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**MOLLY'S PEASANTS.**

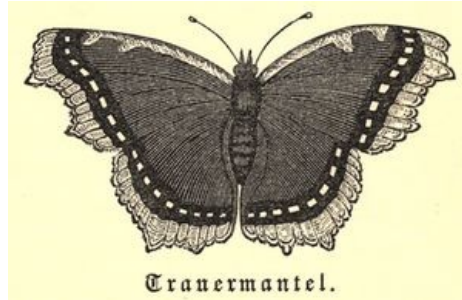


MOLLY AND KITTY,  
OR  
PEASANT LIFE IN IRELAND;

WITH  
OTHER TALES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY



Trauermantel.

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## DEDICATION.

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MY DEAR ERNEST:—

Although it is highly improbable that your happy and sheltered childhood and youth will ever be checkered by the struggles with fortune and the world painted in the following Scenes from Life, yet I am sure they cannot fail to interest you, increase your sympathy with all who suffer, and teach you to rejoice in the well-earned triumphs of uprightness, perseverance, patient study, benevolence, and the forgiveness of injuries. While reading them, will you not sometimes bestow a kind remembrance upon your friend and cousin,

THE TRANSLATOR.



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MOLLY AND KITTY,

OR

PEASANT LIFE IN IRELAND.



IN one of the most desolate regions of Ireland, scarcely ever visited even by the most inquisitive traveller or the most eager sportsman, stood, nearly sixty years ago, a row of low and miserable hovels. They were formed of rough stones rudely piled together, and, at a little distance, looked more like the heaps of stones which in ancient times were thrown together to mark the spot upon which slept the dead, than houses intended to shelter human beings. Upon a closer examination, however, an observer might perceive, if the mould, moss, and mud did not succeed in concealing them from his searching glance, rude doors made of unplanned boards roughly nailed together, without either latch or bolt, with little holes irregularly bored through them to admit the blessed light of heaven, which cheers the poor as well as the rich, within these dark and miserable walls. Notwithstanding this proof, he might still continue to gaze on in doubt, asking his sinking heart if it could be indeed possible that these unformed masses of stone were really intended for homes for beings endowed with quick susceptibilities, and the godlike powers of human reason. But as he inspected the tottering roof, thatched with rushes and covered with turf, he might observe heavy clouds of thick gray smoke curling and eddying from a hole in the top; then his last doubt must cease, and, breathing a deep sigh for the wretchedness surrounding him, he is forced to confess that nowhere throughout the whole extent of civilized Europe are such comfortless dwellings for men and women to be found.

[4]

Only those who know something of the poverty and misery endured by the Irish people, even at the present date, when the ardent friends of humanity have succeeded in winning for this oppressed and injured race some of the political rights hitherto denied them in consequence of their obstinate adherence to the faith of their ancestors, can form any conception of the state of utter destitution in which they formerly lived.

[5]

In one of the hovels which we have just described, and whose interior is if possible more repulsive than its exterior, two forms present themselves to our readers. The one is that of a young maiden scarcely sixteen, who kneels upon the earthen hearth, close beside a suspended kettle. The glimmering fire, which she now succeeds in stirring into a bright flame, shows us a slender form, a soft and clear blue eye, long, fair hair, and a pale, pale face, whose features are rendered strangely attractive by the deep melancholy imprinted upon their youthful lines. Her left arm, whose dazzlingly white skin glitters through the holes in the coarse, dark, worn-out garment, holds a child, who stretches one of its little meagre hands towards the cheerful blaze, while with the other it tries to cover its naked knees with its short, torn frock. It shudders as it finds all its efforts vain. Cowering and sinking upon the shoulder of the elder, it murmurs,—

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"I am so cold, Molly!—oh! so, so cold, Molly! and so, so hungry!"

"Poor little Kitty!" answered the elder maiden, gently, "have patience only for a few minutes more; the potatoes in the pot are already beginning to boil, and on Sunday you shall have something more than potatoes, for father promised to bring a little piece of pork for you home with him."

"Molly, won't he bring some stuff with him too, to make a new frock for me, for this one is so short that it won't cover my legs? He promised me he would, and father has never told a single story to his poor little blind Kitty."

"We will see about that," answered the sister, soothingly; yet in every tone which breathed so softly from the quivering lips might be read the secret of the bitter suffering which she struggled to repress. "If our father really promised it to you, he will be sure to keep his word. But don't you remember, as he was going away, he called back to you through the open door, 'If I can possibly do it, my little Kitty!'"

[7]

The child raised her large, sad eyes towards the face of her sister, while the big tears rolled rapidly over her sunken cheeks; at last she stammered through her broken sobs,—

"Are we, then, so very poor, Molly?"

"Oh! very, very poor indeed, Kitty."

As if to convince herself of the truth of the words which she had just uttered, she suffered her eyes to wander through the miserable room in which she was seated. All they owned in this world stood in this chamber. One corner of it was separated from the rest by a partition of boards: the space thus inclosed was intended either for the pig or the goat of the family. She could scarcely see through the larger apartment for the thick and blinding clouds of smoke; but she knew where the coarse pine table stood, and the low wooden stool. She had herself spread a little moss and a few handfuls of reeds under the wretched beds, to keep them as much as possible from becoming damp and mouldy on the earthen floor. There was but little to count. Apparently not much consoled by the consideration of their possessions, she turned away her melancholy eyes, and again assumed her first position. But the changing expression of her face, and the head, sometimes raised as if in eager expectation, and sometimes sinking as if in despair upon her bosom, gave sufficient evidence that she was in a state of restless anxiety. At last she said to her little sister, who, apparently exhausted by her fit of weeping, was now lying quietly in her arms,—

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"Do you hear nothing, Kitty?"

After a short pause, the child answered,—

"No; I hear nothing. Nothing at all!"

"Nor I, Kitty; and yet father should have been back long ago. Often and often I thought I heard

the sound of his footsteps; but I must have been mistaken, or he would now be here. It seems to be growing dark already. If you would only promise me not to stir from this spot, not to move any closer to the fire, I would go a few steps from the door, and look if I could see him coming. I feel so restless and anxious to-day. May the Holy Virgin guard us, and keep any new misfortune from falling upon us!"

[9]

"Go, sister," answered the little girl; "you need not feel uneasy about me, for indeed I will not stir from this spot, in which you have put me, until you come back. But, Molly, don't stay too long, don't leave me too long alone, because I am so much afraid when you are not with me, and when I cannot hear your voice. I think the angels that mother used to tell us so often about must be just like you, Molly,—so kind and so good."

Touched by these simple words, Molly bent down, pressed her lips upon the brow white as marble in its famished pallor, and said softly,—

"God has taken away from us the mother who loved us so dearly, and made an angel of her, because she was so kind and good. When you are good, Kitty, she is glad; and in the blessed place in which she now lives, she feels her happiness redoubled. So you must always be very good, my little sister. How could it be possible that you would do anything which would make your mother and sister feel sad? Don't be afraid if I leave you for a little while. Only think of your dear mother, that she is always near you, that she takes care of you with the truest love, although even from the very day upon which you were born she was so weak and suffered so constantly that she could scarcely be numbered among the living; and I have often spent whole nights upon my knees, with the hot tears running down my cheeks, praying the Merciful One to take the poor sufferer we loved to himself, that she might rest with Him above. At last, Kitty, He took her to heaven!"

[10]

Then Molly again stirred the fire, seated her little sister upon an old coverlid, the ends of which she tenderly wrapped round the emaciated, half-naked limbs, and left the hovel. The long autumn night was already falling upon the earth, and covered the landscape with its dull, gray veil; the cheerful sky was thickly overcast with dusky clouds, which, constantly changing their fantastic forms, seemed hunting each other through the vaulted gloom. A rough north-wind met poor Molly as she emerged from the hovel, tore the heavy door out of her slight hand, and blew it with a loud crash against the wall. She shuddered with fright, but, almost immediately regaining her self-possession, she attentively examined the door, to ascertain if any of the boards had been broken in the sudden jar; and having soon convinced herself that nothing had been injured, with considerable effort she succeeded in rolling a heavy stone to the door, to prevent the possibility of the recurrence of a like accident. Then she stooped to look again at her little sister through one of the holes which served as windows to the hut. Kitty sat as motionless as she had promised to do, and Molly, apparently satisfied that she would continue to do so, hastened forward upon a narrow footpath, so little frequented that its slight traces were scarcely distinguishable in the increasing gloom. From time to time she stopped, sometimes to look around her, and listen anxiously for the desired footsteps, sometimes to get breath, for a strong and piercing north-wind blew directly in her face, and greatly increased the difficulty of her lonely search. After she had struggled on for a considerable distance, she thought she heard the longed-for sounds; and before she had ventured to give herself fully up to the hope that the so long expected one was indeed near, a tall form stood before her, whom with a loud cry of joy she immediately greeted as "Father!"

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But there was no response given to her joyful welcome. In utter silence, the tall man grasped the slight girl round her slender waist. Almost carrying her forward, for her feet scarcely even touched the ground, he reached the entrance of his wretched dwelling. With a powerful kick, so that it rolled entirely over, he tossed away the heavy stone from the door, drew, or rather bore, his daughter into the inside of the now dimly lighted hut, rapidly flung the rope which was fastened to the door round a post which seemed planted in the floor for that purpose, and with a few strides stood directly in front of the fire. He then seized the coarse sack which he had carried upon his broad shoulders, and threw it upon the ground with such force that the child who was lying near his feet, and who had probably been asleep, started up with a loud cry of fright.

[13]

"Don't be frightened, Kitty," said Molly, soothingly, as she threw a handful of shavings into the now sinking fire; "don't be afraid now, for our dear father is with us; the potatoes are cooked enough, and you shall no longer be so very, very hungry."

"Is my father indeed here?" said the little girl, at once forgetting both hunger and cold. "Where are you, father? Just speak one word, that your poor little blind Kitty may know where to find you. O, you have been away so long to-day! and yet Molly told me it was not far to the village to which you were going, and that you had not much to do there."

But no sound escaped the lips of the one so warmly welcomed. Motionless and with folded arms he still stood before the fire, darkly gazing into its cheerful glow. His eldest daughter then softly approached him; by the blaze of a lighted shaving which she held in her hand, she saw the expressive face of her father, with its weather-beaten skin and labor-wrinkled brow, and with the deepest sorrow impressed upon every line of the manly and handsome countenance. The tears which were hanging upon his long eyelashes, the spasmodic quivering which wreathed its torture round his mouth, could not escape her searching glance, rendered keen through the power of love. Trembling before the recital of some new and dire misfortune, which she felt he was now about to make to her, she leaned her innocent head upon the breast of the beloved and true-hearted father, whose life had been so often and fatally darkened by misfortune. But almost roughly he pushed her away.

[14]

"Child!" he cried, with an expression of the deepest agony in his fine face, "why do you continue to love a wretch whom the whole world has forsaken? You, too, had better forsake him! Fly,—fly now,—instantly, or he will draw you into a far deeper misery,—a suffering for which there are no words, in comparison with which all you have already endured will seem to you a lot worthy of envy, a destiny full of blessings."

Molly fell at his feet, and embraced his knees, while her soft blue eyes gazed pleadingly into his face. [15]

"You would drive me from you?" she asked, with trembling tones; "you yourself would rob me of my last hope, my only support? No, father; you cannot mean it so, you cannot be in earnest! There is no happiness which I would not willingly resign, unless it were to be shared with you! All the suffering and agony which God may choose to inflict upon us will I bear without a murmur, with a firm and unblenching spirit, so long as He tears me not from your side! Father, drive me not from you!"

Deeply touched, the man gazed upon his fair child.

"So said your mother, also," he murmured in a tone of voice scarcely audible, "when her stern father renounced her on my account. She joyfully offered up to me comfort and wealth; through all the bitter renunciations which our poverty forced upon us, her spirit remained unbroken; and even when her eye grew dim with the gathering mists of death, the last breath which escaped from her pale lips was still fraught with blessings, with consolation, with undying love for me!" [16]

"My mother was, indeed, good and pious," answered Molly, "and her memory will always be dear to my heart. The heavenly cheerfulness with which she bore all her sorrows and sufferings will always remain in my remembrance, and encourage me to imitate it. But you are not less dear to me than she was. How could my mother find any sacrifice hard which was to be made for your sake? Her father must have been very wicked when he would have forced her to marry a man who was generally despised, only because he was rich, although she frankly confessed to him that she could never be happy with any one but you. When she told the man whom her father would have forced upon her that she could not love him, and when he in consequence ceased to urge his suit, then her father was so enraged at her candor that he renounced and cursed his only child. But you remained true; you clasped the disinherited girl with more love to your bosom than if she had brought you all the wealth of which her father had deprived her. To render her life less laborious, you have yourself suffered tortures. You have never rested night or day, you have shunned no fatigue, you have avoided no hardships; and when at last she fell sick, and grew weaker and weaker every day, and in spite of all your weary struggling you could not procure for her the little comforts which you thought necessary to lighten her sufferings, then you went secretly and sold your farm for a third of its value, because upon no less stringent terms would the heartless purchaser consent to pay you any ready money upon it, and permit you still to remain in possession of it until the dying wife should have closed her eyes in death. For the physician had already said she must soon die, and more significantly than even the prophecy of the skilful doctor did her always increasing weakness whisper it to our sinking hearts. You would not suffer the tranquillity of her rapidly passing hours to be broken, and thus she was never informed of the heavy sacrifice you had made to insure her comfort. Softly she slumbered her life away, for she was never tortured by any fears for the future of her loved ones." [17]

"Why do you stop, Molly?" vividly asked the father, as the daughter suddenly ceased in her narration. "O, go on! go on! Confess at once that you have often thought whether your father had not been unwise thus to sacrifice his little farm, which was all he possessed; whether he had not been imprudent to give up his only hope of subsistence for himself and his children, to keep alive, only for a few days longer, the flickering flame of life in the heart of the wife, who, under all possible circumstances of alleviation, was doomed soon to die?" [18]

"Is it possible that you can think so meanly of me?" said Molly, hastily, while the indignant blood rushed to her pale cheek, which glowed for a moment like the summer rose.

"If a thought so degrading has ever once flitted through my soul, may God and the Virgin forsake me in my hour of need!"

A loud cry from Kitty now interrupted them. Tired of the long conversation of which she could understand so little, the child, who had not before ventured to leave the spot upon which her sister had seated her, had at last risen, and, in her attempt to approach the speakers, had fallen over the sack which her father had thrown on the floor on his entrance. [19]

"Don't cry, darling," said the soft voice of Molly, as she lovingly caressed the little girl, who was trying to dry the ever-gushing tears with the corner of her apron. "You have not hurt yourself very much, have you, Kitty? It don't pain you now, does it, love? Don't cry any more, and I will tell you what is in the sack over which you fell. May be we shall find some calico in it to make a little frock for you, or some wool to knit stockings for you. I will make them long and thick for you, so that your poor feet will no longer be frozen." So saying, Molly opened the sack, but she quickly drew her hand out again.

"What is the matter?" asked her father. "Why do you look so frightened? That which is in the sack cannot possibly hurt you now. I would willingly have spared you the sight, Molly, but you must know it, and perhaps it is better you should hear it now than to-morrow, because you will then have time to make the necessary preparations." [20]

As he spoke, he stooped down and lifted up the sack, which was dotted over with dark red spots resembling blood. For a moment he stood as if irresolute, as if his heart failed him; then,

with a sudden effort, he raised from the sack the head of a pig, which looked as if it had just been cut off, and held it immediately over the flame, so that his daughter could clearly see it. Molly could not suppress a faint shriek.

"Holy Virgin!" she exclaimed, as she covered her face with both hands, from which every trace of color now vanished. "What will become of us! O, I never could have believed it possible that Wilkins would carry his dreadful threat into execution! I never thought that any man would be guilty of such a barbarous deed! He has torn the last hope from the heart of the poor! It is frightful,—horrible,—it must draw down the wrath of God upon him! O merciful God! what will become of us?"

"I can soon tell you that," replied her father, with assumed tranquillity. "They will be here early to-morrow to tear all our remaining property from us. As it will not, however, pay more than half the debt, they will then drive us all out of the cabin, and—and—that is all,—that is all, Molly! You can form no idea of what I have lived through to-day. The blood still boils in my veins as I think of it. I was on my way home from the village, where I had changed our few spare potatoes for some other things which we could not do without. I was only about three hundred steps from our own door, when I heard a gun fired close by me. I stopped, and looked round in every direction to see from whence the shot came, when I perceived Wilkins standing in the neighboring field, who in the same moment recognized me, and burst into a loud fit of laughter. 'You ragged rascal!' he cried to me, 'just come a little nearer and look about you, then tell me if I am a bad shot, for your brute lies stone dead upon my first fire.' With these words, he gave a kick to something which lay at his feet. I drew nearer to look at it; it was a pig,—our pig,—the pig which I had intended to sell this very week, so as to be able to pay the rent now due upon the hut;—our pig, to which we have so often given our own meals, and have so often been forced to do without food ourselves that we might fatten it for sale. I was struck dumb! I could force no words through my quivering lips. I felt as if some huge hand, which I could not remove, were grasping my throat, and slowly twisting my neck round. But my horror, my despair, was only pleasure to this inhuman wretch.

"With his fierce gray eyes sparkling with malice, he said, in a tone of wild triumph,—'Look now, fellow, didn't I tell before how it would be? It was only yesterday I said to your daughter, You had better tie your pig up tight, for if I ever find him in my field I will without any warning send a ball through his head. And now I have shot it. You had better look out and get the money to pay your back rent. Ha! ha! ha! But we will go shares in the carcass of the pig; for I must be paid for my shot, or else I will have wasted my powder.' 'Halloo, fellows! come here, will you?' he cried to some of his people who were at work in the field; then, cutting off the head of the dead brute with his jackknife, he ordered them to carry the rest of it to his own house.

"Then life and motion at once returned to my paralyzed limbs. Before he was aware of my intention, I had seized him by the shoulders, lifted him from the ground, and shaken him violently. He literally foamed with rage, when he found he could not loose himself from the iron grasp of my powerful arms. At last I sat him down again, but not very softly, as you may suppose. No sooner had he felt the ground fairly under his feet, than he ran off as fast as possible; but when he thought himself at a sufficient distance from me to be safe, he turned round and screamed to me,—'Day before yesterday the new landlord arrived here; he is no such milksop as the old one was; he is determined to have his rent, and you may be sure that you must either pay it to-morrow or find another house before night.'

"The last cruel words of this barbarous man died away in the wind. I put the head of the pig, which he had designated as my half, into the sack, and then seated myself upon a stone to think how I could tell all this to you, how I could soften it for you, Molly. I thought it over and over until it grew dark, for I could not bear to bring such bad news home, when I remembered that you would be wondering what had become of me; and I had just set out again on my return when I heard you cry, 'Father!' God be thanked that you now know all! I breathe already more freely, for my breast felt as heavy, and my heart as much crushed, as if the weight of the world had pressed upon them!

"Now, children, let us eat our supper and go to bed; it is, in all probability, the last night we shall ever spend in this house. However that may be, He who clothes the lilies and feeds the ravens will not desert us. Even if men wearing the human form, yet without compassion for their fellows, should drive us from our only shelter, and force us to take up our abode with the beasts of the field, or the wild things of the forest, yet will He find for us a shelter in which we can lay down our weary heads in safety!"

Molly had listened in utter silence to the sad recital of her father. She now poured the potatoes out of the pot into a large, black earthen dish, sprinkled a little salt over them, placed them upon the table, pushed the two wooden stools close to it, and kindled a thin stick of pine, which she put into a hole in the wall, that it might throw its uncertain light over the last meal they were ever to eat together in their present home. Taking little Kitty upon her lap, she sometimes helped her father to a potato, sometimes gave one to the hungry child, but she tasted none herself. Large tears, like pearls, ran unceasingly down her pale cheeks; but no other trace of suffering betrayed the bitter emotions which struggled in her soul. The scanty meal was soon ended; after half an hour had passed, nothing was to be seen in the dark room, nothing heard save the measured breathing of a sleeping child, from time to time the gasping of a suppressed sob, or a deep, yet half-stifled sigh.

## THE NEW LANDLORD.

MORNING now dawned upon the earth, but no friendly smiles from the joyous sun announced the birth of the young day. The lonely hills in the distance were half veiled with thick gray mists, which, tossed and whirled by the fitful gusts of the dreary autumn wind, looked like the dim ghosts of the dead giants, driven on to judgment by the fell spirits of the gloomy air. As far as the eye could reach, no human form was visible. A flock of sheep were quietly browsing the scanty grass on the slope of a neighboring hill, while a few ravens fluttered and cawed above. Everything seemed dead, even in the little row of wretched hovels which we have described. At last the door of the most miserable among them, with whose inmates we are already acquainted, opened, and Molly and her father stepped out in the bleak, raw morning air. At the same moment, they observed the forms of several men turning into the little footpath which led by these humble dwellings. From the enormous strides taken by them, they seemed to be hurrying forward with all their powers.

[27]

"Father, do you know those men who seem to be hastening towards us?" asked Molly.

"How can you doubt for an instant, my poor child? How fast they hurry on, as if they feared their human prey might escape them! Can you see them distinctly? Wilkins is with them. No doubt he is delighted that he is permitted to take any part in this inhuman act. Look! He has his two furious bloodhounds with him! It seems he has not forgotten the scene of yesterday, and has, therefore, deemed it best to bring his protectors with him. Yes, yes; the very worm will turn when it has been trodden upon."

The poor man sighed heavily and deeply, and then cast a pleading, almost a reproachful, glance towards the clouded heavens. He felt his hand suddenly seized, and a shower of hot, hot tears pour upon it; then he shook his head almost defiantly, as if ashamed of his momentary weakness. He pressed his daughter closely to his true heart.

[28]

"Courage, courage, my dear child!" he said to her. "To-day you will need it all! But the just Judge, the Merciful One, will surely aid us, although no way of safety seems at present open before us."

"O father!" answered Molly, sobbing, "what a terrible day! I never could live through it were you not near me. Look! Even the bright sun has wrapped himself in his thickest, darkest veils, that he may not be forced to gaze upon a scene so full of horror."

She closed her eyes as she rested her head upon his shoulder, but was soon frightened from her place of refuge by the furious howlings of the fierce hounds.

"Ha! ha! ha!" cried Wilkins, who now stood within a few steps of the door, and gazed upon them with an expression of vindictive rage. "Are you contemplating the charming country which surrounds you? Well, well, you will certainly have time enough to study nature in the open air, with no roof between you and the autumn stars. Therefore, perhaps you had better gaze upon the delights of your castle here, think what a charming place of residence it has always been for you, and that, if you really wish to enjoy the luxury of a shelter within its walls, you must pay immediately the rent which is due upon it; for you are in arrears seven months and ten days. Ha! ha! how is it? will you answer me? I must know instantly, O'Neil, whether you are ready to pay me the ready money, the sum due upon the rent, now, or not?"

[29]

O'Neil answered tranquilly, "You know I cannot pay it; and you know, too, why I cannot; for you yourself robbed me yesterday of the only means to do it which I possessed in the world."

Wilkins angrily interrupted him, saying, "What nonsensical stuff! What idle chattering! I know where I am, and what I am doing; and you shall soon know it too! But if the keen wind should nip the nose of your dainty daughter, or freeze your own, then remember that it was warmer in this hut, and that it was no trifle to have handled an honorable sportsman like myself with your rough hands! Ha! ha! The morning air is somewhat bleak, but we shall have rain before night! Go ahead! go ahead, boys! go into the rascal's den, and bring out all you see there. Ha! ha! ha! No doubt you will find things of enormous value in it, for the lord tenant carries his head so high he must surely have thousands at his command!"

[30]

The men who were with him approached the door of the hovel, in order to execute his brutal commands; but Molly rushed on in advance of them to bring out her little sister, who, utterly unconscious of all the horrors that surrounded her, was still wrapped in peaceful slumber. As Molly lifted the scarcely wakened child tenderly in her protecting arms, she lightly murmured, "O that I, too, were blind! for even to sit in perpetual darkness must be a lighter affliction than to be forced to look upon such things as are now occurring, without possessing the least power to prevent them."

[31]

"Do you wish to become blind?" asked Kitty, who, almost as in a dream, had heard the sad words of her sister. "O, if you only knew how frightful it is to be blind, you would never, never say such a dreadful thing! O, what a constant happiness it must be to be able to see!" added the poor little blind girl, vividly, while her dead eyes seemed almost to kindle into life as she continued to speak. "Molly, my Molly, if I could only see you, and my dear father, and the blue sky, and all the glittering stars, which you have so often told me were so wonderfully beautiful, then I would willingly endure both hunger and cold, and I would never complain again, Molly!"

"Alas, my poor little blind one! hunger and cold you must soon endure, without being able to



see the shining stars above, the faces of those you love, or the blue heaven-tent!" sighed Molly, as the rapid tears coursed down her cheeks. "O, my heart will surely break if I am to see my poor little Kitty pine and waste away before my eyes! There is no deeper anguish in this wretched world than to be forced to gaze upon the slow agonies of those whom we love and cannot aid. That is the real torture; that is far worse than death!"

[32]

In a few moments the men had succeeded in dragging out all the scanty furniture of the unhappy family. Wilkins measured it rapidly with his keen eyes, then turned them away with an expression of the utmost scorn. He muttered angrily between his teeth: "The whole property is good for nothing, except to split up and heat the stove. It would never be worth while to offer such wretched trash for sale, for the whole sum that could be raised upon it would not be enough to buy the most wretched goose that ever starved upon the bogs of Ireland."

Then suddenly and angrily turning to O'Neil, who stood, as if turned to stone, before the door of his hut, he said: "Now, O'Neil, what are you standing there for? You had better use the time before the arrival of the landlord, whom I already see in the distance. If you stay here until he comes, he will probably let you taste the delights of his hunting-whip, for he is very generous in the lavish use he is in the habit of making of it."

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O'Neil shuddered as if stung by a rattlesnake; his hands were clenched as if in a convulsion; his eyes started almost out of his head, as if about to fall from their pained sockets.

"Pitiless! inhuman!" he cried, "what do you require from me? O, if indeed a human heart beats in your bosom, look upon these poor girls, and you cannot, I am sure you cannot, re-echo an order so cruel to their unhappy father! Take all that we possess, we will ask to retain nothing; but for the love of God, drive us not out naked, without a shelter, in the freezing autumn blasts! Give me only a respite for three months, and I will do everything. I will work day and night; I will never rest until I have gained enough to pay my rent!"

Wilkins looked upon him with a bitter smile, and answered with a harsh voice: "All this is useless. No delay can possibly be granted to you. And I advise you, as a friend, that you had better get out of the way before the new landlord comes."

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But O'Neil did not seem to regard this warning.

"O God!" he cried, "where shall I find words to move this heart of stone?"

Then again turning himself towards his enemy, he plead yet more earnestly with him.

"Have mercy upon us, Wilkins, I conjure you by all that is holy or dear in your eyes; by the bones of the mother who loved you, and which are now mouldering under the sod; by the trembling head and silver hairs of your aged father; by the Eternal God who rules above the stars, and who suffers no cruelty to pass unpunished! You had a great deal of influence with the former landlord, and I have no doubt that a single word from you would induce the new one to grant me a short delay. Speak it, Wilkins!"

"Halloo! what's the matter there?" cried a rough, loud voice; and the speaker, mounted upon a powerful horse, rode towards them.

Wilkins bowed to the very ground. "It is the tenant," said he, "of whom I spoke to your worship yesterday; he won't leave the hut, and yet I have already promised it to another."

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"He must go, and go immediately. There shall be no delay. Where is the rascal who dared to lay his insolent hands upon one of my agents."

O'Neil now pressed up to the side of the horse upon which the speaker was seated, and, throwing himself upon his knees, wringing his hands in his wild despair, passionately prayed, "Have pity! O, have mercy upon us! For the sake of the harmless, helpless children!"

"Is the rascal mad?" said the angry landlord; "tear him from under the feet of my horse, or I'll drive the iron hoofs into his brain. If he refuses to go away from the cabin willingly, let the bloodhounds loose upon him, and I'll warrant you they'll soon put an end to his Irish howls."

Yet again would O'Neil, for the sake of his helpless children, have tried to touch the heart of the barbarous landlord. Again he raised his pleading eyes to the hard face; but its fierce expression told him all hope was vain, and a frightful, shrill cry, almost like a death-shriek, forced its way from his agonized breast. As if suddenly overcome by utter despair, he sprang up with a wild movement from the earth upon which he had thrown himself, took little Kitty in the one arm, while he threw the other round the half-fainting Molly, lifted her entirely from the ground, and, as if hunted and pursued by relentless furies, rushed rapidly away. But scarcely had he lost sight of his wretched hovel, when he fell, completely exhausted, to the ground.

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The poor occupants of the neighboring cabins, who had been silent, yet indignant, witnesses of the horrible scene which we have just attempted to portray, now approached with various little offerings for the banished and homeless family. One brought a cake of oatmeal, shaped like our pancakes, but as thin as a sheet of paper, and as hard as a stone; another offered a little bag of potatoes, some salt, and a small piece of pork; an old woman presented Molly with a yard or two of coarse linen, and a pair of knit stockings; and a young girl wrapped up the half-naked Kitty in a large piece of heavy cloth spun from wool. Each gave what he had to spare, not only food, but some of the most indispensable utensils for cooking; indeed, many gave more than they could well spare, and the good people would certainly have taken the unhappy, homeless family into their own hovels, if they had not stood in awe of the rage of the landlord, and feared the revenge of his heartless agent. So true is it that compassion dwells rather in the hut of the poor than in the palace of the rich.

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Silent from excess of feeling, and with many grateful and heartfelt pressures of the hand, O'Neil parted from his kind neighbors. Unsteadily and doubtfully he gazed into the distance. As he threw a despairing glance above, the dark clouds parted; and the bright sun looked cheerful and glad as the heavy folds of his cloud-veil were lifted, and joyously he sent his mild rays upon the moist earth.

"This way, this way, dear father. O, let us take this path: it leads to the hills!" said Molly, pointing to a hill down whose side trickled, singing, a little stream. The drops of water sparkled like bright tears as the rays of the sun shone upon them, and the rippling of the brook, as it kissed the pebbles, was soft and tender as the distant echo of a cradle-song, chanted by some fond mother to prolong the sleep of her slumbering child. Silently O'Neil turned into the path which Molly had begged him to take, holding the poor blind child in his arms, who, through her unconscious and innocent questions, constantly added to the tortures of his sick heart. His whole soul was now filled with but one thought, one wish,—the desire to find before nightfall some cleft in the rock, some cavern, which might serve as a temporary shelter for the beings he loved. If he should be able to succeed in gaining any place of refuge, and what means it would be best to take, in order to find some spot in which he could leave his children, while he labored to keep them from dying of hunger, were the questions which filled his soul, and tasked all the powers of his mind to answer. He struggled with all his strength to suppress every other thought, to banish every emotion of anger or hatred from his heart, in order to be able to give every faculty of his being to the solving of these pressing questions. Yet, with all his thinking, with all his struggling, with all his suffering, he could find no egress from the dark labyrinth of cares in which he was involved, in which he perpetually wandered; for although a thousand plans passed through his whirling brain, he was always obliged again to relinquish them, because of some obstacle which rendered their execution impossible.

If this man, the lineal descendant of the first possessors of green Erin, now driven about without home, without shelter, to preserve his own miserable life, or to still the painful cries of a frightful death from famine, which was already fastening its accursed fangs in the heart of his children, had been driven in his agony to scorn the laws made by his oppressors, and, like the wild beast, had sprung from his inaccessible cleft in the rock, his last refuge from the cruelty of man, and had carried his booty home to sustain life in his dying children,—to whom should the crime be justly attributed?

