

**The Project Gutenberg eBook of
The wanderings and fortunes of some German emigrants
, by Friedrich Gerstäcker**

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The wanderings and fortunes of some German emigrants

Author: Friedrich Gerstäcker

Translator: David Black

Release date: May 9, 2013 [EBook #42672]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Martin Pettit and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <http://www.pgdp.net> (This book was produced from scanned images of public domain material from the Google Print project.)

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WANDERINGS AND FORTUNES OF
SOME GERMAN EMIGRANTS ***

**THE
WANDERINGS AND FORTUNES
OF SOME
GERMAN EMIGRANTS.

BY
FREDERICK GERSTÆCKER.**

[Pg iii]

**TRANSLATED
BY DAVID BLACK.**

**LONDON:
DAVID BOGUE, FLEET STREET.
MDCCCXLVIII.**

Now Ready, in post octavo, 6s. cloth,
**THE WANDERINGS AND FORTUNES
OF SOME
GERMAN EMIGRANTS.
BY FREDERICK GERSTÆCKER.
TRANSLATED BY DAVID BLACK.**

[Pg iv]

From the "Athenæum."

The substance of this entertaining book—which relates the fortunes of a company of German adventurers bound for the land of promise, with the design of forming a colony there—is

evidently no fiction. It is impossible to read many pages without perceiving that the author is telling what he must himself have seen, known, and suffered—so minute and circumstantial is the narrative: and as he is gifted with considerable powers of observing and describing, the reality of his work renders it extremely life-like and engaging.

Any true account—and such, in the main, this undoubtedly is—of what befalls the exiles from Europe in their attempts to settle in the New World, will always have a certain interest for those who remain behind. To English readers, especially, it is something new to learn how it fared with a party of German emigrants in North America. Of the fortunes of many of our own countrymen who have gone thither on the same errand we have perhaps sufficiently heard. But we are little acquainted with what the crowds that have for many years past been leaving Germany for the United States may have to say of their experience. We are glad, therefore, to meet with a writer who is evidently no stranger to this little known history; and who has not only had a personal share in the emigrant's lot and a close acquaintance with many features of that New World to which hope allures him, but a quick eye, as well, to read the characters of men and things, and a ready masculine pen to record his observations.

Herr Gerstæcker seems to be a genial observer of the humours and ways of men, as well as apt in the business of daily life—with some readiness in portraying both in a simple, dramatic fashion. The tempers and oddities of the motley crew of pilgrims from Bremen are drawn with a freshness, and a truth to the special dialects and features of the different provinces and trades from which they were collected, that it would not be easy to reproduce in an English translation. The smith—the bold, burly brewer—the little tailor, half sly, half sheepish,—the flourishing man of law—the rough, simple Oldenburgher boor—and the meek, but somewhat too child-like pastor, are each and all kept in consistent life-likeness throughout the whole course of the adventure; and in many of their mishaps, and experiences, and dialogues, present themselves with that mixture of good-natured rusticity and awkward humour that seems to be native to the ordinary German mind. The book, in short, is full of pleasant reading, as well as of sagacious remark—and must take a useful place in any series of works written for the people of a country that almost vies with our own in the number of exiles whom it annually sends across the Atlantic.

D. BOGUE, 86, FLEET STREET.

CONTENTS.

[Pg v]

CHAPTER I.

THE SEA VOYAGE.

The embarkation—First taste of salt water—Sea-sickness—Intestine dissensions—The passengers—Alsations—The Oldenburghers and their wooden shoes—A calm—Fate of the wooden shoes—A child overboard—Capture of a shark—A storm—Effects of the storm—Death of a passenger—The storm abates—Complaints against the committee—The remonstrance—The committee's vindication—Indolence of the Oldenburghers—A stratagem—Approach to the American coast—"Ashore! Ashore!"—Negro robbers—Termination of the voyage [p. 1-43](#)

CHAPTER II.

A WEEK IN NEW YORK.

The "Switzer's home"—Wonders of New York—"Five hundred journeymen wanted!"—A civil countryman—The future settlement—An adventure on the Quay—"The Switzer's home"—A night's "rest"—The "striped pig"—A natural curiosity maker—The "striped pig" explained—Yankee dodges—Mr. Becher's address—The promised land—The purchase completed—A Methodist rant—The tailor's adventure—Letters of introduction—Suspensions against Dr. Normann—Dr. Normann's "smartness"—The separation [44-83](#)

CHAPTER III.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE SETTLEMENT.

Scenery of the Hudson—The haunted island—A night on the Hudson—Utica—A "railway hotel" repast—The Erie canal—A name for the future town—The canal bridges—The first death—The Falls of Niagara—American fences—Abandonment of luggage—Difficulties in the treasury—The subscription—

[Pg vi]

Cincinnati—Adventures in Cincinnati—An old settler—The Negro barber—
German-American politics—Political spouting—Daybreak on the Ohio—
Normann's love suit—The Cincinnati "Museum"—First impressions of the
Mississippi—Arrival at the Big Halchee—The home in the wilderness [84-
133](#)

CHAPTER IV.

THE SETTLEMENT.

A night in a shanty—The watchman's horn—The woodsman's hut—Death in
the woods—The forest burial-place—A clearing on the Mississippi—A desolate
scene—The "river" and the "town"—The floods of the Mississippi—A journey
in the woods—Unpleasant forebodings—A town in the backwoods—A "camp
out"—The "dead clearing"—The "lot" identified—The disappointment—Forest
lodgings—Use of the axe—Deer-stalking—Perils of hunting in the backwoods
—Progress of settlement—A plot and a counter-plot [134-174](#)

CHAPTER V.

EXCURSIONS HITHER AND THITHER.

Plans for the future—How to "get along" in America—Philadelphia—The
Quaker City—Points of the compass—Letters of introduction—Steam-voyage
to New Orleans—Approach to the city—"Yellow Jack"—A New Orleans school
—American school-system—Pleasant anticipations [175-194](#)

CHAPTER VI.

[Pg vii]

THE SETTLEMENT—AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

A "herd" of wild turkeys—Turkey-buzzards—A startling apparition—Dr.
Normann—The doctor's accomplice—The reconciliation—Sinister speculations
—Plans for abduction—"Bear-tracking" [195-210](#)

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLIGHT.

Purchase of horses and cattle—Backwoods hospitality—The wolf and the
sheep—"Salting" cattle—Elbow-room in the woods—"Westward Ho!"—
Farming in the Backwoods—"Chicken fixings"—Rail-fence making—Mutual
secrets—The deer-calf—Success of the ruse—The arrival of the cattle—
Treachery discovered—Bertha's fears—The Mulatto's sudden appearance—
The abduction completed—The Serpentine water-course—Narrow escape
from discovery—The pursuers at fault—The last gleam of hope [211-249](#)

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MOUTH OF THE BIG HALCHEE.

The shores of the Mississippi—Girdling—Settlers' errors—New mode of
banking—Settlements by communities—Schwarz's plans—Wood-carrying on
the "go-ahead" principle—A backwoods "river"—A Mississippi steamer captain
—American hospitality—The landing—An unexpected discovery [250-268](#)

CHAPTER IX.

[Pg viii]

TREACHERY WITHIN TREACHERY.

Normann's suspicions awakened—The Yankee's escape—The pursuit—The
deliverance—Suspense—Bertha restored to her father—An unpleasant
recognition—The mulatto's escape—Death struggle on the Mississippi—The
return to the settlement [269-290](#)

CHAPTER X.

THE MIGRATION.

A new home—The old bachelor—A ride through the woods—The deserted

**THE
WANDERINGS AND FORTUNES
OF SOME
GERMAN EMIGRANTS.**

[Pg 1]

**CHAPTER I.
THE SEA VOYAGE.**

The majority of the intending passengers by the new and smart bark, the "Hoffnung," Commander Wellbach, bound for New York, were assembled at Meier's, the host of the Hull Arms Tavern, in the ancient Hanse-town of Bremen, prior to their departure, to hear the laws read, which had been drawn up by a committee chosen by themselves, from among their leading men, and to subscribe these laws. They related not only to the voyage across the ocean, but also to the proceedings of the Emigrants on their arrival in their new home, and were intended, as the preamble expressed it, "to unite firmly the Emigrants in a band of friendship for the attainment of *one* great object."

The committee consisted of six members—namely, the Lutheran clergyman, or, as he is styled, the Pastor Hehrmann; Becher, an advocate; a Mr. Von Schwanthal; two brothers, merchants, named Siebert; and a gentleman named Herbold, formerly a landed proprietor. They were zealous for the general welfare, and had, by these laws, reserved equal rights and assigned equal duties to each, so far at least as was compatible with the foregone determination of buying a block of land somewhere in the United States, immediately on their arrival in New York, of occupying it, of tilling it, and of harvesting it in common; and such of the party as had never handled a plough or a spade, were as pleased as children with the thought of working hard in the New World—in the primeval forest—and pictured to themselves how well they should relish the bread to be raised by the toil of their own hands.

[Pg 2]

The requisite funds for the voyage, as well as a small surplus for a beginning, had been previously handed over by each of the little community to the elder Siebert, as treasurer, who had accordingly bargained with the broker and paid for the passage; and when all the passengers had signed the laws there no longer appeared to be any obstacle to their future happiness, or, at all events, none to their future concord and good-fellowship.

Scarcely had this been concluded before a clerk of the shipbroker entered the room, and announced that one Peter, the master of a river craft, would start on the following morning at seven, with the passengers and lighter part of the baggage, such as they might want to get at during the voyage, for the "Hoffnung," a new copper-fastened and fast-sailing ship, then moored at Bremerhafen, waiting for them.

There remained, therefore, but one night more in their native land; even the most callous among them felt their spirits droop at the thought, and several wrung their hands in silence.

"How shall we feel, then," said Pastor Hehrmann, who noticed this movement, "when the last grey strip of land disappears in the distance, when the great desert of waters surrounds us, and our native land, which is still ours, torn from us, perhaps for ever? 'Tis a serious step we are taking, and let us all recollect how necessary it is for us to hold together with heart and soul. We are to face these dangers together, we must therefore act together for the common good, and not only unite our interests, but sincerely love each other as brothers."

[Pg 3]

Pastor Hehrmann was a worthy man, and meant what he said, and those who were acquainted with him knew it and honoured him. A long pause followed; at length, the elder Siebert, not without reason, reminded the Emigrants of their approaching departure, and that, no doubt, there must be many little matters to buy and to provide. This string once more touched, soon caused a universal movement and bustle; the feelings were forgotten, and the body, particularly the stomach, for which they had to provide, asserted its just claims.

Two large boats received the Emigrants at the hour fixed on the ensuing morning, and all of them—including the committee and a few others of the travellers who had preferred passing the thirty-eight miles, which separated them from the ship, in the steamer which started five hours later, but was so much faster—were before long under way for the ship to which they were about to confide their property and their lives, for an uncertain and perhaps a dangerous voyage.

They were a motley company these two boat-loads of human beings—men, women, children, girls, and young men, all mixed together: and, as a sharp although light wind began to curl the

waves, and rocked the boats a little, many a one felt a strange sinking at the heart, and some even inquired of the watermen whether sea-sickness was ever known to break out on the Weser-boats; however, they reached unscathed the large ship which lay in the offing near Bremerhafen, whither she had been already towed out; there, all climbed on board in confused haste, the luggage followed, and a new world surrounded them.

But there was not much time left for reflection; the sun had nearly run his course, and every one had yet to make arrangements for passing the night, which seemed no easy task in the narrow space which was pointed out to them.

[Pg 4]

A mason, who had quitted home with a wife and three little children, asked the mate, with downcast spirit, whether they were *all* to find quarters in that hole; the answer was, "Yes." Nor was this all; chest after chest, trunk upon trunk, were let down into a hold of about eleven yards in length by but a few yards in breadth, for the sleeping berths on either side almost filled it up, so that it appeared a puzzle to most of the travellers how the captain was to stow his living freight, if he had no more "rooms" for the purpose than this.

Their surveys and conjectures were cut short for awhile, by a signal from the ship's cook, explained by the mate to mean "feeding time," which called all of them to a small kitchen, painted green, and fastened to the deck by plaited ropes and iron hooks, there to "catch hold," as the cook expressed it, of their tea and biscuit. Now, although doubtless hands were given us to "catch hold" with, yet it did not appear how they were to be applied for that purpose to the tea, all their vessels and earthenware being carefully packed up in their chests and boxes.

The consequence was, that most of them had to go without tea for that evening. There was a tanner, however, on board with a large family, who quietly expressed his opinion that those who would go to America must know how to help themselves, and taking hold of a large bucket, whereon a capital "H" was painted, he got the cook, who laughingly did as he wished, to pour the tea for his whole family into the bucket.

"I say, that's too strong for the children," quoth his wife, as she stared into the bucket; "you had better pour some more water into it."

"But I've got none hot," pleaded the husband, who would not understand the tea's being too strong.

"Well, then, take some cold," replied his better half; "why, the tea is boiling hot."

[Pg 5]

The tanner with a sigh obeyed, and asked a sailor who was just hauling up a bucketful for some of it, which request the latter, so soon as he had been told what it was for, willingly granted, and with the most obliging countenance in the world, he diluted the tea for them which had been pronounced too strong.

The sailor remained standing beside them.

The tanner's wife, after merely touching the mixture with her lips, to see that it was not too hot, poured a spoonful down the throat of her youngest child; no sooner was it partly down, however, than he sung out lustily, struck about him with hands and feet, and spluttered out that which he had just taken in great haste. Frightened to death, the woman took a gulp of the beverage herself, fearing lest she had scalded the child; it was cool enough, but it produced nearly the same symptoms in her as it had in the child—the tea was completely—pickled.

The sailor went back to his work, chuckling inwardly, first whispering to the husband, "Now, do you see, you're on salt water."

Fortunately there was plenty of tea left for that evening, and the cook gave them a second allowance.

But the time had now arrived for them to look after their sleeping places before it was quite dark, and all crept with their mattresses and blankets into one or other of the "berths," as the square boxes, fixed two and two, one over another, are called, in order to have some place to lay their heads for this night at all events, if not for the whole voyage.

It was a scene of disorder and confusion; chests, boxes, umbrellas, hat-cases, blankets, mattresses, and cooking apparatus, and even here and there human beings stretched out upon them, laid about higgledy-piggledy, in the thickening twilight, and looked like some shapeless chaos.

The water, fortunately, remained quiet, so that no danger was to be feared from the motion of the ship; but as the rays of the following morning's sun lighted up the steerage, they gave the unfortunate occupants some notion of the miseries of a sea voyage.

[Pg 6]

For, some sailors letting themselves suddenly down the two hatchways, as though they had descended from the clouds, soon disturbed the tranquillity which, notwithstanding the confusion, seemed to reign below; indeed some had passed the night in such break-neck positions that they hardly dared to move when the dawn discovered their relations to external objects.

However, compelled by necessity, most of them clambered on deck, and left the luggage to the sailors, who chocked and made it all fast to the uprights, with ropes and cords, so that it might not be thrown about by a rough sea.

The committee, who had arrived about two hours earlier than the two boats, had taken up their quarters in the cabin, where they had arranged themselves tolerably comfortably, with the exception of the Pastor Hehrmann, who, remaining true to the resolution, "that we all are equal," would have no preference over the poorer class, and had taken possession of one of the berths close under the after hatchway, as being one of the most airy and healthy parts of the steerage.

Everything was arranged on this day; each person had a permanent berth allotted to him, as also a certain allowance of butter for the week, and of beef or salt pork for the day; that done, Pastor Hehrmann read a short prayer, and as soon as supper was over, most of the passengers went to rest wearied with the exertions of the day.

Towards morning a light wind arose; sufficient to determine the captain to get under weigh. The heavy anchor was weighed, and the majestic vessel slowly stretched out towards the mouth of the river.

When they arrived there the breeze died away altogether, and the slack sails hung about the mast; but at ten o'clock, when the greater part of the emigrants were assembled on deck, some little black clouds arose in the south-east, spreading themselves out and covering the whole sky; the wind, with extraordinary rapidity, howled over the excited waters towards the ship, filled the sails and laid her quite on one side, and passed on over the as yet slightly curled waves.

[Pg 7]

At this stage most of the travellers who were below, more particularly the female part of them, rushed out of the cabin, calling for the Captain, "for," said they, "the ship is falling over." In vain did the mate and some of the crew assure them to the contrary. "No, they had the evidence of their senses that the ship lay all on one side, and of course it must fall over, whether it would or no;" and then, alas! the consequences which they painted were so dreadful, that they filled them afresh with horror, and crying and sobbing, and no longer able to stand, they held on by the water-casks which were fastened to the deck.

But a mightier soother than mate or captain either, now trod upon the scene, one that not only pacified their spirits, but within a few hours made them all as indifferent to storms and waves as though they were reposing on their respectable stable mother-earth—this was sea-sickness. Excited by the winds, the waves raised their crests higher and higher, and the ship rose and fell with them; but, the higher the waves rose the more were the hearts of the poor emigrants dejected, and they lay about the deck with chalk-coloured faces, regardless of the sprays which washed over them and wet them to the skin.

Pastor Hehrmann and another, a young doctor, named Werner, who, to escape from the water which flooded the deck, had climbed into the lower cross-trees, and taken up his quarters there, were the only persons who were spared by the ruthless sea-tyrant; they kept in the open air and did not feel the least inconvenience.

Things were not much better in the cabin than in the steerage; Mr. Herbold seemed to bear it better than the rest, but even he appeared pale and ill. The others were in a pitiable state, and the elder Siebert, who lay in one of the lower berths, two and two having a little cabin to themselves, at length dare not venture his head out at all; so exactly did his brother, who rested, or rather tortured himself above, seem to lie in wait for the opportunity of having a fresh attack of this dreadful and not to be suppressed sickness.

[Pg 8]

Mr. Becher accounted himself as one doomed to death, and M. Von Schwanthal affirmed that as for him he existed only in his stomach.

Fortunately this state of things was not of long continuance, for already on the following day the wind abated, and also the waves, although the ship continued to dance up and down merrily, and as yet but few of the sick had completely recovered.

A general demand now arose for herrings and such like things, for those who began to recover and to get back their appetites could not make up their minds to the hard ship's biscuit and the salt beef and pickled pork, and lamented for something comfortable to the stomach.

Here again, Pastor Hehrmann, who, more by accident than from any hope of their utility, had brought a small barrel of herrings with him, was at hand to assist them, and he divided the herrings willingly and gladly among the convalescent.

The wind remained moderate, and everything promised a prosperous voyage.

On the fourth day they came in sight of the French town of Calais, and the town of Dover, on the opposite English coast; sailed on the following morning past the Isle of Wight—and on the evening of the sixth day they entered the Atlantic Ocean.

Scarcely recovered from sea-sickness, the little community in the steerage had by no means adapted itself with contented mind to the novelty and inconvenience of its situation; on the contrary, they already lived in discord and hatred among themselves, and their minds were becoming more and more embittered.

[Pg 9]

Pastor Hehrmann, indeed, did all he could to restore peace, and was partially successful; but fresh outbreaks were constantly occurring, and the committee thought themselves called upon to interfere.

A cabinet-maker, who had travelled in Russia and Poland, in Denmark and Sweden, in Prussia

and Austria, as he had related a hundred times to his patient hearers, got into a quarrel with a stout brewer—had called the latter by some opprobrious epithet, and was knocked down in consequence by the brewer, who had a mind to put an end to the matter at once. The cabinet-maker was quieted, it is true, but the brewer had a harder combat before him, for nearly all the women took part with the vanquished, and such a storming and scolding as now arose had never before been heard on board the *Hoffnung*.

Meanwhile the committee had determined to interfere, and its members betook themselves to the hatchway of the steerage, whence a confused murmur of voices met them.

M. Von Schwanthal, a good, amiable man, but not of the cleverest, volunteered to allay the ferment by a short speech, and although Mr. Becher opposed this, the rest were content. M. Von Schwanthal, therefore, descended backwards a few steps of the stairs, little better than a ladder, which led below, till he thought he had got far enough to overlook the interior, and then turned round and addressed the assembly below politely, with—"Gentlemen," (Ladies would have been more appropriate,) when unfortunately his feet slipped forward, and he arrived at the feet of the breakers of the peace more speedily than he had purposed.

"Good morning, M. Von Schwanthal," said the brewer, quietly, who, notwithstanding the noise and disturbance around him, sat very comfortably on his large round-topped chest, filling a pipe of tobacco.

[Pg 10]

"But, my good people," cried M. Von Schwanthal, jumping quickly upon his feet—the rest of his address was unheard, a roar of laughter drowned his words, and mortified, and swearing inwardly, M. Von Schwanthal regained the deck.

However, he had attained his object—peace was restored for the moment at all events, for the people now only laughed at the mishaps of their committee-man. But new squabbles arose daily, and the ill feeling extended towards the committee-men whom they had themselves elected, and who, it was suggested behind their backs, might have taken their passage in the steerage like the rest, "for in America all men are equal."

Some Alsatian peasants were particularly warm in support of these opinions. Their words sounded like thunder. They swore that they would no longer be ridden over roughshod by the gentry, as they had been, but intended to give them a bit of their mind at the earliest opportunity.

On the other hand, a little troop of Oldenburghers, consisting of twelve stout young fellows, lived contentedly enough; they troubled themselves about nothing, came upon deck regularly three times a day to receive their meat and drink, and laid themselves quietly down again on their mattresses in their berths to rest themselves, as they called it.

The whole of these worthies wore large wooden shoes, to the great vexation of their fellow passengers; and when they lay in bed, as they did during the greater portion of the day, they placed these shoes in front of their berths, so that people had often tumbled over them in the narrow dark passage through which they had to wind their way. The Oldenburghers, notwithstanding the threats and remonstrances of the others, would not remedy the grievance, contending that they were as good as the rest, that in America all people were equal, and that nobody had any right to forbid them from placing their wooden shoes where they thought proper.

[Pg 11]

Some of the women felt their position amidst these constant bickerings and squabbles to be a very unpleasant one, and amongst others, the wife and daughters of the Pastor Hehrmann, who, surrounded in the steerage by clamour, scarcely liked to leave the deck, when evening closed over them, to venture down again into the dark hold.

The Captain, it is true, several times good naturedly offered them the cabin for their abode, but Pastor Hehrmann would not accept it, dreading, not without cause, lest he should thereby excite more discontent amongst his restless countrymen, already ill enough disposed towards their "genteel" committee-men.

Pastor Hehrmann's daughters were respectively seventeen and nineteen years of age, and two more tender and amiable creatures never traversed the Atlantic to accompany their parents in search of a home beyond it.

They were slim and well grown, and in their almost black hair and dark glowing eyes one could scarcely recognise daughters of the North. They tended their delicate mother, who had suffered seriously from sea sickness, with care and love, and did all in their power to smoothe her disagreeable position.

The *Hoffnung* had in this manner left about a hundred German miles (nearly five hundred English miles) behind her, when one morning the wind suddenly ceased, the sea became as smooth as glass, the ship stood immovable, and the sun shone down clearly and cheerfully from the pure unclouded sky.

It was such a day at sea as restores sick persons to balmy health, and causes healthy persons to forget that they are floating on a few boards over an almost bottomless abyss cut off from all human aid. The day passed in rejoicing, in singing and dancing, and it was nigh midnight before the last of the travellers betook themselves to rest, leaving the deck to the sailors of the watch.

[Pg 12]

All was still, when a dark figure cautiously and noiselessly emerged from the steerage; it carried something under its arms and in its hands, approached the bulwarks and threw it over; it fell on

the water with a splash; all was silent once more, and the figure disappeared through the hatchway.

Two sailors sitting in the bows had been spectators of this proceeding, and endeavoured to make out what it was which the unknown person had confided to the deep; but it was too dark, and they leaned back into their former attitudes of repose to resume the yarn which one of them had been spinning, when again the same figure appeared, and again, cast something, whatever it might be, overboard.

"I say, Jack," whispered one of them to the other, "what can it be that yon fellow is throwing overboard? it splashes so in the water; let us see what it is."

"Oh, never mind," answered his messmate; "whatever it may be, it's nothing belonging to us, for he fetched it out of the steerage; but I think I see something floating on the water."

"By Jove, and so do I," replied the other; "come along; I should like to know what it can be."

The two sailors advanced, but the figure had already withdrawn itself; they could, however, distinctly make out some light objects upon the smooth sea, and were still speculating upon what it could be, when the mysterious one re-appeared for the third time, loaded as before; he paused a moment on perceiving the two sailors, but his irresolution did not last long, for stepping gently forward, he looked cautiously round for a moment, and then laughingly showed the curious spectators several pairs of wooden shoes, which he launched into the Atlantic, like the rest.

"Well," said he, when the last consignment had been duly forwarded, "we're rid of them, anyhow, but don't say a word, for God's sake," he continued, seizing by the arms the two sailors, who were just about to roar out. "Hush! I beg of you. If those bumpkins were to know that it is I who played them this trick, they would be the death of me. But one of them trod so heavily on my poor corns the other day with his wooden machines, that I vowed to do it; but not a word—you promise that?"

[Pg 13]

The sailors laughingly gave their word not to betray the least hint, and the little mischievous journeyman tailor, who, as a South German, had a native hatred to the Low Germans, slipped down unobserved to his rest, perfectly satisfied.

Who shall describe the noise, the abuse, and the threats on the one side, or the rejoicing on the other, the following morning, when the Oldenburghers, wanting to get up to breakfast, were unable to find their wooden shoes in their accustomed places, but in lieu thereof discovered them floating round the vessel at a distance of some hundred yards.

They cursed and threatened loudly, and requested the Captain, who was just coming up the companion stairs, with his hands in his pockets, and could hardly conceal his amazement, that he would let a boat be put out to fish up the lost sheep. But he replied gravely, that the weather looked much too suspicious; that a squall might spring up at a moment's notice, and therefore he could not venture to leave the ship in a small boat.

"But, Captain," said one of the much-injured lads, "where is the squall to come from? The sky is all blue!"

"Do you see that black cloud, down yonder, near the horizon, in the west?" asked the Captain, pointing at the same time towards that quarter.

"No!" was the unanimous answer of the Oldenburghers.

"You don't see it? Well, it's all one—I see it! Besides, you can't tell sky from sea yet! But the cloud looks suspicious—and I wouldn't lose a boat and four hands for all the wooden shoes that were ever made!"

With these words he turned upon his heel, and walked down the companion stairs again.

[Pg 14]

The Oldenburghers now applied to the committee, and demanded that they should recover their property for them. But Mr. Becher, with a shrug of the shoulders, gave it as his opinion that the jurisdiction of the committee extended, it is true, to the whole of the vessel, but not for an indefinite number of yards round her into the sea; therefore, that the gentlemen must either make themselves comfortable—or else, fetch the shoes themselves.

One of them was in the act of proposing, as the sea was so still, to jump in, and to collect the fugitives by swimming; while the rest were uttering maledictions on the head of the author of their troubles, and announcing how they would all thrash him, if they could but catch him, when suddenly the cry, "A shark! a shark!" was heard from the cross-trees. It was young Werner, above alluded to, who had chosen that elevated place as his favourite resort, and to whom all eyes were now turned, to learn the direction in which the sea monster was to be found.

Werner pointed to the streak of light formed by the sun upon the water, and all the voyagers distinctly perceived from the deck the dorsal fin of the shark, standing six or seven inches out of the water.

Although several of these voracious creatures had been already round the ship, still probably few of the travellers had seen one of them, and all pressed to the ship's side to view the fish, as it came nearer and nearer to the ship and the surrounding wooden shoes.

"Well, I should like to know whether he eats wooden shoes!" said the Brewer, rubbing his hands

complacently, and watching every movement of the creature.

His wish seemed on the point of being fulfilled, for the fish, approaching the first sabot, described a circle round it, and all expected the immediate disappearance of the same, when a fearful cry—such a cry as can only issue from the breast of a terrified mother—was heard from the midst of the crowd which had pressed, full of curiosity, to the bulwarks, and in the same moment, a heavy body fell on the smooth surface of the waters, and sank beneath it.

[Pg 15]

"My child! my child!" cried the woman, in the very act of throwing herself after the helpless being, which now re-appeared on the surface, struggling and gurgling. But those who surrounded her held her back, and gazed, in apprehension of the worst, at the swiftly-approaching shark, which now shot forward like an arrow, its attention being aroused by the splash of the object in the water.

Both the daughters of Pastor Hehrmann had witnessed the child's fall; and the eldest of them, in a voice almost choked by terror, cried, "Help! help! for God's sake!" "Launch the boat!" cried the Captain. But there was some delay. A few seconds more must decide the fate of the child—for the shark was scarcely ten yards distant from him, and already seemed to scent its prey. It was then that the young man in the cross-trees glided down a rope with the activity of a sailor, and before any one could guess his purpose, or hinder him, sprang into the crystal flood beneath, right before the very jaws of the fish, and coming to the surface again, seized the child, which had just reappeared for the third time.

A cry of admiration at this desperate boldness arose from sailors as well as passengers; but the shark, frightened by the loud dash, and rendered uneasy by the cries and noise on board the ship, drew back from the booty he had almost reached, and careered around the brave swimmer in narrow circles.

"Strike with your hands—splash—kick—make as much noise as you can!" cried the seamen with one accord. But the Captain had caught up a rope, and threw it to the young man, who, holding the child in his left arm, seized the rope with the right one, and held himself afloat by it, while he kicked out with all his force, and splashed the water far around him.

[Pg 16]

"Sling the rope round your elbow," called the Captain, "and we can haul you up." The young man did so; but all his bold and generous sacrifice seemed in vain, for the shark, who by this time had found that there was no danger to be apprehended from this quarter, shot forward once more.

The sailors, indeed, hauled the rope with their utmost strength and goodwill, but their help seemed to come too late; for the monster was but a few feet off from him, and was just about to turn on its back, to snap at the body of the unhappy man, when—in that very moment—when every one in breathless and fearful dread awaited to see the worst—a heavy piece of meat fell into the sea, close to the open fangs of the shark, and was swallowed by him as quick as lightning.

It is true, that this mouthful only seemed to have whetted his appetite for more, for he turned again, and made a second movement to seize the body of the bold swimmer, who was already half drawn up from his watery grave; but, suddenly the shark began to lash the water with his tail, started back several feet, and dived down.

Nobody troubled himself at the moment as to the cause of this almost inexplicable salvation, for all that had hands hauled away to get the poor fellow, who was almost terrified to death, on board; and he had scarcely handed the living child to its mother, before he fell back senseless in the arms of those around him.

But there was not a woman on board who would not now have pressed forward to call back the fainted one into life; and the mother of the saved child threw herself on her knees, and audibly besought the Almighty not to rob her so soon of the saviour of her only joy. Meanwhile, the attention of the travellers was distracted from the patient, whom, besides, they knew to be in good hands, towards the sea, whence a great splashing and noise resounded anew.

It was the shark, which, caught by the hook which the cook had fastened in the lump of meat, and thrown to him in the nick of time, was striking and tearing in the vain endeavour to regain his lost freedom. All hands laid hold of the rope, and after a time the immense fish (for he was about fourteen feet long) floundered on the deck, striking it till the planks shook again.

[Pg 17]

But he did not live long—passengers as well as sailors caught hold of whatever came to hand, and the creature, with its head shattered, soon writhed in its own blood.

While the men, on the one hand, were thus busied with the destruction of the life of their adversary, the women, on the other, were tending their charge with tender care, and watching anxiously every symptom which might announce returning consciousness.

There was no surgeon on board—as, indeed, there hardly ever is on board of ships destined for emigrants—but the Captain had abandoned his medicine-chest to them, and Hoffman's drops, sal volatile, and several other powerful remedies were applied to bring the colour back to the pale cheeks, and open the closed eyelids.

At last a deep sigh escaped from the breast of the unconscious one; the women uttered cries of joy, and Hehrmann's elder daughter clasped her sister's hand fervently, and called her a *good, dear* girl, while a tear glistened in her own eye.

Young Werner recovered, though but slowly; and it was touching to see the woman, with the rescued child on her arm, fall down on her knees before him, and kiss his hand, so that he could hardly prevent her. Even the hardy sailors felt their hearts warm and soften at the sight.

All squabbles and disputes were put an end to by this occurrence, at least for a time, and even the Oldenburghers tried to forget their wooden shoes, particularly as, towards evening, a light East wind sprang up and filled the slack sails, and removed the ship more and more from them.

About midnight, however, a fresh favourable South-easter sprang up, that sent the Hoffnung pretty fast on her destination; the sails were filled, and the white spray splashed from her bows; the wind did not increase for some days, so that the sea was not much agitated, the motion of the ship gentle, and the travellers, who by degrees became accustomed to the rocking to and fro, suffered little from sea-sickness; even Mrs. Hehrmann, who had dropped the title of "pastress" at Bremen, began to recover, and was often on deck.

[Pg 18]

Young Werner, who by his boldness had made himself the favourite of the whole ship, attached himself more especially to the family of the Hehrmanns, and in particular was attentive to the women in contriving and executing a number of little comforts to better or smoothe their situation, which was by no means one of the pleasantest. Many a kind look from the elder daughter, Bertha, was his reward, and on these occasions he felt that a new and glad world opened itself before him, as though he had already, on the desert seas, found a home, which he had hoped to find in foreign distant climes.

It was late one evening; the moon, that but shortly before had poured her friendly light upon the slightly curled sea, hid her disk, which was nearly at the full, behind thin clouds, that floated past her quicker and quicker, that covered her closer and closer, till at last a faint glimmer announced the spot where she tried in vain to break a passage, and to dispel the closing shadows.

Werner, wrapped in his cloak, had been relating the tale of his life, a simple one, to old Hehrmann; how he had, yonder, lost all that was dear to him; how he was bound, with the rest of his fortune, to that strange country which is the hope and the silent longing of thousands, either to found a new home among strangers, or else, at all events, not to be daily reminded that he had once possessed such, and now was banished from the threshold of his paternal house, tenanted by strange people.

[Pg 19]

The two girls, wrapped closely in their mantles, and leaning against their father, had listened with breathless attention, when the loud orders of the Captain, who issued his commands quickly through a speaking-trumpet, disturbed the confidential conversation, and called the attention of the friends to what was passing around them.

An ominous rustling and whispering from the sea greeted the ear, and the dark waves, sprinkled as it seemed with millions of glistening stars, rolled and tumbled together more uneasily.

The Captain's voice sounded louder and shorter, and the sailors climbed like cats up the shrouds, ran along the yards, and fastened the loosened and fluttering sails to them. Scarce was this dangerous work over before a distant howling was heard. With fearful rapidity it hurried nearer, and in a few minutes more the ship flew, with her jib and foresail only set, like an arrow through the heaving waves.

The passengers, warned by the Captain, forsook the deck, and Pastor Hehrmann and Werner were the only ones who defied the weather, for the waves looked terrifically beautiful in their dark grandeur, when the white and glowing looking foam shot past on their crests, and dissolved itself in a thousand little sparks. At last, however, they were obliged to quit the deck, for heavy drops fell from the clouds that towered themselves closer and closer. They descended, not without casting many an inquiring and fearful look towards the threatening sky, with some reluctance into the dark between decks, whence a suffocating vapour waved against them, and where they required some minutes before they got used to the close and vitiated air, and ventured to breathe it freely.

A hollow sea was running; the waves struck heavily against the sides of the ship, which quivered at each blow. Still the wind had not had time to raise the sea much, and the good ship, heeling over to leeward, which gives a vessel a more secure, and even a more quiet position than when the sea is right abaft, and the lofty structure rolls from side to side, shot forward rapidly through the dark flood, dashing the white foam before her, so that most of the travellers sank into the arms of sleep, quietly and heedlessly.

[Pg 20]

And Werner, too, crept into his berth, and listened for a long time, with his ear pressed close to the ship's side, to the surging and dashing and thundering of the waves without, until his eyes also were weighed down by weariness, and he found in his dreams the happiness that he was now driving through storms and waves to seek.

A wild and confused cry, the lumbering and crashing of heavy objects, and an almost stupifying acute pain in the head, awoke him. He opened his eyes in terror and wonder; but although pitchy darkness surrounded him, he could distinguish that the ship must have changed her course, and therefore now leaned over on the side he was on, for his head laid low down, while his feet were elevated. He quickly changed his position. But the fearful noise between decks continued, and, creeping out of his berth, he soon became aware of the shocking condition in which he, as well as all his fellow-passengers, was placed.

In the space which separates the two rows of sleeping places, there stand beams or pillars, ten feet apart from each other, destined as well for the support of the deck, which rests upon them, as for the security of the luggage within, and to these the chests and boxes, the trunks and packages, which are to be used, or their contents consumed, by the travellers on the passage, and therefore cannot be put into the hold, are lashed with ropes; and this is always done by the sailors, in order that, in the event of a sudden squall, or of continued stormy weather, the heavy baggage may not be hurled hither and thither in the narrow space, and endanger the limbs or lives even of its closely-packed tenants.

[Pg 21]

This had been, and properly, done on board the *Hoffnung*, and that in such wise that most of the lids and covers could be opened, and so permit the free use of their provision and clothes' stores; but one of the countrymen, not comprehending the evil consequences of its omission, had unfastened one of the ropes—notwithstanding the cautions of several of his fellow-passengers—to enable him to take something out of his chest more conveniently.

The little tailor, who lay in the berth over his, probably had some indistinct vision of chests and boxes dancing about, for he tried to fasten the rope again, but not being initiated in the mystery of tying such knots, he was only partially successful. When, therefore, the ship began to rise and jerk about, when the whole weight of the luggage swung over, first to this side and then to the other, the knot was loosened, and first the little packages and boxes came tumbling down from their elevations, and at last the heavy artillery, the immense storehouses of the emigrants, followed.

It is true that, with praiseworthy zeal, several of these latter jumped out of their berths so soon as they observed the danger, but such was the mad motion of the ship that they could hardly keep on their legs, much less govern these heavy bodies, and a sudden movement of the ship throwing every thing towards them, compelled them hastily to retreat to their berths, which were protected by stout planks, in order to avoid being injured or crushed by the approaching chests.

Their position was a fearful one, and was rendered more so by the cries of a young lad who had been trying to reach the opening towards the deck, and had been seriously hurt by one of the chests which rolled against him; while on all sides the shrieks of women, the cries of children, and the groans and retching of the sea-sick, resounded from the berths. It was a scene of dreadful confusion, and in vain did they all call for the sailors to help them; none of them could have been of any use in the darkness, had they had leisure to attend to the unhappy passengers.

[Pg 22]

It was then, when every one believed that the terror had reached its height, and could not be increased, that a cry of dread and agony pierced through the noise and tumult, and even the children and the sick stopped their lamentations to listen to that sound, and to the momentary complete silence which succeeded the tumult; but it was only for a moment that cry of fear; "A corpse, a corpse!" echoed from berth to berth, from mouth to mouth.

Among the passengers on board the *Hoffnung* there was an old woman, a widow, and her only daughter, who had gone out at the request of her son, a cabinet-maker in New York. He, being in tolerably easy circumstances, wished to have his poor old mother, who fared poorly enough in Germany, beside him; and had sent home the means to enable her and his sister to make the voyage over, to come and live with him.

The poor old woman, however, who was ailing when she came on board, and had been much shaken by the sea sickness, no doubt in the confusion and terror of that night considered the destruction of the ship inevitable, and fear hastened the catastrophe for which bodily weakness and illness had prepared the way.

She died, pressed to the heart of her daughter, who convulsively embraced her; and it was the latter, feeling her mother's body at her breast grow cold, who had uttered the shriek of terror and agony.

But all their prayers for help were vain; the poor young girl was alone obliged to preserve the corpse from the rolling of the ship, and there she lay for some hours with her dead mother in her arms.

Day, which had been so ardently and fearfully longed for, broke at last, and with it came help in their really shocking need.

Eight sailors and the second mate came below to the unfortunate people, and in danger of their lives, and not without several severe bruises, made fast the chests and boxes once more, while the ship heaved yet more madly, and rolled from side to side.

[Pg 23]

The first thing to be done was to remove the corpse from between decks; but in vain did the second mate beg of the girl to part with her mother's body to him; she only clasped it more tightly and declared that she would only part with her in death. In vain did Pastor Hehrmann endeavour to persuade the poor creature, and to induce her to give way to the reasonable and pressing request of the seaman; she would not, and her wild and incoherent words led to fears of the worst for herself; it was only when, exhausted by the exertions and the horrors of the night, she fell back in a swoon, that the sailors succeeded in taking from her the stiffened corpse, which was quickly, then and there, sewed in a large piece of sail cloth for more convenient transport on deck, and in order thence to be committed to the deep.

The Captain, meanwhile, had made room in the cabin for Pastor Hehrmann's family, and had the

women at least, and their beds, removed thither. Mrs. Hehrmann, indeed, was more dead than alive, and she scarcely could have got through such another night of terror. The Pastor himself no longer opposed this removal, for he could not help seeing that his family, although not brought up in luxury, yet never had been exposed to similar sufferings, and could hardly have borne a life surrounded by such scenes—but he himself would not forsake the steerage.

There the scene was a shocking one, and pen or pencil would be too weak to attempt its description.

The corpse was carried by the sailors towards the hatchway, and there handed to those above, who laid it on a plank and bore it to the lee side of the vessel.

In spite of the rolling of the ship, in spite of the constant washing of the waves across the deck, although none other of the passengers, no, not even the committee, came to his side, the worthy Pastor Hehrmann, amidst the howling of the storm and the dashing of the waves, spoke a brief service for the dead over the body of the poor old woman, for whom the wild waves, instead of the arms of an affectionate son, now waited. The corpse was then lifted on the edge of the bulwarks, which were gliding, with an arrow's speed, through the foaming waters, and scarcely two feet elevated above them, (so inclined was the ship,) and in the next minute the sea engulfed its victim.

[Pg 24]

But where, in this time of need and sorrow, was the committee, who had pledged themselves to provide during the voyage for the well-being and comfort of the travellers who had confided themselves to their care?

Where was this committee, when all were calling for them, and wished for their help, or at all events their sympathy? Alas, the poor committee itself lay in the most pitiable condition, sea sick to a fearful degree, up and down about the cabin. The Captain could not be blamed if he swore a little, and declared that in whatever part of his cabin he got to, he could not help treading upon some member of this "extensive" committee, who, deaf to everything beside, only sighed and groaned, and called on death to relieve him from his misery.

When the Captain told them of the case of death in the steerage, M. Von Schwanthal, raising himself a little by a leg of a camp stool, dolefully exclaimed, "Alas, who could the old woman be!" and sank back again exhausted, whilst the other members said nothing, but merely shook their heads gently and significantly.

Mid-day approached, and the cook's call to dinner was heard, but few followed this call; and again, scarce a third of these few executed their bold resolve, under such circumstances, of eating, as well as fetching, their dinners. The Brewer got as far as the hatchway ladder, where he remained lying, and was only aroused by a dishful of rice, which, with its bearer, a journeyman tailor, came flying down on the top of him. But he bore no malice. Misfortune had made all equal; they remained lying near each other; and one of the sailors remarked, that "that was the fattest piece of beef he had ever met with in the rice-soup."

[Pg 25]

The sea was majestic to behold—the gigantic waves which were excited, rolled and lifted up themselves, shaking off, when at their greatest height, the white foam from their crests, and then plunging down again, and with their powerful shoulders pressing forward another, often a yet more gigantic mass of foaming ocean.

Whole companies of large porpoises, rolled and tumbled about in the angry element, allowed themselves to be lifted up to the very summit of the waves, and then leapt, as in play, from the descending wave out into the dark blue flood, streaked and marbled with veins of white foam, constantly repeating their play anew till they disappeared behind the watery mountains, and were only visible again for a moment when the ship was raised on some gigantic wave, and could survey, as from a tower, the whole excited foaming and boiling desert of water.

The storm lasted during three days; the ship with her jib only set, for they had been obliged to take in the foresail, drove to leeward, the rudder was lashed, and the sailors upon duty on deck were obliged to secure themselves by ropes from being washed overboard by the sea, which struck over the ship with fearful violence. At last, on the fourth day, the storm seemed inclined to abate. It is true that the sea ran as high as before, for the monster could not pacify itself at once; but a hope was now revived at least of more peaceable times, and that partially allayed the despair of the passengers; but it was not until the sixth day, when the sea had almost entirely abated, and the ship flew through it, leaning on one side, but no longer rocking backwards and forwards as before, when the sails could be set and the rudder managed, that the sea-sick recovered, and even some individual members of the committee made their appearance on deck, pale, and with sunken cheeks and lack-lustre eyes.

[Pg 26]

Mrs. Hehrmann improved rapidly in health during the last few days: the sickness seemed to have exhausted its virulence upon her, and to have yielded to a stronger nature. Her improvement was almost visible; and she passed nearly the whole day upon deck, where, attended by her daughters, and strengthened by the more generous diet of the cabin, she appeared to absorb new life-juices from the pure sea air.

The poor girl, from whom, when in an unconscious state, they had taken the dead mother, did not fare so well. Her reason had, it is true, returned; but she lay in her berth in a high fever. In the stillness of the night, her mind often wandered to her mother, and in her delirium she spoke words of comfort to her, and assured her that she would soon, very soon, see her son again.

The women took the poor creature under their care, and nursed her as well as they could.

But now the old grudge, which festered in the hearts of the steerage passengers towards the committee, began to ferment afresh: How much had not the committee promised, and how little, how very little had it performed! Were *they* to bear it quietly, and without grumbling? Were they to look on, while they were neglected, and, perhaps, even laughed at behind their backs? Were they to let these fellows carry themselves so high, while *they* suffered tortures which they had not before thought possible? No, they would argue the matter at least; no one could forbid that; for as to *acting*, unfortunately they had themselves parted with their weapons for the purpose. For, before leaving Bremen, where the separate articles of agreement were drawn up, all had by mutual contract, and by the deposit of a small fund in the hands of the treasurer, M. Siebert, sen., who was chosen by acclamation, obliged themselves, upon their arrival in their adopted country, to buy a certain number of acres of land, as many as their means would permit, in a district to be chosen by the committee, and, as already stated, to clear it and to cultivate it in common. For this purpose, there were not only agriculturists for the tillage itself, but they had also a smith, a wheelwright, brewer, tailor, shoemaker, glazier, cabinet-maker, weaver, and almost all other necessary artisans, so that, as observed by the committee, they were assured against accident, and dependent upon nobody.

[Pg 27]

They had even provided themselves with tools; and although the Captain, before starting, warned them against carrying over German utensils and tools, and indeed in general, as he expressed it, "from carrying over German customs, and German iron, and little German silver," yet neither the committee nor the rest could be brought to see it in this light, and some seventy hundredweight of agricultural and other implements—such as axes, hatchets, saws, chains, ploughs, scythes, and even carts and waggons, had been got on board and brought across. The freight on board ship, it is true, was not very high, and although the captain here again called their attention to the expensive carriage to their place of settlement in America, yet all the members of the committee, with the exception of the Pastor Hehrmann, who was inclined to believe in the reasoning of the old seaman, had read too much about America, and the manners and usages there, not to be aware that tools were very dear in the interior, and even that in certain places they were not to be had; it is true that they did not exactly know whether they should alight upon these certain places; but they thought that they ought to provide for the worst, since it was possible that they might. The great mass cordially approved of this; indeed, most of the emigrants could not imagine how they could work with tools of a different construction from those to which they had been accustomed from infancy upwards, and in this particular were well satisfied with their committee.

[Pg 28]

The expense of the passage and of the land journey to their ultimate destination was to be defrayed out of the deposited money, and then the residue was to be applied, so far as it would extend, in the purchase of land, and the committee undertook to subscribe such funds as might be required for any further needful expenses themselves. But the committee were especially to see that a healthy and good tract of land was selected, and that it should be conveyed and assured to them in due form as their sole property; for there was not one of the party but had heard of the frequent occurrence of frauds there, and who did not fear them; that, then, everything should be divided and allotted, according to right and justice, as well labour as property; and it was one of the chief conditions—and indeed one that was of course—that the committee were, generally, not only in their adopted country, but on the voyage out, to keep in view the interests of the members who had confided in them, to protect and to provide for them.

Mr. Becher for this purpose had made an extraordinary address to the meeting, at the Hull Arms, in Bremen, with which all were particularly pleased, if for no other cause, because he addressed them invariably as "Citizens;" one expressed his opinion, before they went on board, that never before had any one made such a speech to them. They confided implicitly in the committee; but this concord received a severe shock from the complete neglect with which the poorer portion of the emigrants were treated even on board ship; sea-sickness, it is true, quieted their minds for a time; but the storm which had left the ocean, passed into the hearts of the steerage passengers, and they would not admit the propriety of the committee eating their pudding while they got only bacon and split pease.

It might be borne, the Brewer considered, if they did not carry the savoury dishes from under their very noses, but that it was just as if they did it on purpose to make game of them. The steward, or cabin attendant, namely, was obliged to pass through amongst them, every time that he carried the dinner into the cabin, and the smell of the roast meat and pastry had contributed not a little to raise their bile against the committee.

[Pg 29]

It happened, one morning, when Pastor Hehrmann (who otherwise always quieted the dissatisfied by his reasonable representations—remedied that which he himself considered wrong—and kept the disturbers of the peace in order,) was seated beside his family, near the wheel, and was gazing at the broad and sunny expanse, dotted here and there with a distant sail, that the revolt grew apace, and the good people did, as most others in their place would have done—they *resolved* to revolt, if they did not actually do it.

But, in order to bring their grievances before those who were to blame, they agreed to send deputies to the committee to represent to the latter the irregularity of their proceedings; to request a change; and to get the promise, which they had formerly made, renewed by them, or otherwise to demand the return of the deposits, so that each of them might again do as they liked.

This last point, in particular, found many supporters, and so far all was well; but the little circumstance remained—who was to say all this to the committee?

Unquestionably the tailor had the best tongue, but he was only a journeyman. One of them—it was the brewer—therefore proposed Werner, and all immediately concurred in the choice.

As he was not present, they sent everywhere in search of him, to fetch him, and to communicate the resolution to him.

But he was sitting up aloft, gazing dreamily, not at the wide rolling sea, not at the distant ships that steered past with their sunny sails, not at the sea-mews or the Mother Carey's chickens, that were wantoning about the Hoffnung, sometimes skimming over the surface of the splashing waters, as if the top of each wave must reach the bold creatures and drag them down—sometimes diving with the quickness of lightning into the flood, as bright as crystal, and coming to the surface again loaded with their booty; no, he gazed at the steerer, who, wheel in hand, was looking earnestly, first at the compass, then at the top-gallant sails, to see that they caught the wind fully.

[Pg 30]

And who was this helmsman?—some rough strong figure, in a coarse blue jacket and Scotch bonnet—some bearded physiognomy, with dark brows and sunburnt features? No; he wore a gay-coloured light dress, a light-blue silk handkerchief, loosely slung round the white neck, dark curls, lifted by the soft south wind and fluttering round the dear rosy face—in short, it was Pastor Hehrmann's elder little daughter, Bertha—who was here learning to steer the ship from the chief mate, and indeed showed herself so teachable, that the grave man let her hold the helm herself and stood looking on, and smiling when the ship would not immediately answer the rudder, and she leaned with all her strength on the spokes; and then, when she saw her come round and follow the prescribed track, merrily shook the long flowing curls from her face; perhaps, also, at the same time, she stole a shy, pleased glance upwards—of course merely to observe the sails.

Thrice already had a sailor, dispatched by the brewer, been into the top, and pressingly requested Werner to come below, before he obeyed the call; and then, discontented and grumbling at being obliged to quit his perch, slid down a rope. Hardly had he arrived in the steerage before all thronged round him, and twenty at once tried to make him comprehend a story which he could not understand from any of them—at last, he found out what was passing, and what was wanted of him. However, he briefly declined the honourable offer, as he called it, giving as his sole reason for so doing, that he did not belong to the association formed in Bremen, and consequently had no right to act as its mouthpiece; that he could not interfere with what the committee might commit or omit; and that if he were to do so, they would merely have to ask him what business it was of his, and he should be silenced. He thanked them in brief and friendly words for their confidence, and quickly climbed aloft again. Now good counsel was scarce, and they really knew not whom to choose.

[Pg 31]

"Well, then," said one of the peasants at last, "I'll go myself; what need is there for fine speeches? I'll tell them my mind, and what we have agreed upon."

"That's right, Schmidt," all the others echoed. "You go; you know what you're about, and you'll tell them what they ought to be told."

No sooner said than done. Schmidt, accompanied by the brewer and the shoemaker, took his departure with prompt and firm step; had himself announced to the Captain by a sailor. He came to them immediately; but on hearing what they wanted, referred them to the cabin, where the whole of the committee, with the exception of Pastor Hehrmann, were quietly playing at whist.

The cabin of the Hoffnung was very prettily arranged; everything was of mahogany, the tables of lighter coloured wood, and the sides surmounted by a brass edging; the little windows were hung with pink curtains, and two large massive mirrors were let into the sides, below which were soft red-coloured sofas.

Poor Schmidt felt quite nervous on entering this splendid cabin, and he began to stammer a part of his speech, when the elder Siebert, who observed his embarrassment, and perhaps had some guess of what brought the people there, with a patronizing air spoke to him, and called him, "My good man."

This brought old Schmidt round directly; his bile was raised, and he delivered all that he had got to say in a straightforward manner; pointed out to the several members their promises, and required their performance, or else the return of the money which was in their hands.

[Pg 32]

Pastor Hehrmann, who had followed them below, endeavoured to speak to him in a friendly spirit, but Schmidt turned sulkily away, and said, "Oh, I know very well that you mean well, but still the others do as they like."

"My dear Mr. Schmidt," Mr. Becher now began, "you will pardon me if I call your attention to one or two little errors in your ideas. You reproach us with being careless of your welfare; that we are luxuriating here while you are suffering; that we have every convenience in the world, as you were pleased to express yourself, while you laid in the steerage; that we looked down upon you, and intended to tread you and your honoured friends—allow me, if you please—under foot. But tell me, my dear Mr. Schmidt, how have we deserved these accusations? What have we done to arouse your anger?—let me conclude, I beg. We have taken up our abode here in the cabin, instead of in the steerage with you; but was not that for your good rather than for our own? Are

there not quite people enough already in that narrow space, without us? and don't we pay *our own* hard cash for those conveniences which we enjoy here?

"You reproach us with neglecting you! you must blame the Captain for that. The rules of the ship are strict; the steerage passengers are not allowed in the cabin, and as little are the cabin passengers allowed in the steerage! Do you require greater equality? You say that we feast here while you starve. Have you not a supply of good healthy food in the steerage?—meat every day, and plenty of vegetables? coffee in the morning, tea in the evening, good butter and ship's bread, even a pudding on Sundays, with plums and syrup? Do you call that starving? or is the diet bad, eh?"

The three deputies shook their heads with one accord.

"Well, what more have we," the orator continued, "except what we pay dearly for? We want to tread you under foot! My dear Mr. Schmidt, *how* have we deserved this accusation? What has happened that could make you believe such a thing? No; we respect your rights, we feel that we are all only men; men, the work of the same Creator, and made after his image, and that we are bound for one adopted country on a single and mutual object. Gentlemen, I feel myself honoured, in being your equal, to stand as an equal to such worthy men, and I believe that I may pledge myself for all my fellow committee-men to these sentiments."

[Pg 33]

A low murmur of assent was the reply. Pastor Hehrmann had placed himself at the window, and was looking out at the waves.

"I see," continued Mr. Becher, following up his advantage, "you feel the truth of what I have just said; but if you consider us selfish, bad men—if you think that we are capable of deceiving or taking advantage of you—if you believe that our intentions are not pure and good—well, there stands Mr. Siebert—he will cheerfully repay the sums which are in his hands, but at the same time with deep regret that you, my worthy countrymen, should have entertained distrust towards him and us."

Mr. Becher ceased, and looked down in a melancholy manner. Honest Schmidt, however, who had expected pride and haughtiness, and was ready to meet them, had been by no means prepared to be spoken to and received with so much civility; and being himself an honest upright man, not readily suspicious of others, he gave Mr. Becher good-heartedly his hand, which that gentleman pressed and shook warmly, and Schmidt assured the committee that they must not take it amiss; that he was a little unpolished and rough, but meant well; and that as he and his friends saw that the committee were not proud, and intended to perform what they had promised, there existed no longer any reason why they should ask for a return of their money, and he would therefore go and tell the rest in the steerage that everything was settled, and that they had nothing to fear.

[Pg 34]

The three deputies then retired, amidst mutual assurances of friendship. Mr. Becher followed them with his eye until they passed up stairs, and had disappeared above; he then turned round, and, embracing his friend Siebert, assured him, with affected tone, (imitating Schmidt's voice,) that they were all free and equal as the Almighty had created them, and that they would hold together through trouble and in death.

Mr. Von Schwanthal, meanwhile, with a very long face, shuffled the cards again and again, and assured these two, who laughed heartily, that it was no joking matter; that the people were in earnest, and were not altogether wrong; that for his own part, however, he did not exactly see *how* they were to arrange matters in America; for, after all, such a perfect equality was not easily adopted.

"And *why* not?" Pastor Hehrmann interrupted him. "If we are all animated by strong and public-spirited feelings; if we all resolve only to act in such a manner that the whole may prosper; if we lay aside all petty, personal objects; if we——"

"But, my dear Mr. Pastor, we want to play whist," young Siebert interrupted him, laughing. "Let us first get to this land of promise, and all that will follow as of course."

"Well, I'm content," said Mr. Von Schwanthal, sighing, and handing the cards to be cut; "I shall be very pleased if all goes well."

Pastor Hehrmann returned upon deck to his family, whilst Becher, Von Schwanthal, and the two Sieberts continued their game. But Herbold walked up and down the cabin, with his hands crossed behind him, and wearing a very thoughtful countenance; and he whistled so loud that at last Becher begged him, for Heaven's sake, to leave off.

In the steerage, meanwhile, all seemed to be pacified again; the fact that Mr. Becher had offered to return them their money left no doubt as to his sincerity: and as to the other points, they were content to assent to them; all they wanted was, to have their equality acknowledged, and that the committee should see that they would not "put up" with anything.

[Pg 35]

The wind blew pretty favourably from the south-southwest, and the ship flew along bravely, with all sails set, through the slightly ruffled waves. They were now off the so-called Bank of Newfoundland, and were approaching nearer and nearer to the American continent: the captain even had the lead sounded, but without as yet finding bottom. A glowing heat lay upon the water, and the burning sun shone almost perpendicularly down upon the travellers, who felt more and more the continued monotony of the voyage.

Although squabbles occurred daily in the steerage, yet, in general, peace was easily restored; the spirits were at rest—almost too much at rest; for a portion of the Emigrants, especially the Oldenburghers, lay so immoveably in their berths all day, that there was no getting any fresh, healthy air below. Werner remained the whole day through upon deck, for he could not, as he declared, endure the stifling atmosphere below; and almost all the women complained bitterly of the want of pure air in their sleeping places. Pastor Hehrmann first tried to rouse these "immoveables," but in vain; then came Becher, who put to them a number of cases, showing the evil consequences of so much rest, as he called it. It was in vain. Even Siebert tried his luck, with the same want of success. The good folks lay still, and asserted quietly, "That *they* were quite comfortable—and that those who were not so, might go above; that they compelled no one to remain below, and could not understand why they should be compelled to go on deck." In fact, they remained where they were; and the Committee, at their wits' end, turned at last to the Captain—he promised a remedy.

