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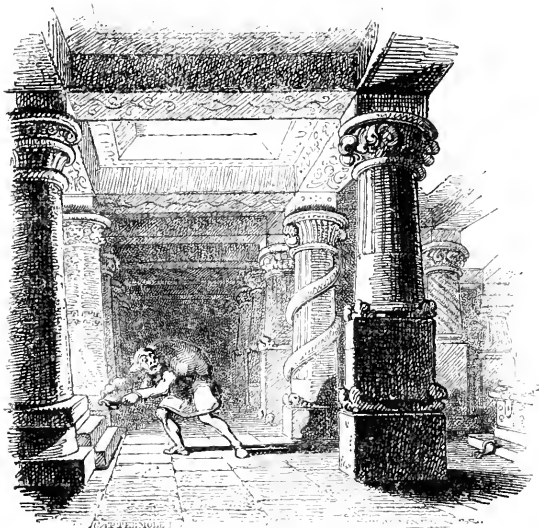
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POPULAR TALES AND ROMANCES

OF THE
Northern Nations,

IN THREE VOLUMES.



The Treasure Seeker, p. 48.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE English reader of these volumes must not expect to find in them the style of romance, which is now so popular, and justly popular, in his own country. These tales do not pretend to be a picture of human nature or human manners; they are either imitations of early traditions, or the traditions themselves, amplified by some modern writer, and must be judged of in reference to such origin. Stories of this kind form an important feature in the literature of the Germans, who seem to be the authenticated historians of Satan in all his varieties of name and attribute. Of such tales, no small portion has been

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derived from the Harz Mountains ; nor is this to be wondered at ; the belief in supernatural agents has its native home among mountains and deserts, and snows, and in short wherever society is broken into small masses and detached from the frequent intercourse of the general world ; scepticism is the inhabitants of cities as credulity is of solitude, and the man, who was an unbeliever of all things amidst crowds, will become a believer of all things in loneliness.

The legends of these volumes have been gathered from various sources, and, of course, will be found to have characters as various ; the elegant and playful Musäus has nothing at all in common with the dark, wild fancy of La Motte Fouqué ; just as little similarity is there between Veit Weber and

the author of the Freischutz; and though supernatural agency forms the basis of all, the superstructures vary with the varying characters of the authors. It may be said, that reason has nothing to do with any of them, either with sylphs or gnomes, spectres or sorcerers, and this no doubt is true; but reason is not always the most agreeable companion, nor is her constant presence any way conducive to the expansion of the kinder feelings; fiction is the natural point of rest for the mind, when worn out by the stern realities of life: those realities present little that is agreeable, and it is no wonder, therefore, if we seek to escape from them in the dreams of falsehood. There is something too, in such tales, that touches a spring common to all hearts; the connexion between the visible and

invisible world is a thing which all reason denies, but all feeling allows, and which it always must allow, or fancy will be so completely subdued to truth that even poetry will have lost its value. Philosophy, or what is called philosophy, is, indeed, very busy in its vocation ; fiction is banished from the nursery ; Jack the Giant Killer is superseded by moral essays, and the reign of reason is speedily about to commence, when we shall believe nothing but what can be proved to be, and shall attain a happy exemption from those vulgar prejudices, which have hitherto held society together. But the dawn of that glory has not yet appeared ; the dreams of Homer, Shakspear, and Milton are still tolerated ; they still shine on in the night of our darkness—long may they do so ! the daylight, that

would extinguish them, would be worse than darkness.

It must however be allowed that, with the Germans, fancy has had too much sway, for it has seldom been under the guidance of sound taste, and the consequence is, that the multitude of their original fictions is disgraced by the most barbarous absurdities. The same may, in some measure, be said of their modern romance, but at the same time the reader can not fail to be delighted with the variety and richness of its inventions, *diablerie* with the Germans being as inexhaustible as the fairyism of the Eastern world. Sometimes it is presented to us under its most terrific forms; at others it appears, as in Musäus under a light veil of irony, in a tone half jest, half earnest and that is, indeed, its most beautiful

form. Few tales are more pleasing than the Spectre Barber, one of the happiest illustrations of this class of writing, where a playful fancy sports with a fiction, that was at no distant time the delight and terror of the peasant's fireside. La Motte Fouqué, on the contrary, is altogether a magician of darkness, who loves to treat the wild and impossible as serious matters, but who always endeavours to draw from them some moral conclusions. Veit Weber, another great name of romance, builds his tales on the dark times of chivalry, when the knights plundered the people with the sword and the monks plundered the knights with the bible. Ottmar and Büsching are the antiquarians of romance, who have collected the scattered traditions of the peasantry, and retailed them to the world with little deviation

from their originals. Madame Naubert is more akin in her genius to Musäus, though a spirit of an inferior order ; her materials are generally of the light and playful kind ; or, if not, she makes them so by the manner in which she works them up. Laun is the historian of ghost-stories, which have really occurred but which have subsequently been found capable of rational explanation ; a translation of three or four of his tales has lately been published by Ackermann ; the work is well executed and affords much wholesome food for the over-credulous. Grimm is the collector of Nursery Tales, and as such is well known to the English reader. Lothar has a volume on the plan of Ottmar's the most essential difference being its inferiority. On the same principle are two volumes of Popular Tales, published at Eisenach, without the author's name,

but many of them are exceedingly entertaining. Lebrecht and Tieck are the authors of many beautiful legends, but they have generally trusted to their own fancy instead of building themselves on antient traditions. Backzo's legends are something in the manner of La Motte Fouqué, though neither so fanciful nor so original. But to detail all the volumes of German legend and romance would be to give a bookseller's catalogue; for, not only has Moravia, Silesia, Thuringia, and Austria, each its distinct legends, but every quarter of the Harz Mountains, east, west, north, and south, has its own exclusive terrors; and when to these are added the fictions of later writers, the catalogue swells beyond all reasonable limit.

It may perhaps be objected to the present collection that, in two instances, it goes over ground that has already

been trodden ; the Spectre-Barber has appeared in the *Tales of the Dead*, and Kibitz, in the *Ladies Magazine*, but the first of these translations was given in a mutilated form, nearly one half the tale having been omitted, and Kibitz seems to have been nearly re-written, so that neither interferes with the plan of the present work, where the alterations, with very few exceptions, are purely verbal. But this objection, if it be an objection, is confined to the two legends already mentioned ; the remaining tales, to the best of our knowledge, have not hitherto been translated, so that, whatever may be their faults in other respects, they will at least have the merit of novelty with the English reader, and that, though not the highest, is certainly not the least, of commendations.



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THE
TREASURE-SEEKER.

ON the Tuesday after Bartholomew's day, in the very year that the emperor Wenceslaus fled from the prison at Prague with the fair damsel of the Bath, according to an ancient custom, the guild of shepherds at Rottenburg held their annual procession, at which was present all the country for about three miles round. After hearing mass at the church of St. Wolfgang, they proceeded to mine host's of the Golden Lamb, where they spent the rest of the day in quaffing their cups, playing on their rustic instruments, and dancing too in the open square until sunset. The younger part of the company then dispersed homeward; not so, however, the elders, and the more substantial shepherds, for they continued to carouse over their wine till the night was far advanced; and, when the liquor

had somewhat thawed their tongues, began to indulge in loud and lengthy discourse. Some made sage predictions as to the weather, on which subject they were in no wise inferior to some of our modern seers ycleped almanack-makers. Indeed, they prognosticated very shrewdly what the approaching season would be, from the aspect of Our Lady in the procession over the mountain, and the appearance of the heath flowers.—Others related stories of their youthful adventures, recounting how valiantly they had defended their flocks against the attack of the wolf, by aid of their faithful ally their dog; or put to flight the still more terrible were-wolf by devoutly crossing themselves, and repeating a prayer to St. Andrew. Or, they told how they had been led out of their way across wild and through wood: and had been mocked and perplexed by witches and spectres. So terrific were most of these narratives, that they caused to shudder that part of the auditory which consisted of the town's folk, and made their hair to stand erect with horror. Of these latter, in fact, no inconsiderable number attended to share in the festivities of this rustic holi-

day; for many a boon companion, and mechanic, generally betook him on this evening to mine host's of the Lamb.