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## THE STORM.

"He clothes the lilies, and feeds the ravens."

NOT far from the sea-coast, in a cavern formed by the fall of an enormous rock, after a period of about fourteen days from the occurrences which we have just described, we again find the unfortunate family of O'Neil. Aided by his herculean strength, he had succeeded, after the most vigorous efforts, in removing the heavy fragments of fallen rock from the interior of the cave, and thus gained sufficient space to shelter himself and his children from the piercing winds and increasing cold of autumn. The entrance to this subterranean dwelling was partially hidden by a projection in the wall of rock, and this kind freak of nature not only secured them from the unwelcome or untimely gaze of prying eyes, but also gave them some protection against the wind and rain, which might otherwise have rendered their refuge almost untenable. There was a small opening in the vaulted roof of the cavern, also formed by the hand of nature, which served both as window and chimney, yet which might be entirely closed by rolling a stone upon the outside of the cave. The inside of this primitive dwelling was indeed very far from offering what those accustomed to the slightest degree of comfort are in the habit of calling the "necessaries of life"; yet it might be seen, upon the most cursory glance, that tasteful and industrious hands had labored to remove the most striking appearances of discomfort, and had skilfully used every available means to provide for the most pressing wants of the afflicted family. Some fragments of rock, which they still suffered to remain on the inside, had had their projecting inequalities carefully hewn away, and were thus changed into chairs and tables. Two low benches of stone, which they had found laying along the walls, and which in their long, narrow form somewhat resembled coffins, had been slightly hollowed out, and, covered with reeds and soft moss, they answered in place of beds and bedsteads. A little fire burned in one corner, on a hearth formed of two flat stones, while Molly, occupied with her sewing, was sitting near the entrance, apparently with the intention of getting all the light she could obtain, as it fell but scantily into the interior of the cavern. Kitty, with her head resting in her sister's lap, was kneeling at her feet.

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"Have you almost finished my little frock, Molly?" asked the blind child.

"You will soon have it to put on, Kitty; I have only the sleeves left to finish now!"

"It takes you a great while to make it, Molly."

"That is very true, darling, for the only needle that I have is too fine to carry the coarse thread; so no matter how much I hurry, the work progresses very slowly."

"O my good sister Molly! How much care and trouble you have always had about me! If I could only see, I would work so willingly! but now I can do nothing, except to pray always to the Blessed Virgin to reward you for all the care you take of the poor little blind girl. How often and often you have almost starved yourself, that you might be able to give me something to eat, trying to conceal from me that you were so hungry yourself! but you did not always succeed in hiding it from me, Molly. How lovingly you clasp me in your soft arms, and hold me close to your bosom, to try and warm me when my limbs are half frozen with cold!—But hush!—don't you hear something, sister?"

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"Nothing, Kitty, but the wind, which howls as it winds through these desolate cliffs."

"O, how frightful it is here when father is not with us! 'I will not be back for three days,'—did he not say so, Molly, as he went away?"

"Yes, my darling. 'When the sun for the third time stands midway in the sky, I will again be with you,' he said, as he kissed us at parting."

"Then he will be here to-morrow. But do you know where he is gone?"

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"He went to seek work in one of the more distant villages. Perhaps some of the farmers may employ him; he thought he might be able to gain something by aiding in the labor of harvesting. Although we have been so very economical in the use of the food which our kind neighbors gave the morning upon which we were driven from our home, it is already exhausted. If our father should fail in his efforts to get work, we must die of hunger, Kitty."

"What do you say? Die of hunger! How horrible! It would have been better, then, that we had been torn to pieces at once by the furious bloodhounds which the angry landlord threatened to set upon us, than to linger on through such a frightful death.—But, Molly, do you hear nothing? nothing at all?"

"No, little sister; nothing but the raging of the storm and the surging of the waves as they break upon the coast. You are always so nervous and excitable when our father is away; but be quiet, for another Father, far more powerful, and still more kind than our dear one, is always with us, and watches over us with tender eyes. He will never forsake us; he will deliver us in the time of need; but we must do all we can to help ourselves. In the hour of our greatest necessity, he stands closest to us. He will not suffer us to perish utterly."

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"Talk on; talk on, dear Molly," said Kitty, pleadingly; "if I can only hear your voice, I don't feel so much afraid, it is so soft and sweet! It is so much like our dear mother's, that I often fancy it she who is speaking to me.—But you surely hear something now, sister!"

"I hear nothing but the long cries of the sea-gulls, as they flutter o'er the waves, and their sharp, shrill tones tell us that we will have more wind and rain."

"It is very strange that you do not hear anything; for it has seemed to me four or five times as if I heard the death-sobs of some one in the last agony, and a despairing cry for help has at intervals rung in my ears! Are you crying, sister? Or what is that hot drop which has just fallen upon my hand?"

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"It is only a drop of blood; I have stuck my finger with this fine needle. Your anxiety has excited me also, and it seems to me now as if I too heard long sighs and groans near us. It may, indeed, be possible that some unhappy creature requires our aid. I will at least look out and see if I can discover from whence the sounds come. Remain sitting quite still here, Kitty; your little frock is finished, and as soon as I come back I will put it on you, darling."

Molly stepped out in front of the cave. She looked eagerly round in every direction, but she saw nothing save the desolate cliffs, whose naked sides had bid defiance to the storms of centuries, and piles of rocks overgrown with moss, like the gravestones used in the times of the heathens. From one point, where the formation of the hills allowed the distant scene to be visible through the aperture, she saw far in the distance the foaming, tossing waves of the white, wide ocean.



**MOLLY AND THE  
STRANGER.**

"O, if the slight and tottering boat of some poor fisher, or if some richly laden ship, is now tossing about upon the raging waves of this wild sea, pity those, O thou good and powerful God! who have nothing but a plank between them and eternity!" prayed Molly, with lifted hands. Then again she thought she heard a deep sigh very near her, and at the same moment she stumbled and nearly fell over something which lay at her feet; and as she stooped down to see what it was, she discovered with horror that the dark object before her was a human form, over whose face the fresh blood was streaming, and whose hand still grasped a gun. It was too dark to be able to see the features of the man distinctly; but although his clothes were soiled with blood, it was evident that he belonged to the higher walks of life.

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"Holy Virgin! What can—what shall I do?" exclaimed Molly. "The wounded man is still living; but if I leave him lying here alone, he must certainly perish; and, poor weak girl that I am, how can I possibly lift his heavy body and carry it into the cave?"

She raised the head of the wounded stranger, and held it gently in her arms, so that it might rest more comfortably than upon the hard earth. At last the thought that it would be possible for her to drag him to the cavern struck the compassionate girl.

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"Perhaps I am strong enough to drag him home; I will at least try it," said Molly.

She ran first rapidly back to the cave, in order to remove carefully all the stones which were to be found upon the way over which she judged it best to drag the body; then, hastily returning to the wounded man, she tenderly supported his shoulders, and succeeded in thus moving him a few steps forward. But she was soon forced to stop to get breath and collect new strength; yet she did not suffer her courage to sink, and after many forced stops and many vigorous efforts, she at last succeeded in dragging the wounded man to the entrance of their strange place of shelter. She laid him softly down on the outside of the curtain of rock, ran within, and while she, exhausted and out of breath, explained to little Kitty that she had found a human being who sadly needed their help, she hastily carried the moss from the two coffin-like beds standing against the rocky walls, made a bed of it by the side of the dying fire, and rested not until she had placed the wounded man upon it. She then stirred up the fire, to diffuse more heat as well as to obtain more light, placed shivering little Kitty somewhat nearer to the genial blaze, and again left the cavern to bring some fresh, cool water from the spring, which was not far distant. She was soon back again, and began, as carefully as possible, to wash the clotted blood away from the face of the wounded man, which was still flowing from an open gash upon the forehead. But as she continued to bathe it with the fresh cold water, the blood gradually ceased to flow, and with the hope of entirely stopping it, she took the only handkerchief which she possessed from her neck, and bound it round the wounded head. At last the man opened his eyes. At that moment Molly recognized him,—and, with a sudden shudder, turned away! It was the landlord, whose stony heart her father had in vain attempted to move, before whom he had uselessly humbled himself to the very dust, from whose mouth the fiercest, the most inhuman threats had proceeded, who now lay, prostrate and helpless, before her, whom she had taken in her own arms and painfully brought to their last refuge! But the struggle did not last long in the depths of Molly's heart. What she ought to do, what duty and humanity ordained should be done, even for the most bitter enemy, stood in clear and plain letters before her soul. She did not repent for a moment of that which she had already done; and she determined to offer up everything in her power to preserve the sinking life in the bosom of the barbarous landlord. She knew, by the wild rolling of his bloodshot eyes, by the feverish color which burned upon his cheeks, and which had suddenly succeeded to a death-like pallor, that his life was in danger; but she determined not to tell her sister what a dreadful guest was indebted to them for their strange hospitality. It suddenly occurred to her that she had taken all the moss from the bed of the little girl, and that she must again venture out to search for more; and she rapidly made ready to seek it in the neighborhood of the cavern, before it should be too dark to collect it. When she returned with enough for the little bed, she handed a potato, which she had just raked from the warm ashes, to her little sister for supper.

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"It is all I can possibly give you, Kitty," she said, in a melancholy tone. "Even the salt is all out; let us hope that our dear father will bring some more home with him to-morrow. Before you go to sleep, darling, pray to the Holy Virgin that she will take care of him, and that she will lead him back again in safety to our arms!"

She then placed her sister upon her little bed of moss, sang with her soft young voice a soothing lullaby which she had learned from her mother, and not until she was convinced, by the sweet and measured breathing of the blind child, that she was certainly asleep, did her soothing cradle-hymn cease, or did she leave her side. Then she hastened to the wounded man, by whom she determined to watch during the weary hours of the long night.

She found him also sleeping, with his head sunk upon his breast, while he groaned frequently, as if tortured by some frightful dream. He still held the gun spasmodically clasped in his clenched hand; Molly carefully tried to wrest it from his iron grasp. At last she succeeded, for although he sprang up fiercely and looked wildly around him for a moment, he again fell back almost immediately, exhausted and without power. She then took her station near him, that she might watch his feverish movements; her eyes rested long and searchingly upon his features, which strangely reminded her of some face familiar to her, and although she earnestly sought to trace the resemblance, yet she did not succeed in finding out the person whom the countenance of the landlord constantly recalled to her uncertain memory.

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What a night for the poor maiden! The storm of rain and wind raged still more furiously than it had done during the day. It broke and roared through the sharp rocks, while the howling and

whistling of the raging winds sounded like the sobs and sighs of thousands of dying men. Like continuous peals of distant thunder, as they flung themselves in their might against the steep and jagged rocks of the cliff, the breaking of the raging waves might be continually heard. But they only broke to renew the strife; to collect again vast masses of the maddened sea to renew the vain attack upon the rock-bound coast.

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For a lone and unprotected girl it was also fearful in the inside of the cave. The wind would not suffer the thick smoke to ascend through its usual outlet, and it filled the room with its stifling vapor, while the dying coals glowed upon the hearth like fiery eyes glittering through the gloom, and the heavy, feverish, spasmodic breathing of the suffering man rendered it still more dreadful. Molly felt as if surrounded by the icy air of a charnel-house; as if the cold hands of the dead grasped her throat and stifled her breath! All her limbs shivered as if struck by a sudden chill, until she at last conquered herself sufficiently to be able to leave the spot in which she was seated. After walking up and down the cave for a short time, she grew more tranquil; folding her hands, she knelt by the side of her sleeping sister, and prayed for some time; then she threw some turf upon the dying fire, and again seated herself beside the stranger. Pious hymns breathed lightly through her youthful lips; as the simple but touching words sank deeper into her heart and warmed her soul, her voice unconsciously swelled louder and fuller. The wounded man awoke. Scarcely daring to breathe, he listened to the sweet, enchanting tones, that, like wreaths of early flowers, wound themselves round and into his rapidly returning senses, melting away the bands of ice which surrounded his breast, and stealing into the hidden recesses of his wondering heart.

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"Where am I?" he suddenly asked, trying to rise as he spoke, while he put his hand to his wounded head. "No, no, it is no dream!" he continued; and then, as if he wished to convince himself that he was really awake, he said, "And yet it seemed to me that I heard the voice of Kitty."

When Molly heard him speak, she sprang up, and then knelt down beside him, to ascertain if he required help. The old man at that moment first became aware of the maiden's presence. In the dim light which glimmered from the fire, it would have been difficult to have discerned her countenance clearly. Yet, as if it were a matter of the greatest moment to him to be able to see her features distinctly, he leaned forward and gazed earnestly into her face. Then, as if he feared she might suddenly escape him, he seized her rapidly with both hands, drew her as close as possible to him, and looked long and eagerly into her soft blue eyes, from which so much heavenly sweetness, so much tranquil devotion, shone upon him. "Kitty!" he exclaimed at last, with a voice of anguish.

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"Kitty, my daughter!" he breathed once more in stifled and scarcely audible tones, and then sank fainting upon the floor.

"Holy Virgin! Help! he is dying!" cried Molly, wringing her hands. Tortured by the most dreadful fear, she placed her hand upon his heart; but it seemed to her as if it had already ceased to beat. Then she held her cheek close to his lips, but no breath gave evidence that life yet lingered in his breast. In an agony of fright, she sprang up, seized a bucket, and ran to the entrance of the cave. The morning had not yet dawned, and the storm was still raging without, yet nothing could stay her course; neither the furious wind, which, as if armed with a thousand human hands, seized her upon every side, and with which she was forced to battle for every step which she gained in advance; nor the uncertainty and roughness of the way, which it was almost impossible to find in the heavy gloom. Sometimes she fell down upon a jagged stone, and rose with the blood streaming from her bruised knee; sometimes she fell into a great bush of thorns, which tore both hands and face; but thinking not of her own pain, she rapidly rose again, and hurried on. She had already filled the bucket three times at the spring, fortunately guided to it by the noise of the stream rippling over the stones, and three times she had fallen and spilled the cool water, but she would not relinquish her attempt. She would not despair. Again she filled her bucket, and with the greatest efforts, creeping forward, feeling her way both with her hands and feet, she at last reached the cave with a sufficient supply of the precious fluid. She softly approached the old man, who was still lying in the same situation in which she had left him; she bathed his temples with the cool spring-water, but as this did not seem to produce the desired effect, she sprinkled his whole face with the fresh drops, and tried to make him swallow some,—but it was all in vain! She waited for a few moments; then she wet the handkerchief bound round his wounded head; again she bathed his temples, and hope now began at last to revive for Molly. After she had almost despaired of ever seeing him restored to life, he opened his firmly closed lips, and a light sigh breathed through them. The pallor of death vanished by slow degrees from his face; regular breathings heaved lightly through his breast, and a healthful and necessary sleep now seized upon all his senses. After Molly had gazed upon him attentively for a long time, and had thoroughly convinced herself that the crisis of danger was past, exhausted by the physical exertions and mental agonies of the trying night, she, too, fell into a deep slumber. Stretched upon the hard ground, with her gentle head resting upon its pillow of stone, her wearied eyelids closed, and she softly floated into the lovely land of dreams.

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It was broad daylight when Molly awoke. From the land of light, of lovely fantasies and sunny hopes, of happy visions, she returned to the sad world of reality; and a single glance round the cavern was sufficient to bring before her memory all the exciting occurrences of the night just past. The wounded man was still asleep, and she was very glad that it should be so; she would have given a great deal to have been certain that his sleep would last until the return of her father, whose arrival she most ardently longed for.

Kitty had been awake for a long time, had been frightened at not finding her sister at her side,

as she was accustomed to do, had several times called her name lightly, but, receiving no answer, tried to calm herself with the thought that her sister had wakened before her, and had gone to the spring to bring water to prepare their simple meal. But hearing now the tread of light footsteps, she joyfully stretched out both arms to greet the coming one.

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"It is you, Molly, I know," she cried with a blissful certainty of tone. "My Molly, my only, my good sister!" said she caressingly to Molly; and the child whom she had nurtured as tenderly as the truest mother could have done pressed her closely to her heart, and covered her with the innocent kisses of childlike love.

"Be quiet, very quiet, my little darling, for you have not forgotten that we gave shelter last night to a stranger, who requires sleep, and who may easily be awakened by your pleasant chattering. Your breakfast is not yet ready; but if you will sit here quite still and silent, you shall not have to wait for it long."

"Never mind the breakfast," said the child; "indeed I am not very hungry; and, unless you will eat it, we can keep the little piece of oatmeal bread, so that our father may have a mouthful of something to taste when he returns, hungry and tired, home. Indeed I am not hungry, Molly," asserted Kitty once more, because she supposed, from her sister's silence, that she did not quite believe her words.

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"If you would really make me very happy, sit down close beside me, and tell me something out of the Bible. Tell me about blind Tobit, whom the good God made see again as well as anybody else, because he was good, patient, and pious; or else about Joseph, whom the wicked brothers sold into Egypt, and yet God made him great and powerful, and he became the benefactor of thousands in a strange land."

Molly did as the little one requested. She took her upon her lap, and related to her all that she had asked for. Her words were simple, but they were colored by the warm, true, and pious feelings of the maiden. From time to time she rose and slipped to the side of the sick man, whom, to her delight, she always found asleep.

"Don't you think that father must soon be here?" asked Kitty, after several hours had thus passed away.

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"O, I hope and wish for it so earnestly!" answered Molly.

"While chattering with you, I have quite forgotten to look out and see what kind of weather it is. It seems to me the storm has raved itself to rest. Remain here, darling, near the bed of the sick man, and if, by the lightest change in his breathing, you think that he is awaking, call my name loudly; I will be at the entrance, and will certainly hear you."

With these words, Molly placed Kitty at the feet of the sick stranger. "Do not forget you must sit still, Kitty, and be sure to call me if he moves," said Molly as she left the cave.

The dear, warm rays of the sun greeted her as she sought the open air. Only the lightest clouds, finer and softer than any web ever woven by human hands, flitted over the high arch of the heavens, for ever changing in form and play of varied light. The air was soft and mild, which it rarely is in the end of autumn in Ireland, and upon the glittering surface of the wide sea millions of white and sparkling waves were dancing, like bright fairies and water-spirits. From the path which lay stretched at her feet, winding now up, now down the cliffs, in a hundred serpent-like turns, sounded, sometimes farther, sometimes nearer, the tones of a single full, clear, and manly voice. Molly listened attentively, and in her eyes, which reflected back so truly every thought of her pure soul, glittered a ray of hope.

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She was not mistaken; the tones of the dear voice came ever more distinctly to her ears; she could even distinguish the words which fell from the lips of the unseen singer, Erin ma Vourneen, Erin go Bragh! The sounds were close at hand; only a projecting rock hid the coming form from her searching eyes; another second passed, and, with a loud cry of joy, she sank upon the breast of her father.

"Father! my dear, dear father!" she cried, almost breathlessly, as she again and again wound her arms around him.

O'Neil rapidly placed upon the ground a few cooking utensils which he had brought with him, and a little bag of meal, and then embraced his daughter with all the marks of the truest affection, asking her as many tender questions as if years, in place of days, had passed since they parted.

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"But where is my Kitty?" said he, anxiously; "nothing has happened to my poor blind girl?"

"Nothing, dearest father, nothing! The little one is in the cave; I have just left her, to look out if I could see you coming."

"Let us go to her immediately!"

"Wait a moment! I am so glad that you are here already; I could scarcely have believed you would have returned so early. What unexpected good fortune has brought you back so soon, and so richly laden, to our arms?"

"I met with a farmer not far from here, tolerably well off, who required assistance to dig up his potatoes, and who promised me a little share in the harvest-grain if I would stay and help him. I found him more humane than I had anticipated in the beginning, and when he saw that I labored with all my might to help him, he willingly granted me a day to visit my home, and gave me a share of my wages to bring with me. But now come to Kitty," said O'Neil, quickly, as he

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commenced to make his way to the cave.

"Dear father, yet another word! You will not find Kitty alone!"

"Who is with her, then?" asked O'Neil, astonished.

"An old man whom I found yesterday evening near this place, bleeding and wounded, who had probably lost his way upon the chase, and injured himself through some unlucky fall."

"Did you say he was an old man?"

"So he appears to be, for the thin hairs which scantily cover his head are white as snow; but whether they have whitened by the frost of years, or through the weight of cares and sorrows, I am not able to say."

"Have you no suspicion who the stranger may be?"

"Yes, father, I have more than a suspicion; I know it certainly. Like a flash of lightning, the recognition passed through my soul, when he, after a long fainting fit, opened his eyes and gazed upon me, although I have never seen him but once before, and that but for a flying moment, in the whole course of my life."

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"And his name is—"

"I know it not."

"My child, you speak in riddles! You know the stranger; and yet you cannot tell me his name?"

"And yet I say nothing but the truth, father!" answered the anxious maiden.

"Lead me, then, rapidly to him, Molly! You fill me with curiosity, less through your mysterious words than through the strange anxiety that speaks in your excited voice, and in every line of your quivering face. You try in vain to conceal your uneasiness from me.—Can it possibly be," said he, as if suddenly overcome by some dim divination of the truth,— "Can it be that—Yet no; that would be indeed impossible!"

As he suddenly interrupted himself, he pushed the hair, with a restless motion, from his high and broad brow.

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"What an idea! Only the vain creation of an excited fancy! And yet if it were he! The mere thought of such a possibility drives all the blood back from my throbbing heart!"

As he spoke, he covered his eyes with both his hands, as if to exclude some sight of horror, the view of which would blast his eyes for ever!

Molly softly approached him, and, throwing her arms tenderly round him, she murmured as lightly as if she feared the sound or meaning of her own words,—

"My dear father, even suppose it should be the man who drove us from our wretched hovel,— who took from us the last of our miserable possessions; suppose it should be the rich landlord, who, in addition to his barbarous conduct, insulted you with the most shameful, the most humiliating words; would you,—could you, render evil for evil? Could you have suffered him to remain exposed to all the horrors of the storm which raged so pitilessly yesterday, wounded and dying; and would you have refused him your aid? O my father, to whom I have always looked up almost as to one of the Holy Ones of heaven, whom in all the trying circumstances of life I have always seen pursue a course so noble, I am sure, very sure, if you had been here, you too would have offered him assistance; and your daughter, in sheltering the unfortunate old man, in doing everything to alleviate his condition which it was possible for her to do, has only fulfilled the divine lessons which you imprinted upon her heart; she was only striving to resemble you; for you have ever been her fairest, highest model, in the practise of every self-sacrificing virtue."

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For the first time, Molly ventured to look up to the face of her agitated father. Pale, as if already frozen by the stroke of death, he leaned against the steep cliff. Motionless, as if becoming part of the stone itself, his staring eyes moved not in their strained sockets; his long, flaccid arms hung loosely down at his side; the spirit seemed about to leave his powerful body for ever!

"Father!" shrieked Molly, in a tone of utter despair.

At the same moment, the soft, sweet voice of a child sounded from the cave,— "Molly! my Molly!"

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"Father!" again repeated Molly, "father! for the love of God, speak! Speak only one word to your anxious child! Do you hear Kitty call me? The wounded man is awake; *we must* see him!"

O'Neil sank, with a spasmodic movement, upon his knees; his soul seemed to be engaged in a fearful struggle, for the large, cold drops of sweat covered his broad brow; he shuddered and quivered, as if convulsed by some dreadful spasm of agonizing pain.

"O thou pure Virgin of heaven, thou holy Mother of the Son of God!" he prayed, with a loud voice and uplifted hands, "have mercy upon me! By the bitter pain which pierced thine own tender soul, when thou wert standing under the dreadful cross, on which they crucified thy Holy Son; by all the tears of agony which thou must have shed in witnessing his unmitigated torments, have mercy upon me! Forsake me not! Leave me not to myself, in this wild struggle of my soul! O Merciful Jesus, who died to redeem thy enemies, give me the power to forgive the man whose fell malice deprived my own father of his little all; who has wounded, in the deepest manner, the holiest feelings of my heart, and who was the cause of the early and painful death of the being dearer to me far than my own life,—the beloved wife of my soul! O, enable me not only to forgive, but also to forget, all the misery this man has brought upon me!"

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The words ceased to sound from the agitated soul of O'Neil; but it was evident he still prayed, for his lips were quivering with the holy thoughts. Tears glittered in his upraised eyes, and, as if he would stifle all the indignant emotions of anger and revenge which surged through the depths of his tortured being, he pressed his hand closely against his heart, whose wild beatings were distinctly heard by poor Molly. But it was now evident that he was gradually becoming more tranquil. Molly knelt close beside him; her head rested upon his shoulder; her ardent prayers were united with his, for she now for the first time fully understood the circumstances in which she had placed him. It was the stern and cruel father of her mother whom she had brought into the cave; whom no entreaties would induce to recall the dreadful curse which he had pronounced upon the innocent head of his only child, and which, like a blighting worm in the heart of the summer rose, had fed upon her tender life, and, after a life of hopeless anguish, laid her in an early grave.

## THE GRANDFATHER.

"Forgive your enemies."

OUR prayers to be aided in the fulfilment of the Divine commands are always heard by the Holy One who gave them.

Molly and her agitated father were still kneeling together at the entrance of the cave, when Molly felt herself suddenly raised from the ground, then closely embraced, and, upon looking up, she saw herself in the arms of her grandfather, who, in the most unexpected manner, had tottered to the rude door of the cavern.

"O'Neil," said the old man, while his voice trembled audibly, "O'Neil, I have heard your prayer. I read in your moistened eyes that you have conquered; and that no feelings of revenge or hatred towards the man who has been the cause of all your misfortunes still linger in your soul. I freely acknowledge that I have treated you in the most shameful manner. The eager thirst for gold, that, like a wicked demon, possessed my whole being, induced me to betray your father, whose firmest friend I once was; it enticed me on to wish to sell, for my pecuniary advantage, my own sweet child. Baffled in this inhuman desire, I drove her from her home, burdened with my curse. It was the love of gold which led me on to oppress and abuse my tenants; to torture and drive them, until I had put into my own coffers all which they had gained by the bitter sweat of their rugged brows. Nay, it was indeed sometimes from their very heart's blood that my purse was filled. Tortured by this insatiable thirst for money, and stimulated by my cruel agent, Wilkins, whom you, O'Neil, had several times reproved for his cruelty, and who consequently hated you, I drove you from your last shelter, without suffering myself to be moved by your manly prayers; for Wilkins had already found another tenant, who was willing to pay a higher rent for your wretched hovel. Yet believe, upon my most solemn word, O'Neil, that I have never truly known you. A secret and gnawing anguish has tortured me for years, which I have in vain struggled to suppress. Dreaming and waking was the face of my poor daughter ever before me; sometimes pale and bloody, sometimes in the full brilliancy of her youthful bloom and beauty. O, if in that dreadful morning in which I drove you from your hut I had thrown a single glance upon the face of the maiden whom you call *your* child, and who is the perfect image of *my* daughter, now sleeping in the quiet grave, over which you have trained the long moss and planted the violet, certainly I must have granted your prayers, and all would have terminated in a different manner. But I do not regret it for my own sake. I bless my fate which led me to this desolate spot; I bless the fall from my horse, and the wound which I then received. If it had not been for these apparent misfortunes, I would never have found the ministering angel whose sweet compassion was so infinitely grateful to me, when I lay almost without consciousness before her; whose heavenly goodness restored me to life, and has given me back a far greater gift than life,—the possibility to love again!

"O'Neil," continued the old man, while from his eyes, which had long since almost forgotten to weep, two great tears rolled down and mingled with his tufted beard of snow;—"O'Neil," he cried, as if from the very depths of his heart, while he stretched out both his hands entreatingly towards the man whom he had so deeply injured;—"O'Neil, for the sake of this angel, forgive the hard father of your Kitty, whom you so ardently, so truly loved, and whose innocent life he filled with bitterness. O, forgive him, as she who has long since gone to her home in heaven forgave the cruel father, upon the very bed of death which he had prepared for her, for the cruel curses with which he had burdened her heart!"

Overpowered by a wild rush of alternating feelings, O'Neil fell upon the breast of the old man.

"My Kitty! my Kitty!" he cried, gazing up to heaven, while the gushing tears flooded his manly cheeks;—"my Kitty, if you had only lived to have seen this day! But be witness of all my struggling, yet deep feelings! Even as you prayed for and blessed your father with the last gasps of your breath, so will I also forgive him! Now," said he, heaving a deep sigh, and pressing the trembling hand of the old man to his heart, "now all is forgiven! all is forgotten!"

The two men clasped each other in a silent embrace, full of holy emotions. Repentance and forgiveness met, and understood each other!

Full of the highest happiness, Molly went to the cave to bring her sister out, who, tired of remaining so long alone, had already groped her way to the entrance.

"Come, Kitty, come," said she joyously, as she took the little one in her arms, "O, come quickly, for we have found our grandfather!"

"Our grandfather?" answered the astonished child; "you seem so rejoiced, Molly, that it must be a very pleasant thing to have found our grandfather!"

"O, very, very pleasant!" answered Molly, and then gave the little blind girl into the arms of the old man, who pressed her to his heart, and kissed her. Then he said rapidly: "Now let us all hasten away from this desolate, frightful place; and it shall henceforth be my only care to make you forget all the unspeakable misery you have suffered through my cruelty."

Molly and O'Neil again entered the cave, to bid farewell to their strange place of refuge. Molly looked gratefully round, as if to thank it for the shelter it had afforded them.

Soon the whole four were on their happy way together home. Their path passed by the hovels whose inmates had evinced so much kind feeling towards the banished family; and they found

there a man who, upon a promise of good pay from the landlord, was willing to take them home in his little one-horse wagon. Towards evening they reached the handsome house of the grandfather. The old housekeeper came rushing out to meet them, perfectly astonished to see her master, whose return she had awaited with the most dreadful anxiety during the whole of the stormy night now past, and whom she never thought again to have seen alive, as his horse, covered with foam and blood, had returned home without a rider. She was also very much surprised at the little band of strangers who accompanied the old man. She turned herself right and left in her confusion, without exactly knowing what kind of welcome she was to offer the new guests, who, although scarcely covered with their miserable rags, yet through their noble bearing and appearance inspired respect. At last the old man said to her, in a more friendly tone than she had ever before heard from his lips: "Make haste, Mary! Prepare the very best you have in the house, for I intend to celebrate this evening the happiest festival of my whole life!"

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He then dismounted from the wagon, and placed himself upon the threshold of his own door, to welcome his new inmates, whom he begged, individually, upon their entrance, to consider the house and everything in it as their own.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, as he led them in, and gazed in the soft eyes of Molly, "how poor was I, until this moment, although surrounded by so much wealth! and how truly rich have you always been, although in the midst of such bitter poverty, in the sweetness of your holy love! How warmly my heart beats to-day! how full it is of happy feelings! Like a tree blasted by lightning, I have stood stripped and desolate in the arid desert my own faults had made for me, almost afraid to gaze around me. But I have grown young again in your embracing arms; for the first time since I cursed my poor Kitty, does it seem to me a joy to live!"

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KITTY.

"Then said Raphael, I know, Tobias, that thy father will open his eyes."

THE old man had spoken truly. A thousand joys of which he had never thought before, whose delight he had never even divined, bloomed in his lonely heart. As long as he should live, it was his wish that the family should continue to reside with him; and Molly was to become the guardian angel of the neighboring poor. She did not wait until they begged her assistance; she gave it unasked for to those who required it. She was a daily visitor in their humble homes, and when want and necessity were at last banished by her efforts, she taught the poor economy and neatness, through the beauty of her own example.