At last, one fine morning, when the sun was shining warmly and refreshingly on deck, he had the idlers asked once more to come upon deck, and as the summons was unheeded, the word of command was given down both hatchways, "All on deck!—all on deck!"

[Pg 36]

This, too, was unavailing; it had been tried several times already. But, when all the well-disposed had obeyed, and women and children had left the between-decks, several sailors simultaneously descended the two hatchways, four of them, provided with pots of tar and red hot irons, and two with pans of sulphur. When the latter had ignited their brimstone, the others dipped their irons in the tar, and such a vapour immediately filled the hold, that the sailors, familiar as they were with climbing up and down, could scarce find their way into the open air, where they were received with hurrahs by the Emigrants.

Meanwhile, it fared very ill with the poor "immoveables," who tried in vain to find their way to the hatchways; they could neither find them nor their way back to their berths, but were obliged to wrap their jackets round their heads, and throw themselves on the ground, there, half suffocated, to await the drawing off of the dreadful smoke. But the remedy was effectual—for on the following morning, when the voices of the two sailors were heard at the hatchways, not one passenger was missing from on deck.

All had now recovered—even the poor girl had got better under the careful nursing of the women, assisted by some medicines ordered by Werner, and she met with every assistance and sympathy which she could expect, under such circumstances and in such a position.

But the longed-for coast now drew nearer and nearer, and the passengers, by this time grown impatient, expected daily to see the wished-for shore rise out of the blue distance; the lead had been twice successfully cast, and the depth found announced the neighbourhood of the coast.

One morning, the glad cry of "Land! land!" resounded in their ears, and before the eyes of those who were half awake could distinguish the low blue stripe, almost fading in the horizon, and stretching out towards the north-west, a charming little cutter shot towards them, with the speed of an arrow, through the waves; the flag of the United States, the stars and stripes, fluttered at the mast, and in a few minutes more the pilot, a tall, haggard-looking man, in a black dress coat, dazzling white linen, and a large gold watch-chain, sprang, with a bound, up the ship's side.

[Pg 37]

With wonder, bordering upon awe, the steerage passengers gazed at the pilot, who was no sooner on board than he took upon himself the complete command of the ship, and ordered the sailors about as though he had made the whole voyage out with them. He was the first actual living American whom they had seen, and spoke real English.

There remained, however, but short time for astonishment, for the wind was favourable, and the Captain announced that they should cast anchor that very evening. Hereupon every one had a variety of little matters to look after and get in order, and most of them scarcely cast another glance upon either the pilot or the land.

The magnificent coast stood out more clearly and distinctly every minute; at first, the mere outline of the hills was discernible, and certain hollows and promontories—then darker and lighter spots could be distinguished—the eye was able to separate field from woodland. There a house started up—is it, perhaps, some farm, inhabited by Germans? Over yonder, there stand some single trees, and farther to the right—yes—something moves: it is a flock, there are living creatures on the shore, and the searching gaze might soon detect men—human beings—who moved backwards and forwards, and it soon even became a question of indescribable interest whether that man yonder, to the right of the projecting tree, and to the left of the red roof, wore—a hat or a cap! Every trifle was narrowly examined, and it was only when they came nearer and nearer, and new objects were constantly crowding forward into notice, that they turned their attention to the grandeur of the whole scenery.

[Pg 38]

It was a delightful view. That beautiful bay, with its meadows and its woods, fields and buildings, its forts and its many ships, bathed in the magic of a new, unknown, and long-desired country. None of the Emigrants knew yet the many cares and privations which, perhaps, awaited them there. None saw in the splendid landscape spread out before them, all the want, all the sorrow, that reign among the indwellers of this, as of every other country; they saw only the beautiful sparkling shell, and concluded that the kernel must of course be good.

Towards evening, the heavy anchor rolled into the deep, and a little boat, bearing several medical men, and with a yellow flag flying, came up to them. The doctors examined the state of health of

the passengers, and pronounced it satisfactory.

Still, the "Hoffnung" remained this night without further communication with the shore, and it was not until the following morning that a little coasting vessel, with two schooner sails, came alongside, and took the steerage passengers on board, to conduct them to the Quarantine Buildings, where their luggage was to be examined, and they themselves were to remain for twenty-four hours longer.

Here, again, their concord was near being disturbed; for the committee remained on board. Werner, however, pacified them, by the assurance that it could not be helped, for that they dared not even go on shore with them—that such was the regulation; but they would now shortly set foot on land, and every distinction would cease.

This consoled the people; they assisted to carry over their things to the Quarantine House, and were soon busily engaged studying the thousands of names which former emigrants had written in pencil upon the rough-hewn timbers of which the building was composed. Many a one found there the name of some old acquaintance, and hastened to incorporate his own in the general register. Pencils were in demand.

[Pg 39]

But how many elegant verses, gnawed by the tooth of Time, passed into decay here in retirement! how many effusions of a pure poetical frenzy, seizing on the poor exile torn from his home to this foreign, friendless shore, disappeared, without a trace, among the mass of names! Werner copied some of them into his pocket book—

"Now we'll all sing Hallelujah,
For we are in America."

Another—

"For all that we've suffered I don't care one button,
Now that we've plenty of fresh beef and mutton!"

Although the Quarantine House was distant a few hundred yards only from the shore, (it was built like an island in the water,) yet the Emigrants had hitherto in vain asked for permission to go across. At last some boats came over, and the cheerful cry, "Ashore! ashore!" resounded from lip to lip.

All, however, did not avail themselves of the permission; some would not leave their things, which stood there unprotected; others considered the fare demanded higher than suited their views; in short, there might be about fifteen, who, jumping joyously into the boat, were rowed ashore to their adopted country, whose soil they were now about to set foot on for the first time.

And now, no doubt, they fell down and kissed the longed-for land, hugged the trees, shook the Americans as their new brothers heartily by the hand, embraced them, and in their turn were received by these latter equally cordially and affectionately, and as newly acquired brethren and fellow citizens, who had just been endowed with sacred Liberty!

No; they inquired for the nearest tavern, where some fresh bread, cheese, and beer, were to be had, and were laughed at by the Americans on account of their speech and their costume. But they found what they were looking for, and without bestowing a single glance at the town, which they said they should see enough of by and by, they stormed into the public room of the inn with joyful haste, "in order to get the salt taste out of their mouths," as the brewer expressed it.

[Pg 40]

Their entrance was characteristic. The brewer stepped up to the bar, and in a deep, sonorous voice pronounced the single word "Beer," but with such emphasis, with such feeling, with such infinite longing, that one could see at a glance what the man had suffered since he had been deprived of its enjoyment. He knew besides that the same word signified beer in English as in his own language, and, indeed, had already intimated, on board ship, his conviction that in all languages it must be called "Beer," for that it could not be expressed otherwise.

Several of the passengers had zealously studied English aboard ship; the tailor had been particularly industrious in this respect, and he now determined to make a trial of his acquirements, as he naturally supposed himself to be surrounded by Englishmen, or rather by persons who spoke nothing but English. With a face of great importance, therefore, he walked up to the bar, and asked loudly, and, as he supposed, distinctly, for a "A porschen hemm," (a portion or plateful of ham.)

He was taken aback very much by the simple answer of the hostess, who, in broad German, smacking a good deal of the Swabian twang, asked him, for Heaven's sake, to speak German, for she understood that much better than his English.

The passengers were not a little pleased to meet with a countrywoman, who was already in America, and the evening passed with incredible swiftness, amidst full bowls, and good, strengthening, and long-missed food.

Werner had remained but a short time beside them, and had gone and seated himself on the beach, gazing dreamily out upon the wide sea that had borne him thither. Long and steadfastly

[Pg 41]

did his eye rest upon the proud ship whose red-and-white chequered flag fluttered in the fresh wind, resting upon the waters with sails taken in, like some wearied bird, and only slightly rocked by the gently heaving waves. Yonder structure contained all to which his heart was attached, and he felt almost impelled to swim across and climb up its side in infinite longing.

He still sat there when deep night had sunk upon the misty expanse of waters, and the hull of the ship and the water on which it rested disappeared in the dull darkness; the sharp line of the masts alone stood out in relief against the lighter horizon, in which many a friendly star glanced through the driving clouds, when he thought that he heard something move in the bushes behind him—he looked round, he listened—all was quiet—only the lights shone from out the not distant houses, and human voices sounded from them over towards him.

He arose; it began to grow cool; the night air was damp; he cast but another glance towards the peaceful ship, from whose cabin also a light now shone out, and turned towards the neighbouring inn, when two dark figures rushed upon him, and at the same instant a blow from a stick, narrowly missing his temples, at which it was aimed, descended upon him.

"Help!" cried he, seizing one of his aggressors, who he now saw were negroes, by the throat; but a second better directed blow descended with fearful force upon his forehead, protected only by a thin cap; his senses left him, and he sank down unconscious.

How long he might have lain there he knew not; when he came to himself again he found himself in the midst of his travelling companions in the Quarantine-house, and the poor girl whom he had healed, and the woman whose child he had saved, supporting his head and bathing his wounds.

He gazed around in astonishment, for in fact he did not at once discover where he was, and although awake, he thought he must be dreaming, when, looking up, he saw the room in which he was, from the roof of which, consisting of rough-hewn beams, a lantern was suspended, throwing a dim, indistinct light around—and he heard the words and the murmur of voices around him. But the women had observed his waking, and their cheerful call immediately brought all the emigrants round the couch of the sufferer.

[Pg 42]

A hundred questions were directed to him simultaneously, and in vain did he ask himself for an explanation of what had taken place. It was some time before the tumult was allayed, and he learnt that his cry for assistance had fortunately been heard, and, as such attacks had occasionally been made in that quarter before, it had been attended to.

The scoundrels, disturbed by the men who hurried towards them, had robbed him of nothing besides his purse. His pocket-book, which he carried in a coat-pocket behind, and which contained the whole of his little stock of money, had, fortunately, thanks to their speedy assistance, escaped.

With his purse, he might have lost, according to his statement, some five or six dollars. But all attempts to overtake the robbers had proved vain; under cover of the night they had reached the neighbouring woods, and were secured by them from further pursuit.

Werner soon recovered, and—with a cool bandage round the wound received from the bludgeon—slept throughout the night softly and tranquilly.

On the following morning a little boat carried him and two other steerage passengers to the steamboat, which was at hand, and merrily getting the steam up to start from Staaten Island for New York; but scarcely had he put foot upon its deck, before he met the eyes of Bertha, who, standing by her sister's side, had not noticed his arrival, until she caught sight of his pale face and the white handkerchief tied round his head.

The blood left her cheeks, as she asked him, in a tremulous voice, what had happened; but, before he could reply, he felt the hand of Pastor Hehrmann on his shoulder, who heartily welcomed him, it is true, but also started back on seeing his pale face. Werner had to relate what had occurred, and Bertha listened with palpitating heart and half-opened lips.

[Pg 43]

The remaining members of the committee now joined them, and pitied young Werner, heartily. Becher was of opinion that he had received a "striking" proof of the evil disposition of the negroes.

At last, after the expiration of about half an hour, the steamer, passing rapidly through a number of small craft and vessels, went on its course towards the immense city of New York, which, with its mass of houses, surrounded by a forest of masts, spread itself out before them.

The elder Siebert, who had formerly lived four years in the United States, undertook the care of their luggage, and gave directions to some carters, whose numbers he took, and then passed on, leading the way, with his travelling companions, through the, to him, familiar streets, towards Hudson-street, where they had obtained the address of a good French boarding-house; for, as Siebert assured them, there were few good German inns at New York, although their number extended to several hundreds.

Their sea voyage was thus happily accomplished, and they now only awaited the arrival of the rest of their fellow passengers, which was to take place on the following day, in order to discuss and execute their plans for the further journey, as all were agreed that too long a stay in New York was to be avoided—first, on account of the loss of time, and, secondly, of the considerable expense.

Mr. Siebert promised to make inquiries forthwith as to the most advantageous neighbourhood for a settlement, and to communicate the information to the committee.

CHAPTER II. A WEEK IN NEW YORK.

[Pg 44]

Hotly and oppressively did the sun shine down upon the mirror-like surface of Staaten Island Bay, the next day, when the boat, containing the steerage passengers of the *Hoffnung*, reached the Quay at New York, and threw its ropes ashore. The sailors had not had time to make fast before a complete flood of persons pressed forward from every side from which it was possible to get upon deck, and crowded every corner and gangway of the vessel.

A great number of those who jumped on board to welcome the fresh-comers to their new home appeared to be actuated, not by curiosity only, but also by zeal to make themselves useful, and without looking round they seized upon boxes and chests, and seemed inclined to empty the whole vessel.

"Hallo there! where are you off to with that chest," cried the brewer, seizing at the same time the above-mentioned article of luggage with both hands, and dragging it from the shoulders of a sturdy negro, who was just about to step on shore with it.

The black, it is true, explained his intentions in few words, but as the brewer unfortunately could not understand a syllable of what he was saying, he merely shook his head, and carried back his chest to the remainder of his luggage. The same sort of thing occurred to all the rest, until at last the master of the boat interfered, drove the intruders back, and the few seamen on board, with the willing assistance of the Germans themselves, got the whole of the passengers' things on shore, and several of the emigrants kept watch by them. This last measure seemed a very necessary one, for, as carrion vultures surround a dying animal, so did carters, black and white, surround the piled-up boxes, impatiently waiting the moment when each of them might carry off his load.

[Pg 45]

Pastor Hehrmann, the elder Siebert, and Mr. Becher, now joined them, and after a hearty shaking of hands with their fellow travellers on the so longed-for terra firma, took counsel how best to lodge them properly, since they could not well all find room together in one tavern.

Many had brought with them the addresses of "good" German inns in New York, obtained through acquaintances or relations who had formerly sojourned at them, and found them comfortable. Others were directed to a so-called "German Boarding House" in Pearl Street, and a large number, including nearly all the Oldenburghers, determined to remain on the Quay, where they saw three German public-houses side by side, as well to have a view of the shipping as to save the money required for the removal of their luggage, which they at once got on their own shoulders, and carried across into the "Schweitzer's Heimat," (the Switzer's Home.)

Siebert advised them not to take up their quarters at these waterside public-houses, but they had made up their minds; they listened, it is true, patiently to his representations and arguments, but still went and did as they wished.

Mr. Siebert now exhorted each of them to be careful in noting accurately the number of the cart which carried his property, so that, in the event of their being separated from it, they might not lose their little all, and he then started, with a portion of his fellow travellers, towards the boarding-house, whilst several two-wheeled carts, with their baggage, accompanied them.

[Pg 46]

In less than two hours the whole company was scattered; and we will now follow the Oldenburghers for a moment, who, persecuted by the jokes and jeers of the carters plying on the quay, carried their heavy chests into the inn, in front of which hung a gaudy sign, intended to represent a Swiss landscape, with the subscription "Schweitzer's Heimat."

The landlord, who was a fat man, and who might have passed for a good-natured looking fellow, had it not been for a slight cast in his eye, met them at the door, and called to them, in a not-to-be-mistaken Swiss dialect, to carry their things up into the large saloon.

The thing was sooner said than done—for it was no easy matter to get the colossal boxes and chests up the narrow and steep staircase. However, they succeeded at last, and found themselves in a very large roomy apartment, which might claim the title of a "saloon," and contained about twenty double beds, while beside these, in two long rows, there stood a number of boxes and bags. Immediately afterwards, their host followed, and indicated a particular corner for their luggage.

"Are there more people to sleep here, then?" inquired one of the Oldenburghers, who began, perhaps, to think the thing rather uncomfortable.

"Yes," replied our host, "we are a little crowded for the moment, but to-morrow many of them are going away, and if you will only make yourselves comfortable for to-night, the matter can be arranged."

"And two have to sleep in one bed?" asked another.

"It might happen," replied the landlord, "that we might be compelled to accommodate three in some of them; it's only for one night, and you are not spoiled—on board ship, things are worse, I know;" he laughed, and descended the steep stairs.

"Yes, that's true enough—on board ship it's worse still. But upon my word, I don't see why on that account it should not be otherwise here in New York." [Pg 47]

The others comforted him with "Well, it's for one night only!" and easily pacified, they walked down to the bar-room, where a kind of barman, half sailor, half waiter, stood behind a counter covered with unwashed glasses, and filled liquors for the guests out of pitchers and bottles.

Tobacco smoke and noise filled the room, and the sound of curses and laughter, of violence and hallooing, met them at their entrance. They called for a can of cider, it is true, in an unoccupied corner—but they did not feel at home or comfortable there, and determined, at last, to go and have a look at New York.

Meanwhile, Mr. Siebert had led his protégées to a somewhat more decent and better house; and the brewer, the little tailor, the shoemaker, and old Schmidt, the quondam ambassador to the committee, took a room together. But the shoemaker was in despair, for one of his chests, containing all the tools of his trade, and many other things, was nowhere to be found. He had last seen it upon the shoulders of a negro, who was walking behind the cart containing the other luggage, but distracted by the gaudily-ornamented shops, he had lost sight of the black suddenly, and neither him nor the chest did he ever see again.

All inquiry was in vain, and he was now convinced how much reason Mr. Siebert had to recommend particular attention to their property.

The others felt themselves the more comfortable, and the little tailor declared it was worth while to travel to America, if it were only to look at the streets and the people. Soon afterwards they were summoned to dinner, and in the large room of the house they found a long table spread, at which all of them, without distinction of rank, took their seats, and were allowed to torture their teeth with some very tough beef.

The dinner was not particularly good; but a glass of cider, which they got with it, consoled them, and a stroll through the town was agreed upon by all the Germans immediately after dinner. The shoemaker alone remained behind, in order to prepare a pot of his new expeditious blacking, with which he hoped to earn something, and to reimburse himself somewhat for the loss of his chest. [Pg 48]

But what splendour, exceeding anything they had imagined, met their eyes in the broad and handsome streets which they wandered through; what gold, and silver, and costly stuffs, gleamed in all the windows and shops; they could not gaze enough, and stopped continually at newly-discovered beauties with fresh astonishment. But they were particularly delighted with the number of small two-wheeled trucks, drawn about the streets by men, full of the finest pine-apples, cocoanuts, and oranges; and no sooner did the brewer learn that a pine-apple (which, in Germany, as he had heard, would cost a couple of dollars) might be bought here for as many groats, than he bargained for a whole armfull; the others were not behindhand, and they filled the vacuum which the dinner had left in their stomachs with fruit.

The little tailor, on the other hand, could not get over his astonishment at the number of clothes'-shops, for in some streets every third house seemed to be a tailor's workshop; when stopping suddenly before one of these, as if petrified, he stared at a small shield, upon which there was this notice, both in English and German, "Five hundred Journeymen wanted."

"Hallo!" he cried, "that's what I call a master. But by this and by that, he must pay good wages, if he can employ so many people! Hark ye, I'll go in and try."

"What are you going to be at inside, then, Meier?" asked Schmidt, of the tailor; "haven't you engaged to go with us, and actually paid for your share of the new farm?"

"Oh, that be hanged!" said the tailor; "if I could get work at such a master's, I should be much better off."

"That don't signify," said the brewer; "your word is your word, and you must come with us! Who else is to sew all our clothes?" [Pg 49]

"Well," said the tailor, "but if brilliant prospects should present themselves to me here, the Committee would surely allow me to accept them; for to remain all one's life a poor journeyman tailor——"

"All that don't matter," replied the brewer; "you've paid your deposit, and go you must! This was the object of having all the articles written down, in order that, afterwards, nobody might do as they pleased."

"At all events, I'll ask the question," cried the little fellow, quickly; "a question can't hurt, and perhaps it may be of use hereafter."

With these words he walked in, accompanied by the others, who were curious to see the interior of such a shop, and he was not a little astonished to find the master a German, and moreover an Israelite, who in very polite terms asked him what he wanted, and what articles he would allow him to show him?

"Oh!" said the little man, rather abashed; "I'm only a tailor—and—should like to inquire after work; you have given notice outside that five hundred—"

"Yes, that was three days ago," the clothes-dealer interrupted him, suddenly changing his tone altogether. "Since then, I've engaged four hundred and sixty—indeed, I should have liked to make up the five hundred, but as most of the work is already arranged, I could only pay the rest very small wages; besides, most of our summer clothing is made by sempstresses. However, you may work a week on trial. You're only just arrived, aint you?"

The tailor answered in the affirmative, wondering at the same time how the man could know this.

"Well, then," continued the other, "as I said, you may work a week on trial, and I'll pay your board—if we suit each other, at the end of the time, we can enter into an engagement."

[Pg 50]

"We'll consider it, meanwhile," said the brewer, going away, and dragging the little tailor, who offered little resistance, after him, by his coat tails, out of the shop.

"What a lot of clothes were hanging in there!" said Schmidt, when they got outside again.

"I wonder where he puts his four hundred and sixty journeymen to," said the little tailor, looking up towards the house; "that must be something like a workshop!"

"He's no fool," the brewer rejoined; "he wants to get you to work a week for nothing—a pretty arrangement, that!"

"But it may be the custom here, you know," said the tailor.

"Oh, I wish they may get it!" replied the brewer; "if that's the custom, I won't stay in America. But, hallo! if there aint the Oldenburghers coming along!"

It was them, in fact, who, like their fellow-travellers, staring into every shop, came up the street, and were not a little pleased to meet with their old acquaintances so suddenly. On board ship, they had almost ceased to look at each other, from anger and hatred; but here, in a foreign country, where everything met them coldly and indifferently, and everybody seemed to be only trying if they could squeeze money out of them in some way or other, their old quarrels had vanished, and they shook hands like brothers.

Of course, they continued their stroll together, and for several hours more traversed the principal streets of New York; but who shall describe their embarrassment when the setting sun reminded them of their return, and not one of them could find their way back, or had even any idea in which direction their several inns were situate.

They walked in vain, with quickened pace, through the straight streets, which all cross each other at right angles, no longer admiring the gaudy show of the wares exposed for sale—at last, not even honouring them with a glance.

Suddenly, they met a man who certainly must be a German: the long blue coat—the high-crowned and broad-brimmed hat—the short pipe—there could be no mistake. Schmidt accordingly walked confidently up to him, and taking off his hat, bade him good day, and inquired whether he had the honour to address a German. The man thus accosted, however, stared at him awhile, and seemed in doubt whether he should answer or not; at last, he drew a long whiff from his short pipe, stared at the Emigrants all round, one after the other, and answered, in a drawling tone—"Yes."

[Pg 51]

"Oh, then, perhaps you can tell us the way to Perl, or Pirl Street?" (for they had all, by this time, noticed the meaning of the English word, "Yes.")

"What number?" asked their countryman, who was sparing of words, looking this time upwards towards the roof of the houses.

What number!—oh, yes, there they all were, but not one could remember it. Schmidt owned this at last, and added—

"Well, the street can't be so *very* long; if we can only get to the one end of it—I know the house, if I see it again. Whereabouts is Pearl Street?"

"There—and there—and there!" said their friendly countryman, pointing up the broad street in which they were standing, then down again, and then to the left, towards a cross street; and, puffing another long cloud from his pipe, left the Germans looking at each other.

"There—and there—and there!" said the tailor, at last, after a pause. "Oh my! he must be making game of us—the street can't go all round about!"

But the street did go all round about—at least, it took a large curve, and the poor devils might have stood there a long time, without knowing what to do, had not a more obliging countryman of theirs at last assisted them, and put them on their road again.

The Committee, in the meanwhile, had made themselves pretty comfortable at the French tavern, in Hudson Street, whither several of the steerage passengers had followed them, and a large meeting was convened to be held there on the fourth day, in order to agree upon the next measures to be taken, and to determine what was to be done. In the interim, the elder Siebert had been busily engaged collecting more accurate information concerning the interior of the country, and the fittest place for a settlement, and had made the acquaintance of a certain Dr.

[Pg 52]

Normann, who promised to lend him a helping hand, as he had already, according to his own account, been serviceable to many Germans in this particular, and they could trust him the more implicitly as he did not make a business of it, but merely did it out of friendship for his countrymen.

He accordingly accompanied Siebert to several vendors of land, and appeared at last, according to his statement, to have met with a particularly good thing for the emigrants. It was a piece of land in Tennessee, situate about thirty miles west of the lively little town of Jackson, where good water, a healthy locality, first-rate soil, and the neighbourhood of a navigable river, the Big Halchee, on which several mills were already erected, promised every possible advantage for settlement.

Pastor Hehrmann objected that they could not very well undertake such a long land journey, because they had so much luggage; but the provident Doctor had an answer ready to this—he assured them, that their destination being only about fifteen miles from the Mississippi, they would have to travel that short distance only by land, but that every other quarter mile of their journey might be passed by water, and *that* either in a ship by sea to New Orleans, and thence up the Mississippi River to the mouth of the Big Halchee, which was known to every captain, or by steamer or canal-boat to the Ohio, and then down that river into the Mississippi.

The latter route was determined upon unanimously by the Committee, for they would not expose themselves again to all the dangers and discomforts of a sea voyage; and the principal object of all only now remained to be fixed—viz., the price to be paid for the land. Here again there appeared to be no difficulty, for the terms were to be as follow:

[Pg 53]

The piece of ground^[1] consisted of fifteen acres of cleared land, but which, certainly, had not been cultivated for five years past; but Herbold thought that the soil would only be the richer for that. These fifteen acres were surrounded by a fence ten rails high, (but which, probably, would require a little repair here and there,) and further, a curing-house, a small kitchen, a stable, and a small crib for Indian corn. All these edifices were detached—together with the absolute property in one hundred and sixty acres of land covered with splendid wood, which were to be sold at an average price of four dollars per acre, or six hundred and forty dollars cash for the whole, and the purchasers were to have a formal deed of conveyance.

The price seemed extraordinarily reasonable; for, although it is true that the so-called Congress-land, or the tract of country not yet occupied by individuals, and belonging to the government of the United States, is sold at the cheap price of a dollar and a quarter per acre, yet it does not consist of any portion of cleared land, nor of buildings, which undoubtedly must make a great difference. Dr. Normann affirmed besides, that it was always a good sign of the fertility of the soil of a tract of land, that people had formerly settled on it, for that the whole surrounding district was open to them, and of course they would not choose the worst. The committee comprehended these reasons completely, and determined to lay the plan before the next meeting, and make arrangements accordingly.

[Pg 54]

Young Werner had meanwhile settled himself in the same inn with the Hehrmanns, although he had hitherto formed no definite resolution as to his plans for the future. His heart urged him to remain with the Society, and Dr. Normann also strongly counselled this; but his former plans had been, first of all, to wait upon several merchants in Philadelphia and Boston, and to deliver his letters of introduction, in order to be enabled, under their guidance, easily and surely to begin some new occupation, in a country where he was a stranger. It was when things were in this position, on the second evening, and whilst he with Pastor Hehrmann and other guests were sitting smoking a cigar, in the street before the inn, that he made the acquaintance of a young man, a German by birth, who, coming from Kentucky, had traversed nearly all the northern states, and now visited New York city for the first time. He had been in America from his childhood, and knew the country thoroughly; but he shook his head doubtfully when he heard, in the course of conversation, of the agreement which all the Germans had mutually entered into, to found a settlement in common.

"My dear Mr. Hehrmann," said the young Kentuckian, "you must not be offended that a young man like myself should presume to offer you advice; but I have experience on my side. These settlements in common do no good, and you will live to see the result of yours. Somehow or other we Germans agree with difficulty (unless we absolutely must); and here, in America, there is no *must* in the case. The country is too large; the prospects and openings are too many and too various, and consequently societies generally dissolve themselves quickly, and for the most part in a very unpleasant manner; and besides," he continued, stepping closer, and in a suppressed voice, "I don't quite trust this Dr. Normann; I have an impression that I have met the man before somewhere, under no very honourable circumstances, but I can't exactly remember where, and therefore will not positively affirm it. However, be that as it may, take care, and pay particular attention that you have the so-called 'deed' or instrument conveying the right of property."

[Pg 55]

"But come, Mr. Werner," said he to the latter, "we'll take a walk down to the quay together; there are many things to be seen there which will interest you, and besides you don't know enough of New York yet." With these words, he took Werner's arm, and lounged down Hudson-street towards the Battery, and then to the left to the waterside, to the same spot where the steerage passengers of the *Hoffnung* had landed a day or two before.

As they were wandering along the narrow quay which separates the houses from the water, observing the arrival and departure of the shipping, they perceived an unusual crowd of people

assembled in front of one of the German taverns which stand there side by side—in fact, before that very one where the Oldenburghers had put up. They walked forward to ascertain the cause.

Just as they had pressed on sufficiently to obtain a view of the entrance of the house, the door, which up to that time had been closed, was suddenly opened, and a man, who was received by the people outside with loud hurrahs, was violently ejected, and the door instantly closed behind him.

A thousand different witticisms and jeers welcomed him; but he appeared neither to hear nor to see what was passing around him, but only tried to get out of the crowd.

He was passing close to the two young men, when the Kentuckian laid his hand upon the man's shoulder, and exclaimed with surprise:

"Müller! where do you come from? and in this blackguard hole? I thought you were quiet and contented in Indiana."

"Oh, Mr. Helldorf, is that you?" replied the stranger. "Yes, bad enough to be here, and to go back thus; but the devil take this den of thieves—I've been cheated out of all that I could call mine." [Pg 56]

"But how is that possible?" asked Werner.

"Possible!" said the other, laughing bitterly; "what is not possible in these German taverns in America? But come away from here; my blood boils, from merely breathing the air of the neighbourhood of this pestilent hole; come along, and I will relate to you my story, and that of thousands more, who have lost, and will lose, all they possess in the same way."

The three men walked some paces in silence, side by side, when the poor German thus began:—

"It is now two years since I landed here in a French ship from Havre; I had not a single acquaintance in all America, nor did I consider that I required one, but relied on my own strength and perseverance, for I was healthy and strong, and called about fifteen dollars in ready money, and a large chest full of linen and clothes, my own: what more did I want? I went, as being near the landing-place, into this godless house. Had I only kept my eyes open, the first view must have betrayed the character of the crib to me; but, as it was, I thought I could make shift in it; paid my two dollars and a half per week for board, and tried to find work. In vain did I run about daily; the times were bad; I could not speak English, and besides I would not undertake any kind of work that I did not thoroughly understand, and thus months passed by, during which the landlord, when I returned of an evening, unsuccessful, consoled me, and obliged me to drink, at which he was always ready to give me the benefit of his company. It is true that I was not then aware that, according to an American custom, I had to pay for both glasses, as well for that which he drank as for my own; or, rather, that he chalked it up.

"Ultimately, he got my last dollar, and I wanted to leave, with about fifty cents in my pocket, and go to work somewhere or other, if only for my board, but he still persuaded me to remain. He would arrange the matter, he said; something or other would turn up some of these days, and I was not to let my spirits droop; that I knew very well that I might have credit with him, and that I need have no anxiety about that. Fool that I was, I followed his advice." [Pg 57]

"Thus a fortnight more passed away, and my debt to him, for board and drink, might perhaps amount to six dollars, when, one Saturday evening, he called me aside, and declared that he could not feed me for nothing any longer, and that I must look about for a lodging elsewhere. I then informed him of my total inability to pay, which, besides, he knew very well before, and offered him some of my shirts in lieu of payment; for I told him he need not suppose that I wanted to cheat him; he declined this, on the pretence that he could not mix himself up with barter of that kind; that he wanted money, and not linen, to pay for his liquors and his provisions; and that if I were not in a position to pay money then, I had better look about and see where I could earn some, and that, meanwhile, he should retain my chest as a security.

"I was quite content—for the things would have been an incumbrance to me in my wanderings—took, therefore, two shirts and a couple of pairs of socks out of my box, and wrapped them in a pocket handkerchief, and left the remainder, with the key, in his hands, with the request to have the things occasionally taken out and exposed to the air, to prevent them from rotting.

"I then left this place on foot, and, with a few cents in my pocket, made my way to Indiana, where, at last, I found work; and *you* know, Mr. Helldorf, *how* I worked there, in order to get my living honestly. When, at last, I had earned the necessary sum, beside enough to defray the journey, I came hither to redeem my box, for, meanwhile, my shirts were worn out. This morning I arrived, and went immediately to yonder rascal. Do you suppose that he knew me again? Do you suppose that he knew anything about a chest belonging to me? Confusion!—the fellow was wearing one of my own shirts at the very moment when he denied ever having seen them. I could contain myself no longer, but knocked him down; his accomplices, however, got hold of me, and turned me out of doors; and here I am again, with, the exception of a few dollars, and of much experience, as rich, or rather as poor, as before." [Pg 58]

"But you will go to a lawyer, surely," said Werner, indignantly—"won't you? That must be the shortest way."

"Do you think so?" asked the German, looking sideways at him; "you have not been long in America, if you call that the shortest way; I should have costs to pay, and trouble and delay

besides, and should never see an article of my linen either—that's lost; but Heaven have mercy on that rascal, if he ever crosses my path again."

"Never mind, Müller," said Helldorf, deprecatingly; "like thousands of others, you have paid dearly for your experience, and should rather feel obliged to the rogue, on that account, than otherwise; another time, keep a better look out; you know the American saying: 'No German can earn, or rather save, a cent in America until he has got rid of his last European penny.' You have now done with your European property: work hard, and you'll soon earn something again."

Müller shook his head; acknowledged, however, the truth of what he heard, and, after a little reflection, shook hands with Helldorf; bowed to Werner, and went up Broadway back into the town.

Young Helldorf related to his newly acquired friend many other things concerning the German inns, not only in New York, but throughout the whole United States, and which being, for the most part, established by people who are afraid of work, appear in no way to serve the convenience of travellers, but are merely money-boxes for their landlords, into which every passer-by may cast his mite, without receiving the least service, or even thanks in return. At last the two young people reached the boarding-house, in Hudson-street, and separated for the night.

[Pg 59]

The Committee had undoubtedly chosen one of the best, as well as one of the most reasonable inns in New York; nevertheless, all its members were compelled to submit to the custom prevailing throughout nearly all the United States—that two people should sleep in one bed—which is only tolerable when several friends are together; and highly repulsive when one is thrown among strangers. The Committee at first refused to comply with this custom on any condition, and M. Von Schwanthal said that it was opposed to all propriety and manners; but it was of no use, the house was pretty full, and though they might perhaps have had a bed each, they would have been obliged to make room in their beds for any stranger who might chance to arrive during the night. They chose the less disagreeable alternative of being among friends, at all events, and agreed, as well as they could, about their couches. Hehrmann's family took possession of a little room to themselves.

Meanwhile it fared dreadfully with the poor Oldenburghers, at the Switzer's home, where, with admirable stoicism, packed three and three in a bed, they exposed themselves to the attacks of innumerable squadrons of bugs. They had not even wherewithal to get a light, in order to see the extent of their misery. Grumbling and swearing, they lay till morning. Sleep was out of the question; and it was only towards the approach of dawn, when their tormentors withdrew, that, completely exhausted, they fell into an uneasy, unrefreshing sleep, out of which they were shortly awakened by the screeching voice of the maid, who called them to breakfast.

They reproached the landlord bitterly, and assured him that it was impossible that they could endure such another night. He, too, promised a change, and gave them his word that they should sleep more quietly next night; but, to their by no means agreeable surprise, they learned how he usually kept his word. They certainly lay somewhat more quietly, for they were so wearied that the exhausted body compelled sleep, but everything else remained as before; even their position, three in a bed, was not bettered.

[Pg 60]

They, therefore, came to the heroic resolution, on the ensuing morning, to shift their quarters, cost what it might; it cost, however, the amount of a week's board, which they had been obliged to pay in advance, and of which the landlord refused to return one cent; on the contrary, he abused them besides, and told them his opinion that his house was much too good for such peasant fellows as they. Notwithstanding, they carried out their determination, and aided by a carter (a German who had spoken to them in the street,) removed to the tavern of their fellow-travellers, the situation of which they had by this time discovered.

But they found these latter in no enviable condition, for the fruit, of which they had partaken so heartily, had made them all ill; and the poor little tailor was so bad that, as he said himself, "he could hardly support himself on his pins." Besides this, the brewer had met with a peculiar mishap, for when the alarm of fire arose, for the first time in the night, (which hitherto had been the case twice each night) he jumped in wild haste out of bed to the window half asleep, and upset over himself the whole pot full of the shoemaker's newly-discovered and prepared blacking, and at the same time was so ill and miserable that he would not suffer any of them to come near him to clean him; even the shoemaker was not permitted to scrape off the most of it, as he expressed himself. The brewer was obstinate, and insisted on dying in the blacking.

The Oldenburghers found room in this house; and if the bugs were pretty nearly as bad as at the waterside, still the whole place looked a little cleaner and more civilized, and they had to sleep only two in a bed. Besides, the sick soon recovered themselves, and as the day fixed for the consultation drew near, all who were to take part in it were well enough to give their attendance.

[Pg 61]

Mr. Siebert had fixed two o'clock in the afternoon for the meeting, and the four comrades, Schmidt, the brewer, the tailor, and the shoemaker, lounged off, down Pearl-street, immediately after dinner, in order not to be too late.

They had stood about before a great number of shops, now viewing the many curiously-bound books and coloured engravings, now admiring in astonishment the little shops of the money-changers, in whose windows lay long rows of bank-notes and scattered heaps of gold, and strange-looking silver coin; now staring after the gaudily-dressed negresses and mulatto women, who in their turn honoured the gaping party of "Dutchmen" with a broad grin; when the tailor

suddenly called the attention of the rest to a sign opposite, which bore the picture of a small striped pig, over which was an inscription, "Entrance, 6¼ cents."

"What is to be seen there, then?" said Schmidt.

"Oh!" quoth the tailor, "don't you see, it's all over stripes; but it seems to me very small."

"Shall we go in?" asked the Brewer; "it only costs a sechser," [2] (six cents.)

"Yes, the devil take the sechsters!" said the shoemaker, with an important shake of the head; "one of their sechsters is just as quickly spent as a sechser with us at home, and yet yonder it's only six pfennings, and here it's four-and-twenty! I won't go with you; I have too much need of my few kreutzers, for the brewer had the blacking that I hoped to earn a couple of dollars by."

[Pg 62]

"But, shoemaker," said the brewer, "don't be offended, but that was—very—well, I don't know how to express myself mildly enough—but *very* stupid of you, just when there was an alarm of fire to put your blacking in the window."

"Well; but how could I tell that there was going to be a fire?" asked the other, surprised.

"Well, perhaps not exactly; yet—never mind, shoemaker, that can be made up again, and the six cents can't cling to your heart now; so come along—we must have a look at this wonderful creature."

With these words he stepped forward, and immediately afterwards, accompanied by his companions, walked through a small glass door covered with a green curtain, into the house.

The interior of the narrow and low room which they now stepped into, by no means resembled a menagerie in other respects, for on the right hand stood a small table, like a bar-counter, covered with bottles and glasses, and several persons were seated, or lounged about the room, while, on the left-hand was fixed a square box with wire trellis-work, something like a rather massive bird-cage, and therein sat a little innocent pig, on which one might faintly recognise the wonderful stripes which passed across his body.

The four Germans paid their six cents and a quarter and viewed the pig. The shoemaker, however, shaking his head, thought it very hard that one should pay so much money to see a creature like that.

"And it has no stripes!" cried the tailor.

"Wait awhile," said a man standing behind the table, in German, but with a strange sounding foreign accent, "it will soon have some."

"Stripes!" said the brewer, surprised.

"Ahem!" nodded the stranger; "but wont you have something to drink?" he continued, getting out some glasses. "What do you take, brandy, whisky, cider, wine, beer."

[Pg 63]

"Beer! by all means," said the brewer.

"No," declared the shoemaker, "I won't have anything to drink—six cents for such a sight as that, and six more cents for a drink! No; to stand that I must have stolen my money, and found my box again!"

"The drinking costs thee no more," the barman declared.

"Why do you 'thee' and 'thou' [3] me, then?" asked the shoemaker, somewhat nettled.

"Thou speakest so prettily, how else shall I call thee?"

The shoemaker was about to make some angry reply, but the little tailor poked him in the ribs, and said, "Don't be a fool, but let him talk in his own fashion—he says the drinking is to cost nothing."

"Well, I don't care," said the shoemaker; "he might as well be a little more civil."

The men had just stepped up to the table, and had their beverages handed to them, when, to their inexpressible wonder, a tall man, with a light blue dress coat, of coarse cloth, with bright buttons, chicory-coloured trowsers, and a black hat, worn rather back on his head, holding a paint-pot in the left hand, and a long brush in his right, walked in and, without changing countenance in the least, or troubling himself about those around him, went up to the box where the bristly little prodigy was kept, took his brush between his teeth while he opened the lid, and then with bold strokes of the brush, but in perfect repose of mind, began to freshen up the rubbed off stripes of the grunting quadruped.

"I say," quoth the brewer, nudging the tailor, "look!—see, how he is manufacturing natural curiosities."

"Oh my!" exclaimed the little man in his turn, "and we must pay six cents for *that!*"

[Pg 64]

The men who were in the room laughed immoderately at the surprise of the Germans; and the barman observed to them, in perfect good faith, "There, you see, you've learnt something new again!"

But the shoemaker was indignant; he pulled his hat over his brows, and immediately forsook the house, accompanied by his companions, without bestowing another look at either the people or the *lusus naturæ*.

"I never—why that beats cockfighting!" cried the little tailor, when they were outside again. "I never heard of such a thing; why, those fellows have the impudence of the devil himself."

"Well, we shall do well in America, if this is to be taken as an omen," laughed Schmidt, "but I wonder that the police should suffer such a trick. Couldn't one inform against the fellow?—why, it's a—regular cheat."

"Yes, that would be a great deal of good," replied the tailor. "We dare not tell of it, for if we do, they'll only laugh at us, besides— But, hallo, brewer! where are you off to?" he called after him, as that worthy, who had suddenly stopped, as if in reflection, now turned and ran quickly back—"have you forgotten anything?"

But he got no answer. The brewer ran, as fast as his legs would carry him, back to the drinking-shop which he had just left; but while they were yet gazing after him in wonder, he came back again, with a very cross face, and joined them. "What have you forgotten, then?" asked all of them at once.

"Oh!" replied the brewer, peevishly, "I was so taken aback by that precious pig, that I left my beer only half drunk out, and now they've poured it away, and grinned at me besides for coming back for it."

He fared no better with his companions; and laughing and talking over what had just occurred, [Pg 65] stopping before every shop, they wandered slowly towards the place of meeting.

Business had not yet commenced, and the passengers of the "Hoffnung" were standing about in groups in the large dining-room of the tavern; the only strangers present were Dr. Normann and young Helldorf. But the little tailor could not contain himself any longer, and although the four companions in misfortune had come to the resolution to keep their adventure secret, still he related it to Pastor Hehrmann, who, with young Werner, Dr. Normann, and Mr. Helldorf, stood at one of the windows.

"My dear friend," the doctor said, in a very affable manner, by way of consolation, "you have by no means been cheated; that's a house where I am very well known, and where I often look in, for the people there keep the best of liquors."

"But, my good doctor," objected Pastor Hehrmann, "if they pretend to show a natural curiosity, and take money for it, that cannot be excused by any means."

"The thing has two sides," the doctor replied; "they take the money, it is true, but then they give their visitors something to drink in return. Did you not get what liquor you called for? Such was the case. Well, then, you had value for your six cents. The striped pig is only there in order to give the landlord the opportunity of selling his liquors without being compelled to pay the high tax which is levied upon all other drinking rooms. He is not forbidden—nobody can forbid him—from showing any natural wonder, or any creature indeed, were it even a common rat; and if he receives six cents for the view of his striped pig, and gives his visitors some liquor for nothing, why, he doesn't *sell* his brandy, and consequently need not pay for a licence for so doing."

"Well, that *is* a dodge," said the tailor.

"There are many other ways and means besides," the doctor continued, "to evade this law, which, [Pg 66] strictly speaking, is by no means an unjust one, but is intended to prevent the too great increase of drinking-shops. For example, in Nassau-street, there is a man who keeps brandy and cigars—the cigars are *very* bad; however, he charges six cents a piece for them, and gives a drink into the bargain. In Boston, not long since, chemists only were permitted to retail spirituous liquors, but that did not prevent the publicans from doing so; they procured some large bottles, had them filled with blue and red coloured water, put a few glasses, with herbs and tea and such like cheap medicaments, in their bar-rooms, and in a few days there arose, I forget now how many hundred new chemists' shops. These are little advantages which every one endeavours to get in this country. The American motto is, 'Help thyself,' the *how* is a secondary consideration."

"Fine principles those for honest people!" observed Werner.

"But so it is," said the doctor; "you'll find that out soon enough. For example, you probably may have observed some clothes shops here and there, where five, or even six hundred hands are wanted."

"Oh, yes," cried the tailor, quickly; "we went into one of them this morning."

"Well?" asked Dr. Normann, "hadn't he already engaged four hundred and some odd?"

"About four hundred and sixty," the tailor interrupted him in astonishment.

"Well, then, four hundred and sixty," said the doctor, laughing. "So I suppose that, as he had nearly completed his number, he could only take you upon trial? I know—the usual pretence—not on account of the journeymen, but of the customers, who are to form a very grand idea of the shopkeeper's business; such a man has, perhaps, not more than six or seven hands at work for him in a little back room. Appearance is everything."

"But, gentlemen," Mr. Becher now interrupted them, "suppose we now proceed to business? Dr. Normann, whom I hereby have the pleasure of introducing to all present, has been so good as to look about for a well-situated tract of land for us, and this meeting has been called to confer on the acceptance or rejection of this offer."

All held their peace, and surrounded Mr. Becher in attentive silence. He thus continued:—

"The land which Dr. Normann has recommended to us, lies in Tennessee, somewhat more than 200 German miles (1000 English) farther to the west; however, with the exception of some few miles, the entire distance may be passed by water. We obtain there, for the purpose of a beginning, 160 acres of good land, covered with wood, and, supplied with some, although inadequate, buildings. But, where timber is to be had in superfluity, and there are so many active and strong hands which can be put in motion, I should say, according to my view of the case, that the want of buildings is but a small drawback. Of these 160 acres, fifteen are completely cleared, rendered arable, and fenced in, and although they have been but little cropped, yet have been lying fallow again during five years past, and therefore, in this respect, are very promising.

"In addition, the price asked for the whole, through the kind intercession of Doctor Normann, is reduced to four dollars per acre, although the owners, in the first instance, are said to have asked six dollars, which, therefore, would amount to 640 dollars for the whole, and might not only be defrayed out of the funds in hand, but would leave a balance of some 220 dollars wherewith to defray at least a portion of the travelling expenses.

"If we accept the proposal, in the first place we not only save much expense, which a protracted stay in New York would make inevitable, but we lay the foundation in common of a sure provision for the future, for, according to the doctor's statement, there are a great number of Germans living in Tennessee, of whom hundreds are only waiting for the opportunity of joining some regular German colony; and I should think that we possess both the will and the means to found a sound and orderly one."

Mr. Becher ceased, and complete silence reigned for a moment, which was suddenly broken by Mr. Herbold, who, with his hands in his pockets, and leaning against a table, had listened attentively to the whole proposition, and now gave vent to his thoughts in the words, "Not amiss; that might do very well."

Murmurs of approbation of the scheme now resounded from every side, but a number of questions were also put from all quarters, which neither Mr. Becher nor the committee generally could answer, and which related to the climate, the produce, the game, the healthiness of the district, and the nature of the soil. At the instance of Mr. Becher, Dr. Normann now took up the word, and said:—

"It is a pleasure to me, gentlemen, to be enabled to answer the greater part of the questions which have been addressed to me in the most satisfactory manner. The climate is mild, the winters are short, and ice and snow are seldom seen, which, indeed, you may conclude from the fact that cotton is grown there, which, it is well known, requires a warm climate. The productions are cotton, maize, or Indian corn, wheat, rye, barley, oats, and all sorts of pulse; at the same time it is the finest district for peaches, and the forests are filled with wild fruits; the cattle, of which you may rear as many as you please, run about in the open air all the year round, and will not cost you one cent for fodder.

"Stables or cattle sheds are not thought of, unless, indeed, you wish to keep a horse constantly ready, and confine it on that account. The soil is particularly good; just consider that tracts of country on the Mississippi have been cropped for more than a century, and have never been manured yet. As to its healthiness, why, temperate people are well everywhere, and a farmer's life is necessarily a temperate one."

"But how are we to take what we may raise to market?" asked the brewer.

"A small river, which is navigable during at least seven months in the year, runs past your settlement," replied the doctor. "Besides, you are a short distance only from the Mississippi, and by it are connected with the whole world."

"The description is very inviting," said Pastor Hehrmann, smiling: "it almost seems to me that the worthy doctor has sketched a little paradise; but shall we not be disappointed in our expectations? Such an undertaking is an important step, and ought to be well considered from every point of view."

"What grounds are there to induce me to tell you a falsehood? Have I any interest in the whole affair?" replied the doctor, confidentially and good-naturedly.

"Allow me, gentlemen," Helldorf now began, "to call your attention to some circumstances which I find have hitherto not been considered. The long journey is the least matter, for you must go somewhere or other, and if you have not too much luggage, that can be got over well enough; but the cleared land has not been tilled for five years, as I hear, and you must remember that we are in America, and not in Germany."

"You don't pretend to affirm that that will injure the land?" the doctor, who seemed highly dissatisfied with the young Kentuckian's presence, interrupted him.

"Not in the least," the other replied; "but do you think that nothing has grown on the old field in five years, or that the bushes and young trees which have shot up can be so very easily eradicated?"

"Well, but though underwood is bad enough, certainly," interposed Mr. Herbold, "still there are plenty of us, and it sha'n't take long to clear all that off again."

"My good Mr. Herbold," objected Helldorf, "believe me, you and all your company could not in several years clear fifteen acres of woodland on the Mississippi, which, having been chopped, has lain waste for five years;^[4] and besides, I am convinced that you must not reckon in the least on fences and buildings; for where these have been so long neglected in the bush, they will hardly be of any use." [Pg 70]

"Mr. Helldorf, I can't comprehend why you view everything from the blackest side!" remarked the doctor, somewhat offended, as it seemed. "What grounds do you give for your apprehensions?"

"My own experience," the Kentuckian calmly replied; "it happened so with my own land; just where the largest trees were cut down, or only girdled and withered, so that light and air could have free access to the soil, there the young saplings and stems shot out with a rankness and rapidity of which Europeans can form no notion; and this after-growth, for the very reason that it consists mostly of roots, is a great deal more difficult to clear than the aboriginal trees, the thick shadows from the tops of which have killed the underwood beneath for ages past. But, passing over this, what title to this land can you show to the society?"

It was obvious that the worthy doctor was unwilling to enter upon answers to young Helldorf's questions; but as the eyes of the whole assembly were fixed on the doctor, as though they addressed the question to him, he smilingly drew a parchment from his breast pocket, and unfolded it. It was the grant of the said 160 acres of land to a certain William Hewitt, in consideration of military services performed, and was signed by President Monroe, in 1819.

Helldorf had no objection to make to this; the military grants were mostly acknowledged, but were always to be bought at a very low price, and he only stated that the improvements ought to be pretty considerable to induce the emigrants to give so much more per acre than they could buy land of the government of the United States for. [Pg 71]

The doctor made no reply, but turned to the people themselves, who, without exception, appeared so delighted with the attractive description of the place which was to be their future home, that they began to press upon the committee to conclude the bargain, and set out for the goal of all their wanderings.

"But you have told us nothing about the game?" asked M. Von Schwanthal, who was a keen sportsman.

"Because I did not wish to appear in your eyes as an exaggerator or embellisher; for no doubt you will consider me such when I tell you of the deer, the turkeys, bears, &c., which, you will find yonder."

"And hares and partridges?" asked M. Von Schwanthal.

"No one thinks of shooting them," smiled the doctor; "for Heaven's sake, who would waste a charge of powder and shot upon a miserable partridge, when he can get a deer with it? But you'll find all that out when you get there."

All the emigrants appeared to have made up their minds, and they were as eager about the purchase of, and journey to, that spot of land, as though they had had their eyes upon that little point, between the Mississippi and the small town of Jackson in Tennessee, ever since they left home. They would not hear of any other state but Tennessee, and the committee closed the bargain with Dr. Normann on the same evening, paid the purchase money, and received from him the deed, which was handed over to the elder Siebert for safe custody. The latter had hung back a good deal pending the treaty, and returned very superficial answers to several questions addressed to him concerning the condition of the country (which, according to his own account, he had travelled through). However, he concluded the purchase in legal form, and took possession of the muniment of title. He paid the purchase-money out of the funds which remained in his hands, and merely called the emigrants' attention to the fact that the time was at hand when they would have to pay up their remaining contribution, so that the committee might not be fettered in acting for them according to the best of their ability. He appeared to have formed an acquaintance with Dr. Normann very quickly, and towards evening left the tavern in his company. [Pg 72]

It now only remained to determine the route which the emigrants should take to reach their new home; but all were soon agreed upon this subject, for every one was afraid of another sea-voyage, and the road by Albany, Buffalo, thence down the Ohio to Portsmouth, from which last-named place they could reach the Big Halchee by steamer, was adopted. It is true that Helldorf, who by this time had become pretty well acquainted with their situation, had recommended them to sell the greater part of their baggage, particularly the ploughs and axes, &c. which they had brought with them; but no one would listen to this, and at last the third day was fixed for their departure.

From New York, they were to start in a steamer for Albany, thence by rail as far as Utica, and from Utica by canal, over Buffalo, to Portsmouth. Their society consisted of sixty-five individuals in all, including women and children, and hitherto everything promised a prosperous journey; the

weather, besides, was splendid, and glad hope animated every breast.

Werner, however, persuaded by Helldorf, had not joined the society, and did not intend to follow it for some time to come, as he wished, first of all, to visit Philadelphia and Baltimore. Preparations for the departure of the settlers were now in full activity, and many things which they considered they could not calculate on meeting with in the interior were bought in New York. M. Von Schwanthal, in particular, provided himself with powder and shot, and promised to find fresh meat constantly for the whole party.

[Pg 73]

Next day was Sunday, and the Oldenburghers had betaken themselves to the German church betimes, to attend divine service; but the shoemaker was anxious to hear an English sermon for once, and easily persuaded the tailor and Schmidt to accompany him: the brewer remained in bed.

The three, therefore, dressed in their Sunday's best, traversed the quiet and almost empty streets, until they came opposite to a church, whence the loud and thundering voice of the preacher resounded. Without long consideration they entered, and found themselves in a small but pretty well filled church, fitted up after the ordinary fashion of evangelical churches, with a high pulpit and small altar. The preacher appeared particularly inspired, and the words seemed "to flow of themselves from his mouth," as the shoemaker expressed it, not a syllable of which, however, could they understand.

Pressed forward by those who arrived later than themselves, our adventurers had got promoted nearly to the centre of the church, and stood almost opposite to the priest; but the countenance of the latter became constantly wilder, his movements more violent, and the little tailor had twice already gently touched the shoemaker, and expressed a wish to retire, when suddenly a woman, who was sitting close beside them, uttered a heart-breaking sigh; Meier turned his head quickly, and saw that she began to turn up her eyes, and gasp for breath.

"I say, there's a woman taken ill!" he said, in a low voice, to Schmidt, who stood just before him.

"Oh, she'll get better again presently, I dare say!" said Schmidt, pacifying him.

But just the same sort of sighing and groaning arose from several sides, and the stout woman near them seemed especially affected by something or other, for her sighs followed each other faster and faster, her limbs began to tremble, and everything showed that she must be dreadfully excited. All at once, a change came over the whole spirit of the fat woman; her gaze was fixed on the tailor, who tremblingly followed her every movement with his eyes; her nostrils dilated, her mouth opened, and, uttering a loud scream, she jumped up.

[Pg 74]

"Oh Lord!" cried the tailor, and his knees knocked together. Schmidt looked round for the first time at the inspired one, who moved up and down, stamped with her feet, clenched her hands, and cried and rejoiced.

Schmidt cast his eyes round about, but to his inexpressible surprise nobody seemed to trouble himself about the stout woman; the people did not so much as look round; and as he thought that she must be possessed by an evil spirit, at least, he pressed past the tailor, who made room for him with the greatest pleasure, and took hold of the arms of the woman, who was striking about her violently.

"Break open her thumbs—break open her thumbs!" the shoemaker exclaimed; and Schmidt, poor fellow, good-naturedly tried to comply, when a dreadful cry met his ear; at the same time he felt himself suddenly seized simultaneously by the collar, by the arms, and by the shoulders, and before he could exactly comprehend what was taking place, or what was intended, he lay peacefully alongside of the shoemaker in the street. Scarce had they had time to pick themselves up and look about them, when the door opened once more, and the tailor, without his hat, made a mighty spring, clean over the pavement and gutter, into the carriage-road, where he fell nearly doubled together, but quickly gathering himself up again, and either not heeding or else not hearing the calls of his comrades, he flew along the street in wild haste, till on his turning the corner they lost sight of him.

The passers-by began to take notice, so the shoemaker took hold of Schmidt's arm, and they forsook together a spot where their presence began to attract attention. It was not until they had got into the vicinity of their inn again that Schmidt stopped in surprise, and, staring at the other, said—"Well, I beg of you!—did you ever experience the like in your whole life?"

[Pg 75]

"For the first time to-day!" the shoemaker replied. "But where can the little one be?"

"We shall be obliged to have him advertised in the newspapers," Schmidt said; "for, with such a start as he took at the church, he'll never stop again till he drops. How he ran, to be sure!"

"Yes; and what did they really turn us out for, after all?" asked the shoemaker; "perhaps it was because you went to the assistance of the fat woman?"

"Ask them," growled Schmidt; "rough people, they are. Well! if they only wait till they catch me in one of their churches again!"

They had, meanwhile, reached their abode, and found the two young people, Helldorf and Werner, who were sitting in the public room, conversing with the brewer. But when the shoemaker and Schmidt told them the story of their wrongs, Helldorf burst into a loud laugh, and

explained to them that they had got into a congregation of Methodists, and had offended the latter not a little by laying hands upon a sister who was divinely inspired. But all felt anxious now about the little tailor, who had fled in such fearful haste, no one knew whither, when the latter unexpectedly made his appearance at the door, with haggard eyes, pale colourless cheeks, and quite chopfallen. He really looked very ill.

The landlady, however, quickly filled him up a good bumper of bitters, and he recovered a little by degrees, though it was quite half an hour before he was in a condition to relate, how the fat woman, whilst Schmidt and the shoemaker were being turned out, had attacked him, and (he protested solemnly, and swore that it was true) had tried to bite him; that he recollected nothing further, except having jumped up, and fled with all the strength at his command.

"But, I say, where's your hat?" asked the brewer.

[Pg 76]

"That must be lying in the church still!" sighed the tailor.

"Yes, but won't you go back, and fetch it?" said the brewer.