Among all the company no one was more jovial, or contributed more to the conversation than the silver-headed Martin, a lively old man of eighty years; who, like the patriarch Jacob had seen a whole race of shepherds descended from himself. When the room began to clear somewhat of the guests, he ordered mine host to bring him a cup, by way of a farewell glass before retiring, not displeased to find that the tumult had somewhat subsided, and that it would now be in his power to make himself better heard.

“Good neighbours,” quoth the old sire, “you have been recounting some wondrous, marvels; nor have they, methinks, lost any thing of their worth by savouring a little of the wine cup. I myself, however, can tell you an affair, which although I give you nothing but the pure truth will appear more wonderful than any of your tales:—but the evening is now rather too far advanced, and I should never come to the end.”

All were silent while the old man was speaking ; and such was the hushed attention in the tavern-room, that you might have supposed the bishop of Bamberg was reading mass. When he ceased, however, there were voices enough to be heard, for his neighbours cried out unanimously : “ Father Martin, let us hear this strange adventure of thine, never spare us the pleasure on a holiday-night like this.” Even some of the town’s folk, who had been preparing to depart, now hung up again their cloaks, and beseeched him to relate his marvels as their parting cup. Their earnest solicitations were more than old Martin could withstand, he commenced therefore as follows :

“ Affairs went sorrowfully enough with me in the world, at first. Being a destitute orphan boy I was forced to beg my bread from door to door ; I had no place that I could call my home, but strolled about with my wallet from one village to another. When, however, I grew up to be a sturdy lad, I hired myself to a shepherd on the Harz Mountains, whose flocks I tended for three years. At that time, one evening, about the begin-

ning of the autumn, ten of the sheep were missing, on which I was sent into the wood to search for them. My dog got upon a wrong scent, and hunted about the under-wood; night began to fall, and I being unacquainted with the place, and not knowing how to find my way, determined to pass the night beneath a tree. Towards midnight the dog became uneasy, began to howl, slunk his tail, and crouched close to me: I then perceived that all was not aright, and looking up discerned by the clear moonlight, a figure standing opposite to me, resembling that of a man whose body was entirely covered with shaggy hair. He had a long beard reaching to his middle, a garland upon his head, and around his loins an apron of oak-leaves, while, in his right hand, he held a fir-tree that had been torn up by the roots. At this apparition I trembled like an aspen leaf, and my very soul was shaken with horror. The terrific spectre motioned with his hand that I should follow him; yet I stirred not from the spot: I then heard him exclaim in a hoarse growling voice: "Coward heart, take courage, I am the Treasure-Keeper of the Harz. Come with me, so shalt find a treasure." Al-

though my apprehension threw me into a cold sweat, I at length roused myself and, making a sign of the cross, replied: 'Avant thee Satan, I desire none of thy treasures!' On this the fiend grinned horribly in my face, and pinching me, said: 'Loon, thou rejectest good fortune! continue then a sorry varlet all thy days'. He then turned away as if to depart; but again approached me, saying: 'Bethink thee, bethink thee well, thou heedless wight. I will fill thine wallet, I will fill thine bag with a joyous burden.'—'It is written,' I returned, 'Thou shalt not covet; away than from me, thou evil spirit; nought do I require of thee.'

"As the spectre saw that I listened not to him, he desisted from further importunity, only adding: 'Thou wilt repent this;' then looked gloomily at me, and, after a short pause of reflection, continued: 'Give good heed to what I now say, so that it may yet avail thee, shouldst thou think more advisedly. In the Brocken Mountain, deep under the earth, is buried an immense treasure of gold and precious stones, which, having been deposited there by twilight, may be removed in the open day, as well as at

deep midnight. I have watched it for seven hundred years; but, from this day forward, it becomes again free to be taken by whoever discovers it:—my time is up. Therefore, did I intend to deliver this hoard to thee; for, as thou pasturest thy flock on the Brocken, I have felt kindly disposed towards thee.’ He then proceeded to acquaint me with the place where the treasure was to be found, and of the manner in which I ought to seek it.

“ It seems to me even now as though I heard him, so plainly do I remember his every word. ‘ Proceed, said he, towards St. Andrew’s mountain, and there enquire for the Black King’s valley; or, as it is now called, the Morgenbrodsthal. When arrived at a brook, named the Duder, follow its track, against the current, until thou reachest a stone bridge, hard by a saw-mill. Pass not, however, over the bridge, but still continue to advance with the stream on thy right hand, until thou seest before thee a steep rocky crag. A bow shot distance from this, thou wilt perceive a hollow, resembling a grave prepared for a dead body. Do not fear, but clear

it out without apprehension, although thou wilt find it no very easy labour: thou wilt perceive that it has been filled up with earth intentionally. Having now discovered a stone wall on either side, proceed manfully in thy work, and thou wilt soon meet with a square flat stone, built into the wall, and about a yard in height and breadth. This being wrested out, thou wilt be at the entrance of the vault where the treasure is deposited. Into this opening must thou creep on thy belly, with a miner's lamp in thy mouth, thy hands being quite disengaged, lest thou shouldst strike thy face against a stone, for the descent is very great, and the stones are exceedingly sharp. Should thy knees chance to bleed, regard it not, since thou art in a prosperous path. Nor rest until arrived at a staircase of stone, of which thou wilt, without difficulty, descend the steps, in all seventy-two in number; and wilt reach a spacious hall with three doors, two of which are open, but the third is fast closed with bolt and bar. Heed well that thou goest not through that on the right hand, lest thou should disturb the bones of the former

possessor of the treasure. Neither enter that on the left; it is an unclean vault, wherein house the viper and the snake; but open the closed door by means of *spring-root*, which thou must not fail to take along with thee, else is all thy labour bestowed in vain; for, with tool of iron, however strong, thou wilt accomplish nothing. How thou art to obtain this precious root, that must thou enquire of some well experienced carl; since it is known to those who track the forest, and is not very difficult to be met with. Fear not, even though the door should burst open with a crash as loud as if of thunder; thou wilt receive no injury, it being merely the force of the root. Only remember to cover well thy lamp, so that it may not be extinguished, so wilt thou needs be dazzled by the noble sparkling and bravery of all the gold and jewels, wherewith are covered the walls and pillars of that vault; yet stretch not out thy hand towards them—beware of that as thou wouldst of sacrilege. In the middle of this subterraneous hall stands a brazen chest like as it were the high altar of some church. There

thou wilt find enough of both gold and silver, and mayest take all that thou cravest. Takest thou as much as thou canst carry, so hast thou enough to suffice for thy whole life : it is besides in thy power to return thither three different times, but no more—the fourth would prove in vain ; nor would thou escape without the chastisement due to thy avarice. Forget not to close well each time the mouth of the cavern, by which thou enterest the vault of the treasures of king Bructorix.’ When the phantom had ceased speaking, my dog pricked up his ears and began to bark ; I heard the sound of wheels at a distance, and, looking around me, perceived that the figure had vanished.”

With these words did the grey-bearded ghost-seer end a narration that affected his auditors in very different ways. Some were fain to treat the adventure very lightly :—“ ’Tis certainly a wondrously fine dream, my old sire !” exclaimed they : others gave implicit credence to the tale ; while a third party, more cautious than either, assumed a sagacious look, but cared not to utter their opinion of the matter. As for

‘mine host,’ he very shrewdly asserted that the proof of the pudding lay in the eating; that, let them dispute, and *pro* and *con* as much as they please, the question after all was, had Martin really been on this subterraneous pilgrimage, and had he returned with his pack laden with treasure? In order, therefore, to ascertain this important point, and keep his guest in the talkative humour, he filled him a goblet from a fresh flask, and as he offered it, said :

“Come, goodman! let us hear whether you visited this said cavern, and found there all that this spirit promised? or did the mischievous elf play thee false?”