Wilkins, the cruel agent, was placed in a situation in which he could injure no one; but no revenge was wreaked upon him. He was not punished; he was permitted to retain his house and field, and a great portion of his former income. But his position as agent was given to one whom O'Neil had long known as a good, kind, and just man, entirely incapable of any act of cruelty.

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During three peaceful years, the old landlord continued to enjoy his quiet life of domestic bliss. He died tranquilly in the arms of his son-in-law, to whom he gave the whole of his estate. O'Neil and his daughters soon after left this property in the charge of a good overseer, to whom the strongest commands were given never to drive or distress any of the tenants on account of their being in arrears for rent. O'Neil was exceedingly desirous to visit the property which had been for many, many years in the possession of his own family, where he had played through the glad days of his happy childhood, and which, through the wonderful providence of a kind God, he could again call his own.

A far more lovely landscape surrounded Molly, so susceptible to all the beauties with which Nature decks the earth. Rich grain-fields waved around her; fertile meadows, with their deep-green carpets overgrown with many-colored flowers, lay at her feet; and orchards, in which the sunny-hued fruit burdened the laden branches until they kissed the ground, greeted her happy walks. Under the direction of O'Neil, a row of neat dwelling-houses rose around them, the occupants of which became far more economical and industrious, when they saw that part of the fruit of their labors was for themselves and their children, and that the landlord had no idea of appropriating the whole of their hard earnings to his own use. How happy was Molly, when she saw these healthful and powerful men, from whose bronzed faces content and happiness smiled, and who were now neither wretched nor oppressed, returning with cheerful songs to their expectant wives and playful children!

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Still a heavy cloud sometimes rested upon her fair young brow. Not seldom gushed the hot tears down her now rosy cheeks, when she looked upon Kitty, who, as she grew older, appeared to feel more and more deeply the many renunciations which the want of sight inflicted upon her. The melancholy plaints of the little girl pained her affectionate heart. Nothing could be more touching than to hear Kitty say,—

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"O Molly, if I could only see you and my father,—only once! only once!—I would ask no more! I would gaze upon you until I had imprinted every line of your face upon my soul, and then I would cheerfully close my eyes again in their dreary darkness,—close them for ever, Molly, with your image in my heart!"

One day, when Molly was visiting a school which she had established for the instruction of the poor in basket-weaving and other light arts, she heard a beggar, whom she had at various times assisted, telling many wonderful things about a young physician who had lately established himself in a neighboring town, and who, according to his account, had already restored many blind people to sight. She remained standing by the threshold, absorbed in the deepest attention, as long as the narration lasted. She then approached him rapidly, and, while her heart beat high with expectation and new-born hope, she said,—

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"Tell me, I beg of you, tell me if what you have been relating is indeed the truth? If it is really true, if my little sister should receive her sight, I would never forget that I had first heard of this happy possibility through you; and, full of gratitude to you, I would take care of you as long as your life should last."

"Certainly, all I have said is true," answered the old beggar. "I have seen little Jack sitting at the church door as blind as a post, and now he sees as bright and clear as anybody who has always had two good, sound eyes in his head."

Molly ran directly to her father with this joyful news. But her father shook his head, and said earnestly to her,—

"Do not suffer this sweet hope to take such entire possession of you, my kind child! Above all, say nothing about it to Kitty; for the poor little blind girl would suffer tenfold more if she should nourish such a hope, and be doomed to meet with a bitter disappointment. Yet it is possible it may succeed! Kitty was not born blind; she was more than a year old when she lost her sight."

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When he saw how deeply Molly was distressed by his want of faith in the possibility of Kitty's restoration to sight, he tried to calm her anxiety, and continued,—

"If it should succeed, Molly, who would be happier, who would be more grateful to the good God above, than myself? I would joyfully give up the half of my property, nay, the whole of it, Molly, to open again the sightless eyes of our poor little Kitty! We will set out to-morrow, at the

earliest dawn of day, to seek the physician who has given sight to the blind!"

The sun had not yet entirely risen, when Molly, after a sleepless night, was already stirring through the house, making the necessary preparations for their contemplated journey. She hurried on everything with as much eagerness as if her life depended upon the loss of a single hour, and succeeded in stimulating the slow coachman to an extraordinary rapid gait in comparison with his usually slow pace. The carriage rolled down the hill upon which the house was built just as the first glittering rays of the sun filled the valley with their rosy light. Molly held her little sister in her arms. Sometimes she pressed her wildly, as if in fear, to her breast; sometimes she looked long and deeply into her large, sad eyes, as if it would be possible to read in them the success or failure of the contemplated experiment. Tortured by the most restless impatience, she asked the old beggar (who had taken his seat by the coachman to show him the way) every five minutes if they were not almost there.

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"We soon will be! We soon will be!" was his dry answer; but to the excited Molly, so full of hope and fear, this word "soon" seemed to cover an eternity. Always so merciful, both to man and beast, she would not spare a single moment to the poor horses to rest.

"Only drive on!—drive on!" she begged; "the poor, tired horses shall have a good rest and plenty of food after we are once there!"

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In vain Kitty asked where they were going, what was the aim of their journey, and what made Molly so impatient. "You will soon know all about it," was the only answer she received. At last—at last—the travellers stopped before the house pointed out by the beggar!

They found the physician to be a young and amiable man, who, after a short examination of the sightless eyes, said he felt certain the operation would succeed, and that it would prove neither difficult nor dangerous. But he said he would not like to undertake it until Kitty had been for a few days under his care.

The few days demanded by the young physician were soon over. Resting in the powerful arms of her father, with Molly standing pale and trembling by her side, Kitty awaited the eventful operation.

"You need not be afraid, my little angel," said the doctor, consolingly; "I will not hurt you much."

"Oh! even if it should hurt me very much," answered the gentle child, "what pain could possibly equal the bliss which I expect to receive from your skilful hands? To see my father, and my Molly,—my Molly!—how long have I yearned with a sick heart to see my Molly!"

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The physician raised his hand,—touched the darkened eyeballs. A loud shriek of joy,—another and another,—announced the complete success of the delicate operation. But Kitty was forced to conquer her wild longing to gaze on the faces she loved; for after a single fleeting second, the physician carefully bound a thick band of linen round her head, that the tender organs might become gradually accustomed to the light and air.

No pen could describe her rapture, when, after the removal of the veiling band, she lay for the first time with the full power of sight in the arms of her loved ones! Tenderly and lovingly, she embraced them again and again; now she gazed into the joy-raying eyes of her happy father,—now into the deep, blue, tender eyes of the beloved Molly,—as if to make up, in the fulness of her bliss, for the long time she had been deprived of this source of delight. Then she suddenly turned round to the young physician who was standing behind her, and who had been deeply touched by this exciting scene.

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"How shall I thank you?" she cried, pressing his hand to her innocent lips, which he vainly struggled to withdraw. "O, let me kiss your hand," she softly prayed, "let me kiss the dear hand which has enabled me to see my father and my Molly; and tell us how we can make you happy! We can offer you no fitting reward; for what price would be sufficient to pay you for the benefit you have conferred upon us? Only some pledge of our eternal gratitude, some sign of undying remembrance from the family whom you have made so blessed, ought we to give you!"

The young man bent down to hide his tears, kissed the grateful child, and murmured lightly: "Your joy, Kitty, which has rendered this hour the happiest of my whole life, and whose remembrance will always be dear to my heart, has already been to me a high and holy reward! But," he continued, in a voice scarcely audible, and broken by emotion, "there is a still higher, a still dearer reward, which I would willingly owe to your prayers for me, Kitty! Ask your dear father to receive me as his son! Ask the beloved sister if she will trust the happiness of her life in my hands! Kitty, plead for me!"

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He could say no more; he was choked by his emotions. But Molly had understood his broken words; covered with blushes, she flew to her father, who took her by the unresisting hand, and tenderly led her to the young physician.

"You have, indeed, chosen the most precious reward," said O'Neil, "yet I willingly give it to you, for you seem to me to be a man of noble character. The manner in which you practise your benevolent art is the surest proof to me of your kind heart!"

"Dare I hope that your cherished daughter does not withhold her consent?" asked the young man, with trembling voice, as he pleadingly, yet tenderly, took the hand of the maiden.

Candid as she always was, Molly answered softly: "In restoring my little sister to sight, you have made me very happy; yet I must frankly confess that it is not gratitude alone which binds me to you. Another voice speaks to me in the depths of my soul,—the voice of affection; it

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whispers me that you deserve my confidence. Could you possibly deceive me?"

Then the young man raised his hand, as if to take a solemn oath.

"Never! never!" with clear and loud, yet solemn and tender tone, he said. "Nothing shall ever part me from thee, no change in destiny shall sever me from thy side! I feel within myself the strength to offer everything up for thee, to conquer all things through my love for thee! Thy holy confidence in me shall never be deceived! Undying love and tenderness for thee, my Molly, shall ever fill the heart in which thou hast trusted!"

He nobly kept his plighted word; and Molly never had any cause to repent of the confidence which she had reposed in him.

O'Neil lived to attain a great age. He lived to see little Kitty married to an excellent young man, who managed his estate with the greatest care, when he grew too old and weak to attend to it himself. And when at last the death-angel came to call him to a higher life above, he blessed with his dying voice his sons, his daughters, and his grandchildren. But the last pressure of the stiffening hand, the last words from the lips that were to open no more on earth, were for his own Molly.

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"Molly," he painfully sighed, "I can see thy sweet face no longer, for my eyes are darkened by the night of death, but thy image still floats before my parting soul. Thou wert my consolation and support when the hand of the Lord rested heavily upon me. Thy confidence that all would yet be well never wavered; thy gentleness and thy loveliness touched and softened the heart of the long defiant one, who had before scorned all the warnings sent from Heaven, and changed his angry hatred into wonder and love!

"Next to God, from whom all good gifts come, I thank thee, my dearly beloved child, that the rough and thorny path of my life was changed into an earthly paradise, which leads to heaven! Molly! my Molly! may thy children resemble thee, and make thee as happy as thou hast made thy father!"

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## THE GUARDIAN ANGEL AND THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC.

"Like rainbows o'er a cataract, Music's tones  
 Played round the dazzling spirit."

THE evening bells were loudly ringing in the little town of Geremberg. Troops of busy workmen were hastening home from the neighboring fields and gardens, while children, with merry shouts, were driving herds of cattle, droves of sheep, and domestic poultry, and their clear and joyous laughter might be heard far above the lowing of the weary cows, or the shrill hissing and cackling of the numberless flocks of noisy ducks and geese. The barking of dogs, with the hoarse oaths and gruff voices of the drovers, added to the general din. Wagons heavily laden with provisions; drawn sometimes by four, sometimes by six horses, rolled wearily along, but the pleasant anticipation of rest at the neighboring inn, and the recollection of its well-filled crib, urged the exhausted steeds to new efforts of their almost failing strength. The lighter farm-carts, full of sweet hay or perfumed clover, upon which lay the rosy-cheeked farm-boys almost buried in their beds of fragrance, easily passed these lumbering trains. With his coarse boots fastened to the dusty wallet which hung upon his back, and his feet wrapped round with bloody bands of dusty linen, the tired wanderer limped painfully on, carefully selecting the grass which grew along the edge of the footpath, because its fresh and dewy growth soothed and cooled the burning of his blistered and wounded feet.

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All were seeking the same goal, all moving towards the little town from whose glimmering windows the hospitable lights already began to gleam through the deepening twilight, although a rosy and still glowing pile of clouds on the verge of the western horizon yet waved a farewell greeting from the parting sun.

The highways were soon deserted, and the whole neighborhood was quiet. Only a solitary woman was now to be seen slowly moving along the pathway; she seemed very much tired, and, seating herself upon the ground, she took a heavy basket from her back, and carefully unbound the cloth which was knotted over it. She then looked cautiously around her in every direction; scarcely breathing, in the earnestness of her search, no nook or corner escaped the prying eagerness of her gaze. A dead silence reigned around, only broken by a confused murmur from the town and the distant barking of dogs. Twilight was entirely over, and a few stars only twinkled in the skies. The woman then rose from the ground, carefully hid her basket in a little ditch, after having taken a thickly veiled object from it, which she carried in her arms to a thicket of hazel-bushes, which separated a piece of meadow ground from a field newly ploughed. She laid the veiled object softly down in the high grass, and was hastening rapidly away, when the screams of a child were heard proceeding from the hazel-bushes. Without once looking behind her, the woman continued to hurry on, but the screams of the child grew louder and louder, and forced her, however reluctant she might be, to return. With her hand threateningly raised over the child, and her voice full of stifled rage, she cried,—

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"Will you quit screaming instantly, you little screech-owl? If you don't, I'll whip you soundly!"

"Do—do—take itty boy!" sobbed the lisping accents of a child's voice.

"Be quiet, and don't dare to stir from this spot, and go to sleep immediately. Do you hear? Or—"

A heavy blow accompanied this threat. The child gave a loud shriek, but soon suppressed his cries; even his faint sobs grew by degrees less and less audible, until at last no evidence was given that he still lived. The woman remained in the bushes, sitting beside the child whom she had carried from her basket to that secluded spot.

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It grew darker and darker, and the timid child anxiously seized the rough hand which had just beaten him; as he had been told to go to sleep, he closed his eyes in fear and trembling, and soon sunk to rest. As he slept tranquilly and soundly, the grasp of the twining fingers grew looser, the little hand opened, while the woman drew hers from the clinging clasp, and lightly, gently, and noiselessly slipped away. With flying feet, she hastened back to the place in which she had left her basket, fastened it quickly upon her back, and, as if able to pierce the surrounding gloom, threw a searching glance in every direction, and then, as if goaded by the fell fiends of a wicked conscience, rapidly fled along the highway upon which she had first appeared. She soon vanished in the darkness of night.

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The forsaken child slumbered softly on. The bright stars looked inquiringly through the leaves, and mirrored themselves in the tears which still hung on the long eyelashes of the little sleeper. A flashing gleam of white light suddenly broke in through the clustering leaves of the hazel-bushes.

A glittering form stood at the side of the helpless infant; she spread her arms over him as if to bless him, and, bending lightly down to him, she imprinted a long and lingering kiss upon his pale, broad brow. The child smiled even in his sleep, and longingly stretched out his arms towards the form of light which still continued to bend fondly o'er him. She stroked the clustering curls tenderly back from the spot which she had just touched with her lips, and the pale brow glittered and gleamed with the bright yet mild radiance, which, like a light seen through a vase of alabaster, seemed to pervade her own aerial figure. She shone, as if the holy starlight had been condensed into a human form to bless and consecrate the helpless innocent. Lightly and gently she passed her transparent hand over the sleeping child.

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Suddenly a mighty angel, with wings of pure and dazzling lustre, stood at the head of the little sleeper.

"What are you doing here, with the little immortal whom the Holy One has committed to my care?" said the angel, earnestly, to the spirit, who glittered as if made of starlight.

"I have consecrated the poor forsaken boy as my high-priest. I have kissed his pure brow, breathed the joy of art into his young soul, and thus secured his earthly bliss. Do you not recognize me, holy angel? I am the Spirit of Music!" [101]

"Yes, I know you well," answered the earnest angel. "But I know, too, that if your gifts often lead to heaven, they sometimes also lead to hell! Alas! how many of those whom I once loved are now forced to mourn that you ever accorded to them your protection, since your gift has only led them to the home of the fallen angels!"

The starry form reproachfully answered: "Am I, then, justly responsible for the evils which result from the ruined nature of man? The source of music springs in heaven! Do not the angels strike the harp, and sing eternal praises round the high throne of God himself?"

"They do, and I cannot justly complain of you," answered the guardian angel. "Your gift is indeed a godlike one, but it is also full of danger. Men are very frail; and pride and vanity are the evil germs which lie concealed in every human breast. To uproot these dangerous germs, to guard against their injurious growth, is our never-ending, yet often thankless, occupation; for the Angel of Darkness works against us, cultivating and fostering all that we have condemned. Unfortunately, he often gains the victory; for as the will of man is free, it depends chiefly upon himself whether he will embrace Light or Darkness. If the Evil One conquers, veiling our faces in sorrow, we sadly turn away, and are forced to leave our beloved charge for ever. What is more calculated to cultivate pride or vanity than any extraordinary gift which distinguishes man above his fellows? Thus I am forced to repeat, that your glorious present is still a dangerous one, which may easily become a stumbling-block, a stone of offence, upon which the immortal spirit may be wrecked for ever. For man is only too apt to become vain and presumptuous, to prefer himself to the great Giver of all faculties and arts, and, in the excess of his arrogance, to forget the Holy One, to whom all thanks and all honor are justly due, to whose high service thou, O glittering Spirit of Music! hast ever been firmly attached! Thou seest now why I tremble for the soul of this forsaken infant!" [102]

"Thou art his guardian spirit, and it is best it should be so! Guard him, then, in such a way that he shall not be fed upon vanity, that he shall early learn to walk in the paths of religion, which also lead to the highest art. O no! no! Fold thy white and shining wings closely around him! My kiss will not lead him to destruction; it shall only brighten the rough and dark path of life for his tender heart! I have consecrated him to art; do then thy part, and educate him for heaven! Guard him well, for my kiss has made him sacred! We meet again! Farewell!" [103]

The star-bright spirit vanished; but the earnest angel knelt in prayer beside the deserted boy, covering the fragile body, that the baneful night-dews might not destroy it, with the glittering and snowy, yet warm and tender, sweep of the drooping, sheltering wings.

## WALTER AND MOTHER BOPP.

"Women are soft, mild, pitiable, flexible;  
But thou art obdurate, flinty, rough, remorseless."

CLEAR and bright rose the sun on the following morning. The birds warbled, and the mowers were whetting their scythes in the fields. A butcher's boy from the town, occupied in the business of his master, was going, accompanied by his large dog, to the neighboring village, and thought it best to take the short cut through the meadow. But the dog suddenly ran to the little copse of hazel-bushes, shoved his shaggy head deep in among the leaves, growled, and then sprang barking back to his master, rapidly bounded off again to the thicket, and did everything in his power to awaken the attention of his owner.

"Something must certainly be in there," thought the boy, as he hurried to the spot where the dog was still standing and barking, to see if he could discover anything. He drew the branches asunder, looked carefully around him, and at last saw a sleeping child. [105]

"What can be the meaning of all this?" he muttered to himself, as he pressed into the thicket. "The deuce take me if it isn't a poor forsaken child! There seems to be a card or a letter pinned upon his breast. The mother who could do such a wicked thing must have had the heart of a vulture! What a beautiful little fellow! Can the poor little rascal have spent the whole night here? I suppose he has, for he looks blue and frozen with the cold! What am I to do with him? If he should waken up and cry, it would drive me crazy, for I am sure I wouldn't know how to quiet him. Oh! now I know what to do with him! I will run back to the town and tell the squire about it, for the child is lying between his two fields; he has plenty, and will take care of him. I will leave my piece of bread close by him, lest he should waken up and cry for hunger. Now I must be off, for I have no time to lose!" [106]

The boy soon carried his design into execution. The information that a child, a foundling, had been left upon his land, in the hazel-bushes which separated his meadows from his grain-fields, was given to the squire as he sat at breakfast. The squire frowned, and wanted to hear nothing more about the infant who had been placed upon his farm. In the mean while, some of the people of the town, and some of the servants of the squire, were sent out to see what the truth of the matter really was.

Mayor, squire, and magistrates were soon assembled in the council hall, to draw up a record, and to consider what it was best, under the circumstances, to do. The sheriff held the foundling in his arms, and the little fellow looked around him as if quite unconcerned about the matter, while he was busily employed in consuming the hard piece of brown bread which had been given to him by the good-hearted butcher's boy.

The child was stripped, in accordance with the command of the squire, in order that the letter, which was firmly sewed to his dress, might be more conveniently read, and also to ascertain if any distinctive mark could be found upon his body. The boy was clad in a dark woollen frock, whose color had become almost undiscernible through constant use, and a fine linen-cambric shirt, without any mark. A little round locket of some worthless metal was fastened round his neck with a silken cord, but all attempts to open the lid were in vain. Either it was not made to open, or the spring which closed it was so hidden that none but those already in the secret could find it out. This little locket gave rise to the supposition that, although the boy seemed, at the present moment, to be utterly forsaken, yet those who had deserted him still preserved a wish to be able to identify him at some future period of his life. [107]

The letter was very badly written, and read as follows:—

"My name it is Walter.  
Though still very young,  
I have known want and care,  
As to you I have sung;  
Whoe'er will receive me  
Will not be ashamed,  
If once in his hearing  
My lineage is named.  
My parents are dead,  
They sleep sound in the grave:  
Alone they have left me,  
Strange sufferings to brave.  
I dare say nothing further:  
Yet pity my grief,  
Help me in my sorrow,  
And yield me relief!  
O, shelter me, women!  
And harbor me, men!  
O, save me from famine!  
In God's name,—Amen!"

[108]

Mayor, squire, and magistrates looked inquiringly at each other. Many guesses were made, many suppositions proposed to solve the mystery, and the most searching inquiries were to be

immediately instituted, with a view of finding out who had been guilty of exposing the unfortunate boy to the solitude and darkness of the past night. In the mean time, it was determined that the child should be taken care of, and, after a protracted discussion, it was finally resolved that he should be boarded with one of the poor families of the village, and that his expenses should be paid out of the revenues of the town. The people were then called together, in order to make them acquainted with the occurrences which we have just related, and the boy was finally apprenticed to the one who was willing to take him at the lowest rate. The town-fiddler, Bopp, had offered to feed and clothe him for so small a sum, that the poor foundling, utterly unconscious of how destiny was disposing of him, was given over to his charge. As he took the helpless infant in his arms, to carry it home to its new brothers and sisters, it grasped his hand with its tiny fingers, and smiled friendly in his face. [109]

"Maggie! don't pound so with your feet, for you shake the table so that my writing is blotted, and my letters all humpbacked!" said Conrad, gruffly, to his sister, who was sitting beside him.

"What has the pounding of my feet to do with the shape of your letters, I should like to know?" answered Maggie. "I can't help doing it, at any rate; I must beat the time when father plays, it helps me on with my knitting. If you would only be more careful, you would write better. Look here, what a long piece I have knit in my stocking!" [110]

With a rapid movement, she held her long blue stocking up immediately in front of her brother's face; but as she did so, she awkwardly gave a great push to his elbow, and so jostled his arm, that it drove the pen full of ink entirely across his copy-book, and spoiled the appearance of the whole page. Crimson with rage, the boy gave the little girl a violent box upon the ears. Maggie shrieked loudly, and tried to revenge herself in the same way. Thus a fierce battle began at the table, round which the children were engaged in their studies. Not far from it two fat, ruddy little boys were playing with the black house-cat. Conrad and Maggie had wrestled and struggled forward until they were close upon the little ones; Maggie stumbled over the cat, and fell upon her little brothers. The children screamed, the cat yelled, so that the baby in the cradle was waked up, and soon added his cries to the general uproar. Quite undisturbed by all this frightful tumult, Father Bopp stood tranquilly at the window, and practised a dance upon the clarionet. [111]

He was a little, slender man, and blew with his cheeks puffed out into his instrument. His tailor-work, the signs of his daily occupation, hung upon the wall, between his fiddles and horns. He was so accustomed to the noise of the children, that he continued his practising without appearing in the least disturbed by their deafening din. As tranquil as the musician himself, as undisturbed by all that was going on in the dark, dirty room, a beautiful little boy of about five years old sat quietly at his feet. With his large, dark eyes fastened upon the face of the father, his bare legs doubled up under him, he supported himself, half reclining, upon his left hand, while with the right he beat the time lightly, but accurately, upon his naked knee. He was wretchedly clothed; his torn coat of dark-blue linsey was a great deal too short, and, as it had neither buttons nor hooks to keep it together, it gaped widely in front, exposing his breast and shoulders to view, whose soft forms shone in their warm brown tints. His dark, full curls fell uncombed and uncared for over his rounded forehead and blooming face. [112]

"Potz tausend! Odds bodikins! What a noise you are making there!" called the mother from the adjoining kitchen. In the same moment she made her appearance at the smoky door. She was a stout, strong woman, her thick and coarse blond hair fell in uncombed masses from what had once been a black velvet cap, but which had now assumed a gray tint from age and constant wear. A gray petticoat, a long red jacket, a red and black plaid neck-handkerchief, and a blue cotton apron, completed the costume of the mother, whose clothing, as well as her full, red face, bore visible marks of the life of the kitchen. Armed with a broom, she sprang into the sitting-room, and brandished it over the heads of the children, who were still tumbling about upon the floor.

"Will you be quiet, you noisy brats?" she loudly cried. "Get up from the floor, instantly! What has happened? O, do quit that everlasting blowing upon the clarionet, man! It is impossible to hear one's own voice with such an incessant clatter! Which of you began it?" [113]

"Conrad struck me!" screamed Maggie.

"Maggie pushed my elbow when I was writing, and I shall be kept in for it to-morrow!"

"They both fell over me, and the cat scratched me!"

"They hurt my foot!"

"They knocked me in the head!"

Thus the children cried and screamed confusedly together, while the baby in the cradle shrieked until it lost its breath.

"Silence!" commanded the mother, accompanying her order with a heavy thump of the broom-handle upon the floor.

"What are you doing there, Walter?" she angrily cried. "Are you sitting there again, with your eyes and mouth wide open, staring at your noisy father, instead of rocking the cradle, as I ordered you to do? Wait, you little good-for-nothing,—I'll give it to you!"

With a single bound, she stood by the frightened boy, tore him up by the arms, slung him round [114]

with rude force, and then shook him fiercely. Then she dragged him to the corner in which the cradle stood, and, pushing him down by it, she said: "Sit here upon the floor, and don't stir a single inch; and don't let me hear a single tone, a single sound, from your ugly lips!"

She held her red fist, doubled up, threateningly before his eyes. The poor child pressed his lovely face closely upon the dirty floor, to try to stifle the loud sobs of pain which broke from his wounded body and his crushed spirit.

In the mean time the children had become more tranquil. Conrad was rubbing out the ugly stroke which marred the beauty of his copy-book; Maggie tried to take up the stitches which had fallen, when she pulled one of the needles out of the long blue stocking; and the two little boys had run into the kitchen to hunt the black cat, which had taken refuge under the table. The tailor-musician had put up his instrument in its allotted place, put on his blue cloth roundabout, and, taking his hat from the nail, was blowing the dust off it, as he said lightly to his wife, who was trying to quiet the baby: "Listen to me, wife! Walter had nothing at all to do with the noise and screaming of the children; so don't be cross to him about it, will you?"

[115]

"What's that to you, I should like to know? Mind your own business, and don't meddle yourself in things that don't concern you. Stick to your needle and your fiddle: what do you know about children? That's my business; and, potz tausend! I should like to see the man who would dare to meddle in my affairs!"

"I am sure I have no wish to do it," said the crest-fallen little tailor, "but you must not abuse Walter; for although he is so very young, he can already play three dances upon the fife; in another year, I can take him about with me when I play at the balls; and thus he will soon be able to gain money for us all."

"Indeed!" cried the woman, scornfully. "He is a little miracle in your eyes! But mark well what I say; if I don't keep your infant miracle in order, he'll soon become a monstrous good-for-nothing. Odds bodikins, but I intend to do it, too! Now go about your business at once, and don't bother me with any more of your ridiculous nonsense!"

[116]

The tailor looked compassionately at the poor, sobbing boy, shrugged his narrow shoulders, and, after an abrupt "good by," left the house.

Mother Bopp put the child in the cradle, ordered Walter to rock it and watch the baby, and told Maggie to set the table for supper. This command soon brought the still quarrelling brother and sister again together. They all bestirred themselves busily, shoved the heavy oaken table from the wall out into the middle of the room, and put stools and benches round it. Maggie set a tin salt-cellar upon it, and placed a large spoon near the salt. The four children took their seats at the table. The mother soon brought in a great earthen bowl, full of smoking potatoes, and put them on the table. She then seated herself in the arm-chair, and they all began to eat their supper. But Walter still remained alone on the floor in the corner, and rocked the cradle, while he eagerly breathed the vapor from the smoking potatoes, which soon spread itself through the low room.

[117]

A considerable time had elapsed, in which Maggie had often touched her mother's arm, and looked pleadingly and significantly towards Walter, but it had not produced the least effect upon Mother Bopp. Maggie had eaten very little herself, and two or three potatoes, which she had carefully selected, still lay before her, which she boldly protected against all Conrad's attempts to appropriate to himself. At last, Mother Bopp cried, "Walter!" and the boy hastened to her side.

"Will you always mind what I say to you? will you always do what I tell you to do, and never again lie, like a little idler, upon the floor?"

"Yes!" sobbed the boy, "I will never again forget to rock Johnny, even if my father should play upon the clarinet!"

"Well, then, if you will promise always to be good, I will punish you no more to-day. Sit down, then, and eat your supper, and mind that you begin no quarrelling with the children!"

[118]

Walter slipped quietly to the corner of the table, where Maggie made room for him, and secretly shoved before him the potatoes which she had so carefully chosen.

"See now," growled Conrad, "you can pick and peel potatoes enough for Walter, but I have to peel them for myself. Can't he peel them for himself as well as I can?"

"No, for you are a great deal larger than he is, and can peel two before he is ready with one; and you have already eaten a great many, and he is just beginning," answered his sister.

"But I will have these, too!" he cried, defiantly, and attempted to seize them.

Walter tried anxiously to cover his treasure with his little hands; Maggie helped him, but Conrad was strong, and soon again began to beat them. Mother Bopp, who had gone for a moment to the cradle, turned angrily round, and in a great passion cried, "What! fighting already? Who began it?"

"Conrad took my potatoes from me," said Walter, in a meek voice.

[119]

"The stupid little devil lies; they didn't belong to him at all, for Maggie peeled them!" screamed Conrad.

"I don't tell a lie," said Walter; "he did take them away from me."

"Walter is right; Conrad is both a thief and a liar!" asserted Maggie.

"Can it be possible that Walter is fighting again? That is too much to bear!" cried Mother Bopp in a rage. "Didn't I just tell you, you must be good, and that you must never fight again? You are a

bad, wicked, troublesome fellow! Off,—off to bed with you! You shall not taste a single bite of anything to-night!"

"But, indeed, mother," interrupted Maggie, "it is not at all Walter's fault; Conrad—"

"Hold your tongue, miss!" cried Mother Bopp. "Much you know about right and wrong, to blame your own brother! You had better take care of yourself, or—"

The raised hand and threatening face explained sufficiently this mysterious "or."

Maggie sunk into a gloomy silence, and secretly wiped the tears from her eyes. Conrad made a triumphant face at her, and ate at his ease the peeled potatoes which he had so unjustly stolen from the foundling; and poor Walter, hungry and crying, stole to hide himself in his wretched bed. [120]

It was very late; everybody had gone to rest, but Walter could not sleep. But when the rest of the family retired, he too, out of fear, pretended to go to sleep, but he could not do so; and as he restlessly tossed about upon his bed, the straw crackled under him. He thought he heard some one lightly calling his name. He sat up, and saw Maggie standing beside him, who asked him in a whisper, "Why don't you go to sleep?"

"Dear Maggie, I can't, I am so hungry!"

"I thought so, poor little fellow!" she answered compassionately. "Here, I picked up two potatoes while mother was in the kitchen, and slipped away a little bit of bread, too. Eat them, Walter! But take care that you don't let any crumbs fall in the bed; for if mother should find out to-morrow that you have had anything to eat to-night, it would be bad enough for us both!" [121]

"Dear, good, kind Maggie, thank you, thank you!" said the child, while he eagerly devoured the cold potatoes.

"Good night!" "Good night!" said the children to each other as they parted. Maggie slipped quietly back to her bed again; and after Walter had satisfied his hunger, he slumbered sweetly and quietly on until the morning dawned.