"*I!*" exclaimed the tailor, astonished to the last degree; "*I go back into that church,—to that fat woman! Brewer! if the whole church were filled with hats, (of the best quality, five and a quarter dollars a piece), and I might have them all, I wouldn't put a foot across the threshold.*" It was useless to press him further; he never saw his hat more.

Mrs. Hehrmann, with her daughters, had by this time recovered from the troubles and hardships of the sea-voyage, and Bertha, in particular, was as blooming as a rose; but she bowed her little head very sadly and sorrowfully when Werner, while sitting beside them and Helldorf, in the little room, on the Saturday evening, for the first time intimated that they would not continue their journey together, but that he proposed, in the first instance, to visit the neighbouring towns.

"I had believed that you would have joined our settlement," she whispered, at last; "but it seems, however,—"

"But, child," her mother interrupted her, "Mr. Werner, no doubt, has his own sufficient reasons, and when he has attended to his business here, perhaps may visit us in Tennessee. He knows that he will be always welcome to us."

"I need not tell you, my dear madam," answered Werner, "how I appreciate your goodness, and how grateful I am for the friendly sympathy you have constantly shown me; and I hope to be able to prove it hereafter. At present, however, I am compelled to visit Philadelphia as well as Baltimore, to deliver several letters of introduction, which may, perhaps, be of service to me hereafter; it would, therefore, be imprudent in me to neglect them. But, notwithstanding, it is quite possible that I may reach the locality of your settlement soon after you, as Mr. Helldorf tells me that there is a nearer way over the hills."

[Pg 77]

"Quite right," replied the latter; "and it will probably so happen; for, my dear Werner, if nothing else detain you besides the result of your letters of introduction, your time will not be much taken up. One invitation to dinner at each place where you have delivered such a letter, and you have gone through it all; it is even questionable whether he to whom you were recommended may know you on the following day."

"But, Helldorf, my dear fellow——"

"I know it—I have seen it happen so often. But there's nothing like a trial, and that is soon made."

At that moment, a tap was heard at the door, which opened, and in walked Dr. Normann, with the most agreeable face in the world. He inquired very anxiously after the health of the Hehrmanns, and gave them such good and reasonable advice as to their future conduct, in their new and unaccustomed mode of life, related on the occasion so many experiences and events from his own life, and altogether managed to make himself so agreeable, that even Helldorf lost a portion of his former unaccountable aversion to him, and became more conversable and friendly.

The doctor was particularly obliging to Werner; and, upon hearing that he was going into the interior, promised him some excellent introductions, such as must assure the best reception to him.

"But of what use will they be, doctor?" asked Helldorf; "you know yourself that in this country ——"

"I know—perfectly aware of it!" the doctor interrupted him. "But rely upon me, you shall have introductions, to-morrow morning, from a man which will ensure you the reception of a son in his house; and yet I give you my word that, except his name, I myself know as little of the man as you do."

"The doctor speaks in riddles," said Mrs. Hehrmann, smiling; "if you could do that, you would be a conjuror indeed!"

[Pg 78]

"Anything but that, madam; all that is required is a little knowledge of human nature. But to-morrow I will give my proofs."

"I say, Doctor, you were speaking, not long since, of an invention of yours, on account of which you were staying here," said Helldorf. "Might I ask of what kind it is?"

"Haven't I told you about my invention yet?" simpered Normann. "Yes, I hope that it will make some noise; I have discovered the long-lost art of making inconsumable light. It was known to the ancients, for in long-closed-up sepulchres burning lamps have been found. I am already in communication with the President on the subject, and am going to Washington next week, on that account."

"Why, doctor, this discovery must be of inestimable value!" exclaimed Werner.

"A hundred thousand dollars have been offered me for it in Germany, and the same sum in France; but I am a Republican—Republican, body and soul—and my invention is not to be bought by any king! It was in Arkansas that——"

"Were you ever in Arkansas?" Helldorf burst out, jumping from his chair, and gazing narrowly into the doctor's countenance. The latter appeared to change colour, but soon regained his self-possession, and, looking the young man fixedly in the face, and with a somewhat forced smile, said—

"No; you did not hear me out. It was in Arkansas that I was about to make some experiments on the subject, but at that time I was taken ill at Cincinnati, and could not undertake the journey."

"I beg pardon," said Helldorf; "it was an old recollection—your face seemed so familiar to me."

Again the colour left the Doctor's cheeks a little, but his features remained unmoved, and he said, smiling—"He who lives in America sees many faces, for half the population is constantly on the move; that among them there should frequently be people who resemble each other, is very natural. But," he broke off, abruptly, "I have yet some little business to transact. As to our engagement, Mr. Werner, I am ready to keep my word to-morrow morning. Call for me at half-past eight. Till then, farewell! Mrs. Hehrmann—ladies, I take my leave."

[Pg 79]

When the Doctor had left them, Helldorf spoke only in monosyllables, and shortly afterwards also withdrew, accompanied by Werner.

"Now I'm sure of it!" he exclaimed, as he wandered down the Sabbath-still street; "now I've got on the fellow's track. Arkansas—Arkansas!—that's the place where I have seen him!"

"But he has never been there," suggested Werner.

"Lies! lies!" exclaimed Helldorf. "I saw how he changed colour, for he recognised me, too, at that moment! But he wore a beard then, which disguised him, and passed by a different name. There he was Dr. Wähler—I am certain of it—and was challenged for cheating at play, and secretly shot his challenger on his way to the ground!"

"That would be horrible!" said Werner.

"It is him—I know him!" Helldorf declared. "Now Heaven have mercy upon the poor settlers, for there can no longer be any doubt but that the rascal has cheated them!"

"But how can that be possible?" Werner objected. "You yourself pronounce the deed correct and genuine, the land must be in existence! I can't conceive——"

"Time will show!" Helldorf exclaimed. "But that this is the villain, I could swear! I am only curious to know in what manner he will procure letters of introduction for you to-morrow."

"Is it not possible to bring him to account, if he has been guilty of anything so dreadful?" asked Werner.

"How!" replied Helldorf, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Where are the proofs?—where are the people now who then lived in yonder scene? Oh, my dear Werner, a year—a single year—makes a wonderful change here in America! However, I have not yet done with this villain, for he whom he shot was my best friend; the good Doctor may, therefore, look out for himself, if his path crosses mine! But now good night, Werner. Say not a word of what I have just confided to you, and let him give you the letters of introduction to-morrow morning; perhaps, we shall get at some explanation of the Doctor's character."

[Pg 80]

Werner did not retire to rest until late, and wild dreams disturbed his slumber; he was, therefore, up early, and at the hour appointed stood at the doctor's room. He was just dressed, and met him at the door, and taking the young man's arm, confidentially, walked with him to an hotel in Chatham Street, where he inquired whether a certain Mr. Smith, from the country, was staying there?

On receiving the waiter's reply in the affirmative, he told him to announce two strangers who wished to speak to Mr. Smith upon business; and, turning with a smile to Werner, who asked him once more in astonishment whether he really did not know the man, said, "You may convince yourself of that."

Mr. Smith immediately asked the gentlemen up stairs, and the waiter showed them into a small, clean-looking room, where the stranger stepped forward to meet them, and politely asked them to be seated.

"Mr. Smith," Dr. Normann now began, "although I am a complete stranger to you, still I have heard of your considerable tracts of land, and of the advantageous position of your proposed town. A party of Germans have arrived here, and another ship is expected to follow in a few

weeks, all of whom intend to settle somewhere in the interior. This young man, Mr. Werner,"—the American bowed,—“is commissioned to look about for a suitable spot for them, and upon my advice, purposes visiting your neighbourhood. If I might request of you the favour of some introductions for my friend, which might facilitate his business, you would not only greatly oblige us, but perhaps also attract a settlement of industrious Germans into your vicinity.”

[Pg 81]

The expression of the American's face had brightened up more and more during these words. He now rose very politely, shook hands with both of them, and said some very obliging words to young Werner, to which the latter, abashed by such boundless impudence, and not himself sufficiently master of the English language, could only reply by a silent bow. Without wasting another word, the American went to a writing-table, and after the lapse of a very few minutes, handed over an open letter of introduction to his own family, as well as to his two brothers, who lived in the same neighbourhood, and who were therein requested to show all possible civility to the bearer, and to assist him in seeing the country, and especially in becoming acquainted with their part of it. In vain did Werner try to stammer out a few words, which were intended to inform the American that he had no part in this breach of confidence: the latter, who probably supposed that he was endeavouring to express his thanks, drowned his words in a stream of compliments. Dr. Normann took him by the arm, and, before he knew exactly what was going forward, he found himself, in a few minutes, in the street again, with the letter of introduction in his pocket-book, and the doctor's arm in his own.

“Well—haven't I kept my word?” he asked, laughing, as they walked down Chatham-street towards the Post-office; “am I not a conjuror? Yes, my dear Mr. Werner, take hold of the weak points of the Americans and you may do what you like with them, but, unless you do that, they're as tough as hickory.”

“Doctor, I shall never make use of this letter of introduction; for I consider——”

“Pooh, pooh, my good friend!” exclaimed the doctor, laughing; “wait till you've been a year or two in America, and all that will come round; then you'll become what the Americans call 'smart.' Take notice of that word; in those five letters is comprised a whole dictionary.”

[Pg 82]

Werner was going to reply rather bitterly, but suddenly bethinking himself of another course, he bade the other “Good morning,” and leaving the doctor, who stepped into a shop near Astor House, turned back, and walked to the right, up Broadway.

There he sought Helldorf, to whom he related the whole proceeding; but Helldorf only laughed, and replied, that it was just what he had expected; that the doctor was a thoroughbred sharper, and, as he feared, was not content with what he had already squeezed out of the society.

“He has other views,” he continued, talking half to himself, “otherwise he would have disappeared immediately after the success of his plan—the sale of the land—but we'll observe him, and Heaven have mercy upon him if he gives us a hold upon him.”

The next day was fixed for the departure of the society as well as of Werner; but the latter had soon completed what little arrangements he had to make, and determined to seek the Hehrmanns once more, and to pass the last few hours in New York, at all events, with them; he was, however, by no means agreeably surprised to find the doctor already there again, and to hear that the latter had determined to make the journey as far as Cincinnati (where he gave out that he had business) with them. Werner, it is true, soon forgot all lesser cares in the absorbing pain of a parting from his beloved, for it was in vain to try to conceal from himself with what earnestness his heart clung to the Pastor's little daughter; and he only pressed Helldorf's hand in silence, when the latter asked him, in a whisper, if he did not also think “that the air of Tennessee would agree particularly well with him?”

In the meantime, the travellers had many things to arrange, and had their hands full of business; the committee, therefore, gratefully accepted the offer of Dr. Normann, to assist the Messrs. Siebert in the care of the freight, while Mr. Hehrmann and Becher, with the help of Werner and young Helldorf, endeavoured to procure what conveniences they could for the women.

[Pg 83]

Dr. Normann, quite in American fashion, had with him only a small portmanteau, not much bigger than a knapsack, in order, he said, to have his things sent after him subsequently; but the more baggage, on the other hand, did the “allies” carry with them, and the committee began already to perceive that it would not have been so much amiss if they had paid a little more attention to what the Captain of the “Hoffnung” had told them about this. But after dragging their goods so far, they considered that they must now go through with it, and before long the last article was stowed away in the mighty steamer. The New York clocks struck five, the ship's bell rang for the third time, and the ropes and planks were drawn in; the white steam rose into the clear air in puffs, which followed each other more and more quickly—the colossus gained life, and the wheels struck and pressed with a splash the little waves behind them. The boat pushed from the shore—it strove, panting, against the descending water—struck the waves away on each side—and now, with the mighty power of her boilers and cylinders, the vessel dashed forward on her clear and mirror-like course.

Helldorf tried in vain to drag Werner from the landing-place, where, pressed upon by the crowd driving hither and thither, he could hardly stand. His eyes hung upon the outlines of the boat, now becoming each minute less distinct, where but a few seconds before he thought that he had remarked the waving of a fluttering handkerchief, and only when she had disappeared round a bend in the river, did he yield his arm to his friend, and wander silently by his side, back into the

city.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] One hundred and sixty acres of land is not more than one farmer would take; consequently, very far short of the wants of a party of sixty-five persons. Probably the author means it as another satire on the ignorance of emigrants.—Tr.

[2] A sechser is a small German coin, value six German pfennings, or rather more than an English halfpenny; a cent. I need hardly say, is the hundredth part of a dollar, or about a halfpenny sterling.—Tr.

[3] In German, "du" (thou) is used only in addressing those with whom one is on familiar terms; but "sie" (you) is always employed either in speaking to strangers, or to persons whom it is wished to treat with respect.—Tr.

[4] This is much exaggerated; two men can chop and clear—i. e. log and burn—fifteen acres of hard woodland in fifteen weeks; and allowing, as is the fact, that land in the condition referred to in the text would take twice as long to clear as the original wood, still that would only make it thirty weeks' work for two men. Not the work of several years for twenty or thirty men, although unused to this work.—Tr.

CHAPTER III. THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE SETTLEMENT.

[Pg 84]

As the handsome steamer, panting, foamed up the splendid Hudson River, the Germans were never tired of viewing the wonderfully beautiful, yet grand landscape, which, in all its glitter, in all its splendour, lay spread out before them.

The sun, meanwhile, cast his farewell rosy kiss upon the silver-clear stream, and the picturesque masses of rock which formed its banks, towering towards heaven, and covered with a dark-green leafy canopy, glowed in his friendly light with such magical beauty as touched the hearts even of the rough Oldenburghers, who, absorbed in one continued gaze, quite forgot to provide for the comfort of their bodies during the long night which was drawing nigh.

Pastor Hehrmann, lost in deep reflection, stood on the broad fore-part of the boat; but his eye was not luxuriating in the view of the wonders of nature which surrounded him, for it gazed dreamily at the red and gold clouds which passed slowly across the deep-blue sky. He had left wife and children in the cabin, and thought himself alone in his silent meditations, when he felt the gentle pressure of a hand upon his shoulder, and at the same moment his elder daughter leaned her head, with its curled locks, upon his shoulder.

"Is it not beautiful here, father?" said the dear girl, looking affectionately into his eyes; "is it not splendid on this wonderful stream? Oh! to live here, to be able to call one of those charming little country houses one's own, how delightful it would be! The people must be very good who live here."

[Pg 85]

"And why, Bertha?" asked her father; "do you think that the beauty of nature alone exercises such an influence upon the human heart? Yes, you are right—it *should* do so; but, alas, it is just in the most beautiful regions, in countries like paradise, that we too often meet with the worst of men; that the wildest passions rage; and it almost seems as if where God has poured out the greatest splendour and gorgeousness upon the earth, there the human heart has remained the only spot in which hatred and discord, wickedness and discontent, could find a harbour."

"But I will not wrong the good people of this district," he continued, smiling, when he saw that his daughter looked at him rather anxiously. "I speak of the tropical countries; the population of the Hudson is good; it is descended from the honest old Dutchmen who founded the first settlements here, and although the present generation——"

"Why so serious, my friends?" said Dr. Normann, who advanced towards them at this moment, and interrupted their conversation. "You admire the steep rocky shore—yes, a splendid part of the country, but inconvenient for travelling; one is often compelled to make circuits of some miles to get at the river from the land side, and that is, to say the least, inconvenient; but we are in a dangerous vicinity here, for yonder is the Haunted Island—yes, yes, the Haunted Island. Oh, you need not wonder so, it is here as on the Rhine; and if we have not the old castles, or rather ruins, why every rocky promontory, every singularly-formed cliff, every old house, has its story and its ghost."

"Oh, pray tell us why it is called the Haunted Island?"

"Well, then," the doctor smiled, "it's certainly a harmless story, but has cost the inhabitants of this neighbourhood many a shake of the head, particularly in earlier times. But the Yankees of the present day are a spoiled, unpoetical, and anything but romantic race; they believe in nothing which they cannot grasp with their fists, and take not the least interest in anything, were it even the spirit of their own ancestor, unless they expect to derive from it some material benefit or

[Pg 86]

other; and certainly such is not the case with the 'Haunted Visit.'"

"The Haunted Visit," said Bertha, her curiosity now extremely excited.

"Yes," replied Normann, "and here comes your mother and sister, who, perhaps, would also like to hear of our spiritual neighbourhood." The last-named persons joined them with a friendly recognition, and the Doctor thus began his tale:—

"Long ago, when the Dutch were still in quiet possession of this country, which since *that* time has changed its masters more than once, there lived in a little town, on the east bank of the river, a man named Van Tromp, who, as he had no occupation in particular, served happy indolence in real Turkish fashion, loafing up and down the streets as his only business, and, like some hawk in search of an unfortunate partridge, spying through the still streets after some yet more unfortunate acquaintance. No sooner did he see a victim, than in a few bounds he overtook him, and unless the fated one chose to sacrifice a button, he was obliged to endure and listen to the story which Van Tromp had in store for him, and which most likely he had already heard from his own mouth many times before.

"Once upon a time, when, in this manner, he had stepped on board of a little trading cutter (which in those days, before there were any steamers, navigated the Hudson), and had there entangled the cook in a highly interesting conversation—on which occasion he related to him, for the seventeenth time, how cunningly he had managed to escape being married—he missed the departure of the little boat, and as he could not spring ashore again, he resigned himself to his fate, viz., to remain on board until, in the course of a given number of days, the vessel should return.

[Pg 87]

"But here a particular and peculiar misfortune befel him; under way—namely, when wearied out with story-telling—he had stretched himself out upon deck, and had fallen asleep; the vessel tacked, the large sprit-sail swept over the deck, and Van Tromp, whom nobody thought about, was shoved overboard by the heavy boom. Some affirm that the whole vessel capsized; but probably that is a fable. Be that as it may, Van Tromp sank like a stone, and suddenly found himself—and you may conceive his surprise—at the bottom of the Hudson, among the spirits of those who, during past centuries, had perished there.

"He might have been very well off here, for, according to the most authentic intelligence, they lead a very jolly life in the blue depths down below there; but his eternal propensity to tell stories, which did not forsake him in his new abode, soon drove away all good company from him. In the beginning—yes, whilst his anecdotes were yet new—they put up with it; but when the same, and still the same, were constantly repeated, and the poor drowned folks had no hope of getting rid of their tedious story-teller till the day of judgment, it was then that they resolved, in a council especially called for the purpose, to evade their otherwise immutable laws, for Van Tromp's benefit as well as their own, and to permit the former to visit the earth again; only, however, in the form of a living man, in order not to excite any unnecessary consternation among the peaceful dwellers on the Hudson.

"Van Tromp was now happy, and soon made excursions through the streets of his native place again, although in a new form. But of what use was this change? Of what use were the different voice and varying clothes—*the stories remained the same*—word for word did they come back again, as though read from some ancient chronicle; and in a few days he began to be avoided. The rumour that the drowned man had come back, and in a different shape, and was wandering among them, spread like wildfire through the little town, and scarce had he time to commence one of his old anecdotes, before the auditors, with complete indifference to their buttons, and even to whole pieces of lining, sprang back in terror and fled from their spectral neighbour.

[Pg 88]

"The natural consequence was, that Van Tromp became misanthropical, sought out lonesome places, talked to himself, and at last withdrew to this island, which we have just now passed, in order no longer to waste his stories upon a generation that was unworthy of them. There you have the simple story of the 'Haunted Visit,' and every farmer upon these banks here can relate his particular stories drawn from Van Tromp's life."

Several other Germans, also passengers on board the steamer, now joined them, and anecdotes and legends followed each other until darkness and the damp air from the river compelled all to seek the interior of the vessel.

The remainder of the society had meanwhile passed their time in a similar manner, only that the four friends—Schmidt, the shoemaker, the tailor, and the brewer—for whom the landscape had fewer attractions, spread out a due quantity of provisions between them, and were busied in doing ample justice to them. But when it suddenly became dark (which, to their surprise, it did with wonderful rapidity, for in New York they had not noticed the speedy approach of night), they found themselves in the highly disagreeable position of people who are very tired, and have no place where they can properly rest themselves.

"It is very wrong," the shoemaker said, "not to give one so much as a bottle of straw. Surely one can't walk about all night."

"I should like to lie down on the bare boards," said the brewer, looking about him, "but these disgusting people do nothing but spit, and in every direction too, so that one can hardly find a clean place the size of one's foot. What fellows they are! Why, sandmen among us behave themselves better."

[Pg 89]

"When shall we get to Albany, do you think?" asked Schmidt of one of the engineers, who was pouring some oil on the engine out of a small can.

"Nix versteh!" said the American, shaking his head; "no Dutchman!"

"Well, then, you need not call names, if you don't," exclaimed the brewer, testily, in a loud voice, so that the man who was addressed turned round surprised.

"Don't be a fool!" said the tailor, taking hold of the angry man's arm; "do you think you will sleep any the better for getting your hide full of blows?"

"But it's true, what business had the fellow to talk about 'Doetsch?'"

"Where can the Committee be?" Schmidt now asked; "and I've seen nothing of the Oldenburghers either, since we've been aboard."

"Who knows where they've poked themselves to?" grunted the shoemaker, wrapping himself up more closely in an old mantle with a hundred or so of capes. "I shall seat myself in a corner and wait till daylight; I'm tired of standing about." The others followed his example; and soon, in the wide, and sparingly and weakly lighted lower deck of the great boat, groups of sleepy passengers sat or lay about in all directions, some with their heads resting upon their luggage, some alongside of a chest, and passed the night by no means conveniently, for in addition to their other discomforts, the cool river air blew in from all sides of the open boat, feeling anything but beneficial, and awakening lively longings in the hearts of the travellers for a warm bed.

Day broke at last, and with it the call, "Ashore, ashore!" came to disturb them from the first slumber, into which, tired with long watching, and yielding to over-weariness, they had just sunk. The boat was going alongside the Quay at Albany, and the freight was soon after got ashore, as the Captain had to return to New York the same morning.

[Pg 90]

Dr. Normann meanwhile undertook to conduct the ladies to an inn not far off, whilst the settlers (for this was the name which the society had now assumed) had enough to do to receive the freight, and get it up to the somewhat distant railway. The journey was to be continued hence, by the doctor's advice, by rail as far as Utica, and here the conviction forced itself upon the settlers that they carried too much luggage with them, for the carriage by railway was not inconsiderable, and the constant packing away, and moving backwards and forwards highly inconvenient and expensive. But the discovery was of no use: the constant consolation was, "we have brought it so far, and certainly can't leave it now that we are near the end of our journey."

But the end of their journey was not reached so soon as they expected, and they had yet many inconveniences to meet before they could hope to arrive at the spot which was to be the scene of their future labours and of their domestic repose.

They reached Utica that night. Here the unpacking of all their wares and utensils took place again, and all had to be got to the canal, where two boats were lying ready to start immediately for Buffalo.

The unloading and removal in the night formed a very troublesome business, and the settlers would have grumbled a good deal had not Pastor Hehrmann, the younger Siebert, and Mr. Herbold, shown themselves particularly active and attentive on the occasion; but as they lent a hand everywhere, all was soon got through, and in less than an hour the horn of the master of the boat blew for departure.

The brewer and the tailor had escaped work this time, and associated themselves with the remaining members of the Committee; for scarcely had they descended from the railway carriages before a very elegant hackney-coach drew up, and a young man opened the door for them. Now, although M. Von Schwanthal, Siebert senior, Mr. Becher, and Dr. Normann with Pastor Hehrmann's family, had got into two other coaches, yet the two who remained behind did not care to waste their money so thoughtlessly, and the tailor politely declined, saying—

[Pg 91]

"Much obliged, but riding don't agree with us."

"It costs nothing," replied the young man, who had opened the door for them, civilly, and in good German; "it belongs to the railroad."

"Nothing at all?" asked the brewer, distrustfully.

"Not a cent!" the other assured him. The word was a lever that raised the little tailor like a spring into a corner of the vehicle, where, when the brewer had somewhat more slowly followed him, he comfortably rubbed his hands, and, laughing, exclaimed—

"Now it agrees with me, and if it went as far as Buffalo!"

It did not go to Buffalo, however, but scarcely a hundred yards off, to a brilliantly lighted up hotel, where both of them, not a little taken aback, were ushered into a large dining-room. There was certainly no time to be lost here, and the tailor, following the example of the brewer, seated himself at one corner of the long table, at which their fellow travellers from the cabin had also just taken their places. In a moment a cup of tea was handed to them, and in like manner successively several plates with various meats and confectionary. Both, however, ate very moderately, declined a second cup of tea, and rose again from table, where they had not felt much at their ease all the time, although a mass of provisions, heaped upon a multitude of small

plates, covered the board, and three very pretty young women were constantly pressing them to take first one and then another dish.

"What have we to pay?" asked the brewer, at last, of one of the young women, as he could see no waiter. The pretty girl, however, only laughed and shook her head. She understood no German.

"What have we to pay?" the tailor (who appeared to think that the girl must be hard of hearing) now cried, so that she started back and looked in amazement at the little thin figure. But another of the girls standing near, called out a few words in English to the first, who now smilingly advanced, and said, "Fifty cents."

[Pg 92]

"Fifty cents," repeated the other, translating it into German—"fifty cents each person."

"Fifty cents apiece?" asked the brewer, alarmed; and, turning to the tailor, "I say, why that's a gulden!"

"Sixteen gute groschen for *one* cup of tea!" grumbled the little man in a low tone to himself, but pulled out his meagre purse and paid it: so did the brewer, and both quickly left the brilliantly lighted house, for Meier (that was the tailor's name) anxiously remarked that they should have to pay for the lights if they stayed much longer.

They stood still as soon as they got out of the door, and looked at each other, half in surprise half in grief.

"Sixteen gute groschen for one cup of tea!" repeated the tailor, with pathos: "half a Spanish dollar of good hard money!"

"And I'm as hungry as a lion," said the brewer; "I ate nothing on purpose, because I thought we should otherwise have too much to pay."

"That's just my case," complained Meier. "Sixteen gute groschen and nothing to eat! But, I say, we must not tell about this!"

"No, if you could only hold your jaw!"

"Not a syllable," the little man declared.

At that moment, the horn of the canal boat was heard, and several men with lanterns came towards the tavern to fetch such of the passengers as were missing, and who accordingly immediately proceeded on board. It was not, however, till the following morning that they were able to make themselves a little acquainted with surrounding objects on board the conveyance itself.

The canal, bordered by two good walls, might perhaps be from twenty-five to thirty feet wide, and boats meeting each other could only pass at certain places. Along the sides were good broad roads, and three horses were harnessed to the long tow-rope of each boat, but they did not hurry themselves much, for the whip of the rider was seldom able to get them beyond a walk. The canal boat itself was clinker built, and about seventy or eighty feet long and fourteen broad; but the after and fore parts, divided into cabins, were alone used for the passengers, while the centre was solely arranged for and devoted to freight. In the first boat were the Oldenburghers, our four friends, (Schmidt, the brewer, the shoemaker, and the tailor,) several Saxon peasants with their families, the cabinet-maker, and the glazier. In the second, on the other hand, were the Committee, with the remainder of the travellers, so that the whole number of passengers were pretty equally divided.

[Pg 93]

As to the passage-money, the Committee had only undertaken to defray the freight of the cargo; it was left to the travellers to pay their own fares, and to provide themselves with provisions for their journey, which of course made it optional with them either to be boarded in the boat or to supply themselves.

The first boat chose the latter mode unconditionally, which resolution was influenced not a little by the tailor's relation of the imposition of the preceding evening, for Meier could not find it in his heart to keep the secret of their dreadful expense. They consequently bargained for all such articles as appeared to them necessary for a journey of several days, at the grocery stores (or shops), of which there were plenty everywhere near the canal, and which chiefly contained such things as served for the convenience of travellers; and they fared, if not so well or so conveniently as the Committee, who preferred having their board provided for them, yet much more cheaply, and that was the principal thing in their then circumstances.

They felt most uncomfortable at night, when, for the sake of room, they were put into hammocks, which were suspended in rows of three, one above another, from the side. In the second night the ropes at the head of the shoemaker, who just then was dreaming uneasily about robbers and wild beasts, gave way, and his head tumbling down, while his legs remained in the air, he awoke, with such a cry, that all jumped out and came about him. It was some time before they could pacify him, and at first he stared at the tailor, who was shaking him, with such wild rolling eyes, that the latter let him go, and sprang a step backwards.

[Pg 94]

The travelling in the canal-boat was very slow; the roads (as it rained during a couple of hours each night) were bad, and almost bottomless, and in many places the horses could scarcely wade through the mud; but for this one must be prepared in all travelling by canal. It is slow work, and the only chance of enjoyment which a traveller on such a *ride* has, is to walk afoot alongside

when he can. In places where the road was tolerably elevated and dry, the passengers often got out and wandered for miles beside the long ark-like box.

In the meanwhile, earnest debates had arisen in the second boat, and that as to the name of the future town which they were about to found. Siebert, senior, was unhesitatingly for "Teutonia," while the junior considered "Hermannstadt" more suitable; Becher was for calling it "Roma," and Von Schwanthal was of opinion that it must be called the "Hoffnung," (Hope), as they had began their journey in the "Hoffnung." Parson Hehrmann supported the latter, and Herbold alone expressed himself very decidedly against all such German-sounding names, and required that it should be called "Concordia." As he had Dr. Normann and the ladies on his side, he carried off the victory at this extraordinary meeting by an overwhelming majority, and the town was provisionally christened "Concordia," with a reservation, of course, to take the opinions of all the settlers on the subject. Some hours might have elapsed when the boats stopped at a small town, both to change horses and to unload a great portion of the cargo—at least, of the foremost boat. Here the whole of the passengers came together once more, and the debate about the name began again.

[Pg 95]

"Concordia!" exclaimed the shoemaker. "No, much obliged—that name wont suit; we are regular Germans, and I don't see why we should have such a foreign word as that. The pastor's name pleases me better, 'Hoffnung.'"

"Shoemaker's-hope!" laughed the little tailor, giving him a poke in the ribs; "that would sound well."

"Or Tailor's-cabbage!" grumbled the other, in return.

"But," expostulated Mr. Becher, "'Concordia' means Union, and union, you know, is to reign among us."

"Well, then, why not call it 'Union' at once?" asked the shoemaker, in surprise. "Why have such a far-fetched expression, which half of us don't understand?"

"Can't you understand Concordia?" smiled the cabinet-maker.

"No, nor you neither, however you may make believe!"

"The shoemaker is right," Meier opined; "we'll christen it 'Union,'—that sounds better."

"Or 'Harmony!'" suggested the cabinet-maker.

"Why not 'Harmonika' at once. Would you call the town after a public-house!" exclaimed the brewer. "Well, what next, I wonder?"

"My good people," said the Pastor Hehrmann, interrupting them, "no object is gained by this dispute. Besides, I don't see at all why we should puzzle our brains at present about a name, seeing that the town which is to receive it does not exist yet; the child has to be born before it can be christened."

"But why not discuss an affair which hereafter will be by no means unimportant, and for which we have ample leisure just now?" said Siebert, senior. "For my part, I should wish for a ballot; everybody can write a name which he has thought of for the future town, upon a slip of paper, and let the majority decide."

"Yes, that's it—we'll do that!" all exclaimed. Slips were soon distributed—every one quickly committed his favourite name to paper by circulating pencils, and threw the slips into the hat of Mr. Becher, who went round to collect them.

[Pg 96]

A sheet of paper was then taken, and Mr. Von Schwanthal volunteered to act as secretary, and to write down the names as they were read over, and from these to determine which had the majority.

But what names came to light then!—Oldenburgh, Merseburgh, Osterholz, Sittensen, Helgoland, Saxony, Germany, Hildburghausen, Dresden, Bremen, Happy Hope, Goldland, Germania; and, nearly towards the last—amidst universal laughter—"Anna Maria." "Concordia" had only four votes; but Pastor Hehrmann and Von Schwanthal's "Hoffnung" was successful: a great number of the others had adopted this, and "Hoffnung" was read over eleven times; consequently, as having a majority of voices, it was pronounced to be the name of the town which was to be built.

"Aboard!—aboard!" the voice of the boatman now exclaimed. "All aboard! we have stayed here long enough!"

The command was speedily attended to, and both boats were, before long, under way again. The weather, which hitherto had been dull and foggy, now cleared up completely, and a fresh east wind rustled through the shadowy tree-tops, and rendered the journey a highly agreeable pleasure excursion. The passengers might have passed their time very well and pleasantly upon deck, had not the bridges, which followed each other at short intervals, proved a great hindrance, for every moment the call, "Look out!" disturbed them, and immediately afterwards, the boat glided so closely under the beams that they were compelled to lie flat down upon their faces, to avoid being pushed off.

"We are coming presently to a couple of very low bridges," said the man at the helm to the passengers of the foremost boat, who were bivouacked about the deck in picturesque attitudes,

and were beguiling their time partly by stories, and partly by card-playing. "They are much lower than those we have passed," he continued, when he saw that his first warning was unheeded; "and besides, we have taken a great deal of the cargo out of this boat, which will therefore graze much nearer to the timbers than the hindmost boat. You had better go below."

[Pg 97]

For awhile, all remained lying still; at last, however, the tailor rose, and said, "No; I can't swim, and I don't want to be shoved overboard! Come along!"

Most of them followed him. The glazier alone lay where he was, saying, with a yawn, "I need not stand up—it's much pleasanter here than below, in that box!"

The rest slowly retired to the interior of the boat. The shoemaker and brewer alone stood beside the helmsman, and looked back at the second boat, which followed at the distance of a hundred yards.

"I say!" remarked the brewer, laughing, "wont it sound comical, when our town is built, and people say—'It's so many miles to the Hoffnung (Hope),' or, 'I live near to the Hope'? or, 'I live in the Hope, No. 7, on the third floor;' people will think it is a public house! What name did you vote for?" The brewer would, doubtless, have replied, if both he and the shoemaker had not forgotten the question; for in the same moment they saw that the helmsman stooped down, heard the loud laugh of the glazier, and just as they were turning round, were seized by the low bridge, and unmercifully shoved overboard, head foremost. But the canal was not deep, and they soon reappeared, spluttering and blowing, and had the satisfaction, besides, of being well laughed at from the second boat, in which all pressed to the windows and to the entrance. When they got on board again, of course they were obliged to change their clothes; but they avoided coming too near the helmsman, as the tailor would have it that he had done it on purpose.

The glazier had enjoyed the joke royally, but would not leave the deck, although the American at the helm assured him that the next bridge was lower still. Stretching himself comfortably, he declared that that was the best place in the whole boat—and remained.

[Pg 98]

All the passengers, with the exception of this one, were employed in various ways in the interior of the boat, when suddenly the voice of the helmsman was heard. "Take care!" he cried; but with so loud, so anxious a voice, the warning seemed so earnest and urgent, that all, as if seized by something which they could not explain, remained motionless, in the attitudes they were in, and a deathlike silence ensued. But this was broken by such a fearful yell, that it made the blood even of the bravest run cold. Immediately afterwards the former stillness prevailed, and the settlers heard the steersman call to the drivers to stop the horses, while he jumped upon deck. All now rushed up, to see what could have happened, to drive even the quiet Pennsylvanian from his post. But what a horrible spectacle presented itself to their view! Pressed together, with his head shattered and his clothes torn, the glazier lay there—a corpse, and the American turned away with a shudder, when, on attempting to raise his head with his hand, he saw the brain, which pressed out of the wound. The dreadful event was explained in few words—the man had remained on deck in spite of all warnings, the bridge had struck him, and unfortunately his head was raised upon his arms, which hastened the certain death.

All assembled round the body; but help had come too late; and the conductor was compelled to proceed, in order to give notice to the authorities of the next town of what had occurred, and to bury the remains there. Fortunately, the place was not far distant; and the horses, as though wishing to flee from the fearful load which they dragged after them, put all their strength and mettle to the draught. In less than an hour, the boat stopped alongside of the broad masonry quay of the canal, whence the news of the casualty quickly spread, and half the town came out to the boat.

The settlers had to leave the burial of the body to some of their German countrymen resident there, as the boats would not wait so long on any condition; and paying the expenses out of the little stock of the deceased, they quitted, with anything but cheerful feelings, the spot where they had left the first of their company dead behind them.

[Pg 99]

It was some time, too, before the former easy tone was resumed. The people had become dejected; for the quick putting aside of the body, the little ceremony there was made in taking it away, gave them a glimpse of the little value that *human life* bore in their new home. Pastor Hehrmann was particularly affected by the calamity, and exhorted the young people again, in the most earnest manner, to follow the warnings of the Americans, who must, of course, be best acquainted with the dangers of their own land.

The boats approached the little town of Lockport, where one of them was to take in further cargo. The captain, however, collected the passage-money before they arrived here, lest any of his passengers might step on shore, and forget to return. The fares were paid by each of the settlers, as agreed upon, out of their own pockets. Mr. Siebert, now, began to confess that they had, perhaps, brought some things which were not absolutely necessary to their progress, particularly as he now, for the first time, noticed that the German implements differed essentially from the American. His voice, however, found no echo, and the old story—"We've brought them so far with us, and can't leave them now," again silenced every objection.

The boats were to remain half a day at Lockport, and the American advised the Germans to ride over and see the Falls of Niagara, from which they were not very distant, and whither the locomotive would carry them in a very short time.

Pastor Hehrmann determined at once to give his family the treat of this grand view, and Mr. Becher, M. Von Schwanthal, and Dr. Normann offered to accompany them; the rest did not think it worth while to undertake a journey expressly on account of a waterfall, but determined, instead, on viewing the surrounding country, and left the boat before its arrival at the town, so as to reach there about noon.

[Pg 100]

It was late before the whole company assembled again from their various expeditions. The Niagara excursionists were quite delighted with the lofty and wonderful spectacle which they had enjoyed, and the others, especially the country people, were equally astonished at the singular agricultural arrangements which they had met with. Schmidt, especially, could not contain himself, for he had met with a couple of fellow countrymen at Lockport, and had learnt a thousand different matters from them, which it cost him the greatest possible trouble to believe.

"Round every little field, even if it were only half an acre, there is what they call a fence,"[5] he kept constantly repeating: "why one will have nothing else to do, all one's life, but to chop wood and split it."

[Pg 101]

"I should like to know what I'm to do here," said a locksmith, who had been into one of the log-houses; "why everything is made of wood here that we make of iron. The fences may be all very well; but when it comes to hasps, and hinges, and door-locks of wood—why, there is an end of everything."

[Pg 102]

"Well, thus much I can see," said the tailor, "they don't use carpets in their houses, that's certain; and as to their having wooden locks, that seems to me quite natural; I should like to see the thief that could find anything in them worth carrying away."

"They've got no wheels to their ploughs," said Schmidt; "not the least vestige of a wheel."

"And one is not safe of one's life in the street!" exclaimed the tailor: "a drove of cows comes along every moment; five times have I been obliged to climb up to the top of one of their high fences; every time the great brutes looked at me as though they would eat me. But—hallo! there's the horn blowing again; the boats are off; so now for Buffalo!"

It was nearly evening when they resumed their journey, and consequently it was night when they reached Buffalo, on Lake Erie, and they remained on board the canal-boat until the following morning. A steamer was to leave at ten o'clock for Cleveland, across Lake Erie, and Dr. Normann advised them not to neglect the opportunity of going by her, as they would thereby continue their journey most speedily, and also most cheaply.

The cargo had now to be transhipped for the fourth time, and in Cleveland yet again, to a canal-boat, as far as Portsmouth; and in Portsmouth, for the last time, to another steamer. The treasurer now clearly saw that the cash in hand would only be sufficient for the payment of the freight, and perhaps would scarcely suffice for that; he therefore proposed, either to sell a portion of their goods, or else to leave them behind, as there were daily opportunities of forwarding them to the Ohio and the Mississippi. However much a large section of the settlers might still be opposed to this measure, yet the majority saw at last that it was necessary that something should be done, which ought indeed to have been done long since, and, after lengthy debates, the Committee was authorized to sell a portion of the utensils. But however the Society might debate about the matter, it was impossible to carry it out, for if the Committee had had as many days as it had hours for the purpose of carrying into effect such a sale, it would even then have striven in vain; for, in the first place, the settlers could not agree concerning the particular articles which were to be parted with, and, in the next place, there was no buyer to be found, even at the most reasonable prices; there was only one blacksmith who came forward, and he would only pay them for certain articles valued as old iron. This was rather too much of a good thing, and the suggestion of the landlord of the tavern, where they had put up for the short time, was gratefully accepted—viz., to leave the things in an old out-building, which in winter served for a wood-shed, until they should be inquired for.

[Pg 103]

According to the advice of several Germans there, they took with them, besides two carts and a wagon, which, if sold, must have been replaced hereafter at a high price, (although no more than their freight came to,) only some saws, chains, and axes, and scarcely left themselves time to get the rest on board the "Ontario" steamer which soon after rang her bell and commenced her passage to Cleveland, whereby they were compelled to leave their remaining things exposed on the water-side. The landlord, however, promised to take care of everything for them, that they need not make themselves anxious about it, and swung his cap after them besides, as long as he could see them.

They reached Cleveland in the night; had to unload there, for the fifth time, and get themselves and their things into a canal-boat, which bore them through Ohio State to the Ohio River, at the little town of Portsmouth; and it was here that they got on board the steamer which was to take them to the mouth of the Big Halchee, and consequently to within about fifteen miles of their destination, the projected town of "Hoffnung."

[Pg 104]

In Portsmouth, again, they only stopped so long as was necessary to remove their things on board, for when they arrived, the steamer was on the point of pushing off, and was only prevailed upon to wait for a short time by the prospect of the large number of passengers. Any bargaining for freight or passage-money was therefore out of the question, and before they were aware of it they saw themselves on the broad Ohio, gliding past its picturesquely beautiful banks.

"A fine voyage this is!" growled the brewer, when he got time, at last, to seat himself, weary and tired, on the large chest which contained his clothes and linen;—"one eternal driving—one eternal lugging about. How often have I had to haul this cursed box out of one boat into another. Thank Heaven, this is the last."

"I'm better off there;" laughed the tailor, "my luggage is soon got across; this little knapsack; the hat-box—the hat lies in the church—and this handkerchief, with the biscuit and sausage in it, are all my riches. But, I say, brewer, between ourselves, who is to pay our passage-money when we've got no more?"

"Why, we're nearly there," replied the brewer.

"Yes; but at present," said the tailor, pulling a long face, "I'm regularly stumped!"

"No more money?"

"Not a rap."

"Well!" cried the brewer, astonished, "that's a good one; the Committee will look rather glum."

"Listen," said the shoemaker, who advanced towards them at this moment, "I've got something on my mind which I should like to tell you."

"Out with it," ejaculated the brewer, encouragingly.

"I have no more money!"

"Come to my heart, companion of my sorrow!" spouted the tailor, in the mock-heroic style, "now I'm no longer afraid; now there are two of us, the thing is getting common." [Pg 105]

"Well, I'll be hanged if I can see the comfort of that," remarked the brewer, shaking his head; "the best thing you can do is to go to the Committee and let them consider the matter."

At this moment they were called by one of the Oldenburghers to the after-deck, where all the settlers were assembled, (for only Hehrmann's wife and daughters and Dr. Normann had taken cabin passages,) in order to confer on an important subject. Five other members of the society had announced themselves to the Committee as no longer possessing any money to defray their further travelling expenses, and had applied for the assistance of the community. They promised to work out every advance so soon as they should get to their destination. The tailor had his name and the shoemaker's immediately placed on the list, and the question now only remained, whether this money was to be supplied out of the funds in hand or by contributions.

Mr. Siebert, senior, opposed the former proposition with might and main, and produced the accounts which he had kept of freight and transport expenses, which, notwithstanding all the bargaining, alone amounted to a hundred and sixty dollars; so that the whole finances amounted only to about sixty dollars, while they were still twelve hundred miles from their new abode.

There was not much to be objected to this—the matter was too clear; but new difficulties presented themselves when it came to raising a subscription in order to pay the passage-money of their fellow-travellers. The Oldenburghers formally opposed it, and declared that they, too, possessed nothing more, and wished also to be put upon the list.

Mr. Siebert had behaved rather passively and indifferently hitherto, but now he came out, and requested all present to give him their attention for a short time. When all was silent, he turned towards his fellow-travellers, and, quiet and self-possessed, thus addressed them:— [Pg 106]

"Gentlemen, we have come to that point in which our future fortunes, our future relations to each other, must be ascertained. What was our intention when we forsook our native land? We intended to found a new home for ourselves—we intended to buy a strip of land, and to become farmers. We have got the land—but more is required for farming besides land merely. We must, as soon as we reach our destination, procure, not provisions alone, but also utensils for the tillage of the soil, for the erection of warmer and more substantial habitations; we must purchase cattle; for however easily cattle may increase in this new country, still, above all things, the stock must first exist; we must have horses to draw the ploughs which are to prepare our fields. For all this, money is required—money, *much* money; and if we are not in a condition to raise that, why, our settlement ceases at once, even before it has begun.

"All this, moreover, was well known to you before we left Bremen, and *all* then expressed themselves ready to satisfy such requisitions as had for their object the founding and maintenance of our new colony, to the best of their ability, and with cheerfulness. Shall we now, when the string is first touched, go back from this? Or does *not* the assistance of the members (who are necessary to the preservation of the whole) conduce to the *general* good? Assuredly it does—and is a principal condition of the whole. But, as we have touched upon this subject now, I must go back to our earlier plan, and remind you that the period has now arrived to put it into execution. Let every one contribute, according to his ability, towards the common fund, of which an accurate account will be kept; and the amount subscribed, let it be ever so small, shall yield interest at four per cent., as pre-arranged; while, as actual occupiers of the land, the lenders' money is perfectly secured. Besides, this is a subject long since and frequently discussed; I have even the list here upon which each of you have entered how much (about) he should be able and willing to come forward with; the question, therefore, only is, whether you will perform your former engagements—whether, in fact, generally, you are minded to carry out your former plans; [Pg 107]

for now the time has come for ascertaining this. As it concerns a question, moreover, which you would probably wish to consider, I request your reply this afternoon."

The meeting now adjourned, and stormy debates commenced, for the Emigrants were once more to touch their funds, and that to a more considerable extent than before, and to place their last money in the hands of the Committee whom they thereby virtually invested with absolute authority, for they made themselves entirely dependent upon them. They considered the matter backwards and forwards; the Oldenburghers spoke against it; they wanted to divide the land purchased into as many portions as there were persons who had contributed to its purchase, so that each might manage his own share on his own account; but this did not suit the others, who considered the working in common so much more beneficial and more conducive to their object.

The Committee had gained an important advantage in having joined them in the 'tween decks; it appeared more natural to them; besides, the little shanties, which lay scattered all about the banks, also spoke to their hearts. Thus, they thought to themselves, must their new homes be, though of course only for the first few years.

The fields adjoining looked so fruitful, the apple and peach orchards round about the dwellings looked so inviting, that they felt half inclined to put an end to the question by a hasty resolution; and when, to crown all, Pastor Hehrmann, Mr. Herbold, and Becher came among them, and exhorted them to be of good cheer, and when Mr. Becher handed over 100 dollars, and the other two 200 dollars each, before their eyes, to Siebert, senior, they could not think of considering the matter further; even the Oldenburghers felt touched; and before two o'clock of the afternoon, after a narrow inspection, there was found collected, from all members able to pay, 1932 dollars into the common purse; certainly a respectable fund to found a modest home in the woods with. The passage money of the penniless was paid out of this at once, and they undertook to repay the expenditure so soon as their funds would permit.

[Pg 108]

Having got over this difficulty, the "settlers" employed themselves in examining surrounding objects a little more narrowly than hitherto they had been able to do, on account of the constant bustle. The steamer itself first claimed their whole attention; it appeared quite different from the Eastern boats in which they had travelled before. The engine stood upon deck, and two regular stories were erected, and upon the latter, whilst the helmsman's place, instead of being aft, was forward, in a small glass house between the two great chimneys. The cargo was mostly below in the hold, and the first story, arranged for cabin passengers only, was not to be approached by deck passengers; but Siebert, senior, and Pastor Hehrmann had an opportunity of seeing the whole when they paid the total amount of freight and passage money which they had collected from the individual members. Pastor Hehrmann, besides, might have remained there on account of his family, but he wished, just at that time, to avoid everything which might lead to envy or discussion. The cabin was beautifully fitted up, the long and large saloon was closely hung with pictures, and between these, large richly fringed crimson curtains concealed the sleeping berths for gentlemen, whilst an apartment in the after-part of the boat was separated by a glass-door from the rest, and distinguished as the ladies' cabin, to which was added, besides, a small black shield, with an inscription in gold letters thereon, announcing, 'no admittance.'

The mode of steering the boat struck them particularly, for, as the steersman stood in front, two wire ropes issued from the little house in which the wheel was turned, right through the ship, aft to the rudder. The two long boilers were placed forward of the engine, and were there fired by the stokers.

[Pg 109]

As they stopped at several small towns, they only reached Cincinnati, the largest city of Ohio State, and, indeed, of the whole of Western America, on the next day. The Captain announced to them that he should remain there until the following morning, and, therefore, that they would have ample time to look about the town, only they must be aboard by seven the next morning. The people did not need to be told this twice; they streamed ashore in shoals, and drew off in single groups through the broad and handsome streets of the town. But everywhere they met Germans; they saw their countrymen in all parts; and when they got over some canal bridges into the other part of the town, their mother tongue sounded out of every door, and out of every open window.

Our party of four, whom we have so often already followed in their wanderings, again found themselves together, and determined to make a regular good use of the day, to see whatever was worth seeing and within reach, without much expense.

They strolled slowly along the quay, or steam-boat landing, as it is there called, and were just passing one of the innumerable little clothes-stores, when a young and dapper little fellow, with well-curled hair, and very shining boots, dived out of the depths of the recess, approached the four men, cast a scrutinizing glance at them, and then, without more ado, seized Schmidt round the waist, and dragged him towards the entrance, whilst he, at the same time, gabbled a lot of English stuff to him, of which Schmidt did not understand one word.

"Let me go," he cried, peevishly, at last; "or at all events, talk so that I may understand what you want."

The young man still hung back with his German, which, he undoubtedly understood; but as he saw that his English was of no use, he begged our four fellow-travellers in very good, though rather Jewish German, just to step in and look at his goods.

[Pg 110]

"We don't want anything," said Schmidt, who did not feel comfortable at being caught hold of in

such a way by a stranger; "our clothes are all good."

"All good!" repeated contemptuously the young Israelite—"all good? Then I should like to see what you call bad. And you go across the street in Cincinnati in that coat? you present yourself before decent people with those trousers? you wear such a hat upon your head? If I only had a garden I would change a new suit for this old one; I would, upon my honour, only to get such a scarecrow for birds as is not to be found elsewhere in the world—I give you my word of honour, I would."

"Hark ye," said Schmidt, who was getting angry, "what the—— Well, I wont use bad language—though I was going to say——"

"Don't be angry, my good sir; don't be angry," exclaimed the little fellow, "the clothes would be good enough if any other person wore them, but with such a handsome figure as yours, it's a thousand pities to have such a bundle of rags hanging round you. Here"—he interrupted Schmidt, who was getting angry again—"I'll sell you a whole suit for——"

"Much obliged," said the latter, and made an effort to free himself from the hands of the clothes-dealer; "I don't want anything." But the thing was easier thought of than executed, for the little Israelite held fast, and overwhelmed poor Schmidt with such a heap of compliments, as to his appearance, how wrong it was of him to habit his handsome limbs in that fashion, that at last the latter did not know what to do, and was already asking the price of a pair of trousers, merely to get rid of the importunate one, when the brewer, who for some time past had found the thing going beyond the bounds of his patience, came to the rescue. With powerful grasp he seized the slender Jew, till the latter sung out lustily, and said to him—

[Pg 111]

"Hands off! Hands off, I say! Nobody is forced to buy bargains here; if we want any clothes, the tailor will make them for us; that's what he's there for." And seizing his astonished comrade by the arm, he dragged him by force out of the shop.

"The devil is in the tailors here in America," said Schmidt, when he got outside. "These fellows are worse than highwaymen, who at all events wait till it gets dark before they attack you, but that fellow begins at noon-day."

"And you would have bought something, sure enough," said the shoemaker, as they turned up the main street.

"What was I to do? he would not let me go."

"Look, here's another clothes-shop, and another Jew inside," said the tailor; "this makes the fifteenth out of thirty-three houses that we have passed; they just do swarm here."

Strolling thus up the street, they came between the sixth and seventh cross streets, opposite to a German tavern, and finding a number of their fellow-countrymen there, they stopped. But these had been some time in America, and so soon as they heard that the four men were new-comers, they set up such a lamentation about bad times, and want of money, that the settlers felt quite hot and uncomfortable.

It is true, that at first they would not give in to these complaints, for what Dr. Normann had told them about the country sounded quite different, but at last, staggered by the testimony of so many bystanders, doubts began to arise in their minds, and the shoemaker said,—rather faint-heartedly, however—

"If one can earn a dollar a day at work, I should think that one might live upon it."

"Yes, if one could get it," replied an old Hanoverian peasant, who, rather ragged, and with pale cheeks, was sitting on a bench before the house, nodding hard with his head at the same time. "But they scarcely pay one twenty-five dollars a month during the harvest, and after that, poor devils may get on again as best they can. They offered me and my two sons six dollars a month; the two boys were obliged to accept it, but I was taken ill, and am eating up nearly all they earn."

[Pg 112]

"Are they making no railroads, no canals, hereabouts? There's always plenty of money when they are going on."

"Half a dollar a day, and on wet days they don't work. Payments are made monthly in paper money, and if one afterwards loses the fourth part only, one must think one's self lucky."

"But handicraftsmen are well paid here, are they not?" asked the tailor.

"Paid!" exclaimed another, laughing ironically, out of the open door. "I'm a tailor, and I've worked for two months past for my board."

"But, my good people," said the little fellow, dolefully, "why, it must be dreadful here in America, then. What is one to do?"

"It's not so bad as the people make out," interposed a farmer, who now joined them, and whose clean clothes and white fine linen bespoke a certain easiness of circumstances. "It's not so bad," he repeated, "only you must not suppose that roast pigeons fly about, crying, 'come eat me!' First learn the ways and customs, first learn the language of the country, and you'll work yourself into the whole system of the people with whom you have to mix. Only don't stop in the towns; out into the country, become countrymen, breed cattle; if you have to work for small wages at first, what matter; every man must pay his apprenticeship-fee, and don't suppose that you can escape doing

that here. If for a year, or even two, things go ill with you, don't abuse the country and the people directly; no one drops from the sky a master ready-made, and good work must bide good time."

"Well, that sounds reasonable," said the brewer; "there's no great lamentation about the matter, nor does he overpraise the thing; so there's some hope left, that, after awhile, we may earn something on our land." [Pg 113]

"Bought already?" said the farmer.

"Yes; a whole company."

"Good land?"

"It's said to be very good; we haven't seen it yet."

"And bought already; well, that is old-countryman like; the Americans don't do things that way; they see the land first, and then they don't always buy it exactly; they go on Congress land, which they have to pay for in a couple of years, and with their ready money buy cattle; that doubles its value in three years, and is as good as thirty-three or forty per cent. Where is your land, then?"

"In Tennessee, on a small river which they call Big Halchee, or something like that; they've got such break-jaw names here."

"Big Halchee?" said the farmer—"that is a creek, a brook merely; but the land there is said to be good. 'Tis unhealthy, it is true."

"The deuce it is!" exclaimed the shoemaker, startled. "Dr. Normann told us it lay in the healthiest part of the State."

"Well, then, it must be a long way up the Creek."

"I don't know what you mean by crick," grunted the brewer; "the place is said to be fifteen miles from the Mississippi, and there are some houses upon it."

"Very likely," said the farmer; "I was never up the country there. And when are you going?"

"Now, directly."

"Now? In August? Well then, I wish you joy of the fever," said the farmer, laughing, drank the glass of cider which he had called for, and went off up the street.

The brewer meanwhile ordered some beer, growled something about nonsensical stuff, fever, fiddlestick, old women's tales, and so on, and then wandered off with his comrades higher up into the town.

"Well," said the shoemaker, at last, stopping near a shoemaker's workshop—"if that isn't curious; I begin to think that all the shoemakers in Cincinnati are confectioners. Only look now at the gingerbread and sugarcandy in that window there, a whole lot of it; the few pairs of shoes only seem to be hung beside by way of ornament." [Pg 114]

"A pretty sort of ornament, indeed," grinned the tailor. "The shoemaker is right, though; honeycakes and leather must agree well together here; but perhaps it isn't a shoemaker's."

"Not a shoemaker's!" bawled the other, peevishly. "I should think I ought to know a shoemaker when I see one. Don't you see him hammering away, yonder, between the honeycake and the pink child's-shoe."

"Yes, sure enough," said the little man; "it must be the custom here, then; opposite yonder is another, and he has got a whole box of ready-made[6] shoes standing before his door."

"Hallo! he must have been a hard-working fellow," exclaimed the shoemaker, in astonishment, on perceiving the number of shoes set up in a large box; "and upon my word all made with little wooden pegs, too—they don't appear to sew here at all."

"Where shall we go to this evening?" asked the brewer. "I wish there was something to be seen here."

"Another striped pig, perhaps?" suggested Schmidt.

"Nonsense," growled the other. "But, I say, the Museum yonder, in that wide street where the red lantern is hanging, is said to be well worth seeing. What say you?—shall we go in? It only costs a quarter dollar."

"That would be just one half of all that I am worth," said the tailor.

"Well, I'll pay for you, tailor, if Schmidt will pay for the shoemaker."

"Agreed," replied Schmidt. "I'm willing to stand Sam; only I should like to be shaved first, for my beard feels very prickly—but I have not seen a sign of a bason[7] anywhere, although I've been constantly looking for one." [Pg 115]

"There are some Germans; perhaps they can tell us where a barber is to be found."

"Walk down here till you come to the first red-and-white painted pole, that's a barber's shop."

"What! a little pole with a gilt knob at the top?" asked Schmidt.

"Yes, there are five or six of them in this street."

"Well, that is a curious sign for a barber," said the shoemaker; "I've been puzzling my brains all day to find out what those poles could mean."

They soon arrived at one of these shops, whence the cheerful notes of a fiddle issued towards them. Schmidt went in, while the rest employed themselves outside in noticing the passers-by, and in looking into the different shop windows; but they had not waited long, before Schmidt, with his face all over lather up to his eyes, came running out again, clapped his hat on his head, and fled.

The three burst into a roar of laughter, and other people also stopped to see what was the matter.

But Schmidt, who perhaps was a little ashamed, quickly wiped the soap off with his handkerchief, and turned aside into a side street, whither his comrades followed him.

"What, in the name of wonder, has happened to you?" asked the brewer.

"Nothing," said Schmidt; "I was a jackass; but I got such a fright when I saw that tall black fellow with the razor."

"The *black* fellow?" asked the tailor.