“By no means, returned honest Martin, I cannot accuse him of telling me untruths since I never took even so much as a single step, to find out the cavern, or to open it.”—“And wherefore not?”—“For two reasons: in the first place, I had too much regard for my neck to expose myself to the malice of a goblin; and in the next, I have never been able to meet with any one to inform me how I am to come at the spring-root,—where it groweth, or

at what season of the year, or what hour of the day it must be plucked, although I have questioned respecting it many a one well conversant with every kind of plant.”—The innkeeper was now quite aground with his inquiries, without having obtained the slightest glimpse into the business, when a shepherd, well stricken in years, addressed himself to the narrator of the history, and said :

“’Tis a thousand pities, neighbour Martin, that your secret is now somewhat out of date. An you had had your wits about you some forty years ago, you had certainly not missed of having the spring-root. And, although you will never, I warrant me, climb the Brocken at this day yet, if it be only for mere passing the time, I will inform you by what means the plant may be obtained. The readiest method of all is to call in the service of a black woodpecker. Watch one in the spring tide, at which season it makes its nest in a hollow tree, then after the time of brooding, and when it flies out to seek food for its young ones, drive a hard knot of wood into the hole, whence it has taken its

flight. Then watch behind the tree, until its return. As soon as it perceives that all access to its home is intercepted, it will fly round the tree with a scream of loud lament, then suddenly wing its course towards the west. After this you must take care to be provided with a scarlet mantle; or in lieu of this, hie to a dealer in such wares, and buy thee some four yards of red cloth; which conceal beneath thy garment, and wait by the tree until the bird return with the spring-root in its mouth, even though it be one, nay even two days. No sooner will the bird touch the wooden plug with this wondrous plant, than it will immediately fly out, with a sudden bounce, just as a cork does from a foaming flask. Then lose no time, but instantly spread the mantle or cloth beneath the tree. Terrified at the sight, supposing it to be fire, the woodpecker will let fall the root. Having once obtained possession of the charmed plant, fail not to bind it to a piece of christ-thorn, otherwise it will assuredly be lost whenever you lay it out of your hand."

Many a comment was now passed upon this

procedure, while the glass freely circulated ; nor did the boon companions disperse until the midnight hour had already chimed.

Apart from this social circle, with no other companion than the cat, a solitary toper had occupied mine host's well-stuffed leathern chair ; in which post he had, during the whole evening, observed so strict a silence, that he had rather seemed to be preparing himself for a Carthusian Monastery, than to be the inmate of an inn on a festival night. Little as he was generally given to contemplation, he now sat profoundly wrapped in his own cogitations, in which he was now induced to indulge on more than one account. This individual, be it known, was Master Peter Block, whilom a cook to a worshipful magistrate, then vintner, and tapster successively ; and these honourable employments being abandoned, he occupied now a more private station ; for, during the last ten years, Peter had descended the ladder of promotion with most quick retrogradation, so that he who had formerly contributed to other men's feasting, was now obliged

to practice fasting on his own account. In his quondam calling, he had been a man of a jovial complexion, nothing loth to a merry jest, but rather one who tickled the fancies and the palates of his guests in pretty equal ratio. In the noble art of cooking his science was indisputable. There was no dainty nor devise, in which he did not exhibit the skill of a professor, and the zeal of a dilettante. But unfortunately our artist would needs dress for himself a sauce that requires more of the ingredient called good luck, than any other article in the *Almanac des Gourmands*:—in other words, Master Block sought out for himself by times a help-mate; and, in evil hour, made choice of a fair one, whose venemous tongue had already gained her the ill-will of all the town. Whoever came in her way, for it little signified to her whether friend or foe, she was certain to cover them with abuse; nor did even the saints in the calendar, escape her with impunity. No wonder, therefore, if all the gallants were shy of addressing Dame Ilse, until Master Block, who had heard her commended as a thrifty, notable housewife, ventured to espouse this foulmouthed specimen

of the sex denominated fair. Hardly, indeed, had she left the altar ere she gave the poor wight a foretaste of connubial affection. Such an union was not blessed with a numerous progeny; for, of all their offspring, none escaped from a premature death except a single girl, who was of so firm a constitution as to suffer neither from the harsh treatment of her mother, or the overweening fondness of her father.

In the mean while the circumstances of the family had altered very materially. Even in his youth, Master Peter had never been a proficient in arithmetic; for, of all the rules, the only one in which he succeeded was substraction: as to addition and multiplication he could comprehend neither, nor was he much more successful in division. It was too great an exertion for him to keep an exact credit and debit account in his affairs: had he but money, neither kitchen nor cellar went unprovided; his boon companions too, were always sure of meeting with the best cheer, long credit, and open house so long as they entertained their host in return, by joyous tales and witty stories. On the other hand, his kindly compassionate

nature displayed itself equally towards those whose only claim consisted in their utter inability to pay for their lodging. Were his finances exhausted, then, indeed, he borrowed from usurers at high interest ; and, as he feared being called to account by his tyrannical rib, he always gave the authoritative dame to understand that it was to clear off some old debts. The accommodating principle by which, like many other well disposed christians, he found it so convenient to regulate his conduct, was that at last all would turn out for the best. But at the last, however, Master Peter found that he had turned all the money out of his pockets, and himself out of doors ; for, to the unspeakable regret of all his good friends, and all the bonvivants of the town, he was obliged to take down his sign.

In those good old times, when it was one of the chief duties of a notable housewife to attend herself to the affairs of the kitchen, it was in vain to seek a place where he might display his talents as a culinary artist. Under these unfortunate circumstances, therefore, he was com-

pelled to become a dependant upon his wife, who set up a small flour trade: and, as an ass was now become indispensable to her establishment, Master Peter acted as substitute for that respectable animal. Without the least compunction, the dame loaded the shoulders of her yoke partner with many a heavy sack of flour, which he was obliged to carry to the mill, although not without groaning under the unaccustomed weight: but even these services did not always obtain the best of recompense, for most sparingly did she meet out to him his provender, and not unfrequently did this female satan let him feel too the additional weight of her fist, whenever he ventured to complain of the weight of the sacks.

Such conduct grievously afflicted the compassionate nature of his daughter, and drew from her in secret many a bitter tear: she was dear as the apple of his eye to her father, who had trained her, from her very childhood, in his own ways; she therefore repaid all his affection with the most submissive filial love, and consoled him under all his domestic afflictions.

The amiable Gertrude supported herself by needle-work, especially embroidery, in which she had attained such a proficiency as to be able to copy any object. She worked the robes used by priests at mass, altar draperies, and those variegated and fancifully figured cloths with which it was then the fashion to cover tables. Although obliged to give her mother a strict account of all her earnings, she nevertheless, sometimes contrived to lay by a trifling coin, which she privately made a present of to her father, in order that he might occasionally visit mine host of the Golden Lamb, and forget, for a season, his afflictions. Previously to the shepherd's festival she had secreted double her usual savings, and she joyfully slipped them into her father's hand as he returned one evening from his labours at the mill. This kindness, on the part of his child, touched his very soul, and so affected him that the tears came into his eyes, the more so as he was busied with a project which would hardly deserve such a return from the affectionate girl.

Absorbed in deep reflection, he betook him-

self to the Golden Lamb, where, forcing his way through the boisterous assembly, he called for a measure of wine; then heedless of and unheeded by the rest of the company, planted himself in mine host's easy chair, which, in spite of its luxurious appearance, could not obtain a tenant on account of its retired situation. Here, having first of all somewhat refreshed his spirits, and screwed himself up to the pitch by a glass of generous wine, he gave full play to his thoughts, and canvassed within his own mind a certain critical proposition, that had been made to him respecting the fair Gertrude.