The scene which we have just sketched may serve to give some idea of the loving hearts to which the poor foundling had been intrusted. Mother Bopp had persuaded her husband, whom she completely ruled, to take the child, because she thought that, where so many children had to be fed, one mouth more would scarcely add anything to the necessary expenses, and that the little sum which the mayor, squire, and magistrates were willing to pay from the town revenues for his keeping would be very useful to her in various ways. In what manner she fulfilled the duties which she had assumed for the deserted boy, we have already seen. At least, the "one mouth more added nothing to the additional expenses." [122]

In spite of her cruelty, the boy was strong and healthy, and both in beauty and behaviour far surpassed the little Bopps. This was, however, only a new ground for her deep and intense hatred. Walter was maltreated, starved, and beaten. But, even if crying from pain and hunger, when Father Bopp commenced his daily practising upon his instruments, he would cease upon the very first tones, and, creeping close to the feet of the tailor, he would listen to him with the greatest apparent satisfaction. For this reason, the tailor-musician began to love the deserted boy even more than any of his own children, who never paid the least attention to his playing. This of course increased the hatred of Mother Bopp to the unfortunate orphan, and awakened the envy of her darling, the red-headed, noisy, wicked Conrad. Maggie had felt a tender compassion and real affection for the luckless child, from the first moment in which he had entered her home, a desolate but beautiful creature of about three years old. She cherished and protected him to the extent of her power. [123]

The tailor began to give Walter lessons in music when he was only about five years old. He taught him upon a fife which was of the right size for his little hand, and he could soon play several dances tolerably well. It was his intention to render his progress as rapid as possible, and to teach him all the dances in common use, so that he might take him with him to play at fairs, parties, and wedding festivities. Mother Bopp had nothing to urge against it, because she saw that he would soon be able to earn some money in this way; but she always contradicted and battled with her husband, when he spoke of the astonishing talent which the child possessed, or expressed his astonishment at the rapidity of his progress. She said Conrad would have learned a great deal faster, if his father had only taken the trouble to have taught him. But, indeed, she thought it was better it should be so, for Conrad was far too smart to content himself with being nothing more than a town-fiddler. No, indeed! She had higher views for him: he should be a student. When such remarks were made by Mother Bopp, the tailor would heave a light sigh, and say, "Well, well, we'll see about that." [124]

He never ventured to contradict his wife openly; but when it grew too stormy and uncomfortable for him at home, he used to go to the Golden Star, and drink his sorrows into forgetfulness. But when he came staggering back to the house, he had often the courage to express and maintain different opinions from those held by his wife. But she always got the upper hand in such contests, for she forcibly supported her right to tyrannize in her own province, and knew how to hold him under the most despotic petticoat government.

These vulgar scenes and low squabbles were the first impressions which the young spirit of Walter received. He loved the father and Maggie, and hated the mother and Conrad. When he

was about seven years old, he could play the fiddle and fife almost as well as the tailor, and accompanied him everywhere where his business called him. Indeed, the people soon refused to employ the old musician without the young one, which pleased the little tailor exceedingly, because it furnished him with an excuse to have Walter always with him. The squire himself had admired the skill of the foundling, and sent him a present of a violin as a Christmas gift, which made Walter so happy, that it enabled him to bear, almost unnoticed, the constant and provoking malice of Conrad.

[125]

So Walter, with the new fiddle which the squire had given him at Christmas, went everywhere with the tailor, and his happiest hours were spent far from the house of his tormentors. Without ever growing tired, he played away in the midst of dust and tobacco-smoke, laughed at the coarse jokes which occurred, drank off, without thinking, the brandy and strong beer which was handed to him; and when, through the stimulating effects of such draughts, his shyness and bashfulness vanished, and his vivid spirit manifested itself in droll jests and witty speeches, then old and young would crowd around him, admire his musical talent, and laugh at his smart sayings; and the more impudent and spoiled he became, so much the more was he the petted darling of the farmers and mechanics.

[126]

Thus was Walter upon the high road to destruction; thus might he have become a complete good-for-nothing. But the stain of this spoiling by the inconsiderate populace was only upon the outer man; and his inner nature remained pure and unhurt, so that the evil vanished as soon as its cause was removed.

Notwithstanding the constant interruptions which occurred in his attendance at school, from which, at times of festivals and weddings, he was often absent for whole weeks together, as he was industrious and desirous of acquiring knowledge, he made rapid progress in his studies.

The praises and rewards given him by the different teachers in the school excited Conrad's envy to the highest degree, and greatly enraged Mother Bopp.

The yearly examinations had just ended. Among those who had taken the highest prizes Walter stood conspicuous. Conrad had obtained none. Walter stood, with his cheeks glowing with excitement, turning over the leaves in the books which he had just received, when the venerable pastor approached him, stroking, as if he were well pleased with him, his dark, clustering curls, and said to him: "I hope, my child, that you will win, next year, the prizes in the higher classes. But in order to render this possible, you must not lose so much time at school as you have done this year. Music, in the right time and place, is certainly a very good thing, my son; but you are now at the right age to acquire more extended and general knowledge, and the loss of proper schooling in our early years can never be replaced by any future application, however severe it may be. It is also high time that you should begin to study the Word of God; and if the director of the school continues to be as well satisfied with you as he is at present, I will take you under my own care, and myself instruct you in all necessary knowledge."

[127]

Walter's eyes sparkled with delight; an exclamation of grateful joy parted his rosy lips; he stammeringly promised to do all that would be required of him, and with both his little hands he trustingly pressed the hand of the pastor, who bade him a cordial good-by. He then turned to the tailor, and advised him not to keep the child from his school to go about to fairs and weddings with him, and thus prevent his otherwise certain progress in his studies. The tailor promised that he would do so no more, and then spoke of the genius of the boy for music, and of his own strong attachment to him.

[128]

Then they all left the school-room, and when they stood in the street before the door of the school, the elated tailor could contain himself no longer, but seized the boy in his arms, pressed him to his breast, and kissed him frequently, as he said, "You dear little fellow! I always knew you were a smart boy, and now I am sure you will do me credit some day or other."

In a very bad humor, Mother Bopp ran her elbows into his side, and wakened him, not very pleasantly, from his dreams of joy and honor. He saw a dark storm lowering upon the threatening brow of his wife, and knew that, as soon as they were sheltered by the privacy of their own roof, a perfect avalanche of abusive words would flow from the bitter, firmly-closed, thin lips. Frightened at once into silence, he quietly slipped behind his angry spouse, and placed as many of the school-children as he could between himself and the ruffled dame. But as their way led through a back street, in which the glittering sign of the Golden Star enticingly hung, he slipped, unobserved, into the beloved precincts, in order to gain courage to face the tornado which he felt awaited him at home.

[129]

Poor little Walter was soon driven from the heaven which the praise of his teachers and the smiles of the venerable pastor had prepared for his heart. Conrad told his mother that Walter had made use of the meanest and most disgusting arts of hypocrisy and flattery to win the love of the teacher, and that it was entirely through unjust partiality that he had obtained the prizes, which all the boys in the school knew he did not deserve.

"Mean hypocrite!" cried the angry woman, "I'll teach you to play your low tricks upon us, you detestable viper! Do you really think I'll suffer you thus to impose upon my son, and not punish you for it? I don't care whether the schoolmaster or the parson does it, but it's infamous and scandalous that a miserable foundling, whom nobody knows anything about, nor in what jail or penitentiary his parents may now be stuck, should be preferred to the decent children of honest people!"

[130]

Walter's cheeks glowed like fire; he pressed his hands spasmodically together, while the lightning fairly flashed from his lustrous eye as he gazed angrily at the irritating woman. She well



knew that there was nothing she could have said or done which would have wounded him as deeply as this stigma cast upon his unknown parents.

"Only look, mother!" said the malicious Conrad. "Look! Walter stares at you as if he were going to eat you up! He scorns and defies you, mother!"

"Does he? O, I know how to break him of that! I'll beat the life out of him, or I'll break his defiant temper!" said she, exasperated to perfect fury, while she slapped him again and again, with all her strength, in his face. "March into the room, sir! march! You sha'n't leave the house to-day! You sha'n't go to the school festival at all, sir! You are no fit companion for honest people's sons, you beggar's brat! The pastor shall know before the day is over what a mean, hypocritical, wicked, ungrateful boy you are!" [131]

No expression altered in the lines of Walter's young face; he was so accustomed to abuse that he had long borne it with an air of calm and cold defiance. Without making any reply, he went quietly into the room, as he had been ordered, and concealed the rage boiling in his heart under an appearance of perfect indifference. He soon after took up his violin, and, as he played, peace and tranquillity returned to the tortured little breast.

Twilight began to darken into night, and the children had not yet returned from the school festival. Walter had played until he was really tired, had put his violin down upon the table, and, with his head resting upon his arm, had sunk to sleep. When the tailor, half intoxicated, returned home, the customary scene of quarrelling was renewed. Walter was awakened by the noise; he listened, and heard the falling of the blows which the strong and vigorous woman was heaping upon the fragile little man whom he loved, and who had never said an unkind word to him since his entrance into the family. His heart bled for the poor tailor, and all the bitterness in his nature was aroused against the wicked woman who treated them both so cruelly. [132]

"Wait a moment, wicked woman!" he murmured. "Conrad is not in the house to help you, and the father shall have the best of it to-day!"

With one rapid bound he was in the room, and fastened his arms round the feet of Mother Bopp, so that she might be thrown down, and thus forced to release her husband. She was surprised for a moment when she felt herself thus suddenly caught, but seeing immediately that it was only Walter, she tried to push him away with her feet. With her left hand she grasped the little tailor by the throat, while with her right she brandished the yardstick. Again and again she struck him violently over the head and shoulders with it. Alas! Walter could endure it no longer! He seized the round and powerful arm, and fastened his sharp, snow-white teeth firmly in the solid flesh. She screamed loudly with the sudden pain, the yardstick sunk from her right hand, the left loosened its grasp from the throat of the tailor, and wreathed itself in the dark locks of the unfortunate boy. The tailor fell upon the floor, muttering words which were quite unintelligible. Walter had pulled his teeth out of the athletic arm, and the blood dropped down upon his head. He looked at it unaffrighted, nay, rather with a triumphant expression, and said,— [133]

"You shall never beat my father again! I will never suffer you to do it again, never! I am growing taller and stronger every day, and I will henceforth always help him. You cannot treat me worse than you have hitherto done, unless you kill me outright. Do that if you dare; for if you do, you know you will be hanged!" [134]

Actually struck dumb with astonishment and rage, the woman looked down upon the defiant little hero. Recovering herself, however, she seized him by the arm, dragged him to the front door, and, as she pushed him down the steps, cried after him,—

"Off with you! off with you, you good-for-nothing little rascal! Go and beg your bread where you can! If you ever dare to enter my house again, I'll strike you dead with a club, like a mad dog! I'll teach you to bite like a bloodhound!"

The heavy bolt fell jarringly in its place, and Walter stood in the street alone!

Soon after, the school-children, full of joyous prattle, began to return from their festival, and poor Walter hid himself, that they might not see him as they passed by. The moon looked calmly down upon the house from which he had just been driven. He had never known any home but this, and although he had spent many wretched days there, yet the separation from it pained his heart. He said to himself, as the big tears rolled rapidly down his cheeks,— [135]

"How many stories she will tell about me! The good pastor, who spoke so very kindly to me to-day, and my teacher,—oh! they will all learn to think so badly of me, for she will tell them all what a wicked, dreadful boy I am! But she might say of me all she could, if she would only stick to the truth. But she won't do that! Suppose I were to go myself to the pastor, and tell him how it all happened? But that would be of no use to me, for perhaps he would not believe me, and it would not bring me back to my home. Nothing would ever induce me to enter the house again! No, she shall never again have a chance to beat me like a mad dog! I need not beg either, as she says I must. I can support myself very well, if she would only let me have my fiddle! Ah! if Maggie had been there, she could have told the pastor that I only tried to help her father, because he is so much weaker than this strong, cruel woman!"

As these thoughts were passing through the mind of Walter, the door of the house was softly opened, and Maggie slipped noiselessly up the street, looking searchingly in every direction, and at last cried, with a suppressed voice,— [136]

"Walter!"

"I am here!" answered the boy, and Maggie hastened to meet him.

"O Walter!" she said, "why have you treated my mother so badly? Her arm is very much swollen, and she suffers a great deal of pain!"

"I am not sorry," answered the boy; "I would like to leave her a long remembrance of Walter."

"Shame! shame! Walter, that is wicked!" scolded Maggie. "I never could have believed that you would have spoken in such a cruel manner. Do you not know that he who lifts up his hand against his father or mother stands near his own grave?"

"But she is not my mother at all; and you know she has always reviled me as a poor, miserable foundling. But, Maggie, you must not think that I bit her because she whipped me. She may say what she will about it, but I will tell you the truth. I ran in to help your father. Could I stand quietly by, and see him beaten with the hard, heavy yardstick? No! I could not bear it; for he is not strong enough to contend with her,—and he is so good and kind, and never likes to hurt anybody. You know I have borne calmly enough all her harsh treatment to myself, no matter how unjust and unkind she might be to me,—as she was this morning when I brought my school-prizes home, and she beat me; yet you know, Maggie, I never retaliated my wrongs upon her. But indeed I could not see the weak father so abused! Ah, dear Maggie! do not let them slander me! Tell the good pastor, and my kind schoolmaster, that I did not do it to defend myself from her blows, but only to help my poor, weak father!"

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"Yes, yes, I will! I will indeed!" sobbed Maggie; "but what can you do for yourself, poor boy? Hide yourself anywhere you can to-night, and then come to-morrow and beg mother's pardon, so that you can come home and live with us again!"

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"Never! never!" said the boy, hastily. "I will never enter the door again! Your mother pushed me out, called me a dog, and threatened to knock me down dead with a club if I ever crossed her threshold again! She said I would have to beg my bread. Beg, indeed! I am far enough from that, I can tell you! If I only had my fiddle, I could take care of myself well enough, for I can play all the dances as well as anybody! Beg, indeed!"

"You are right," said Maggie. "You are a musician, and there is no reason you should be beaten and abused by anybody."

"Yes,—but without an instrument!" said Walter, sadly. "My fiddle, and the beautiful book that I got to-day in school, as a reward, are surely my own property; they lie both together in the chamber."

"Don't fret about them, Walter, for I will bring them both to you," said Maggie, soothingly. "Stay here in the shadow of the wall; as soon as mother goes to sleep, I will find them, and bring them to you. Here is a piece of bread; it is all I could find in the kitchen, and I have brought you a cake home from the school festival. Good-by! Don't grow weary waiting for my return; but if I don't go back now to the house, mother will miss me, and I may not be able to get out again."

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**THE YOUNG ARTIST.**

Maggie hastened away, and the boy seated himself in the shadow of the wall, ate his bread and school-cake, and soon slept tranquilly upon the cold stones.

After a considerable time had elapsed, Maggie wakened him up; she had the treasured fiddle, and a little bundle in her hand.

"Here, poor boy, is your fiddle!" she sobbed; "I have tied your shirts and your book up in this bundle. The father sends you a thousand good-byes; he has somewhat recovered himself, and is very much distressed at your going away. But he thinks that when you get away from here, and mingle in the world, that you may become a great artist. He sends you the few pennies which he had by him, and begs that, when you go into the wide, wide world, you will not forget him, for that he will always love you. He whispered this secretly to me, when mother was in the kitchen, and our wicked Conrad in his chamber. Good-by! good-by, my dear, dear Walter! and don't forget Maggie in the wide, wide world!"

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"Farewell, dearest Maggie! Stand by your father whenever they treat him badly. When I have grown to be a great artist, as the father says I will,—and you may be sure he must know something about it,—I will have plenty of money; and then you, Maggie, and the good father shall live with me, and I will try to reward you for all the kindness you have both shown me. But I cannot let your mother and Conrad live with me, for they are so bad that they would make us all unhappy; but I will give them plenty of money, so that they can have pancakes every day in the week for dinner, and a nice piece of roast beef for Sundays."

"Will you really do all that, Walter?" said the child, as she clapped her hands in astonishment and delight.

The boy proudly and confidently nodded an assuring "Yes," and Maggie continued,—

"What a good-hearted boy you are! Only make haste to be a great artist, that we may soon meet again! O how very happy father, you, and I might be together! Until then, Walter, farewell!"

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"Farewell, Maggie!" said Walter.

Then the two children embraced each other. They parted, consoled in some degree by the idea of soon meeting again. Maggie slipped back into the house, and Walter, carrying his bundle on a stick slung over his shoulder, and his violin under his arm, passed, full of hope, through the closing gate of an unhappy past, into the breaking dawn of an uncertain future!

## WALTER FINDS AND LOSES A FRIEND.

"The field lies wide before you, where to reap  
The noble harvest of a deathless name."

THE pleasant town of Sallheim, in consequence of the exceeding beauty of its situation, was a place of considerable resort. At the very end of the long village the principal hotel, the Golden Crown, was placed. A fine view of the enchanting valley below was to be seen from its garden, and guests of all ages and ranks took refreshments under the shade of its branching trees. The ninepin-alley was always full. A fine band of music often played under the dense shadows cast by the lindens, which attracted numberless visitors from both town and country. Upon one bright afternoon in summer, such crowds of people arrived that the garden was scarcely able to contain them all, for the next day was to be the opening of the great annual fair. Wandering musicians, organ-grinders, harpists, rope-dancers, men with puppet-shows, &c. arrived, and put up at the Golden Crown, in hopes of earning a few pennies from the rapidly gathering throng. Quite a crowd of people were collected round a stout and athletic man, who was giving various proofs of exceeding strength, such as tossing up cannon-balls in the air, and catching them as they fell; balancing a table upon his teeth, upon which his youngest daughter stood; while groups of eager children were standing round a puppet-show, or listening to the music of the harp.

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Two large pear-trees stood in the outer yard, with chairs and tables placed under them, at a considerable distance from the noise and bustle of the garden. A single person occupied this comparatively quiet spot. He was a little man, not taller than most boys are at ten years of age; his large head was set upon his high, broad shoulders, almost without a visible neck; his chestnut-brown hair, which had fallen out from the crown of his head, streamed long and thin over a high hump which rose upon his back; his nose was large, and curved like the beak of an eagle; his mouth was immense, and fully furnished with white and glittering teeth; while his pale blue eyes, large and round, protruded considerably from their sockets. He rested with his arms leaning upon the table, and his hands, which from their size would have done honor to a large man, were occupied in peeling an apple. Before him stood a waiter, upon which were placed pears, nuts, bread, and wine. He looked good-humored and contented. His coat was of dark, fine cloth; his linen beautifully made, and as white as snow.

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A little to the left of the pear-trees was seated a slight and sunburnt boy, very meanly clad. A stout stick and a little bundle lay near him on the ground, and a fiddle, wrapped up in a bright-colored handkerchief, showed him to be a wandering musician, who came to try his fortunes, with older men, at the fair. With his dark, curly head supported by his left hand, he was busily engaged in devouring a great bowl of bread and milk. It was Walter, the foundling, who had now been wandering without a home for nearly three months, and who had found some trouble in supporting himself by his playing. He travelled about without any distinctive aim; sometimes he gained small sums of money, for the beautiful boy often awakened a lively interest in his hearers; but he was often forced to listen to harsh words and terms of reproach, which wounded his very soul. He knew now that it was no easy thing to make his own way through the world, and to become a great artist. But he did not lose his courage; he rejoiced that through his almost hourly practice he was constantly acquiring more facility upon his instrument, and that he could play several long pieces, which he had picked up in his wanderings, from hearing them executed by better performers than himself. After Walter had finished his bowl of bread and milk, he stretched his tired limbs out upon the bench, and sought repose. For the first time he now observed his neighbor, whose remarkable appearance at once chained his attention. The little man was eating his nuts apparently with great satisfaction; he cracked them with his sharp, strong teeth, and threw the shells about, right and left, in quite a comical manner. A whole troop of boys, some of them from the village, some of them guests at the inn, had gathered themselves around him. They put their heads together, whispered, coughed, and tittered, pointed their fingers at him, and mimicked all his movements. He appeared to take no notice of them, but went on quietly eating his nuts. This only made the mischievous boys more insolent; first one cried, then another, and at last all together: "Nut-cracker! nut-cracker! crack me a nut! Ha! ha! ha! Halloo! nut-cracker!"

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The boys came nearer and nearer to him, and declared that, if some one would pull him by the coat-tail, and then shove the very hardest kind of nuts into his mouth, he could surely crack them. They then determined to make the attempt; some of them pulled his coat-tail, while others threw little stones at him. Walter could no longer endure this derision of the stranger. Brandishing his heavy travelling stick in his right hand, he suddenly sprang before the table of the humpback, and said, with flashing eyes: "Shame! shame, boys! to behave so rudely! Do you not see that he cannot protect himself against your mischief, because he is weak? Shame! shame! to attack one who is weaker than yourselves!"

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The boys stopped their sport for a moment; but they rapidly consulted together, and then hallooed: "What does that beggar-fellow dare to say to us? He had better not try to master us! He's a pretty looking chap, to be sure, to dare to scold us! Up, and catch him! Pound him, and beat him, until he can move no longer!"

Part of the boys fell with loud shouts upon Walter, while others threw stones at him. The boy parried their blows with his stick, and defended himself bravely; but at last he must have yielded to numbers, had not assistance come from the quarter from which he least expected it. The little man, for whose sake he had encountered the storm, stood suddenly beside him, tore the two boys

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who were trying to throw Walter down away with great violence, shook them for a moment in the air, and then threw them upon the ground. Then with his long arms and immense hands he seized upon two other boys, and while he held them in the air he cried, "You bad boys, if you don't let the little fiddler alone, and go away quietly from here immediately, I will toss these two boys like balls among you, and not one of you shall return alive to the house!"

The boys were seized with a sudden panic, and with loud shrieks ran away. The man set his two trembling prisoners free, who rapidly fled to join their companions. He then looked round after his little protector.

Walter was standing at the well, washing the blood from his still bleeding brow, for he had been struck with a heavy stone. The little man hastened to him, and said in a compassionate tone, "My brave little defender, I hope you are not much hurt?"

"O no!" answered Walter, "I don't think it amounts to anything. But don't be offended because I came to your aid. I thought you were weak, and that I could help you; but you are very, very strong!" [149]

"Yes, God be thanked! In giving me this strangely disproportioned form, he gave me an extraordinary strength with it, in order that I might be able to protect myself from the ill-treatment my odd appearance might bring upon me. But the laughing and scoffing of bad boys makes, in general, but little impression upon me, and I scarcely ever use my strength, lest I might hurt them. You could not know that, my boy; and that you alone among so many should have struggled to protect me is a sure proof that you have a good heart. Come, child, let me put this piece of healing plaster on your wound; I always carry some about with me in my pocketbook. There, now! it is on, and it will quit bleeding. Now sit down beside me, and tell me what your name is, and why it is that your parents let you travel about alone, at such an early age."

Walter immediately did as he had been requested. The deformed and exceedingly ugly man had won his entire confidence. He related his whole history to him, without concealing anything. [150]

The little man muttered, now and then, some almost unintelligible words, and moved his thick head and short neck strangely about. After Walter had finished his recital, he laid his large hand upon his dark curls, and said friendly to him: "My dear boy, if you continue to travel about as you have done, from town to town, with your fiddle, you will never become even a respectable man, much less a great artist; for in this way you will never acquire any knowledge of music, or the meaning of the word of God."

"Heaven help me!" sighed the boy; "what will become of me? what had I better do? I cannot go back to Mother Bopp, for she would strike me dead like a dog. Poor, forsaken boy that I am! nobody cares about me; I am entirely neglected. Alas! alas! I have no parents to love me, as other children have!" Thick tears coursed their rapid way over the rosy cheeks of the deserted foundling.

"Be still, and do not weep, my poor child! You have a Father above,—one who is a Father to us all,—who loves you, and will take care of you." [151]

"No, indeed, sir," said the child, while he looked full into the face of the stranger, with his fearless and lustrous eyes, "no, no, I have certainly no father!"

"Believe me, my dear son, you too have a Father,—a good and powerful Father. He dwells above us, in the depths of the blue heavens, but he is also everywhere upon the face of the earth. He sees you always, and always takes care of you. His name is GOD, the Father."

"Indeed, sir, you are mistaken. I have heard that he has a great deal to do, and a great many worlds to take care of. He don't trouble himself about a poor, forsaken boy," said the child, sadly.

"And yet he has numbered the very hairs of your head, and not a single one falls to the ground without his will," answered the stranger, earnestly.

Walter gazed into his face with the greatest astonishment; then ran his fingers through his thick curls, as if to convince himself anew of their immense number, shook his head sadly, and said unbelievably: "No hair fall from my head without his will! It has also, then, been his will that I should have been exposed in the hazel-bushes; and that Mother Bopp should beat me so cruelly! No good father, that loved his child, would suffer such cruel things to happen to him." [152]

"My poor, dear boy!" answered the stranger, deeply touched, "God, the good Father, has certainly permitted that you should have been forsaken when an infant, and have been since so cruelly maltreated. Why he suffered such things to be, and why he gave me a form so fantastic and deformed, we cannot now know, but we shall know his merciful motives when we no longer wear these earthly garments,—when we are with the good Father in heaven. But it must certainly have been for our own benefit: perhaps it was necessary for the salvation of our souls. Believe me, this is true, my son. Trust firmly in the Father in heaven; he is both good and powerful. Although you know so little about him, he will take care of you, and manifest himself at the proper hour. But the night is rapidly approaching, and I must go back to the town. Here, my son, is enough to pay for your night's lodging. If you would like to see me again, do not mingle with the people who attend the Fair,—the organ-grinders, puppet-show men, and the like,—but come to the town in the morning, and inquire for the house of Mr. Burg, the clock-maker; and when you have found it, come in, and you shall not fare the worse for our accidental meeting. Farewell, my poor boy! Trust in the Father in heaven, and implore him for his gracious aid!" He rose rapidly, pressed a guinea into the child's hand, and with long and powerful strides left the inclosure. [153]

Walter remained thoughtfully sitting upon the bench. At last, after a long pause, he murmured

lightly to himself: "The good God cares for me, and no single hair falls from my head without his will; I must trust in him! So the little man said." His voice grew more cheerful, and, looking at the glitter of the gold which he still held in his hand, he continued: "Then it was the good God who directed that I should meet the kind little man, and that he should give me all this money just at this moment, when I have not a single cent in my pocket, and did not know how I should gain enough to pay for a night's lodging. Yes, that must the good God have done! At any rate, I must thank him for it, for the little man vanished so suddenly that I had no time to say a single word to him."

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Walter folded his hands, and made a short prayer, such as his childish heart dictated to him. He then took his violin, went contentedly into the house, and, as his benefactor had advised him to do, sought no other companions, but went to bed alone, and soon fell asleep, full of joyous hopes.

The high-road was filled with people, for the Fair enticed both sellers and buyers to the neighboring town. As Walter walked cheerfully along under the shadow of the tall chestnut-trees which bordered the highway, he hummed a song, and thought of the good little man. Suddenly a coarse voice cried to him: "Good morning, little fiddler! Are you going to the town?"

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Walter looked round, and recognized the stout, strong man whom he had seen the day before, and who was walking close behind him. A little cart, full of the most heterogeneous baggage, was drawn by a dog, and driven by a boy of about Walter's own age. A maiden somewhat older walked behind the cart, carrying a harp upon her back, and a still smaller girl, who also took a part in the exhibitions of the family, ran alongside. As Walter's eye rapidly glanced over the members of the wandering household, he took off his hat, and politely answered the salutation of the man.

"Now, boy, tell me, are you going to the town in order to earn something there?" said the stout man to Walter.

"Yes, I am," answered Walter.

"Are you entirely alone, or do your parents expect you there?" the man continued.

"I am entirely alone!" sighed the boy.

"And do you think it possible, you little fool, to get on by yourself? Have you a passport and a certificate from your home?" "No! I have neither. I did not know I should need them," answered Walter.

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"I thought so! You are already in a scrape, then. There are officers appointed by the government, whose duty it is to see that all strangers possess such papers; they exact them from everybody, little and big, and those who have them not are immediately taken up, and either put in prison, or sent out of the country as nuisances and vagabonds."

"O, I am not at all afraid of that!" said Walter. "I know a good gentleman in the town, who would certainly help me."

"Oh!" growled the man, "if you have an acquaintance in the town, that is quite another thing! Rosa! Rosa! don't be running about so in every direction! You'll tire yourself out before you come to the town, and then you'll not be fit to do anything. Come to me, and I'll carry you a little!"

He raised the little girl in his arms, and swung her upon his back. The child, accustomed to this manner of being carried, fastened her arms and feet around him, and from her new position commenced teasing and tormenting her sister, in no very refined manner.

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Walter began to dislike his companions, and to feel rather uncomfortable with them, so he tried to walk faster than they were doing so as to leave them behind, but the man hastened his steps, and insisted upon keeping up with him. After a short time he said to him: "Now, tell us, boy, what is the name of your acquaintance? If he is rich and kind, he will probably give me, who am very poor indeed, something worth looking at, if I make my children perform for him. Where does he live?"

"His name is—is—I cannot think now of his name! Wait a minute! O yes! He said I must ask for the house of—of—the clock-maker. Now, what was the name? Merciful Heaven! Can I have forgotten his name? I will certainly recall it in a moment or two."

"O my young fellow!" said the man, while he laughed very loud, "you are really in a bad fix! A friend, whose very name you have forgotten, will not help you out of the hands of the police."

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"O, I shall certainly be able to recall it to my memory!" said Walter, with the tears running down his cheeks.

"My poor child!" said the man, earnestly, "if you can't remember the name before we arrive at the entrance of the town, from which we are not more than a hundred feet distant, you are ruined. The police keep a sharp look-out; without making any bones about it, they will seize you by the throat, and throw you into some dark jail. Then, in the company of rats, toads, and other monsters, you will have plenty of time to think of the name of your kind acquaintance!"

"O good Heaven! In that case, I will not enter the town. I will return, and remain in the village," sobbed the boy, and turned rapidly round to take the direction back to the inn.

"I really pity you, poor little fellow!" said the man, while he held him fast by the arm. "You will be able to earn nothing in the village, but in the town you might do a sure business. I am a good-hearted fellow,—I wish I could help you! H—m! h—m! let me think a minute! How can I possibly

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do it?—Yes, yes! I have it now! You can stay with me and labor with us. I can say you are my son. I have my papers in my pocketbook, and they state that I, Christopher Pommer, am travelling with my family. How can the police know whether I have one child more or less? If you are satisfied with my proposal, you shall live with us. I will furnish you with enough to eat and drink; you shall live with me as one of my children, and I will give, in addition, a penny every day. There, boy, you have found a good friend; everything found for you, and a penny a day clear! You see I am rather a good-natured fool! Now, then, are you agreed?"

"That depends upon what you will require me to do," said Walter, doubtingly; "for I have never learned to twist about my limbs as you do."

"Ah! it would take you a long time to learn that," answered the man, laughingly. "You will only have to do what you like to do,—to play upon the fiddle. My Minnie plays upon the harp; you can play together in the different houses and in the streets, and all the money that the people may give you for it you are to bring to me. You see it is only out of the kindness of my heart that I offer to serve you, for Minnie can earn as much without you as with you!"

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It seemed to Walter that what the man said was true enough. It was certain that Christopher Pommer and his family did not at all please him; but then he had a perfect horror of jails and rats. Yet it was with a feeling of irresistible repulsion that he entered into the proposed arrangement.

"Well, then," said the man, with his harsh, disagreeable laugh, "we must soon commence our preparations for business. What is your name, my son?"