"Yes," said Schmidt. "When I went in, I sat myself down with my face to the door, and a little white boy lathered me, while at the back of the shop, behind a sort of curtain, somebody was performing beautifully on a fiddle; it went so fast, that one could not distinguish the different notes. When my face had been lathered, the playing suddenly stopped, and before I was aware of it, one of those negro fellows that run about the streets here by dozens—a big, dangerous-looking fellow, with great goggle eyes, and a shining razor in his hand—approached me. I suppose that he was going to shave me, but I was so startled that up I jumped, tore the napkin off my neck, caught up my hat, and was out of the house like lightning; they must have had a good laugh at me."

[Pg 116]

"Didn't they just laugh!" said the shoemaker; "the black stepped into the doorway, and grinned till it looked as though his two rows of teeth stretched from ear to ear. But it was stupid of you, Schmidt; he wouldn't have cut your head off."

"Oh, I know that well enough, only I was so taken aback at the first moment; the fellow looked so grim. What am I to do now?"

"Why, go into some other barber's shop, for you must not show yourself in that one again on any account; it's as well that we leave here to-morrow morning. There's one down yonder."

Schmidt followed this advice, and went through the operation this time, but declared positively, that he had again fallen into the hands of a black.

When this matter had been disposed of, they wandered slowly down Main-street again, and got entrance tickets for the Museum.

There we must leave them, and follow another section of the travelling companions—viz., the two Sieberts, Pastor Hehrmann, Becher, and Herbold, who had likewise walked up into the town, and had sought out a chemist and druggist named Strauss, to whom they were recommended by Dr. Normann. He received them in a very friendly manner, and in the afternoon took a walk with them. Mr. Strauss had not been long in America himself, but had lived nearly the whole time in Cincinnati, and appeared to have made himself pretty well acquainted with the state of affairs there; he did not praise the place much, and showed a disposition to remove westward. Siebert immediately tried to gain him over for their colony, but was unable to induce him to promise anything certain, although the idea of quitting Cincinnati did not seem to be a difficulty. He inquired with much interest into the plans and prospects of his countrymen, but shook his head several times very doubtfully, when the relators got into what he called their "castles in the air." He had known Dr. Normann for some years, and inquired with much interest after all that related to him.

[Pg 117]

"To be candid with you," he said, at last, "I don't altogether trust that gentleman."

"How so?" exclaimed Mr. Siebert, in some alarm.

"Well, he has told me such stories about inventions which he pretends to have made, some of which are really ridiculous; brags so much of Republican-American sentiments, and altogether plays the part of such an extraordinarily clever and wonderfully rich man, that I have become somewhat distrustful of him, the more particularly, because, as far as regards the latter assumption, I have strong proofs to the contrary; but I may be mistaken; he may be a very honourable man, and a clever one he certainly is."

Thus conversing about one thing and the other, they had wandered through most of the streets of the town, and had returned to Main-street again, when Strauss suddenly stopped before a low, wide building, with a wooden staircase, and said—

"By the bye, we were talking, this morning, about the politics of the Germans here; would you

like to attend a German political meeting this evening?"

"Willingly," they all said; "where is it held?"

"Just here, where we are standing, in the house of a fellow-countryman, of course, who, besides, keeps very good beer. Cincinnati is, moreover, the Munich^[8] of North America. But here is the place; and, as I hear, the speechifying has commenced——"

[Pg 118]

They walked in, and found a pretty numerous assemblage of Germans, who were mostly sitting round a table, talking together in a very animated manner, and only ceasing when one of them, by rattling a tin can, intimated a wish to address the assembly.

The election of President was at hand, and the Democrats were trying their utmost to get the Democrat Polk elected President; whilst the Whigs were noways behind hand in *their* exertions in opposition, and to carry their candidate to the Capitol at Washington. But, instead of being satisfied with praising their own respective candidates, and placing them in the most favourable light, both parties were chiefly engaged in blackening the character of the man put forward by the opposite party, in such a dreadful manner, that if what they said were true, no respectable dog could have accepted a piece of bread at his hands.

In such a meeting they now found themselves, and the settlers had already listened with great attention to the addresses of various orators, whose words were frequently interrupted by shouts of approbation, and rewarded by thunders of applause.

"It must be admitted," said Becher, when, after awhile, they had walked up and down outside the house to cool themselves—"it must be admitted that they have a peculiar way of speaking here—such violent abuse of one man, whose only offence appears to be, that their opponents wish to make him President; their style would not suit my taste; however, different countries, different manners; probably the Whigs are not much better."

"Worse still, if possible, worse still," said Strauss, laughing. "But could you understand all that the people inside there were saying?"

"Well," replied Pastor Hehrmann, "I have listened pretty attentively, but I cannot say that I comprehended everything; some of their sentences seemed very bombastic."

"Yes," Becher interrupted him; "now that you mention it, I think I could also affirm that those portions of the speeches which the people applauded most loudly, contained nothing further than very vague ideas; the good folks seem easily satisfied."

[Pg 119]

"Will you believe me," smiled Strauss, "that I will go in and talk nonsense for five minutes—nonsense, pure barefaced nonsense—and that at the conclusion it shall be hailed with loud plaudits?"

"Well, I don't think them quite so bad as that comes to, either," said Pastor Hehrmann, with a deprecating shake of the head; "they are actuated with the best intentions—viz., that of having the affairs of the republic, in which they live, managed as well as possible; and if they are not exactly learned men, still they probably can distinguish sense from nonsense."

"Well," said Strauss, "we can make the experiment. Come in with me; only keep serious; that's all I ask of you."

The meeting was powerfully excited by a speech which had just been made. Here and there violent blows of fists upon the table testified what strength their owners were capable of using should they be called upon to combat for the right cause, and all of them were talking and hallooing together.

Strauss had to rattle the tin can several times; at last the excitement abated a little, and the new orator stood upon a chair.

"Gentlemen,"—he now began, after casting a searching glance round the circle, and making some very long pauses, particularly in the commencement, as though he were overcome by his feelings, until at last, by degrees, he got into full swing, as Mr. Becher afterwards observed, and pursued the thread of his discourse with more animated words and gesticulations,—*"It is with satisfaction—that I do myself the honour—of standing up in this place—which it would be impossible to express. I see that you are determined to remain true to your former well-tryed and honourable opinions. I see the fire of courage and of patriotism beaming in your eyes. I see that you will not bow down again under that yoke which you have but recently shaken off, together with the old country, your former home."* (No, no, no! from several parts of the room.)—*"Gentlemen, it is not only necessary that we should show firm resolution in the exertions which we have attained by the perseverance of our dear fellow-countrymen, and with iron determination refuse to join a party which tries to frighten us by trickery and bragging; no, we must also, conscious of our worth, in the hope of real and irresistible conviction, endeavour to carry out that feeling which inflames us with holy ardour, that feeling for justice and freedom which is a birthright of Germans!"* (Bravo! bravo! from all sides.)—"Gentlemen," Strauss, becoming warmer, now proceeded—"you have an internal conviction of the words of truth. Although British gold and selfish opinions may oppress a portion of this holy republic, although tyranny and oppression may threaten with chains and sharpened swords, have you ever been dismayed? Did you not return gloriously and triumphantly from the former battle?" (Hurrah for Strauss! hurrah!)"—"Yes, my dear fellow-countrymen, you understand my feelings, but you also

[Pg 120]

know, as I do, that a party cannot triumph in whose hearts a participation in deceit and seductive appearances has taken root, whose independence and convictions are attacked by venal brokers and agents, in which the blind fanaticism of thousands aimed at a height which, by chimerical hopes and impressions, composed of promises and deceptions, sought in vain to attain that goal which comes to meet and bless an honest heart." (Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah for Strauss! the crowd exclaimed, and the rejoicing and clattering of drinking vessels for some moments drowned every other word.) "No, no, and no, again I say," continued Strauss, as soon as the noise had abated a little. "When the heart does not with loud throbs throw itself into the arms of liberty,—when strength does not stretch out its powerful hands into one great alliance—where talent and knowledge do not work together with firm and inflexible unanimity, where, during generations, evil has not been held in contempt and good honoured—of what avail are the fine-drawn nets of the hypocrites, who appear to spread their yarns with cunning fingers? Let them spread them, let them contrive—the tricksters! let the nets become closer and closer daily, which are to conceal their guilt with an easily rent and transparent covering. Let them rejoice in their vileness—let them, with gnashing teeth, defile the throne of truth, which is firmly wound round the hearts of our party with twenty-handed arms! Let them go on patiently. But as for us, I point with luminous finger to the oriflamme of youthful Immortality—for us, I say, away, away with cunning and false shame! away with fraud, away with false appearances! We, my brothers, are German democrats, and let our motto be, 'German perseverance and German truth!'"

[Pg 121]

"Hurrah!" screamed the crowd once more, in ear-piercing chorus, as Strauss descended from the chair, and several approached, and shook hands with him in a friendly manner.

Pastor Hehrmann, however, had quietly gone out as soon as the speech was concluded; the rest now followed him; and Strauss, as soon as he joined them, smilingly asked them whether he had been as good as his word.

"Deuce take it!" exclaimed Becher, "but that was a capital speech; and how pleased they were with it!"

"That was nothing," whispered Strauss; "there were too many of the 'honourables' there, and one must not lay it on too thick with them. But the other day I was in my element; they called upon me for a speech, and I talked such stuff to them that at last I began to be ashamed myself. At the conclusion I compared *our* president to a comet, and said, that 'as the latter the more it stretches backward the broader it becomes, so shall we in our progress grow and increase in strength, till, like a brilliant comet in the night sky of the opposite party, we shall break our way shining and flaming to the zenith of the firmament.' You should have heard the applause; and the lacemaker from down in Front-street, who has made a couple of thousand dollars or so, and therefore considers himself a wonderfully clever fellow—but who, I may observe in passing, is a dreadful Whig and a blockhead, and had only come to our meeting to hear what was going forward,—went away, saying, 'It's all very well, anybody can deal in abuse.'"

[Pg 122]

"But I don't consider it right to mystify the people in such a way as to their feelings; why not speak to them in clear distinct words? why not endeavour to strengthen them in pure unadulterated truth?"

"Mr. Hehrmann," said Strauss, becoming more serious, "I could answer that question by another, but we will confine ourselves to what is political. You dare not do it; no one would listen to you at last, and the people would say, 'He will only tell us what we know well enough already,' whether they know it or not. No, to be a Mentor of the people, I, for one, shall not aspire; but if they will be made fools of it's their own fault. If they would only learn to *think* before they would *abuse*, all that would not happen; but you may convince yourself, from every individual, with a few exceptions, that what I say is correct. Thousands of my worthy fellow-countrymen, some of whom even pass for political luminaries, know and understand as little of American politics as most German reviewers know of the books which they review. They just cast a glance into them, and criticize away.

"The Germans here follow the multitude, and many of our German Tom Noddys, who with puffed-up cheeks look down upon their poorer countrymen, although they themselves, but a few months before, scarcely had salt to their bread, become Whigs; because they now come in contact with rich Americans who are Whigs, and who see through these addle-heads, flatter them, and lead them by the nose so long as they want to make use of them. You cannot conceive what a contemptible animal is one of these German parvenus who has become rich. But it is getting late, and we had better go to bed; farewell, therefore, until to-morrow; I'll come round to the boat before it starts."

[Pg 123]

The settlers followed the advice of the apothecary, and, wearied with the constant wandering about, retired to rest. Pastor Hehrmann, however, continued silently to walk up and down the deserted deck in deep musing, till weariness overcame him also, and he laid himself down, wrapped in his cloak, beside the little cabin of the pilot, there in the open air, to await the rising sun.

The dawn was yet contending with the increasing light of the young day, and the crew, who had been busy at work cleaning the various decks, had just concluded their labours, when the door of one of the sleeping apartments in the ladies' cabin opened, and the pastor's elder daughter stepped out into the fresh morning air, to greet the first rays of the awakening day. The neighbourhood, still and pleasant, lay before her; the river murmured and splashed lightly against the sides of the boat; fishes leaped out of the water; single boats, with snow-white sails,

glided quickly across the stream, and all nature rested, overspread with such a lovely charm, that the dear and good girl gently folded her hands, and with her clear eyes turned toward the equally pure sky, prayed inwardly.

"Good morning, Bertha!" whispered a voice, softly; and the maiden started back, exclaiming "Oh!" with a glad voice—but she receded still farther, pale and frightened, when she saw the sharp eyes of Dr. Normann fixed upon her with a keen though friendly expression. He now climbed quickly over the paddle-box down to the gallery of the ladies' cabin, and approached the young girl, who timidly drew back, exclaiming, reproachfully—"Doctor, you must have mistaken the place."

"No, my dear Bertha," said the doctor, seizing her hand, which she, half mechanically, let him do. "No, I do not mistake, but the boat will leave in a few hours, and I myself cannot leave Cincinnati, on account of business, until the expiration of some weeks. It is therefore not possible for me to part from you thus, without having first declared myself."

[Pg 124]

Bertha would have withdrawn her hand, but he would not let her, but continued, more passionately,

"Bertha, there is no time now to choose convenient times and places; I am on the point of losing you. You must, during the whole time you have known me, have remarked with what devotion I love you."

"Sir!" said Bertha, alarmed.

"Do not take away this hand from me," the doctor continued, with ardent looks; "do not reject the heart of one who is capable, nay, the whole wish of whose soul is to make you happy; do not turn your dear face away; say at least that you are not angry with me."

"Leave me, sir, I beg of you," said the girl, who was now really alarmed; "I can give you no hopes to encourage feelings which I cannot reciprocate."

"I have startled you, Bertha, have I not?" asked the doctor; "you are angry with me on that account."

"I am not angry with you; no, do not misunderstand me; you have been so disinterestedly obliging to my parents, and to the whole company, that I cannot help giving you my whole esteem."

"Oh! why that cold word—esteem?" said Normann.

"Do not demand more; I cannot, I dare not, ever feel more, I——"

"You love another; you love yonder young man, who——"

"Sir," said the otherwise so-retiring girl, drawing herself up proudly, "I believe that I am not bound to give any account of my feelings to you." With these words, she endeavoured to go back on the gallery, in order to return into the cabin, whither the doctor dared not have followed her, but he barred her passage, and said, in a low tone, but gravely: "Bertha, I love you—love you with a passion that startles even myself. Bertha, you *must* be mine; do not rob me of every hope; say, at least, that you may, one day."

[Pg 125]

"Sir, you will oblige me to call for assistance if you do not let me go. You cannot hope to force me to love you? Farewell; *if* we ever meet again, may this conversation be forgotten by both of us. I bear no ill-will towards you."

With these words, she stepped past the doctor, who no longer sought to detain her, but looked darkly after her, and then murmuring something between his teeth, quickly regained the upper deck; without looking round, he jumped off the other side of the paddle-box in a bound or two on to the lower deck of the boat, strode over the plank, and disappeared in a few minutes more among the buildings of the town.

The Captain was as good as his word, as to their early departure; it was not yet seven o'clock when his bell sounded for the first time, and soon after, the mooring ropes were got in. Strauss, who wished to take leave of his new friends, could scarcely press their hands, before the engines began to work, and in a very short time more, the boat panted, hissing and foaming, down the stream towards the father of the waters—the Mississippi.

At breakfast, all the 'tween deck passengers assembled in the lower deck, but they were not a little astonished on finding that Dr. Normann had disappeared so mysteriously without taking leave. Pastor Hehrmann, it is true, might have given them some explanation, for he had been an unintentional spectator from the upper, or so-called hurricane deck, of the whole interview between his daughter and the doctor; but the latter, in hurrying off, had not observed Hehrmann, and as his daughter said nothing on the subject, the pastor determined not to allude in any way to what had taken place.

"What can have become of the doctor!" exclaimed Becher, when he had been sought for everywhere, and the conviction forced itself upon them that he was not on board. "This morning I saw him running hastily into the town. I called after him, too, but he either did not, or would not hear me."

[Pg 126]

"Probably," suggested the elder Siebert, "he went to look after something or other, and did not think that the boat would start so soon. Is his luggage still on board?"

"If I am not much mistaken, he carried that under his arm," replied Becher, "but I will not positively affirm it."

M. Von Schwanthal now gave a different turn to the conversation as well as to the thoughts of the settlers, by describing the Museum—where, on the preceding evening, he had fallen in with our four-leaved shamrock, Schmidt, the shoemaker, the tailor, and the brewer,—in such a droll manner, that all assembled round him.

"They call it a Museum of Natural History," he said, laughing; "a couple of cupboards full of stuffed birds, and hideous drawn-out beasts, are the only things that belong to natural history in the place; but there are plenty of other things; for example, mammoth's bones, Indian weapons and dresses; a cuirass, picked up after the battle of Waterloo, on which, if I mistake not, the hero's blood yet sticks; a French postillion's boot—the latter was shown as something particularly curious; a piece of steam-boiler that had burst and was blown from the steamer, I don't know how many hundred yards, upon the shore; snakes in spirits-of-wine; and, above all things, a horrible room-full of relics of criminals; ropes and nightcaps of people who have been hanged; awfully distorted heads of malefactors in spirits; hands and feet cut off; knives and axes, with which deeds of murder have been done, and on which the blood may yet be seen. Pish! a shudder runs through me at the very thought of it."

"And then the large dolls," said the tailor.

"Yes, splendid wax-figures, representing nothing but tales of murder and robbery, and then such attitudes! One thing amused me very much; under a glass-case there stood a kind of machine, put together of iron and brass wheels: it is true it was immovable, but below was a label pasted on it, whereon was written, 'Perpetuum mobile.'" [Pg 127]

"And the last was pretty, too," said the shoemaker, who could not conceive why the Committee laughed at this; "there came in one of these negroes, and threw a whole lot of plates in the air, and danced about underneath them without letting one fall to the ground."

"But how about 'Hell?'" smiled Von Schwanthal, glancing sideways at the brewer; the other three burst out into a hearty laugh.

"Well," said the brewer, rather vexed, "I should like to know who would not have been startled. They've got a concern there which they call Hell, a whole room-full of devils, poor souls, snakes, and I don't know all what. On one side there was a railing, so I leant quietly against it, and was looking at a tall skeleton that stood close beside me and had frightful claws; but while I was thinking of nothing of the kind, it turned suddenly round and sprang right at me—it looked horrid."

"The brewer did not make a bad jump either," Von Schwanthal continued, taking up the narrative; "but unfortunately he alighted upon the corns of an old lady, who began to abuse him soundly."

"She must have been a German," said the brewer; "for though she spluttered out nothing but English gibberish, yet the first word she said was 'Rindvieh.' (brute or ox, lout,) I understood that."

"That wouldn't be difficult for you," tittered the tailor.

Siebert, senior, had meanwhile looked round once more after Dr. Normann, but without being able to see or hear anything of him, and the emigrants had to comfort themselves with the fact, that he had promised to visit them very shortly in their new settlement. For the moment, also, their senses were too much occupied with the present, in seeing all that was new, which glided past them, sometimes on the river, sometimes on the shore, and as the weather was warm and beautiful, they spent the greater part of the day, as of the night, on deck. [Pg 128]

Bertha, after the doctor left the boat, had given vent to her distressed feelings, in her lonely berth, by a healing flood of tears; but determined on concealing the conversation which had taken place from her parents, in order not to trouble them unnecessarily, and at breakfast she appeared collected and almost cheerful.

The boat pursued its course with rushing speed down stream, and already, on the second evening, reached the mouth of the Ohio, the little town of Cairo, at the south-west angle of Illinois State. But here the passengers had the mortification to discover that they were to be removed into another boat—"the Orinoco," upon one of the largest of the Mississippi steamers, as the smaller, "Dayton," hoped to do more business on the Ohio, which just then could not be conveniently navigated by the larger vessels, by reason of the want of water. But they did not experience much inconvenience in the matter, for the little vessel laid herself close alongside of the larger one, and in less than three hours all was ended, and their position was at the same time considerably improved, as well as regards room as convenience.

Now, therefore, they found themselves, for the first time, on the mighty Mississippi River; Pastor Hehrmann gazed gloomily out upon the yellow surface of its waters, which with headlong rapidity rolled themselves down in enormous breadth between its flat banks.

"And I had pictured to myself such a lovely idea of this mighty Mississippi!" he murmured to himself; "and now it looks so desert and wild, so malicious and spiteful: many a thing loses its charm when it is looked at near at hand."

The remaining settlers seemed less unpleasantly surprised by the grand surface of water which spread itself out before them.

"That's something like a river!" said the tailor; "one almost feels as though one were going to sea again; I really should not know which way to steer to get down it." [Pg 129]

"It's a good job the pilot isn't quite so stupid," said the shoemaker, and the little one probably concurred in this view, for he simply nodded his head.

But the weather did not continue so favourable as it had been. From the other side of the river, from above the close tree-tops, dark heavy masses of cloud rolled themselves on towards them, spread all over the sky, and made the neighbourhood look yet more dreary and more forbidding. Now and then single clouds discharged their loads of water, and the rain streamed down at those moments with such fearful force that the people in the boat, which rushed through it, felt quite anxious and frightened. But while they were sitting in the dry and tolerably comfortable space of the lower deck, awaiting the clearing up of the weather, the by no means agreeable cry of "wood aboard! wood aboard!" was heard through the boat, and, well or ill, *all* had to turn out, for *all* had engaged, when they paid less passage-money than they otherwise would have done, to help to carry the wood for the firing of the boat. A certain Republican spirit had prompted them not to shrink from a kind of work which some other passengers who travelled with them did not shun. It is true that they had not taken into account that their clothes were not suitable, and that they possessed neither the practice nor the endurance required to bear, without grumbling, a hardship which they now discovered was none of the lightest.

The evening set in; it became dark, and rained as though the skies were coming down; and during several hours they had to clamber up the steep and slippery river-bank, about twenty or thirty feet in height, and get down again with three or four heavy pieces of cordwood on their shoulders, in doing which they not unfrequently slipped and fell, and sometimes hurt themselves considerably without receiving any comfort in return, except that, when after three hours' work, they went on board again, tired and worn out, with torn and soiled clothes, they were laughed at into the bargain by the crew of the "Orinoco." In return for this, and for a repetition of the same work two or three times more, they saved a dollar per man on the whole voyage. [Pg 130]

The next day was not much better; the weather remained dull and rainy, and the wood-carrying had to be done twice more; but they were now hourly approaching nearer and nearer to the object of their journey, and the captain told Siebert, senior, who spoke English, that he should land them about one in the morning at the mouth of the Big Halchee.

"Do you know the place?" asked Siebert.

"No, I do not; but the pilot thinks it is a little creek of that name, and lies between Randolph and the northern boundary of Tennessee."

"What is the name of the town at the mouth of it, then?"

"Town!—there's no town at the mouth."

"No town! Well, then, some little place?"

"Yes; a cordwood-chopper lives there with his family, if he has not moved away yet. Those people are always on the move."

"Strange!" grumbled Siebert to himself; but the idea did not seem to please him, that only a solitary wood-cutter should occupy the mouth of their river; for he concluded, not unreasonably, that many settlers must have located themselves there, had the watercourse been of any magnitude; he said nothing about it, however. And now preparations commenced in earnest for getting ready all their cargo of valuables, in order not to be detained too long with the unloading when the boat should land. It was unpleasant, of course, that it should rain and be dark when they reached the place of their destination, but that could not be helped; all were glad to be so near the goal, and had not the least fear for the future. They were aware, no doubt, that they should have to make shift with the few buildings which they should find upon their farm, but still it was a beginning, and comforts might be obtained by and by. [Pg 131]

Night came on—the rain poured down in streams—all nature seemed in agitation; but the mighty boat hissed and hurried through the roaring storm, dashing with its paddles the yellow waves the wilder, towards the steep and loose river banks, where they broke, so that here and there large lumps of earth were loosened and precipitated with a splash into the flood.

"But we can't land in weather like this," said Von Schwanthal to Siebert, senior; "the captain will have to lie-to until to-morrow morning."

"That he wont;" said Siebert, shaking his head, "we needn't reckon upon that; these captains of steamers are a rough, hardened set of fellows; no, he would put us ashore if it rained pebble-stones."

"If there's only a good tavern not far from the shore we may there await better weather."

"Well, I hope there may be!" sighed Siebert, and went to his box, to cord it and get it ready.

Bustling activity now reigned everywhere among the passengers, but not the best of humours; the weather had put them out, and the greater part of them sat about, grumbling, agitated by

uncomfortable feelings, in the corners of the 'tween decks.

Midnight was past, when the bell rang for landing, while the thunder outside accompanied its sound, which echoed far out into the darkness. Not long after a firebrand was swung on the left shore, and the vessel took a sweep in order to lie-to with her stern to the stream; the captain at the same time stepped to the 'tween decks, and cried—

"Big Halchee—who's for the shore?"

The sailors and stokers followed, and seized everything that came to hand, and put it ashore; but not above, at the top of the bank, but close to the river's edge, where about fifteen cords of wood were already piled up. These meanwhile were carried aboard by another portion of the workpeople, and the whole scene was a dreadfully confused and disordered one. Women complained, children cried, men swore; the rain meanwhile actually *flooded* from the sky, and the women, as well the Hehrmanns as the other families, could only be got up the steep bank of the shore with considerable trouble, where they perceived, by the glare of a pine-torch, a solitary small and low house, the door of which was open, while in the chimney there burned a slightly glimmering fire.

[Pg 132]

The owner of the house and of the cordwood accompanied them as far as the entrance, and made signs for them to enter. But Siebert, who had previously exchanged a few words with him, whispered, as the latter turned away, "Don't crowd too near the bed; the wife of our host lies there; she died about an hour since!"

There was something so awfully quiet in the words, that Pastor Hehrmann looked round terrified after the American; but he went quietly down to the steamer to receive the price for his wood. There the captain, out of particular civility, had caused an old tarpaulin to be spread over the goods which had been tumbled ashore, and which covering he intended to fetch away on his upward journey: Siebert, however, quickly bought it of him for five dollars, for he now saw how necessary it would be for their use, and then followed the rest into the shanty. All could not have found space in this, even had the dread of the corpse not driven the greater part of them into the most distant part of the room; fortunately, however, there was also a so-called kitchen, or smoking-house, behind the dwelling, and here a great number of the settlers were billeted, at least for the night. Oh, how anxiously all waited the morrow.

It was a fearful night; the storm roared round the house, so that the weak boarding which formed the roof clattered and tumbled, and here and there the rain poured through in streams. The mosquitoes appeared insatiable, and swarmed round the poor tortured ones in an almost unbearable manner. The little children, in particular, alarmed by the novelty of all that surrounded them, would not be quieted, and by their cries increased the strangeness, the unearthliness of their situation; and before them all, still and motionless, careless of mosquitoes, or of any other disturbance, the young woodsman sat beside the bed of his dead wife, which was hung over with a thin mosquito curtain.

[Pg 133]

Silently he stared into the now bright flaming fire in the chimney, and his left hand all the night through clasped the hand of the corpse. The elder Siebert, it is true, once tried to approach him and to offer consolation, but the unhappy man merely made a sign to him to leave him alone, and stared uninterruptedly into the fire on the hearth. He was beside his wife, and seemed not to remark the presence of the many strangers.

Pastor Hehrmann, seated at the head of the bed where the corpse lay, had collected his family around him, and had spread his large, wide cloak over them, to defend them as well from the annoying insects as from the single drops of rain which penetrated. But, comforting all in their unpleasant position, he concluded a simple but touching prayer, which he spoke aloud, with the words, "May the Almighty make our departure as glad and as happy as our arrival is inauspicious and melancholy."

A loud hearty 'Amen' from every lip replied to this, and then deep silence reigned throughout the house of affliction.

FOOTNOTES:

[5] Fences, in America, are formed of poles of wood, split lengthwise, which ordinarily surround the fields in a zig-zag form, and are intended to preserve the grain from the cattle, which run about freely. In the West, where there is wood in abundance, this arrangement is universal; but in the East, and particularly in the vicinity of towns, they are beginning to raise quickset hedges, or at least to apply the wood in the most economical way, so as to make as little wood as possible surround a great space.—*Note by the Author.*

Many old countrymen, upon their first arrival in America, are disgusted with the rail fences, and talk about the quickset hedges which they will have upon their land; but it all ends in talk. Wood is adopted for fences in America, as well because of its abundance as because the white and black thorns, used in quickset hedges in England, although they grow, yet do not generally thrive there; besides, the planting, filling up gaps, pruning, ditching, &c., requires much labour, and that is expensive there. Cattle, also, are so used to the bush, that they would make no difficulty of walking through a quickset hedge, unless it were many years old, and well made. Every man can swing the axe there, and most of their woods grow tall in the stem, without knots or branches, for fifty feet or so, and split readily, sometimes even without the wedge. They therefore cut trees,

such as ash, oak, elm, birch, and (for the lower rails, to resist the effects of wet) cedar, into twelve or sixteen feet lengths, and then split them, either with the axe alone, or with the assistance of a mall and wedges, into rails of a convenient thickness. These are laid upon the surface of the ground in zig-zag, as mentioned by the author, each overlapping the other by six inches or so, and so on to the height of from six to twelve feet, and, in well-made fences, stakes are also driven firmly into the ground, near the places where the rails meet, one inside and one outside of the fence, at an inclination towards it, their points meeting and crossing each other at the junction of the top rails, and forming, by such crossing, a receptacle for a heavy rail or rider, as it is called, which tops it all, and serves to give the whole stability; thus all nails and iron-work, which are expensive, or wooden pegs, which would require labour, are dispensed with, and a fence is obtained, having nearly the strength of a brick wall, and capable of restraining cattle. Fences without stakes and riders are also used, especially for temporary purposes, supporting themselves by the zig-zag ground-plan and their own weight, but are liable to be invaded by a breachy ox, and are also more liable to be put out of their position. An ox is, in America, termed "breachy" when he has learned to lift the rails off with his horns, which he does by the ends one after another, like any Christian, until it is low enough for him to step over; but if properly staked and ridered he cannot do so. Such oxen are not very common, but never can be cured of the habit, and however well they may work in the yoke, have to be fattened and killed forthwith. When the two or three lower rails, and also the stakes, are of wood, capable of resisting the effect of damp, such as cedar, black ash, &c., a well-made fence will last for an indefinite number of years, but otherwise seven or eight years suffice to rot the lower rails, and to make constant patching necessary, which is almost as bad as making a new fence, for, to get at one of the lower rails, the fence has to be taken down for many lengths on each side, and never can be relaid so well. In the Canadas, and the Northwestern states of the Union, the ground, during winter, is covered with snow, for a distance of ten degrees and more south of corresponding latitudes in the Old World, and this is the season when the timber is easily got out of the bush, or of the swamps, into the clearings, either on low sleighs, or by being snagged—that is, dragged out by oxen and a logging chain.—Tr.

[6] It is not customary for shoemakers in Germany to keep a large stock of shoes; those in the text, of course, were not all made by the seller, but probably in New England, where there are whole towns where nothing else is done. The wooden pegs would surprise an English shoemaker as much as they did the German.—Tr.

[7] A brass bason is the German barber's sign—Tr.

[8] Munich is celebrated throughout Germany for the goodness of its beer.—Tr.

CHAPTER IV. THE SETTLEMENT.

[Pg 134]

He who awaits the coming morning in a warm, soft bed, in a well-built house, cares little whether it rains and storms without, or whether the sun darts his first rays in a clear blue sky. Perhaps he wraps himself only the more comfortably in his covering, and turns once more for a short morning nap, when the rain beats cold and loud against the window-panes, and the wind whistles madly in chimneys and key-holes, shakes down the soot in the rocking fire-places, turns the rusty old weathercocks, scraping and creaking, backwards and forwards, and howls up and down the streets in wild unfettered play.

But, on the other hand, how anxiously does the invalid on his sick bed, or the poor wanderer, who has had to pitch his roofless, unprotected encampment under the trees of the forest, amidst storm and tempest, look forward to the lingering, lingering dawn of morning! how many times does he turn his eyes on near objects, and gaze searchingly round, to see if he cannot discover a somewhat lighter reflection, a more distinct perception of the surrounding place, which may announce the breaking morning, and promise him at least light, with which he may hope for some alleviation of his torment, or some amendment of his unbearable position!

How ardently, how eagerly, was this morning longed for by the settlers, who, scarcely conscious where they were, many of them just awakened from a deep sleep, had been turned out, in storm, and rain, and pitchy darkness, into the wild, rustling forest, with scarcely a roof for shelter, and who could not even reconnoitre the place where they were, which, but sparingly lighted by the embers on the hearth at first, was now shrouded in impenetrable darkness.

[Pg 135]

Add to this, the consciousness of having a human corpse in the room, and of the presence of the still, motionless figure of the young man, who, so long as he sat by the bed-side of his wife, had betrayed no more sign of life than did the dead body by whose side he watched, and whose hand he probably was still, as before, holding in his own.

At last, at last, the first faint glimmer of dawn broke through the cracks of the hut; the grey firmament, so far as the narrow clearing of the wood allowed it to be seen, showed itself lighter and lighter, and the wet foliage rustled and shook more loudly and violently to the morning salute of passing gusts of wind.

Wild, strange, unearthly sounds were heard, at the same time, from without, so that the women

started with fright, and huddled closer together, in order, united, to meet with more heart the terrors, which appeared the more awful because they could neither assign to them form or shape.

With the dawn, too, the mosquitoes became unbearable; they attacked in swarms the unfortunate strangers, whose sweet blood appeared to be particularly palatable to them,[\[9\]](#) and no handkerchief wrapped round, no mantle, no veil, could any longer protect them from their innumerable and painful stings; for they searched about, and did not rest, until, somewhere or other on the body they found an unprotected spot, into which they might bury their insatiable little trunks.

It now became lighter and lighter[\[10\]](#) in the little space, and every moment they recognised more distinctly the details of their anything but pleasant environs. [Pg 136]

So this was a log-house! Wind and weather found free access on all sides,[\[11\]](#) and even the roof, to which they could look up unimpeded by any ceiling, allowed the rain, which beat down in wild, stormy streams, to come through in large drops. As to household utensils, the dwelling scarcely contained any; at least, none which they could distinguish in the dawning light. The bed, covered with the white mosquito curtains, and supporting the corpse, beside which the young woodsman still sat, silent and motionless, and some rough seats, on which a portion of the settlers had placed themselves, were the only furniture of the forest home.

The settlers had, meanwhile, passed the long melancholy hours in very various and strange groups and positions. It must doubtless have been most difficult for the members of Hehrmann's family to bear their hardships without a complaint, without a murmur; for, accustomed from childhood to the pleasant conveniences of life, and hitherto withdrawn from the discomforts to which others had been exposed during the whole voyage, they had no idea, except from the first few nights in the steerage, of such a situation or such sufferings. Quietly and uncomplainingly the tender beings clung to the husband and the father, who folded them in his arms, and tried to protect them with his cloak from cold, and wet, and mosquitoes.

The rest of the Committee were equally ill lodged; but the men, by a sort of instinct, had cowered down in the chimney-corner, packed as close together as possible, in order to leave no more of their persons exposed to the attacks of the little blood-thirsty enemies which in myriads surrounded them than they were able to defend. The brewer, the shoemaker, the tailor, and Schmidt, as well as a troop of Oldenburghers, and several other groups, composed of Brunswickers and Alsatians, did precisely the same, so that afterwards, when the unpleasant part of the business was past and forgotten, and the settlers remembered the comic side of that night only, Becher was wont to say that the whole company was divided into so many heaps of rats. [Pg 137]

Suddenly there was heard without, seemingly quite close to the house, a strange, wild, unearthly noise, rather a howl than a cry—and it sounded so plaintive and awful, like the cry for help of one that was perishing, and then again like the mocking laugh of a maniac, that the trembling girls pressed closer to their father, and many an otherwise brave man, surprised and startled, looked up and listened, with loud beatings of the heart, to the constantly wilder sounds.

"I say, brewer!" said the tailor, pushing him in the side, with all his strength, "what's that?"

"D—n!" swore the latter, who had just dropped off into a doze, and whom the ungentle application called back again to partial wakefulness and suffering—for the two, at present, seemed inseparable—"leave me alone; what should it be!—the watchman!—don't you hear his horn?"[\[12\]](#)

"A fine sort of watchman, that!" said Schmidt. "They don't want a watchman for these two houses—the people in the streets here are quiet enough o' nights, I'll be bound!"

"Don't speak so loud!" whispered the shoemaker; "yonder still sits the American, beside his dead wife. Ugh! but 'tis awful to have a corpse in the room!" [Pg 138]

"Awful!—nonsense!" said the brewer, still half asleep—"not if she lies still!"

"You be quiet, will you!" whispered, fearfully, the tailor; "if he over there hears you, he might take it ill."

"How is he to understand German?" replied the other. "But whatever it may be, it's howling on the other side of the house now. A bear, I dare say!"

"Oh! don't go frightening a fellow so!" exclaimed the tailor, half angry, half frightened. "It's bad enough as we are; it only wants that to make it complete. Oh, geminy! these gnats!"

"There never were such gnats as these before," said Schmidt; "and I think the whole kit must have come across to us."

"Oh, no! the Oldenburghers, over yonder, seem to have got a few, too," grinned the shoemaker, maliciously. "One of 'em keeps hitting himself *such* raps on the face—his nose will be black and blue to-morrow!"

"I'm getting hungry," yawningly said the brewer, who now began to wake up by degrees. "Is it raining still?"

"No; it has ceased raining," said the shoemaker; "but if the little town here is no better paved than the landing-place, good luck to our shoes! there will be work! Whoever has not got bull-hide

straps to keep 'em on, will lose them in the mud!"

"Town!" asked the brewer, who had been round the little clearing. "Town! there's no town here, shoemaker—it must be higher up. I wish I could get something to eat!—I'm very hungry, that's a fact!"

"The howling has taken away all my appetite," whimpered the tailor; "blown it completely away, as it were. However, I shouldn't mind a cup of coffee."

"I should like to know where we are to get coffee from here," said Schmidt; "and if we had any, we couldn't drink it out of our hats; I see no cups."

"Well, then, we could unpack some," said the tailor; "but hush! the man there is moving," he continued, in a low whisper, as the woodsman, rising from his seat, drew back the mosquito net, which had hitherto covered the corpse of his wife. [Pg 139]

On a poor-looking mattress, stuffed with moss, lay the body of the young and beautiful American; a plain white calico dress covered her limbs, and her long flowing chestnut hair clung around the pale sunken features of her noble face. The eyes were closed, and on the lids there lay two pieces of silver coin to keep them down. The right hand rested upon the heart, the left lay beside her; she seemed to have fallen asleep gently, and without pain; angelic peace was depicted on her pure and beautiful features.

The young man gazed long and silently upon her, and he watched, as if in a dream, scarcely conscious that he did so, the individual mosquitoes which flew in through the now opened net, expecting a new meal. He noticed how they alighted upon the dear face of his wife, as though they expected to find blood in the dry veins of the corpse, until he himself gazed upon the creatures with stifled breath. It came over him that his Maria—his all in this world—could not be dead, and he expected to see the little blood-suckers swell as they drew in her warm life-juices; but scarcely had they bored their slight and pointed stings through the skin, and appeared to have made the first attempt, before they quickly and tremblingly, with evident signs of fear and alarm, endeavoured to free their little trunks, flew quickly away, and in confused haste sought in vain for the opening by which they had entered.

With a deep sigh the unhappy man let his arm fall, and turned silently away; it was then that his eyes met those of Pastor Hehrmann, who had risen in order to offer words of consolation and of courage to the sufferer. As he was endeavouring to call to mind the little English which he knew, and was making several pauses in speaking, from lack of words to express himself; the other made a sign to him with his hand, and said, in good and pure German, but with averted face— [Pg 140]

"I am a German, Sir; I understand your language."

"A German! and alone in this neighbourhood?" asked Hehrmann, surprised; "have you been long, then, in such melancholy circumstances?"

"You shall hear all that when I have buried my wife.—Will you help me?"

"Such is not only my wish, but my duty also," said the clergyman, kindly. "But, my dear Sir," he continued, somewhat shyly and almost timidly, "do you live really quite alone in this spot? and is this house situate at the mouth of the Big Halchee?"

"Yes," said the woodman; "the nearest house is three miles below; just such another as this, and only built for the same purpose, cordwood chopping, for sale to the passing steamers."

"And there is no town hereabouts?"

"No," was the short, half-whispered answer.

"And further up the Big Halchee—are there no settlements there?"

The man no longer seemed to hear him; his eye again hung upon the pale countenance of his wife, and he resumed his seat beside her, no longer conscious of what was passing around him.

Pastor Hehrmann did not venture to disturb him again, and the men stared inactive upon the silent suffering figure without knowing what to do, afraid, on the one hand, of disturbing the mourning of the house, anxious, on the other, not to lose time, so valuable to them, in order to reach, at last, the spot which was to be their new home.

It was one of the women who first plucked up resolution,—the usually so bashful and retiring Bertha. She advanced to the hearth, blew the almost extinct embers into a livelier glow, [13] piled upon the flame such logs of wood as she could find lying round the house, and fetched out some pots and pans which appeared to have been neglected for many days, in order, not only to get ready a wholesome warm meal for the settlers themselves, but for the owner of the house, who, judging from his appearance, had probably not taken any nourishment for several days past. [Pg 141]

An example only had been wanting, and greater activity now prevailed on all hands. The women got to work, and some assisted Bertha, while others carried wood and live embers over to the other house, to light a fire there also, and to prepare breakfast simultaneously at both places, for the by no means insignificant number of persons.

Herbold and Becher, who were appointed to the commissariat department, meanwhile went down to the margin of the river, where their chests and other stores, for the most part, were still

standing, and gave out the necessary provisions, whilst the elder Siebert, accompanied by his brother and two of the Oldenburghers, looked about the homestead for mattocks and spades, in order to dig a grave for the corpse, but nothing of the kind could be found about the place, and they were compelled to have recourse to their own tool-chest. But the mattocks were at the very bottom of the chest, and had no handles. One of the Oldenburghers fortunately recollected having seen two pickaxes inside the house, and went back to fetch them, when the eye of the young widower fell upon them, and he soon guessed for what purpose they were wanted.

He quickly arose, beckoned the people to follow him, and led them about three hundred yards into the woods, where, in olden times, probably even before the Indians, a simple mound of earth, about ten or twelve feet in height, had been raised. There he begged them to begin their work.

[Pg 142]

Among the settlers were three carpenters and several cabinet makers, and they proceeded to work together, to construct a coffin, rough, it is true, but still adequate to its purpose, using chiefly the planks of a boat, which they found there ashore and burst. As they were well provided with tools, in less than an hour the last and narrow house stood ready for the reception of its tenant.

The young farmer, whose name, as they subsequently learnt, was Wolfgang, now returned, and the women having prepared breakfast, the rain having ceased, and a sandy place between the hut and the shore being dry, it was spread out there upon chests, and ingeniously-contrived stands.

They had to press the mourner repeatedly before they could induce him to eat a few morsels, and to drink a cup of warm coffee, although, during three days past, no food had crossed his lips; he then went into the house to the corpse of his wife, and wrapped it in the sheet whereon she had been lying, and which was now to be her winding-sheet.

Our four-leaved clover had meanwhile taken little part in the burial preparations, and, after their meal, were just about to stroll slowly off to look a little at the neighbourhood. But their little excursion was destined to be interrupted, for Mr. Becher, who appeared to adapt himself most readily to circumstances, however new to him, and who perceived that continued delay in this place would only tend to tire and to dispirit the emigrants, called together all the able-bodied who had hitherto been unemployed, to put together the two carts which they had brought with them, and to load them with the things which were most indispensable for the present.

Schmidt, as a farmer, and a wheelwright from Brunswick territory, performed the most effective services at this task, and in a short time the conveyances were ready for departure. One trifle, certainly, was still wanting, namely, cattle to draw them, and it was not until all was finished, and ready to move on, that the good folks thought of this deficiency.

[Pg 143]

It is true that neither horses nor other cattle could be seen about the place, but Mr. Becher did not doubt but that the farmer would find some; for the wood, piled up in considerable quantities on the beach, proved clearly enough that more than human strength had been required to get it all to the margin of the stream. But for the moment there appeared no prospect of being able to induce the man, who was engaged in paying the last duties to his wife, to fetch horses or oxen, whichever he might possess, and all further work had to be suspended until the conclusion of that melancholy duty.

Becher himself therefore began to examine the soil and surface upon which they now found themselves, more minutely, and the four allies, with two Oldenburghers and the wheelwright, now wandered along the margin of the Mississippi and looked at the surrounding landscape, as well as at the farm which had received them on their entrance upon their new mode of life with such melancholy and unpropitious omens.

The tailor went ahead upon the narrow footpath which led along the bank of the Mississippi; Becher and Schmidt followed; then came the shoemaker and the brewer, and the Oldenburghers brought up the rear. They had scarcely marched 200 yards in this order before they came to the banks of a muddy brook with a rather wide bed, but which now appeared nearly dried up, and poured its muddy water in a narrow thread only into the Mississippi. Near its mouth several immense cotton-wood and cypress trees lay, wildly thrown together, forming a kind of natural bridge, whilst some broken branches and stems stuck in the mud of the brook in all directions, and appeared sufficient of themselves to prevent navigation, even with a light boat.

Nearly all the stems which projected out of the turbid water were closely covered with small soft-shelled mud-turtles, which, when they perceived the approaching men on the bank above them, quickly flapped head foremost into the water again.

[Pg 144]

"A beautiful neighbourhood," said the tailor, stopping at the extreme verge of the bank, and pointing to the scene before them—"a very beautiful neighbourhood; and for this we have travelled, Heaven knows how many hundred miles, to take a summer lodging here! Well, I must say Dr. Normann shows remarkable taste; I really admire it."

His companions, thus brought to a halt, also stared round them, though in silence, and the wild and dreadful desolation and loneliness of the scene probably excited no very pleasurable feelings in them, for, avoiding each other's eyes, during several minutes they gazed upon the wild boundless landscape of swamp and water. Becher, however, looked shyly, sidelong, at the men who had accompanied him, and suddenly began to whistle a waltz with all his might.

The tailor turned round, surprised, towards him, and said, "Yes, a nice time for whistling!"

The wide expanse spread out before them was by no means calculated to produce an agreeable impression on new comers, particularly upon such as had not been accustomed to a flat country. On their left the muddy flood of the mighty Mississippi rolled rapidly and maliciously by, whilst, from the opposite side of the little brook, beside which they were standing, a sand-bank stretched out in smooth, monotonous, evenness, farther and farther still, into the stream, until, in the grey distance, where the latter took a mighty sweep to the right, it seemed to connect itself with the opposite shore, and to absorb the enormous mass of waters. The other side of the Mississippi also presented to the view a flat landscape of deep forest and swamp, uninterrupted by a single hill.

The vegetation was certainly grand, and these gigantic stems, which rose, smooth and faultless, to a height which they had never before contemplated, produced a strange, almost uneasy impression upon the wanderers; then again the wild vines and creepers which wound themselves from stem to stem, the wild and desert-looking fallen masses of wood, often half rotten, the enormous withered trunks, which here and there, as if stifled by the creeping plants, madly stretched their naked giant arms towards heaven, as if supplicating help, gave the whole such a gloomy, forbidding aspect, that the little tailor, after a minute's pause of astonishment, drew a long breath, as though he would have removed something from his heart; at last he turned round to his friends and fellow-travellers behind him, and said—

[Pg 145]

"Well, I had imagined the thing quite different from this; for if——"

To the boundless astonishment of the rest, the tailor had all at once disappeared; but before they had time to advance a step, they already heard, down below, in slime and water, a crying and splashing, which proceeded from their unfortunate comrade, who now, when at last he got firm footing, cried out lustily for help; for he could not comprehend where he was, how he had got there, and whether he had reached the end of his career, or was destined to proceed further and further downwards.

"Hallo, below there!" cried Becher, who soon ascertained that the tailor had received no injury, and that there was no further danger—"Hallo, there! is it a good soil? to what depth is it arable?"

"Help! help!" cried the little one, who was in no humour for joking—"Help! help! I am drowning! I can't swim! I must drown!"

Close to him, not three yards off, there was a young cypress tree which had fallen into the brook, and Becher now called to him to reach one of its branches until they could fetch a rope from the house and draw him up.

Meier, however, seemed noways inclined to take a step towards his own safety; fear had almost deprived him of his senses, and he continued to cry, "Help! help! I'm drowning! I can't swim!"

[Pg 146]

The houses were not very distant, and several of the women, who had heard the cries for help, hastened towards them, whilst the shoemaker ran, as fast as his legs would carry him, back to the landing place, to bring the necessary ropes from thence. But even then the most pressing requests and explanations were required to make the little man understand how he was to wind the rope round his body and fasten it; his whole presence of mind had forsaken him, and he considered himself lost beyond salvation.

At last he so far recovered his senses as to be able to tie a knot, and by their united strength (for the mud in which he stuck was tough) he was, after long pulling, and amidst the laughter of the women, brought to light. No sooner, however, did he feel himself on terra-firma again, than he doubled himself up, and swore hard and fast that a tremendous great snake had bitten him in the foot, and that he should die a lingering, miserable death.

They had a good deal of trouble to convince him of the contrary, but ultimately he felt that he was safe and sound, and turned back with the others to the laden carts, thenceforward, however, he could not be prevailed upon to come within fifty yards of the steep banks of either river or brook.

The sun was tolerably high in the heavens before the remainder of the settlers returned from the burial of the young American woman; about the same time the wood cart belonging to Wolfgang arrived, drawn by two powerful oxen, beside which walked a negro boy about twelve years old, with a very long whip, who drove forward the cattle, which were in a wooden yoke, as well by blows as by words. He stared with surprise on finding so numerous and unexpected a company assembled in so quiet a spot as that generally was.

The burial of his wife appeared to have restored all his former energy and power to the young German, and he was even ready to assist the strangers with council and deed, when Pastor Hehrmann had hastily made him acquainted with their immediate plan of settling not far from him, as well as with their wish to reach their destination as soon as possible. First of all he directed the negro boy to blow a horn, [14] which was in the house, to call in the other labourer, who was still at work in the woods, and then to put the oxen to the settlers' laden cart.

[Pg 147]

But here a new difficulty presented itself; this was the only yoke of working oxen which the German possessed, and he informed them that their road lay through a swamp, which would be so muddy and bad to get through, after the recent rains, that but a very light load could be taken.

"But would it not be possible to forward the cargo much more easily and quickly to its destination by the Big Halchee?" said Pastor Hehrmann; "a couple of stout rowers——"

"Would be easily able to execute the task," interrupted Wolfgang, "if they had water enough for navigation; the Big Halchee is not navigable at present."

"Is it far from here?" asked Becher.

"That gentleman can tell you the precise distance," said the farmer, pointing to Meier, the story of whose misfortunes he had just heard; "he was in it."

"What, is that the Big Halchee?" asked Becher and Siebert, startled.

"That is the Big Halchee," repeated the farmer, nodding; "but why do you ask? had you imagined it more agreeable, or larger?"

"Certainly," said Herbold, dispirited; "we heard that it was navigable, and that there was a small town at its mouth."

"According to American notions," replied the young farmer, a slight smile passing over his pale features, "both assertions might be maintained. It is navigable in spring, that is to say, down stream, for you cannot make way against the current when the water is high."

[Pg 148]

"But the town," asked Pastor Hehrmann, in surprise—"you don't mean to call your solitary house a town?"

"If you were to travel through the United States," said Wolfgang, "you might meet with many not more considerable towns than this, and with much more sounding names; but the place here is not called a town; it was only proposed to build Halchee Town here, and some speculators planned out the streets. You may still see the trees marked out in the woods; the Mississippi rose suddenly just then, washed away the little huts which they had erected here; one of the land-dealers was drowned, too, I think, and the thing was dropped."

"But are you not afraid that such a flood may reach you some time or other, and sweep you away with it?" asked Hehrmann, with signs of alarm.

"Certainly, that is by no means impossible; and next year is a leap year,[\[15\]](#) too, when the Mississippi regularly overflows its banks, sometimes more, sometimes less, and I was thinking of removing across to Arkansas, or down to Mississippi; but now," he continued, in a low voice, while two large bright tears came into his eyes,— "now I shall remain here; if the flood should really rise—well—I have nothing more to lose."

"But, tell me, my dear Mr. Wolfgang," Hehrmann asked in terror, "are all the dwellings along the river exposed to these dreadful dangers?—When that mighty stream once overflows its banks, such a mass of water must be irresistible."

"Do you see these marks?" Wolfgang asked, pointing to some faint, scarce distinguishable, light spots, which might be made out about eight feet from the ground, upon the bark of the trees under which they stood. "Do you see these marks? thus high the water rose last spring; my house, it is true, lies higher than this, yet it came into our room, and it carried off about thirty cords of wood with it."

[Pg 149]

"And you remained here?"

"What will not one do to earn money? The steamers use much wood, and pay tolerably well; I wanted to lay by enough to buy a little farm by and by in a wholesome district; now my wife is dead, and I—But let us start; it is getting late."

"But you are not going to leave your house now to accompany us?" asked Siebert, surprised; "suppose in the meanwhile—"

"My other negro will remain here," Wolfgang interrupted him. "Sam, the old fellow whom you see coming yonder, is faithful and honest; I can rely upon him; besides, you would hardly reach your destination without a guide, so that there is no choice."

"Oh, we might follow the road, you know," said Becher.

"Yes, if there were a road thither," answered the farmer, "but to the spot which you have described to me there leads no road, and if there are really houses there, the place must be very much overgrown with second-growth brush, otherwise I must have come upon them in some of my hunting expeditions; perhaps it is the place which the hunters call the dead clearing."

"Have you much game in this neighbourhood?" asked Von Schwanthal, who appeared much interested in this subject.

"Pretty well," replied the farmer, "but it is difficult to get at; the woods are too close, and the game itself is shy; it requires a practised hunter to track and kill a deer."

"Do you happen to know a certain Dr. Normann?" Becher now suddenly inquired, as if struck by a new idea.

"Normann?" said the farmer, trying to recollect, "Normann; no, the name is strange to me—why?"

[Pg 150]

"It is the name of the man who sold us this piece of land," said Pastor Hehrmann; "from all, however, that I have hitherto seen, I scarcely think that he ever set foot here, and almost dread that Mr. Helldorf's prophecies will be fulfilled."

"Helldorf?" asked Wolfgang, in his turn, surprised; "Helldorf—where did you meet with him?"

"In New York," said Siebert; "do you know him?"

"Do I know him!" replied Wolfgang; "I passed my happiest time here in America, beside him in Arkansas, and had it not been for my mad endeavour to earn a sum of money, I might have been still with my Maria at the foot of the pleasant Magazine Hill. Oh! that I had never seen the Mississippi again."

"Then you consider this climate very unhealthy?"

"Unhealthy!" said the German, in a low, hollow tone—"unhealthy!" he repeated, even lower still. "In the first year, my wife's sister died—that ought to have been a warning to me; in the same fall, my child; to-day we have buried my wife; and next spring, it is to be hoped, will find me by her side."

"Come with us to the hills, then, where a healthier air blows," said Herbold; "you can get land from us, and——"

"To the hills?" asked the German, surprised; "how far up the Big Halchee are you going, then?"

"Well, the land is said to be fifteen miles from the Mississippi," said Becher; "that's a pretty good distance."

"Yes," replied Wolfgang, "but then, you are still fifteen miles from the hills, and in no healthier district than this is; on the contrary, you want the air from the river, which is often fresh; a number of small lakes, too, cross the country in all directions, and evaporate, for the most part, in summer, and fill the atmosphere during four months of the year with their poisonous exhalations. Just now is the most unhealthy time."

[Pg 151]

"The devil it is!" said Von Schwanthal; "the worthy doctor never said a word about that."

"If he was ever in the valley of the Mississippi, he certainly must have known it," replied the farmer; "but now we'll be off; Scipio has been cracking his whip for the last quarter of an hour."

The emigrants parted unwillingly from the bulk of their remaining property, which at first they could scarcely resolve to leave by the waterside, merely under the superintendence of a negro; but at last they were convinced that a theft could hardly be committed here, for such a hut was certainly not a spot in the neighbourhood at which such valuables would be looked for. The chests and boxes, therefore, which contained the most necessary articles for the moment, to commence life in the midst of the woods, were placed on the carts, and even of these another selection had to be made; then the party set itself in motion, under the guidance of the farmer, who went first, and with an axe cut down, where necessary, the underbrush and young trees which stood in their way, or called into requisition the united strength of the men, to drag aside obstructions in the shape of occasional mighty trunks of fallen, rotten or half rotten trees, and thus made way for the wagon, which fortunately was narrow across the wheels.

The Germans were not a little nor agreeably surprised, when they discovered, after scarce an hour's progress, that the broad path which they had hitherto followed, was a mere track for getting out wood, and that now they had to shape their course straight through the woods—and *such* woods.

Fearful doubts now began to arise, even in the breast of Hehrmann, who had hitherto considered Dr. Normann an honest man, and it was with some anxiety that he looked forward to their entrance upon their new landed property.

While walking beside Wolfgang, he entered into conversation with him, and soon learnt the story of his simple, although active life.

[Pg 152]

Wolfgang hastily passed over a dark period in Arkansas, where a stranger, who was a German too, had sown hatred and discord, and stained their pleasant clearings with blood; and he related how, far away, up the Ozark mountains, he had become acquainted with his wife; had fallen in love with her, and whilst still a young girl married her; had founded a home in the midst of the wild woods, and lived happily, until, driven by the desire for ready money, which was not to be had at all there, he had quitted the healthy hill air to come down into the poisonous swamps.

He concluded his story (which Mr. Hehrmann listened to with bowed head and sorrowfully throbbing heart) by saying, "Mr. Hehrmann, you now, with wife and child, come from a healthy, cool climate, in the middle of summer, into the swampy atmosphere of this river, therefore *beware*. If wife and children are dear to you, commence your American farmer's life in some other district. You have yet the choice; this whole enormous country is yet open to you; all the northern, healthy states, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, even the northern hilly part of Arkansas, if you are desirous of choosing a milder climate; forsake these poison-impregnated swamps, where a German, unless already acclimatized, cannot exist, or at all events cannot remain in health; I speak from experience."

"Mr. Helldorf said so too," replied the preacher, thoughtfully.

"Mr. Helldorf knows the country," said Wolfgang, "he has wandered through it many a long year, and whatever he may have told you is true, you may rely upon it. As to your Dr. Normann, I certainly don't know the good man, and will therefore say no ill of him, but here in America there

is such a host of land-speculators, particularly in the seaport towns, that the emigrant cannot be too cautious; I am almost afraid that you have fallen into the hands of such a one, and if so, why of course you must try to make the best of a bad bargain."

[Pg 153]

"I say," remarked the shoemaker to the tailor, stumbling for the fourth time over a projecting root, and this time really hurting himself, "if I had any capital invested in this speculation, I should quietly begin to tear my hair out by the roots, but as it is, I can look on, and I must confess that I am curious to know how it will end."

"Well, look after your feet, at all events," said the other, as the shoemaker tripped again. "You do nothing but stumble. No; shares are beginning to fall, so far I am of your opinion; but what matters; *I* shall eat my way through; I've no fear of that; and if M. Von Schwanthal only shoots as much game as he has promised, and we get meat, and such meat, too, three times a day, I don't mind about this little mud excursion. Moreover, I've been on the look-out for some time past after a deer; it's strange that, in such a forest as this, the game should not be running about more plentifully. But, shoemaker, did you imagine the river on which our town was to be built, like what it really is?"