A young artist, who conceived that his talent lay more particularly in the representation of female beauty, and who, accordingly, was constantly on the search after the best models, no matter whether a Venus or a Magdalen, a saint or sinner, provided that the outward form was not deficient in charms—had been struck by the extraordinary beauty of Gertrude. Having just before been commissioned by a nobleman to paint for him a Venus rising from the sea, it instantly occurred to him that he could

no where meet with a more suitable model for his purpose, than the daughter of our quondam cook. Fearing, however, that maiden bashfulness would feel some repugnance at making such a free display of her charms, as was consonant with the more liberal notions of an admirer of virtù, he judged that his better way would be to apply directly to the father of the maiden; he therefore occasionally employed him to grind his colours, for which service he never failed to remunerate him very handsomely. One day, when he thought that matters were sufficiently ripe for his purpose, he ventured to make his proposal, hinting that a compliance would be followed by an ample present. Yet Master Peter, thinking that the artist was on this occasion instigated quite as much by his admiration of nature as his attachment to art, and suspecting that he was anxious for something more than merely the *beau idéal*, replied in no very gentle manner: "What do you mean, my fine master, by this sort of jesting? Though I have been a cook, you certainly do not suppose, that I will therefore

serve up my daughter to you with as little ceremony as I would dish you up a well dressed pullet?" The knight of the pencil found it necessary to exert all his eloquence to appease the irritated feeling of the honest cook ; and to explain to him that such a procedure was perfectly compatible with the strictest modesty, quoting numerous precedents for both the decency and the harmlessness of this method of studying.*

Satisfactory as were the examples adduced, the simplicity of master Peter could not comprehend that there was neither danger nor scandal in such a procedure ; until at the sight of some broad pieces of gold which the painter took care to display, his began somewhat to give way : for, in his present circumstances, such a bait was a very powerful one. He promised

* Had our artist lived now he might have silenced all scruples by referring to the illustrious example of the Princess Borghese who sat *en nue* to Canova, for her statue. Being asked by an English lady how she could bear it? the Princess very naively replied : " O ! very well, there was a good fire in the apartment during the whole time." T.

therefore, to take the matter into consideration, hinting however that even should he himself not refuse, he anticipated a greater obstacle in his daughter's reluctance; assured that she would not comply. "As for that matter, leave me to surmount all difficulties of that nature. You remember the fable of the dispute between the sun and the wind for the traveller's cloak? and I warrant me the coyest maiden may be persuaded much more easily by a young fellow than an old father."

The contract being thus far agreed upon, Peter was striving to settle the matter as well as he could between his banking after the gold and his scruples of conscience, at the very time that goodman Martin began his tale of wonder, which so interested the solitary occupier of the landlord's chair, that he instantly dismissed his own contentious thoughts in order to catch it with greedy ear. Not a syllable escaped his attention, but the farther the narrator proceeded the more eagerly did he listen. At first, it was merely curiosity that induced him to give his ear to the tale, but, when

neighbour Blas explained in what manner the spring-root, the talisman that was to open access to the treasure, was to be obtained, his imagination was completely inflamed. He instantly seemed to himself to stand before the brazen chest, and heap up the bright pieces of gold into his sack. The proposition of the painter was now rejected with a noble indignation, twenty broad pieces seeming a sum too paltry even to stoop for, had they been lying at his feet. Inspired nearly equally by the fumes of the wine and the thoughts of the Potosi he had discovered, he quickly determined to rest all his hopes of fortune on the success of his journey to the Brocken. Buoyed up by the inflammable gas of hope and that of imagination, his excursive fancy was among the clouds, and busily employed in building airy castles.

Covetousness and avarice were by no means his failings: as long as his prosperity lasted, his money passed lightly through his fingers: the more difficult therefore, was it for him afterwards to bear his indigence with tolerable patience. Whenever, therefore, he indulged in

dreams of wealth, it was principally in order that he might resign his post of proxy to a beast of burthen, and should no longer be obliged to carry sacks to the mill, but have it in his power to bestow a handsome dowry upon his dear Gertrude. Even before he had quitted the host's dignified easy chair, he had arranged every detail of his projected journey, except what regarded the funds necessary to accomplish it; and had fixed upon the following Sunday to carry his plan into execution.

Master Peter quitted the Golden Lamb as joyously as if he had obtained there the golden fleece. The only circumstance that now disturbed his ideal felicity was, that he was not yet in possession of the magic root, and when he considered that the black woodpecker did not build its nest in those parts, he became as melancholy as if suddenly roused from a delightful fairy vision. Quite disconsolate he retired to his chamber, and threw himself upon his hard mattress, but not to enjoy repose. It seemed nevertheless as if something whispered to him the old proverb, 'that which is delayed is not therefore

quite stayed.' Instantly rising, he struck a light, and, taking pen and ink, faithfully set down from beginning to end, the whole process of obtaining the treasure, so that not a tittle might escape his memory. This being done, he felt his chilled hope somewhat revived, trusting that, although he might be obliged to perform the part of ass for another winter, the time would yet come when he should be able to discontinue his sorrowful pilgrimages to the mill.

While busied in this occupation, daylight appeared, and with it his amiable spouse, who, suddenly bouncing in upon him, bestowed upon him no very pleasing salutations, seeing in what manner he was employed. "Drunkard, that thou art, exclaimed she, hast thou again been spending the whole precious night in carousing, wasting the money that thou hast pilfered from me? Begone out of my sight, thou sot!" Master Peter, having long been accustomed to greetings of this description, was not disconcerted, but replied, as soon as the tempest was blown over a little: "Sweetheart, don't disturb thyself so monstrously; what I have in hand is an undertaking that

must be performed ; I am even writing my last will and testament." At hearing this the affectionate Gertrude burst into wailing, since she imagined that her father had had some evil presentiments during the night, announcing to him his last hour. She had too herself dreamt that she had seen an open grave ; besides it was a most unusual thing with her good father to think much either about visiting the next world, or quitting the present one. Dame Ilse, on the contrary, gave little heed to any idle prognostics of this nature, her flinty nature received with little emotion the intimation that she might soon loose her spouse, who, in all probability, intended thereby to awaken some tenderness in his favour. On the contrary, she varied her theme in every possible strain of discord. "Thou knave," exclaimed the virago, "thou hast squandered away all thy worldly goods and chattels, and now pretendest that thou art making thy will. What hast thou now to bequeath?"—"True Dame, of worldly goods I have now but few indeed : but still I have a *heavenly* treasure, to wit a most affectionate

wife, whom I bequeath"—“To the devil with thee, thou insolent varlet,” returned the Dame, at the same time flying upon like an enraged tigress: and some blood might have been spilt had not the rash testator made good an immediate retreat.

Full fifty times had our good Peter witnessed the return both of the stork and the swallow, without paying any attention to it, and as often too had he on Maundy Thursday served up to his friends a mess of cresses and other herbs, and the first produce of the spring without even tasting them himself. But now he would not have exchanged for the best martinmas goose, the first sorry cabbage which his frugal housewife dished for him the following spring: and no sooner did he observe the first return of the swallow, than he celebrated the wished-for event in a flask of wine, at the Golden Lamb. He now laid by every penny of the secret service money with which he was supplied by his daughter, in order that he might have wherewithal to reward the first lucky wight who should inform him where to find a black

woodpecker's nest. He even retained a scout or two in his service, whom he sent to reconnoitre for this purpose, both wood and wild. The saucy varlets would sometimes, however, make it April-tide with him, sending him many a mile through brake and briar, over hill and down dale, where his labour was at length rewarded by meeting a raven's or a squirrel's nest in the hollow-tree to which he had been directed; and, if he pretended to be angry at this vexatious waggery, they would laugh at him to his face, and then run away. At length, one of these scouts, less knavish and more fortunate than the others, having actually met with a black woodpecker that had pitched its nest on an old decayed tree, arrived express with the important intelligence. Our anxious student in ornithology instantly flew off, as swiftly as if transformed to a bird himself, to ascertain the correctness of the report. His guide conducted him to a tree, where he saw a bird, which seemed to have its nest there, fly to and fro, yet the black woodpecker, not belonging to any of those genera of birds which culinary orni-

thologists study, and being also less sociable in its nature than either the sparrow or swallow, and less familiar to him than either the capon or goose, he was doubtful how far the information was correct ; for to do him justice, he was quite as well acquainted with the phoenix itself as with the black woodpecker. Fortunately a fowler, who was then passing, extricated him from his perplexity, giving a decision consonant to the querist's wishes, very kindly too, describing with the exactness of a naturalist, every thing relating to the history of the bird, save one trifling particular, to wit, the wonderful virtue on whose account it was now an object of such anxious search.