"Walter," he answered, with his head sinking upon his bosom.

"O boy, be more cheerful! Don't let your head hang down in such a way! I must make you acquainted with your brothers and sisters, for we are almost at home. Halloo, children! Come here! You must learn to know your new brother. This is he. His name is Walter. Walter, this is Minnie, with whom you are to play; this boy is Bastian; and the child upon my back is little Rose."

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"And this is Nero," cried Rose, as she pointed to the dog in the cart.

"True enough," said the man, "he belongs to the family, and earns his own bread with the rest of us. Once for all, I tell you, children, you had better behave yourselves properly, or—or—But here is our inn, the Black Bear; here we are well known: we are good old friends. We will take a bite of breakfast here, arrange our dress a little, and then go to the town to seek work. Whoever brings the most money back with him shall receive a double share. But when it strikes nine o'clock in the evening, everybody must be at home. You, Walter, must first practise a couple of hours with Minnie; then you will go through the town together."

"Father," said Bastian, "am I not to go with Minnie, and play upon the flute, as I always do?"

"No!" answered the father, gruffly; "you must go with me. You know we were forced to leave your mother at home sick, and you must try to make yourself as useful as possible. You must take the trumpet, and blow it very loud, so as to attract a great many people."

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"The boy you have picked up can do that. I am sure he looks strong enough!" growled Bastian. "But as I have always been accustomed to go about with Minnie, I don't intend to give it up to him,—and I will go with her!"

"Don't mutter such nonsense, boy, or I will have to teach you obedience." Then he whispered to the angry flutist: "Didn't you hear how this little chap managed the fiddle yesterday? He knows something about music, and plays very well; that is the reason why I tried to frighten him into staying with us, with my stories about the police. Be quiet instantly, so that he may not suspect my motives!"

In the mean time Walter and Minnie had entered the inn. As soon as they had eaten their breakfast, they began to practise together. As Minnie could only strike a few chords upon the harp, she could soon play a simple accompaniment to some of Walter's pieces, and as he already knew almost all of the tunes which Bastian had executed upon the flute, the two children were ready at the appointed time to commence their musical wanderings.

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Three days and nights had elapsed since Walter had been adopted as a member of the family of Pommer; but he already counted the days until the fair should be over, when he might again wander about alone from village to village, for he felt very unhappy in his present situation. When he came back with Minnie in the evening tired and hungry to the house, they were always harshly greeted, for Pommer never thought they brought enough home, and constantly accused them of having, in some way, wasted the money which they must have received. The penny promised per day was never paid. Often and often Walter had to play dances until daybreak, for the most degraded company, in the hall of the inn. If he hesitated for a moment, or complained of fatigue, Pommer threatened to deliver him up to the police, and the fear he entertained of dark prisons and rats soon brought him to yield to the most unreasonable demands.

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One evening when Walter had played for the disorderly dancers until long after midnight, when he was at last released and sought his wretched bed of straw, he found Pommer, in a state of complete intoxication, stretched across it in such a way that it was quite impossible for him to find any place upon which to rest his tired limbs. He slipped back into the hall of the inn, and threw himself, in discomfort and dust, upon the hard bench. The tears unconsciously and rapidly streamed from his eyes.

"Ah, how unfortunate I am!" he sighed; "I am again entirely forsaken. The little man, whose



name I have so unfortunately forgotten, indeed told me that I was not forsaken, and that nothing could happen to me without the will of God. But everything goes wrong with me; what is to become of me? If it is indeed God's will that I should be so miserable and so forsaken upon earth, it would be far better for me to die! O thou good God in the far heavens! if it be indeed true that thou canst see and hear me now, I beg thee with all my soul, let things, if only for this one time, go well with me! O free me from these wicked men, who may perhaps succeed in making me as worthless as they themselves are! Hast thou really seen Father Pommer this very evening putting his hand into the pocket of the red-faced soldier, and stealing his purse from it? Dost thou not know that it must be a very sad thing for me to be forced to call a thief father? O if I only knew if my own father yet lived, and where I could find him! Lead me to him, thou good God, and grant that he may be a kind one! But if he is really dead, then at least take me out of the hands of these bad men!

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"The little man told me that thou wert my Father in heaven: that thou thyself lovedst me! O dear Father so far above me! I would so like to have a father upon earth, who could teach how to do right,—how to avoid wrong! Do send me one! I will love thee so dearly if thou wilt! I will always obey thee and thank thee! O remember how early I was forsaken,—into what cruel hands I have always fallen! O thou Father above, listen to the cries of the forlorn orphan! Pray, pray, pray listen!"

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The boy sank to sleep with these prayers on his lips; these sad thoughts in his soul.

At daylight in the morning he was wakened by the harsh voice of Pommer, and in a few moments he was again with Minnie in the street.

## WALTER'S FRIEND.

"Wilt thou draw near the nature of the gods?  
Draw near them, then, in being merciful!"

THE children stood before a very handsome house, and played many of their best pieces; yet no window was opened, no friendly face looked out, no kind hands threw gentle gifts to the little musicians. The children and people who were passing by would indeed stop and look at them for a moment; but as soon as Walter came near them with his hat for a collection, they would suddenly turn upon their heels and go away. Minnie and Walter both looked sad, for it was almost noon, and their pockets were yet empty; they were very hungry, and unless they should chance to meet with some wonderful piece of good luck, they had everything to fear from the anger of Father Pommer on their return in the evening. [168]

With redoubled eagerness and force the children were playing their last new Polka. Walter's eyes were steadily fixed upon a window, from which he thought he could discern some one watching them, seated behind a curtain, and he hoped to receive something from the half-hidden form. But he felt his arm suddenly seized: he was startled, and looked round to ascertain what it could be; and in the benevolent face that was gazing upon him he instantly recognized, to his unutterable delight, the little man whose name he had forgotten, and whom he had so longed to see.

"God be thanked that I have found you! that you are really here! Now, indeed, everything must go right!" he cried, almost beside himself with joy, as he extended his hand to the stranger.

"If you really had such a strong desire to see me, why did you not come to my house? for I gave you my name, and you might easily have found me," said the clock-maker.

"You did, indeed, but I forgot it! I could not recollect it: that was my bad luck!" said the poor child eagerly. [169]

"Did you really forget my name? Did you try hard to recollect it?" asked the little man, doubtingly. "Come, children, they do not seem inclined to give you anything here. Come, I will walk with you a little way."

Minnie took her harp, looking very much astonished, and gazing distrustfully at the watch-maker, who did not seem to concern himself at all about the maiden. He asked Walter to tell honestly and truly all that had happened to him since their parting, and what he had done to support himself.

The boy related concisely all that had occurred. He told him that, having no passport, he was very much afraid of the police, and of being put into prison; but that the stout man had taken him as his son, and that he played about in all the streets with Minnie, who accompanied his violin with the harp, in order to get as much money as they could.

"Then you have found a father, and require no other?" said the clock-maker. "Now everything goes on happily with you: this wild kind of life suits you, and you desire nothing better?" [170]

Tears filled the large, dark eyes of the poor orphan; he looked sadly at the stranger, and shook his head.

"You are not happy?" answered the stranger; "if you will try to accustom yourself to a regular and industrious life, and if you will promise to be a good, truthful boy, you may come with me. I will take you into my own house, and take care of you as long as you show yourself worthy of my protection."

Walter remained motionless for a moment, as if turning into stone; then his eyes sparkled with delight, and with a cry of joy he threw his arms round the neck of the clock-maker, who tried to calm his stormy transport, and said to him: "Gently! gently, my boy! the people in the street are stopping to look and laugh at us as they go by. Once inside of my house, we can talk about it, and rejoice. Come! come quickly with me home!"

But Minnie now took Walter's hand, and said defiantly: "I will not let Walter go with you; he must stay with me, because I cannot play or earn anything without him. My father stands at the corner of the next street; I will go and bring him here, for I am sure he will never consent to Walter's leaving us." [171]

Walter clung, trembling all over with fear, to his protector, who said sternly to the girl, while he filled her hand with small coins: "Here, child! here is more money than you and Walter would have earned all day to-day and all day to-morrow! Your father has no right to this boy; tell him he must take care to do nothing more against the laws, or I will expose him to the police. You had better join him now; and you, Walter, follow me!"

The boy's heart throbbed with joy when, having turned the corner of the street, he could see nothing more of the Pommer family, and he found himself quite alone with his benefactor. He kissed his hand again, and bounded joyfully on beside him. The little clock-maker put all kind of questions to him, which the boy readily and candidly answered. The face of the little man grew more and more friendly and cheerful. They soon arrived at the house. They opened a handsomely ornamented iron gate, and stepped into a pretty garden. The paths were strewn with gravel, the beds were well laid out, and bordered with boxwood. Lilacs, pinks, roses, lilies, and many other beautiful flowers, smiled in luxuriant and variegated bloom around. In the midst of this neat [172]

garden stood a small dwelling-house, whose white walls were almost hidden by the clinging vines, which seemed to love to twine about them. In front of the house there was a small place shaped like a semicircle, strewn nicely over with sand almost as white and shining as silver, which was partly shaded by a trellised woodbine, and partly by the low and spreading branches of a large apple-tree. A small table and several seats stood in this place, and a very pretty spinning-wheel, pushed a little to one side, betrayed that the spinner had just left the spot. Mr. Burg called softly, "Christina!" and the called one made her appearance immediately on the threshold of the house. Christina was the twin-sister of the clock-maker Burg. Like him, she was very short, but she was well formed. She wore a dark-colored dress, and a cap and neck-handkerchief of dazzling whiteness, while the large bunch of keys which were fastened to her side spoke of household cares and household thrift.

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"Here, Christina!" said Burg, in a tone which betrayed suppressed emotion, "here is Walter, of whom I have already spoken to you. He will be our son, and make us happy. Sweetest sister, I think I have brought you a treasure to be valued, as a present from the fair!"

Christina took the boy, who was almost as tall as herself, in her arms, and pressed him to her heart; then she laid her hand upon his brow, and said, with a tender yet solemn voice: "God bless thy entrance into this house, my dear child! May his Holy Spirit descend upon thee, so that thou mayest become a pious Christian and a useful man! May his grace be with thee evermore! Amen!"

The tears rushed to Walter's eyes,—he did not himself know why, for the soft, friendly face of Christina inspired no sadness or timidity, but the most heartfelt confidence.

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"I have found the boy in the street, my sweet sister, and I have no doubt that he is really suffering with hunger. I hope your pantry is full enough to satisfy the appetite of the starving child."

"Do not be afraid of that," said Christina, laughing. "As I have expected the arrival of our son every hour during the last three days, I have provided for all his wants. Come! come in, brother, and see!"

Everything was clean and neat in the little house; everything seemed to correspond with the character of the brother and sister. That especially pleased Walter. His new parents took him by the hand, and led him about the house, showing him the cheerful sitting-room with its vine-curtained windows. At one of these windows stood a table, with very fine tools upon it, and several watches hanging near it, suspended to the wall; at the other, the sewing-table of Christina was placed, her comfortable cushioned chair, and her footstool. The brother and sister worked together in the same room, and it was only over some very delicate piece of mechanism that the clock-maker shut himself up in the apartment at the other side of the house. A savory smell of a good dinner proceeded from the clean kitchen, and it was very agreeable to poor, hungry Walter. They led him about into all the rooms and chambers; at last they took him up a story higher, into a lovely little, friendly room. A neat bed, covered with a white quilt, stood near the wall; chairs, tables, a bureau and a wardrobe, a dressing-glass and a handsome timepiece, were all in their appropriate places, and the snowy window-curtains gave the room a most comfortable appearance.

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"How do you like this chamber?" said Christina, friendly, to Walter.

"O, it is delightful! Even the Mayor himself in Geremberg has not a single room as beautiful as this one is."

"This is your own little room, my boy," said Christina. "You are to sleep in this quiet bed, and if you never forget to say your evening prayers devoutly, God's winged angels will watch over your sleep."

"Me? Am I really to sleep in this soft, white, beautiful bed?" said the delighted boy to his benefactress. "Ah, I have never seen one half so beautiful! I have always slept upon straw, or upon the bare ground. O dear sir! O dear, kind lady! how very good you are to poor, forsaken Walter!"

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He threw his arms around them both, and then sprang delightedly about, gazing on everything around him with rapturous and grateful astonishment.

"As several days have passed since we first expected you," said Christina, "I have provided clean linen and new clothes for you, which I think will fit you. You will find everything ready for you in this wardrobe. You must wash yourself very clean, comb your fine hair nicely, put on your new clothes, and always try to keep yourself very neat. We should suffer no stain upon us,—neither upon our souls nor our clothing. Make haste, my son, and get ready. In the mean time, I will set the table, and flavor the soup."

With a friendly greeting, Christina left them, while Burg stayed to help the boy to dress. When Walter was well washed, combed, and dressed in his new clothes, his appearance was strikingly handsome. The clock-maker looked at him with undisguised pleasure, while the boy exclaimed, in grateful rapture,—

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"My dear, dear sir, how am I to thank you? how am I ever to compensate you for all this?"

"I shall be fully compensated, if you will only be good and obedient," answered Burg. "But before all things else, thank God, my son! He has led you, in the most wonderful manner, through much tribulation, to us. It was certainly his kind hand which led me to you, just when I had determined to seek out, and adopt as my own, some forsaken orphan. Do you not acknowledge

that you have a Father in heaven, who, even when he appeared to have forsaken you, yet wonderfully led you upon the right way?"

Walter was silent, and seemed lost in thought. "Yes," he at last replied, "yes, I now see that he has graciously cared for me. Last night, I prayed to him with all my heart that he would let things go well with me, if only for once; and see! already to-day he has heard and fulfilled my prayer! I believe that, if I had learned to pray to him sooner, he would never have let it go so badly with me."

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"Never forget it, then, in the future, my son," said Burg. "Trust always in the good Father above, with a childlike and firm faith; and even if you should be unfortunate in this life, never cease to rely upon the only firm support,—the Father above."

"Yes, yes, dear sir! I will certainly trust him," said the boy.

"Call me no longer 'Dear sir,' but 'Dear father'; and call my sister, 'Mother.' With God's help, we will try to be kind and conscientious parents to you; and I believe you will be a pious and true son," said Burg, as he kindly pressed the hands of the orphan.

Christina's clear voice now called them to dinner. As they entered the dining-room, her eyes fell upon Walter. She looked astonished, and yet full of contentment, for his beauty was very striking in the neat clothes which her care had provided for him.

Walter was, as if through magic, suddenly transported into a life differing in all things from the life of his earlier days. He had been abused and forsaken,—driven from the only home he had ever known; he had struggled with cold and want, and lived in poverty, hunger, and dirt. He now lived in the bosom of a tranquil, industrious, and pious family. The brother and sister, secluded from the noisy world, surrounded by their beautiful garden, and in the possession of a fortune more than adequate to their wants, led a pious and charitable life. Christina's character was childlike and simple. She had never known nor ever desired any other happiness than to serve God and to love her twin-brother. With a far keener intellect, the brother's character, in its simplicity and piety, resembled that of the sister. He was an excellent clock-maker, but he gave his clocks into other hands to be sold, as he knew nothing of trading, and hated to be annoyed with it. He said it disturbed the quiet of his soul, and wasted his valuable time. His favorite employment was to imagine ingenious and artistic fancy works, and set them in motion by clock-work. He never sold any of these. He kept them in his parlor, and on festival occasions he would exhibit them to his own and his sister's friends. He had made, among other things, a very complete paper-mill, and a most beautiful church. In the paper-mill, the mill-clappers rattled up and down, the wheels ran merrily round, the mechanism worked well, and all the preparations for making paper were really there; everywhere was seen the appropriate labor, and at last tiny sheets of real paper were made, which the mechanist would kindly distribute among his own and his sister's friends, as remembrancers of them and of his novel invention. The church was lighted up, the many-colored windows glittered, the bells rang, the organ played, and people were seen going in at the various doors, and walking round in the beautiful building. These pieces of artistic mechanism were his delight; he often passed whole nights without sleep in inventing and executing things still more curious and ingenious. The pastor of the parish, and his wife, were his most intimate friends; indeed, it was only upon rare occasions that any other guests were to be met in his house.

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The brother and sister had lived together nearly half a century in unbroken peace, in heartfelt unity and love, when the melancholy thought presented itself to them, that after their death there would be no one to inherit their highly improved property, no one to take care of and cherish the works of mechanism invented by the clock-maker, no one to whom Christina could confide her pretty house, and carefully and tastefully cultivated garden. They consulted seriously together what would be best to do. We will leave it for the benefit of the poor, said they with one voice; but they sighed, and looked sadly around them.

"Our beloved house and garden must in that case be sold," sighed Christina. "God only knows in what hands it will fall, and how it will be taken care of! All that I have planted and nurtured with so much love will be rooted up, or trampled under foot!"

"And all my beautiful works of art will be sold," said the brother, in a still more melancholy tone. "If an unskilful hand touches them, if a single wheel gets out of order, they are ruined for ever!"

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"It is very sad, indeed!" said they both.

"Yes, Christina, it is truly melancholy," again commenced the clock-maker, after a long pause; "but it is very sinful to attach ourselves so firmly to such fleeting things. During the whole course of his life, man is constantly forced to struggle with himself that he may not break the holy commandment: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' Our clinging so firmly to these passing things of earth is nothing but a species of idolatry. Therefore, my dearest sister, we will try to free ourselves from the thralldom of this sin; we will simply leave our property to the poor, and give ourselves no trouble about what shall become of it after we are dead and gone!"

Christina secretly wiped the tears from her streaming eyes, answered nothing, but spun industriously on. After a considerable time had elapsed, she said, in a trembling tone: "Listen to me, my dear brother! I would like to make a proposition to you, which I have long cherished in silence. What do you think of our taking some poor, forsaken orphan child into the house, bringing it up to truth and industry, and adopting it as our own son or daughter? We might then divide our property between it and other poor people. In this way we might fulfil our own wishes

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without being guilty of the sin of idolatry. Indeed, who knows but that, through our careful instruction and education, we might aid in saving the soul of some unfortunate orphan?"

The brother gazed upon her with approving and deep tenderness. "My dear Christina," he said, "have you considered fully how much trouble, anxiety, and care the reception of such a charge would entail upon you?"

"O, no thought of that kind should ever prevent me," she answered. "I love children dearly, and I have long wished to have the charge of one. I will make but little account of care, anxiety, and trouble for myself, if with the help of the Lord we can only succeed in bringing a forsaken child up to be a good Christian. Then it would doubtless love us as if it were really our own. The human heart constantly longs for love; and, as we grow older, what could be a greater source of pure pleasure for us, than to have a young, innocent, loving, childlike creature constantly with us?"

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The brother sprang to his feet, seized Christina in his arms, kissed her fondly, and said: "Sister, your words flow from my own heart! I have long cherished the same wish, but could not venture to ask you to assume this additional burden. But now all things seem to have arranged themselves in the happiest manner; and with God's help we will soon find the child we seek!"

The good people made a happy choice in selecting Walter; or rather God had graciously provided for the fulfilment of their wishes, and led to them the forsaken boy. They brought him up with prudence and with love. His many and excellent faculties were developed in the highest degree through the best of teachers. The good pastor was his instructor in all that belonged to religion, while the truly Christian life of the pious brother and sister exerted a most beneficial influence upon the heart of the poor boy, and all the bad habits which he had acquired from the vicious examples which had been constantly before his eyes, from the first moment of the precocious awakening of his intelligence until his fortunate reception into the house of his present protectors, rapidly and for ever vanished. His days always began and ended with prayer, and the consciousness of the perpetual presence of the Almighty, in the fulness of his strange love and enduring mercy, was with him in the hours of labor and the moments of relaxation.

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Burg was anxious that Walter should adopt his own profession, so that when he became the inheritor of his property he might also inherit his artistic skill. But Walter evinced no disposition to embrace it. He was astonished at the works of art, clapped his hands joyfully at the appearance of life in the movements of the diminutive figures, and wished he had the skill to make them; but his desire rapidly vanished when he saw his adopted father at work. His attention was only fastened upon such objects, by their entire novelty, for a few moments; then he would bound away to bring his beloved violin, and play hour after hour upon it with real joy of heart. The clock-maker soon knew what were Walter's peculiar talents, and, very far from wishing to contend with the gifts of nature, at once relinquished his own cherished wish. He shall have every opportunity to cultivate his genius, he said to himself; I will give him every advantage. He took his adopted son by the hand, and led him to the town, where he placed him with a master of high distinction. The master tested the talents of the boy for music, and found them so quick and promising that he readily undertook their cultivation.

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A new life dawned for Walter; he lived in and for music; for he now heard it in a perfection of which he had never dreamed in his childish years. He pursued his studies with assiduity and delight, and soon surpassed all his associates. His master was astonished at the rapidity of his progress, and every day increased his attachment to the talented boy. After a comparatively short time he found him sufficiently advanced to introduce him into the study of harmony, and thus to open a way for him into the very depths of the art he loved. The glowing and creative imagination of the boy now found the proper element in which to work, while laws and rules based on nature opened and defined his paths through the boundless regions of the tone world.

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Years sped on. The days which he passed in the peaceful home of his kind protectors, sheltered and cherished by their constant love and care, warmed and lighted by the glittering rays of the science he loved, were as happy as those of his earlier childhood had been miserable. In later years he often spoke, with rapturous gratitude, of the untroubled bliss of the studious, youthful, innocent days of his first introduction into the enchanted realm of Art.

## WALTER AN ARTIST.

"In diligent toil, thy master is the bee;  
 In craft mechanical, the worm, that creeps  
 Through earth its dexterous way, may tutor thee;  
 In knowledge (couldst thou fathom all the deeps),  
 All to the seraph are already known;  
 But thine, O man, is Art,—thine wholly and alone!"

CHRISTINA sat in her full Sunday attire upon her cushioned chair; she looked very much excited, and a restlessness, quite unwonted in her usually calm face, exhibited itself in her whole demeanor. Her small hands were folded together, and the tears which trembled upon her eyelashes, and found their way down her sweet face, showed that, though her prayers were offered up in silence, they came notwithstanding from the very depths of her heart. A tall boy, with a joyous face, now broke suddenly into her room: it was the twelve-year-old Walter. [189]

"My darling mother, have I dressed myself as you would like me to do?" he asked, as he placed himself immediately before Christina, whom he had already outgrown.

"Kneel down here upon my footstool, my son," said Christina to him, "that I may see if your shirt-collar fits neatly."

Walter, humming a song, instantly obeyed. Christina arranged his dark and shining locks, pulled the fine, dazzlingly white shirt-collar quite straight, and shook off a little dust which had just settled upon his new suit of fine cloth. She then gazed lovingly at him, threw her arms round his neck, kissed his brow tenderly, and, in a tone quivering with emotion, said,—

"May God be with you, my dear boy! May his blessing rest upon the events of this evening!"

Burg now entered the room with his hat in his hand, and announced that the carriage was at the door. He too gazed upon his adopted son with tender emotion; he embraced him in silence, then, helping his sister to put on her cloak, he led them both to the carriage, which stood at the gate of the pretty garden. [190]

That the secluded brother and sister should have driven to the town in a carriage, and in full dress, would have excited the astonishment of all their neighbors, had it not been generally known that Walter was to make his first appearance before the public, that he was to play at a concert which was to take place that very evening. How willingly would all the good people of the neighborhood have crowded into the brilliantly lighted hall, to have heard the boy whom they all loved show his skill in his beloved art! That, however, could not be; but they thought it very natural that Christina, who never left the house except to go to church, should in this case make an exception to the general rule.

The concert-room was crowded to overflowing. After the last notes of the overture had died away, Walter stepped forward, and bowed calmly and gracefully to the throng. Struck with the agreeable expression and bearing of the boy, a light murmur of approbation pervaded the whole assembly. He played one of the concertos of Beethoven. His tone was pure and sweet, his execution full of power and energy. Overcoming every difficulty with apparent ease, he stormed through the allegro, exciting a feeling of astonishment in his countless hearers; while in the adagio his melting tones pressed into the depths of every heart, appealing to the feelings as music only can. Such repeated acclamations, such noisy applauses, broke from the dense mass before him when he had finished, that the boy was actually frightened, and, without making the usual bows and acknowledgments, sprang back and hid himself among the musicians of the orchestra. But the cries did not cease, for the audience were determined to greet again the little artist. Then the chapel-master took the blushing boy by the hand, led him again in front of the orchestra, and showed with proud joy to the excited public his favorite and cherished pupil. Again rang the clamor of applauses loud and long; repeated and enthusiastic cries of *Encore! encore!* Bravo! bravo! seemed to rend the very air. [191] [192]

Happy,—yet abashed and half-frightened Walter!

The tears ceased not to flow from the streaming eyes of Christina. When she heard the darling of her soul play, as she had never heard him play before, he seemed to her almost strange and wonderful, and her heart trembled within her; while her breast heaved anxiously and almost shudderingly at the loud, stormy, and never-ending applauses which were offered to the child of her love. She scarcely understood their full import, for she had never attended a concert before; she looked anxiously into the face of her brother, who was standing near her seat. He was deeply moved; he grasped and pressed her hand, tears trembled in his large, protruding eyes, the corners of his mouth were twitching with excitement, and the strange contortions of face which he made to try to conceal his emotion, had an almost comic effect. This was remarked by some of the young people in his neighborhood; they whispered to each other, pointed him out to others who were near, and lorgnettes and opera-glasses were instantly directed upon the strange appearance of the deformed clock-maker. As soon as he observed this, he immediately withdrew himself from observation. He left his place, pressed towards the door, escaped from the concert-hall, and the sea of tones whose waves were now rising, now falling, in their stormful play. He felt that he must be alone with God, under the holy arch of the starlit heavens, in order to pour out unobserved the thronging emotions of his excited heart. [193]

The concert was over. Burg returned to the hall to seek Christina and Walter. He was detained sometime in the door-way by the press of the hurrying throng. At last, however, he reached his sister, who told him that the chapel-master had taken Walter away to introduce him to a noble family, who loved and patronized art, who gave a party this evening particularly to the artists and the friends of music; and as Walter had been particularly invited by the cultivated Countess W —, whose patronage might be of the greatest service to him, it would not be advisable or courteous to refuse the kind invitation.

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"It is really painful to my heart to be obliged to give up Walter, upon this evening particularly!" said Christina. "But I did not know what to do; I could not see you anywhere, and the chapel-master was so pressing, and in such a hurry! I strongly recommended to our dear son, however, to be very prudent, and not to suffer himself to be made vain, or to be spoiled!"

"I am very sorry!" said Burg. "But it cannot be helped. Come, Christina!"

He led his sister to the carriage, and was silent and serious during the whole drive home, as he was in the habit of being when immersed in thought. A few words of deep and highly excited feeling were exchanged by the brother and sister upon the subject of Walter's brilliant success on his first appearance before the public, and hopes and fears alternated in their loving, simple hearts. Wearied by the unwonted excitement of the day, Christina went early to rest; while Burg opened a large book, and lighted another lamp, to await the arrival of Walter home.

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Twelve strokes slowly sounded upon the various clocks in the house, telling Burg it was already midnight. He rose, as he shut the book of Chronicles in which he had been reading, opened his window, and looked anxiously out into the dark night. After a considerable time had elapsed, he thought he heard the distant rolling of a carriage; it drew nearer,—it stopped before the garden gate. "At last!" said Burg, heaving a deep sigh, as he closed the window. Almost immediately after, the door opened, and Walter entered.

"Good evening, my dear son! At last, at last I see you again," said Burg, as he rapidly advanced to meet him.

"O my father!" cried Walter, as he threw himself into his arms, "what an evening I have spent! how happy I am!"

Burg gazed inquiringly into the glowing face of the boy; it shone with intense excitement and proud joy.

"You are still very much excited, my child. You will find it quite impossible to go to sleep in such a state. Come, then, sit down beside me, and tell me all that has happened."

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"O father, if you had only seen how much they have all honored me! I was dreadfully frightened, at first, with the terrible noise they made in the concert-room; but the chapel-master says that was very stupid in me, and that one soon grows accustomed to all that. The Count laughed at me for running away, very much, at first, and said I must learn to bear still higher marks of honor; that I must learn to wear the immortal crown of laurels, for that, young as I am, I could already take my place with the true artists; that in a few years I would surpass them all, and that my name would be sounded with honor through the whole civilized world. Father! my father! is not that glorious? Everything was beautiful in the Count's house; such immense rooms I never saw before. We were soon seated round a table covered with the most exquisite food. They drank a kind of wine that banged when they took the corks out, as if a pistol had been shot off, close to your ears. It foams and foams; it is quite sweet, and tastes excellently."

"Have you taken more than one glass of it, my son?" said Burg, as he anxiously laid his hand on the glowing brow of the excited boy.

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"No, father, I have not. The beautiful Countess ordered me to take the seat next to her own. Only think, father: the chapel-master says that was the seat of honor! But the Countess would not let them refill my glass. She said it was possible I was not accustomed to it; that my good mother, Christina, would not be pleased if I should be spoiled by drinking too much of it. But only think,—just try to guess what happened next!—No, that is not it. Ah! father, you would never, never guess it! Only think of it! they all drank my health, making their glasses rattle as they did so; and then they all congratulated the chapel-master upon having found such a pupil as I am. They drank his health, too. Ah! there can be no greater happiness in this life than to be an artist! And I am certainly one already, for they all declared I was. When I look at the other scholars of my own age in the institution, I cannot help pitying them; for they are really stupid in comparison with me, and I do not believe that they will ever receive such honors as have been rendered to me to-night."

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"And whom have you to thank for this distinction?" asked Burg.

"Myself and you!" answered Walter, rashly. "You sent me to a most skilful teacher; but he has many pupils who have been studying a great deal longer, yet play much worse than I do."

"Then you have no one but yourself to thank for your talent for art?" asked Burg.

"Yes, I owe it to my own industry. The chapel-master himself says so."

"Procure me still another joy, my dear Walter! Write me a finished poem!"

"But, father, how can I do it?" said Walter, quite astonished.

"I will give you plenty of time to do it," said Burg. "I will take you to-morrow to a most skilful master in the art of poetry; to please me, you will again be very studious and industrious, and thus you will be a great poet!"

"My dear father, I am sorry for it, but I think it would be impossible!" answered Walter. "You know that at school I never wrote with any ease; indeed, I always found it very difficult, for I have no talent at all for it!"

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"But through your own industry you will certainly learn to compose as well in words as you have done in tones."

"O that is entirely different!" said the boy, quickly. "I have a great deal of talent for music, and none at all for poetry."

"Ah, indeed!" answered the father, earnestly. "I thought, because you had attributed all the honor of the day to *yourself alone*, that you would be able to make as rapid progress in any other art. But if that is not the case, it seems to me that you cannot claim all the honor for yourself alone, for you have just admitted that success in any art requires, in the first place, talent. Now how have you been able to create this internal talent, which you confess to be the first requisite?"

Walter blushed crimson; he looked confusedly upon the floor; then he murmured: "No man on earth can create that,—that is a gift of the good God!"

"Then," said Burg, very seriously, "without any merit, any assistance, on your part, out of pure love, God has endowed you with the beautiful and glorious gift of a genius for music. You are only fulfilling a duty, when you cultivate to the utmost of your power the high talent which you have received from God. Would you not be guilty of the blackest ingratitude if you would suffer the capabilities with which he has gifted you to remain uncultured in your soul? And yet you think that you have done something very extraordinary, and that the honor and praise which thoughtless men have so freely lavished upon you belong of right to you alone; whereas all the distinction which has been offered to you is justly and solely due to God. Because you have done in music only what it was your duty to do, would you wish to claim merit for a thing so simple, and would you, in the excess of an idle vanity, forget your Maker, from whose bountiful hand you have received all?"