"How? what is it really? it does not exist at all. Call *that* a river!"

"Well, what I mean is, did you imagine it like what it is?"

"I don't exactly know," said the shoemaker, with a sly laugh at the tailor, "I have not examined it so narrowly as you have, you know; you have a *well-grounded* acquaintance with it."

"A fine subject for joking, to be sure," said the little one, indignantly; "suppose I had been drowned?"

"If we creep along in this style," said Schmidt, who now joined in the conversation, "we shall certainly not come to our journey's end to-day; we don't advance a hundred yards straight forward, before some tree or other has to be cut down to make room for the wagon. Are there no foresters^[16] here, I wonder?"

[Pg 154]

"Yes, a nice place this for foresters," said the brewer; "foresters in *this* wood! But if we don't soon reach some place where one may get something to drink, I shall get thirsty. What do you call all the towns, then, that are said to be in this neighbourhood? Deuce take it; where there are so many towns, there must surely be some village or other to be met with."

The worthy brewer was not aware, that in the United States of North America everything, even a group of two or three houses only, is called a town. A grand name, some ancient Greek or Roman one if possible, throws sand into the eyes of foreigners, and the land speculators in the large towns often sell "lots," as they call them, to emigrants, who expect to find a lively, animated place, and instead, have to be thankful if they can meet with anybody at all there to supply them with bread to begin with.

The women had meanwhile reconciled themselves to their wanderings as well as they could, and only one of them, a young girl, who was sick, and unable to walk, had been, on that account, placed upon the wagon, where, upon some spread-out mattresses between the well-secured chests, she had a sufficiently convenient, although not very quiet place, for the wagon, owing to the rough uneven road, tumbled about dreadfully. The Hehrmanns went foremost, and evidently struggled to let no melancholy humour be seen, although the tough mud which they had to wade through, and the innumerable stringy, and sometimes prickly, creeping plants, which entangled their feet, while the thorns penetrated their stockings, and tore their ancles and insteps till they bled, made walking as troublesome and unpleasant as well could be.

[Pg 155]

Thus they wandered and wandered on, until the sun went down below the tree tops, for fortunately he had driven away the clouds of rain, and the heaven extended its blue tent, brightly and clearly, over the travellers; but the close oppressive heat, on the other hand, operated yet more unfavourably upon them, because no good water was to be had, wherewith to quench their burning thirst. The wished-for fresher evening air at last cooled their heated faces, although the mosquitoes, which had lain concealed during the glowing heat, now re-appeared with fresh vigour. Yet they cared less for these than for the burning rays of the sun, and wandered forward with quickened and more elastic tread. But ere long, their silent leader intimated to them that they must bivouack where they were, for that he could not trust himself to keep a straight course after dark, and besides that, to proceed further at night was not only extremely wearisome, but even dangerous.

This was bearable enough in the mild summer air, and all of the party were easily and readily reconciled to it; the coverings which they had brought with them were therefore stretched out to keep the dew from the women, and soft beds of leaves were collected to make the first night in the woods as pleasant as possible; and the men also laid themselves down beside the fires which Wolfgang had lighted, whilst the provisions which they had taken with them stewed and roasted at the crackling flames.

And now again, fortunately, at a great distance, at first, the awful sounds were heard which had filled the settlers with such terror on the previous evening, and they were not a little astonished to learn that those dreadful notes proceeded from owls—and very insignificant little owls, too. Von Schwanthal, somewhat later, tried to shoot one; but although several of them, attracted by the fire, approached them, and gave out their monotonous horrid song in the tree tops close

[Pg 156]

above them, yet the foliage was too close to permit the eye of the marksman to perceive them in the darkness, and he discharged both barrels in the direction in which he guessed the noisy nocturnal bird to be—to the great terror of the female portion of the society, the tailor included—without, however, even interrupting the bird, much less driving it away.

Fortunately, the night remained dry, although the sky became overcast again, otherwise the situation of the poor Germans, unaccustomed to such privations, would have been a melancholy one. As it was, sleep visited the closed eyelids of the wearied at intervals only, for the strange noises which surrounded them on all sides, the dreary rustling of the gigantic trees, and even occasionally the stealthy, cautious footstep of some deer or wolf, that slunk round the bivouack, and only scented its enemies when it got to the leeward side, and then fled in hasty bounds—these kept them in continual excitement.

At last, morning came. The oxen, which had remained yoked during the night, were put to once more; the quickly-prepared breakfast was despatched, and the caravan moved on again, sometimes painfully, through little muddy brooks and standing pools; sometimes going round a wild and dreary looking lake, without defined banks; sometimes forcing their way through reed-brakes, sometimes through closely-tangled creepers, until at last Hehrmann, who, according to his calculation, had traversed a distance of twenty-five, instead of fifteen miles, addressed the guide, and inquired whether he did not think that he might have lost his way, for that it was impossible they could be far from the designated spot, if they had really constantly kept the true course.

"Oh, we have followed that," replied Wolfgang; "moreover, the frequent turning aside to avoid wet and impenetrable places has much prolonged our journey; but if my senses do not deceive me, we are now at the very place."

"On the right road, you mean," said Siebert, senior, who had likewise approached them, and now looked about him, right and left, apparently in search of some outlet by which they might avoid a thick copse, closely overgrown with young timber, which lay right before them, and which, on account of the many creeping plants and underbrush, was impenetrable.

[Pg 157]

"No; at the very spot itself!" said Wolfgang, observing the place attentively. "Do you see yonder tree, which has been felled in by-gone times?" he continued, addressing the men, who pressed round him. "The lower part is wanting—it has been used for rails; and yonder—yes, it's a fact, I am not mistaken!—yonder stood the fence. Look you, here are some single, half-rotten portions of it."

"But the field!" said Becher, alarmed.

"Was this thicket," replied the German, "now, it is true, a chaos of woods and underbrush. The land, for that matter, seems very good!"

"But we were to find land fit for the plough!" exclaimed Herbold, advancing, in real alarm. "You don't mean to tell us that this wilderness is the fifteen-acre field!"

"I have never been here before," replied Wolfgang, quietly, "and must therefore examine the place first. But if your land has not been cultivated for fifteen years, you may rely, in case this really should not be it, that it will hardly look better than that which lies before you! But we will hope for the best! Look you, a road has once led through here, this tree has formerly been blazed, although the bark has almost grown together again. It will be best to leave the wagon with the women behind us, and go round this wilderness, first of all; if we can't find the houses, we may come upon the section line—for according to your deed the land has really been surveyed—then we shall know directly where we are and what we are about."

"I doubt that!" said the shoemaker, to Schmidt. "One tree looks to me just like another, here; and if I were called upon, at this moment, to say from which direction we came here, I should have to guess!"

"Well, I must admit, too," said Schmidt, "that so long as the roads here are in no better condition, so long I shall not wander far from the rest—for whoever loses himself is done for!"

[Pg 158]

"Come along!" said the tailor; "there's a house to be searched for!"

"Where is the house, then?" asked the shoemaker, quickly.

"Well, that's just what they're searching for!" grinned the tailor. "Stupid as you are, you must know that!"

"Hark ye," said the shoemaker, savagely, "drop your larks—none of us are in the humour to listen to your nonsense just now! But let us go along, too; I should like to know whether our guide has found the right way!"

Scipio had now to halt with his team; and, in fact, he would not have been able, without the help of the axe, to advance any further; for every road and outlet was wildly overgrown, and scarcely passable on foot, much less with a four-wheeled wagon. Following, therefore, the course of a small brook which ran in a north-easterly direction towards the Big Halchee, after a short march, keeping to the margin of the thicket, and, as Wolfgang now positively asserted, former field, they reached the Big Halchee, and also, close to its soft, friable banks, a little log hut. However, Wolfgang warned them from entering it; for the earth round about, as he observed to the by-

standers, was cracked, and the little house was every hour exposed to be precipitated into the muddy bed of the stream, as, apparently, had happened to the former appendant and now vanished buildings, of which Pastor Hehrmann was then thinking.

"But is it not possible," said Becher, despondingly, "that we may be at the wrong place? You might, perhaps——"

"Yonder tree is the north-east corner of the section," replied Wolfgang, pointing to an oak standing at no great distance, the greater part of the rind on one side of which was peeled off, and on which some roughly-carved numbers and marks were still discernible.

"Then the dwelling-house has fallen down at some earlier time?" said Siebert, junior.

[Pg 159]

"There it stands!" replied the farmer. "A better dwelling than that was, in former times, you seldom meet with in this wild neighbourhood. How many buildings are specified, then?"

"A dwelling-house, with chimney—a smoking-house—a kitchen—a stable—and a maize-crib," read Siebert, senior, from his pocket-book, which he had got out.

"Do you not see that I was right?" said Wolfgang. "Here you have proofs of my assertion: these are the remains of the former chimney, which now certainly totters over the precipice, and may crumble and fall next night. The smoking-house must have gone before, at some earlier time; and the kitchen too, for I see nothing of them. But the stable is probably yonder heap of fallen logs; at least, there is no trace of any chimney there, and the distance of a stable from the house is also about the right one."

"And the maize-crib?" asked Pastor Hehrmann.

"Probably stood in the field," said Wolfgang. "Doubtless the remains might be found in yonder thicket; but it would hardly be worth while to seek for them, for such maize-cribs are easily raised, with split logs, mostly of ordinary fence-rails, and they generally rot in six or seven years."

"But, in the name of goodness, what are we to do with the women? Here we have brought the unfortunate creatures into the midst of the forest, without a roof or shelter; they cannot bear it."

"Oh yes, though," replied Wolfgang, with a gentle nod of the head, "they can bear much, very much, and a few nights in the open air is not the worst that could happen to them. It is fortunate, however, that I came with you myself," he continued, in a livelier strain; "you might have fared ill by yourselves, unaccustomed to the country and the climate."

"How far are we from the nearest town?" asked Siebert, senior; "it would, perhaps, be best, after all, to take them there until we have erected habitations."

[Pg 160]

"No," said Wolfgang, decidedly, "that is impossible; first, the place is more than thirty miles off; then, as I have heard from hunters, there are several lakes between this and it, before one gets to the hills, and besides, I don't know the exact direction. But, even if we could reach the town on a smooth, even road, I would not advise you to leave the women over there by themselves, for such little towns are for the most part inhabited by a rough, vicious people, the scum of the backwoods, and everything is so frightfully dear, that the money which is here so hardly earned is squandered on the people there. No, we will soon knock up a few sheds, which will at least keep off wind and rain for awhile; when that is done, I shall return to my own house, and send the old negro to you with a portion of your remaining things; he may stay here a couple of weeks, and put what you require into something like a regular train."

"But, my dear Mr. Wolfgang, how shall we ever be able to repay your kindness?"

"Make yourself easy on that score, you have done more for me; I shall never forget how kindly you buried my poor wife for me. Besides, this is no more than a neighbour's office; for you will learn, by and by, how far neighbourhood extends in the woods. However, strictly examined, I am rather selfish than otherwise; for I must have an occupation to amuse me, and after all that has occurred, of which you have only witnessed the tragical end, I should go mad, did I now remain alone and inactive upon my farm. Therefore, Courage! things will go better. If you were not here, this would be one of the last places which I should have recommended to you; but as it is, you are here, and all further delay and complaint are now useless."

"But to think that we can't even use one of the houses to shelter the women!" exclaimed Herbold, stamping angrily with his foot. "Plague upon the stealthy rascal who has deceived and betrayed us under a friendly face; if I could only catch him."

[Pg 161]

"Either he has deceived you," said Wolfgang, "or has been himself deceived; still, you yourselves are chiefly to blame for your misfortune—to give it its true name. You should not have bought directly, but should have first seen your bargain. Even in Germany you would not have purchased an estate without seeing it."

"But, then, the low price!" pleaded Becher.

"You have an answer to that here," replied Wolfgang, "if the land had been presented to you, it would still have been bought too dearly if it did not please you, and you had to undertake a long journey to it with wife and child, with bag and baggage. But it will be a warning to all of you for the future. Moreover, I recommend you to remain here no longer than is necessary to get over the first alarm, and to enable you to look round either in the neighbourhood, or the adjoining

states, for a healthier district; to travel about at random with so many people wont do at all. You must first find something that will suit you. Until then, this place is good enough, and when that is done, we will migrate together, for I, too, must first get my stock of cordwood to the river side, and there sell it."

"But the houses," repeated Herbold.

"I should not have advised you to have entered them even had they been standing; snakes and all kinds of vermin take up their abode in such ruinous old wooden buildings. But to work! I will now give you some practical lessons in house raising."

"Are you a carpenter?" asked the shoemaker.

"Not exactly, but everything else that is wanted, or rather, that necessity teaches us, in the woods. But of that hereafter: you will learn all that yourselves—one single year in America, in the bush, often does wonders."

"But we must make arrangements for the night," said Pastor Hehrmann; "we must not allow the women to be exposed to any accidental storm that may arise—the sky, too, is cloudy."

[Pg 162]

"Do not fear, my good sir," said Wolfgang; "do you see the roof of yonder house? Although the planks[17] upon it are for the most part rotten, yet we shall probably find among them enough to erect a temporary roof for to-day and to-morrow. We shall get along by-and-by; first of all we must find the place where you think of erecting your future abode; when that is done, we will take the luggage there, unpack the wagon, bring it here, and fetch away all the boards that we can find, which are good for anything. Luckily, I have brought tools for splitting such slabs as we may want, for I guessed that the place would look pretty much as it does—and as——"

"Mr. Wolfgang, you have become our guardian angel," said Pastor Hehrmann, gratefully grasping his hand. "What should we have done if we had arrived in this desert without you? the very idea is shocking; for, unfortunately, even as it is, with you, it is bad enough. But you are right; further reflections are unavailing here, and we must now prove that we not only wish to become American farmers, but that we have the strength and perseverance to carry out our resolution."

Wolfgang, quite aroused from his sorrow by the need in which he saw so many of his fellow countrymen plunged, by the appeal made to his whole activity and knowledge of life in the woods, and who hoped to find alleviation, or at least temporary forgetfulness of his grief in distraction, undertook the cause of the new settlers with cheerful zeal; he soon chose a somewhat elevated spot, not far from running water, and near enough, also, to the place where the people would have to clear their first field; then worked and toiled as though he were about to found a home for himself, and to clear and till his own land.

[Pg 163]

They quickly removed thither the things which they had brought with them, and pacified the women as well as they could, concerning their disappointed expectations; for to conceal the facts from them for that day would have availed nothing but to have made them anxious all night, and to have still, of necessity, learnt them on the following morning.

The plan with the old planks turned out well; the greater part of them were still serviceable, only the getting them down was attended with some danger. But the tailor, on the one side, and Scipio, on the other, performed essential services on the occasion, and the former boasted not a little of the dangers to which he had been exposed, when, two nights later, the ruinous hut, with the whole piece of ground on which it stood, really followed the kitchen and the smoke house.

The precaution for the encampment proved to have been necessary, for towards morning there fell a tolerably smart shower of rain, from which all the settlers were protected, and next day they proceeded with fresh energy to the erection of the shanties in which they intended to pass the winter.

But now it appeared how much they all had to learn, for no one knew how to handle the axe, and in splitting the four feet long slabs, they were all, even the carpenters themselves, very awkward. Wolfgang did not allow any trouble to put him out, but worked from morning until late, and on the evening of the second day he had the satisfaction of seeing that all had a roof to their heads, and that the company was at least sheltered from storm and rain.

The articles left behind, on the banks of the Mississippi, now began to be much wanted, and their friendly helper determined to return with his negro, and to send up the other black to the raising of the houses and chimneys.[18] He promised to relieve him again himself, for it would still be too quiet and lonely for him on his desolate hearth; received a few commissions to buy provisions for them of the steamers which might land there, and, after bidding a hearty farewell to all his newly-acquired, and worthily deserved friends, left the "dead clearing," as the place had really been called, on account of its desolation, by the hunters who made excursions thereabouts.

[Pg 164]

The entire colony now consisted of fifty-three persons, children included; of mechanics, there were, three carpenters, two cabinet-makers; a blacksmith, a locksmith, the tailor, shoemaker, and brewer, a tanner, and a glazier's apprentice. The latter, a young lad, had only come out to New York with them in search of his father, but had ascertained from an acquaintance, whom he accidentally met there, that his parent had died, and had been buried about three weeks before.

The poor boy, who was scarce fourteen years old, had now no other resource but to join the society, which kindly received him; there was very little stirring in his own way of business, it is

true, at present; for glazing windows, there were wanting not only sashes for the panes, but houses for the sashes; but he soon found out that the axe played a prominent part in the woods, and determined to devote all his skill to that.

Wolfgang perceived, even during the first few days, with what zeal the boy worked, when he could get hold of the American axe for a few minutes; for those which they had brought with them from Germany were not of much use, except as wedges, and when he returned to the Mississippi, he left it with the boy, in order that he might exercise himself in its use.

[Pg 165]

Charles, as he was universally called by the passengers of the *Hoffnung*, did not require to be told this twice; from morning until evening, he stood in the woods, and hacked, and chopped, and thought himself richly rewarded, when he could hear the mighty stems fall with a loud crash.[\[19\]](#)

The shoemaker, the tailor, and the brewer, did not participate in this passion in the least. Working in the open air was altogether disagreeable to them; to stand in the sun all day, and "hack about at that hard wood," as the tailor expressed himself, did not agree at all with their constitutions. But, as even the committee-men worked hard, and as Pastor Hehrmann, in particular, from early till late, was the first at work and the last to quit it, they were ashamed to lag behind, so did their best. Meier always doubled himself up like a clasp-knife, when he got under the shed of an evening, and during all the first week was too fatigued to eat a morsel. The shoemaker intimated, on his part, that were he in Germany, he should join the society for prevention of cruelty to animals.

One only of the male portion of the colony had not yet done a stroke of work, either with the axe or otherwise; this was Von Schwanthal; for provisions were wanting, or, at least, want before long could be foreseen, and the hunter shouldered his double-barrel, and stalked into the woods.

Now there was nothing unusual in this; on the contrary, it was a matter of course; every company that bivouacks in the woods—be they raftsmen, on the banks or neighbourhood of a stream, or settlers, or even trappers of beavers and otters,—have their hunters, often five or six men, who hunt in the vicinity of the camp, and regularly bring in their booty. The colony stood much in need of such a hunter, or rather, of several such, but Von Schwanthal was not the man for it; for hardly had he ventured a hundred paces into the thicket—scarcely did he find himself surrounded on all sides by heaven-aspiring trees and wild bush, before he listened attentively for the sound of the axes, as it reverberated towards him, so that he might not possibly miss the direction; and he would not have been induced to leave the neighbourhood of the people for all the game in the world. That he could not get a shot in this way may be imagined, and he came back regularly every evening, weary and hungry, in order to victual himself again for the following morning, to beat about the semicircle, with which he now began to be tolerably acquainted, once more, and afterwards to abuse the neighbourhood in which fortune had cast them, for want of game.

[Pg 166]

The old negro arrived about this time, with the second load, several more axes, a barrel of flour, a barrel of beans, and a barrel of salt pork; he brought also a fowling-piece, one of the long Yankee rifles, with him.

Von Schwanthal viewed this new shooting apparatus with a very incredulous smile, for the rough stock, carved out of very common wood, the old, rusty barrel itself, which certainly could not boast of a promising appearance, the large knife with a brown wooden handle, the old leather bag, with a couple of flints, two bullets, a screw-driver, and a mould; these, taken altogether, looked anything but sportsmanlike, and contrasted very unfavourably with the excellent apparatus of the German sportsman.

But when the latter got up, on the ensuing morning, he heard a shot at no great distance from him, and looked about everywhere for Sam; but Sam had started before daybreak, and shortly returned, panting under the weight of a splendid young deer, which he carried upon his shoulders.

This disgrace had to be wiped off. Von Schwanthal never could look any one in the face again, if that fellow scarcely got his rubbishy old gun out, before he returned laden with spoil, while *he* had been on the look-out during four entire days, and had not brought home so much as a claw. The time for exertion had arrived; the zealous hunter hardly gave himself time to swallow his breakfast, and hurried off as fast as his feet would carry him, right into the trackless thicket. But when arrived there, his sporting ardour cooled down considerably, for he reflected upon the hopeless condition of a person who should lose his way in those swamps; but his feeling of honour got the better of this thought; his entire reputation as a sportsman was at stake; he *must* kill something or other. He was well enough aware, though, that so close to the camp, where the game could hear the strokes of the axe, and the rasping of the saw, as well, if not better than he could himself, there was no chance; taking care, therefore, to keep the sun straight before him, he walked right on in that direction; he avoided no thicket, no fallen tree, but pressed on through the one, and climbed over the other, and soon found himself above his knees in water, in a swamp which spread itself out before him, and as far, at least, as he could see, was nowhere bounded by higher ground.

[Pg 167]

What was to be done now? Should he turn back, or endeavour to force his way through that desert of swamp, and catch a dreadful cold, if he got nothing else? Suddenly, he heard something splash to his right; immediately afterwards, a couple of dry boughs snapped, and yonder—yonder, scarce thirty yards distant from him—bounded a mighty stag, in an open place in the woods, where the water, too, seemed to be but a few inches in depth. For a moment, the hunter stood as

if thunderstruck, for the whole had taken place so suddenly, so unexpectedly, that he could hardly recover himself; at last, however, he mechanically raised the gun to his shoulder, and pulled the trigger.

But, alas! in vain did he press the trigger till he almost pressed it down—no hammer fell—no discharge followed; the stag sprang about twenty yards further, and for some seconds more stood looking at the strange object in the water. Von Schwanthal pulled and pressed, till the perspiration stood in drops upon his forehead. But in vain; the hammers descended, it is true, but the piece did not go off—not so much as a cap even exploded. It was then that he recollected the unlucky "patent safety," which he had pushed forward whilst among the creeping plants and underwood; he quickly pushed it back, but the deer was, by this time, probably tired of waiting—Heaven knows how long!—to be shot at, and fled in rapid bounds into the thicket; and the two cracking shots which were now sent after him—alas, too late—only served to add wings to his already mighty bounds.

[Pg 168]

Schwanthal stood, and gazed after the stag, as he disappeared in the bush, and then down at his gun. He next seated himself upon the bough of a prostrate oak, which projected out of the water, took a screw-driver from his pocket, and very deliberately removed both of the safety-screws from the lock; wrapped them in a small piece of paper, and then went back to the nearest dry land, or rather, to that which was not covered with water, and trod them—without a syllable, without a single oath, but with such rage and determination—into the soft damp earth, that they had soon penetrated far into it; he then, giving them a last hearty farewell kick, said:—"So now, lie there till you rot—when I want you again, I'll let you know."

So far so good. Now the first thing was to re-load the gun; but what was to be done then? To wade further into the mud, or to turn back, and that without having accomplished his object? No, on no condition could he do that; the attempt, at least, must be made, and, besides, the sun shone so clearly and so cheerfully that, losing one's self was out of the question; so he cautiously stepped further and further through the silent, listening woods—further still, till at last he reached a small flat ridge, which traversed the swamp from east to west, and was itself dry.

If he should follow this he must leave the sun a little on his left, and it was very questionable whether he would afterwards find the right direction on his return. He determined, therefore, to remain on the watch where he was, where, of course, it was just as possible that a head of game might come right towards him, and where he would incur no danger of losing himself.

[Pg 169]

With a patience that would have done honour to a saint, hour after hour he stood there, immovable, and listened attentively, often breathlessly, when here and there a dry twig fell into the water, to the slightest noise, to the gentlest sound, to the most trifling rustling of the leaves. At last, however, the declining sun warned him of his return, and, although he could not conceal from himself that the best time for the movement of game was just beginning, yet he could not prevail on himself to remain there, and perhaps afterwards lose his way in the dark, for the sun was his only guide in the wilderness.

Chagrined, he slowly turned to quit the post he had hitherto kept; but—fresh horror!—whither? The sun, as he now for the first time considered, had been travelling through the sky during many long hours, and stood in a totally different quarter from that which it occupied in the morning. Should he now find his way back?—might he not turn off too much either to his right or left? The bare idea raised his hair on end. Snatching up the gun, he sprang in great haste over the narrow tongue of dry ground, and over the other side into the swamp again, in order not to lose any more valuable time, and waded, as fast as his feet would carry him, right through it, with such exertion and haste that the water often splashed right over him, and in less than a quarter of an hour's march he was completely wet through.

But his fears seemed to have been verified, for he ought long since, as he firmly believed, to have reached the spot where the trees felled by the settlers were lying, and yet the swamp did not come to an end; for although Von Schwanthal saw dry land on his left, he would not on any account deviate from what he considered the right course. He now felt the water grow more shallow, and immediately afterwards found himself upon dry ground—ran over it—came to one of the innumerable little muddy brooks, which cross the country in all directions—dashed through it without pausing to consider; found himself up to his arm-pits in water—climbed as well as he could out on the other side—and, being now firmly convinced that he must have lost his way, as he knew nothing of this brook, he began to call out with all his might for help.

[Pg 170]

"Mercy on us! what's the matter?" asked the little tailor, who stood close beside him without his having noticed it,— "why, you're on dry ground again."

"Oh, Meier, are you here?" exclaimed Von Schwanthal, delighted; "why, there's the shoemaker, too. You haven't—surely, you haven't lost yourselves, have you?"

"Lost ourselves? no, no!" laughed the little fellow; "we are too wide awake for that; I, for instance, never go further away from the rest than I can reach with my hand one of them, at all events. But what did you halloo so for?"

"Oh, I—I—haven't you seen a stag come past here?" asked Von Schwanthal, taking up his cue, for he was ashamed to let the people see that he had been frightened. "I only called 'Look out!' in case any one might have been out here with a gun."

"It sounded exactly like 'Help!'" said the shoemaker, grinning, and giving the tailor a sly push

with the crosscut-saw, which rested on a slight oak, felled by Charles's hands, lying between them. "Have you shot nothing?—there was a report."

"I—I wounded a stag," answered the sportsman; "but there was so much water on the spot, that the tracks could not be followed, I couldn't trace the blood; and, as I had no dog, why—"

"Of course!" said the tailor, elevating his eyebrows and nodding his head violently—"of course! I think I shouldn't catch a stag either, without a dog—the critters run so fast." [Pg 171]

Schwanthal turned away in vexation, and, in a very bad humour, strode towards the encampment, which was no longer distant; but he suddenly began to limp, and declared, when he arrived at the first fire, where he met Mrs. Hehrmann, that he had sprained his ankle, and most likely must give up wandering about for a few days.

Von Schwanthal was pretty well cured of his apparently insatiable passion for sport, and even began to help the labourers at their work; but that was the wisest thing he could have done, for he thereby escaped ridicule, and he comforted himself meanwhile with the idea that he should soon be sufficiently acquainted with the woods—at all events, in the neighbourhood—as to be exposed to no further danger of losing himself, and to be enabled to hunt in all directions.

The men worked away perseveringly, without murmuring, and the women, seeing the energy and spirit with which the men bore the greatest hardships, abstained from complaining about their failed hopes and disappointed expectations; but instead thereof, as it could not be helped, they bore their privations with exemplary patience and fortitude. Hehrmann's family, especially, was foremost in setting a good example, and Bertha and her sister Louisa were the first at every kind of work.

But the men stood in need of such encouragement, for their labours progressed very slowly; the negro, it is true, had arrived, and with his help many a tree lay felled and chopped; but it was not until now, when they had begun the work, that they perceived the full extent of all they had got to do. How they were to clear five acres of land, in as many years, appeared an inexplicable riddle to them all, however they might conceal their thoughts from each other.

The tailor gave vent to his feelings the most candidly of all, for when Wolfgang relieved the negro again, he showed him the dreadful blisters which he had got on his hands, and confessed to him (in confidence, of course) that he never could think of passing another year in that place. [Pg 172]

But where, during all this time, was the Doctor, who, for the sake of a few hundred dollars, had sent the poor settlers, ignorant of the country, in such a shameful manner into the wilderness? As he had now obtained his end, received the money, and left the strangers to their fate, the most natural thing for him to do was to take himself off, and carry away his plunder to a place of security—and such had been his original intention; but something on which he had not reckoned, and which he had not foreseen, forbade the execution of it; for a wild uncontrollable passion took possession of his heart for the lovely daughter of the Pastor. Blinded by love, he determined to follow the colony to its destination, and partly to weather the storm of those who would discover that they had been deceived, partly to turn it off—to remain in Bertha's neighbourhood, perhaps to make her his wife—at all events, to be able to call her his. With this object he had, as a primary step, to ascertain what her feelings were towards him, and it was for this that he had approached her, on the last morning, with a confession of his love.

But her cold behaviour showed him at once what he had to hope from her heart and feelings; moreover, it could not escape him how she blushed and became embarrassed at the allusion to Werner.

At a glance—with the glance of a man of the world—he saw that nothing was to be accomplished there by honest wooing; but he was not the man so readily to give up a plan he had once formed. During eleven years past a sojourner in foreign lands, during the latter portion of that time in America, he had learned to surmount whatever obstacles might come in his way; and as he was not particular whether he resorted to honest or dishonest means, if he could only attain the ends he had proposed to himself, he seldom failed in carrying out his plans. [Pg 173]

But, to follow to Tennessee those very settlers who had been deceived by him, to play a part in all those unpleasant scenes which he could very well foresee, and yet not advance a step nearer to his aim, did not seem to him expedient. He determined, therefore, on remaining in Cincinnati for the present; for that Bertha must be his he had vowed, and only the more stimulated by the obstacles to the realization of his project, he now considered ways and means to carry off, by force, the girl who would not voluntarily follow him.

How difficult, how impossible, almost, pursuit was on the Mississippi, when that mighty stream, with its wilderness on either shore, once divided the pursued from the pursuers, he knew but too well, and all that he now required was some trusty friend to assist him in his undertaking. Such an one he had already found in Cincinnati, on the previous evening, and while the "Dayton" was puffing and blowing down the beautiful Ohio river, Normann and Turner (the latter a gambler by profession from New Orleans, but who stayed in the North during the warm summer months) stood on the quay, and Turner said, smilingly, when the Doctor had made him acquainted with his wishes—

"Capital, Doctor—capital! And she has got a pretty sister, too, eh?"

"A beautiful girl," he assured him.

"Here's my hand, then; I'm your man! I could not better employ my time, till the healthy season in New Orleans commences again. Perhaps we may get both the girls."

"That is hardly possible!—how are we to bring them away?"

"Well, it's all one," said the profligate, laughing; "we're sure of one. Moreover, I know that part of the country as well as though I had spent all my life there. Five of us once ran all the way from Randolph up to the Halchee on foot, most of the way at night, and with about twenty stout boatmen after us. I shouldn't forget that chase, were I to live a thousand years."

[Pg 174]

"And how did you get off?"

"There was a small boat on the Halchee; we jumped into it. The owner would have made some difficulties, but luckily I had a loaded pistol with me,—but that has nothing to do with it. The bargain is made."

"Shall we go alone?"

"No; we must have some one else to row, but I know one that will do; a free nigger in the town here, whom I could lead to Perdition with us for twenty dollars a month, and an extra allowance of whisky."

"Good,—such a fellow will be useful. And when shall we start? To-day?"

"Halloo! not so fast. I have got a young Italian, who has been recommended to me, to pluck first; he seems immensely rich, so we will get all ready for starting; perhaps, a hasty departure may be convenient some of these days."

"Well, then," said the Doctor, "I'll get together everything that is necessary, and this evening we'll meet at the old place in Sycamore-street."

Normann left him, and walked along the quay, and up Main-street; but Turner remained, with his arms folded, and followed Normann's retreating figure with a contemptuous smile, and wheeled round on his heel when the other turned the corner, and disappeared in the street to the right; and with the same malicious expression he whispered to himself—

"We'll steal the girl together, my little Doctor, and if she's as pretty as you've described her, why you shall help me; but if you suppose, my short-sighted Dutchman, that she's for you, why you're confoundedly out in your reckoning, I guess!"

FOOTNOTES:

[9] Mosquitoes always sting an old-countryman during the first year ensuing his arrival more than they ever do afterwards, and more than they do natives.—Tr.

[10] There is no dawn in the latitude of the Big Halchee in August, or none worth mentioning.—Tr.

[11] This is not a picture of an average log-house, (which is wind and water tight, and warm,) but of a very temporary shanty; it is not consistent with the occupant's skill as a back-woodsman, or his industry, that he should have let his wife live a single week in such a hole—especially when a few shingles, and some moss and clay, would have remedied all.—Tr.

[12] The watchmen in Germany, twenty years ago, used to (and, for aught I know, still may) carry a horn, like that of our newsmen, which they blew and announced the hours, &c.—Tr.

[13] The fires in the back-woods are raked together at bed-time, and covered with thin ashes, and so remain all night, smouldering, so that in the morning they only require to be fanned a little, in order to burn again, so as to ignite fresh fuel; indeed, the back log is usually a thick piece of heavy wood, which lasts a day or two.—Tr.

[14] The blowing of a horn is the usual signal to come home to breakfast, dinner, supper, or for any other purpose, on North-American farms.—Tr.

[15] This seems to be rather unaccountable; it may be the popular belief.—Tr.

[16] Wood is used for fuel throughout Germany, and the numerous forests are under the care of officers, called foresters, who have assistants, called huntsmen, under them; they plant, thin, manage, and cut the timber; also preserve game, kill vermin, &c.—Tr.

[17] Rough shanties and small log-houses are sometimes covered with planks, as in the text; but the more usual course in America is to roof houses with shingles, which are rectangular pieces of pine split (with a shingle knife) into the thickness of about a quarter of an inch, or less, and these are nailed on, overlapping each other, like tiles; they are light, weathertight, and durable, and only inferior to tiles, slate or tin, in being more liable to accidents by fire.—Tr.

[18] As the old chimney, even assuming it to have been of brick, would not have sufficed, the reader may perhaps ask where the bricks and mortar came from; but it is common in shanties in the woods, when these cannot be had, to form chimneys of slabs of bass-wood, and plaster them with clay. It need hardly be added that they sometimes take fire.—Tr.

[19] Persons who once take to chopping—i. e., felling trees—prefer it to all other work, and even

CHAPTER V. EXCURSIONS HITHER AND THITHER.

We have almost too long neglected a principal person in our narrative, Young Werner; we left him sadly musing on the banks of the beautiful Hudson River, and must now return to him.

"Well," said Helldorf, smiling, "have you nearly done looking? My friend, my friend, it almost seems to me as though the most serious thoughts in the world—thoughts of marriage—were floating in your head. Consider that your chief object in coming to America was to earn something, and that until that is done— Well, then," he said, interrupting himself with a smile, when he saw that Werner turned his back impatiently upon him, "it's the old story, and all that I may say will not alter it. But come along, Werner, else we shall really miss our boat, and that's the most important thing to us at present."

"And will you indeed accompany me, my dear Helldorf?" asked the young man.

"I suppose I must," said the other, with a shrug of his shoulders; "but it's no such great sacrifice I am making. In the first place, I am heartily sick of my stay in New York, and I have in fact some business to look after in Philadelphia, which, if it does not absolutely require me to go there, yet renders my presence desirable. We will therefore lose no more time, but take our things with us at once; and, if I can, I'll accompany you on your journey as far as Cincinnati, for I'm much mistaken if you remain more than four weeks in Philadelphia."

"My dear fellow, however much my heart yearns towards Tennessee—as I feel but too well that it does—yet it will be impossible for me, within that period, to conclude that which I ought to conclude in Philadelphia, or rather, to speak more correctly, to commence the formation of connexions which I ought to form there. But we shall see; perhaps you yourself may like to remain longer."

"Well, we shall see, certainly," replied Helldorf. "To speak candidly, I should, in your place, have gone with them to the settlement at once."

"To become a farmer?"

"For no other purpose; but you are just like all the rest—you will only learn by experience. But we must really be off. Do you see the smoke yonder; that's from the Philadelphia packet-boat, and we have little enough time left to get all our things on board."

The young men returned to the town arm in arm, and in another hour they stood upon the splendidly fitted-up steamer which was to conduct them to the proud Quaker city.

Their journey was a short one; they went by water to the southern shore of Staaten Island Bay, removed the little baggage which they had to the railway there, and, in six hours more, they found themselves in the most beautiful, but assuredly, also, the most tedious, of North American cities.

"Well, and what do you think of setting about next?" inquired Helldorf of Werner, when, towards evening, they had deposited their luggage, and were walking about Chestnut-street, the principal street of Philadelphia, which was then crowded with well-dressed people.

"Why, to deliver my letters of recommendation, of course," answered the other, smiling. "I have been so urgently recommended to certain houses of business here, that I may be permitted to hope that I may receive some assistance from them in furthering my plans. Yes, Helldorf, I may confide in you—I know that I can confide in you"—continued the young man, seizing his friend's hand, and becoming more animated; "you have behaved so heartily towards me, even from the very first, that I must unreservedly unfold all my plans to you."

Helldorf smiled, but pressed the right hand which was extended to him, and replied, "And may I not guess them?"

"Partly, perhaps," said Werner, and his countenance coloured more deeply—"partly, no doubt—my love for Bertha—but that is not all; that is only the sunny point of my existence—the aim towards which my whole exertions, my whole soul is directed; but you shall know the means also by which I hope to attain my object, and you shall tell me whether you approve them or not."

Helldorf slightly bowed, and Werner began:—

"In stating my endeavours and plans, I probably shall be merely describing those of thousands besides, who, like myself, are thrown upon these shores without means, and who wish to make their fortunes, as the phrase is.

"When I embarked at Bremen almost, my only wish and intention was to travel through the States in all directions; my plans are now altered. Taking all things into consideration, I don't think that Pastor Hehrmann will agree long with the Committee whom they have chosen."

Helldorf nodded his head, significantly.

"He himself is poor," Werner continued, "and the time may arrive when he may stand in need of a friend; so I will set to work with zeal and earnestness,—get some situation here, which I must soon be able to do—work, speculate, devote my whole life to this one object, and then present myself, cheerfully, to the parents of my beloved, and ask them for their daughter's hand,—then I shall have deserved her."

"Well said, my worthy young friend," said the Kentuckian, laying his hand upon Werner's shoulder; "but I don't see why you should make such preparation here in the East; your prospects *here* are very uncertain."

[Pg 178]

"My recommendations——"

"I beg of you, for Heaven's sake, say no more about your recommendations: those——. However, I will not make your heart heavy; but, Werner, if you will follow my advice, you will go to the West as quickly as you can, and become a farmer; every month that you pass here is so much time lost, for farmer you will become, after all. You are no merchant, have never been one, and—in short, are not at all fitted for an American trader."

"But I don't see why not! I understand book-keeping thoroughly."

"Oh, I don't mean on account of want of knowledge; that, if necessary, could be acquired by you, and soon, too—you are too honest!"

"Why, my dear Helldorf; you surely don't mean to affirm that the American merchants are dishonest?"

"No, certainly not," exclaimed Helldorf; "and I should be very sorry if you should so misunderstand me; but more is required in order to be a merchant here in America than merely book-keeping and speculating on the Exchange; for this last branch of business we have a special class of men, the money-brokers as they are called, who, I may say, in passing, don't stand in very good odour. But the German is no match for the American in business, because he is too considerate. The Jews get on about the best of any here; they soon adapt themselves to the manners and customs of the country, begin in a small way, and do not let either painstaking or shame discourage them—and become rich. But in America the standard of honesty is different from that of Germany. In your country, for example, a bankrupt who should become rich by his bankruptcy would be stamped with infamy. It is quite different here; I know people who have been bankrupt three times, who possess more than a million of dollars, and are reaccounted among the most respectable men of the city wherein they live. In Little Rock, one of the richest merchants made a declaration of insolvency, and yet, at the same time, was building a couple of large brick houses."

[Pg 179]

"But how was that possible?"

"Oh, in that way anything is possible, and the Americans call it 'smart.'"

"That's the word which Dr. Normann mentioned to me. But about the merchant?"

"The doctor is acquainted with it, no doubt," said Helldorf, with a smile. "Well, the merchant in question had settled all his property upon his wife—no one could take any part of it from him; the creditors came, but had to draw off again without getting anything."

"But the houses?"

"Oh, his wife was having them built; *he* had nothing, of course—he was a poor ruined man; however, everybody gave him credit again, and as soon as he had obtained his certificate, he began business afresh with more spirit than ever. I could relate hundreds of such instances of people whom I have known personally."

"That certainly does not say much for their honesty, if such a proceeding is reckoned an ordinary mercantile transaction," said Werner; "but, be that as it may, trade certainly is the quickest way to acquire a little property; and, I should think, that if one were honest and upright, buyers must soon find it out, and it would carry weight."

"Oh, my dear Werner, that's of little use here; the modest man remains behind, and without puffing and quackery, a poor devil can seldom get along in America, unless, as I have already observed, he turns farmer. Those are my views, but I don't wish to palm them upon you as the views of all the world; I shall even be glad, on your account, if you should not find them confirmed."

"But I have no capital to begin with—at least——"

"If that makes any difference at all, it's rather in your favour than otherwise," said Helldorf, smiling; "don't suppose that the people who bring over capital with them pluck roses here. 'Where there is nothing, the Emperor himself can't levy tribute,' and 'he who has no money pays no premium.' But these sort of sayings are thrown away upon emigrants; they must try it all themselves; afterwards, they get along better in every way."

[Pg 180]

"But I feel a real desire within me to set to work at a business life here."

"Very well, my dear Werner, then I won't dissuade you," replied Helldorf, good humouredly; "deliver your introductions to-morrow, and we'll see what may turn up. It's getting late, so let us make haste back to our inn, else we may arrive after time, or miss our supper, which is about the

same thing."

The two friends returned to their boarding-house, and as Werner went out rather early on the following morning, the afternoon was advanced before they met again.

Werner came home very tired; he had delivered a number of letters of introduction, and had found a good many of the people, whom he had subsequently to call upon, from home, which altogether was no trifle in that immense city. However, he had been asked by *all* to call again next day, a sure sign that the people intended not to accept the introduction merely, and then drop the matter, but that they would exert themselves a little for him.

He had received an invitation to dinner for the next day from a merchant named Harvey, whom he had found a very agreeable man, and he promised himself much satisfaction from it.

"Well then, our paper is going up," said Helldorf, with a smile; "well, I wish that I may prove a false prophet. We will remain together a little longer this evening, for to-morrow I must go to German-town on some business, which will detain me for three days at the most, and I hope afterwards to see you finish with Philadelphia and your future prospects."

"Hardly so soon," said Werner, incredulously; "but time will show; from all that I have seen to-day, however, I think that I may fairly be sanguine." [Pg 181]

At the public dinner table, they met several other Germans, among the rest a M. Von Buchenberg, who was seated next to Werner. He had been some weeks in Philadelphia, and purposed to visit the West, in order to survey several districts of land in the interest of some company or other, which already had a high-sounding name.

Von Buchenberg was not calculated, however, to give much encouragement to young Werner, for he abused the town soundly:

"The devil take this *pious* Philadelphia!" he exclaimed, indignantly; "they keep Sundays here so strictly, that one daren't so much as peel an apple, and yet all the while there they sit in their rocking-chairs, and calculate and plan, how they shall cheat each other next day. Heaven alone knows all the sects that crawl about here; there are Quakers and methodists, baptists, presbyterians, Millerites, Schulzerites, and Meierites, and Heaven knows what other names the fellows have! A shudder comes over me when I see the gang of thieves, cutting about in snuff-coloured suits."

"But the quakers are very plainly dressed," said Werner, taking up their cause; "indeed, 'tis a part of their religion to attire themselves in as quiet a manner as possible."

"Certainly," exclaimed Buchenberg; "but is it not strange that they should dress themselves up in a costume which everybody else has long since ceased to wear? The women, too, don't they just coquette in an alarming manner from under their black sun-bonnets of such a very pious cut! Well, then, the town itself!" continued the little man, who had just got into train, "this regularity at last becomes quite unbearable, and one dare not go abroad without a compass. If you inquire of any one in the streets which way you are to get to so-and-so, they don't answer you as reasonable people in other reasonable places would answer: 'You go down yonder, then take the first turning on the right or left as the case may be, go through that street, and then through such another street to the place you wish for;' oh lord, no!—if you ask a Philadelphian your way to ever so near a place, he says directly: 'Oh, you can't miss it; you go from here three streets south, then you turn westward till you come to the fourth, then again two streets south, and it's to the east the third house on the north side.' Now I'll appeal to anybody, isn't it enough to drive one wild?" [Pg 182]

"Why, the points of the compass are easily remembered," said Helldorf, with a smile.

"It happened just the same with me," Werner declared.

"Easily remembered!—how so?" said Von Buchenberg, who now got rather warm on the subject. "Suppose that it's cloudy; and besides, since when, I should like to know, have all men learned astronomy? I know that the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, but therewith, Basta, the rest does not concern me. If I want to know about it, I look into the almanack. But that isn't all: the other day I was sitting at this very table, and yonder, where that gentleman now sits, there sat a Quaker; in the middle of dinner he stretches out his arm, and points down the table, saying to me, 'Friend, may I trouble thee to reach me that north-west dish.' I sat, regularly nonplussed, and stared at him, whereupon he added, by way of explanation, that one to the south of the soup.' Why, it beats all; what, am I to go outside the door, and look after the quarters of the heavens, or else have a pocket compass always ready beside my plate?"

Helldorf and Werner laughed heartily, and the worthy Von Buchenberg was quite right, for the regular plan of the town in which all the streets run at right angles from north to south, and from east to west, has familiarized the inhabitants with this mode of expression. And it must be allowed that when the ear has once got accustomed to it, the most distant places may be thus admirably and accurately designated; but to the emigrant, unless indeed he happen to be a seaman, the thing sounds oddly. [Pg 183]

Next morning, Helldorf started on his little journey, and Werner ran about from one merchant to another, made calls upon calls, and was met everywhere by mere civilities, or at most by a dinner. He became heartily sick of this kind of life, and longed for the return of his absent friend,

although he almost dreaded his ridicule, for everything had happened pretty much as he had foretold him. Still he was at least conscious that he had not neglected anything which he had to do, and had done everything in his power.

Helldorf returned at the time appointed; but, contrary to expectation, he did not ridicule his friend, but merely excused the men (merchants for the most part) to whom the introductions had been addressed, for not having paid more attention and regard to them.

"You see, my dear Werner, every year many thousand persons arrive in the United States, the majority of whom entertain the settled conviction that they cannot get along at all unless they bring their pockets full of introductions which certify on the face of them to the good people—'Hark ye, I am so and so, a respectable, decent person, and it would much oblige Mr. So and so, in Europe, if his esteemed friend in Philadelphia or New York, or whatever the place may be, would receive me in a friendly manner and aid me with word and deed; the friend in Europe would also, in return, be most happy to render any similar service.' Yes, that's all very well, but how seldom does it happen that any one requires an introduction for Germany? for America it is a matter of daily occurrence. No, the merchants in the great commercial towns are regularly inundated with such recommendations, and we must not by any means blame them, if they are not beside themselves with joy and gladness so soon as they see a stranger enter their house, poking such a letter of introduction, as a snail does his horns, before him. 'Help, thyself,' is the motto here, and whoever is thoroughly impressed with that need not fear. But, Werner, I have a proposal to make to you. I have accepted a commission in German-town, which will oblige me to go to New Orleans, will you go with me?"

[Pg 184]

"How far is it to New Orleans?" asked Werner.

"One can tell that you haven't been long from Germany," said Helldorf, with a smile. "*Here* nobody asks how *far* it is to a place, but the question is, '*How* do you get there?' I intend to go by water. If you like, make up your mind quickly, and we'll go back to-morrow to New York, whence the packet boat 'Mobile' starts for New Orleans, and, if we have a favourable passage, we may get there in a fortnight. In New Orleans you can look about you a little; who knows what may offer itself there, and after a stay of about a week, I promise to accompany you to any little river in Tennessee which you may propose. From New Orleans we can get up there in three days."

"Oh, my dear Helldorf, Philadelphia has discouraged me very much! What am I to do in Tennessee? How can I hope—how dare I ask, for Bertha's hand? How am I to support her?"

"Oh, means will be devised," exclaimed Helldorf; "only you must set the right way to work, and an industrious man need not fear to strive in vain. Trust in me, my dear Werner, and I'll put you on the right track, and if you don't follow it, why it's your own fault. Do you go to New Orleans with me?"

"Agreed!—here's my hand. It's true that I have a couple of introductions for that place, too; but they shan't determine me, for I'll not use them;" and, in the first impulse of vexation, he pulled the letters out of his pocket, and would have thrown them into the stream which flowed past.

"Hold!" said Helldorf, seizing his hand; "we must not condemn all without distinction; such letters are like wet percussion caps, they generally miss fire; sometimes, however, one does explode, and the gun goes off. Such a bit of paper is not heavy, and, at any rate, can do no harm."

[Pg 185]

Werner put back the letters into his pocket, but opined that something unforeseen must happen to induce him to make use of them.

Their preparations for the journey did not occupy much time, and as a favourable wind filled their sails from New York, they passed Sandyhook on the second evening, and, steering due south, entered the open sea.

With the exception of some storms, which they had to encounter in crossing the Gulf Stream, their voyage was as quick and as pleasant a one as could be expected at the season; only the heat became very oppressive as they sailed along the Gulf of Florida, past the Havannah, for the wind, which had hitherto brought some cool breezes with it, now almost ceased.

It was on the sixteenth day from their departure from New York, that Werner, stretched out on the bowsprit of the ship, looked forward at the steamer which was approaching them, for the purpose of towing the ship through the labyrinth of the Mississippi Delta, about eighty miles up the broad stream, to New Orleans. She soon laid herself alongside the ship, the ropes were made fast, and, leaving the flat, reedy, and swampy shores of the outer mouth behind them, the "Porpoise" steamed away against the current. Now they glided past between mighty forests intergrown with reeds,—now these became more open—plantations became visible,—and now, as they approached nearer and nearer to the gigantic commercial city of the south, the constantly increasing civilization and culture had driven the old, venerable, primeval forest far into the background, so that its distant tops could only be discerned as a green stripe on the horizon, and, instead thereof, a boundless sea of waving sugar-canes, and tall, stiff, cotton-plants surrounded them.

Night closed in too soon for the astonished spectator, and by day-break he was already awake again and on deck, to admire the panorama of New Orleans, now spread out before him in all its grandeur.

[Pg 186]

If, even on his landing at New York, he had found himself surrounded by a peculiar foreign-

looking kind of life, how much more was this the case here, where the tropical countries were wafting their warm luxurious breath towards him! The innumerable ships and vessels of all descriptions which bounded the shores with a forest of masts, the multitude of steamers arriving and departing, the sailing-boats shooting backwards and forwards across the river, the little fruit-boats, the crowding of wagons with goods on the shore, the movements of the cheerful, well-dressed crowd, which seemed to be thrown together there from all quarters of the globe,—all these so occupied his senses, that he scarcely noticed that the ship was landed and moored to the quay, and his attention was first called to the fact by the idlers and business-people who pressed on board.

Helldorf, who had been several times before in this capital of the South, and to whom the bustling and picturesque scene was no longer a novelty, had, meanwhile, handed over the luggage belonging to them both to a drayman or carter, whose number he took, and the friends lounged slowly across the Levee,[\[20\]](#) up into the town.

"What do you think of New Orleans?" asked Helldorf, at last, as they turned into one of the principal streets which ran parallel with the river, and Werner stopped, really astonished at all the magnificence and splendour which met his wondering eye on every side.

"There certainly is something grand about such a city," said Werner; "but it's too much for me, it oppresses more than it pleases. It is beautiful to see once, but I don't think that it would please me for a continuance."

[Pg 187]

"Exactly my idea," said Helldorf; "however, my friend, in a week or two it will present a different spectacle. As soon as the yellow fever comes in here, the most of the occupants (those who possess the means, that is to say,) go out, and of those who remain a large number die off like flies. I was once in New Orleans in September, and all these streets, now so crowded with people, were deserted and empty, and as silent as the grave; many were even boarded up, and on innumerable doors black crape fluttered, or boards were hung out, containing cautions from approaching too near, as the pestilence was raging within."

"I suppose Germans don't remain here much, for the climate must be especially pernicious to them."

"Germans usually form one half of the entire number of victims," said Helldorf; "they come here, live intemperately and dissolutely, and expect to be able to endure and to keep in health, where thousands of their countrymen perish miserably, and are buried like dogs. Oh, my friend, 'tis a melancholy chapter that, and we'll talk more about it some other time. For the present, while 'tis yet cool, we'll stroll about a little; by-and-by, it will be insufferably hot in the streets. Will you deliver your letters of recommendation here?"

"No, I'll not vex myself any more," replied Werner.

"But one of them is sealed," said Helldorf; "perhaps it contains private matter, and may be of much interest to the party to whom it is addressed."

"I think not; the writer of it, an old uncle of mine, read the contents to me, and then sealed it in my presence; it is just an introduction like the rest, and for a quondam Doctor of Medicine too, who is said now to have turned farmer, somewhere in the southern part of Missouri; he wont be able to help me much."

[Pg 188]

"Well, don't say that," replied Helldorf, with a dissentient shake of the head; "perhaps, more than all these traders and merchant gentry here, who look upon an emigrant as a piece of goods, as perishable goods merely, if they can get any benefit out of him, but entertain a holy horror of him if such be not the case, or they even fear that he may become burthensome to them. But come, we will look up an old friend of mine, who keeps school here in Poydras-street—a college friend."

"And he has turned schoolmaster?"

"Lord! what does one not turn to in America, if an opportunity occurs or a good prospect offers. As he writes to me, he is doing very well. This is the number of the house. I think we may as well go in at once."

"But shall we not disturb him?"

"Oh, they're not so particular about that here; besides, the school will probably be thinly attended in summer, and I shouldn't wonder if the holidays had already commenced. But we can soon convince ourselves."

They mounted a narrow, steep staircase to the second floor, and, when arrived there, found themselves without any necessity for tapping at the door, in the middle of the school as it were. The door of the room, which was not a large one, stood open, on account of the heat; the windows likewise; and scholars and teacher sat, mostly in their shirt sleeves, in the cool draught which streamed through the house.

"Helldorf!" exclaimed the schoolmaster, a handsome young man, with dark curly hair, jumping up, surprised, from the two chairs on which, half extended, he had made himself up a very comfortable seat. "Helldorf! where the deuce do you drop from?"

"Do we disturb you?" asked the other.

"How can you think of such a thing!" was the laughing answer. "Well, the holidays commence next Friday, and to-day is Monday, and then the vexed soul will rest!" [Pg 189]

"And where shall you go to?"

"Up the river, of course!"

"Why, that's just the thing—we shall travel together, at all events, a part of the journey. But stay, I must first of all introduce my friend Werner to you—a German, just arrived, who thinks of settling in the West. I trust that you'll be good friends."

The two young men shook hands; and the scholars—a mixed company of French, Creole, German, and English—nudged each other, and tittered at the German, or "Dutch" as they termed it, that was spoken.

There were boys and girls of all ages, and of the strangest appearance, thrown together. But one of the queerest specimens stood right before the little reading-desk, and in front of a large black board, which was hanging on the wall, and half covered with the alphabet in Roman and German characters.

"Look ye, Helldorf," said young Schwarz, smiling, as he laid his hand on the shoulder of the hopeful young citizen of the world, who, with his knees somewhat turned inwards, and his hands in his pockets, stood in by no means a picturesque attitude before them, and exhibited his projecting profile staring from beneath a matted head of hair. "Here I have a prize specimen of my scholars—a juvenile Benjamin Franklin, only undeveloped; a diamond, only rather rough! He is one of those rare individuals for whose genius this low sphere is too narrow, and who may be found by dozens, armed with spoons and bits of stick, at the sugar and syrup casks on the Levee! Come, Benjamin, now mind what you're about!"—turning towards the youth, who was about twelve years of age—"don't disgrace me, but show what you have learnt. Do you know any of the letters that are written on here—eh?"

Benjamin distorted his mouth into a broad grin, till it reached from ear to ear, balanced himself from the left foot to the right, began to poke, not his hands alone, but his arms also, into his pockets, and nodded his head in token of intelligence. [Pg 190]

"So, you know some of them! But, come, take your hands out of your pockets—that is not becoming!"

Benjamin obeyed the command, as far as the right side was concerned, and produced five fingers which certainly appeared to confirm the master's former speech, and not only bore antediluvian traces of syrup, but also of Levee dust.

"The other, too, Benjamin," said Mr. Schwarz.

The left followed—rather slowly, it is true—but still it followed. However, it seemed to feel an irresistible disposition to occupy itself with something, and meanwhile, laid hold of the left foot, which was raised towards it.

Helldorf smiled, and the foot fell back into its old position.

"Now, tell me which of these letters you know?" asked Mr. Schwarz.

Benjamin, thus driven to extremity, first drew his right sleeve carefully across under his nose, and made divers efforts, which severally miscarried, by reason of the grave look of the master, to slip the left hand into his pocket again. At last, he made a step forward, rubbed the palms of his hands once or twice violently together, not so much to their damage as of the dried syrup, grinned yet broader than before, advanced a second step, and pointed, half abashed, to the capital "H."

"So, you know that letter?"

Benjamin nodded his head, significantly.

"You don't know any other?"

A violent shaking of his head confirmed his negative answer.

"And what do you call that one?"

The catechumen peeped from one stranger to the other, with an embarrassed smile, rubbed the palms of his hands with unmistakable zeal on both his hips, looked first at the board, then at his toes, and then up to the master—and at last whispered— [Pg 191]

"I do—a—n't know!"

But Helldorf and Werner could stand it no longer; and the whole class joined their loud laughter in a full pealing chorus, and a weight seemed to be removed from their hearts.

"Go home!" exclaimed Schwarz, who had great difficulty in keeping his countenance. "You need not come back this afternoon; but mind, let me have your lessons well learnt by to-morrow!"

He had no occasion to say this twice; the command was obeyed so promptly that none of the boys stayed to put on their jackets, but each of them seized his few books under his arm, and

struggled towards the stairs, in order, if possible, to be the first, but at all events, not the last, who should forsake the school-room. Even Benjamin seemed in a moment quite transformed; he squeezed a small and very much crumpled straw hat on his head, and dived, with apparent contempt of life, right into the midst of the throng that was hurrying out.

In a few more seconds, the three young men were the only occupants of the room; and Helldorf, still laughing, inquired of his friend how, in the name of wonder, he had got into such a situation?

"The matter is very simple," said Schwarz; "I had nothing else to do—could obtain no employment—and became schoolmaster! Thousands do the same, in America; and out of the forty-seven thousand elementary schools which the United States possess, I am quite convinced that there is not one thousand which can show masters regularly educated from youth upwards to their profession! Nothing is more easy than to pass a schoolmaster's examination; and as neither party is bound to the other, nothing is more easy than to put an end to the relation!"

"But such a constant change of masters must operate very prejudicially upon the children themselves," said Werner.