Our mysterious projector rejoiced, to the very bottom of his soul, at the discovery which he had made : daily did he make a pilgrimage to the auspicious tree, and read over his pretended testament, with more zeal than ever he had done his breviary. When it appeared to him to be full season to set about his great work, he began by hunting out a red cloak ; unfortunately but a single copy of this article was extant in the

whole town, and this unique was in the possession of a person to whom people in general are somewhat reluctant in making applications—namely, to that worthy branch of the executive power, and that dignified public functionary cyleped the hangman. It cost him no little exertion to overcome his scruples, and have recourse to a step which might compromise his reputation, and probably cause him to be expelled from the honourable society which assembled in mine host's parlour at the Golden Lamb: nevertheless, he found himself obliged to chew the bitter fruit. His worthy neighbour Redcloak readily complied with his request, considering that his robe would not be greatly disgraced by being seen on the shoulders of so respectable a personage as our Master Peter. Provided with this indispensable part of his apparatus, our botanizing friend set out to execute strictly, according to the prescribed formula, the ceremony which was to put him in possession of the mystic plant. All proceeded exactly as neighbour Blas had predicted; and, when the woodpecker came flying back to the tree with the root in its mouth, Master Peter

suddenly advanced from behind the tree, and performed his manœuvre with such rapidity and dexterity, that, in its terror at sight of the flame-coloured mantle, the bird let fall the root, and, at the same time that which would have restored the good man to his eyesight, like the aged Tobias. The project was now happily accomplished, and thereby was obtained the magic root, that by acting as a master key to every door, threw its possessor into an extasy of ineffable joy. He failed not to wrap it up in a whole bunch of christ-thorn, and proceeded homewards as overjoyed as if he had been already in possession of the treasure.

Of course, he could now no longer continue at home ; but all his thoughts and wishes being directed towards the Brocken, he made as hasty preparations as possible to decamp privately. His travelling equipage was soon put in readiness, being only a sturdy staff, and a stout wallet. It happened fortunately that, on the day fixed for his emigration, both dame Ilse and her daughter were gone to a convent of Urselines, where a nun was to take the veil ; goodman Peter availed himself of this oppor-

tunity to desert his post, he having been placed sentinel during the absence of the female part of the garrison.

Just as he was about to bestow his parting benediction on his household deities, it occurred to him that it would not be at all imprudent were he first of all to take a preparatory lesson on his talisman, in order to satisfy himself, beyond all doubt, of its efficacy. His worthy Dame had in her chamber a cabinet built into the wall, in which shrine she kept certain golden relics, most religiously guarded under seven locks, the keys of which she constantly wore about her person by way of an amulet. Not having been allowed to hold a committee of inquiry on the state of his wife's financial arrangements, Peter was altogether ignorant of these private funds, although he had some suspicion that a secret hoard existed somewhere: as soon, therefore, as this cabinet met his eye, his heart acted the part of a divining rod. With a bosom throbbing with anxious expectation for the success of the experiment he was about to make, he took out the root, and

touched the door of the shrine. To his rapturous astonishment the seven locks immediately unbolted of themselves, and the door flying open with a crash, displayed to his greedy gaze the store of bright seducing mammon, from whose snare his pious partner took such pains to secure him. At first, he hardly knew whether to be more delighted at the proved efficacy of the magic root, or at the treasure which he had discovered, but stood himself rooted to the spot, as if the secret spell had transformed him to a statue. At length, he bethought himself in earnest of his intended pilgrimage, and providently furnished himself with this treasure as a viaticum on his journey, considering it as a lucky augury of his farther success in his new trade of treasure-finding. Having completely emptied the shrine of its valuable relics, he carefully fastened again all the locks, like Master Nicholas the thief who stole the golden tables at Lünenburg, and forthwith departed on his expedition of discovery, in the highest spirits.

On their return from their more devotional ex-

cursion, the females greatly wondered to find the house shut up and the trusty sentinel nowhere to be found. To all their knocking and calling no reply was returned except by the mewling of a cat. Not being provided with so expeditious a *passé par-tout* as the spring-root, the Dame was obliged to have recourse to less supernatural means, and to apply to a locksmith. While the smith was employed in opening the door, the pious Dame was equally busied in sundry ejaculations, and in preparing a terrible philippic (in which the figure Epanorthosis was by no means spared) wherewith she intended to salute the unfortunate wight whom she still deemed to be sleeping at his post, for, in the bitterness of her spirit she exclaimed: "Baal, sleepeth." However, after the strictest search had been made from the cellar to the very house-top, no Baal was found. "Who knows," thought she, "but that the false loon has hied him to some of his tippling haunts?" And struck with sudden alarm at the suspicions awakened by this idea, she instantly felt for her keys, thinking that her sacred amulet might

have fallen into unholy hands, she was however, tangibly satisfied that it was quite secure ; the cabinet too looked so very composedly that her suspicions were again removed.

Mid-day, evening, and midnight came in succession : still they brought not Peter Block. The business now grew serious, and mother and daughter held a solemn council as to the causes of this sudden absconding. The strangest conjectures were made ; and, as that gloomy hour naturally suggested more alarming and mournful ideas, even Dame Ilse felt some compunctious visitings of conscience. " Alas," exclaimed she wringing her hands, " I fear, Gertrude, thy father has made an untimely end of himself."

A fresh search was now made ; and they carefully examined every beam and hook on the premises, on which it was possible that the unfortunate wight might have been tempted to render himself *dependant*, but they were satisfied that he had not travelled out of the world by a hempen road. All the ditches, and ponds, —not forgetting the milldam were then scruti-

nized, and still no trace whatever of the lost sheep. So that, at length, the good Dame piously resigned herself to her widowed state, consoling herself with the prudent reflection, that it was not now probable that she should ever see her husband hanged, as she had so often predicted; nor were the expenses of his funeral likely to be incurred. All therefore, that now remained to be done, was instantly to look out for a successor to Master Peter in his asinine duties, and to purchase a four footed beast of burthen to replace the biped. Having met with one to her satisfaction, and settled the price, she went to draw the sum upon her treasury, and for this purpose unlocked its well-secured door. But what could equal her horror at perceiving the dreary scene it displayed! For some minutes did she stand as in a mute trance; at length the dreadful conviction flashed upon her mind. Of what nature were the exclamations and apostrophes that now rolled in full torrent from her tongue, it is easy to devine.

About a month after this domestic catastrophe, a knock at the door announced some one's arri-

val : Dame Ilse hastened to open it in the expectation of a customer, when there entered a young man, apparently a person of some consequence and of prepossessing address ; and his attire was that of a country gentleman of some note. With a courteous salutation the youth expressed his joy at seeing her so well, and enquired very kindly after her daughter, although the Dame could not recollect ever to have seen him before. Notwithstanding that she found the visit intended rather for the latter than herself, she invited the stranger into the room, and having offered him a seat, enquired his business. With a mysterious air he now requested permission to speak with the fair needle-woman of whose delicate work report spoke so exceedingly high having a commission to deliver to her. Dame Ilse had certain shrewd conjectures as to the purport of this commission which the youthful stranger seemed anxious to communicate to the fair damsel : yet, as the interview would be in her own presence, she summoned the industrious maiden from her task. On perceiving the visitor, the modest Gertrude blushed, and

bent her eyes on the ground. Familiarly taking the hand which she would fain have withheld, the youth cast on her a gaze of tenderness that by no means dissipated her confusion: nevertheless, anticipating his salutation, she exclaimed: "Ah Frederick! how came you here? I deemed that you were now a hundred miles from hence. You know my sentiments, and are returned to disturb me again." "No, my dear girl, say rather that I am come to ensure the felicity of us both. My destiny is now altered, I am no longer the poor wight that I formerly was. A wealthy relation is lately dead; I am the inheritor of all his possessions, and have now store of riches: I need not therefore any longer apprehend your mother. That I love thee I feel full well: that thou lovest me, I venture to hope. The first is certain, and therefore, am I come to woo thee; should I find the other equally so, I shall be transported with rapture."