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"The sweet and foaming wine which you drank to-night is called Champagne. Its taste is very pleasant, yet it is sometimes a poison. One or two glasses, however, is not injurious. But it is often forgotten that a bad spirit lies concealed in the pearly drops which foam and dance upon its surface. He who drinks too much of it loses his force and his senses, and in his drunkenness resembles the madman who forgets his God. Such excess often leads to the commission of great crimes. The applauses of the crowd, the reverence paid to genius, the sweet flattery always offered to the artist in the most intoxicating manner, resemble champagne. The bad spirit which is concealed in the froth of popular applause, to ruin and destroy the artist, is Vanity. Woe to him if he does more than simply taste the sweet draught! If he eagerly gulps it down, he draws in Vanity at the same time, which must lead him to certain destruction; for it entices him away from God, to whom alone all the fame, all the honor, which men so lavishly expend upon the artist is justly due. Vanity is constantly hovering over the robe of light in which all Art is clothed; she skilfully throws her own spotted veil over the glittering raiment, drawing Art gradually down to the service of hell. True, divine Art, however, soon discovers the toils of vanity, and, throwing them off for ever, passes on to that heaven from which she springs. A demon of darkness unfortunately too often borrows her form of light, and assists the work of Vanity in the soul of the artist, which she has subjected to her power. All that he creates gives evidence of the demoniac source from which his works spring, and that love and faith no longer make their home in his spirit. He grows gradually dizzy; he falls from sin to sin, and dies in wretchedness. An early grave, and the speedy forgetfulness of the masses who once caressed and flattered him, is sure to be the fate of the unhappy artist who, in the indulgence of his own vanity, forgets his God. My dear son, pray that you may be protected from demoniac pride, from artistic vanity!"

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Walter, who had listened to his father with ever increasing emotion, while his handsome face grew pale with varying feelings, now threw himself weeping into his arms, while he cried: "Father, forgive me! I also have been both proud and vain. O, aid me to contend with these wicked spirits! Suffer me not to be conquered by them!"

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"Pray! pray constantly, my son! In the midst of the intoxicating flatteries which will be offered to you, never forget that it is God alone who has gifted you with a genius for art; that you are nothing more than a miserable worm in his hands, and that it behooves you to bow low before his power, and give to him alone all honor! Never forget that it is your duty to cultivate the talents he has condescended to give you to the utmost extent, that you must one day give an account of the use you have made of them; and when they try to make you believe that you have reached the highest possible point, remember that it is impossible to stand still; that you must go on, or fall backward, and that only in the most constant and unremitting efforts to progress can your duty be fulfilled! Go now to bed, to sleep, my dear, dear son! May God be ever with you!"

The preceding conversation, held by Walter with Burg after the intoxication of his first exciting and brilliant success, made a deep impression upon his young soul, and exercised a decisive influence upon the whole course of his life. The growth of vanity was for ever stifled in its first germ. He struggled restlessly forward upon the path of Art, but he gave at the same time the rare example of a young, handsome, and brilliant artist, in the possession of true modesty. He soon grew accustomed to the applauses of the masses; they reached his ear, but the poisoned arrows pressed not into his soul.

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When Walter had attained his seventeenth year, his master, whom he had long since surpassed, wished that he should make his name known through the civilized world, by extensive travels as an artist. Burg determined to accompany his beloved son, upon his first entrance into the great



world. The parting from Christina was very painful; her tears flowed long and fast; she believed she would never see her darling again. Only reiterated promises to write to her constantly, could in any degree calm her distressed heart.

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The young artist had already earned fame and gold in many of the larger towns, and had made the name of Walter Burg widely and honorably known, when he came into the neighborhood of the scenes of his sad and deserted childhood. Certainly no one there would recognize the poor foundling in the brilliant artist, and he felt the most vivid wish to give a concert in the immediate vicinity of the tailor musician Bopp, and to see him and Maggie again. Burg willingly acceded to his natural request, and the news soon pervaded Geremberg, that the celebrated young artist, Burg, on his journey to Hamburg, would give a concert in the town-hall.

The musicians of the town tuned their instruments, and looked at the music placed before them on their desks. No rehearsal had been given, because Walter Burg had only arrived the very evening upon which the concert was to take place. The town musicians determined to play as well as they could, and if the notes came too thick and fast, young Burg might himself provide for getting on as well as possible without them. No person divined that the celebrated artist whom they were momentarily expecting, and little Walter, whose early efforts they had often admired, were one and the same person.

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Father Bopp sat bent almost double, and held his instrument loosely in his hand; he had grown much thinner, and looked very sad; for with increasing age and poverty his termagant wife burdened him every day more deeply.

The hall was soon full; many people were even standing in the open door, who had no money to take seats within, among whom was Maggie. Walter entered, and the concert began. The good people of Geremberg, even the mayor himself not excepted, had never heard such music before. The enchantment and delight was universally felt; yet we must confess that no slight degree of the enthusiasm manifested was to be attributed as much to the exceeding beauty of the young artist, as to his complete mastery of art.

Walter played a long time alone; the musicians had all quietly put down their own instruments, and listened attentively to him. Father Bopp wept in the excess of his musical excitement.

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The concert at last ended. The mayor hastened to congratulate the young man, to tell him of his astonishment and delight, to ask him to stay as long in Geremberg as he possibly could, and also to try to learn something of his life and connections, for it is always esteemed very interesting to know everything about the destiny of a young artist. To his great astonishment, he found the young man standing beside Father Bopp, and putting into his shabby hat the whole sum taken in at the doors, to which he added a small roll of gold.

"That is too much, sir!" said Bopp; "the expenses for the whole of us together do not amount to as much as that; besides, the truth is, we have scarcely played at all."

"But that is all for yourself, alone," answered the young man. "Father Bopp! can it be possible that you do not recognize me? Yet you yourself gave me my first lessons upon the violin! Open your eyes a little wider, and look at me full in the face. I am your own little Walter!"

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Father Bopp continued to gaze at him, without being able to articulate a single word; his mouth was wide open, his hat fell from his limber hands, while his trembling arms, deprived of all power to move, anxiously sought to stretch themselves towards the noble form of the young artist.

"Indeed, it is true! I am really Walter!" cried Burg, as he threw his arms round the astonished tailor. "Dear, good, kind old Father Bopp! I remember all the pieces which we used to play together, and have become what you always said I would be,—an artist!"

The bewildered astonishment of the old man gave place to the strangest manifestations of the wildest joy. He danced about, he stood on one leg, he laughed, he cried, he threw his arms round Walter, then bounded off to gaze in his face, and again returned to embrace him. Burg was standing in the neighborhood, and witnessed the comic manifestations of the excited tailor's joy with heartfelt sympathy.

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The news that the accomplished young artist was no other than the poor little foundling, who had lived so many years among them, ran through the hall like lightning; it soon reached the outer steps, and the throng who were making their way down them. They all turned back; they crowded round Walter; they renewed their acquaintance with him, and declared they had always known he would make an extraordinary man.

At last Walter was free from their noisy demonstrations. He hastened into his own room, where he found Burg and Father Bopp with Maggie, whom Walter really longed to see. She was quite grown up, looked fresh and healthy, and was delighted to meet her early and loved playmate once more.

While the two old men talked together, the confidence of their childish years was soon re-established between the young people. Walter gently asked Maggie how all went on now at home; to which she answered, sighing, "Just as it used to do in old times."

Conrad was no student, but had become a lazy, useless, worthless fellow, who gave them all a great deal of trouble; but he was still the mother's favorite. Poverty had very much increased upon them; with all her labor, she could scarcely earn enough to support herself; if she could only gain a little spare money to pay the necessary expenses, she would like to be married to their neighbor Peter, whom Walter must remember. Walter consoled her with the hope that he would be able to send her sufficient money to carry out her matrimonial views, as soon as he had

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earned some more. He was able afterwards to do so; he established Maggie and Peter in a comfortable house, and always supported old Father Bopp. When Bopp and Maggie used to speak of the famous artist, and recounted all the benefits he had showered upon them, then would Mother Bopp cry: "You and he have only me to thank for all these great things; for if I had never driven the boy out of the house, he never could have become what he now is. So you have all a great deal to be grateful to me about!"



**MAGGIE AND PETER.**  
**The first dawning of Love.**

After Burg had received from the mayor the clothes which Walter had on when he was first taken from the basket, as well as the clasped locket which had been carefully preserved by the squire, he and Walter sat out on their way to Hamburg. But the interesting events which occurred there will be best learned from a letter which the clock-maker wrote to his affectionate sister Christina.

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THE CLOCK-MAKER BURG TO HIS SISTER CHRISTINA.

Hamburg.

MY DEAR CHRISTINA:—

You write to me that you have awaited the arrival of each of our letters with anxiety and impatience, but that after their reception you have always been happy and joyous. I fully believe you, my true-hearted sister; for all the details I have given you of the development of Walter's character have shown him to be kind and good. His own letters have expressed to you the childlike love which he feels for you, and he has written to you in what manner he has been everywhere received, what applause has been showered upon him; and yet you must have seen, from the simple language of his trusting heart, that he has not fallen a prey to vanity, but that he is still the modest and unspoiled youth he was when he parted from you. He has only a proper sense of his own worth; he loves his art, and practises it because he loves it; but his great talents have not made him haughty, presumptuous, or vain; he does not worship himself because he possesses marvellous faculties, the free gifts of his gracious Creator. Yes, my dear Christina! I can truly say, with a joyful heart, that the general and enthusiastic wonder and admiration of applauding throngs have not puffed up our Walter in a vain conceit of himself, but that he gives to God alone the glory!

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The letters of recommendation and introduction, which were given to us by the Count, Countess, and the chapel-master, have procured for us everywhere a good reception. Especially do we find this to be the case here in Hamburg. But I have already written about this to you, for I now remember that I asked you, in my last letter, to present our grateful thanks to the Count, particularly for his introduction to the Russian Minister, Count Arnoldi. He is a most accomplished person, and we have been received in his house as if we had been his own relatives. Walter feels himself strangely attracted to this lovely family. The minister is an excellent man, and knows perfectly how to make the best use of his great wealth. Weighty matters of necessary business keep him closely chained to his writing-desk during the greater part of the day; but at his late dinner, and during the evening hours, he is an intellectual and cheerful host. His wife was born in Livonia, and is a refined, cultivated, and lovely lady. As a lover and protector of Art, she not only collects together in her house the most distinguished artists, but has also dedicated it to the encouragement and preservation of their most masterly works. The central point of all her love and care is her daughter, the beautiful Sophie, now twelve years old. The little girl has a remarkable talent for music, and much pains has already been taken with its cultivation. Our Walter, still an innocent child in his pure soul, soon won the sympathy of the beautiful girl, and they are truly attached to each other. When she plays upon the piano, he often accompanies her upon the violin; and, in spite of the little time which he has at his own command after the fulfilment of his various duties, he has already composed several pieces for his little friend. Her parents are so attracted by the elegant manners and unblemished character of our dear son, so much won by his marvellous genius and his youthful beauty, that they willingly encourage the friendship of the two innocent children for each other.

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We visit every day the house of the Russian Minister, and the ties between the old and the young become hourly stronger. The son and heir of the house—about the same age with our son, and also called "Walter"—makes a remarkable exception to the friendship and love which his parents and his sister have evinced to Walter. Indeed, he seems actually to hate him; and as his manners are exceedingly rough and rude, he has made him feel his dislike in the most wounding manner, upon more than one occasion. His step-mother (for he is a son of the first marriage of the Minister) made the remark, one day, that Walter, our son, and their daughter Sophie, resembled each other very much. The young man laughed, and maliciously remarked: "The love which my mother cherishes for music could alone induce her to see such a likeness; for how is it possible that the only daughter of the rich Minister should resemble a travelling artist, who is only the son of a common clock-maker?"

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"Why not?" answered the lady, quickly. "Beauty and refinement resemble each other, in whomsoever they may be found, as well as coarseness and vulgarity; therefore, I would not be at all astonished if some one should remark a strong resemblance between the only son of the Minister and the boy of one of his peasants!"

The young man blushed crimson; and, looking most maliciously at his step-

mother and Walter, left the apartment, with a threatening gesture at our darling, who had heard nothing of all this, as he was talking quite unconcernedly with Sophie in the deep embrasure of one of the large windows.

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The lady of the house made the most graceful apologies to me about what had just occurred, and, with tears in her large eyes, said: "The invincible roughness and vulgar pride of this unendurable boy embitter my whole life, and are preparing a coffin for the noble form of my excellent husband. They seem to be an ineradicable consequence of his early education. How happy are you in the possession of such a son! Let us be candid: we envy you the possession of such a treasure!"

You will probably think, my dear sister, that it would be far better for me to relate all this to you, if I were quietly seated by your side, in our own sweet home; and that it would be far more agreeable if I were to write to you only of our own dear Walter, and of his brilliant musical triumphs, than of the malicious and unpolished son of the Minister. You would be right in this decision, and I would not have written all this to you, if I did not think it was all necessary as an introduction to the weighty events which I am forced to impart to you. Yes, my dear, my true-hearted sister! your tender heart will be filled with joy, and yet your soft blue eyes may shed many tears. Hear, then, my pure-hearted one, all that has occurred. May God himself stand by you with his precious grace, and enable you to bear the heavy hours in which all selfishness, even of the highest and noblest kind, must be subjected to a fearful proof! May your self-sacrificing love for Walter enable you to endure all!

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I had appointed the next day for our departure. Walter did not object to it, although he confessed to me that the separation from the Arnoldi family would be very painful to him, because he loved them—he knew not why—from the very bottom of his heart. I pointed him to the brilliancy of his prospects in the future. He acknowledged that his career was full of hope; yet but slightly consoled he accompanied me, towards evening, to the house of the Minister, who had invited all the friends of the young artist together, to spend the last evening with him at a parting festival in his own house. I hoped that the younger Arnoldi, who greatly prefers card-playing to the most excellent music, would be, as usual, not at home. But it was not so. He was there upon our arrival, and seemed to me to be in a worse humor than ever with our innocent son. He took his place in the deep recess of one of the windows, and I soon remarked that, from behind the half-veiling curtain, he watched every movement made by Walter with a malicious and suspicious air. We were received with the greatest cordiality and affection by all the invited guests, and the different members of the family of the Minister. When the Minister himself asked his daughter to open the piano, and play for the last time with the young artist, tears rushed to the bright eyes and rolled down the rosy cheeks of the beautiful child. At the very moment that Walter and she commenced their duet, a violent and stormy verbal discussion began at the door of the music-room. The loud and shrill tones of a woman's voice were heard far above the instruments, fiercely demanding entrance. After a moment's delay, the door was thrown open; and, in spite of the servants, who were struggling to hold her back, a tall and powerful woman forced herself into the parlor. The Minister moved forward to meet her, and said sternly: "What is the meaning of this strange insolence? If you have really urgent business with me,—if it is necessary that you should yourself have an interview with me,—come to me early to-morrow morning, at a more suitable time. If your business, however, is very pressing, you may follow me now into another apartment."

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The woman seemed to hesitate for a moment, and looked half-confused round the room; but, rapidly regaining her self-possession, she said, defiantly: "They will no more admit me to your presence to-morrow than they did yesterday and the day before! The command of the young lord, as the people call him, that your servants should set the dogs upon me to drive me away,—should beat me from your door,—has made me raging mad. He needn't think that I am so much afraid of their blows! He had better not threaten me too far! Now I am determined to speak out the whole truth! Have you quite forgotten me, Minister Arnoldi? I am Martha Meyer. I am the daughter of the Meyer to whose care you intrusted your son, nearly eighteen years ago."

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"Very well! very well, my good woman!" said the Minister, considerably mollified; "it is very natural and very kind in you to come sometimes to visit your old charge. To-morrow morning I will be disengaged, and I will then see what I can do to help you. Go down now into the servant's hall. I will give orders that you shall be well taken care of. Walter, lead the foster-sister of your childhood out, and see that she is supplied with all she needs!"

The young man looked very much agitated, and, as he stepped from behind his sheltering curtain, he seized the woman by the arm, and was about to hurry her out. But she loosened her arm from his rough grasp, and screamed out with her whole force: "This is not your own son, Minister Arnoldi, but my brother, Peter Meyer, who has been thrust upon you! He knows it himself well enough, but he

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has no compassion upon us at all; he leaves us in want and poverty, and when I came just now to beg him for assistance, he pretended not to recognize me, threatened to complain of me to the police, and have me driven from the city. He ordered the servants to set the dogs upon me, and to lash me out of the house if I ever suffered myself to be seen here again!"

"Cursed liar!" cried the young man, who had in vain tried to hold his hands before the mouth of the angry woman, and thus arrest the stormy flow of her injurious words.

She succeeded, however, in holding him at arm's length from her person, while she continued to shriek: "So, so; I am a liar, am I? Now that you have openly defied me, I will tell the whole story. Minister Arnoldi, my own blessed mother, may God forgive her! imposed this beggar upon you as your child! He is, however, her own son! Your boy Walter she exposed at night to be taken care of as a foundling! I can bring certain proof of all I assert!—Set the dogs upon me, indeed! My own brother, too!"

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These words fell like a stroke of thunder upon all who were present. The astonished guests gathered together in the background; Madame Arnoldi clasped her daughter anxiously in her arms, as if she feared some one would tear her away from her; and the Minister exclaimed, in a tone stifled by emotion: "Proofs! proofs! I must have full and certain proofs of this horrible story."

My dear, dearest sister! I know your tender heart is beating fast; that your eyes are too full of tears to see clearly, and that, trembling with fear and excitement, you are striving to read on! I, too, suffered intensely. I grasped my Walter's hand as if I was determined never to give him up. Alas! My throbbing heart rapidly divined the truth, but it was no time for me to speak, for the angry woman rapidly proceeded in her strange narration.

"My mother, seduced by your wealth, determined that her darling little Peter should be your heir. In order to carry out this scheme, she commanded me one day, shortly after the death of my father, to get little Walter ready, for that she intended to take him to another town at a considerable distance, and place him with her aunt as her own Peter, while she intended to make the real Peter pass as your Walter. She concluded, however, afterwards to alter her plan. She made me write a letter, recommending the child to the compassion of all men. As I saw her sew this paper tight upon the dress of the little boy, I thought it more than probable that she would not take him as far as her aunt's. I pitied the beautiful child sorely, for I could not help loving him; but I was dreadfully afraid of my mother, and I did not dare to refuse to do as she told me. I fastened securely and secretly around Walter the locket which you had hung on his neck when you parted from him; and when my mother asked for it, I told her that Peter had had it to play with, and had thrown it into the well. Every word I have spoken is true. I can tell you where your own son is,—for I soon found out what my mother had done with him, and have always, without exciting any suspicion, kept myself fully informed about the fate of your forsaken boy. The well-known clock-maker Burg, now residing in D—, has adopted him as his own son!"

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You must have already divined, my poor Christina, that this announcement was coming: imagine what an impression these words must have made on all the bystanders! "Burg! Walter Burg!" was echoed and reechoed from every quarter of the room.

"Walter Burg is here!" cried Madame Arnoldi, suddenly, as she seized the cold hand of our almost benumbed darling. "Father, here,—here is indeed your son!"

"If he is," cried the woman, "he must produce the locket."

Walter trembled from head to foot as he produced that dear possession, which you know he has worn upon his heart ever since he left Geremberg.

Arnoldi recognized it instantly!

"It is a false imitation, only made to ruin me!" said the unhappy young man, whom the events of the last five minutes had transformed to a beggar.

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The Minister touched the spring, which was only known to himself, the locket sprang open, and suffered the picture of a beautiful woman to be seen. It was Walter's mother! Doubt was no longer possible.

"My son! my forsaken son!" cried the Minister.

"Our son! our artist son!" said his wife.

"My brother! my own dear brother!" exclaimed Sophie.

Six loving arms embraced the bewildered, happy, rich, and noble Walter!

And I? Ah, Christina! my dear sister! I drew back into a quiet corner, buried my face in my hands, while the hot tears coursed their rapid way down my cheeks, and tried to reprove my weak, selfish, foolish heart, which whispered ever to me: "Poor, poor father! you have no longer a son! For the rich son of the Minister you

can do nothing more! He is yours no longer!"

I must confess, my heart, that this was very selfish! It was human, indeed, but not Christian. Did we bring up Walter so carefully only for ourselves? Have we loved him solely because he made us happy, and not for his own sweet sake? Who should rejoice over his present good fortune more than we? For although we love him so very dearly, yet nothing in this world can possibly replace the love of tender parents, the affection of brothers and sisters! Therefore, Christina, we will rejoice with our dear Walter from the very depths of our hearts! We will humbly thank the Merciful One that he chose us to shelter his early life, to keep him pure from evil, and to turn his young and grateful soul to the worship of his God! This happiness we have enjoyed in its purity; it will accompany us to our latest hour; its memory will never cease to refresh and console us.

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My good, my pious, my beloved sister! I call upon you in this hour to make with me this heavy yet righteous sacrifice; for it is our duty to give back the blessed names, which make the heart happy, of father and mother, into the hands of those who claim them by the divine right of nature.

After the first intense excitement had subsided, after Walter, in the arms of his parents and amid the tender caresses of his lovely sister, had somewhat regained his bewildered consciousness, the first thought of his true heart was for me! He tore himself free from their clasping arms; he hastened to me, threw himself upon my heart, and said, as he wept: "Father Burg! O, say you will still be my father! O, what would have become of me if you had not taken pity upon me? Happy, happy man that I am! I have now two fathers and two mothers!"

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"Yes, and a sister that loves you too!" said little Sophie.

Now you see, my dear Christina, that Walter will still remain our son!

I am very much tired, for these scenes have been full of excitement for my heart. This long letter has also wearied me, and the fear of distressing you, my dear, true sister, has so exhausted me, that I do not feel able to write to you a description of the never-ending joy-festivals of the family of Arnoldi. I will relate all this better to you by word of mouth, for I will follow this letter almost immediately, and I will bring you as many guests as your little house can well hold,—the Minister, his wife, his daughter, and his and our son.

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Yes, my Christina! you shall soon again clasp the happy Walter to your true heart; you shall soon learn to know the dear ones to whom he now justly belongs; you shall receive the earnest thanks of his grateful father for your holy care of the forsaken orphan; while the beings with whom it has been the pleasure of God to place us in such relations shall learn to esteem and honor your gentle virtues!

Will you not, after a few natural tears, my Christina, rejoice with us all in Walter's good fortune?

I will come the day before the arrival of our guests, so that I soon hope to hold you to my heart!

God be ever with you, my beloved sister!

Your loving brother,

CHRISTIAN BURG.

The Minister Arnoldi lived in St. Petersburg, where he had inherited a handsome property. As his young wife became quite sickly there, by the advice of her physician he took her to Germany. But it was only for a short time that he was allowed to cherish a hope of her ultimate recovery there. The young wife was seized with a most depressing attack of home-sickness; he was forced to yield to her wishes, and, notwithstanding the advanced season of the year, to commence with the poor sufferer their trying journey home. When they had arrived at one of the little towns in the North of Germany, her situation became so critical that it was found impossible to continue their homeward route, and soon after he wept beside the coffin of his young spouse. After she had presented him with a son, she slumbered softly on, until her sleep became the long and dreamless one of death. The poor widower, with his helpless orphan in his arms, stood, without counsel or friends, by the early grave of his wife. It was late in the autumn; the weather was cold and stormy; how could he venture to undertake such an unpleasant journey with his new-born and delicate infant. No choice remained to him but to adopt the means often taken in large cities for the nursing and bringing up of little children; he trusted his greatest treasure, his only and darling son, to the wife of a peasant. She was to be his wet-nurse, and to assume the whole charge of the infant. The pastor of the parish promised to keep an attentive eye upon the child, and the woman was to receive through him a rich reward for her trouble. Before Arnoldi parted from his little Walter, he hung a locket containing a picture of his mother round his neck, and, oppressed with anxiety and pain, he set out on his lonely journey home.

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The deception and cruel desertion of the woman are already known to the reader. If it had not been for the sudden death of the worthy pastor, it would have been impossible for her to have carried such a wicked scheme into execution. She passed off Peter as Walter Arnoldi, and told the neighbors that she had taken her own child to her sister, because the boys disliked each other,

and were constantly quarrelling.

Years passed on. Arnoldi was constantly occupied in the most important business, and, as he feared the effect of a change of climate upon the constitution of his son, he thought it best for the boy to be permitted to remain with his nurse, who constantly gave the most encouraging accounts of his increasing strength and of his unbroken good health. Besides, Arnoldi had married again, and was very happy in his second union, while the birth of a daughter placed the memory of the son whom he had never known still more in the background. After he had taken a house and settled himself finally in Hamburg, he sent a faithful servant to bring home his only son. He was almost frightened when the ugly, awkward, rough, little boy was presented to him as his child. He reproached himself bitterly with having left him so long in such rough hands, and sought through redoubled love and attention to compensate for the time he had permitted him to be with entire strangers. But all his care and trouble availed but little; his son assumed, indeed, the outward form of refined society, but his mind continued rough and unformed. Lazy and idle for all mental effort, he was very cunning and skilful in reaching his own low aims. His sister had told him on his departure who he really was, and that it was his duty to send her plenty of money as a reward for keeping his secret. He thought it proper to do this at first, but he soon gave it up. Thereupon, she threatened him to disclose all, and he again sent her money. At last, she received nothing but the advice to trouble him no more. This seemed to awaken Martha's long slumbering conscience. Being once on a visit at D—, she heard accidentally that the clock-maker Burg had adopted a child who had been exposed and deserted at Geremburg. She now knew where the little boy, whom she had left in possession of the locket, was to be found. She visited Hamburg with the intention of getting money from her brother, by constantly threatening to betray his secret to the Minister. She did not know that Walter was then in Hamburg. The harsh reception given her by her brother irritated her almost to madness, so that she betrayed more than she had any intention of doing. But that beneficent God, from whom no secrets are hidden, had arranged it in such a manner that all who were concerned were to meet at the proper time and place.

The Minister was so overjoyed at the turn things had taken, that he never thought of inflicting any punishment. He rewarded Martha liberally for her late confession, and promised to Peter Meyer (who devoutly persisted in saying that he had not believed a single word of Martha's story, and that, until he saw the miniature inclosed in the locket, he thought that he was truly Walter Arnoldi) a considerable capital, which was to be paid out to him as soon as he should have mastered any available business, or was willing to commence any reputable occupation.

Peter, who now plainly saw that he was forced to relinquish all his hopes as heir, promised to be more industrious; and as he evinced an inclination to go to sea, he was intrusted with a situation on a trading-vessel which had once belonged to the Minister.

Walter became, as was to be expected, an artist of the highest fame, and many celebrated performers were formed in his school. He preserved his childlike love and reverence for his adopted parents to the hour of their death; he passed a certain portion of every year in the neat little house in which he had spent the happiest days of his childhood. The pious brother and sister gave their property at their death to the poor; but Walter had purchased, during their lifetime, the house and garden, with all the clocks and pieces of exquisite mechanism, and founded an institution, of which it was one of the conditions that everything within the beloved inclosure of Christina's garden, everything within the walls of her quiet home, should remain for ever undisturbed,—consecrated to the honor and sacred to the memory of Christina and Christian Burg!



## THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC AND THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

"Knowledge by suffering entereth;  
And Life is perfected by Death!"

AFTER a long life full of honor and blessings, the great maestro, Walter Arnoldi, was called from this earth to the better land. The pale Angel of Death, the Spirit of Music, and his own Guardian Angel, stood at his bedside.

The starry light again glittered round and through the aerial form of the fair Spirit of Music; the tones of her strange voice were sad, but soothing. She held a glossy wreath, made of the undying leaves of the consecrated laurel; and as she bent to twine it round the pale but calm brow of the artist, she kissed again his broad forehead, and said: "Thou wert a true priest in the service to which I consecrated thee. Lo! I have made thy name immortal. My early kiss did not lead thee to destruction, but kept thy noble soul ever pure from the stains which pollute the common mass of men."

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"That was because I led him where he could learn to know the Light of Life,—the Son of the Virgin!" said the Guardian Angel. "Without such knowledge, he would have been ruined; for Vanity and Pride, Falsehood and Selfishness, stand continually around the gifted, to seduce them from their duty, to lead the undying soul into the snares of hell. But he humbly bowed before the greatness of his Creator, because he had learned to know the Victim Lamb; he loved him, and believed on his name, to the last hour of his life. He did not claim the glory of his genius as a distinction for himself alone; he used it for the honor of his God! Therefore am I sent to bear the faithful soul home to the throne of God, where, in the tones of heaven, he shall sing eternal praises!"

"And high and earnest song shall accompany him on his upward way!" said the Spirit of Music, fondly.

The hymn of praise, in the unearthly glory of its heavenly tones, broke from the inspired lips of the glittering and radiant spirit.

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A smile of strange rapture transfigured the face of the noble artist, as the music of heaven mingled with the memories of his kindred labors upon earth. At that moment the pale Angel of Death kissed his quivering lips, and the three happy spirits, full of joy, bore the redeemed soul to the throne of God!

In the morning, the scholars found their beloved master dead, and his head already crowned with a glittering wreath of deep-green laurel. Vain were all their efforts to ascertain what unknown hand had twined it there. Unfaded and unfading, it still lies upon the quiet grave of the true and faithful artist!

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BENEVOLENCE AND GRATITUDE,

OR

THE RUSSIAN OFFICER.



THE reign of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, was disturbed by a series of bloody wars, and numerous were the enemies whom his brave people encountered upon all sides. These struggles were illustrated by many deeds worthy of undying renown, and the number of those who proved their love to their king and country, by the sacrifice of life itself, was fearful. Blooming striplings, the sole hope of their aged parents, stout men, the stay and comfort of their families, and noble leaders, whose worth and abilities were universally acknowledged, all fell in the bloody battles, and apparently in vain, for peace seemed as distant as ever.

The Russians, under Count Fermor, invaded East Prussia, which Frederick could not defend, owing to its distance from the main body of his states. This province yielded, and the Count crossed Poland and Pomerania with his eighty thousand men, prepared to carry the war into the very heart of the country. He attacked the city of Küstrin, which he reduced in a few hours to a heap of ashes. The citadel alone remained standing, and the Prussian commandant determined to perish with it, rather than yield. [242]

Information was speedily brought that Frederick himself was approaching, and this news saved the fortress; for the Russians quitted Küstrin, and, marching northward, encamped at Zorndorf, between the Wartha and the Oder. A most bloody battle was soon after fought in this place. Frederick advanced upon the enemy, who were formidable, not only from their vast superiority in numbers, but also from their incredible hardihood.

The Prussians must be victorious, or their very capital would soon be in the power of the enemy, and their whole country lie at the mercy of the Russians. Frederick knew this well, and determined not only to defeat, but to annihilate, his foe. He commanded his men to give no quarter, and to destroy all who fell in their way. [243]

The battle was long and desperate. The right wing of the Russian army was finally driven into a swamp, surrounded, and hewn down by the Prussians, scarcely a man escaping; while the left, eager to avenge their slaughtered brethren, made a most furious onslaught. But, notwithstanding their desperate courage, they were driven back, and obliged to quit the field.

The ammunition was all exhausted upon both sides, and the fight was hand to hand, with sword and bayonet, when the night came on and put an end to the bloody strife. The Prussians awaited its renewal with the coming dawn, for Count Fermor had drawn up his men in order beyond the swamp; but, after lingering in the neighborhood during the whole of the next day, he finally withdrew with his army towards Poland, leaving twenty thousand dead upon the field of battle.