"Certainly it does. But the masters must have a better provision made for them, if they are to be expected not to throw up their employment as soon as anything better may offer! We are not in Germany, where a poor schoolmaster must put up with his lot, because he cannot hope to earn his bread in any other way, and where, if the attempt should fail, his return would remain closed from him for an endless time. If I were to accept a situation as dancing-master to-morrow, or were to go upon the stage, or take to performing conjuring tricks, it would be a very trifling obstacle, if, indeed, it would be one at all, to my becoming a schoolmaster again!"

[Pg 192]

"Are the schools all established on the same system as this one?" asked Werner.

Schwarz laughed. "Speak out what you meant to say!—established without any system at all, like this! Why we certainly cannot require better things, in summer, in New Orleans. In winter, my class is—or rather, was—three times as well attended; the lessons are regularly heard, and order prevails. But during the summer, everything slumbers—and in four weeks from this time the city, whose commercial activity now seems boundless and inexhaustible, will look like a protestant church on a week day! But we are wasting time here! We will pass the heat of the day at my house, and towards evening stroll through the town. Then it is that it shows itself in its splendour, and that one can understand the possibility of there being people who, notwithstanding the annual return of the plague-like yellow fever, yet bid defiance to the infection and to their fears, in order to live in New Orleans."

Helldorf got through a good deal of his business on this day, and Werner, in the meantime, remained in Schwarz's company, where he soon discovered that he too was intending to bid adieu to town life, and—to become a farmer in the woods of the West.

"As soon as I once forsake New Orleans," said he, "I shall never return to it. I have got through *one* year safely—to remain a second would be to tempt Providence; the two hundred dollars that I have been able to save will found myself a home."

[Pg 193]

"Two hundred dollars! How is it possible; why, with that you cannot buy even the most needful things."

"Oh, yes," answered Schwarz, with a smile; "you don't want much in the woods; if you like to come along with me, I will give you some practical instructions in the matter. You may still profit from a schoolmaster."

"And do you really believe that with two hundred dollars——"

"Not you," interrupted Schwarz; "not a newly arrived emigrant; unless, indeed, he follow reasonable counsel and instruction; but with those it is possible even for him; but, in that case, he does not succeed upon the strength of his two hundred dollars alone, but makes use of the premium, also, which his advisers have paid; in my own case, that amounted to seven hundred dollars—quite a decent little fund."

"And you, yourself, will settle?"

"Yes; I will build my shanty, and clear a little land this fall and winter; then I can begin at once next spring."

"And cattle?"

"I will rear also, of course—'tis the chief source of profit."

"And do you really think that, in a few years, one may earn enough to—to——"

"To keep a wife," said Schwarz, with a laugh.—"Eh! that was what you were going to say?"

Werner coloured up to the eyes.

"Why, of course," continued Schwarz, who noticed it, with a smile. "It is only as a farmer that you have a prospect of soon being enabled to marry; it is even, to a certain extent, a necessary consequence, for a bachelor's household in the bush is rather too dull an affair. Have you got a little wife already!"

"I? No, Heaven forbid!"

"Halloa! don't rear on your hind legs directly!" said Schwarz; "I didn't want to inquire too minutely. But, be that as it may, we can try it, at all events—if you don't like it, why, Lord bless you, you can give it up again. One takes to something else—better luck next time." [Pg 194]

Thus the matter was disposed of for the present, and five days passed away in a constant whirl of excitement, for everything that the young German saw and heard possessed the charm of novelty, and was invested with the magic of a southern climate, so that he several times hinted to Helldorf, that he felt an almost irresistible impulse to jump on board of the first ship that started, and visit the tropics.

But every one dissuaded him from undertaking such a voyage, especially at that time of the year; Helldorf especially exhorted him to abandon these ideas.

"For," said he, "we are destined for a temperate climate, and although we may force ourselves into the torrid zone, still, either we perish there, or become a sort of half-and-half, nondescript being, who, any one may see, is not in his right place."

At last, Helldorf and Schwarz had terminated their respective businesses, and the latter allowed himself to be persuaded first of all to land in Tennessee, and visit the German settlers there. Selecting, therefore, the fastest of the nine steamers which, on that day, started up stream, viz:—the Diana—they got their things on board, and were soon flying up the river between the really garden-like banks of the Mississippi, where plantation succeeded plantation, and wide boundless fields alternated picturesquely with buildings concealed by groves of oranges and pomegranates, until now and then the dark, morassy, and primeval forest interrupted the blooming landscape once more, and stretched its waving boughs even to the strand, to which it clung with its winding creepers, as though it would not be parted from its cradle, the old Mississippi.

FOOTNOTE:

[20] The Levee in New Orleans, and indeed throughout Louisiana, is the dyke or dam thrown up along the Mississippi, which hinders the stream from overflowing the adjoining lands, which, when the waters are high, are on a lower level than itself. In New Orleans, it is more especially used as a landing place for steamers and a public promenade, and in general is the scene of the greatest bustle, on account of the constant arrival and departure of ships and vessels, while dealers and hawkers increase the throng and noise.

CHAPTER VI. THE UNEXPECTED VISIT.

[Pg 195]

And how were the settlers getting on in the meantime? Had they reconciled themselves to their new position? Had they forgiven Dame Fortune for having cast their lot out in a woody desert?

No. They, of whom one would have least expected it, namely, the women—were the most patient; the men, on the other hand, especially the Oldenburghers, grumbled dreadfully, and declared often enough that they were entitled to expect a better kind of life in return for the payment of so large a capital. 'Tis true that they could no longer reproach the Committee with pride or exclusiveness, for they lived in the midst of them, ate the same food, and laboured at the same tasks; but that, in fact, was one of their chief grievances, that they really had no reasonable pretence for complaint.

Under Wolfgang's direction, and with his active help, sufficient shanties were erected to protect the whole of the settlers from wind and rain; and, indeed, to afford them as convenient a shelter as is usual in those parts. They had also begun to clear the land—that is, to fell the trees and to grub up the bushes, and the immediate necessities of life for the present were provided for, Wolfgang having bought a sufficient quantity of flour and salt meat from a steamer which stopped at his place to take in wood, and having sent up these stores by his negro. [Pg 196]

What was it that they wanted, then?

Everything! How had the ideas which they had cherished in their old home been verified? Where were those fertile plantations, where that super-abundance of produce, that easy life of which they had dreamed? Alas! it had, indeed, been but a dream! Such things look very different in reality. Those aboriginal woods which we cannot picture to ourselves grand and splendid enough, become an intolerable nuisance when we have to live in them, and to combat their gigantesque vegetation. Every one hears and reads with pleasure of the romantic life of a hunter, who passes his nights in the open air, under the greenwood; but it is anything but romantic when the rain falls through that greenwood, and wets one to the skin. Thousands of such trifles there are, to which all, especially Europeans, must first get accustomed; but that is not done in three weeks, which was the period of time that had elapsed since the passengers of the "Hoffnung" had taken possession of their land. Was it surprising, then, that they were not yet satisfied with their life, that they could not be satisfied?

They were occupied for the moment in splitting rails to fence in a large cattle-yard, and Wolfgang

had gone off into the hills, accompanied by Siebert, senior, and Herbold, (the former as treasurer, the latter as an adept in the business,) to purchase some horses and cows wherewith to commence cattle rearing. But, as this branch of rural economy is conducted very differently in the backwoods of the West, from the old settled States and Europe; as the cattle are not tied up in sheds, but roam freely about in the woods, and when wanted, have first to be sought for and got together, such a piece of business is not done in a day, and Wolfgang told the settlers beforehand that they were not to alarm themselves, if he and his companions should stay away a week or even a fortnight, as they probably should bring the cattle with them, and as driving them would prove very tedious.

[Pg 197]

They had been gone three days, and Von Schwanthal, who, since the time when Meier met him in the woods in such a state of alarm, had pretty well abandoned his shooting, was just engaged with Pastor Hehrmann, Mr. Becher, and some of the Oldenburghers, in splitting a huge red beech, which, with combined efforts, they had felled on the previous day, when the tailor, who had been piling brush in the neighbourhood of a little thicket, suddenly came rushing towards them with good news depicted in his countenance, uttering exclamations, and making signs, while yet afar off.

The men paused in their work, looking at him as he came running towards them. He arrived at last, almost out of breath, exclaiming—

"Mr. Von Schwanthal—Mr. Von Schwanthal, get your gun; there's a whole 'herd' of turkeys over yonder!"

"Where?" the latter hastily asked, throwing down the axe, and jumping up in a great hurry. The old love of sport, which had only slumbered for a week or two, awoke in all its vigour.

"Here, close by, where we're working—where the dead cow lies that couldn't stand the climate!"

"Near the dead cow?" asked Von Schwanthal, surprised.

"Yes, it's a fact, I assure you; but make haste!" exclaimed the little tailor, himself spurred on to irrepressible excitement by the sight of the game. "You seem to think that they'll wait till you come."

Von Schwanthal ran quickly to the shanty, which was not far distant, put a couple of dozen of cartridges in his game-pouch, seized the gun, and followed Meier's active little form, which bounded over a fallen tree, lying in his way, with gazelle like agility, and then dived into the woods.

Siebert, junior, the shoemaker, brewer, and Schmidt, with some Oldenburghers and Alsatians, who also had been in the neighbourhood, drew back when they saw the game and heard the tailor's resolve to fetch the hunter; but now they made signs from a distance that the birds were still there, and exhorted the approaching men, by all kinds of telegraphic movements, to walk carefully, so as not to scare away the delicate roast.

[Pg 198]

Von Schwanthal requested his companions—for the whole company had joined the sport—for Heaven's sake to be quiet, and to remain where they were, whilst he crept forward by himself, in doing which he found the game-bag a very great incumbrance, to see if he could not get a shot right into the whole flock, (or herd, as the tailor called them,) and perhaps kill three or four at once.

As said, so done; he first laid aside the cumbersome pouch, and then crept on his knees and left arm, holding the fowling-piece in the right, over stems and roots towards the designated spot.

One circumstance was unfortunate: there was a very disagreeable odour there, for the body of the dead cow had already begun to pass into putrefaction. Von Schwanthal wondered, too, what in the world the turkeys could be about in such a noxious neighbourhood; but there was not much time left for reflection, he had to advance quickly, so that his booty might not escape; and, sure enough, actually, yonder, on and beside the dead animal, there sat about twenty hens, large, strong birds, some of which were looking carefully round, with their long necks, and others—strange!—were pecking at the carrion.

"Thou hast never read about that in any natural history!" thought Von Schwanthal, to himself. "Turkeys and carrion!—wonderful!" But he did not waste the precious time in these hasty reflections, but slid, as fast as he could go over such rough ground, towards a thick cypress, from behind which he hoped to get a capital shot at the whole flock of turkeys. And, lo! he actually succeeded to reach the wished-for position without being observed, or, at all events, without being heeded, although he made noise enough, and some of the birds must have heard him, for they separated themselves from the rest, and looked very attentively, with heads sagely inclined on one side, in the direction where he stood, hidden by the tree.

[Pg 199]

But now the favourable moment appeared to him to have arrived to make sure of his booty; without further delay, therefore, he raised the gun, levelled, and fired the charge of shot right into the midst of the flock.

The turkeys took wing—rose higher and higher—then flew in circles round and round the place from whence they had been so suddenly and so roughly scared. But one of them, which had received several grains of shot, and just retained sufficient strength to raise himself to the lower bough of a neighbouring oak, settled there, flapped his wings once or twice, and then fell down

again, from his elevated perch, dead.

Von Schwanthal shook his head. The turkey fell very light for so heavy a bird. But his companions left him no time for reflection.

"Hurrah!" exclaimed Meier, as he sprang forward, and raised up one of the slain; "hurrah! now we've got a roast!—Oh, geminy! what a stench there is here!"

"But that *was* a shot!" said the brewer. "Five at once!—and such creatures! If one could get such a shot every day, I should go shooting myself."

Von Schwanthal had lifted up the one which had fallen by its naked head, and weighed it in his hand.

"Remarkably light!" said he.

"Why, that bird has the head of an eagle!" exclaimed Becher, who had now also joined them. "Why, that's a singular creature!"

"But are they turkeys, after all?" asked Siebert, junior.

"Well, what else should they be!" opined the shoemaker. "They're certainly not partridges!"

[Pg 200]

"But not turkeys, for all that," said, with a laugh, Pastor Hehrmann, who had, in the meantime, examined them more narrowly. "My dear M. Von Schwanthal, I am afraid that you have shot carrion vultures for turkeys!"

"Well, what next, I should like to know!" said the tailor; who, as he had been the first to give tongue, felt his dignity much hurt by this remark. "If those are not turkeys, you may call me 'Donkey!'"

"Then we must set about christening you afresh," smiled Hehrmann; "for these are buzzards—and probably of that kind which are called the turkey-buzzard, from their resemblance to the turkey. Don't take hold of them, M. Von Schwanthal, you won't be able to get rid of the smell!"

"Yes," declared the brewer, "they do stink—that's a fact!"

"It struck me as very strange," said Von Schwanthal, shaking his head, "directly I saw the creatures seated on the carrion. But they're strikingly like turkeys!—Good Heavens!"

As Von Schwanthal uttered this exclamation, he started back in surprise, and had, in fact, cause for wonder; for before him, with the most amiable smile upon his benevolent countenance, stood no other than Dr. Normann! he who, ever since the settlement had been in existence, had been abused and cursed a thousand times, by almost everybody, and to whom the Oldenburghers, in particular, had vowed death, if he should ever come within their clutches!—yes—whose fraud had even elicited abuse from the little tailor, who, although not in general maliciously disposed, yet had declared "that he would pass a hot goose over the fellow's skin, if he could catch him!"

This Doctor Normann now stood before the astonished settlers, bowing and smiling, as though he had the best-founded claims to the gratitude of the emigrants; and said to those next him, with the most hearty expression of voice, whilst he held out his hand towards them—

[Pg 201]

"Well, how are you, my friends?—all well and hearty?—that's the chief thing! How d'ye do, Pastor Hehrmann?—and you, my dear M. Von Schwanthal? Ah! Mr. Meier and Mr. Schmidt—Mr. Siebert—all hearty? I am delighted—I am really delighted!"

"Sir," said Hehrmann, who had collected himself first, "it cannot be concealed from you that we are all a little surprised at seeing you here, after what has occurred!"

"You thought, perhaps, that I had run away from you!" said the Doctor, laughing. "No, no; on the contrary, you ran off from me. The boat started half an hour earlier than the captain had told me, and—"

"To what are we to attribute the honour of this visit?" asked Pastor Hehrmann, somewhat coldly.

"My dear Pastor," said Normann, advancing towards him, looking him full in the face, "I can guess the cause of your coolness—the land is not what both of us expected. But should I have returned, if I had cheated you?"

"Well, hark ye," said Schmidt, who had hitherto stood by in astonishment, "we have no fault to find with the quality of the land—that's good enough; but there's not the least shadow of all the rest of what you talked about! You must excuse me, but it was all humbug!"

"I really cannot understand you, Doctor!" Becher interrupted the last speaker, who was getting rather excited; "how you can dare—"

"What's the use of all this palaver with the fellow!" exclaimed one of the Oldenburghers. "Devil burn him! he has sent us into the wilderness here, and now he shall see how it will fare with him, since he has been fool enough to follow us!"

"Will you listen to me, or not?" cried Dr. Normann, starting back, and shoving his right hand under his waistcoat. "Will you condemn a man without having heard him?—without allowing him to defend himself!"

"What is there to defend?" exclaimed the tailor. "The evil is done, and here we are in the midst of it!" [Pg 202]

"Will you give me ten minutes' quiet audience," asked the Doctor, "and not interrupt me?"

"Speak on!" said Hehrmann.

"Well, I'll convince you that you wrong me, if you for a moment consider me capable of deceiving you!"

"To the point, if you please!" said Becher.

"You shall not have long to wait," the Doctor continued. "On the very same day on which you quitted Cincinnati, I followed in another boat, the 'Buck-eye Belle,' and went to New Orleans. It is true, that I had intended to have got out at the Big-Halchee first, but the captain would not land expressly for a single passenger. In New Orleans, I of course immediately sought out the boat in which you came down here, and inquired after you; but learnt, to my horror, from the pilot, whom I knew very well, the true state of affairs, and what the land in this neighbourhood was. The pilot happened to have been hunting near this little river last year.

"At first, I refused to believe what he told me; but he soon adduced such convincing proofs, that I was compelled to admit to myself that I had been imposed upon, and that you would take me for a false, deceitful person. I could not bear that; at the same time, I could not conceal from myself that mere excuses were inadequate, that I must *prove* to you that I am an innocent and honest man. But, again, to do this it was necessary that I should recover compensation, as far as that is possible, for the damage suffered by you; and it is on that account chiefly—and not only to clear myself of suspicion—that I am come hither."

"But how can you——"

"Allow me, in the first place, to introduce a friend of mine, Mr. Trevor."

He pointed, at the same time, behind him, and the man alluded to, whose slim form, hitherto unnoticed by anybody, was leaning against an oak, his hat pulled down rather low over his sunburnt forehead, now raised himself, and bowed politely to the people. [Pg 203]

"Mr. Trevor speaks German," continued Dr. Normann, "and has accompanied me in order to give evidence in New York (whither both of us are bound) of the state of things here—viz., as to how far and by what means you have been cheated by that rascally land-jobber. In a month's time, I hope to be enabled to send you not only the full amount of the purchase money, but a considerable sum for damages besides!"

"Then the laws, or their administration, must be very different from all that I have heard!" replied Mr. Becher.

"Mr. Becher," exclaimed Dr. Normann, while he placed his hand on his breast, "why should I come back to you, if I had not the intention and prospect of making good the damage which I have brought upon you? What other motive could have impelled me to a place where I knew before hand that I should (with reason) be ill received?"

Pastor Hehrmann looked hard at the doctor; for a moment the thought again flashed across his mind of the declaration to his daughter, which he had accidentally overheard; but Normann, who had no idea that Hehrmann had heard a word of it, and well knew, or guessed, that Bertha would be silent on the subject of such a conversation, met the eye of the Pastor firmly, and thus (although unknown to himself) almost entirely effaced the quickly-raised and passing suspicion of the other.

"And you really suppose that you will be able to make that person answerable for the fraud?" asked Becher, still incredulous.

"I not only think so, but am sure of it," said Dr. Normann; "fortunately I have in my hands his undertaking in writing; there are witnesses enough to it in New York, and if I bring testimony by this gentleman what the neighbourhood here really is like, no advocate *can* get him off from his deserved punishment." [Pg 204]

The emigrants, unacquainted with the administration of the law in the United States, really began to believe the words of the man who had enticed them thither, but who now defended himself with so ready a tongue—particularly as one circumstance told in his favour, viz., that some such object alone could have made his visit probable—for what possible benefit, thought they, could any further deceit be to him.

The men, therefore, became more and more friendly and confidential, and, before he had passed an hour beside them, their acquaintance seemed nearly re-established on its old footing of friendship. The honest folks could not, and would not, believe a fellow-countryman capable of such villainy, for such treachery appeared impossible to their own hearts.

One thing more remained to be done; he had to be presented to the women, and their prejudices had also to be removed; Becher and Hehrmann undertook this office, and walked towards the houses with him and the strange gentleman, while Von Schwanthal with the others remained behind.

The men had mechanically withdrawn themselves from the spot where the carrion was lying, to

escape from the offensive smell; but although the American could only with difficulty suppress a loud laugh when he caught sight of the slaughtered buzzards, and readily guessed how these useful creatures had met with a premature death, yet Normann, on the other hand, carefully avoided seeming so much as to notice the strange game. It was not his cue to raise the slightest cloud of vexation on the brow of any one of the people, whom he had to make friends of for the present.

Pastor Hehrmann presented the returned one to the women; honest and just himself, he was loth to believe any one else capable of such villany, and therefore gladly gave ear to what the doctor now told him. And, although Bertha, at least, started and turned pale at the arrival of the certainly unexpected guest, yet, on the other hand, Normann's behaviour was so hearty and frank, that all willingly absolved him, and listened and gave credence to the explanation repeated by Hehrmann. Within a few hours it seemed as if nothing unfriendly had ever occurred, as if the doctor had solely and merely acted so as to be deserving of all the settlers' warmest thanks. They now only looked forward with pleasure to the return of Siebert and Herbold, in order that they, too, might be made acquainted with the good news; and Mrs. Hehrmann, for her part, declared that it was quite a relief to her that she was no longer obliged to consider Dr. Normann guilty of such a breach of friendship and good faith.

[Pg 205]

The American was also treated with attention and heartiness by the whole of the settlers, and although the so-called Pennsylvanian German, which he spoke, certainly sounded rather strange to their ears at first, and was often incomprehensible, yet they did their best to chat with him, so that he might not suffer too much ennui.

But Mr. Trevor appeared to be particularly partial to the conversation of Miss Bertha, who spoke a little English, and he gave himself every possible pains to teach her the pure accent of such words as she did not pronounce or emphasize correctly.

Dr. Normann, it is true, several times endeavoured to give him occupation elsewhere; but he always returned to the young lady, who appeared to be pleased with his attentions, because she thereby hoped to escape a tête-à-tête with Dr. Normann, of whom she had a complete dread, since the scene on the deck of the steamer.

The doctor, in the evening, tried, as far as possible, to ascertain everything which had occurred; of course, he had to inquire into particulars, in order to be able to proceed right vigorously and effectually against that cheating land-shark.[\[21\]](#) At the same time, he managed to get at some general acquaintance with the state of the finances; but he could only obtain the exact particulars from Siebert senior, whose return he therefore resolved to await, before taking any decided step.

[Pg 206]

On the following morning, Normann wandered with his companion backwards and forwards in the woods, under the pretence of viewing the ground, in order to convict the New York swindler, and here the following dialogue occurred between these two worthies:—

"When, the devil, do you mean to be off, Normann? What's the use of frittering away our precious time here?"

"We can't get away yet," objected the doctor; "how are we to get the girls to the river quickly enough to be safe from pursuit?"

"Don't talk such stuff," said the American, with a laugh; "which of the Dutchmen is to follow us through the woods without losing himself directly, so that he won't be able to find his own track again? No, by Jove, that matter would not give me the least uneasiness: I vote for carrying off the girl, as soon as we can entice her a rifle-shot's range from the shanties, and that, it is to be hoped, will be no difficult matter; I shall think of something that will raise her curiosity."

"She appears to please you?"

"She's a glorious girl!"

"Turner, don't forget our agreement!" said Normann, with a voice of grave exhortation, for a strange uncomfortable feeling now, for the first time, crept over him: the suspicion that perhaps his accomplice might deceive him at last.

"Why, of course, I recollect our agreement," laughed Turner; "but perhaps you're jealous? Ha, ha, ha! that's a good one! Do you suppose then that if I had wanted a girl, I need have taken a journey of seven hundred miles down the river for her? Nonsense! It amuses me to get through the summer in this way, for in Cincinnati there is nothing more for me."

[Pg 207]

"Had the Italian to pay his footing? Hang it, man, I shan't betray you, at all events!—and yet I've put the question ten times to you already in vain!"

"Why do you put it at all?—it must be all one to you," growled Turner, angrily; "'tis always better not to talk too much about such things. But, I don't care. Yes, I believe that he may probably remember me awhile. But the journey down stream came very opportunely; I was only afraid that the cursed sailing boat would have overtaken us. Confound the fellows! the wind blew remarkably fresh—a few hours more, and——"

"The Ohio makes too many bends," said the worthy doctor, smiling; "a sailing-boat never can overtake a steamer on it; but I really think it would be better for us to await the return of the

others, who, as Pastor Hehrmann told us, are to bring horses and cattle with them. On horseback, the affair could be much more easily managed, for, after all, Turner, it would be rather too much of a good thing to carry the great girls fifteen miles through the woods."

"We can take turns."

"I thought we were to carry off *both*?" said the doctor, on the watch.

Turner, who wished, at present to avoid everything which might arouse the doctor's suspicions, immediately answered this question in the affirmative, and exclaimed, laughing—"Well, of course, you are right—we will wait for the horses, unless a favourable opportunity should meanwhile occur to entice both girls towards the Mississippi, which certainly might be difficult."

"If any body should find our boat yonder?" said the doctor, "that would be a cursed go!"

"Indeed it would," said Turner, musingly; "that would be unlucky, and might be attended with yet more unlucky consequences; but I can scarcely think it likely; Scipio, you know, is beside it, and I have hid him out-and-out well. Besides, it's a German, too, they say, who lives at the mouth of the Big Halchee, and that being so, we need scarcely apprehend discovery from that quarter."

[Pg 208]

"Well, well, don't think so ill of the Germans either," said Normann, warningly; "there are some among them who are not behind a thorough backwoodsman in tracking."

"I'll tell you what, Normann," exclaimed Turner, abruptly, as he stood still, and looked at the rivulet, on whose banks they just then were; "I really believe that we can get the boat up here; then the affair would be child's play."

"Not so safe as you suppose, Turner; the Big Halchee makes innumerable windings, and if they cut them off, they can get on faster on shore than we on water."

"They must first know that we had gone by water; the Big Halchee has only risen since the day before yesterday—since the dreadful rains—and I don't think that up to that time it would have borne even a canoe. I'll tell you what, Normann, it may be a week or a fortnight before they return with the horses, and to wait till then will make the matter too tedious; besides, I haven't time to wait so long; therefore you remain here, say that I'm gone hunting, following a bear's track, if you like, and meanwhile I'll return quickly to the Mississippi. If the Halchee is navigable, why, I'll be back again by to-morrow evening, perhaps before, and then nothing more will interrupt our flight; then cunning and force must help us; if it is not navigable, why, I'll bring up the boat as far as possible, and we may still, perhaps, save ourselves some miles of our land journey."

Normann willingly agreed to this plan, for it not only facilitated the execution of this shameful piece of scoundrelism, but also removed his accomplice so long from the neighbourhood of the object of their treachery.

It required only a little further confederacy, and, after a brief farewell, Turner threw the rifle over his shoulder, and soon disappeared in the bush; while Normann returned slowly and musingly to the settlers.

[Pg 209]

The excuse for Turner's absence was readily received by them, and Von Schwanthal only lamented that he had not heard of it soon enough to accompany him. Normann, meanwhile, who, according to his own assurance, had also lived much in the woods, and consequently was acquainted with agriculture as well as the management of cattle, gave himself every conceivable pains to teach the men as well as the women a number of little contrivances, which those only who live in the woods find out by degrees.

The fever, too, had attacked several of them, although the general state of health was, on the whole, still tolerable. Normann gave them excellent instructions for this, too, and showed them several medicinal herbs growing in the woods, whose uses he taught them. He behaved himself so well, took such endless trouble, and was so civil and polite to all, that even Bertha, towards whom, alone, he observed a rather distant behaviour, began to feel herself more at ease in his society, as she could not but think that he was cured of his love for her, and only wished to do everything in his power to render those inconveniences into which the settlers had been plunged, unfortunately, by his means, as light as possible.

He was particularly friendly and attentive to Louisa, Bertha's sister, and her junior by a few years, and two days thus passed with surprising rapidity.

On the second evening after the conversation last detailed, the greater part of the settlers were seated close together before the principal dwelling, which, situated in the midst of several smaller dwelling-places, and subdivided by partitions, had to serve as a sleeping-place for most of them until they should have furnished the remaining houses. Several small fires, lighted in a circle, and fed with decayed wood, gave out a thick smoke, and served to keep off the otherwise too troublesome mosquitoes, and the doctor had just concluded a highly interesting story about the catching of wild horses on the western prairies, when the bushes rustled, and the American stepped towards them. He was heavily laden, and laid down the young stag which he bore on his shoulders, at Bertha's feet, but declared that he had not been able to overtake the bear whose tracks he had followed.

[Pg 210]

Normann watched his looks, to guess whether the attempt had been successful or not, but the

American was too wily to expose himself to the possibility of a discovery, if any one of the persons present should notice any sign, and therefore remained quite unconscious, answered Von Schwanthal's questions in the most circumstantial manner, related a number of hunting anecdotes, laughed and joked, and altogether did as though there were no such person as Dr. Normann in existence.

It was not until they retired together to their sleeping-places, that he whispered lowly to the latter—

"The boat lies scarcely five hundred yards from hence, safely hid; and to-morrow they must be ours."

FOOTNOTE:

[21] Those persons, in the sea-port towns, who make it their business to sell fraudulently bad land to the newly arrived, are usually styled land-sharks.

CHAPTER VII. THE FLIGHT.

[Pg 211]

Wolfgang, Herbold, and the elder Siebert, had gone off to the hills, in order to purchase from a farmer there, whom Wolfgang knew, such horses and cattle as they stood in need of for the moment, and which, if they should sell or leave that place within a short period, might either be driven on board of a steamer and so sent to the nearest town, or even be taken with them to their new place of abode.

Their journey had been anything but agreeable, for on the very first day it began to rain, and, during seventeen successive hours, it had never ceased from pouring. The swampy ground, damp at all times, became almost impassable, and besides they were frightened by tempests, which passed over their heads, with bright flashes of lightning, and loud peals of thunder, and that in such rapid succession, that the sound of one peal had not died away, before another already rendered them uneasy about their safety.

Siebert was especially frightened, and although, at first, he endeavoured to conceal it, as well as he could, yet, in the course of the day, he was unable to keep up this disguise, for the thunder and lightning seemed to have no end; he therefore candidly acknowledged his fears, and affirmed that it must be a presentiment that he should be struck by lightning.

Wolfgang laughed. "No, my dear Mr. Siebert, do not make yourself uneasy; the old belief, that lightning prefers to strike trees, and other high objects, is certainly well founded, and with us in the woods, here, it always lights upon a tree; indeed, I should like to know where else it is to go to; it would be quite a feat for it to pass into the earth, without striking one of them. No, I have heard of a good number of accidents, by falling trees or branches, under which men have been buried, or at least crippled, and cattle, more particularly, are often thus destroyed, but I have never yet heard of a man having been struck by lightning, at least, not in the woods. In the hills, there are a kind of natural lightning conductors, I mean the hickories or white walnut trees, although the inconstant fluid not unfrequently has its joke with some old oak. But it prefers the former tree, and I have found them split down to the very roots. But if I am not mistaken, we are approaching the hills, the rushes become thinner, and the soil is getting undulating. Now we have the prospect of surprising my friend at home this evening, and there we may rest ourselves for a day, to make up for our exertions."

[Pg 212]

Wolfgang had concluded correctly; the last slope of the hills stretched to where they stood, and thenceforward their road became better, as they forsook the swampy hollows, and remained at the border of the higher land.

The farm of Stevenson (the name of Wolfgang's friend) lay, according to his calculation, about five miles further off; but it was not until nearly evening that they reached the fence, and with it the boundary of a well-cultivated field of Indian corn, more than ten acres in extent, before which Herbold stood still, quite surprised and delighted.

Wolfgang, however, did not leave him much time to look about him, but hurried his companions on towards the house, so as to enable them to dry themselves, and to get something warm, for he feared that the other two, not yet inured to the climate, might not escape with a mere cold, but perhaps get the fever or ague.

Stevenson received them hospitably and heartily; his daughters set about making some good, strong, warm coffee for them directly, while his wife got out everything in the shape of clothes, either old or new, and ere long, the wet and hungry wanderers were seated, dry and refreshed, before a warm fire, so that even Herbold confessed that he had not felt more comfortable for many a year past.

[Pg 213]

Indeed, Stevenson's family seemed to be a pattern of American domestic life;—the interior of the house, simple, it is true, and even poor, was as bright and clean as one could have wished it; the utensils shone and glittered again, and the mother with her two grown-up daughters, clad in the

homespun grey of the western forests, looked like the ideal of a worthy matron, surrounded and supported by youth and beauty. The strangers soon felt happy in their neighbourhood, and it only required a few words of encouragement to make them move about with as much freedom and ease as though they were at home in their own houses.

The storm which had so vexed them, and wetted them to the skin, like all other things in this world, had its bright side, too, for it had driven in the cattle towards the protecting dwellings of man, instead of wandering about the woods in all directions, as they otherwise would have been. Cows and horses stood in peaceful agreement, side by side, and licked the salt which a little fair-haired boy strewed for them, upon troughs hollowed out and fixed for the purpose, with an eagerness and enjoyment which told distinctly enough how long they had been deprived of it, and how fond they were of it. A small flock of sheep, with their leader, a stately ram, also approached, but the protector of the cows, a stout, broad-shouldered bull, did not seem particularly to relish his company, and lowered his sinewy neck towards him, and pawed the ground threateningly with his foot. The ram, on the other hand, who did not like to be looked upon as a coward before all his dames, and to forfeit the respect which he considered his due, also assumed a hostile attitude, bent down his head, and ran full tilt, carrying the war into the enemy's territory, at his hundred-fold superior adversary, so that the latter was quite taken aback, and merely awaited the attack with horns pointed down.

[Pg 214]

But the ram was too wide awake to let himself into a quarrel where he undoubtedly must come off second best, and therefore, when he found himself close before the bull, he turned suddenly off to the right, bringing a couple of cows between himself and his antagonist, called his own little flock together by a peculiar bleat, and in the next moment was on his way to the woods with it; so that the deluded bull, when at last, he threw up his powerful head in defiance, to see what had become of the threatened attack, saw no enemy in his vicinity, and could only express his contempt by a loud, hollow bellow, and by a little sand which he scraped up and threw in the eyes of a couple of cows.

Herbold had looked on at the whole game with much pleasure, and now turned to his friendly host with the question, whether sheep were advantageous and profitable stock in the backwoods.

"No," said he, "at least I have not found them so. The stock, of course, like the rest of our cattle, have to run about wild in the woods, and although the wolves rarely venture on a young calf, yet they persecute the sheep considerably; it is, therefore, only possible to preserve a flock if one has a good ram beside it."

"And do you really think that a ram can bid defiance to the wolves?" asked Herbold, surprised.

"Yes; I not only think so, but am certain of it," replied Stevenson; "they place themselves in a posture of defence, go round and round the flock, and constantly threaten the wolf with their attack, of which he is particularly afraid."

"But when several wolves are together, as no doubt is often the case?"

"The wolf is very cowardly," continued the old farmer; "he seldom ventures on an open attack, and is fearful of resistance. I am firmly convinced that a single sheep could drive away the large black wolf of the woods—to say nothing of the little, grey, prairie wolves—if it would advance resolutely upon him, and make a feigned attack or two. But, as sheep, after all, are but sheep, why, this is not often attempted; they try to fly, and Mr. Wolf seizes them by the collar. But that is not the only thing which interferes with the raising of sheep, there are other circumstances with which we have to contend. In consequence of their running about in the woods unrestrained, their wool gets full of burrs, and it would be still worse were we to keep them in fields or fenced places, where the burrs are yet more abundant; it is therefore out of the question, to wash the sheep before shearing them. That is the reason why, although there is pasture in abundance, we keep comparatively few sheep, and even those few, we should do away with, if our wives were not obliged to use a little wool, to weave and to spin clothes for themselves and us."

[Pg 215]

"Strange that wolves persecute sheep so everywhere!" said Herbold, with a sagacious shake of the head; "they are natural enemies, no doubt, and the sheep must be aware of it, and dread their worriers."

"Don't suppose that," observed Stevenson; "strange to say, the thing is originally quite the reverse. I have experienced it several times myself. When I have removed to an unsettled district, which, be it said in passing, has been several times the case, I have not lost a single sheep during the first few months, sometimes even during the whole first year, and that surprised me the more as I found everywhere in the neighbourhood frequent tracks of wolves. At a subsequent period, I was once accidentally witness to the cause of their being so strangely spared, and which had already been mentioned to me by various neighbours. I was standing on the look out for an old buck that had passed that way, and from the spot where I had hid myself, could overlook a little plain below me, where my flock, then consisting of but seven ewes and a ram, was pasturing. Suddenly a wolf broke out from a neighbouring thicket, and was about to pass across the open space. But he certainly must have fallen in with the sheep for the first time then, and they must have appeared very strange to him, for just as I thought that he would select one for his breakfast, and was on that account about to step forward to hinder him, he halted, scented them, advanced timidly a step nearer, and suddenly, when one of the ewes turned round towards him, fled, with rapid bounds, into the cover of the thicket. He was afraid of the creatures which were as yet unknown to him, and it was only in the course of time, perhaps when driven by pinching

[Pg 216]

hunger, that these wolves tasted the first mutton. Thenceforth, it is true, there was an end to safety; the ravenous beasts of prey soon learned how timid and inoffensive that alarming-looking animal was, and how sweet its flesh, and from that time forward did much havoc among the peaceable woolcoats."

"But, as the wolf liked the taste of the flesh," said Herbold, "so also might you rear them yourselves, for the sake of the meat."

"We don't like it much," Stevenson replied; "the fare of the backwoodsman is Johnny cake, or Indian corn bread, and pork, and on that he lives and thrives. We but rarely slaughter a bullock and cure the meat, for the sake of a change; for it is dry eating, and deer and turkeys generally serve the turn."

"Is there much game here?"

"Pretty well. He who knows where to seek for it can always find something, and need not come home empty handed, for if there are no deer to be had, he can get squirrels."

"Squirrels?" asked Herbold, in astonishment.

"Yes, yes, squirrels," said the farmer, smiling; "when you've been awhile in the country, you'll come to relish squirrels too; they are very good eating, especially the grey ones."

"But what do you shoot the squirrels with? I see nothing but rifles here."

"Well, what else should we shoot them with?" asked the other, surprised in his turn; "not with those smooth-bored shot guns, that shoot away a handful of lead into the air, besides spoiling flesh and fur? No, indeed. We have small bored rifles on purpose for such small game, and with those we can fetch down the agile leapers from out of the loftiest tree tops, where indeed your shot guns would not carry the charge at all."

[Pg 217]

"Do your cattle come home regularly, then?"

"Oh no; sometimes a single herd will remain away for months, and pasture ten or twelve miles from home beside other watercourses, and then we have to go after them, seek them out, and salt them."

"Salt them?" exclaimed the German, astonished.

"You are surprised at that," said Stevenson, with a smile; "but of course you are not yet acquainted with the management of cattle in the woods of the West. Well, I can give you at least some idea of it in a few words.

"Our chief wealth, if a poor devil like myself may be permitted to talk of wealth, consists in cattle—viz., horned cattle, horses, and hogs, for as to the sheep they are a mere trifle. But how is it possible that a man should keep large flocks and herds, who perhaps scarcely grows more corn than suffices to keep his own family in bread? Stall feeding is, therefore, out of the question, if, indeed, we had sheds. The woods, on the other hand, are full of the most valuable cattle food; in spring and summer, the beautiful grass—in the fall, the pea-vine and wild oats—in winter, the sweet leaves of the reeds in the reed brakes. It would be folly, with such abundance of food, to think of growing corn for cattle, for the hogs also have more in the shape of roots and acorns than they can get through. We, therefore, rear as much live stock as we can, and trust to Providence to feed it.

"But to prevent them from straying, we have a means which hardly ever fails of attaching them to the spot where they get it. I refer to salt. Horses, cows, and hogs, are all alike passionately fond of it, and to strew salt at certain periods on fixed places is almost sure to bring them back to those spots."

[Pg 218]

"Don't single heads of cattle sometimes stray?"

"Oh, certainly; sometimes small herds do so, and become wild, but that can't be helped; others grow up in their stead, and the loss is made up again."

"Wild animals destroy many, too; do they not?"

"Many!—no. The bear sometimes makes havoc among the hogs, but his hide must generally pay the damage; and if the panther occasionally tears to pieces a calf or a foal, yet after all it does not amount to much; others grow up."

"According to our notions of cattle breeding it would signify a good deal if a panther should destroy a calf or a foal," said Herbold, with a laugh, "but I perceive the thing is carried on upon a larger scale here. You have many cattle?"

"Pretty well," replied the farmer, "about two hundred head in all, counting cows and calves as one. But I am thinking of going westward, and want to sell them."

"What, forsake your farm!" exclaimed the German, astonished. "Why? Is the land not good, or is the neighbourhood unhealthy?"

"Oh, not for that; the land is capital, and we have no cause to complain much of sickness; a little ague, now and then; but that arises from the neighbourhood of the swamps, and it doesn't last long."

"But why do you wish to remove, then?"

"Well, I don't exactly know, but as I have heard the land hereabouts is to be surveyed——"

"And that is your reason? I should have thought that would have been acceptable to you."

"As you like to take it, pleasant or unpleasant; pleasant because one then gets to know whereabout to look for one's own land, and where one may, here and there, have the chance of buying good pieces to add to it; but unpleasant because I should have to pay for it now, and for the same money I could get just as good land further to the west, and much more of it, and perhaps also better cattle. Here I get at present a pretty good price for all that I have, and if a couple of years were only over one's head, and the settlements in this neighbourhood so thick as to impede a man in his free movements"——

[Pg 219]

"Good gracious!" Herbold interrupted him; "why, you haven't a single neighbour within nine miles' distance, as you yourself just now admitted."

"Yet the time is not so very distant," continued Stevenson, without noticing the objection, "when we may have towns upon towns along the margin of the swamp, and I had rather go out of the way of the people; the air of towns doesn't agree with me."

"Well, Heaven be praised!" said the other, laughing, "you haven't much to complain of on that score; the nearest town, as Wolfgang told me, is ten miles distant, and consists of five houses."

"And I shouldn't like any nearer," said the farmer.

"There is another thing which I wished to ask you; how, in the name of wonder, do you manage with the milch kine? You must place them at all events under shelter, and feed them, otherwise you can get no milk."

"We can manage that much more simply," was the reply; "we drive home the calves when we find them in the woods, and the cows, of course, come with them. The cow is milked at the homestead, and afterwards driven out of the clearing. During the first night she does not like to go away, but she is driven by hunger to go at last, seeks her food, and comes home regularly to be milked, and to see her calf."

"Certainly that is a convenient mode of keeping milking cows; and the calf remains all day long in a shed?"

"Shed! we don't know such a word here. Whoever may happen to have a stallion may perhaps keep him in a log-house built on purpose, differing in nowise from our own ordinary dwellings, except that it has no boarded floor, nor chimney, but otherwise we don't require those kind of buildings."

"Well, thus much I can see," Herbold now expressed his opinion; "there is no great art in raising cattle here; one has only to drive them out, and scarcely trouble oneself further about them."

[Pg 220]

"There," said Wolfgang, who had now joined them, and had heard the last remark, "you fall into an error common with emigrants from Europe. They go from one extreme to the other, and believe that, because in their own country they have so much trouble with stall feeding, and are obliged to conduct everything with so much care, therefore that here they have nothing further to do, for instance, than to drive out a breeding sow into the woods, in order to have a drove of some hundred hogs arrive some three or four years after. No, no; one must not neglect cattle here either, but must look after it, else they get wild, and become worse than deer or rabbits."

"I don't know what Wolfgang means by extremes, or what extremes are, but in other respects he has hit it exactly. One has to drive about in the woods for many a long day to get the creatures together, and when that is done they never will remain where they are wanted. But you were saying that you wanted to buy some cows and horses; if you do, you couldn't have pitched upon a better time than just the present; my best cows are here, and there is not one of the horses missing."

"Certainly, we wish to buy both cattle and horses," said Siebert, who now also joined in the conversation; "that was just the cause of our coming hither; but in making our bargain we must rely implicitly upon Mr. Wolfgang and yourself, for——"

"Mr. Wolfgang understands the thing thoroughly," the old American interrupted him, laughing; "we have transacted many a piece of business together. He and his wife—by-the-bye, Wolfgang, how is your wife? she suffered much from the fever lately."

"It is well with her," said the young man, turning half aside; "she is dead."

"Dead! dear me! and we never heard a word of it, so that we might——"

[Pg 221]

"Don't press the subject," said the young man, deprecatingly; "the distance between this and the river is great, how could you hear of it? Besides, these worthy people helped me kindly with the burial. But," he continued, while he passed his hands lightly across his eyes, "I think it is better for me, and for all of us, if we let alone the melancholy past. We have business to attend to, and activity is the best preservative against sorrow."

"But your wife——" said Stevenson.

"Was an angel," Wolfgang interrupted him, in a low voice, "and I shall never, never forget her, so long as this poor heart beats; still, do me the favour not to wake the old sorrow. I have, Heaven knows! suffered enough already.—When are you going to clear out, Stevenson?"

The old man reached him his hand in silence, grasped heartily that which was offered him, and then changed his tone, in order not to sadden his friend yet more.

"It will be next year first," said he, as he drew one of his large mastiffs towards him, and patted his head; "there are always on those occasions so many things to look after, that one hardly knows where to begin or when one has done, and as I have got to cross the Mississippi, why I intend to take my time, and to get done with it all at once. To go back such a distance for something forgotten would be too tedious. How many cattle will you have—a hundred perhaps? The more you can get at first, the more advantageous for you, for the more rapidly and the more numerous does it increase, and it costs you little or nothing."

"That is very true," Wolfgang now took up the discourse; "if one is minded to stay in the place, or at all events in the neighbourhood where one is; but I would by no means advise the gentlemen to do that. The soil is good, but the location is unhealthy, and it will be fortunate for them if they can stand it during the summer; next fall they must seek out a healthier climate, and much cattle would only be an incumbrance to them. Where do you go to?"

[Pg 222]

"Into the Ozark Hills; but why will you not at once quit this part of the country, if you are already firmly convinced that you will not remain here long? I should go at once, for time here is money. Calculate merely the produce in cattle that you would gain by it."

"You are right," Siebert now said; "but where are we to find a neighbourhood directly that would suit us, particularly as we are unacquainted with the country; and then a removal with such a number of people is easier spoken of than executed."

"And how we have worked at our place already!" suggested Herbold; "how many trees have we felled!"

"Well, well, that would be the least part of the business," smiled Stevenson; "there can't be so very many in three weeks; besides, all that is not lost, it has been useful to you for practice, and cannot prove otherwise than beneficial hereafter. But I quite agree with Mr. Wolfgang. If you are not unanimous among yourselves whether to stay or go, as it almost seems to me is the case, why then only take some four or five milch kine and calves, so that you may have milk for the children and the sick, at all events three or four horses besides, and no hogs, they would only be a plague to you, and let that suffice for your beginning in cattle management."

Siebert and Herbold fully agreed with this, and with the assistance of Wolfgang and Stevenson selected such of the cows as appeared the best; then chose three horses, small but sturdy ponies, such as are serviceable in the woods, and, on the fourth morning after their departure from home, they had concluded everything with such good fortune, and so much more quickly than they had expected, that they were ready to think about their march back. But they first strolled, with old Stevenson, through all his fields and improvements, and Herbold especially was much astonished at a style of farming of which he had, up to that time, had no conception.

[Pg 223]

The Indian corn field claimed his chief attention, for although the emigrants, on their journey by canal through Ohio, had already seen fields with rail fences, yet that had always been in the more settled districts, and the fields really looked like fields. But here everything was more in its primeval state, and although the fences had been put up durably and well, yet in the interior there stood almost as many stumps and large girdled trees as there were stalks of corn. It remained an inexplicable riddle to Herbold how any human being could plough among those stumps and roots, for such a field, containing, at least, ten German morgens, or about twenty English acres, could not be tilled with the spade; yet the furrows seemed regular and straight. The plough unquestionably had done it, and Stevenson showed them one without wheels,[\[221\]](#) so as to allow the ploughman to draw it out before every root, to lift it out of the way of stumps of trees, and by pressing or easing it let it go shallower or deeper.

The old American explained to them the culture of the Indian corn, which was very simple, and conducted them between the rows of stalks, frequently from ten to twelve feet high, and which, with their heavy cobs, and drooping, dry, silky little bushes, or flags, presented a stately, and to the eye of the husbandman, most grateful appearance.

The stalks stood, as is customary, upon little mounds or hillocks, quite four feet apart, so as to leave full play for the leaves, and pumpkins or water melons had been sown between them, and throve amazingly, especially the former, which, in some instances, had reached an extraordinary size.

"What, in the name of Heaven, do you do with all these pumpkins?" asked Mr. Siebert, in astonishment, "why, there are actually enough to victual a whole colony."

"Pumpkins," said Stevenson, "are, properly speaking, one of the most useful things which a farmer can sow; horses and cows eat them eagerly, hogs will let themselves be beaten to death for them, and they are one of the most healthy and nourishing articles of food for mankind which we possess here in Tennessee, or indeed throughout the whole west of America.

[Pg 224]

"For mankind, too?"

"Yes, certainly; but by the time that you have got your fields cleared you will have learnt that yourselves. Pumpkins, boiled down fresh, make a capital preserve, of course not so delicate as plums or peaches, and when dried they yield an excellent winter vegetable, which I, at least, prefer to any other."

"And do they only grow Indian corn in this neighbourhood—no cotton, no tobacco?" asked Mr. Siebert; "the climate is assuredly mild enough."

"Mild enough, certainly. In the states lying north of this, immense quantities of tobacco, and even of cotton, are raised, and consequently, those plants would thrive still better in this more southern Tennessee; but, for the culture of cotton, as well as of tobacco, a great number of hands are required, and black hands if possible; slaves, on the one hand, to get in the harvest—that is, pluck the cotton itself—on the other, to attend to the picking of the small tobacco worm. A farmer who is restricted to his own family cannot attempt to raise those sorts of things, or at least can raise sufficient only for his own use. Else it is sure to be a failure, if the crop is not a total loss."

"But how is it with cereals?"

"Why, those might be more practicable, and here and there they are cultivated with extraordinary success, but Indian corn is better for cattle food,[\[23\]](#) and we always prefer it. Another inconvenience of these smaller grains is the bread; we have no suitable mills for it, and on that account alone must content ourselves with Indian corn. In the eastern and northern states, it is of course somewhat different; there they grow wheat and oats, and I am firmly convinced that in the whole course of your journey through New York and Ohio, or Pennsylvania States, whichever way you may have come, you did not get any Indian corn bread, or set eyes upon it."

[Pg 225]

Siebert and Herbold confirmed this; but Wolfgang had meanwhile busily occupied himself in tapping with his bent forefinger against several of the largest and ripest watermelons, to seek out the best of them for eating, as they could not remain much longer, but must return to their settlement.

All three accordingly followed his example, and now sought, heavily laden, the shadow of the house, there to enjoy the melons at their leisure.

Mrs. Stevenson had meanwhile prepared an ample and excellent dinner, such a one as is only to be met with in the woods, so that the fresh comers, who besides had not been much used to dainties latterly, acknowledged with animation that they had not made such a meal for a long time.

Game, turkey, and fat pork formed the "pièces de resistance," the heavy artillery as it were, and preserved pumpkin, beans, sweet potatoes, honey, and milk the by-meats. All was prepared simply but well, and the men did justice to it. But after the meal, Wolfgang again urged their departure, and although Herbold (who began to like the place very much) would have willingly passed at least that day there, yet he gave way to the wish of their conductor. Mounting the horses, therefore, which they had bargained for, they bade a hearty farewell to the family of the worthy old Stevenson, and commenced their homeward journey, driving the cows and calves before them. Stevenson also promised shortly to look them up in their new settlement, perhaps within that very week, to make the acquaintance of his new neighbours, as he called them.

[Pg 226]

But, although they were now mounted, they scarcely advanced more quickly than they had done before on foot, for to drive cows through the woods is a task which, as the Americans say, teaches even methodists to swear, and which certainly offers many difficulties to the tyro. Besides this, Mr. Siebert knew little or nothing about riding, and had trouble enough to keep his seat, owing to the many leaps which the horse was obliged to make over prostrate stems of trees or swampy spots. He had, therefore, to keep in the centre, while Wolfgang and Herbold rode on either wing, in order, not only to make the cattle move on by shouting and swinging their hats, but also to drive back, from thicket and swamp, into the prescribed track, the stragglers, which were constantly straying.

We will not stop to inquire how often, while thus engaged, Siebert and Herbold were dragged from their horses by dangling creeping plants and vines, or lost their seats by sudden shying, or stumbling, or leaping of their beasts, and kissed the earth any way but gently. They progressed very slowly with their charge, and it was near sunset of the second day before they reached the neighbourhood of the settlement, and heard the strokes of the workmen's axes at regular intervals.

* * * * *

But it is high time that we should return to the settlement once more, where those two villains were steadily progressing towards the execution of their criminal plan. But as Normann wished to await the return of Siebert, senior, he and Turner assisted the emigrants with their work, partly to pass the time, but partly, also, in order to restore their former friendly footing more and more. The settlers had thus just concluded two new fenced inclosures, wherein the expected horses and cows were to be kept, for they could not yet make up their minds that the cattle should be allowed to run at liberty in the woods all the winter.

[Pg 227]

Even Hehrmann, who, as he could not forget the last scene on board the steamer, had carefully observed Normann the first day or two, appeared to allow his suspicions to be lulled, when he

noted his open and candid behaviour. One could plainly see in every one of the doctor's movements how much afflicted he was that he should have been the cause of a company of Germans—of people who were his friends—being cheated and defrauded, and how he now strained every nerve to repair, as far as lay in his power, the evil, although it had not been caused by his own act. He had, on that very day even, assured Hehrmann and Becher, that not only did he not entertain the slightest doubt, but that, indeed, he was firmly convinced, that the rascally land-jobber could be successfully brought to account.

The settlers had succeeded, with the assistance of the doctor and the American, in laying "the worm," as the lower row of rails laid in zig-zag is called, and to erect the whole fence faultlessly, so that Mr. Becher, when he surveyed the successful work with self-satisfied look, observed, smilingly, that now the drovers might arrive as soon as they pleased with their beasts, and that Wolfgang would stare to see such a workmanlike performance, as he had before hazarded an opinion that probably he should have to pull the fence down again, if it were not firm enough.

"Wolfgang!" said Dr. Normann, who now heard his name for the first time, inasmuch as hitherto, when the absent had been spoken of, only Siebert and Herbold had been named. "Wolfgang!—the name sounds quite German; does that gentleman belong to your association?"

"He is a German settler," Becher answered, "to whom the cordwood beside the Mississippi belongs, which you probably noticed piled up."

"Has he also lately come over from Germany?" asked Normann, and that with more interest than might have been expected about a stranger. [Pg 228]

"No, he formerly lived in Arkansas," was the answer, "and probably has been some years here in Tennessee."

"A singular case," said Trevor (or Turner) in the Pennsylvanian dialect—"a very singular case, that a Backwoodsman should clear out eastward; an American never would have done that."

Normann was silent, and cast his eyes on the ground; but an attentive observer might have noticed that within a few minutes he had changed countenance very much, and was actually quite pale. The settlers, however, were too much taken up with their new fence, to heed him, and it was only when Normann, after exchanging some words with Turner in a low tone, was preparing to leave for the houses, that Hehrmann noticed the change in his features, and exclaimed jocularly—

"There you see, Doctor, you have over-exerted yourself; this kind of work affects persons who are not accustomed to it, over much; you look deadly pale."

The doctor explained it away, by attributing it to a headache, but affirmed that a short walk would do him good, and, taking Turner's arm, he walked with him towards the houses which were near at hand.

"We must go," he exclaimed, as soon as they had got out of ear-shot of the labourers—"we must be off; we have not a moment to spare, for any instant may bring back those men."

"What men?" asked the American, surprised.

"Those who are gone to fetch the cattle and horses," said Normann, looking suspiciously round.

"Well, who the devil is to understand you? first, you plague and insist upon waiting until this Liebert, or Siebert, as he is called, shall come back, and talk of nothing but riding off, so as to get away more conveniently, and now it almost seems as though you were afraid of the arrival of those whom you were so eagerly waiting for. What ails you?"

"You shall learn all," replied the doctor—"I have no need to keep back a secret of that description from *you*, for a tenth part of what I know of you, would sentence you to the gallows in any Christian country. But now is not the time for story-telling—on the road—this evening—tomorrow morning—any time but now; let us, for the present, manage to persuade the girls to take a walk. But this much I can tell you, I have *well-founded reasons* for avoiding the sight of this Wolfgang. When I relate all to you, by-and-by, this evening, you will allow that I have good grounds. Shall we be off?" [Pg 229]

"Why certainly," said Turner, laughing, "you are the principal character in this business; I have only come with you to oblige you, so that it is only proper that I should not leave you in the lurch when danger threatens you. Away, then, within the next hour if you like—indeed, the sooner the more agreeable to me, although I should have liked to have waited till dusk, because it could be accomplished then with less danger. Well, perhaps we may talk the girls over to accompany us, while it is yet light, as far as where the nigger with the boat lies hid, but then we must certainly gag them until we get to the Mississippi, otherwise their cries might attract some uncalled-for audience, and as no one goes into the woods here without a rifle, perhaps even bring a ball about our ears."

"And our place of concealment?"

"We shall reach it this very evening," replied Turner; "it is a famous little spot, and you will be delighted with it."

"But you have never told me yet where it is," said the doctor suspiciously; "why all this secrecy?"

"You'll know it soon enough. But what is to be done with the girls afterwards?"

"Oh, let us drop all further plans for the present," said Normann, "we have plenty of time for that when we have nothing else to do; now for the smooth side outwards. In fact, I think we have won the confidence of the young ladies to such a degree that they will go with us without much difficulty, if we ask them to accompany us for a walk."

[Pg 230]

"No fear; I know a capital lie, which seldom fails to raise the curiosity of a young lady of sensibility."

"And that is——"

"Hallo, there," said the American, jocularly, "does it produce its effect upon you? Well, as far as that goes, also, you must allow me to keep my own counsel. What will you bet, now, that it does not succeed?"

"It would be against my own interest to bet against it," smiled the doctor, "inasmuch as I am interested in its success; so let us to work, for the ground begins to burn under my feet, and may next hour find us in possession of two angels that might well excite a sultan's envy!"

* * * * *

Bertha and Louisa had just helped their mother to wash up and put away the plates and dishes, and were busied making up summer clothes for the men, in which labour Meier played a prominent part, he having been relieved for a few days from hard work out of doors, and left within to cut out. Turner and Normann walked in; made their obeisance to the ladies, and sat themselves down on a couple of chunks of wood, sawed off for the purpose, and which did duty for chairs. But although the weather was really tempting, and the doctor began several times to say how wrong it was of the young ladies to shut themselves up in the house, and to devote themselves so entirely to work, while they ought to be enjoying the fresh healthy air, and thereby keeping off fever, yet Bertha excused herself on account of the quantity of work which had to be done, and declared that she had so much to do that she could hardly think of a walk, however short, for three days to come. Her mother confirmed this, and Normann, in despair, whittled about on the log, whereon he was sitting, with his penknife. Turner then took up the word, and led the conversation to the cattle, to the cows and calves, which they were expecting, and probably would cause a little change in their monotonous life.

[Pg 231]

"Oh, yes," said Bertha, "I look forward with pleasure to the little calves, there is something so pretty and confiding in a creature that one has brought up oneself, and so made familiar to one; hitherto we have had no living thing upon the farm, except the chickens, which Mr. Wolfgang was kind enough to bring with him."

Again, that name! Normann drew a deep breath, and looked up anxiously to his comrade, as though he would remind him of the promised assistance.

"Oh, yes," continued Turner, without taking any notice of this movement; "I am very fond of tame animals myself; formerly, for instance, I once brought up a young bear, and I must confess that it pained me very much when I had to part with him afterwards, when he grew too big."

"Bears are dangerous animals—are they not?" asked Louisa.