During this speech the maiden's blue eyes assumed a livelier expression, and, at the last sentence, her beautiful mouth displayed a faint

smile ; at the same time she stole a glance at her mother to learn what were her thoughts on the subject. She seemed wrapt in thought, so great was her astonishment to discover that the bashful girl had been carrying on a love affair, without her having the least suspicion of it. The maiden never went abroad, save accompanied by herself, and, at home, under her Argus eye, there was no opportunity for any intrigue ; accordingly, the good Dame was perfectly well satisfied that not even the wiles of the most scheming gallant would be able to gain him access to Gertrude. The event however proved the contrary ; and Dame Ilse now learnt that the heart of a handsome daughter, though so well guarded by her caution and experience, was no safer than a hoard of gold secured by seven locks.

Before she could finish her mental comments on this strange discovery, the suitor produced the most sufficient authority for his boldness, by spreading out on the table a heap of sparkling gold pieces whose brilliancy so dazzled the vision of the discreet matron, both corporeal and in-

tellectual, that she could no longer see either the lovers themselves, or the harm they had committed. Gertrude was now quite relieved from the apprehension of witnessing her lover exorcised as an unclean spirit and doomed to repass the threshold. With most lamb-like patience the good wife considered that beauty is an article not greatly improved by keeping; that, therefore, for such fading ware, it is better to take the first good customer that offers. She opined also that a marriagable daughter was to the full, as safe under a husband's guardianship as her own. She had therefore already prepared her maternal consent, fit to be produced as soon as the suitor should solicit it: and very readily responded her yea and amen, to the proposals of the wealthy wooer.

In short, the treaty of marriage was far more expeditiously arranged than that had been which related to the ass. Upon being accepted as such, the joyous bridegroom, sweeping half the gold into his hat, threw it into the lap of the bride, as her marriage portion; the other half he as liberally scattered in a golden shower

into the bosom of the greedy crone, whose dry countenance instantly acknowledged its influence. This being done he requested a more private audience with his betrothed, of which he now claimed the privilege as a legal tête-à-tête. The mother in the interim, softened if not by the present she had received, by the dreams of future wealth, spared no cost in making due provision for the entertainment of so welcome a guest.

The preparations, now every where to be seen going on, announced a speedy approach of the nuptials. The report of Gertrude's espousals spread like wild fire among all the gossips, as the standing subject of the discussion for the day. Whenever the wealthy bridegroom went abroad, there never failed to appear a fine show of heads at every window; and many a curious group too discussed with eloquence the important affair of this courtship. Some rejoiced that so worthy a wench as Gertrude was so fortunate; while others threw out envious remarks; and, although there was not in all Rottenburg a gallant of more comely ap-

pearance or displaying more bravery of dress than Frederick, still the jealous criticism of the maidens detected many defects in him: one censured him as being too tall, another as too short, a third as too stout, while a fourth declared that he displayed a bad taste in dress. Some censured him as a braggart, others as a coxcomb; while the greater part charitably prognosticated that this fine fortune would not last long, but that he was a mere bird of passage who built his nest there for the season, and would then fly away. They soon perceived, however that, considering the prophesied shortness of his stay, he intended to furnish his nest more abundantly than should seem necessary, since the arrival of several heavy packages of furniture from Nuremburg indicated somewhat more than a temporary sojourning.

At length the marriage day was fixed, and half the town received invitations to the wedding feast, which it was determined to celebrate in the best apartment which the Golden Lamb afforded. As Gertrude was trying on her bridal wreath, she could not help observing: "This

wreath would delight me, indeed, were but my good father here to conduct me to church. Would to Heaven that he were here with us once again. While we now enjoy all the blessings of Providence, he is suffering of hunger!" Even Dame Ilse could not now help expressing some regret, although some of it might probably arise from the want she experienced of having some one on whom to vent her spleen.

The eve of the wedding day was now arrived, when lo! some one stopped before the house with a barrow, and knocked at the door. The bride opened the window to enquire what the stranger wanted, and, to her surprise, discovered that it was even Father Peter himself. All now was tumultuous joy: Gertrude rushed and threw herself upon his neck; even Dame Ilse reached out her hand in token of forgiveness of the theft he had committed, adding, at the same time, a significant hint as she said: "Sirrah, mend thy manners!" At length the bridegroom saluted him in his turn, while both mother and daughter expatiated at the same time on his merits, as a suitor: for Master Peter

seemed to scrutinize his person, with an eye of eager inquiry. No sooner, however, was he informed of the pretensions of the gallant, and the manner in which he had acquired his right to such intimate hospitality, then he appeared to be well satisfied with his future son-in-law, and was soon as familiar with him as though he had long been acquainted with him. After having first brought him some refreshment, the Dame, expressed her curiosity to hear his adventures, and all that had happened to him in his peregrinations.

“Heaven keep me, after all, in my native land,” replied he, “I have travelled far and wide, tried my hand at all kinds of trades, and at length am become a dealer in hardware; but have laid out more than I have gained. All my wealth now consists in this cask of nails, of which I intend to make a present to the young folks here, to begin housekeeping with.” Mother Ilse, now vented herself in so many reproaches, that the bridegroom little pleased at this specimen of female eloquence, was obliged to interfere, assuring her that he was well satisfied with the offer.

Peace being restored, Gertrude requested that her father might conduct her the following morning to the church: accordingly Master Peter appeared dressed out like a burgomaster, in honour of the ceremony, which was celebrated with no ordinary splendour. Soon after this happy event, the young couple set up a separate establishment, the bridegroom having purchased a noble mansion, where he resided in the style of an opulent citizen. Peter, in the mean while, set himself down at his ease, which it was believed the liberality of his newly made son enabled him to do, no one suspecting that the cask of nails, was his real cornucopiæ, whence flowed his abundance of milk and honey.

He had, totally unknown to any one, accomplished his journey to the Blocksberg, with the greatest success, although certainly not altogether with the celerity, with which the wizards ride thither on Walpurgis night, in order to hold their sabbath there; his manner of traveling, however, was quite as safe, and certainly quite as pleasant. He visited each house with a

sign attached to it, with as much devotion as a pilgrim of another description, would have stopped at every oratory, cross, or chapel on his journey; or with as much punctuality as if he had been employed in taking a census of all houses of entertainment, and in ascertaining that their cellars were well stocked, and their larders well furnished. In sooth, during this expedition he passed as much time in the former places as he did elsewhere, so that one might suppose, by his frequent visits to these subterraneous repositories, that he was anxiously rehearsing his descent into the cave of treasures. But at length, the blue distance of the landscape shew the mountains of the Harz: and as the near approach to the scene of action required all the power both of body and mind, to be well fortified for the enterprize, he heroically put in practice the duty of self-denial, and imposed upon himself a rigorous fast.