A few days after the occurrences just related, a lively scene was passing in a little town not far from Berlin. The streets were crowded with people, especially the market-place, with its tall, neat houses, whose polished window-panes shone clearly in the bright sunlight. It was Sunday. Well-dressed dames and young maidens, with their hymn-books in their folded hands, and their eyes cast modestly upon the ground, were hastening to the open churches, while their husbands and brothers gathered in groups before the doors to enjoy a little neighborly conversation. The deeds of the great king were upon every tongue; the last battle was variously discussed, and many an honest burgher, who had never passed the limits of his own little town, thought himself quite wise and experienced enough to play the critic. [244]

"Ah, good morning to you, brother!" cried the stout grocer Bolt to his brother-in-law, Doctor Heller, who at this moment came down the street, accompanied by two other citizens of the town. "Whither away so fast? Won't you step in and breakfast with me? I will give you a glass of beer that can't be matched. I never drank better in my whole life; and that is saying a great deal, for many and many's the brewing that I have tasted!" [245]

"Thank you, my good friend," replied the doctor, as he heartily shook his brother's hand; "thank you, but I must accompany these gentlemen immediately, notwithstanding your enticing offer of beer. But, my old friend, you will keep it until evening, when I can come in and share it with you, will you not? You see I am bound to the hospital. The last battle cost many a poor fellow a broken head, and several of the wounded soldiers are to be brought here, because the nearer hospitals are all filled to overflowing. If I am not mistaken, we are to have a Russian, too, upon our hands, to be taken care of."

"Thunder and lightning!" blustered the grocer. "A Russian! Are we to entertain and nurse our worst enemies? That is too bad. I would rather let a whole regiment of Austrians, Frenchmen, Saxons, or whatever names the rascals may be called by, range at will through my house, than harbor a single Russian. They are worse than savages, and more cruel than the fiercest wild beasts. Yes, indeed, my good brother, you had better keep your Russian far enough away from my clutches!" [246]

"Come, come!" said the doctor, soothingly, "I too hate the Russians with all my heart, but we must feel as human beings, even towards our enemies; and the poor fellow they will send us here can do us no harm. He may have lost a leg or an arm, and even if his wounds be not severe—"

"What! the Devil!" interrupted Bolt. "If my leg or my arm had been shot off, that would have been the end of me. But surely these Russians are not made of the same flesh and blood as we Germans! I will lay you a wager now, whatever you please, that without either arms or legs they would burn the houses over our heads. But look! How lively the burgomaster's granddaughter is to-day! Your servant, Miss Ella!"

This greeting was addressed to a little girl, who had just thrust her curly head through the half- [247]

opened doorway of the opposite house.

"Good morning, neighbor!" replied the child, friendlyly, as she skipped up and down the steps to tease her playmate, a large brown spaniel. The men watched the little one's wild bounds for a moment, when the fat grocer broke the silence by muttering, half angrily: "The old man over there lets that child do whatever she pleases."

"Who can wonder at that?" replied Doctor Heller, as he shook his brother-in-law's hand previous to parting from him. "The little maiden is so very lovely! and we should do no better if she belonged to either of us. But now farewell, old friend! I have already wasted too much time in gossiping; and do not forget the beer I am to have this evening."

After this last remembrance, he hastened away with his two companions.

The little girl had meanwhile seated herself upon the uppermost step of the portico. "Atlas!" she cried to the dog, which had now run into the street, "my Atlas, will you not come to me?"

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The animal ran swiftly towards her, and seated himself lovingly by her side. She threw her arms around his shaggy neck, and leaned her tender chin upon his great head. Doctor Heller had spoken truly when he said, "The little maiden is so very lovely!" for Ella was indeed a beautiful child. Her dark hair fell in long ringlets upon her white neck, her forehead was broad and smooth, her cheeks faintly tinged with red, her large brown eyes, shaded by the long lashes which hung over them as a mourning veil, were filled with the light beaming from a tender and loving soul, and her fresh young mouth, with its smiling lips, was so charming, that the grocer, who was now seated upon the green-painted bench before his shop-door, could not take his eyes from her lovely face.

The old burgomaster soon opened the window. "Ella, my dear Ella!" he cried, "do not go into the street. Had you not better come in, my child?"



**ELLA AND ATLAS.**

But Ella threw up her beseeching eyes, and said to the old man: "Indeed I will not go down, grandfather; I will sit here quite quietly: but do, pray, let me stay out a little longer. I would so like to see all those wagons pass which have just turned into our street." [249]

The burgomaster could not resist her gentle entreaty, and nodded a kindly yes, saying: "Well, then, you may stay, you little coaxing pussy; but do not forget that to-day is Sunday, and that mother and I are waiting for you to come and read the Gospel to us."

He then closed the window slowly, while his eyes rested full of love and kindness upon the joy of his heart, his little grandchild. She certainly did not hear her grandfather's last words, for her whole attention was fixed upon a long train of vehicles, which were moving along as slowly as if they formed part of a funeral procession. Ella sat and gazed upon them. The front wagon finally came quite near, and she then discovered the cause of the slow pace at which they proceeded. Upon the straw which covered the bottoms of the vehicles human forms, clothed in torn uniforms, were lying, and every jolt upon the rough stone pavement seemed to send a thrill of agony through their sensitive frames. [250]

Little Ella's tender heart was deeply touched by the sight of this mournful train; bright tears hung upon her long lashes, and her slender arms involuntarily closed still more tightly around the dog's neck. She pressed him to her bosom, as if she would thus quiet the throbbing of her compassionate heart.

The last wagon at length passed before the door. Within it was a young man, who half sat and half reclined upon the straw, and whose uniform, differing entirely from that of the others, showed him to be an officer. He had evidently been severely wounded. His left arm was in a sling, and he supported his head, enveloped in a rude bandage, upon his right hand. Both the bandage and the tattered uniform were covered with dark-red blood-stains.

As the wagon was passing the burgomaster's house, a trace broke, and the driver left his seat to fasten it. The wounded man looked up, and, observing the child sitting upon the steps, he raised himself with considerable difficulty, and drew his hand slowly across his aching brow. A single look, imploring pity, fell upon Ella; and he then sank back motionless and unconscious upon the straw. The wagon moved on, and the driver seemed to pay more heed to his horses than to his wounded passenger. The little girl's tears fell thick and fast; she watched him until he had disappeared with the others around a corner. She then made a sign to the dog, rose quickly, and, as if inspired by some sudden resolution, hastily entered the house. [251]

Still deeply moved, and her eyes filled with tears, she opened the door which led to her mother's apartment. The room was richly and carefully furnished, and bespoke the wealth and taste of its inmates. The long, flowing window-curtains prevented the sun from shining in too brightly; and only here and there could a few beams pierce through a crevice, and as they fell on the floor, they seemed to sport among the roses adorning the cheerful carpet. Ella's mother sat in a high-backed red-velvet arm-chair. She was the widow of an officer,—Major von Herbart. Still in the prime of life, she bore on her countenance, which had once been very beautiful, the traces of a deep sorrow. A dress of pearl-gray merino fell in soft folds around her graceful figure, and her luxuriant dark hair was covered by a simple lace cap. She leaned against the crimson covering of the chair-back, which rose high above her head, and her delicate hand held a Bible, in which she seemed to have been reading. Her eyes were fixed upon the portrait of a young officer, which hung against the wall opposite to her; and hence she did not remark her daughter's entrance, until Ella had seated herself upon a little stool at her mother's feet, and pressed a soft kiss upon the beloved hand. [252]

"Naughty child!" said the mother, as she stroked the hair back from the fair young forehead with her white fingers, "how you startled me! And how long you have delayed to-day to read your Bible to your dear grandfather and myself!"

Before Ella could respond to this gentle reproach, the old burgomaster entered the room, and seated himself silently in his accustomed place, near his daughter. Ella took the Bible from her mother's lap, and, with a faint and trembling voice, began to read the parable of the good Samaritan, upon which she had accidentally opened. She had often before heard this simple history,—indeed, she almost knew it by heart; but never before had its meaning appeared so clear to her, or penetrated so deeply into her soul. Her voice became firmer, and the words resounded more and more significantly from her lips, until, steadfastly fixing her gaze upon her grandfather's face, she gave utterance to this sentence: "And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." [253]

But here she suddenly ceased reading, sprang up, and, throwing her arms around the old man's neck, said: "My dear, my good grandfather! will you not grant your Ella one prayer,—only one? It is something you can do, if you only will; indeed, it will not be hard for you,—only please say 'Yes,' before I tell it to you!" [254]

"Another prayer already, my little darling?" replied the burgomaster, smiling. "Have you so soon found out that your old grandfather is too weak and fond to deny you anything? But, be it what it may, I promise you beforehand, that, if I can fulfil your wish, I will do so; but out with it, and do not be hiding behind the bushes, for you know how little that pleases me."

"No, no," said Ella, quickly, "I have nothing to hide; you shall know all. You surely saw the wounded men who were brought here to-day, and who, as you told us yesterday, are to be taken to the hospital. Their necessities will I know be there supplied, but still I am certain many things

will be wanting which would render their sad fate easier to bear."

"You are right, my Ella; they cannot find there all they may require, for our town is not large, and very few are the benevolent hearts willing to make a voluntary offering, after the many heavy taxes we have all been forced to pay. But you must not forget, my child, that the men who have thus excited your compassion are soldiers, and consequently not so spoiled as you are. They can easily do without a thousand comforts which long custom has rendered necessary to your well-being. A soldier, who has passed many a night upon the open field, without other couch than the cold, damp earth, a stone for his pillow, and a cloak his only covering, has no need of a soft feather-bed to rest quietly and soundly; a good bunch of straw is all he requires."

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The child sighed deeply. The image of the wounded officer who had fallen back fainting upon the straw, the pleading look which his mournful eyes had cast upon her, would not quit her excited fancy, and the desire of assisting him became ever stronger and deeper. "Ah!" said she, after a short pause, "I would not lie in that hospital for anything in the world! I was once there when our coachman's wife had a fever, but I was soon obliged to leave the room; the dreadful heat and poisoned air nearly stifled me, and I certainly should have died, had I been forced to remain there long. The common soldiers may indeed be accustomed to bear much greater hardships; but I saw some officers lying upon the wagons, and they must suffer a great deal. You have promised, dear grandfather, to grant my request: take then one, only one, of those poor fellows into your own house. Others will follow your example, and thus may at least some of them be well cared for. O, do not look so doubtingly!" continued Ella, in her gentlest and most persuasive accents; "I am sure your heart assents to my wish, even if your lips be silent."

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The little girl did not wait for an answer, but left the room, and in a few moments returned with her grandfather's hat and cane. She placed them both in his hands, tied on her bonnet, threw a light shawl round her shoulders; and, having pressed a warm kiss upon her mother's lips, she led out the half-reluctant old man, who scarcely yet comprehended what he was expected to do. The widow gazed with tearful eyes upon her little daughter's retreating figure.

Ella's cheeks soon glowed from the effects of her rapid pace; her dark locks floated in the wind, and her eyes sparkled with joy. She hastened onwards faster and faster, greeting with a gracious smile all the acquaintances whom she met, while from time to time she turned her head back towards the old man, who in vain signed to her that she must moderate her steps. The hospital was soon reached. It was an old building, whose gray walls had already seen many centuries; its lofty windows were filled with numerous little panes, a portion of which were broken out; and the whole aspect of the sombre edifice was such, that no one could wonder at its gloomy effect upon a child's susceptible imagination. Ella shuddered as her foot crossed the threshold. She remembered the dismal scenes she had once before witnessed within these melancholy walls; and, starting back, she covered her face with both hands. But they were not long suffered to remain in this position, for her grandfather soon clasped them in his own, and said, laughing, "Aha, little deer! have I caught you at last? But now you are my prisoner, and I shall not let you escape, or you will run away from me again, and I am already out of breath."

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"O no!" cried Ella, shuddering, "I could have gone no farther alone. This great old building fills me with dread. Hold me tight, dear grandfather, or I shall be so afraid!"

The burgomaster opened the door, and they entered a long, dark passage, in which they met Doctor Heller. "Only see, now!" cried the doctor, as his wondering eyes fell upon Ella and her grandfather; "here are the burgomaster and the little lady in our old dingy castle. To what happy accident do we owe this honor?"

"Good day, doctor!" replied the burgomaster, friendlily. "I came to see how your patients are doing, especially the new-comers."

"O, quite well,—excellently!" answered the doctor, gayly rubbing his hands. "They are well lodged, and the greater number have already had their wounds dressed; I will bring them all well through."

"O, take us to see them!" besought Ella, interrupting him somewhat impatiently.

The doctor looked inquiringly at the burgomaster. "You must do as she pleases," said the latter, clapping his hand upon the physician's shoulder; while he added, jestingly, "I believe my little granddaughter has some intention of dabbling in your trade; we will see how she will manage it."

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The doctor laughed. "Now judge for yourselves," said he, as he ushered them into a spacious hall crowded with the wounded men; "are not those soldiers as well lodged and cared for as if they were princes?"

The burgomaster shook his head as he replied gently: "Not quite so, but they must be content, for it is the best we can do for them. I think, however, that some improvements might be made; if, for example, we were to repair the dilapidated rooms upon the other side of the building. But where is Ella?" he exclaimed, as he missed the child from his side.

"There she is," said the doctor, somewhat vexed that his arrangements had not met with a more cordial approval; "yonder, by the middle window."

The burgomaster turned towards the spot indicated. Upon a heap of straw covered with a coarse cloth, lay the apparently lifeless body of a young man. A feeble sunbeam, which found its way through the dingy window-panes, fell upon his pallid face, and revealed a deep, gaping wound upon his forehead. Long black hair hung in disorder round his temples. His pale lips, shaded by a dark moustache, were rigidly closed, and his right hand was tightly pressed upon his breast, which was not stirred by the faintest sign of breath. Ella hung over the body with her

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little hands folded together, apparently absorbed in thought. As her grandfather approached, she rose and said: "Only see! there he is. I knew him at once!"

"Who is it? Whom have you recognized?" asked the astonished burgomaster. "Certainly not this young man; I do not remember having ever seen him before!"

"But I saw him," replied Ella, quickly, as she vainly endeavored to hide her tears; "I saw him as he rode past our door, and he saw me too, for he looked at me so piteously, as if he would have said, 'O do help me!' And then he closed his eyes and fainted. But he is not dead, I am sure he is not, grandfather! Let us take him home to my little room, and he will soon recover. You shall have no trouble with him, nor my dear mother either; I promise you that I will care for everything!"

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The old gentleman shook his head, and, turning to the doctor, said: "Judging from his uniform, this young man cannot belong to our army. But why has not some one attempted to restore him to life? Apparently, no efforts have as yet been made to aid him!"

"He is only a Russian!" replied the doctor, contemptuously; "there is no need for any great hurry about him!"

"A Russian!" cried the astonished burgomaster.

"A Russian!" repeated Ella, horrified, as all the cruel scenes of which she had been told, in which the Russians had played so prominent a part, passed before her mind.

"Yes, a Russian!" said the doctor, coldly; "and now, my little lady, I am sure you will renounce your design of having this man removed to your grandfather's house. Besides, we can scarcely hope that his eyes will ever again open; and if he can be helped," he continued, half angrily, "it can be done as well here as elsewhere."

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Ella again placed herself beside the wounded man; all her fear had vanished; one look upon the pale young face had told her that all the Russians could not be so bad as they had been represented.

"But how can this one ever do us any harm?" she cried, again renewing her entreaties to her grandfather.

The old gentleman was at first very averse to granting her request, but all the arguments which he drew from the almost universal prejudices then existing against the young man's nation proved fruitless. Ella begged and prayed, until he finally yielded. An arrangement was made by which the wounded man was to be carefully borne to the burgomaster's upon a litter, which the doctor promised himself to accompany. Ella and her grandfather hastened home to prepare all for his reception.

The child proposed to give up her own little room to the stranger, because, as she said, her flowers would please him, and he would be less disturbed by the noise from the street.

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"But where will you sleep yourself during so long a time?" asked Ella's mother, who was evidently well pleased with her little girl's activity, as she ordered her bed to be exchanged for another, hastily put away her playthings, shut her books up in a closet, and, although everything looked very orderly, still found something new to arrange.

"I?" replied Ella, somewhat embarrassed, and standing for a moment irresolute; "I never thought of that!" Then, as if struck by a sudden inspiration, she ran to her mother, threw her arms around her neck, and cried, laughing: "Will you not, my dear mother, if I beg you right hard, take me into your own room, me and my Atlas? Atlas only wants a little place in a corner, and you can let my little bed stand near yours, as it used to do. That will be delightful! I shall enjoy it so much, for early in the morning I can put my head in between the curtains, lift the cover very softly, and, before you know it, I will be right close to you; then you will fold me in your arms, and we will together pray to God never to part us."

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The child thus prattled on until the flow of her discourse was interrupted by the arrival of the unfortunate man, for whose sake she had been making all these preparations.

"Ha!" cried the doctor, as he entered the room, "I can believe that one might be well satisfied here; it looks like a little paradise. Come in, my men, and help me to lay this poor fellow upon the bed,—so. Now you may go.—But, most gracious lady, your most obedient! Pardon me, that in the confusion I did not observe you sooner. Your daughter has brought plenty of trouble into your house; but the old gentleman must bear all the blame; he should not have permitted himself to be so easily persuaded."

"Do you then think, my dear doctor, that I have so little compassion?" asked the mother, interrupting him. "Do you think that I would fear a little discomfort when a suffering fellow-creature could be aided? O, I would willingly make still greater sacrifices," she continued, as she clasped the hand of the unconscious youth, "if I could recall life into this young frame,—a life upon which may perhaps depend that of a loving mother!"

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The doctor laughed scornfully, and muttered, "As if a Russian could have any feeling!" No one heeded this speech, and he continued: "The wound upon the head is not dangerous; I have just dressed it, and there will be no need of amputating the arm. He seems much exhausted from loss of blood, for he has lain in this position during several hours."

At this moment the wounded man opened his eyes, which he, however, immediately reclosed, as if blinded by the light; a slight tinge of color flushed his pale cheek, and a faint sigh escaped his lips.

"He lives!" cried Ella, joyfully, "he has opened his eyes!"

But the doctor quickly laid his finger on his lips, in token that entire quiet was necessary, while he at the same time shut out the light by closing the curtains. A soft twilight thus pervaded the room, and all looks were turned in expectation towards the young Russian, who again opened his eyes, which rested upon those around him, at first with an expression of doubt and amazement, but finally beamed with the most delighted surprise. He sought in vain to rise; he sank back exhausted upon the pillows, and equally fruitless were his efforts to articulate a single word.

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With some difficulty he seized upon Ella's hand, and pressed it to his heart. This movement told the child very plainly that she had been recognized. She could scarcely conceal her joy. But the physician, who was anxious to avoid every emotion which might prove injurious to the patient in his present state, desired that for a little while he should be left alone. He promised to send an experienced nurse, and to call again in the course of the day.

With difficulty could Ella be persuaded to leave her charge; she followed her mother unwillingly, and gazed upon the wounded man until the door of the apartment had closed behind her.

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## THE LETTER.

ONE day, about four weeks after the occurrences related in our last chapter, Madame von Herbart was seated in a neat little cabinet, where she usually passed her morning hours, employed in the instruction of her daughter. Through the open door, which offered a pleasant view into a beautiful garden, whose trees and parterres were already tinged with the brilliant hues of autumn, a whole flood of perfumes streamed into the pretty apartment. The widow sat by her writing-table opposite the door, with Ella by her side attentively listening to her mother's words, while she related the history of the noble and high-hearted, but unfortunate Grand-master, Henry von Plauen.

She graphically detailed to her daughter the shameful web of hatred, envy, and treachery which caused the downfall of this truly great man. With glowing words she painted the blackness of the ingratitude with which he was rewarded by the very brethren of the order which he had himself saved from ruin by his own exertions, and how they robbed him of all his dignities and honors, keeping a close watch upon him until death freed him from their persecution. [269]

"O my child!" she continued, "how great is the sin of ingratitude! What depravity does it not evince, to distress and injure those who have only done us good! Such a deed is never suffered to pass unpunished by a righteous Heaven, and the German order stands as a warning example in history; for the overthrow of the high-hearted Plauen was the first step in its own downfall."

"May I come in?" asked a gentle but manly voice, at this moment interrupting the narrative of Madame von Herbart.

Ella sprang up from her seat, exclaiming, "It is Theodore!" and hastened to the door.

The wounded Russian could scarcely be recognized in the young man who now approached the widow with a light tread, had it not been for the bandage which was still wound about his brow, and the sling in which his left hand rested. Although his wounds were not yet entirely healed, the short time had produced a wonderful change in his appearance. Instead of the deathly pallor, a healthy red tinged his youthful cheeks, his dull, sunken eyes had regained their fire; in short, a change had taken place in his whole exterior, similar to that we may often perceive when the caterpillar, after an apparent death, suddenly throws off his ugly shell and flutters around us as a beautiful butterfly. [270]

"May I hope for your pardon, my gracious lady?" asked the young man, in fluent but slightly foreign German, while he reverentially lifted Madame von Herbart's hand to his lips. "May I hope that you will pardon my boldness in having interrupted you?"

Madame von Herbart signed to him to be seated upon an arm-chair which Ella had just left, and said kindly: "Your unexpected appearance gives great pleasure. I congratulate you upon the happy termination of your tedious captivity. You have not disturbed us, for Ella's school-hours are just ended." [271]

"You teach your daughter yourself?" asked the young Russian, somewhat surprised.

"I am too jealous of the love of my only child," replied Madame von Herbart, "to trust any stranger with so important a share of my maternal duties. I often feel the insufficiency of my own acquirements, but I shun no labor in learning all myself which I judge necessary for my child; and thus, while forming her mind, I can at the same time influence her heart. It is said," she added, smiling, "that all mothers think their own children prodigies of loveliness; but though I flatter myself this is not my case, for I know my Ella's faults, yet I venture to hope that she will correct them all, through love for a mother who, since her beloved husband's death, has found her purest and highest happiness in the education of her daughter."

A dark shadow, a painful contraction, apparently caused by the remembrance of past days, passed over Theodore's features. He endeavored to conceal the depth of his inward emotion, and cried out: "What is higher and holier in the world than a mother's love?" After a moment's pause, he added, as if speaking to himself: "And what can be more painful than to be forced to part with this heavenly affection early in life?" [272]

Madame von Herbart laid her hand upon the young man's head, as if in the act of blessing him, and said tenderly: "Poor boy! you must have been very young when you were torn from the protection of a loving home, and thrust into the world. Scarcely yet a man, you have already used the bloody sword which your feeble hands could hardly lift. Your compatriots have deeply injured my country, and you, too, came as an enemy upon the soil so dear to me; your wounds show that you wore your arms as no idle ornaments, and yet I cannot hate you, for he who needs our aid is no longer an enemy. You are a Russian, and you weep?" she continued, gently raising the young man's head, which had fallen upon his breast. "I have often heard that the Russians were all rough and cruel, and yet you weep. O, do not be ashamed of your tears! they prove the goodness of your heart, and justify the sympathy you have excited within my soul." [273]

"O my dear benefactress!" exclaimed Theodore, "where shall I find words to thank you? Could you read my heart,—could you see how the thought of the priceless benefits you have showered upon me fills my whole soul,—how all my feelings are fused into an overwhelming sense of gratitude, which I struggle in vain to express,—you would not wonder at my silence. What true nobility did it not require to take an enemy of your country into your own house, and nurse and treat him with such kindness as you have shown to me!"

Theodore was in the highest state of excitement, and again pressed his lips upon the lady's hand. She gently drew it from his clasp, and said, mildly: "But how excited you are! What would Doctor Heller say, were he to see you now? He would think that the fever, which during so many weeks sent the blood seething through your veins, had again seized upon you, and he would quickly withdraw his permission for you to leave your chamber. Away with all thoughts which could be injurious to your health! And now avail yourself of the Doctor's leave to take a stroll in the garden; your little nurse, to whom you owe much more than to me, shall accompany you."

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"Ah, my little Ella!" cried Theodore, making an effort to appear more calm than he really was, "if you will be my guide, the garden, which as yet I have only seen from my windows, will seem to me doubly beautiful."

He then lifted up the child with his uninjured right arm, and kissed and fondled her with a thousand expressions of his gratitude. "But now we must be good children, and do as mamma bids," said he, at length, taking Ella's hand, and leading her out into the garden. In a few moments both had disappeared among the old trees.

We will leave the mother alone in her perfumed cabinet, where she drew from one corner of her writing-desk a package of letters, written to her by her late husband before their marriage; we will leave her with these dearly treasured pages, already wet with so many tears, and follow the youthful pair, whom we again find at the end of a shady avenue of lindens.

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"Take these pears," said Ella to her companion. "They are quite ripe, and my mother planted the tree which bore them before she was as old as I am now; she prefers pears to all other fruits. But you are not gay," she continued, looking true-heartedly into the young man's eyes. "Are you thinking of your mother who is dead?"

She waited in vain for an answer, and then prattled on: "My father is dead, too; he fought at Collin, under Ziethen, and as he led his soldiers to seize upon a battery which was doing much harm to the Prussians, a wicked bullet struck him. I cried a great deal, and mamma always weeps whenever she thinks of him, and of my dear brother, who soon followed my father. Ah, if Victor were only alive! He loved me so dearly, and it was such a pleasure to play with him; but since God took him to his beautiful heaven, I like best to stay with mamma and my old grandfather. And when I want to run about awhile, I call Atlas, papa's favorite dog, for I do not care to play with other children."

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"And do you not like, then, to stay with me, my Ella?" asked the young man.

"O yes, I do, indeed! I love you very much. While you were sick I brought you the most beautiful flowers, and the finest fruit from the garden, but you would scarcely ever taste it. Sometimes you seemed to recognize me, and then you would press my hand to your lips, which burned like fire; but you would often push me away from you, and speak words which I could not understand. My grandfather told me it was your mother tongue, and your delirium seemed to lead you again into the battle, for you gave orders, and cried several times, 'Stand fast, comrades! stand fast! We will show that we do not fear death! Let us conquer or die!' Ah! then I often knelt down by the bed, and prayed God that he would soon make you well."

"Did you do that? Did you, indeed, do that, my little angel?" asked Theodore, drawing the child gently towards him, while his voice trembled with emotion, and his eyes filled with tears.

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"Certainly I did it," replied Ella; "and that is why you are well now, for God has promised that, if we call upon him when we are in trouble, he will save us; and as you could not pray yourself, I did it for you."

The child ceased; they had just reached the end of the garden, and stood upon a little mound adorned with firs and birches, near a pleasure-house which bore some resemblance to a hermit's hut.

"Listen, Theodore; you do not seem to like our garden," said Ella reproachfully, while she laid her hand upon the door, "and yet every one says it is the prettiest in the city, and even strangers often ask for permission to walk through it. But only come in here, and then you will surely exclaim, How beautiful! how glorious!"

The child led the young man through the open door with a triumphant air, as if quite sure of the impression to be produced. He looked round attentively. The walls of the little building were clothed with soft, velvety moss, which still retained its hue of tender green; many-colored shells were scattered round, some forming the initials of beloved names, and others disposed in fanciful arabesques. The tessellated floor was strewn with fresh flowers. On one side stood a comfortable sofa, and upon a low stool near the door lay a piece of woman's work, evidently just commenced. The whole made a most favorable impression upon the beholder; nevertheless Theodore looked as if disappointed, and was about making this confession to his little friend, when she suddenly closed the door, and they stood together in the darkness.

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"Will you play hide and go seek with me, Ella?" cried Theodore, laughing.

But scarcely had he uttered these words, when the opposite wall opened as if by magic, and a loud cry of surprise and pleasure burst from his lips, while his eyes rested upon the lovely scene which he suddenly saw before him. Ella stood near with folded arms, and sought to read in his face whether his delight was as great as she had anticipated. Apparently satisfied with her observations, she stepped nearer to him, and, lightly mounting upon the stool, threw her left arm round his neck, and pointed with her right hand towards the valley, stretching beyond the houses of the little city lying at their feet.

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**ELLA AND THEODORE.**

"In our garden," she said seriously, "the trees are variously planted and trimmed; the blooming hedges are carefully trained, and my dear grandfather even had a pond made, because I am so fond of the water; but do you see all this? Our good God arranged it all himself, and therefore is it much more beautiful than our garden. How pure and clear is the water of that little lake! See how the birches, with their white stems and long hanging branches, are reflected in its shining mirror; and how the cows pasture and the sheep play so gayly upon the green meadows. Look beyond the lake at that great forest of fir-trees; how quietly the villages rest in its shadow, as if they thought themselves quite safe under its protection!"

Her hand still pointed towards the distant view, although Theodore's eyes had long ceased to follow its direction, and rested upon the features of the little speaker. Ella turned towards him, and, as if ashamed, cast down her eyes. "Are you not glad," she said softly, "that God has made it all so beautiful?" [280]

Theodore made no answer; he laid his hand upon his troubled breast and sighed: "What a struggle will it cost me to tear myself away! And yet I cannot remain much longer."

"You are going away!" cried Ella, looking up in dismay. "You are going to leave us!" she repeated mournfully, bursting into tears.

Theodore forced a smile to pacify the child. He kissed the bright drops from her cheek, and said: "Fear nothing, my little one, I will not leave you yet. And for love of you I will again become a child; neither past nor future shall trouble me; I will yield myself entirely to the joy of the present, without looking backwards or forwards. But now, my little angel, leave me for a while!"

With these words he led the child to the door, threw himself exhausted upon the sofa, laid his head upon the soft cushion, and, overcome by his unusual excitement, was soon in a deep sleep. [281]

He had thus rested about an hour, when he was awakened by a loud voice, which cried: "Now, my young sir! what does all this mean? Window and door both open, and there you lie and sleep. Do you call that reasonable?"

The speaker was Frederick, the burgomaster's old servant.

"I have been looking for you everywhere during the last hour, and if the little lady had not told me you were here, I might have been looking for you yet. I have a letter for you, brought by a little boy, who begged me to place it in your own hands. I have looked at the paper carefully on both sides, and as there is nothing on it but a line of crooked pot-hooks, that can harm nobody, I may as well give it to you. Here it is."

Theodore rose slowly, took the note from the servant's hand, gazed long upon the characters, and finally sank back, pale as death, and gasping for breath. [282]

"What a curious people these Russians are!" muttered Frederick, angrily, while he gazed upon the young man with evident displeasure. "God knows I cannot bear a Russian, as, indeed, no true-hearted Prussian can; still, I thought they were men, but this one is no stronger than an old woman. He hangs his head as if the hens had picked up all his crumbs, and is so feeble that he can scarcely stand upon his feet, all because of a couple of sorry blows and a flesh wound, that one of us would not have cared a fig for. Yes, yes, Mr. Ensign, or Mr. Captain, or whatever your title may be, you need not look so incredulous, for I was in both the first Silesian wars, and have stood many a charge when blood fell fast as rain, and the Austrians fled until it was a joy to see them. And when younger men shall be wanting, I may perhaps venture my old bones once more, especially if there be any chance of fighting the Russians.—But, old fool that I am," continued he, interrupting himself, "when I once begin on that subject my heart is on my tongue, and both run away from me as if Captain 'Quickstep' had command.—Nay, that shall not happen again!—But now, right about, my young sir! Wheel round and march into the house. Lay your hand on my shoulder, and I will help you to-day, even if you are a Russian. Any one, to hear you talk, would really think you the child of German parents. Where did you learn our language?" [283]

"From my mother," replied Theodore, faintly and abstractedly; "from my mother, who was educated in Germany."

The manner in which these words were spoken deprived the servant of the courage to ask any more questions, and both silently entered the house. Theodore went immediately to his own chamber, which he left no more during the whole day.