"Bears! oh, no!" said Turner, as he brought his right knee over the left one, and clasped it there with both hands—"oh, no, not to mankind, but very much so to young game; they persecute young deer a good deal."

Normann looked across at Turner, in amazement, for he knew very well that what he was stating was a falsehood, and consequently that he must have some object in it. Turner, however, retained his former attitude, and looked straight before him.

"It is a melancholy reflexion," said Bertha, after a short pause, "how, among animals, one is always seeking the destruction of others; mankind must have learnt it from them. The poor little deer-calf, how frightened it must be when it sees such a formidable enemy approaching!"

"Oh, that enemy, notwithstanding its strength, is the least dangerous!" said Turner, with a smile; "his attack is, at least, straightforward and open; but the poor little creature has much worse enemies, who better know how to employ cunning to get it into their power, and are thereby more formidable and less easily avoided; these last are, especially, the panther and the wolf. Indeed, everything nearly persecutes the young deer:—wild cats, ferrets, even eagles and carrion-vultures pounce down on them, kill them, and eat them on the spot."

[Pg 232]

"Oh, that is dreadful!" exclaimed Louisa; "but why doesn't the dam hide them better?"

Normann got up, and walked uneasily towards the door; Turner cast a smiling look after him, and continued:—"So she does; and it is seldom that the buzzards, especially, can find out such a little creature, yet it does sometimes occur—I had an example to-day."

"But, Turner, it is getting late," said Normann, who could no longer control his impatience and his fears—"consider that we must send off the letter to-day, and that very soon, for the messenger will have no time when the cattle arrives and have to be attended to."

"There's time enough," replied Turner, quite quietly; "I have reconsidered the matter, and think we had better not send till to-morrow morning."

Normann turned away, to conceal the emotions which he could hardly suppress.

"You have seen that to-day, Mr. Trevor?" asked Bertha and Louisa, laying down their work, and looking up anxiously at the man; "and the buzzards found and killed such a poor little creature?"

"They haven't killed it yet," replied Turner; "but will probably do so as soon as it becomes dusk, they are always most ravenous then, and generally save their prey until that time."

"But I don't understand you," said Bertha, surprised; "why do you suppose that they will destroy a deer-calf?—can they observe it in their flight? It is not possible!"

"No, certainly not," said Turner, with a smile; "but just after dinner, to-day, when I was taking a stroll in the woods, I saw five or six of these birds; at first I thought that a panther might perhaps have destroyed some animal or other, and went to see what it could be; but found a pretty little deer-calf, only a few days old, which lay there alone and forsaken. Most likely its mother had been torn to pieces by a panther, and the poor little thing would have to starve to death there unless the vultures should free it from its misery."

[Pg 233]

"But why didn't you bring it with you, then?" said Mrs. Hehrmann, stepping towards them; "good gracious! why it would be shocking if the poor creature should lie like that, helpless and unprotected."

"Oh, how could you be so cruel as to leave it!" exclaimed Bertha.

"Is it far from here?" asked Louisa. "If, as you say, the vultures don't eat their prey until evening, perhaps it may still be living."

"Oh, if you would but fetch it!" asked Bertha.

"My dear young lady," said the American, "the poor thing cannot be very well transported here, unless it were fed first where it lies. I took it up and stroked it; but it was so weak that it was hardly able to move. Men's hands are but rough instruments for handling such a weakly creature."

"You said that it was but a few hundred yards from this?" asked Bertha, once more.

"It is not a rifle-shot off," said the stranger.

"Oh, mother!" begged Louisa.

"Go, children—go," said Mrs. Hehrmann, quickly; "go and try to get the dear little thing home alive; your father will be particularly pleased; he has long wished for some such tame thing."

"Oh, that is capital," exclaimed Louisa, jumping up for her bonnet and shawl; "but we must take some milk with us to strengthen our little charge."

"Alas! if the buzzards should have got it," whispered Bertha, sadly, "I should be so sorry!"

[Pg 234]

"I should scarcely think they have," said Turner, taking the milk-jug, which she had fetched, out of her hand; "it is but a short time since I was there, and the cowardly birds do not venture very readily upon anything while living."

"Have we got enough milk?" asked Louisa.

"I should think so," replied Bertha.

There was fully milk enough to have filled three full-grown stags.

But Normann, who had regained new life at the turn which the conversation had latterly taken, and could have willingly embraced the American, so grateful was he, now expressed himself ready, with the ladies' permission, to take part in the expedition of rescue, and all four were in the next minute on their road towards the woods.

But scarcely had they left the houses, and entered upon the Bush, before the cracking of whips, and hallooing of voices, was heard in the distance, and the children of the settlement came rushing towards the houses, and announced, in delight, that "the cows were coming along, and the calves too."

Universal activity now prevailed, and all ran confusedly hither and thither, for this was an epoch in their farming life. This was the first stock, which was to make them wealthy and comfortable. All streamed by, not only to assist in driving them into the fenced yards destined for them, but also to see them, to admire them, and—to criticise them. But the cows, rendered shy by the crowding upon them of so great a number of persons, began to trip about timidly, and to low; and Wolfgang exhorted the people to stand back, and not to make such a heathenish noise; but they paid no attention, nor did they obey his warnings, until one of the cows, a fine handsome animal, with lofty and pointed horns, sprang right among them, and, naturally meeting with little resistance, disappeared in the next moment in the woods.

The shoemaker and the brewer happened to be just standing on the spot where she broke through, and the latter, upon the sudden charge of the excited animal, threw himself against the former with such force as to knock him right through a sassafras bush into the totally decayed stem of a tree, out of which he had to be got by the united efforts of two sturdy Oldenburghers. But if the settlers had laughed at the half-buried shoemaker, their merriment was yet further

[Pg 235]

increased, when they discovered Meier in the boughs of a stunted oak, in which he must have climbed with indescribable activity and speed, when the first movement of the horned cattle was perceptible, and when the attention of every body else was directed towards them.

Herbold, with irrepressible zeal, followed immediately, full gallop, after the cow; but Wolfgang, who well knew that that was almost an impracticable task in the thick underwood, was acquainted with a surer and much more convenient mode of bringing back the cow of her own accord: he cut off the calf's retreat, so that it could not follow its mother, and then drove it after the rest, which now, by the combined exertions of all, especially by those of the Oldenburghers, had just reached the entrance of the fence, and they soon saw all the cattle, with the exception of the run away cow, safely within fence and rail.

The cows and calves were to remain together during the first night, but after that the former were to be let out, and thus the American mode of treatment be followed.

Shortly afterwards poor Herbold returned, tired and weary, and, as Wolfgang had anticipated, without the cow; but Wolfgang comforted him (for he was annoyed about it) by the assurance that the mother would not leave her calf in the lurch, but would come back to it, most probably on the same evening, or at all events in the course of the night. The result showed that he had spoken truly, for the cow came within a few hours to the fence which held her young one enclosed, and lowed and ran round it until she was admitted too.

It was not until the men had entered the house, and were about to take some refreshment, that Hehrmann thought of making his friends acquainted with Dr. Normann's arrival. Siebert dropped the fork, which he had just taken up, and cried—

[Pg 236]

"What! that fellow has the impudence to show his pale hang-dog face among us?"

Hehrmann pacified him, and explained, in few words, why Dr. Normann had sought them out again, and that he hoped not only to recover the purchase-money for them, but also considerable damages.

"My good Mr. Hehrmann," said Wolfgang, "the gentleman must have some other object, otherwise he would not have followed you. If he is not himself really the vendor of this land—which, however, I strongly suspect he is,—yet he can never hope to recover, in this manner, even a cent of the money which has once been thus expended. He appears to me, moreover, from all that I have hitherto heard of him, to be much too knowing really to believe anything of the kind himself."

"But he told us that the laws——" said Hehrmann.

"Why those very laws"—Wolfgang interrupted him—"do but too much assist those who wish to act unjustly. It is true that if the debt be small, under fifty dollars, and you have a formal note for it, then it may be recovered readily enough; but such debts as exceed fifty dollars, and more especially claims of such a description as require fraud to be established, are very difficult, if not impossible of prosecution."

"Look you, my dear Wolfgang, how much you wrong him; foreseeing that, he has brought a friend of his, who happened to come up the river with him. He minutely inspected and surveyed all with his own eyes, and is to give testimony for us in New York."

"Moonshine,—moonshine!" said Wolfgang, contemptuously; "that is, at most, a mere excuse and cover, to insure themselves a friendly reception here: I don't know of what other use it could be. That such testimony would be of no use to him in New York, Dr. Normann certainly knows full well. Is his companion a German?"

[Pg 237]

"No, an American; but he speaks a little German, though with a very foreign pronunciation."

"Where is he now, then?" asked Siebert; "and where are the young ladies? I have not seen them yet since our arrival."

"The American had seen a young deer in the woods,"—Mrs. Hehrmann now took up the word,—"and as we feared that it might be starved, or attacked by the buzzards, the children have taken a jug of milk, and have gone with Dr. Normann and Mr. Trevor to fetch it."

Wolfgang laid down his knife and fork, and looked up, alarmed, and almost astonished, towards the speaker.

"The American found a deer-calf in the woods, which, as he feared, would starve!" he repeated, as though he were in doubt whether he could have rightly understood the words.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Hehrmann, "and which, he said, was but a day or two old; and, in order that the bears might not devour it, or the buzzards, which had already congregated about it, get it, he went at once."

"A deer-calf—day or two old—bears devour it—buzzards get it!" repeated Wolfgang, astonished.

"Why, yes; and he added, besides, that he must fetch it before evening, for that it was then that the buzzards became most ravenous and most bold, and when they attacked their prey."

"Gentlemen," said Wolfgang, who had suddenly become very earnest, "this American, whom I do not yet know, has either taken the liberty to play off a joke upon the young ladies, your

daughters, or—some scoundrelism has been carried out."

"For God's sake, what do you mean!" cried Mrs. Hehrmann, becoming deadly pale, and the men sprang from their seats in alarm.

"What makes you think that?" said Becher; "is not all which the man said plausible?"

[Pg 238]

"Plausible! Yes," said Wolfgang, "but a lie! Where, I should like to know, do you find, at this season, a deer-calf which may be expected to starve—they are all of them, even those which were dropped latest, several months old; he, therefore, cannot have found that in the woods. Then, again, no bear eats a young deer-calf—that's a fable; and the buzzard, which, besides, troubles itself little about anything which has life, goes to roost as other birds do, like the turkeys and the Prairie hens, at dusk. All that is pure invention to entice your daughters from home; and my advice is instantly to break up in pursuit—perhaps, we may yet overtake them!"

"But where to seek them?" asked Hehrmann, tearing his double-barrelled gun from the wall: "Where to find them? Which of us can follow their track?"

"I know what part of the woods they are gone to," said Schmidt, who had just entered. "I had left a cross-cut saw there this morning, and just went to fetch it."

"Show us the way, then," said Wolfgang, looking at the priming of his own rifle, which, prior to his journey, he had left behind him in Hehrmann's house.

"Oh, God—my children!" cried Mrs. Hehrmann, disconsolately. "Oh! let me go with you!—let me go with you!"

"Don't be terrified, my dear," said the worthy Hehrmann, consolingly, to her; "who knows whether our fears are well founded?—we have at once supposed the worst. It's quite possible that they have only gone into the woods to look for berries, and that we may meet with them close by here."

"I believe, altogether, that you think too badly of Dr. Normann," said Siebert, senior; "I don't think him capable of such villany."

"You are right!" exclaimed Hehrmann, who probably thought of the last conversation of Normann with his daughter, but would not torture his wife yet more by betraying too great an anxiety on his part. "You are right; still, we will go after them; perhaps, too, we may fall in with the runaway cow."

[Pg 239]

"But she—is in the opposite direction," the shoemaker was just going to blurt out, when he was stopped by an emphatic dig in the ribs from Becher; and when he turned angrily towards the latter, he made such desperately quieting faces that the shoemaker was quite taken aback, and held his peace without concluding the sentence.

Wolfgang, Hehrmann, and Von Schwanthal, mounted the horses to go in search of the poor girls; and the remaining settlers, with very few exceptions, followed on foot, to cross the woods in all directions, and, if possible, to get on their track. Schmidt strode on manfully before them towards the spot where he had seen the two men with Hehrmann's daughters for the last time.

* * * * *

"If we can but find the poor little thing!" said Louisa, timidly, when they had entered right into the woods, and were gliding forward, in Indian file, along a narrow track.

"Is it much further?" asked Bertha, shyly, who began to feel ill at ease in the dark shadows of the woods in the company of the two men, neither of whom had spoken a word since they lost sight of the houses.

"No, Miss Bertha," answered the American, with a smile, "*we are nearly there*. Do you see yonder regularly formed circular hillocks?—the poor little creature lies between them."

"Hark!" said Louisa; "I hear shouting and the cracking of whips—they've certainly arrived with the cows and calves. Oh, if we had but waited a little longer!"

"We can be back within a quarter of an hour," said the American, cheerfully, to her. "According to my reckoning, we must be almost at the place."

"But the ground is so damp here," said Bertha, "and mother has particularly cautioned us against getting wet feet—and you too, Doctor."

The doctor was silent, and cast an anxious uneasy glance towards his comrade. Bertha looked up in astonishment at the men, and now first observed in their whole behaviour something strange and unfamiliar—and, like a dash of cold through heart and marrow, the idea of treachery arose in her mind.

[Pg 240]

"We will turn back," she said, suppressing her fears with all the power of which her strong heart was capable. "We will turn back—Mr. Trevor must have missed the direction; no deer-calf could lie hereabouts, the ground is wet and swampy."

"Where lies the boat?" whispered Normann to his comrade; "are we far from it?"

"Over yonder—scarce a hundred yards from this."

"But what shall we do with the girls?"

"We must bind them," said Turner. "Scipio will come running with the ropes, as soon as I give the signal."

Bertha had seized the hand of her sister convulsively—and the latter looked up to her timidly, but still without any foreboding of what was in agitation.

"Why do the men whisper so together?" she asked her sister. "Cannot they find the spot? But, Bertha, what's the matter—why, you are as pale as a corpse! Oh, Doctor!"

She turned round towards the doctor, but in the next moment she herself stood in need of the support of her sister; she started back with a loud cry of horror, and hid her face in her hands.

Before her, a cocked pistol in his hand, stood the American, and, with a look which raised fears of the worst, in a threatening whisper, hissed out these words—

"Dare to scream!—dare to call for help!—and one of you falls a corpse—the other her murderess!"

"Doctor!" begged Louisa, in a low voice—"oh! can you not protect us from this dreadful man?"

But, without even bestowing a look upon the petitioner, the doctor exclaimed—"Give the signal, Turner!—we dare not lose a second more; if Wolfgang should learn under what pretext we have led the women into the woods at this season, his suspicions will be roused, and in tracking he equals an Indian."

[Pg 241]

Turner raised his fingers to his lips, and gave a low whistle; immediately after, the bushes on the river's edge, which was not many yards distant, rustled, and Bertha herself could scarcely suppress a cry of terror, when the bright yellow, devilish countenance of the mulatto, with greedy, glowing eyes, and grinning teeth, dived out of the thicket, and hurried towards them, carrying a bundle of cords in his hand.

"What are you going to do?" cried Bertha, who was the first to regain her presence of mind; "what is your purpose? Is this the return, doctor, that you make for my father's friendly reception? Let us go, and I pledge you my word that I will not say a word of what has hitherto passed.—Back, I say! don't touch that child."

The American had seized Louisa, who was paralysed with fear, and was about to bind her hands, when Bertha rushed upon him. But without heeding the interruption, he flung her with powerful grasp towards the mulatto, who made fast her limbs with fearful rapidity, while Turner exclaimed threateningly—

"Speak but another word, and I'll drive the steel into your sister's heart! By everything sacred, I am not joking! You are prisoners, and must give way to your fate."

"Help, help!" screamed Bertha, contemning every threat, for she did not fear death, if it could save her from shame. But in the next moment the broad palm of the mulatto was lying on her lips, and he exclaimed, with a grin—

"Must put little gag in the little mouth—make too much row!"

Bertha soon found herself incapable of further resistance, and the same thing took place with Louisa, although less was to be feared from her, as she was restrained by the threat of death to her sister, from attempting anything for her own safety.

"Now, away," said Turner, lifting Bertha in his arms. "Come, doctor, you take the lighter one, and, now, Scipio, carry the rifles yonder, and let us see how you can row. You know the reward which awaits you."

[Pg 242]

He sprang forward to the banks of the small river, and down towards the concealed boat; the doctor, who appeared to be momentarily moved by fear, and perhaps, also, by repentance, stood for some seconds, as if petrified, but when he saw Turner disappearing beneath the steep river bank, with his own booty, the former passion was once more aroused; he raised the other girl, who looked up to him beseechingly, in his arms, and with rapid strides followed his confederate.

A few minutes sufficed to get afloat the light and rapid skiff, and, with a low chuckle of triumph, the American pushed from shore. He sat in the stern of the boat himself, and steered; beside him, her back leaning against the cross-bench, with hands and feet tied, and her mouth wrapped round with a silk handkerchief, lay Bertha. The mulatto sat on the middle seat, with the starboard (or right) oar, and on the further seat, Dr. Normann, with the larboard (or left) oar, and quite forward, with her little head on the roughly dragged-in rope, lay Louisa, also bound and gagged, and the clear tears coursed down the poor girl's cheeks, which were as cold and as white as marble.

The sharply-built boat shot forward like an arrow in the somewhat swollen stream, and Turner exclaimed, laughing—

"That was capitally executed; now, for a couple of hours' start, and the devil himself shall not overtake us."

"But we require that, too," whispered the mulatto; "the little river is very crooked—runs first north, then south, in all directions. If they know that we are off, they only want a good horse, and

then might shoot us one after another out of the boat."

"That's true, Scipio," said the American, "but it can't be helped. But, hang it all! the Germans wont be such sharp trackers, either—Normann, don't make such an infernal row with your oar as to discover our place of departure so soon!—it would be horrid, if they should—that's a fact!"

[Pg 243]

"Why, at the worst, we might always save ourselves," said Scipio, "though we should have to leave the pretty little bits of woman-flesh in the lurch."

"But, look, for God's sake, at our course, again!—due east, slick away from the Mississippi!"

"That's the great bend," said Scipio, "we shall take an hour to get round it, and yet 'tis but a couple of hundred yards across."

"Stretch out, you two!" cried Turner; "we must make haste, and leave this little watercourse, with its high, uncomfortable, overgrown banks, behind us. I shan't feel myself in safety, till we're on the other side of the Mississippi."

The men, thenceforward, observed a deep silence; Bertha endeavoured with all her power to raise herself, and looked up entreatingly at the dark man, who sat beside her, with the helm in his hand; but he, guessing well enough that she wanted to speak to him, shook his head, smiling, and whispered, in a low voice—

"No, my dear, you mustn't make any use of your pretty lips yet—the danger is too great, here; besides, begging, or praying, or offering ransom, or whatever else those tricks and evasions may be called, would be unavailing.—You are *mine!*"—and he hissed the word out so softly, between his teeth, that it escaped even Normann's ear: "thou art mine, and no devil shall tear thee from me!"

The boat was now approaching the spot where the curve of the stream terminated, and where it almost resumed its former course. At this point, by reason of the great bend which it made to the right, the rivulet had washed away nearly the whole of the lower part of the left bank, so that the upper stratum of earth, in many places, overhung like a roof, and could only have been retained in its position by the roots of willows, and swamp maples.

The boat, too, had been drifted by the current towards the outer side of the bend in the river, and Turner was just about to keep her head more towards mid-channel, in order to avoid the danger of getting foul of, and, perhaps, overturned by the tree stems which projected from the vicinity of the bank, when the mulatto suddenly held up his hand, and ceased rowing; Dr. Normann instantly followed his example, and the former stood up from his seat, and listened, holding his hands in the form of a funnel to his ear in the direction of the left bank.

[Pg 244]

"Do you hear anything?" asked Turner.

The mulatto made a sign with his hand to be quiet, but remained in his former attitude.

The boat still shot quickly forward, although no longer urged on by the oars.

"What's the matter?" asked Normann, timidly.

"They are coming!" the mulatto suddenly whispered, and pointing, alarmed, upwards.

A glad ray of hope passed across the countenances of the unhappy captives. There was some sign of salvation from their awful danger; and Bertha cast a look of joyful gratitude towards the blue canopy of heaven.

But Turner, who, quickly as thought, perceived their only chance of remaining undiscovered, acted as promptly. He could no longer expect to get away on the opposite side, for he heard the approaching hoofs himself; and there, he must have fallen under the bullets of his enemies before he could climb up the steep bank. On the other hand, on the side whence the pursuers were approaching, the shore was bushy, and, as already mentioned, overhanging. Without betraying the fears which crept over himself therefore, by so much as the twinkling of an eyelash—even with the same cold smile upon his thin lips—he let the boat fall off into the current.

In the next second, he glided between and among some willow shoots which grew close to the water's edge, and were overhung by thick bushes, and there the boat lay, held by the strong arm of the mulatto, still and motionless.

[Pg 245]

At the same moment, some dry branches broke off above, and the leaves rustled—a rider bounded forward, heedless of the closely interwoven branches, and severing them with a sharp hunting-knife only when they actually stopped his passage, nearly to the edge of the bank, and, bending forward, gazed up and down the stream.

"Do you see nothing, Wolfgang?" the anxious voice of Pastor Hehrmann was now heard to ask—"can you discover nothing of my children?"

Bertha, hearing the voice of her father close above her, made a desperate exertion of strength to free her mouth, but Turner held her with an iron grasp, so that she was hindered from making any movement whatever; whilst Normann applied the same restraint to the younger sister, and in addition, pointed a knife at her breast. Although not a syllable escaped him in this action, yet his eyes betrayed the devil that was lurking within.

"Nothing!—nothing at all to be seen or heard!" said young Wolfgang, with a sigh. "And yet it appeared to me, just before we reached the bank, as though I heard the sound of an oar; but I must have deceived myself."

A contemptuous smile played round the corners of Turner's mouth.

"And are you quite certain that they had a boat above here?" asked Herbold's voice.

"I can pledge my neck for it!" Wolfgang answered him; "the tracks were plain enough to be seen."

"Perhaps they are not so far yet," said Becher, who had now also arrived. "As you say yourself, the river hereabouts makes great bends, all of which we have cut off, and I should think, therefore——"

"Perhaps—but perhaps not," Wolfgang interrupted him. "But we must consider this, above all things—that in case they should have passed, we are wasting valuable time in a most inexcusable manner, for we give them more and more the start; and if they once reach the Mississippi, little hope remains of our overtaking them."

[Pg 246]

The mulatto, in the boat below, nodded his head, with a grin that disclosed two rows of dazzling white teeth.

"How would it be if we were to gallop along the banks of the water-course?" asked Mr. Hehrmann.

"Yes, if we could do that," said Wolfgang; "then they should not escape from us—I know that; but scarce half a mile from this, a deep slough empties itself into this little river, and that with such steep banks, that riding through it is out of the question: those on foot might make the attempt, for, if I am not mistaken, there are some cypresses fallen across it, which permit of a passage."

Turner looked interrogatively at the mulatto, who confirmed the statement by a silent nod.

"But how are we to get on, then?" demanded Hehrmann, anxiously.

"We must ride back almost the same way that we came with the wagon," said Wolfgang. "'Tis true that it is several miles round, but it can't be helped."

"Suppose we were to station men along the banks? Then they couldn't slip by, anyhow."

"If we had more horses, and if it were daylight, that might do; but as it is, I fear that we should be dividing our forces too much. Besides, we could do little in a place like this before us, for example—for the scoundrels would know how to cover themselves by the bodies of their unhappy victims, so that we should not dare to fire upon them. My advice is, for all of us to start for the mouth of the Big Halchee, and we horsemen as fast as our beasts will carry us. The Big Halchee, too, is very narrow there, and if we put ourselves in ambush, and draw a couple of ropes across the stream, they *must* fall into our hands."

"But shall you be able to find the route in the dark?" asked Herbold, anxiously.

"Yes, with the help of Providence," said the young man. "I am no longer a novice in the woods, and have spent many a long night abroad among them. But now, let's away. The men afoot may keep close to the river; from this part forward, the Halchee does not take so many turnings; and although the road is rough and bad to travel, yet, on the other hand, you cannot lose your way in the woods. But if you should discover the boat, still, for God's sake, do not fire into it, lest you should hit one of the poor girls, but keep it in your eye till you come to some shallow place, and perhaps may cut off their retreat. Now, gentlemen, give your horses the spurs, and away!"

[Pg 247]

Wolfgang accompanied the word with the deed, and immediately afterwards, the bushes crackled again, and the horsemen disappeared in the woods. But the other settlers sprang and ran along the bank, over prostrate stems, through reed-brakes and thickets, keeping the rivulet in their eye at first as much as possible; but they soon discovered with what difficulties they had to contend, especially in the approaching darkness, and were obliged to confine themselves merely to keeping in its vicinity, so as to be able to recognise its banks. They thought that they should be thus enabled to reach the mouth of the Big Halchee before the boat. All, however, swore solemnly, each time they got entangled in some wild vine—every time they stumbled over the trunk or branch of a tree—when a thorn tore their faces or hands—that they would exemplarily punish the scoundrels who had so vilely abused their confidence.

However, when the chase had lasted an hour or so, many a one among them would have willingly turned back; but, then, the very idea of returning alone by the road which they had come was dreadful. No; to go forward was preferable to that, with the hope of being party to the capture of a couple of traitors who, according to Meier's sentence, deserved to be pricked to death with red-hot needles.

Turner continued under cover of the willows for about a quarter-of-an hour more, until some time after the last of the pursuers had quitted the bank of the stream, fearing some spy might have been left behind; at last, however, further delay was attended with just as much danger as actual discovery, for the horsemen would thereby get too much the start of them; and the American knew but too well that he should be a lost man, if his flight into the Mississippi were cut off.

[Pg 248]

It was not that alone, however, which urged the scoundrel to reach the shores of that mighty stream half-an-hour, at least, before the pursuers; but he told his comrades nothing about that—

indeed, he spoke not a word, but pushed the bushes gently and carefully aside, so that the boat could glide out between them; made signs to the mulatto, which must have been intelligible to the latter, to muffle the oars, so as to prevent the noise of the tholes, and the next moment the slim-built boat was gliding down close under the shadow of the left bank, and that with such extraordinary rapidity that it appeared to mock all further pursuit.

But what, meanwhile, were the feelings of the poor, unhappy girls, thus torn from the arms of their parents, in the power of rude and desperate scoundrels, after having heard their father's voice close over them; after having seen salvation before their eyes, and yet tried in vain to make known their presence by a word, by a sound. Alas! they saw every hope of being restored to their own people, of being rescued from the violence of these traitors disappear.

But, no; there yet remained one hope—they had heard Wolfgang's voice; they had heard the sound of the horses' hoofs, as they galloped off, and knew that they were hurrying towards the mouth of the little river to meet the ruffians there; it was yet possible that they might arrive first, for there must exist danger, or the mulatto would not have strained his sinews until his heavy breathing became more and more audible, more and more distinct, and betrayed the zeal with which he worked.

[Pg 249]

This was the single gleam of hope which fell upon the torrid night of misery and despair which they suffered; and they could only pray to the Almighty that he would give wings to the footsteps of their people, and bring them in time to their rescue.

FOOTNOTES:

[22] The swing plough is not used in Germany, except in parts of Holstein and Friesland.—Tr.

[23] The worthy farmer had before said that they raised no fodder for cattle. The fact is, cattle get their living in the woods, but don't get fat there.—Tr.

CHAPTER VIII.

[Pg 250]

THE MOUTH OF THE BIG HALCHEE.

Werner was sitting upon the narrow gallery which surrounded the Boiler-deck of the Diana,^[24] and Schwarz had taken his seat beside him, on a green-varnished camp-stool, which he bent back as far as he could, in order to be enabled to plant his feet at the same time firmly against the nearest pillar. But the scenery of the Mississippi had materially changed since they had quitted the more southern climate of Louisiana. Those splendid, wide-spread plantations which pressed back the old forest far, far, into the blue distance, and from whose well-fenced fields the feather-like sugar-canes or the stubborn cotton-plants had hitherto met their gaze on the boundless plains on every side, were gone. And with them had disappeared those comfortably arranged planters' dwellings, embosomed in flowers, and orange and pomegranate trees; gone were the tulip and fig-trees; gone the dam on the water's edge, behind which numerous flocks had grazed, and upon which, now and then, the heads and broad-brimmed straw-hats of dark-eyed Creoles had been visible, who, reining in their ponies for awhile, had stopped to admire the speed of the steamer that dashed past them. The little showily-painted boats, with their gaudy flags, which, lower down, had enlivened the prospect, were no longer to be seen, and the forest, the tall, mighty, unconquered forest, overran the land, to the margin of the steep and crumbling shore, and often even beyond it, out into the eddying foaming flood. It was only here and there that, in some nook of the dark and silent woods, there stood the shanty of some solitary cordwood-cutter, around which a regular clearing was but rarely to be seen, and that, perhaps, scarcely fenced in; but, instead, high piles of cordwood, often several hundred yards in extent, testified to the industry of the labourer working there in solitude, and who was but rarely linked to a world from which he seemed to have fled by some steamer stopping here at distant intervals for wood.

[Pg 251]

"But how can any one think of settling in such a melancholy, desolate place?" said Werner, breaking silence, at last, after a long pause, just as the Diana was heaving up the waves from her paddles towards the western shore, till they almost washed the threshold of a hut standing near—"the surrounding swamps must poison the air."

"Certainly," opined Helldorf, "it is a melancholy life they lead who dwell here; but they chiefly view it as means to an end, and therefore put up with it for a year or two, or even for half-a-dozen years."

"And for what end?" asked Werner.

"To earn enough money to enable them to settle in a healthier district, and to buy some little property with what they earn here."

"But why don't the people go to such a spot at once, when land can be had everywhere so readily, as you say; why do they risk having a sickly body when the 'far West' lies open to them, only waiting for the plough?"

"And there are reasons for that too," said Schwarz. "You, no doubt, remember that I have related to you, with *how little* a man may begin life in the woods; but that little he must have, else he has

[Pg 252]

to contend with too many and too painful obstacles. I can, were I to go now, with an axe and a rifle into the woods, found a home for myself; I can chop trees for my log-house; manage to subsist awhile on dried venison;[\[25\]](#) raise my dwelling with the assistance of my neighbours, and make a couple of acres fit for tillage; that is, I fell the smaller trees which are standing upon it and girdle the rest."

"Girdle?"

"Yes; they call it girdling, when they chop out the bark in a ring, for a hand's breadth or so, round a tree, and which is chiefly practised with very thick trees;[\[26\]](#) then grub up the worst roots; and now I have got my land, what Americans call, fit for ploughing. But where is the plough? There is no money to buy it, and I must *borrow* it, as well as a horse to draw it. Neighbours will certainly do that, and willingly, too. They assist the settler with all their power, and not unfrequently make the greatest sacrifices for him. But that has not got me out of my difficulties, for now I want seed to sow my field; I want a hoe to earth up the growing stalks of Indian corn; I have to plough again from time to time; I require cooking utensils,—chisels,—augers,—nails. I haven't even a hand-mill to grind the *borrowed* Indian corn, but must trouble my neighbour for that, too. To-day I want a chain,—to-morrow an iron wedge,—the next day this,—the day after, that, and it does not cease; there is no end of borrowing; so that the neighbours, let them be the most good-natured souls in the world, yet at last must lose patience, and shun the person who merely comes upon their farm to borrow, first one thing and then another, in order that they may not be compelled to give him a refusal.

[Pg 253]

"All that can be met by a small but reasonably applied capital. When one is in a position to procure the most necessary things, there is no fear afterwards; the circumstances of the farmer improve, although slowly perhaps, yet surely, from year to year, and he may constantly look forward, for himself and his family, to a future free from care. But, to expend the little capital in a really reasonable manner, that is the stumbling-block over which most emigrants, or rather immigrants, fall. They frequently come over to America with not inconsiderable property, but then generally suppose—especially if they have much money—that they can buy the whole world, and allow themselves to be drawn into heedless speculations, of which, as they are ignorant of the country and the language, they understand nothing, and into which they are, for the most part, enticed by designing knaves, who are on the look out for such prey. They afterwards, when it is too late, find out how the swindler, who now laughs at them for their stupidity, was merely intent on appropriating to himself their good money, whilst he was making seductive representations of quickly-to-be-acquired riches; and the more difficult for them does it subsequently become, when they are thrown back upon their personal resources, to begin what, to a certain extent, is a new course of life, and a very unaccustomed and hard course, too.

"Those who come over with small sums have the advantage, at least in this, that from the time of their leaving home, forward, they have not been in a position to form such great pretensions, and therefore, when they have lost that little, they are more easily reconciled to the idea of beginning afresh."

"You seem to assume indisputably, and as a matter of course," said Werner, laughing, "that emigrants must really first lose all that they have brought with them!"

"Certainly," Schwarz replied, drily; "for it happens at least ninety-three times out of a hundred, and the remaining seven you will surely allow me to class as exceptions. But experience will show you the truth of what I am telling you, when you shall have been a little longer in the country. Nearly all the Germans, who have got on here, have come over poor; and if you should see two persons arrive, the one with a thousand dollars, the other without a thousand pfennings,[\[27\]](#) I will wager anything that the poor man shall be the first of the two to become wealthy, or at all events independent."

[Pg 254]

"According to that doctrine, money would be of no advantage, then," said Werner, shaking his head.

"Of the *greatest*," Schwarz replied; "but he who possesses it must know how to keep it back. Take my word for it, my dear Werner, that if a man sets foot in this country with a hundred dollars, and lays them out immediately, they are worth nothing to him; but, if he wears them sewed up round his body for three or four years, or if he buries them, he will discover that at the end of that period he possesses in them a little treasure, with which he can commence a new and promising mode of life, in a great many different ways."

"But the idea of burying money! It would surely be better to deposit it in some bank."

"Yes, if you want to get rid of it. The devil trust the banks; to-day they pay silver for their rags—to-morrow they don't even give you half the amount for them. No, no; the banks may be all very well for those people who are accurately acquainted with their business and circumstances, and at least have the means of knowing when they risk something, and when not. But let the newly-arrived emigrant, for Heaven's sake, abstain from throwing his good money into these maws of speculation; else he may have to rue his imprudence when it is too late."

"That throws us back again to my old position," said Werner; "if individuals are really so threatened by dangers on all sides, as you tell me, it must surely be best to begin in large societies or colonies, wherein the interests of all the members can be confided to experienced persons."

[Pg 255]

"In order to be cheated in company," said Schwarz, with a laugh. "Say no more about your unlucky colonies; they never come to a good end, unless the people are influenced by a stern fanatical despotism, acting upon them by means of superstition and religious excitement. Such communities, it is true, are to be found, and some among them there are, in this country, which may be classed with the most blooming and the richest of our settlements; but Heaven preserve us from a life, where mind as well as body is bound in fetters which become tighter and more galling every day. No; we have not come to America for that; we want to enjoy freedom, the greatest blessing which this splendid country possesses; but a colony would just be the greatest and most insuperable hindrance. But I will tell you why, from the very nature of the thing, no German colony, unless under the condition just alluded to,—religious tyranny,—can exist. The different stages of refinement in which people are found in our blessed Germany, are the chief cause. Let them begin with the best intentions of concord and public spirit,—let their will be ever so good,—yet in the long run they don't agree among themselves; unintentionally there arise various little cliques, not exactly of those who are of similar opinions, but of similar education; for he who formerly occupied himself with literature and the fine arts, will always, let him set to work as hard as he pleases, like to devote his hours of leisure not only to chat about cattle and merely mechanical matters, but will also like to converse about something which shall occupy his mind, and, in some degree, recompense him for the now merely material life. But, generally speaking, the less educated man feels himself hurt by this; for as he takes no interest in such conversations himself, he can seldom comprehend how others can do so.

[Pg 256]

"A feeling, unknown perhaps to himself, awakes within him. He thinks himself neglected, and considers those men proud who are only mentally his superiors. From this moment forward all their steps are sharply watched, and it does not remain unnoticed that, as their limbs will not immediately adapt themselves to the unaccustomed occupation, the hard country work, they do less work than the rest. A breach has arisen in their friendly relations which becomes wider every day. The old mischievous saying, 'All are equal here in America,' comes into use more and more frequently and pointedly, and even if those who wish well to the colony do everything in their power to allay the angry feeling, and to restore friendly relations among them, which have been disturbed, nobody knows how, yet it is of no use, good will is gone, a hard, thoughtless word, from one of the 'gentry,' as they already begin to be called, which, perhaps, he never meant himself, gives the finishing touch, and some fine morning Peter clears out this way, Paul that.

"Those who possessed the least now come off the best; all the sacrifices made by the founders are forgotten; they must not calculate upon gratitude, and soon find themselves alone again."

"It would be best, then, for persons of the same way of thinking, and of the same style of education, only to join in the formation of such a colony; the objection to which you allude would thereby be obviated."

"It would, to be sure; but a thousand others arise," continued Schwarz; "just imagine a party issuing from Germany consisting of nothing but—I will assume even—country people, acquainted with one another—there shall not be among them a single gentleman farmer who is accustomed to have bailiffs and servants under him—just imagine them—left to their own resources in a country of which they do not understand even the language, much less the manners and customs, the poor devils would be surrounded by knaves and speculators directly; and even assuming that such colonists really should hold firmly and inseparably together, and should not allow themselves to be cheated in any way, (which is very improbable,) still they would not advance a step; and thus, going from one extreme to another, for the very reason that they did not speculate at all—indeed, could not speculate—they would resemble cattle tethered to a barren heath, although beautiful green pastures might be spread out around them. If any good were to be done with such colonies, my dear friend, you may rest assured that the Americans, who must be best fitted for them, would have discovered and realized it themselves. But they know better; they stand there singly, free and independent, and a German should follow their example in this respect, as he is compelled to do in a thousand other things."

[Pg 257]

Werner looked out upon the yellow waters, reflectively, for some time, and after a short pause, asked—

"And what do you advise me to do, then?"

"Come with me," said Schwarz. "I am going to the southern part of Missouri; there I shall purchase a little improvement—that is to say, a place where one of the restless and ever westward-moving Americans has worked before, and where I need not be obliged to clear land for the first year's crop at all events. We'll seek for a little place for yourself somewhere in the neighbourhood, buy cattle as soon as we get there, so as to lose no time in rearing them, and then you may as well work for a few months, or even for a year, as may be agreeable to us both, upon my land; at the expiration of that time, I hope to have brought you so far that you may commence on your own account, and then the sooner you fetch home your bride the better."

"Oh, my dear Schwarz!—you paint the future much too brightly; I don't even hope to be so near to the fulfilment of my wishes."

"Well, we shall see," said Schwarz, laughing—"we shall see. But where has Helldorf got to? he hasn't shown himself the whole morning; we must be nearly there."

[Pg 258]

"He was sitting above, on the hurricane deck, beside the pilot," replied Werner. "Shall we go up?"

At this moment, the large ship-bell gave the signal for landing; the boat, too, approached the

shore more and more, and there, in the shade of enormous cotton-wood trees and cypresses, stood an insignificant little log hut, almost concealed by immense piles of cordwood, and making its presence known merely by the blue smoke which arose from its clay-plashed chimney into the clear morning air.

The boat landed; across the planks, which were quickly shoved out, hurried away labourers, firemen, and deckhands, who were followed, although more slowly, urged on by rough language from the mate of the vessel, by the deck passengers, who, on board other boats, when they undertook to carry wood, merely had somewhat less to pay for their passage, but, on board the "Diana," were carried gratis, so that the task of wood-carrying should be speedily accomplished, and the journey not thereby delayed; it being important for that vessel to preserve her reputation as the fastest boat on the Mississippi.

It was a strange, bustling kind of life which thus suddenly intruded itself on the quiet forest hermitage. The clerk or business-man of the vessel, with a long measuring pole in his hand, sprang upon the piled up wood, and there measured off a certain number of cords, the boundary of which was marked by a couple of logs laid crosswise; the impatient workpeople then fell upon the cordwood like vultures on their prey, and hurried, each man with his load of six or seven long logs, down the steep bank again, on board, where they threw down the wood, and where other men stood in readiness to pile it regularly up. There might be some forty persons in all, like busy ants, swarmed out in an almost uninterrupted line over one plank, and returned, loaded, on board again over the other; and within twelve minutes about twenty cord were got on board. The farmer or wood-cutter had meanwhile received his money in the cabin above, and he was just engaged in taking a drop of whisky-punch at the bar, when the bell rang again for starting, and he hastily jumped down, in order not to be carried off with the boat.

[Pg 259]

The last of the labourers snatched up the remaining logs; another loosened the stern rope, the farmer himself remained forward beside the spring rope; the cry, "All aboard!" was heard, and the planks, seized by others of the sailors or deck hands, flew back.

"Go ahead!" cried the captain, from the upper deck—the rope struck into the water—other sailors stood forward near the bowsprit, and shoved off her head with long poles; and soon after, she was panting once more away on her course up stream.

"Are we still far from the mouth of the Halchee?" inquired Werner of young Helldorf, who had exchanged a few words with the American cordwood cutter.

"Scarcely five miles; we may be there within an hour," replied the other; "but I scarcely think that we shall be able to reach the settlement itself this evening."

"We had, perhaps, on that account, better remain at the mouth of the river, and start from thence early to-morrow morning," Schwarz suggested; "then we shall have no occasion to sleep in the open air."

"But lose half a day"—Werner quickly interrupted him. "What harm will it do us if we should pass one night under the open sky? You are, no doubt, used to it, and it won't hurt me either; at worst, one can only catch cold."

"Well," said Schwarz, with a smile, "I have no objection: your impatience appears to me very natural—therefore, let it be so. But, Helldorf, hadn't you better go up to the pilot again, that we may not pass the place by mistake; that would be a joke!"

"No, no; the pilot has assured me that he knows the spot," said the latter, "and he will put us out there; but, by way of precaution, I'll remind him of it again. In the meanwhile, you two had better get our luggage down into the little yawl astern, so that we may not occasion any further delay to the vessel on that account."

[Pg 260]

He ascended the narrow stairs which led over the paddle-box; Schwarz and Werner in the meantime followed his advice, got their boxes and bags into the little boat, which was made fast astern by two stout ropes, and was towed after the steamer over the swelling waves, and then returned to the boiler-deck to await the stopping of the Diana.

They now passed a rounded point of land which projected far into the river, and continued to steer for a while along the eastern bank, in order to keep in the deeper channel, but then, just as a sandbank began to show its white surface at no great distance from them, the bow of the boat suddenly turned from the land, and kept a course obliquely across the stream towards the western shore.

"Yonder is another little river, falling into the Mississippi," said Schwarz, pointing from the starboard gallery of the boat back towards the land which they were leaving more and more, behind them—"yonder, where the bright roof of the log-hut stands out."

"You call that a river!" said Werner; "you are liberal with your fine names; three houses cannot stand near each other but you dub them a town. But how desert and wild the prospect looks here, the treacherous rolling stream with its flood of mud, the flat shores without a single eminence, the dead sandbank, which, like a winding-sheet, skirts the gloomy forest. I should not like to live here; the whole appearance of the country seems to tell of fever and misery."

"Yes, it is a miserable kind of life, sure enough, that on the banks of the Mississippi; though it is nothing to speak of just now; but in the time of the floods, when the river overflows its banks and

inundates the whole country—you should pass then; the log huts standing on piles seem to swim upon the waters, the flood as it rises higher and higher lifts up their floor boards and washes them off, and not unfrequently even tears away the miserable little dwellings themselves in its greedy embrace, and carries them off towards the Gulf of Mexico.

[Pg 261]

"I really can't think how rational beings should like to settle here," said Werner, "for if——"

"There lies the Halchee," cried Helldorf, who now came running down from the hurricane deck, pointing astern to the very spot which had already attracted the attention of the two friends—"there lies our destination, and the confounded captain won't put us ashore!"

"What! not land us!" exclaimed Werner and Schwarz, jumping up from their seats, surprised.

"Oh, hang him!" said Schwarz; "he must land us; in the first place, we have not paid our fare beyond—and, secondly, we won't go any further——"

"Yes, all that is very well, but what are you to do with the captain of a steamer on board his own boat? there he is the most absolute of monarchs, and assumes to act with the utmost arbitrariness. It is true that you may 'summons' him at the next town, but that again is attended with so much trouble that one cannot make up one's mind to adopt it unless in an extremity."

"But that is shameful," said Werner, angrily; "he takes money for our passage, and then drags us past the place where we want to land. But, my dear Mr. Helldorf, may you not be mistaken? That can't be the mouth of the Big Halchee, for, according to what Dr. Normann told us, there should be a town there."

"Dr. Normann no doubt told you many things which were untrue," replied Helldorf, very gravely; "I fear, I fear that he has played another of his scoundrel tricks, and that with complete success. I ought not to have let him get off so quickly, but what could I do with him in New York without proofs."

"But what in the name of goodness are we to be at here?" cried Werner. "How much further is this self-willed gentleman going to drag us along with him!"

"Probably to the next town where he may stop, or perhaps, even to the next wood station."

[Pg 262]

"That would be pleasant," growled Schwarz; "we have only just now taken in wood enough to last us till evening at least. No, he must put us out before; probably the place at the Halchee was not convenient for him to stop, because he had to keep so far from shore on account of the sandbank, and would have been compelled to wait a long time for the return of the boat."

"Certainly, that was the reason," replied Helldorf; "and the pilot tells me that the captain has made a considerable wager that he will reach Louisville, which is 1400 miles from New Orleans, within six days. On that account it is that he takes deck-passengers for their services as wood-carriers merely, and only stops at those places where he is obliged."

"Then I'll speak to him," said Schwarz; "so that, at all events, he may not carry us too far. If we land at any little town, or at a farm even, we probably may be able to get a canoe with which to return the few miles."

Schwarz did as he proposed, but the swift boat carried them with great speed, for several hours more, away from their destination, and it was not until the Diana was rushing close past the eastern bank, and there, at a convenient spot for lying-to, found a considerable number of passengers, who had been waiting for the first steamer that should pass, that the captain gave the signal for putting out the boat. The three friends did not wait to be told twice, but quickly took their seats, and found themselves in a few seconds more on dry ground. Scarcely, however, had they touched the sand, before their boxes and bags were chucked after them, by the sailors, with the most amiable *naïveté* in the world; with as little ceremony did they get on board the luggage which belonged to the passengers who were taken up there, and which was lying ready, hurried the passengers themselves after it, and in a couple of minutes from their departure they were alongside their boat again. A rope was thrown to them, and whilst the passengers (among whom were some women) were left to get from the low boat aboard the high steamer as well as they could, the latter already dashed on again, panting and foaming wildly.

[Pg 263]

The proprietor of the farm where they stopped was then at the water's edge, whither he had accompanied the persons who had just left, and he received the three friends, who, as he naturally supposed, had come there on purpose to see him; for his little clearing lay in the midst of an immense reed-brake, and was not in any way connected, by land at least, with other places or settlements.

Helldorf soon explained to him the cause of this really very unintentional visit. Nevertheless, the farmer gave them a hearty welcome, and comforted them with the assurance that the Diana was not the only one of the fast boats which committed such arbitrary acts. He promised them, moreover, a good canoe, large enough to carry them and their effects down stream, only that they must get out of the way of the swell caused by the steamers, as that was dangerous to a deep going canoe, or hollowed-out tree stem.

This was cold comfort, certainly, but there was no choice, for they could not have got along by land, even had they been willing to leave their things in the lurch, a reed-brake in the Valley of the Mississippi being about the worst imaginable of impassable thickets or wildernesses. So, for a

few dollars, they bought the little vessel, and were for putting their things aboard, and going off at once. But the farmer would not hear of this; it was dinner-time—dinner was waiting, as he said, on the table, and they should on no account leave his land hungry, particularly as they had a considerable journey before them, and it was doubtful besides whether they would be able to reach the mouth of the Halchee before darkness set in.

Werner, it is true, would have preferred starting at once, for he could get no rest or peace so near his sweetheart; on the other hand, his stomach spoke pretty distinctly in favour of the offer of the hospitable American, so they accompanied the latter to his dwelling, which was but a few hundred yards off, and where they were most heartily received by the mistress of the house, a very pretty, neat, and tidily-dressed—but rather pale and delicate-looking, little woman.

[Pg 264]

Here they remained for it might be an hour or more, and then they were obliged to take some Indian corn bread and cold turkey for the journey with them, in order, the young lady said, that they might not arrive there hungry again. But so quickly had they become acquainted with, and even attached to these good people, that after no more than an hour passed in their company, they already parted from them unwillingly. But time pressed, the journey which they had to make was a long one, and they wished, if possible, to reach the mouth of the Halchee before evening, at all events, in order to hear from the farmer residing there, whose country they had learned from their host, some particulars of the fortunes of the colony.

Their canoe, which, from its size, might even pretend to the name of a pirogue, was excellent, and bore them, while Helldorf steered, and Schwarz and Werner rowed, quickly down stream. But the warning to avoid the swell raised by steamers seemed to have been by no means unnecessary; for once, when they had not troubled themselves about a boat passing far away towards the opposite shore, the canoe narrowly escaped being swamped by the waves, although these were already much weakened by the distance. By dint of great exertions they managed to keep themselves above water, with the head of their little bark towards the swell which rolled in towards them, whilst the two rowers had as much as they could do to bale out the water that washed over the gunwale. Rendered cautious by this, they landed each time that they saw a steamer coming—and once, when the gigantic Louisiana rushed past them, they carried their boxes upon shore, for this powerful boat threw waves nearly eight feet in height upon the bank. These repeated stoppages delayed their progress very much, and, when the sun set, they had not yet reached the longed-for spot. But the moon shone down clearly from the blue firmament, and they knew that by hugging the eastern shore they could not very well miss the place itself, as the considerable sandbank above the mouth marked the neighbourhood distinctly enough. They reached it, accordingly, at last—glided past it—crossed the Halchee—and landed opposite the house, just where a tolerably thick cotton-wood tree had fallen with its top in the stream, while its root still rested above on the bank, and thereby warded aside the current, and, to a certain extent, whilst they lay close under its shade, formed a secure harbour for the boat.

[Pg 265]

They were about to go at once into the house, from the crevices of which a dim light issued, but another steamer coming up stream, warned them, first of all, to get their things into a place of safety; they carried them, therefore, up the bank, whilst the dogs lying near the house gave tongue, and announced the presence of strangers by barking and howling.

But the people in the house appeared to trouble themselves little about the noise, for no door was opened; and had not the fire glimmering within betrayed the vicinity of human beings, our party would have supposed the hut uninhabited.

"They seem to be very careless about robbers or thieves," said Helldorf, laughing, when they had carried up the last of their effects, and were going down to their pirogue again, to remain beside it until the approaching steamer had swept past, so that their rocking boat should not be washed away by the waves.

"There won't be much to steal there!" said Schwarz; "there is generally not much to be got from the farmers, but a bit of cold steel or a lump of hot lead, and the thievish gentry rather avoid them. Nobody has a lock on his door—a wooden bolt, shoved forward from the inside or outside, answers the same purpose, and affords as much security;—But, didn't you hear some one speak? The voice seemed to come from the banks of the Mississippi."

[Pg 266]

"I heard nothing," said Helldorf.

"Oh, yes, I did, distinctly," replied Schwarz; "probably 'tis from the people, or negroes, from the house here, who may be about to light a fire to induce the passing steamer to land, and take in wood."

But the steamer engaged their whole attention for the time, and not a word more was exchanged, for the colossus rushed nearer and nearer, and close behind it followed the foaming powerful waves, and rocked and beat about the crank boat so madly and wildly, that it was only with some exertion that the three men could protect it from them. But the waves disappeared as suddenly as they came; and Helldorf took hold of the long painter, which passed through a hole forward in the bow, and was just about to make it fast to the branch of a fallen tree, when he suddenly stopped in a listening posture, with his body advanced forward, and his hand raised. Immediately afterwards, the friends looked at each other in astonishment, for angry sounds, as of persons quarrelling, were heard in that direction; these were quickly succeeded by a half-suppressed cursing and groaning, and, in the next, by the report of a shot. The sound of hoofs of galloping horses next struck on the ear; it came nearer and nearer, and, about the moment when the

horsemen must have reached the open space, a smart boat, rowed by one man only, glided out into the stream.

"Massa! take me 'long with you!—for God's sake take me 'long with you!"—cried a voice from the shore. But the man in the boat did not appear to heed it, but rowed on with evident exertion, and that right across the river, in doing which he was carried a little downwards by the current, which was not very rapid in that place.

The Germans had watched the whole proceeding with the most anxious interest, and in the surprise of the moment, really hardly knew which way to turn, or what course to pursue; but Helldorf now exclaimed:—

[Pg 267]

"There's something wrong going forward here; let us go up, perhaps we may yet be of some service;" and with these words he was about to run up the river bank; at that moment there resounded across from the boat, which was already almost lost in the obscurity, a cry for help, so loud and urgent that Helldorf stopped in alarm; but Werner cried out, as he started forward:—

"That was Bertha's voice, by Heaven! Helldorf, Schwarz, if you are my friends, show it now!" and, without waiting for a reply, or caring about the wild shouts and noise which now arose on the bank of the stream, he sprang into the boat, which they had just quitted, and the two friends had scarcely time to follow him, and to resume their places, before he pushed from the shore and took to the oar with all the vigour of which he was master.

"Stay, or I fire!" cried a voice from the shore, which Werner instantly recognised as Von Schwanthal's.

"'Tis I!" he called, in reply—"I, Werner!"

"Stay, or I fire!" repeated the other, who, in his excitement, did not appear to have comprehended the words.

"Then fire, and be d—d!" growled Helldorf, who thought that they had got far enough from shore not to need to fear a shot, especially in the dark; but Von Schwanthal, who never doubted but that this boat was connected with the other, and, in his haste and excitement, not remembering that Bertha, herself, should she happen to be in it, might be hit, levelled and fired; and directly after the flash, even before the report reached them, the slugs, with which the gun had been loaded, struck in and around the pirogue, and Werner could not suppress a low cry of pain.

The second barrel missed fire.

"Are you wounded?" cried Schwarz, turning round, in alarm, towards his friend; "has that blockhead hit you?"

"Hit, certainly; but it's nothing—only grazed, I believe—for God's sake don't let us lose time—we shall be too late else—away!—yonder flies the boat, and if he once reaches the further shore, how are we to follow him?"

[Pg 268]

Schwarz and Helldorf knew but too well the truth of this remark, and, without another word, they urged on the slim canoe, which was considerably lightened by the removal of their baggage, with the speed of an arrow, through the current, after the fugitive.

FOOTNOTES:

[24] The Boiler-deck, in American river steamers, is the space forward of the cabin, on the lower deck, between the two chimneys which pass up through it, and top over the hurricane deck.

[25] A settler calculating on this would stand a chance of being starved.—Tr.

[26] Girdling is a bad and slovenly practice, as the girdled trees, when the rest are cleared away from around them, are very liable to be blown down, and thus endanger men and animals; again, the wood gets so very hard, that it is much more difficult to cut into lengths for logging and burning, when it is blown down.—Tr.

[27] A pfenning is German money, value 1/12th of a penny.—Tr.

CHAPTER IX. TREACHERY WITHIN TREACHERY.

[Pg 269]

"Massa!" said the mulatto, after he had rowed awhile, till large drops of sweat rolled down his forehead—"massa, this is confounded hard work! Shall we drink a drop?—the bottle lies beside you." And he raised his oar out of the water whilst he said these words, so that the clear drops slowly trickled from it into the stream; Dr. Normann also stopped rowing, and breathed hard.

"Confound it!" he then whispered, "this is cursed hard work! I should like you to take the oar a little. There you sit at your ease, enjoying yourself! Let me steer awhile."

Normann made this proposition more for the purpose of getting beside Bertha than to be released from the work, which, though hard, was not altogether new to him; the bold looks which the rascally Yankee now no longer turned away for a moment from the girl, did not please him, and he was less and less able to suppress a growing suspicion that the American did not mean fair play.

"Nonsense!" retorted Turner, who appeared by no means disposed to give up good-naturedly any advantage which he might have obtained. "You want to steer, do you? so that we may run foul of bushes or snags every minute, and afterwards get too late into the Mississippi—eh? No, every second is worth gold, and the change of places would occupy us too long. Row away! row away!—rest when we are once in the river!—there's no time for it now. Away!—when we're in the Mississippi, *you* may steer,—a trifle either way is of no consequence there. Away, I say! or you will have no one to thank but yourself for the destruction of us all!"

[Pg 270]

The men took to their oars again in silence, and shot down stream with wonderful speed. The moon lent them her silver light; and it was not until they caught sight of the shining sheet of water, the Mississippi, that they stopped a moment to take counsel whether they should attempt the passage at once, or reconnoitre first.

Turner voted for the latter plan, and the mulatto was despatched to examine the safety of the mouth; but he returned within a few minutes, laughing, and chuckled out, shaking all the time with inward enjoyment—

"Just as I s'posed!—a confounded rough road through the woods, and the worthy Dutchmen will have a while to ride yet, before they catch sight of the shore! Well, I wish 'em joy! But now, massa, I must have a drink, by golly! or else I wont touch an oar again!"

Turner handed him over the flask in silence, but immediately turned to Normann, and said—

"Doctor, it's time that we changed places; now you may steer. But just step ashore a minute; we must bale the water out of the boat—the confounded thing leaks. Confusion! what a row those dogs are making!—and yet they're to windward of us. What the devil ails them?"

"No cons'quence," grinned the mulatto; "the people will think they are barking at the steamer that is just passing up stream. But, hallo, massa! she's going close in shore!—will make great swell."

"We had better lighten our boat," said Turner, "else we may perhaps end by getting swamped."

"There's no fear," said Normann. "With this boat, I'd row under the very paddles of the Sultana herself, and she shouldn't ship a drop!"

[Pg 271]

"Yes, when you're once out in deep water," growled Turner; "but here, so close to the mud bank, stuck all over with old snags, the devil may trust it!—it's easy work, and 'tis better to be safe! If we ship water now, who knows but that the horsemen may be upon us before we have time to bale it out again."

Without awaiting any further answer from Normann, he took Bertha's sister this time in his arms, and carried her ashore. This had the wished-for result; Normann followed quickly with Bertha, who turned her pale countenance away with a shudder, when she felt herself touched by the hands of the scoundrel; and the mulatto had to mount guard, Turner putting the painter into the doctor's hand, to hold the light vessel, whilst he himself, notwithstanding all the swaying and rocking from the swell, driven up the Halchee by the steamer, which now rushed past, baled her out. As soon as this work was concluded, he gave a gentle whistle, scarce audible, and the mulatto immediately came running down the steep river bank.

"Bring one of the girls," said Turner to him—"the eldest first: so; lay her this way. Doctor, you'll get seated between the two lasses now, only don't let them make you forget to steer." He laughed, at the same time, quietly to himself, and it struck the doctor as though he whispered a few words to the mulatto. Be that as it might, Norman's suspicions became stronger, and he was thinking of letting go the rope, and taking his place in the boat again, when the mulatto came back.