Until he began to ascend the Brocken his nose had served him as a faithful compass, but he now found himself in a latitude in which this magnet no longer acted with effect. He wan-

dered in various directions, yet no one could inform him whereabouts the Morgenbrod's Valley was situated. At length, he got, quite by chance, into the right track; discovered St. Andrew's Mount, and the little stream named the Eder from which he quaffed a draught more inspiring to his imagination, than one from Hippocrene ever yet proved to a son of Apollo; he discovered also the cave and was so fortunate as to solve the problem proposed by mine host of the Golden Lamb. In short, he entered the cavern; the spring-root performed its office; he found the treasure, and filled his wallet with as much gold as he could carry, which sum was quite sufficient for him to live the remainder of his days in wealth, and to bestow a large dowry on his dear Gertrude. Although the burthen, which he now bore, was heavier than any sack of flour, yet the seventy-two steps which he ascended bearing it on his shoulders, did not weary him so much as those leading to the mill.

When he again beheld the light of day on his return from the cave, he felt like a mariner

who just escaped from shipwreck, has been combating in the midst of the watery element with all the horrors of death, and now again presses once again the firm earth as he exultingly scales the cliff. Notwithstanding the assurances which he had received of perfect security, it was not without certain apprehensions of mischief from the spirit of the mine, that he performed his subterraneous journey ; he feared lest the stern guardian of the treasure should again appear in his terrific form, and either throw him into a mortal dread, or even plunder him of the rich fruit of his daring enterprise. His flesh shuddered, and his hair stood on end as he descended the stair hewed in the rock, and so little did he venture to examine the vault wherein the treasure was deposited, that he could not afterwards say whether the walls and pillars glittered with precious stones, his whole soul being intent upon the brazen chest alone, out of which he loaded himself as quickly as possible. In the mean while, however, every thing succeeded to his wish ; he neither saw nor heard any evil spirit ; only the iron

door closed to again with an awful sound, as soon as he set his foot out of the vaulted chamber. In his hurry, the alarmed treasure-seeker forgot the invaluable talisman; the spring-root which he had laid out of his hand, when occupied in scraping up the gold, on which account it was impossible for him to return for another freight; yet this circumstance did not cause much affliction to the worthy Master Peter, his desires being by no means immoderate, and he having too, on this occasion, not spared his back in the first instance;—and when he was disposed so to do, he could shew himself a sturdy labourer.

After he had performed every thing precisely according to the instructions of old Martin, and closed up the aperture of the cave, he departed, considering how he should best secure the prize he had obtained, and live comfortably upon it at home, without exciting idle curiosity or malignant suspicion. It was also very desirable that his shrew of a wife should know nothing of the treasure of the Harz king, else he feared that she would never desist from harassing him until he had surrendered up to

her the fruit of his toils. She should, therefore, partake of the stream, but remain quite ignorant of its source. The first point was easily accomplished, the other caused him to belabour his brains greatly without determining any thing. Having securely packed them up, he transported his riches to the nearest village: here he purchased a wheelbarrow, and ordered a cooper to make him a tub with a double bottom; in the centre of this he deposited his treasure, filling up the false bottom at either end, with nails. With this load he returned home very leisurely; and, as he was in no great hurry to arrive there, tarried at every hospitable tavern, desiring the obsequious master to set before him of the best.

As he approached towards Ellrich, he was joined by a young man of smart appearance, but whose countenance was marked with grief. Our merry pilgrim struck by the stranger's appearance enquired of him, "Young Sir, whither art thou bound?" To which the other replied with a sigh, "I am journeying through the wide world, my good father, or perhaps

out of the world—any where, in short, where my feet carry me.”

“And wherefore should it be out of the world?” kindly asked the compassionate Peter. “What has the world done to offend thee so grievously?”

“To me the world has done nothing, neither have I done aught amiss to the world, and yet, methinks, we do not agree well together.”

Our good natured traveller of the wheelbarrow, who, when things went well with himself, always delighted in seeing others in equally good spirits, exerted himself to cheer the desponding youth; but finding, at length, that his powers of eloquence were of no avail, he suspected that his gloomy mood might be occasioned chiefly by a vacancy in the region of the stomach, and that it was that organ, not either the heart or head of the patient, that was affected. He accordingly invited him to enter an inn, promising not to call upon him for his share of reckoning, a proposal which his melancholy companion did not refuse. They here found a mirthful set of revellers, in whose society Master Peter soon found himself quite in his element; and, by degrees, waxed so

full of joyous glee, and so liberal withal, that he insisted that no one but himself should have the honour of discharging the landlord's bill. This proposition tended by no means to throw a damp upon these choice spirits; on the contrary, they in return became most liberal of jests and repartees, so that it was doubtful whether the number of good things that went into their mouths was not exceeded by that of those which proceeded out from them. Peter's young companion was the only one present who seemed insensible to the wit and gaiety round him; he sat in a corner of the room with his eyes fixed on the floor, so coy too did he appear with his glass that he but rarely saluted it with his lips, and even then he did it in most maidenly guise.

Perceiving him so inaccessible to all social mirth, it now occurred to the good Peter that some heavy affliction, which was gnawing at his heart, was the real cause of the poor youth's despondency. His curiosity therefore became equally excited with his compassion.

“My good lad,” enquired he the following morning, “what is it that disturbs thee so

greatly? Acquaint me with the cause of thy uneasiness?"

"Alas, my worthy father," returned the youth, "what can it avail me, should I disclose the cause of my sorrow: you can serve me neither by your pity nor your advice."

"Who knows how that may be? the old proverb says: Comfort travelleth with no outrider." Peter was now so urgent with him to disclose the cause of his disquietude, that the cheerless gallant was at length fain to comply.

"It is no trifle, no boyish misfortune," said he, "that causes my distress, but the calamitous, unpropitious destiny of virtuous affection. I am the forrester, and the born vassal of Count Oettingen at——, who took me into his house when a child, and bestowed such pains on my education, that the goodnatured world whispered it about that I was his son. A painter lately offered him for sale a number of pictures, to decorate his new castle; among the rest was one representing a damsel of most extraordinary beauty, the original of which, the artist said, was a young girl, whose portrait he had sketched surreptitiously, she being too reserved

to sit to him for that purpose. Never could I satisfy myself with gazing on this charming figure; I always found myself in the apartment where it hung, so that, at length, with continually devouring its beauties, my heart was inflamed to such a degree, that I could no longer find either rest or tranquillity. One day, therefore, I called the painter aside, and conjured him to inform me where was to be found the maiden who had served as the model for this exquisite work; promising him no inconsiderable boon if he would but declare to me the truth. The artist laughed at my simplicity, and at the warmth of my imagination, but revealed to me all that I had sought. ‘The fair maiden,’ said he, ‘dwells at Rotenburg, in which place her father was once a noted cook. You may, if you please, try your luck with her; but, I can assure you, the dame is both prudish and proud.’ I now requested permission of the Count to quit his service, but this he denied me; one night, therefore, I departed without either permit or permission, and, having arrived at Rotenburg, soon traced out my inamorata. Still I found that

my efforts to gain access to her were in vain. She lives under a mother who is a very dragon in watchfulness, and suffers her to appear neither at door nor window, but keeps her as closely confined from the profane gaze of men, as if she were the inhabitant of a nunnery.

“ This caused me no small uneasiness, I determined, therefore, to accomplish my aim by stratagem: I put on female apparel, concealed my face in a hood, and thus attired, knocked at the door. On her opening it, I was so struck with her loveliness as to be near discovering myself, yet, quickly recovering from emotion, I gave her an order for a carpet of rich needlework; for you must know that she is one of the most skilful embroiderers in the whole country. I had now free access to her every day, under the pretence of coming to see how the work proceeded; and enjoyed the pleasure of gazing upon my beloved, and chatting with her for hours each time. I soon perceived that my company was far from being disagreeable to the damsel, so well did I perform the character of an honest matron. At length, one day, when

her mother was absent, I ventured to discover myself to the charming creature, when, starting up from her work, she attempted to flee; I prevailed upon her, however, not to make any alarm, pledging to her my honour, that I came with fair designs, and for the purpose of wooing her as a fair suitor. I then explained to her the whole plan, and the singular manner in which I had become fascinated by her charms. She chided my rashness for having so lightly quitted my patron, and enquired in what manner I intended to support a wife? This perplexing question quite stopped my mouth, for, although I have a pair of strong arms, I cared not to reply that these were able to support us, fearing that a poor labourer would seem unworthy so lovely a creature.