A week passed, and Theodore, whose health had before so rapidly improved, seemed to be a changed man since the reception of that letter, of which no one knew anything but Frederick, from whom Theodore had with difficulty succeeded in obtaining a promise of secrecy. No one had ever seen him very gay, but now he would sit for hours motionless in the same spot. No smiles or sounds of joy parted his lips; and when he spoke, the tone of his voice betrayed a deep and hidden sorrow. When he was asked the cause of his altered demeanor, he would shake his head, his eyes would fill with tears, and the most painful expression would rest upon his features. [284]

Ella, especially, made him many reproaches, for he had promised her to be very gay; she beset him unceasingly with her sympathizing questions, to which he usually returned no answer.

"Are you ill again?" she asked one day, after having exhausted all possible conjectures, to which a dry "No" had been the sole response.

"Ah, yes indeed! ill, ill!" replied Theodore, so quickly that one might easily see how glad he was

to have found any explanation for his strange conduct. "Yes, dear Ella, believe me, I am indeed ill. But leave me now. I shall soon be better."

The deep sigh which accompanied these words betrayed that he himself placed no confidence in his improvement. From this time forward the child persecuted Doctor Heller with prayers to make her poor Theodore well again. The Doctor felt the young man's pulse, and, after a significant shake of the head, he ordered him a quantity of bitter drugs, which the patient regularly threw out of the window. The physician, however, remarked, after a few days, that his medicine had done wonders, and Theodore already looked much better; an opinion in which Ella and her mother did not coincide.

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## THE VISIT.

EARLY in the spring, Madame von Herbart had received an invitation from Madame von Carly, a friend of her youth, who owned a beautiful country-seat several miles distant from the city, to bring Ella, and spend a few days with her in the country. Madame von Herbart had declined the invitation, because she was averse to leaving her home and her aged father, who, during her absence, would be entirely alone. In the month of October, when but few fine days could still be hoped for, Madame von Carly came herself to the city, to carry away her friend, and would listen to no excuses.

"You must go with me, Maria," she said; "there is no use to say anything; I will dine with you, and immediately after dinner you will drive out with me. Here, Ella! come here, my child! How tall you grow! And always in your little white dresses! They would look well upon my children! I believe five minutes would be long enough to change them into many-colored garments. Come now, talk a little; you are as dumb as a fish!" She continued, rapidly: "Will you not be glad to go to Sergow, and see my Louisa, and Freddy, and William? Both the wild boys long to see you; they call you always their white rose, and made me solemnly promise not to return without you."

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"But, my good Lina," said Madame von Herbart, who had vainly striven until now to check this stream of words, "perhaps our visit will not be agreeable to your husband?"

"What an idea!" cried Madame von Carly. "When I invite you to see me, it is well understood that he will esteem it an honor to receive you. Did you never hear the French proverb: 'Ce que femme veut, Dieu le veut!'<sup>[1]</sup> That is the best and most sensible one I know, and I never fail every day to make a little sermon on this text. But now, make haste! Pack up your things, whatever you may require, and let us dine early, that we may soon be off. The ground in the city burns under my feet. I should die if I were forced to live here a week; I always feel as if I could not draw a free breath until I am beyond the gates.—But I had almost forgotten. How is your father, Maria? The last time I saw him, I did not feel so pleasantly as usual in his society. This eternal talk about war and battles, glorious sieges and new taxes, seems to have thrown a black veil over his cheerful humor. He, too, must go with us to Sergow; one week with us, and the blues would soon be driven out of him. But where is the old gentleman? I would like myself to make the proposition to him."

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"He is not at home," replied Madame von Herbart, "and I do not expect him in less than two hours. My poor father is now very busy; he has so many cares, and so much trouble, that we must not wonder if he sometimes looks rather serious. He could not possibly leave the city, and you would only embarrass him were you to invite him, for he always finds difficulty in saying 'No.' Please do me the favor not to attack the old gentleman. Be good now, Lina," begged she, in her most persuasive tones; "promise me that, and I will go with you, and remain three days, although it will be very hard for me to leave my poor father so long alone."

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"Good! So let it be!" said Madame von Carly, after a moment's hesitation. "You see I am a good-natured fool, and am always so easily persuaded. But now go and make your arrangements. Ella will entertain me during your absence."

Madame von Herbart left the room, wishing heartily that the three days were over. She dreaded the visit, for her friend's impetuosity and excitable temper always inspired her with a certain fear. She was never more polite or more considerate of her words than when with Madame von Carly, but she never felt herself more helpless, or more restrained in her freedom of both thought and action, than when in that lady's company.

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She feared still more for her daughter than for herself, and would willingly have spared Ella the three days' torment. Since her brother's death, the little girl had lost all desire to play with other children, and, although she was very patient and yielding, willingly enduring any annoyance for her mother's sake, it was impossible for her to make friends with Madame von Carly's wild slips, as she herself called her children, and always cheerfully to endure the pranks which the little pests were continually playing upon her.

While Madame von Herbart was packing up, and at the same time wondering over the peculiar mode of education practised by her friend,—whose rude, uncultured nature could not endure that a child should be taught to say "Good morning," and "Thank you,"—Theodore entered.

"Are you going away?" he asked, hastily, pointing to the half-filled travelling-bag. "And Ella, too?"

He spoke these words with a strange eagerness, and as Madame von Herbart replied with an affirmative nod, he seemed to be almost glad at this intelligence, for a burning red flushed his cheeks, and his eyes glowed: a moment later, all these signs of satisfaction had vanished. He grew very pale, and his voice trembled as he asked: "Are you really going away?"

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"Yes, dear Theodore!" replied Madame von Herbart, quietly; "to-day, in a few hours. It seems strange to you, because you have seen how seldom I leave the house; and I only go now because I cannot avoid it. But," she added, smiling, "the whole journey will only last three days; on Thursday evening I shall be again at home, and will be very glad to find you much better than I leave you."

Theodore made no answer; he laid his hand upon his heart, as if he felt a sharp pain, then slowly turned away, and left the room.



He did not appear at dinner, immediately after which the carriage was announced, and Madame von Carly hastened her friend's departure. Ella most tenderly embraced her old grandfather. "Will you think of me, grandfather?" she asked, lovingly. "You must often think of me whilst I am away; but do not be sad, for I will soon return, and bring you something very pretty.— But where is Theodore?" she cried, looking round in surprise; "I almost believe he would let us depart without saying 'Farewell.' Naughty Theodore! I will not love him any more."

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Apparently to prove the truth of her last words, she ran to the door of the young man's room, opened it a little, and called in, softly: "Theodore! dear Theodore! are you asleep? O do come out! We are going now."

"Already!" was the answer; "so soon!" A moment after, the door was thrown open, and the young man stood before the startled child, pale as death, and so agitated that Ella drew back half in fear. "Ella! Ella!" he cried, in a voice of the deepest anguish. He then bent down to the little one, and pressed her so tightly to his beating heart that she uttered a faint scream. Not heeding, or indeed seeming to hear this, he led her into the adjoining apartment, placed her on the sofa, knelt at her feet, and, stroking back the curls from her brow, looked long and earnestly into her dark eyes. They seemed to possess for him a magnetic power, so fixed and immovable was his gaze. The life appeared to be gradually leaving his frame, and he remained thus bowed and motionless until he was aroused from his lethargy by a loud call of "Ella! Ella!"

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"I must go!" cried the child, springing up. "Did you not hear my mother calling me?"

"O, only one minute longer!" begged Theodore. He seized a knife, cut off one of Ella's long silken curls, and, hastily concealing his prize, embraced her again, and held her so fast that she could not escape. He kissed her hands repeatedly; great tears streamed slowly down his cheeks, and a few broken words escaped his lips. Again was heard the voice of Madame von Herbart. "Ella!" she said, in a tone of gentle reproach, "did you not hear me call you?"

"Ah! indeed I could not come," replied the child, raising her eyes, as if imploring pardon, to her mother's face, "Theodore held me so fast!"

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The arm which had so tightly held her relaxed, and she was again free. The young Russian's eyes were fixed, as if on vacancy; he turned towards Madame von Herbart, knelt at her feet, and laid her hand upon his burning brow.

"What does all this mean, Theodore?" she asked, surprised and alarmed; "your head burns, and you are fearfully excited. You are certainly more unwell than you have permitted us to think you. Speak, I pray you, and relieve our anxiety. Is it bodily illness alone which has thus overcome you?"

Theodore looked at his benefactress; he heard her words, but they bore no meaning to him. He again pressed her hand convulsively; he moved his lips as if about to speak, but only uttered some inarticulate sounds. He then sprang to his feet, and, casting a long and agonized look upon Ella, he hastily fled through the open door, as if he had been pursued by evil spirits.

Madame von Herbart shook her head sadly, as she turned to leave the room. Uneasy and oppressed, she entered the carriage with Ella, where her friend, who had been long waiting for her, received her with open reproaches.

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"One would think you were going to make a voyage round the world," said Madame von Carly, sulkily, "you make such a fuss about going a hundred paces from your own door. Such lamentable parting scenes always seem very comical to me, especially when the long separation which has occasioned so many tears is to last three whole days! Your father will not die if he does not see you until Thursday, and the young Russian can live till then without your care. What a useless burden you have laid upon your shoulders! I certainly should not have acted so, had I been in your place. It is sheer folly to waste so much kindness and sympathy upon a wild foreigner, who, I am quite sure, laughs in his sleeve at all you have done for him, and will reward you by the most shameful ingratitude. And an enemy of your country, too,—a Russian! It frightens me only to hear one named. I would not give a Russian a glass of water to save his life!"

"O, do not say so!" replied Madame von Herbart, earnestly. "If I had not known you so many years, I might at this moment doubt your good heart; indeed, such sentiments would induce any one to believe you pitiless and unfeeling. Before offering assistance to the suffering, must we then ask, Who are you? What is your creed? or, In what country were you born?—I am really sorry to hear such words from your lips, and the more so that you are not alone in your prejudices against the Russians; they are shared by nearly all my countrymen, and I cannot esteem it an honor to them. I will readily agree that the Russians are far behind the Prussians in cultivation, and even that many may possess the faults attributed to them; but that gives us no right to condemn a whole nation. It seems to me there is such self-exaltation and such pride in this cold, obstinate mode of judging, which not only outrages reason, but renders us forgetful of our duty as Christians. We should certainly esteem our fellow-men innocent, until they have given us proofs to the contrary.—Theodore ungrateful!" she continued, after a moment's pause; "O, if he could be so, where should we seek for truth and faith among men? If his candid face be that of a hypocrite; if his voice, apparently tremulous with excess of gratitude and feeling, could speak words of falsehood and treachery, in whom could we confide? No! no! it is not possible. So fair a form could not conceal so black a soul!"

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Madame von Herbart had spoken more vehemently than was her usual custom, and her cheeks glowed, for she felt herself wounded and misjudged. What she considered as a sacred duty towards her fellow-men, had been regarded as the foolish simplicity of a weak good-nature; and

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one whom daily intercourse, and the apparent candor and excellence of his character, had rendered dear to her heart, had been assailed by the most injurious suspicions.

In a few moments, however, she regained her tranquillity, and said, gently: "Even if you have judged rightly, and Theodore could be ungrateful, we will never regret what we have done for him: the hope of thanks was not our motive. Truly, neither my father, my daughter, nor myself had any thought of earthly reward when we opened our house and our hearts to the poor, forsaken, wounded Russian. But perhaps we had better say no more about it."

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"Well, well!" replied Madame von Carly, hastily, "as you please; I am sure it is quite indifferent to me."

Thus saying, she leaned back in one corner of the carriage, and began to count the trees by the way-side. Her friend, however, soon succeeded in diverting her from this rather uninteresting occupation. She asked concerning the harvests; whether her dairy had been productive this year; and if her garden had yielded her as much as usual.

Madame von Carly was a notable housekeeper, and entered minutely into all the details of her household economy, and the management of her farm. She talked much, and, on this subject, knowingly. Her servants were all discussed, from her own maid to the lowest scullion; and, from her account, seemed to be endless sources of trouble, through their ignorance, stupidity, or evil dispositions.

Madame von Herbart listened most patiently, only now and then endeavoring to interpose a word in exculpation of the frailties of human nature, and by the time they reached Sergow her friend was again quite reconciled with her, and in the best of humors. It was, indeed, no easy task to maintain this good understanding unbroken during three whole days; but Madame von Herbart succeeded better than she had anticipated. On Thursday afternoon, as she was making her preparations for returning home with Ella, Madame von Carly could not conceal her emotion, and said, as she bade her farewell: "Indeed, I do not understand how it is that I love you so well. You can do what you please with me; I may sometimes be a little hasty, but I can never long feel angry with you."

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She then kissed Ella affectionately, gave her a basket of fine fruit for her grandfather, and a bunch of those tiny roses, whose brilliant coloring, and the late season at which they bloom, render so precious in the autumn to all lovers of flowers.

"I will give two roses to grandfather," said the child to her mother, when they were again upon the public road, "and two to Theodore. How glad he will be! He is so fond of flowers, especially of roses."

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She had scarcely uttered these words, when a sudden wind swept over her beautiful blossoms, and scattered all their tender leaves.

"Ah!" sighed Ella, "my joy is soon over! If my old nurse had seen that, she would have said that it boded no good. But you have taught me not to heed such omens."

"And yet this time," replied the mother, "your old Catherine would not have been quite wrong; for this first rude blast is but the forerunner of many storms which are to follow soon; winter will soon be here, and you know your good grandfather is never so well when the weather is cold."

"Oh!" cried Ella, clapping her hands, "I see the city towers, and even some of the houses! There is the great tree in our garden!"

She was so delighted at this discovery, that she wished to leave the carriage and walk, fancying she could thus sooner reach her beloved home. Finally they stopped before the door, and Ella sprang joyfully into the old servant's arms. Atlas welcomed her with every sign of delight. "Aha, my good doggy, did you miss me, too?" she cried, stroking his shaggy coat.

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The great dog leaped up, and placed both paws on her shoulders, so that she could scarcely free herself. Then quickly running up the steps, she was greeted by the burgomaster, who tenderly folded his beloved grandchild to his heart.

"God be thanked!" he cried, embracing his daughter. He then led both his dear ones into his room, whence gratefully streamed the inviting perfumes of the coffee he had had prepared for them. They soon laid aside their wrappings.

"But where is Theodore?" was Ella's first question.

"Is he better?" added Madame von Herbart, anxiously.

"By and by you can judge for yourselves," replied the old man slowly.

Ella again embraced her grandfather, caressing him as if she had been many months away from him. She placed his great arm-chair near the table, arranged the cushions, and, seating herself upon his knee, began the narration of all her adventures. While her clear eyes gazed into his face, she remarked the downcast appearance of the old man, who seemed to have no relish for his little grandchild's prattle, to which he usually listened with such delight.

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"Just see now, mother!" cried the child in a tragi-comic tone of voice, "does not grandfather look to-day exactly like the upper bailiff, when the hail spoiled his best rye-field?"

Madame von Herbart looked up as she handed her father his cup, and was startled by the sorrowful expression of his countenance.

"What is the matter, my dear father?" she cried, hastening to his side. "Has anything disagreeable happened? O, do tell me quickly!"

"It is nothing, my daughter!" answered the burgomaster, endeavoring to soothe her; "several little circumstances have transpired, which have somewhat disturbed my equanimity."

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"And am I not to know what has troubled you?"

"Wherefore not, my child? You must learn them some time, and perhaps it would be better to do so at once. You know I hate all useless secrecy and mysteries. Listen, then. Our king was defeated on the 13th; the news came yesterday, and has been confirmed to-day. He has been forced to pay dearly for his unhappy obstinacy. All his generals warned and implored him to leave the camp which he occupied on the heights of Hochkirch. But he would not be persuaded; he could not be induced to quit his dangerous position, although it was within gunshot of the enemy, because he did not think the Austrians would venture to attack him. The consequence was, that, on the night of the 13th, the crafty Daun left his intrenchments as noiselessly as possible, and surrounded the sleeping Prussians. The watchful Ziethen, who had anticipated such a step, was ready to receive him, fully armed, with all his men. The others were soon aroused, and assembled as best they could in the darkness of the night. All must allow that great order and discipline reign in our army, and thus, although compelled to abandon their position, they performed prodigies of valor, and the enemy did not dare to follow them. But they were forced to leave all their baggage behind them, and many a brave fellow lost his life. The noble Keith and Franz of Brunswick are both dead."

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"Well, father," said Madame von Herbart consolingly, "we must rejoice that the king is still alive. If he has this time been unfortunate through his own fault, he will soon be able to retrieve his losses.—But what sad news have you still to tell us? I can see that you have not yet unburdened your heart."

"You are right," replied the burgomaster reluctantly; "and what I have to tell you will distress the child even more than it does you. If my little Ella will only be reasonable, she will see that it was inevitable; I have often tried to prepare her mind for it. Theodore has gone away! You will never see him again!"

"Theodore gone!" cried Ella, "that is impossible! O tell me, grandfather, you are surely jesting! Is it not so? You only want to tease me a little."

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The old man shook his head, and said: "He left our house secretly yesterday evening."

Ella wept quietly.

"He is ungrateful, too, then!" sighed Madame von Herbart, "and Lina was right. I never could have believed that he would have deceived us!"

"Do not blame him," replied the burgomaster; "I cannot condemn him. I had long observed the inward struggle which was so clearly depicted in his countenance. Believe me, he suffered greatly in being forced to leave us."

Thus saying, he drew a letter and a small package from his pocket, which he gave to his daughter, adding: "There, take them! I found them both upon my bed when I awoke this morning. He must have placed them there himself, for I remember distinctly that some one kissed my hand several times when I was in a state between sleeping and waking. The action aroused me; but when I looked up, all was quiet, and I thought it must have been a dream."

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Madame von Herbart silently took the letter and broke the seal; she read and read, and seemed as if she could not finish it. Her hand trembled, and her eyes filled with tears. Ella glided behind her chair, and looked over her shoulder; but in vain did she wipe her eyes, she could not distinguish a syllable.

"O dear mother!" she cried, "read it aloud; I can see nothing, and I would so like to know if he thought of me."

The mother read as follows:—

"I can no longer remain in a house in which, after so many stormy days, I had again found peace, and felt so happy. My father's brother, who is the general of the division of the Russian army to which I belong, has learned my wonderful escape, and discovered my retreat. He has secretly sent me an order to join him as soon as my wounds would permit; and as a soldier I must obey, although my heart bleeds at the sad necessity.

"How has my poor heart already suffered. How soon in life was I not forced to learn that happiness is a rare sojourner among men. I lost my father before I could lisp his dear name; of course I was too young to know the loss I had sustained, and the less, because my beloved mother redoubled her care and love towards the poor orphan child who lay so helpless in her gentle arms. The boy clung to this one stay with all the passionate tenderness of his character; his mother's eyes were the stars which guided him through the labyrinth of life; nothing could so grieve him as to see them veiled and darkened through his fault. But he was forced with the deepest sorrow to see that the brightness of his stars was fading. His mother's cheek became ever more and more transparent, the words which fell from her pale lips grew fainter and weaker, her wearied feet refused to bear the light weight of her frail figure, and finally—O Heaven! how was it possible that I survived her death?"

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"Men say of many a bitter sorrow, that it is unendurable; and yet I have lived through the deepest anguish. I know no pang of which it may be truly said, that no one has ever borne it,—that all efforts are in vain, and a speedy death the sole refuge. And thus will I strive to overcome the agony which now rends my heart.

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"Farewell, honored lady, in whom I have found the image of my lost mother so vividly renewed. Your gentle voice will ever echo through my soul. Nothing can efface from my memory the kindness with which you have overwhelmed a stranger, and an enemy to your native land; the remembrance will be most dear to me so long as I shall live.

"And you, my little Ella, who would not suffer the glance of a poor wounded man, beseeching you for aid and compassion, to pass unheeded, and who have so often prayed to God for his recovery,—how could I ever forget you? You can scarcely comprehend how two whole nations can feel so bloodthirstily towards one another, how their murderous rage can exceed that of wild beasts, and all because their rulers disagree. You will shudder when you hear that I have again entered the ranks of that army so hated by your countrymen; but I am sure that you will shed more than one tear for the sake of one to whom the memory of the happy days passed near you is so precious. I have but one request to make, and that is, that you will always wear the little cross which accompanies this letter. My mother hung it round my neck when I was a child, since when I have kept and worn it as a sacred relic. Whenever your eyes fall upon it, remember your own kindness and my gratitude.

[309]

"And what will you say, my venerable benefactor, when, in the morning, instead of me, you will only find this letter? Will you condemn my conduct? I must see you once more, and again press my lips upon your hand! Once more will I give free vent to my feelings, and then must I stifle my emotions, be again a man, and fearlessly bare my breast to the blows of fate.

"Farewell!

"Theodore."

A deep stillness reigned in the little circle, only broken by Ella's faint sobs. The old burgomaster also dried a quiet tear.

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"And that was a Russian!" he cried finally, rising to hide his emotion.

Madame von Herbart opened the package; it contained a fine gold chain, to which was suspended a cross of the same metal. She hung it silently round her daughter's neck, and Ella found upon her mother's bosom a free place to weep out all her sorrow.

## GRATITUDE.

Two years had passed; the war still continued, and the position of the Prussian king had not altered for the better. Many of his bravest officers and best generals lay dead upon the battlefield, or were captives in the enemy's hands. Gold and men were both becoming scarce, and still no prospect of peace. But Frederick never thought of yielding; he had determined to conquer or perish in the attempt. His people felt with him, and each Prussian looked with confidence up to his king. All thought that their sovereign would find some means of extricating himself with honor from the unequal struggle. History teaches us that this belief was well founded, for nothing could have been more surprising and favorable to Frederick, than the final conclusion of the seven years' war. [312]

On the 1st of August, 1759, Frederick lost a battle upon the heights of Kunersdorf. Notwithstanding the personal danger which he had himself incurred, and the loss of many of his bravest men, the allied Russians and Austrians obtained a complete victory. Kleist, the renowned poet, whose verses breathe the most tender and gentle feelings, gave the highest proof of his courage by the sacrifice of his life. No death among the many which marked that bloody day excited more sympathy than his; and the Russians, among whom he had fallen, honored his memory by a solemn funeral. A Russian officer laid his own sabre upon the hero's coffin, saying: "Such a man should not be buried without a sword!"

The allies succeeded in gaining possession of Berlin, where a citizen named Gotkowski distinguished himself by the sacrifice of nearly all his private fortune in the service of his fellow-citizens. Experience soon taught the Prussians that their neighbors, the Saxons, were much more to be feared, as far as cruelty and the destruction of personal property was concerned, than the Russians. They forgot how Frederick had spared the treasures of art in Saxony; and, entering his palaces, they destroyed everything which came within their reach,—furniture, mirrors, tapestries, pictures, and marble statues. [313]

The allies occupied Berlin during eight days. The news then came that Frederick was approaching the city in person, and they speedily left it to join the main body of the army, or to seek security in safer positions. Their course, however, was everywhere marked by devastation and ruin, and woe to the town or village through which their march lay.

One of these detachments of Saxons and Austrians, belonging to the rear, left the highway in order to make a predatory excursion upon the little city already well known to us. Early in the morning, these warriors, who were in such haste to flee before the coming of Frederick, poured through the open gates. They brought with them tumult and confusion, plundered the houses indiscriminately, and seemed determined to wash away the stain left upon their honor by their hasty retreat, in the blood of the defenceless citizens. On all sides were heard the cries of women and children, mingled with rude imprecations and scornful laughter. [314]

They advanced farther and farther into the city, and had already reached the market-place.

Doctor Heller arrived breathless before the grocer's door, and cried: "Aha, Master Brother! here they are, at last. You have often said that you would rather permit a whole regiment of Austrians to range through your house, than harbor a single Russian;—and you will now have an opportunity of seeing how gently they will proceed with you. They won't leave a tile upon your roof; I tell you, they are worse than Wallenstein's bands, who, as you know, were not remarkable for their tenderness and consideration."

The honest grocer stood before his brother-in-law, the very picture of despair. His whole body trembled; he pulled off his white nightcap, and cast a melancholy glance upon his great, flowered dressing-gown, as if he feared he would soon be forced to part from this beloved garment. He finally cried out, in a stifled voice, "Ah, my beer! All my beer!" [315]

"Nonsense!" said the Doctor. "Beer here, beer there,—have you lost your senses? Where is your ready money? Have you at least hid that?"

The grocer shook his head, and seemed to be fairly benumbed, body and mind, with terror.

"What folly!" cried the Doctor, angrily. "Quick! Go at once into your house, and throw it all into the well. In five minutes it may be too late!"

So saying, he led the old man with him through the open door. It was indeed full time, for the lawless soldiery were rapidly approaching, destroying all they could not carry away with them. Chairs and mirrors, glass and porcelain, were thrown from the windows in every direction. The robbers fell upon all the casks of wine and brandy which they could find, and their potations only increased their fury and recklessness. They greeted with loud cries of joy the fine stock of spirits of all kinds which they found in the house of our friend, the grocer. They knocked the heads out of the barrels until the whole cellar was afloat, and they could almost have swum in the nectar, which they freely imbibed. The poor grocer fled from room to room until he reached the highest attic, whence he discovered with horror that a thick smoke was beginning to rise from many parts of the city, and that the inhabitants were in vain endeavoring to quench the flames. [316]

Suddenly the hoofs of a whole troop of cavalry were heard upon the stone pavement; and, swift as a whirlwind, a band of horsemen rode past, with a noble-looking young leader at their head.

They stopped at the market-place, dismounted, and hastened into the plundered dwellings, driving out the robbers, who, not yet comprehending this sudden diversion, left their prey, and fled. Renewed efforts were made to extinguish the flames, and the citizens gazed in silent wonder upon their unexpected deliverers, who were most actively engaged in rendering all the assistance in their power, and were constantly encouraged by their leader to new efforts.

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No one knew who the officer was. "He is no Prussian!" "He does not speak German with his soldiers!" "How young he is!" And "How stately he looks upon his black steed!" Such exclamations were heard upon all sides, interrupted by the questions: "But who is he?" "Whence comes he?" "Does no one know him?"

The young officer gave no heed to the curious glances everywhere turned upon him; he forced his way with considerable difficulty through the crowd, and finally stood before the burgomaster's door. He sprang from his horse, threw the bridle to one of his attendants, and, hastening up the steps, entered the open door,—already filled with the brutal soldiery laden with booty. He scarcely saw them, but hurried on, and soon reached Madame von Herbart's room, where he found no one, but was horrified at the devastation. The windows were broken, the curtains lay torn upon the floor, the furniture was scattered in every direction, and the drawers and closets all rifled. He opened a second and a third door: everywhere he found the same waste and desolation, but not a living creature. Pausing, at length, uncertain which way to turn, a faint, half-stifled cry for help fell upon his ear: "Mother! O mother! save me! He will kill me!"

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"Ella, I come!" cried the young man. He hurried through several halls and apartments. But one more door divided him from that imploring voice; he flung it open, and stood an instant as if petrified. He found himself in the once charming little cabinet; but how looked it? The chairs were in pieces, the writing-table overturned; books and papers were scattered upon the floor, mingled with flasks of wine, some broken, others half emptied, and the carpet, which had been in many places wantonly cut and torn, dripping with the contents. Amid these wrecks, a young maiden knelt before a great, bearded soldier, whose left hand had seized upon her long, dark locks, while his right held a loaded pistol.

"Will you give me the chain?" cried the soldier at this moment, not having observed the entrance of the stranger; "I ask you for the last time. You have hid all your gold and silver, like rascals as you are. We find nothing that can be of any use to us. Give me the chain at once, or I will shoot you down!"

[319]

"O leave me the chain!" implored the maiden, looking up with tearful eyes into the monster's face; "you have taken everything from us! I cannot give you the cross,—it is a dear remembrance."

A loud bark from a dog was heard before the garden door. The rude soldier hastily loosed his grasp from the hair, and seized upon the gold chain which had excited his cupidity, that he might tear it from the young girl's neck. He suddenly felt himself thrust back, and a voice cried in his ear: "Hold, you wretch! You shall not lay the end of your finger upon her!"

A swift sabre-stroke gleamed through the air, and cleft the Austrian's skull. But at the same moment a loud report was heard, and the young officer fell mortally wounded upon the floor. "Ella!" he cried, "Ella!"

"Theodore!" exclaimed the maiden, who at the sound of his voice had sprung to her feet. Uttering a loud cry, she threw herself upon the prostrate form of the friend whom she had recognized, and whose warm blood streamed over her dress.

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At this moment, Madame von Herbart and her father rushed into the room. "Ella!" cried the mother, joyfully, as her eye fell upon her child; "O God be thanked! I was in despair, when I could find you nowhere."

But Ella made no answer.

"Are you hurt?" asked the anxious mother; "your clothes are covered with blood!" So saying, she sank half fainting by her daughter's side.

"By whom are you kneeling, Ella?" said the old burgomaster, who had by this time come quite near.

"It is Theodore, our Theodore!" sobbed the young girl, in a voice of despair.

"Yes, it is Theodore, your Theodore," repeated the young man, endeavoring to rise. "He wished to see you yet once more. Holy angels guided his steps,—and he came in time. O," he continued, with a failing voice, kissing the hand with which Madame von Herbart sustained his head, "O, how happy I feel now! I know that I am dying, but I have been enabled to show you my gratitude: I have preserved your native city! I have saved your child!" He paused an instant, as if exhausted, and then said, "Ella, your hand!"

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The maiden placed it within his own, and he pressed it convulsively.

"Think of me often!" he continued; "and believe me, even the Russian has a heart, which guards the memory of past benefits—until it breaks!"

His head sank; his eyes were fixed; he uttered one last sigh, and his soul had fled.

"He is dead!" said Madame von Herbart, after a few moments of deep silence. She wept bitterly; it seemed to her as if she had lost a member of her own family.

Ella's sorrow was unspeakable. Nothing could convince her that Theodore was really dead.

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Even when Dr. Heller came and examined his wounds, assuring them that the best marksman could not have taken surer aim, and that the ball had pierced the young Russian's heart, she could not entirely resign the hope that he would again awake from his deep slumber. She strove to warm his cold hands, to breathe new life into his rigid frame. All her efforts were in vain; her touching prayer, that he would open his pale lips and speak but one single word to her, remained unheard. They were obliged to force her with gentle violence from the bloody corpse.

Theodore's funeral was most solemn; old and young gathered together to join in the last procession. Each one shed a grateful tear in his memory; even the old grocer, Bolt, was seen following the coffin, deeply moved.

A white marble monument marked the place of his burial. The inscription consisted in the name, "THEODORE"; and beneath were carved these simple words, "We meet again." No flaunting paragraph proclaimed his deed, which was more surely treasured in the memory of many a feeling and grateful heart than it could have been upon the cold stone.

Long, long years after these occurrences, when Madame von Herbart and her father rested quietly by the young Russian's side, a tall female form might often be seen busied among these graves. She adorned them with fresh wreaths; carefully trained the flowers she had planted upon them; and when she slowly turned to leave them, and re-enter her solitary home, she would raise her tearful eyes to heaven, and say, "We shall meet again, my dear ones!"

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THE END.

Footnote:

[1] A woman's will, God's will.

#### Transcriber's Notes

Minor punctuation errors corrected on pages [148](#) and [261](#).

Original spellings have been retained including the use of both door-way and doorway.

On page [260](#), "apparently" was changed to "apparentlly." (...lay the apparently lifeless body...)

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MOLLY AND KITTY, OR PEASANT LIFE IN IRELAND; WITH OTHER TALES \*\*\*

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