"Now, massa doctor," said the yellow fellow, showing his ivories—"take the youngest one, if you please,—I'll hold the boat so long." He took hold of the rope, and advanced the right foot. Normann stood, for a few seconds, in doubt, but then turned half aside from him, as though he were about to follow his advice; the half-son of Africa, too, allowed himself to be deceived, sprang rapidly towards the boat, shoved it quickly from the shore, and was just about to follow with a rapid spring, when Normann, who perhaps had a notion of something of the sort—and yet, again, could scarce believe that his own friends would leave him in the lurch in so shameful a manner—upset the well-spun scheme, by suddenly throwing himself upon, and flinging his arms round him.

[Pg 272]

"Hold, sir!" he cried—"you rascal—you! You don't escape so! Turner, you perjured villain! would you betray me?"

"Make yourself loose, Nick!" cried Turner to the mulatto—"make yourself loose!—quick! By Jove, I hear the horses! We are lost if they catch us!"

"You scoundrel! I keep you in pawn!" cried the doctor, who was now driven to extremity. "He can't get away alone, and we shall, at all events, go to the devil together!"

"Haven't you a knife about you, Nick?" exclaimed Turner. The danger increased every moment: a few minutes more must decide their fate. "Come quick!—come both of you, then, in the name of all the devils in hell!—only quickly!" he cried, at last, in a rage, for he knew how invaluable every second was. But even if he could have made the combatants comprehend his wish, Normann, after what had taken place, would not, on any account, have put himself into the hands of his treacherous companions; but as it was, neither of the two enraged men heard even a syllable of the proposal. Nick had, with infinite trouble, got his hand into his pocket, and pulled out a small pocket pistol, which he quickly and secretly turned towards the German's forehead. But this movement of his opponent had not remained unobserved by the latter, and he threw his arm upward, and struck the weapon aside, at the very moment the mulatto was pulling the trigger: the ball even grazed his ear, and the powder singed his face. But now, driven to the extremity of rage, he no longer heard even the approaching galloping of the horses, but seizing the slim figure of the negro with all the strength he possessed, he threw him to the ground. In the same moment, the pursuers appeared on the river bank, close above the two wrestlers, and Turner's boat glided out beneath the shadow of the bushes into the Mississippi.

[Pg 273]

"Confusion!" said the Yankee, gnashing his teeth, finding he had to handle the two heavy oars in tholes which did not correspond. "Confusion seize that awkward brute of a nigger! to let himself be upset like that by a Dutchman; if they only hang the varmint, and I hear of it, that'll be some comfort! Well, my pretty, now we two must make the journey alone," he said, turning grinning to the prisoner lying before him; "didn't I tell you, my poppet, that you——"

"Help, help, here! Help!" suddenly cried with a loud voice, the unhappy girl, who had, meanwhile, with the most fearful exertions, freed herself from the gag. "Help, here! Help!"

In the next instant, the palm of the American's hand was on her lips, and he whispered to her, through his clenched teeth—

"Ho-ho! my pretty little dove, must I draw the bit a little tighter? So," he continued, whilst he made any further attempt at screaming futile, by a large woollen cloth—"so! if it should be a little close for you, you must bear it; over in Arkansas, I'll make you more comfortable."

He seized the oars once more, and pulled away till the tumid veins on his forehead threatened to burst the skin;—"Stop!" resounded across from the shore, and, as he was gazing thither, to see to whom the call was addressed, for he was himself too far for it to have reference to him—a flash gleamed in the obscurity and the report of a shot followed.

His attention was thus drawn to the direction in which the shot was fired, and to his astonishment and alarm, he just discerned, in the dim light of the moon, the dark shadow of a second boat gliding on, which evidently must be following him. Although he could not account, in the first place, where this boat had come from, as the mulatto had found none thereabouts, or, secondly, why his enemies should fire upon it, yet, he did not, for a moment, hesitate in concluding it to contain, as it really did, *pursuers*; and his sole aim now was to reach the opposite shore before it. Once there with his prize, he could, under the dark shadow of the woods, either give them the slip, with his boat even, or else easily carry his prize into the thicket, where pursuit would be useless. So, with his face turned to the dark spot, from which the flashing light of the oars, as they were lifted out of the water, alone announced the activity with which those in it were striving after their object, he himself pulled away lustily, and shaped his course, so as to give way a little to the stream, not exactly across, but rather endeavouring to maintain his advantage, as he still thought it possible to escape them by superior speed.

[Pg 274]

But he was soon undeceived, for although the pirogue was unquestionably clumsier in the water than the excellently modelled boat, yet the latter was not adapted to be rowed by one person: the tholes lay opposite separate seats, the one more forward than the other, and the working of both at the same time was highly inconvenient. Turner, who knew how to scull, might, it is true, have easily got his boat down stream in that way, but he could not have made, in that fashion, so much way as the pirogue, and, he was consequently obliged for his own safety to choose the less convenient but more advantageous mode.

Still, the pursuers gained upon him, and he was obliged to turn the head of his boat more towards the stream, in order to reach the opposite shore as soon as possible. But this movement, which did not pass unnoticed by Helldorf, only redoubled the zeal of the Germans, and the steersman warned the rowers several times, not to pull too violently, lest they should break one of their oars, a loss which could not have been made good.

[Pg 275]

Turner was now compelled, in order to get more command of the lower or larboard oar, and be enabled to stem the stream, to change the tholes, which occupied him some seconds, for whilst he stopped rowing, the boat's head turned quite towards the stream, and she lost her course. Scarcely had the American resumed his seat, and got his little vessel in her former direction, before he saw how much nearer the enemy had advanced, and became conscious of the danger which threatened him. The current, besides, had carried him further down than he anticipated, and he observed, on turning his head to look, that he must touch the upper part of the sandbank, situate on the opposite side of the river, about three English miles below the one before alluded to, and would not be able to give his pursuers the slip in the shadow of the woods, or in the top of some tree fallen into the water. All that remained for him was to save his own life, and gnashing his teeth, he was compelled to admit to himself, that the booty, which he had considered so safe, was lost to him. There is no knowing what he might have done in the first moment of rage, had he only dared to cease rowing for an instant; but as it was, he found himself almost within shot of

the silently approaching avengers, and knew well enough, unless he reached the sandbank sooner, and much sooner, too, than they, that he should be exposed to their fire. He could not possibly dare to hope, that people who engaged in such a pursuit were unarmed, and yet such was the case; not one of the three carried so much as a pistol, and they had simply, on the impulse of the moment, and relying on the goodness of their cause, followed a desperate ruffian, who, there could be no doubt, would have sold his life dearly.

Turner, never without a weapon himself, thought the same probable of others, and as his pursuers were Germans, they naturally, according to his idea, carried nothing else than fowling pieces or shot guns, and those double-barrelled ones. But, just now, he dreaded those more than he did a ball, for it was more probable that he should be hit by them, and perhaps crippled, than with a bullet. He therefore exerted himself in desperation, his limbs were bathed in sweat, his sinews strained almost to starting, and he was scarcely fifty yards distant from the strand which promised him deliverance, when the boat ran upon one of the numerous tongues of sand which in that place run out into the stream, and grounded hard and fast. Turner well knew how impossible it would be for him, under existing circumstances, to get her afloat again, and therefore, without a second's further delay, seized his rifle and shot bag, and jumped overboard, and ran, with rapid bounds, through the water, which there was scarcely a foot in depth, towards the sandy shore. He had hardly reached it, before he began to spring across the hard sand in zig-zag, in order to avoid any shot which might happen to be sent after him, and in doing this performed such extraordinary gambols, that Schwarz, who immediately guessed what he was in dread of, and knew the groundlessness of his fears, broke out into a loud laugh. But Werner, who troubled himself little about the runaway rascal, if he could only succeed in saving his sweetheart, was in half a minute's time beside the boat left in the lurch, in which the maiden, bound and gagged, was still lying. He was in it with a rapid spring, and in the next moment, Bertha, swooning from joyous surprise, rested upon his breast.

[Pg 276]

For the unhappy girl had had no means of forming an idea that any body was in pursuit of her kidnapper; although she heard the shot fired at the canoe, yet, as she was lying in the stern of the boat, with her face turned forward, and could only see the exertion with which the scoundrel was rowing, she gave herself up for lost. Nor had she been able to perceive the happy consequences which had ensued from her cry for help, for the American had immediately thrown himself upon her, and stifled any further sound by a new bandage. When, therefore, she felt, as she supposed, the boat touch the shore, she abandoned all hope, and stared, with fixed and horrified gaze, at the man in whose ruffianly power she now believed herself. But how astonished was she, when, without bestowing a single word upon her, he jumped out of the boat into the splashing water, and directly afterwards another boat glided alongside, out of which—gracious Heaven! was it one of thy angels that thou hadst sent?—the very man sprang to whom her whole pure soul hung with devotion. The joy was too overwhelming; she cast a single look of gratitude upward, into the clear sky, and then sank back, unconscious, into the arms which were clasped around her.

[Pg 277]

In the same moment of time Turner disappeared in the thicket of young cotton-wood saplings, which skirted the sand-bank.

"I say, Helldorf, I think we shall make a good exchange here," said Schwarz, laughing, as he followed Werner into the captured boat; "we'll leave our old hollow log behind us: what say you?"

"Why, of course," said Helldorf; "but we'll tow it into the current again, so that yonder varmint may not chance to use it to get away. Without a vessel, may he be devoured by mosquitoes in Mississippi swamps."

"What jumps he took!" said Schwarz, still laughing at the thought of the Yankee's zig-zag flight. "He thought, no doubt, that we had a whole arsenal of fire arms aboard; but, by Jove, here are two rifles, and a whole box full of provision, apparently."

"It will be time enough for examination when we get back," said Helldorf. "Werner, can you steer?"

He nodded his head in silence, but did not remove his eyes from off the countenance of his beloved, whose deadly pale temples he bathed with the cool water of the stream.

[Pg 278]

"But we're fast aground!" exclaimed Schwarz.

"Wet feet won't hurt us much," Helldorf interrupted him, and jumped overboard at once to shove the boat afloat again. Schwarz quickly followed his example; in a few seconds they felt the boat give way to their efforts, and soon it rocked freely and merrily again in deeper water.

The men now jumped in, and whilst they vigorously plied the long oars, Werner took hold of the tiller with his left hand, while with his right he supported his beloved. The well-modelled boat glided with the speed of an arrow towards the Eastern shore once more.

But there, meanwhile, things had proceeded wildly and confusedly enough. Wolfgang and Herbold, throwing themselves from their horses, had seized the two traitors, who were struggling with each other; but the mulatto would certainly have escaped from the firm grasp of Herbold, for, quick as lightning, he drew a small knife from his girdle, from the use of which the doctor had hitherto prevented him, and stuck it into the shoulder of the German, who instantly let go his hold in alarm; but Pastor Hehrmann, although he shrank from shooting a fellow-being, even though as vile a criminal as he who stood before him, yet could not help giving some vent to his

just rage, and, swinging round his weapon quickly, he struck, with its butt end, the hard-sculled son of Ethiopia, with such good will, on the head, that the stock broke in two, and the mulatto was doubled up without speech or movement. In the next moment, he, as well as Normann, whom Wolfgang held with an iron grasp, were bound so fast that they could not budge. Pastor Hehrmann had, in the meantime, discovered his poor younger child lying on the ground, almost lifeless with anxiety and dread; he loosened her bands, and pressed her affectionately to his bosom, when the report of Von Schwanthal's shot turned their attention in that direction. They now made out both boats in the moonlight, but all of them remained in uncertainty, for who in the world could the pursuers be, if the first boat contained the fugitive and his booty. Louisa increased their doubts by stating that the American was the only one now left of the treacherous band, and the Germans could not imagine where the other boat came from. Had Providence sent it to save the poor innocent girl from the hands of her kidnapper, or did it only bear away others of his rascally accomplices, who, perhaps, had been lying here in ambuscade to cover the traitor's flight?

[Pg 279]

The prisoners were required to give them some explanation; but, however ready the mulatto might be to tell all that he knew, in the hope of saving his dark skin, yet he was compelled to confess that the second boat was unknown to him, and certainly did not belong to their party. This was the only circumstance which left the miserable father a glimmer of hope, although he could not conceive who the men might be who had hastened to the salvation of his child, so unexpectedly, and at so critical a moment. He could now only pray that Heaven might prosper their good work; and, with folded hands, and with his sobbing daughter leaning on his breast, the poor unhappy man stood and gazed, fixed and motionless, out into the silent surface of the stream, as though he would have penetrated the obscurity which shrouded it.

Normann and the mulatto lay firmly bound beneath a tree, and Von Schwanthal stood beside them, with his gun again loaded and cocked; but Herbold pulled off his coat, and was just endeavouring, by the faint light of the moon, to examine the wound which he had received from the steel of the mulatto, when they heard the rustling of the bushes, and the younger Siebert, Schmidt, and an Alsatian, the former armed with a double-barrelled gun, and the other two carrying formidable bludgeons in their fists, rushed towards them. They were soon informed of the state of affairs, and the clubmen were turned into watchers of the prisoners, whilst Siebert laid down his weapon, and looked at Herbold's wound; it proved altogether free from danger; the uncertain thrust had but grazed the shoulder and torn the skin; a linen handkerchief was bound over it, and there was nothing more to be feared from it.

[Pg 280]

It was then that Pastor Hehrmann, who had never turned away his eyes from the river, suddenly exclaimed, as he pointed, with his left arm outstretched, down the stream—

"Did you hear nothing? was not that a sound like an oar creaking against the hard wood of a boat's side?"

All listened, and for some seconds absolute silence ensued, then it sounded distinctly across the water. All heard, at measured intervals, the regular working of a pair of oars, but they still remained in uncertainty whether the boat to which they belonged was going down the stream, or whether it was returning. After a quarter of an hour of the most exciting and painful expectation, Herbold first discerned a dark point in the lighter surface of the water, and soon after, every moment more distinctly, the outline of a boat became visible, ploughing the stream, and, it could no longer be doubted, making for the eastern shore. Now the separate figures of those in it might be distinguished—there were three of them—two rowed, and one was at the tiller—but what was that? Was there not something white lying in the stern? Something now moved in the boat, a white handkerchief was waved:—

"The Hoffnung, ahoy!" cried a loud voice to the shore.

"Gracious Heaven!" said Pastor Hehrmann, and his knees trembled with joyous alarm, "gracious Heaven! was not that Werner's voice? And my daughter—Bertha—"

"Is saved!" the other called back; "we bring her; father, she is here!"

The boat glided into the shade of the projecting trees, and immediately after they heard it strike upon the soft mud. How Pastor Hehrmann flew down the steep bank and clasped the child who was found again, he hardly knew himself. It was only when held in Bertha's arms, and when that excellent girl, who up to that moment had exhibited fortitude and moral strength, broke out into convulsive sobs, and clasped her father's neck, as though she would never, never more loosen her embrace, that he comprehended, that he felt, that he had indeed got both his dear children back, and with a voice almost choked by emotion, he cried—

[Pg 281]

"My Lord, I thank thee!"

How describe, with cold dead words, the feelings which the happy ones felt, when, in constantly renewed embraces, they felt completely that they were restored to each other, never more to be separated! How gladly did the father welcome the worthy deliverers of his daughters, two of whom were already his old and dear friends, and how often had they to recount again and again how they had just happened to arrive in time to save Bertha from an ill which—he shuddered at the mere thought of such misery!

And why, during all these relations, did the dear great hearted girl hide her little head, with a deep blush, in her father's breast? Why did she not look freely and openly into the eyes of those

who had so readily hurried to her rescue when she was in need and danger, as she had hitherto, unconscious of evil, done towards all men? Oh, do not press the poor girl, her nerves have not recovered from the fright and dread, and—Werner has, during the short passage, been whispering so many, so very many things into her ears, that—but 'tis no business of ours, and we had better stick to our story.

"What's to be done now with these two fellows here?" said Von Schwanthal, who probably felt the evening air getting too damp for his taste. "Shall we take them into the house, or shall we carry them to the settlement with us?"

"Well leave them here," said Wolfgang; "what's the use of dragging them about any further? Either we will pronounce judgment upon them ourselves to-morrow, which, at all events would be the shorter course, or we will take them, bound, in the boat, to Memphis, so that they may be punished there."

[Pg 282]

"That will certainly be best," said Pastor Hehrmann, "for, may Heaven preserve us from executing the law ourselves, as I have heard is sometimes practised here in America! We will not dye our hands in human blood."

"Am I dreaming?" said Helldorf, who had stopped to listen as soon as he heard Wolfgang's voice, advancing towards the latter, and availing himself of the uncertain light of the moon. "Isn't that—by all that's wonderful!—Wolfgang!"

"Helldorf!" the other exclaimed, embracing his friend, and pressing him to his breast—"Helldorf, God bless you, my dear fellow—Helldorf!" and with that word, the name of a man with whom he had in past times shared joy and sorrow—the remembrance came upon him suddenly of all that he had lost, of all that he had suffered, and he cast himself in dumb and scarce bearable agony on the shoulder of his friend.

"Friends! I have a hundred dollars in gold upon me," Dr. Normann now suddenly whispered to the two men who kept watch over him; "they are yours if you will cut through the cord, and turn away your head for a moment."

"Hit him over the head, Hans, if he opens his mouth again," said Schmidt, growling a hearty curse to himself into the bargain. "Does the blackguard think to bribe us, too? Wait, you dog!"

Under any other circumstances it is probable that Normann would have been deterred by this not over-encouraging answer, but the sound of the voices of the two men, Wolfgang and Helldorf, filled his soul with horror, and he dreaded the worst.

"I have five hundred dollars with me," he whispered again, as he endeavoured to raise himself; "my men, I'll make you rich, only loosen my bands, and give me a minute's start. *Five hundred* dollars, I say, do you hear?—five hundred dollars!"

"Shall I give him a tap?" asked the Alsatian, and raised the heavy iron-shod stick, which in starting he had seized in haste as the most convenient weapon of offence and defence.

[Pg 283]

"It won't do any harm," Schmidt considered, growling, "for he has already richly deserved——"

The Alsatian did not wait for the conclusion of his comrade's sentence, but gave the bound criminal such a hard and well meant cut across the shoulders, that the latter yelled with pain and rage.

"Hallo! what's up there?" Von Schwanthal now cried, as he levelled his gun, and quickly advanced. "Is he trying to get away?"

"He's offering a bribe again," said Schmidt, laughing, "and the Alsatian has forbidden him rather feelingly."

"Aha! he would like to be off," said Von Schwanthal, "I dare say. His is a desperate case. I wouldn't be in his shoes for the best bearskin in the world. But I think it would be better for us to take those worthies in-doors. In the first place they can be easier guarded there, and besides it's getting very unpleasant out here. Mr. Wolfgang, I dare say, has got a little bread and meat—you understand!"

"Aha! you are hungry," said the party alluded to, with a smile; "well, we shall manage to find something. But here comes Scipio, with fire, I see. That's right of you, old fellow; throw the burning logs down here; we are not going to stay out here all night, it is true, but they may light us for the moment."

He took, at the same time, a burning pine-torch out of the old negro's hand, and stepped up to the place where the malefactors were guarded.

"So this gentleman, here, wanted to bribe our watchmen, eh?" said Wolfgang, while he passed the flaming light towards the pale face of the doctor. "That, I suppose, is your much-praised Dr. Normann. Confusion!" he suddenly cried out, interrupting himself, and starting back in surprise, as though he had trodden on a snake—"Wæhler! Dr. Wæhler! Then there is a retributive providence even in this world. Villain, thy hour has come! Mary! Mary! here is revenge!" And before any of the astonished spectators, who surrounded him, could interfere—yes, even before the pale sinner himself had any notion of what was in store for him—Wolfgang, driven by the sight of the hated one to the wildest and most unbridled rage, swung the heavy brand which he

[Pg 284]

carried in his hand, and dashed it down with all his might upon the malefactor, who uttered a loud scream of dread and horror. The sparks flew far around, and the flame was extinguished—but again the glimmering club was raised and threatened destruction to him who had now fallen back unconscious; it was Pastor Hehrmann who saved him. He seized the enraged man's arm with all his strength, and begged and entreated of him to stay, and not to stain his soul with murder.

"Murder!" said Wolfgang, musingly. "Murder!" he re-echoed as if in a dream. "Yes, yes, it would be murder—yet that villain, has he not deserved death a thousand-fold at my hands? Was he not the cause that we were obliged to leave the home we had founded in a beautiful country, and that my wife now—killed by fever and grief—lies in the cold earth? But you are right," he continued, after a short pause, whilst the smoking torch fell from his hand—"you are right; I will not stain myself with the blood of this villain—he shall be handed over to the *hangman*, to whom he belongs."

"Hold there—hold fast!" cried Schmidt, as he made a spring, and missing his footing, pulled down the Alsatian who stood beside him, to the ground, too.

"Back!" cried Von Schwanthal, at the same time, as he opposed himself to the dark form of the fugitive mulatto, who was just about to fly past him into the thicket.

But perceiving the German levelling at him, and fearing the fowling-piece, which stopped his only outlet in that direction, more, he turned back and attacked young Siebert, who was taken by surprise, tore the gun out of his hand, and then sprung with it, with a tremendous leap, right into the stream, whose waters met over him again.

[Pg 285]

"Wait a bit, you scoundrel!" said Von Schwanthal, as he sprang to the edge of the bank, and raised the gun to his cheek—"wait, you scoundrel! only show your black woolly head again, and I'll let fly at you, so that——"

"Let him go," Werner begged, as he pushed the barrel, which was already aimed, aside—"we are all so happy, this evening. Human blood, spilt by our hands, would put us out. He will not escape his fate."

"You are right, I will willingly leave him; however, you've saved his life, that's certain, else by this time he would have been on the high road to the infernal regions. But, if he really does go to the devil, we've got the head and chief rogue, and he must pay the penalty for both this time. Wait a bit, my little doctor, we'll make you swallow something which shall be more bitter than your own pills."

But the doctor did not hear a word of all these friendly addresses, for, stupified by the blow, he continued to lie there rigid and unconscious, or else pretended to be so, and was carried by his sentinels into the house.

The mulatto, who had made such good use of the moment when they were all occupied with the doctor, and was now joyously dividing the flood with sturdy arms, struck out towards the opposite shore. Von Schwanthal could, for a long time, trace the light stripe which the swimmer left behind him in the water. He certainly appeared to have escaped from the hands of mortal avengers; but a greater one watched him; Nemesis stretched forth her iron grasp towards him—he had met his fate.

There are few who can plough their way across the mighty father of the waters—the Mississippi; the current is too strong; a thousand whirlpools exhaust the swimmer, although they may not be powerful enough to suck him down. The Mulatto stemmed the flood with powerful chest, and had already reached the middle of the river; he then turned on his back to rest, and now began again to labour with redoubled exertion.

[Pg 286]

But this it was which proved fatal to him; he had, from the very first, to escape the still-dreaded shot, over-exerted himself, and now, when fear lest he should not reach the saving shore came to be superadded, it operated cripplingly upon him. His breathing became more laboured, his movements quicker, but also fainter, and it was only the sight of the shore, which constantly advanced more and more near, which yet maintained his spirit. He had now attained the dark line that mirrored the tree tops in the water, yet still the land receded about two hundred yards more.

"Courage!" he faintly gasped, whilst he clenched his teeth as if in grim defiance—"courage! yonder—but a few yards off, life and freedom smile!—courage!" With a strength which he could only borrow from despair, he divided the waters. He had but a few yards more to swim before he could grasp the over-hanging willows of the shore. "Ha! how strong the current rolls along on this side!" He could scarcely support himself above the whirling flood.

"Help!" he cried: Turner must be on this side, and would hear him. "Help!" In vain—twice, already, had he stretched out his hand to a projecting branch, twice had the current's speed sucked him away from under it. Now, again, a saving branch stretched out towards him—with a last exertion of strength, he threw himself upwards and towards it; he clutched the rocking branch which projected far into the river. But, oh! unfortunate wretch, it gave way! it was but a floating reed which had settled there, and that broke in the grasp. The mulatto sank—the waves curled and gurgled above him. He yet clutched the treacherous reed in his hand, and bore it with him into the deep. But there—yet again—as if in the battle of struggling and wrestling life with

the silent deep, the dark figure reappeared from its watery grave; yet again it turned its wild defying look up to the bright, silent, friendly moon, that quietly and holily poured down her peaceful light, as well on the passion-torn sons of man, as on the cold, slumbering, earth, and the silver-gleaming stream. Yet again, a wild, blasphemous curse bubbled from the ashen lips of the mulatto, and the convulsed body sank for ever into the unceasingly further-rolling flood, as though nature would no longer suffer that hideous distorted mask to abide further in the wondrous harmony of her forms.

[Pg 287]

Their caution awakened by the flight of the mulatto, the Germans watched their remaining prisoner with the greater attention and care, and the whole of them now retired to Wolfgang's dwelling, partly to pass the remainder of the night there, partly to maintain a fire, beside which the remaining pursuers, whom they also expected to arrive shortly, might warm and refresh themselves. However, hardly had Wolfgang completed the arrangements for the convenience of his guests, before, to the surprise of all, he led out his horse again, and told the men that he was about to ride back to the settlement that very night, to communicate the happy tidings of the result of their hunt to Madame Hehrmann, and relieve her mind, for that the anxiety of the mother for her daughters so shamefully carried off, must be boundless.

Pastor Hehrmann at first tried to prevent him, but as he probably was alarmed for his poor wife himself, unless she should shortly receive good tidings concerning her daughters, he ultimately offered himself as a companion, and, notwithstanding Wolfgang positively declined this at first, and affirmed that the pastor stood almost as much in need of rest and care as his daughters, and that they must at all events have a protector, yet the father was not deterred by that.

"I leave them to the care of their noble-minded preservers," he said, grasping Werner's hand; "and to-morrow follow us as quickly as you can—we shall await you impatiently."

Louisa was unwilling to part with her father, but surrounded by so many friends, no further danger could threaten them, and to send tidings of their safety was the very thing she had ardently wished. The two horsemen, therefore, departed, and the remaining men divided themselves into two watches, to relieve one another, so as not to be overpowered by sleep. Werner, however, was excluded from these, for it now came out that he had been wounded by Von Schwanthal's shot, and was very weak from loss of blood. The wound, it is true, proved by no means dangerous, yet it called for rest. Von Schwanthal, when he first heard of it, was inconsolable, begged the young man's pardon a thousand times, offered to keep watch himself all night, then abused the doctor and his base accomplices again, and at last, proposed to permit their prisoner, who probably knew some little of surgery, at all events, to use his hands so far as to dress the wounded limb—the upper part of the right arm. Werner had, meanwhile, found a much dearer and better doctor, than him whom Von Schwanthal proposed—Bertha. Scarcely had she heard that the young man was wounded—wounded on her account—before she quickly, and with a strength which one would not have supposed her capable of, tore off the linen kerchief which she wore lightly tied round her neck, and begged—how could Werner resist such a request?—to be allowed to examine, and bind up the wounded limb. Her sister lent a helping hand, and Werner was ordered, notwithstanding all his opposition, to lie down and rest himself, so that he might not catch cold, and the wound, which then was not serious, be aggravated by inflammation. But he would not agree to this on any condition—not even upon the persevering request of the pretty girls; his place, he said, was beside the fire half the night, but the other half with the watch, to preserve those from harm whom he had been so fortunate as to save.

[Pg 288]

Accordingly, it was so done; the men relieved each other regularly, although nothing suspicious further occurred, and, Normann was too securely guarded to escape. It was not till the sun rose on the following morning, in all his splendour and majesty, that they broke up to depart, and to follow the tracks of the horsemen who had ridden on before.

[Pg 289]

The only remaining horse was now applied to the use of the two young ladies, and Bertha, with Louisa mounted behind her, sat as firmly in the saddle as though she had been used to romp about on horseback from infancy. But Werner walked by her side, and held the bridle of the spirited horse, as it stamped along, or she might not have mustered courage to do so. Normann was compelled to accompany the party with his hands tied behind his back, and with Von Schwanthal marching close after him; while the little negro was dispatched to the nearest town, to fetch the sheriff, in order to deliver up the criminal into his hands. Scipio, on the other hand, who had offered himself as their conductor, was to keep up a good fire at the mouth of the Halchee, to collect the scattered settlers, who, it was conjectured, had missed their way, and bivouacked in the woods. Helldorf assured them that he was able readily to find the road from the horse and wagon tracks.

Sure enough, the remaining pursuers of the kidnappers, although they had not exactly lost themselves, yet had so entangled themselves in thickets and briers, that they found it impossible to get on after darkness had set in. Now they tumbled into a ditch, then stumbled over a branch or a root, and tore their hands and faces in a most melancholy manner. In all their troubles, they had kept closer and closer together, in order by their mutual vicinity to keep off, in part at least, the uncomfortable feeling which seized upon them, however brave they might be, when they gazed into the surrounding darkness, whence now and then, wild, strange, and sometimes fearful cries of animals resounded and filled them with terror. By the next morning's light, however, they followed the course of the Halchee, which brought them to the shores of the Mississippi, where the trusty black received them, and gave them tidings of all that had occurred.

[Pg 290]

The luggage of the three friends had been meanwhile got into Wolfgang's house, and Scipio, who

had first of all refreshed his guests with meat and drink, conducted them, following the old wagon tracks, as Helldorf had done, back to the settlement, where the poor little tailor took to his bed at once, and, in consequence of the unusual exertion, had a regular bone-shaking attack of the cold fever, or ague.

CHAPTER X. THE MIGRATION.

[Pg 291]

We must now pass over a period of nearly a year, and I will merely relate, in few words, what took place in the settlement and its neighbourhood in the interim.

The sheriff, accompanied by two constables, had taken away Dr. Normann to the county town, but the settlers found themselves, in consequence, involved in infinite trouble, for almost every one of those who had taken part in the pursuit and capture of that scoundrel was summoned to give evidence upon oath, before the court; even Bertha and Louisa had to go there, and Wolfgang subsequently often expressed his opinion that it would have been better to have allowed him to pursue the course which he had wished to take, and then there would have been no occasion for all this trouble; Pastor Hehrmann, on the other hand, declared that he willingly submitted to it all, for that his conscience could not now accuse him of shedding, or of being party to the shedding of human blood.

Dr. Normann, or Wæhler, as his name was discovered to be at the trial, was found guilty by the jury, and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in the House of Correction; it is true, that he subsequently appealed to the court of the United States, but without obtaining a more favourable result, and in the early part of the following year, he was delivered over in irons to the penitentiary of the state.

[Pg 292]

But how did it fare with the settlers, now that they had arrived in the foreign, but much-wished-for country? Alas, ill enough! At first, Helldorf and Schwarz had taken the greatest pains to induce them to migrate to a healthier district, and that without further loss of time, but the good folks would only profit by experience, and would first pass through every successive stage of expectation deceived and hope destroyed; without which practical lessons, Germans seldom follow advice. As Helldorf and Schwarz, therefore, soon discovered that further persuasion was not merely useless, but would even tend to confirm the obstinate people in their stupid resolution, they gave up preaching of colours to the blind, who could not see or comprehend them. Werner, on the other hand, brought into nearer contact with the Hehrmanns, and emboldened by his adventures and good fortune, sued for the little hand of the dear, blushing Bertha, and the parents gave their cheerful and willing assent, on condition that he should settle among them, and, like themselves, become a farmer. Mindful, however, of the warnings of his friends, and unwilling, besides, to cultivate a spot where the inexperienced Germans had been banished by the fraud of a fellow-countryman, he begged them to grant him a year's delay till he should have founded a little home for himself, when he would fetch bride and parents together, and would, with willing heart, work hard, in order to have all the dear ones beside him.

Pastor Hehrmann, at that time, it is true, shook his head, and replied very gravely, that he had, once for all, given his word to the association, faithfully to stay beside them so long as they required him, and he should be the last to go from so important and self-imposed a duty. Helldorf, however, gave his opinion, with a laugh, that if there were nothing else to detain him beside that, Pastor Hehrmann would, no doubt, be a free and independent man, in the following year, and would willingly accompany his son-in-law to a healthier climate, and pleasanter neighbourhood; he, moreover, would warrant, that within a year, Werner should have made a beginning on a sufficient little property; and he longed not a little himself for the time when he should become a neighbour of the families of Hehrmann and Werner.

[Pg 293]

Accordingly, matters remained thus for the present; Werner, after a stay of about three weeks, cleared out,—accompanied by Schwarz and Helldorf, and even by Wolfgang, the latter of whom, however, only intended to view the country, and to return to the Mississippi, for the present,—across to the southern part of Missouri, and there the three settled themselves on the woody banks of the Big Black River.

They had worked and toiled there during three months or so, and with the little capital which they possessed, and warned by the experience of Helldorf and Schwarz, they had really performed wonders, when one day, Werner got hold of that sealed letter of introduction, which was directed to a distant relative of his own, settled but a few miles from where they were living. Werner would hitherto, on no account, seek him out, but now that his own circumstances looked rather more prosperous, the wish occurred to him to make the acquaintance of the old man, of whom his uncle had formerly often spoken to him.

Dr. Wisslock resided, although he had but little intercourse with the neighbourhood, on the high road leading from St. Louis to Arkansas, and was reputed, as Werner had learnt from some of his neighbours, not only to be the possessor of a very considerable farm, and much property, but also, although very eccentric, to be a very good-hearted man.

It was a Sunday, when Werner determined to look him up, and with the letter in his pocket, he

reached, just before dinner-time, the neat and well-kept fence of the fields of Indian corn, between which, a straight, broad road led to the homestead. Werner followed this, and arrived before the house, threw his horse's bridle over a rack erected there for the purpose, and after tapping twice at the door without receiving an answer, stepped into the house, and from thence walked into a room, the door of which stood ajar. Here he found himself at once in the presence of his relative, Dr. Wisslock, introduced himself briefly and pithily, and handed him the letter.

[Pg 294]

"Hem!" said the old man, when he had hastily skimmed through it—"hem? What has the young gentleman learnt, that he comes dropping, as from the clouds into the back woods in this way?—educated at a university—eh?"

Werner answered affirmatively.

"And now, all at once, wants to become a farmer?"

"A farmer's life has been described to me," replied the other, "by several friends, as most suitable for a German."

"Oh, ah! Yes, I dare say!" growled Dr. Wisslock, nodding his head, significantly; "I dare say, picturesque landscape—hanging woods and rocks—creepers and wild vines—bleating herds, and bear's flesh—the usual dream. You'll find out your mistake."

"I scarcely think so," said Werner, smiling; "what I have hitherto seen of the country, pleases me much."

"You'll think differently when you come to handle the axe and the plough," grumbled the old fellow, by no means more agreeably disposed by this reply. "Here, in the woods, there is no getting on without work, nor without right-down hard work either; we can't buy little niggers and blackamoors, directly. Do you intend to settle?"

"It's already done," replied Werner, rather shortly, for the reception of the old man began to displease him.

"Already done?" he asked, surprised, as he stopped a pinch of snuff midway to his nose. "Already done! why, how long has the young gentleman been in America, then?" and he opened the letter again, and looked at its date.

"Almost a year, and for the last half-year I have been your neighbour, though rather a distant one."

"Oh, the deuce!" exclaimed the old man, and a peculiar kind of movement played round the corners of his mouth, "the deuce! Then you're perhaps actually one of the three young Germans who have made such a good start on the Black River?"

[Pg 295]

Werner nodded his head silently.

"Very glad to make your acquaintance," continued the old man, becoming very friendly, and even hearty all at once,— "have heard nothing but good report of all of you, and was shortly coming to see you. But be seated, I beg, be seated. So you've carried the introduction about in your pocket for half a year! Hem! why didn't you come to me at once?"

"I had brought introductions to New York and Philadelphia," replied Werner, "and seeing their result, or rather finding that they had no result, and, as I now feel well enough, could have had none, I laid by the rest of the letters in my box, and indeed shouldn't have delivered this had it not been sealed, and had I not wished besides to make your acquaintance."

"Hem—hem!" interjected the old man, and one could read in his looks how pleased he was with the firm, manly behaviour of the young man—"hem—hem! very reasonable that—must dine with me first—afterwards I'll take a ride over with you to the Black River—can sleep there, I suppose—eh? Should like to see your housekeeping there—hem—hem!—three bachelors—eh? Heaven have mercy upon us!—there is but one here, and even with him things are bad enough."

The old man chatted away for a long time in his peculiar, but good-tempered style, and actually trotted over to the "Three Mens' Farm," (as it was called in the vicinity, from the three proprietors,) that same evening.

But Dr. Wisslock was not the man to let the matter drop there. If Werner had brought the letter to him at first, and so, if not directly, still to a certain extent indirectly, challenged him to assist him, he might perhaps have met him with the usual American saying, "Help thyself!" But here was quite a different case—the young man did not want him; he had proved that he did not want him, and was only come there to make his acquaintance—that sounded quite differently. Besides, Werner knew nothing of a clause which was appended to the letter, and which his old uncle had *not* read to him with the rest.

[Pg 296]

The Doctor, as he was briefly styled in all the country round, now took a very particular interest in the plans of the three young people, whom he liked more and more upon further acquaintance. He inquired about one thing and the other, and made himself intimately acquainted with all, and not only helped them with excellent advice, but also subsequently, cheerfully, and with good will, by act and deed. Meanwhile, he had ascertained all the particulars, as well concerning the joint-stock settlement, as of Werner's love, and the worthy family of the Hehrmanns. But from that moment forward, he urged and urged Werner to go across and fetch the Hehrmanns out of the

swamps, and put them in train to become acquainted with the *real* life in the west, that they might not in those poisonous swamps imbibe a distaste for the noble woods. But Werner knew but too well that Hehrmann would never desert the settlement so long as the colony had existence, however few the members might be of which it might consist.

Besides, he had firmly resolved not to return to the Halchee until he should be in a position to earn his livelihood, and subsist independently; such was, however, not yet the case, and full six months more elapsed before he had erected a little dwelling on his own land, and had procured all kinds of necessary implements. But when that was done the old man left him no more peace, and he and Helldorf, who volunteered as his companion, set out one fresh sunny morning in Autumn, after nearly a year's absence, to visit his sweetheart, and, with the parents' blessing, to fetch her home to his quiet cheerful house.

Mounted on hardy ponies, the two friends trotted freshly and merrily along through the autumnal forest canopy, and although the wondrous splendour of colour of the foliage, and the thousand various tints of the fading leaves, now and then riveted their eyes, distracting the gaze to and fro, and although they could hardly sufficiently admire the constantly fresh beauties which were presenting themselves, still they did not, on that account, stay the course of their horses, and after a difficult ride through the Mississippi swamps, which, although then dry, were yet overgrown with rank vegetation, reached the broad stream, took advantage of a ferry kept up near the southern boundary of Kentucky, to be set across, and now kept along the eastern shore, and at the foot of the hills as far as Jackson, in order to avoid the low land, and not to be further detained by the difficulties of the ground.

[Pg 297]

It was not until the fourth day that they entered upon the narrow bridle path which the settlers, under Wolfgang's guidance, had in former times marked out to the little town, by cutting blazes, or large pieces of bark from the trees standing on this line. But the road, even when they came quite into the vicinity of the settlement, seemed not to have been used for a long time past; the blazes were grown over, and the yellow leaves of Autumn covered, undisturbed, the slightest trace even of a path. Helldorf smiled quietly to himself, and after they had ridden silently for some time, merely observed—

"The young colony seems to keep itself pretty independent; at all events, it does not seem to keep up much intercourse with the interior of the country."

"Helldorf," said Werner, giving, at the same time, his own beast the spurs, and pushing on beside his friend as a somewhat more open space allowed of their riding abreast; "Helldorf, it seems to me as though the young colony stood in no further connexion at all. I see no cattle anywhere, nor, indeed, any traces of any having ever pastured here; no axe is to be heard, no—but, hold!—what was that? That sounded like one, at least; then, after all, I may have been mistaken."

[Pg 298]

The men halted for a moment to listen, and then heard distinctly enough the distant, regular strokes of an axe. The sound came from the quarter where the settlement lay, and as they now knew that they were near their destination, they cantered cheerfully along through thorn and thicket, no longer following the blazed trees, but the guidance of their own hearing, into the woods.

"It still looks rather rural round the *town of Hoffnung*," said Helldorf, as he was obliged to leap his nag over a great tree stem which lay crosswise in his way. Werner made no reply, but raised himself in the stirrups, and tried to get a view of the clearing, which began to be discernible through the lighter bush.

But, good Heaven! how deserted, how forsaken, did that place look! Where was the bustle and activity of a cheerful, industrious band of settlers, who must be intent on carrying the stores of harvest to meet the approaching winter? Where was the realization of those hopes which so many had nursed and revelled in, whereby a glad provision was to be made for them, and their children after them? Alas, they had all passed away!—those plans and fancies, those bold castles in the air, those notions of public spirit and friendship. Discord and ill will had sown their seeds even in that secluded colony of the Mississippi swamp, or rather the seed which had been long sown had sprung up, and ripened its evil crop, and those expectations which had filled the hearts of the better sort with cheerful confidence, and for which they had quitted their native land and everything dear, had there dissolved away into an evil, painful dream, and yonder stood the ruins, cold and bleak, staring towards Heaven, as though they would testify to the hateful, evil disposition of mankind.

"Good Heaven! what has happened here?" said Werner, as he drew in his horse's reins in alarm—"where are all the people gone who formerly animated this place?"

"Why, where should they be?" said Helldorf, shrugging his shoulders; "dispersed in all quarters, as I foretold you. That does not surprise me much; but that Pastor Hehrmann should not have let us know a word of his having left the place—that does seem extraordinary."

[Pg 299]

"There's some one back yonder, chopping," said Werner; "his back is towards us; now he turns this way. By all that's holy, *that's* Hehrmann!—may I never see paradise if I did not recognise the face! But how pale he looks!"

"Hehrmann, and alone here!" replied Helldorf, thoughtfully. "Well, we will leave the horses behind awhile, for they won't be able to make their way through this wild chaos of young shoots and old stumps; we can then soon convince ourselves whether you are right. I hope, at least, that

it may be so; but let us advance—this uncertainty is dreadful."

The man, who had hitherto been chopping at a long stem, now lifted, with evident difficulty, a heavy log which he had cut off, on to his shoulder, and stepped with it towards the house; there, outside the door, he put it down, and a young lad, who came running from another corner of the clearing, helped him to carry in the load.

Helldorf and Werner hurried forward without exchanging another word, and in a few minutes were in front of the door, which was opened from within.

Hehrmann, who, with the assistance of Charles, the former glazier's apprentice, had just placed the heavy back-log on the fire, stood with his back towards them, but on his wife and daughters uttering a cry of surprise, on seeing those who had approached, he turned quickly round towards the door, and that with no presentiment of any good. But who shall describe his joyful astonishment, when he recognised the dear and long-wished for forms of those worthy men, for whose friendly voices he had so often longed? Who can paint his feelings when he grasped Werner and Helldorf's hands, and with a hearty, although certainly rather tremulous voice, bade them a joyful, sincere "Welcome?"

And what said Bertha to this meeting? Oh, my dear reader, thou art not to know everything; thou must rest satisfied with being told that Werner had been a full hour in the house, and since he was first welcomed by Bertha, and yet, as if in absence of mind, kept her little hand lying warmly and firmly in his. Hast thou ever thus held a being that was dear—very dear to thee? Then thou knowest what it means, and if thou hast *not*—then, poor reader, then, any explanations or description which I might give would not assist thee.

[Pg 300]

But how poor Werner's heart bled, when he learnt, as he now by degrees did, the whole story of the sufferings of the young colony. The prophecies with which those who meant them well had warned them, had been but too soon fulfilled. Quarrels and discord broke out first when the people discovered that they could not, as they had actually supposed, become rich and independent in half a year, and the majority would no longer work, as they declared that they had no occasion to labour so hard for their own livelihood, and that they were not disposed to toil for others of the "Gentry."

Becher had then, first of all, withdrawn himself from the affair, and given up what he termed a hopeless business; Siebert, junior, had followed him, and immediately afterwards the elder one had also disappeared, and that, as Hehrmann, Herbold, and Von Schwanthal could not conceal from the rest of the settlers, with a pretty considerable portion of the common funds. Pastor Hehrmann had then had great sacrifices to make, and gave up the greater part of his already much diminished property to pacify those who made the loudest complaints, and to stave off the ruin of all his hopes, which else would have taken place at once. But what hurt him more than all was the ungrateful conduct of those whom he had most obliged, whom he had most actively supported. People who, without means of their own, had been hitherto supported from the common stock of the society, showed themselves the most discontented; the most embittered quarrels and disputes followed the distaste for work, and although the better men among them, and Hehrmann as the foremost of these, gave way, and again and again endeavoured to restore a good understanding—although representations and even prayers were wasted upon the disturbers, it was in vain. "We are all equal here," was the eternal answer; "and if I'm to toil and moil here, I should like to know what for," said the stupid fellows, who either could not, or would not see, that by such bad faith they not only destroyed the society, but also brought the greatest evils upon themselves, as they now went off without knowing the language, without money, and without friends, into a strange country, and had to toil and plague themselves for yet stranger people, and that, perhaps, for six or seven dollars a month, and without receiving either thanks or a friendly word in return. Von Schwanthal had left later, in order to see Arkansas; for an American, who had passed through, had told him so much of the shooting in Arkansas, that he could no longer resist the newly awakened and mighty love of hunting any longer. He embarked himself and his baggage, after having formally taken leave of the colony, for Little Rock, and intended, as he had told Pastor Hehrmann at parting, to lead a regular hunter's life in the new state.

[Pg 301]

Becher had gone to New Orleans, and the rest gradually dispersed to all quarters of the compass. Hehrmann saw them, one after another, take their leave, or even forsake the place without leave-taking; but when he was left almost alone, and wished himself to seek a better, healthier home, when his last friend had disappeared with Wolfgang, who had cleared out for Missouri as late as seven months since, he found, to his alarm, that he no longer possessed the means. He had given away everything—sacrificed all, in order that he might not see his favourite plan, the union of Germans in, a fraternal society, founder. He had, when they learnt from Buffalo that the things left behind there were gone, and could not be traced, and the landlord pretended to know nothing about anything of the kind—when subsequently link after link of the chain fell away, when those forsook him on whom he had calculated most—even when ridicule or contemptuous laughter met his ear, he had never hesitated. "We are melted down to a few," he used to say to those few, "but we can yet prove that people who religiously are in earnest in the good cause, can carry it through in spite of the greatest difficulties."

[Pg 302]

But he soon discovered that those who continued with him were, for the most part, merely compelled to do so, because they did not possess a single dollar wherewith to pay their passage anywhere else, and gladly seized upon the first opportunity which offered, without troubling themselves much as to what became of Pastor Hehrmann and his family, whom they left alone in

the swamps.

One only continued with them honestly and faithfully—one only never forgot how well, how kindly he had been taken by the hand by this family, when he himself stood alone and friendless. This was Charles, the former glazier's apprentice, and richly did he requite all the benefits he had received, especially during the past summer, when Pastor Hehrmann, himself, was confined to his bed for weeks, by fever. Oh, how often, how ardently had they longed for Werner to come back—that he might keep his word, and seek them again in their now disconsolate solitude! Alas! the mother had already begun to doubt, and had said—

"You'll see, my child; he has acted like the rest of them; he has gone off, far, far away, and no longer thinks of those, formerly his so dear friends, whom he has left behind."

"Or, perhaps, lies ill and helpless himself among strangers," worthy Hehrmann would then usually interrupt her, for still he never could make up his mind to think ill of any one, unless, as, alas! had latterly often been the case, he was compelled to do so, against his will. Bertha would on such occasions stealthily press her father's hand, and wipe a tear from her eye, for still she did not doubt her lover's word; but the idea that he might be ill and suffering, might stand in need of her help, that alone it was which pained her, and which, however much she might strive against it, oppressed her with melancholy.

[Pg 303]

Louisa, too, who had, by this time, grown up to full, blooming womanhood, had latterly become strikingly sad and melancholy, and had even, when the conversation turned upon Werner and his friends, several times left the room, and afterwards returned, with eyes dimmed and red with crying.

Such was the posture of affairs at the "Hoffnung," or "Hope," as they had (with so little presentiment of the result) named the town, which, indeed, was destined to remain a hope, merely. But Werner and Helldorf now sat down beside Hehrmann, who in this one year seemed to have added ten to his age, and spoke to him of courage and comfort.

"You cannot stay here any longer," said Helldorf, at last. "Wolfgang, too, has particularly commissioned us to bring you away, at all events. We have capital land, in Missouri, and although not adequately furnished, still have such conveniences as a farmer in the woods needs. A farm lies ready for you: you can begin to work, and till it, at once; cattle there are also; so that with what yet remains here——"

"Oh, my good Mr. Helldorf!" said Hehrmann, shrugging his shoulders, "it would certainly be difficult to begin with what remains here. Not a single head remains—not even a single horse, to perform the most needful work. The people have left me nothing, and what cows and pigs we had, were all eaten half-a-year ago. I would gladly have bought a cow again, in order to have milk for my family, at least—but, in the first place, I could not spare time to leave the farm so long, and then I doubted whether the price might not be beyond my means. Our ready money has, perhaps through our own fault, very much dwindled down."

"Hem!" said Helldorf, reflectively, not wishing to let it be seen how much all that he heard pained him; "hem—then matters are indeed come to extremity. But, my dear Mr. Hehrmann, don't let that trouble you; you have purchased experience dearly, it is true, but yet, perhaps, not too dearly; you are all still healthy, you know; consider how it fared with poor Wolfgang. No; from henceforward, I trust a better life is in store for you. You will come with us—won't you?"

[Pg 304]

"Gladly, to a healthier climate," replied he. "I have done all that God or man can require of me, and now I owe it to my family to lead them hence; in order to do so, I certainly stand much in need of your help, but, if I keep my health, be assured that you will not have obliged one who will be ungrateful."

"Enough, enough!" said Helldorf, smiling; "who knows how soon we may not hold you to your word."

"But what is to become of Charles?" asked Madame Hehrmann—"we cannot leave the poor boy here all alone."

"No, certainly not," said Werner; "he shall go with us, and if he has a liking for farming, shall found a home for himself; so far as it is in our power to help him, he may rely upon us. That he has kept with you so honestly and faithfully deserves not only our warmest thanks, but also some return, and he shall never find us behindhand."

The preparations for removal were soon made; the little which the settlers had left Pastor Hehrmann, and which was really worth carriage, such as the clothes and linen of the family (of which, however, very much had been carried off) was got together. But the little family-council, which was called for the purpose, really did not know how that little was to be transported as far as the Mississippi, as the horses could not possibly carry all, and the road was too long to make more than one journey. At this juncture, Helldorf made a suggestion which was immediately accepted, and quickly put into execution—namely, to form a light raft on the then swollen Halchee, to cover it with the boards which roofed the house, and upon this to float down their whole stock. They had no occasion to chop trees for this purpose, but took a small log-hut rudely erected for storing Indian corn, but which, as no Indian corn had been yet raised, had never been used, carried the short and not very heavy stems to the rivulet, tied them together with such ropes as yet remained, and soon found that the new construction answered its purpose

[Pg 305]

admirably.

The things were then made fast upon it, and Helldorf and Charles undertook to steer it down stream. Werner and Hehrmann were to lead the little caravan towards the Mississippi, for which the two saddles were by ingenious contrivances turned into side saddles. One of these was occupied by Madame Hehrmann, and Bertha and Louisa occupied the other by turns.

Helldorf had wished, at first, to take the women with him upon the raft, upon which they certainly might have performed the journey very smoothly. And the otherwise so bashful Louisa had been quite ready to throw aside all fear, and to confide herself to the care of the new captain of the raft, as he called himself in joke; but Madame Hehrmann feared to trust herself to so fragile a conveyance, and the land journey consequently received the preference.

They reached the stream without any accident, and were there compelled to avail themselves of Wolfgang's almost ruinous hut, to avoid an approaching storm, and to await the arrival of a steamer, going up stream. Fortunately, the latter happened first. It was the Marmion, a dreadfully slow boat, which crept along the shore like a snail, but, on that very account, landed anywhere whenever a signal was made to take in passengers or goods. She was bound for Cincinnati, and they availed themselves of her as far as Benton, in Missouri, landed there, hired a large carrier's wagon, to the teamster of which they entrusted their whole luggage, bought some more horses, and then prosecuted their journey quickly, and without further hindrance.

They thus reached a spot, within about a mile of their future abode, where speculative heads had, in earlier times, planned a town which did not answer, and was abandoned. An old Yankee lived by himself upon the spot, and had planted the clearing, destined for public buildings, with Indian corn.

[Pg 306]

Here, to Werner's astonishment, Dr. Wisslock came to meet them, saluted the company very politely, and then, as opportunity occurred, appeared to have much and important business to discuss with Helldorf. The latter had not left Louisa's side during the whole ride from Benton, and must have had a great many very interesting things to tell her, for the two had often, out of mere absence of mind, lagged several hundred yards in the rear, and could only be brought up with the main body by repeated shouts and signals.

Werner could not imagine what, in the name of wonder, could have induced Dr. Wisslock to ride thus far to meet them, and then to carry on this conversation aside, which surely could have very well kept till the end of their journey. But he did not remain long in the dark as to the object of this mysterious conduct, for Helldorf suddenly advanced toward the Hehrmann family, who were encamped under a wide spreading hickory, and proposed—Werner's astonishment may be conceived—formally for Louisa's hand!

"And in order that you, dear father," he turned to him, "may no longer stand alone in the world—in order that you may not be forsaken by your *children* also, as others have forsaken you, come and live with me, on my farm, and we will conduct our farming together, so that it shall be a pleasure to us both, and so that you may look forward with courage and confidence to an old age, cheerful and free from care."

"I protest against that," exclaimed Werner, without leaving any one else time to speak. "I have priority—you come with me and Bertha; or, if you won't do that—at least, live alternately with each, so that each of your children may enjoy your society."

"Hallo there, young gentleman!" said Dr. Wisslock, who had by this time approached, and taken hold of Werner's arm. "First of all, that young lady yonder, who has suddenly turned so red, has got a word to say, and then we two have also a crow to pick together."

[Pg 307]

"We two?" said Werner, astonished.

"Yes, we two," continued the old man, without losing his gravity, whilst Louisa, as if dyed in crimson, hid her blushing face in her mother's bosom, and at last, when Helldorf again and again pressed her, merely reached him her little hand without looking at him or changing her posture.

"But, my dear doctor, what, in the first place, have you to say to me?"

"That I'll explain directly to the young gentleman. Does he suppose that he brings me a letter, in which my cousin—but that would be a secondary matter—no, the best friend of my youth—charges me, by all that I hold dear, to care for him as for a son!"

"But, my good——"

"Hear me out!—to care for him as for a son, I say. Does the young gentleman suppose that I have so quickly forgotten all that I owe his old uncle? and that is all I possess. No, indeed! In order, however, that I may, in discharging a portion of my obligation, yet derive a benefit from it, I have planned the thing in this way:—The young gentleman marries Pastor Hehrmann's elder daughter, and goes to live on my farm, which he——"

"Doctor——"

"Hear me out, I say!—which he uses and works as though it were his own. But the old doctor, with whom ploughing and chopping have not exactly agreed for the last two years, must be fed and nursed until his end, in return for which he engages besides to find the young gentleman and his family in medicine and medical attendance during any illnesses which may occur—*without* the

use of calomel—and gratis. When I happen to die, of course he inherits what I have scraped together here; but it is to be hoped that he will have quite enough to do with me, and can very well afford to leave his wife's parents to their other son, whom, by-the-bye, he may always take as a pattern for himself. So now the young gentleman may speak—is he content?"

[Pg 308]

"Dear doctor—your goodness—you—you heap benefits upon me which—I really don't know—Bertha——"

"Well, of course, that's understood," the doctor quickly interrupted him; "you must first ask your bride whether she will undertake the arduous office of sick nurse to an old man like me—she of course has the principal voice in the matter, for hers will be the greatest burthen and trouble. Well, miss," he said, turning with gravity to the charming girl, "Do you say 'Yes' or 'No,' to the bargain?"

Bertha, with agitated feelings, seized the old man's hand, and assured him, that she would always be a good, faithful daughter to him. This so pleased the doctor, that he first looked kindly and fixedly in her bright eyes, and then, all at once, without further warning, took hold of her head, and gave her a hearty kiss.

Is there any need of further description of these happy people? Hardly—Love and Friendship made to them their rude home in the woods a paradise, and the old doctor, who had been already vegetating there for many long years past, forsaken and alone, completely revived, in the midst of them, to a new and almost-forgotten existence.

What became of the other settlers remained for the most part unknown. Von Schwanthal had gone to Arkansas, as already mentioned; the elder Siebert was subsequently met by Becher in New Orleans, but he was not destined long to enjoy the fruits of his breach of trust; he died of yellow fever, and was robbed, by a mulatto woman, who had waited on him during his brief sickness, of everything which he called his, and, by reason of total absence of funds, was earthed away with a thousand others whom "Yellow Jack" had swept off about the same time, in the Potter's field, in a wet, swampy soil. The brewer made his way to Cincinnati, and was quite hearty, when the shoemaker subsequently met him there; Herbold, too, started a distillery, somewhere in Ohio state, and Schmidt was, after a lapse of some years, reported to have been seen in Illinois. The poor tailor fared, perhaps, the most strangely; he was very lucky at first, went to Little Rock, got work there, and earned so much money that he was enabled to begin business on his own account, in a small way; but then bad times came, money got scarce, and saving had to be practised, to which rule of conduct, Meier, who, by this time, had begun to play the dandy a little, would, on no account, conform. The natural consequence did not fail to ensue: he got into debt, and accepted an offer of marriage from a rather elderly lady, on condition that she should pay his debts; this was done, and Meier was now to become a happy husband. But not wishing to carry the joke to that length, he endeavoured to escape southward, on a steamer which happened to be there at the time, but was discovered, and, on that very day, united in the holy bands of matrimony to his forgiving bride.

[Pg 309]

Next year, they learnt that Dr. Normann, or Wæhler—perhaps even that was not his real name—had been transferred to the Penitentiary of the State; but of Turner, no further trace was ever found, save that Pastor Hehrmann affirmed at a subsequent period that he had seen him at St. Louis, whither he had gone on business; he had too quickly disappeared again, however, for the former to make himself certain of the fact. Nor did any one know the name there.

But what cared the happy ones about these scoundrels? They left them to their own shame and dishonour, and to the contempt of all good and honest men; whilst they themselves toiled and laboured on, in their allotted, although narrow sphere of life, according to the best of their ability, and the "Three Men's Farm," as the settlement still continued to be called—when Schwarz, too, afterwards sought unto himself, from among the daughters of the land, a dear little wife—was soon reputed to be one of the best in the United States.

[Pg 310]

THE END.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 4, Chandos-street, Covent-garden.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE WANDERINGS AND FORTUNES OF
SOME GERMAN EMIGRANTS ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if

you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States

without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.
- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation’s EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state’s laws.

The Foundation’s business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation’s website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support

and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.