“ Casting upon me a look full of the kindest sympathy, she said: ‘ We must part: never must we meet again in this suspicious manner. My virtue is irreproachable, yet is my heart weak. Thou hast taught me how easy it is for the seducer to pass through bolted doors. My father destines me for a convent, and I hasten

to comply with his desires; and for this purpose am anxious to earn, by my needle, a sum sufficient to place me there. Adieu, and remove to such a distance, that no suspicious tongues may raise evil reports concerning us."

I was obliged to comply, and to tear myself from her; that was indeed a bitter cup. I departed almost in despair; abandoned myself to my forlorn destiny, continually weeping and lamenting, both day and night. A hundred times a day did I walk up and down the street where she resided; and whenever a bell rung for mass, I instantly hurried away in the hope of meeting her, and enjoying the consolation of beholding her once again. But in vain! she was no more revealed to my anxious gaze. Three times did I prepare to quit the town; yet could not tear myself away, for it seemed to me like departing into banishment. Once more did I seek to gain admission into the house in my former disguise, for the purpose of bidding her eternally adieu. I knocked at the door with the most anxious solicitude: the mother put her head out of the casement, and, on seeing me, began to load me with

reproaches, taxing me with having attempted to defraud her daughter of the sum we had agreed upon. I instantly perceived what reason the prudent Gertrude had assigned to her mother for the abrupt manner in which my visits were discontinued. I now resigned all hope of again beholding the lovely maiden; and quitted the town, and am now wandering about the country in the hope that my grief may speedily devour my heart."

Master Peter listened with extreme attention to the plain and candid narrative of his companion, highly overjoyed at the lucky coincidence which had brought him acquainted with one, who was able to give him such well authenticated tidings of his home, during his absence.

"Your history," said he, "is a strange one enough; there is one point however, which I do not exactly comprehend: you spoke of the father of your mistress—why did you not address yourself to him? He would hardly have rejected such an honest suitor to his daughter, as thou appearest to be."

"Ah," replied Frederick little weening, whom he was now speaking to, "the father is naught;—

he is a sottish, idle fellow, who has left his wife and child, nor does any one know what has become of him. Yet, I do not much blame the poor wight for having run off from such a cross-grained vixen as his wife is—but, then, to desert his sweet child!—she who is so mild, and meekly tempered, and who, even now, always takes his part, and still speaks of him with the kindest affection!—were he here I could pluck his beard for him.” At hearing this unexpected eulogium upon himself, Master Peter redoubled his attention, and was surprised to learn how minutely his companion was acquainted with all his family secrets, without, however, being offended at the indignation expressed against him. He thought, on the contrary, that Frederick would serve his design most admirably; that he could make him the depository of his wealth, so as thereby to avoid all inquisitive curiosity as to the sudden change in his affairs, and, at the same time, conceal his treasure from the greediness of his wife. “My good friend,” said he, “shew me thy hand, and let me see what luck thy stars destine for thee.”

“What should they forbode, save evil?”

returned the hopeless lover. Nevertheless the pretended dealer in chiromancy would not be so put off, and as his companion did not care for such a trifle, to offend one who had treated him so generously, he reached out his hand to him. Mustering up a look of profound sagacity, Master Peter considered all the lines very attentively, shook his head occasionally in the mean while, and, after he had carried on the game for a sufficient time, said: "Friend! he who has luck has also the bride! To-morrow, as soon as the sun rises, hie thee with all speed to Rotenburg. The maiden is faithful, and well inclined towards thee, nor will she fail to receive thee with affection. A rich inheritance, will shortly fall to thee from an old relation, of whom thou little dreamest; and wilt then have wherewith to support a wife handsomely!"

"Comrade," returned the youth, supposing that the prophet was making himself merry at his expense, "methinks it becomes you but ill to jeer the unfortunate. Seek some one on whom you can play your tricks, for I am not your man."

“Nay, my fine spark! I am not he that would deceive you, or amuse myself at your cost: on the contrary, I engage to accomplish my predictions to a hair. To convince you of it, I will now pay you, as much of the said bequest as you choose to demand. Follow me into my chamber, and I will convince you of the truth of my words by the most satisfactory evidence.”

At hearing his friend, the dealer in iron, speak of his gold, in a tone of such confidence, the youth's cheek burned with the glow of joy, and sudden astonishment; nor did he know whether he was dreaming or awake, when, following his mysterious companion, he beheld him, after having secured the door, display the secret contents of his cask,—a golden yolk within an iron shell.

Master Peter now discovered himself to the lover of Gertrude, and confided to him the mystery of the treasure, and also his intention of letting him support the character of a wealthy suitor, while he, on the contrary, would enjoy himself more snugly. The deep melancholy of the youth, now altogether disappeared: he could

find no words to express his gratitude, for being thus suddenly rendered the most happy of all mortals. The following morning both the travellers set out for Ellrich, where the young one equipped himself in all the bravery of a noble gallant. Master Peter paid him in advance a considerable portion of the promised inheritance, and agreed with him that he should privately let him know of the success of his undertaking, in order that he might dispatch a load of costly furniture, befitting the station and character he now had to support. At their parting with each other the presumptive father-in-law made the youth a present of a piece of advice: "Take good heed to thy tongue, and disclose our secret to no one, save to the discreet Gertrude, when she becomes thy bride."

Master Peter now enjoyed the golden fruit of his trip to the Harz Mountain, yet wisely forbore to entertain the public with any description of it; and possessed so much wealth, that he hardly knew its amount. Frederick, however, was supposed to be the source of this sudden prosperity, and, as honour follows quick

on the heels of riches, he soon attained the highest dignities which the town of Rotenburg could bestow on so worthy a citizen. From this time it has become a proverb there, which still remains in vogue, when the people of Rotenburg wish to describe a person in prosperous circumstances, to say, that he is as rich as the son-in-law of Peter Block, the cook.

THE
BOTTLE-IMP.

IT was a lovely Italian evening, when a young German merchant, named Richard, entered Venice, the widely celebrated seat of traffic and commerce. In consequence of it being then the period of the thirty years war, all Germany was, at that time, a scene of dissension; no wonder, therefore, if the young merchant, who was a gallant more inclined to banqueting and luxurious indulgence, than feats of chivalry, was not greatly displeas'd at his affairs calling him for some time towards Italy, where things wore a less hostile appearance, and where too, he had heard, that there was no lack either of the richest wines, or the most delicious fruits—to say nothing of fascinating beauties, in which latter article our gallant piqued himself on being no ordinary connoisseur.

Seated in his gondola, he traversed the various canals of the city, struck with admiration at the beautiful buildings, and still more so at the lovely tenants, whom he frequently beheld, peeping from their lattices. At length he arrived at a magnificent mansion, at whose windows, he saw some ten or twelve charming girls.

“Now, would to heaven,” exclaimed the captivated gallant, “that I had but the opportunity of saying a few words to one of those rare creatures !”

“Well!” returned his gondolier “an that be all, you have only to step out, and go boldly into the house at once:—your time, I warrant me, will pass pleasantly enough.”

“It may be pleasant enough, friend, to thee, to put thy jeers upon strangers; but dost thou suppose that I am such an arrant loon as to follow thy knavish counsel, and to venture where I should not only be hooted out, but receive too a sound drubbing, into the bargain?”

“My good master,” replied the other, “do not think to teach me the customs of our city;

only follow my advice, and, if you are not welcomed with open arms,—why then I am well content to lose my labour and my fare.”

The youth now began to think the experiment worth trying; and soon found that the Gondolier had not imposed upon him. These beauties, he quickly discovered, were far from being prudish or tyrannical; on the contrary, they were of that courteous sort, who are never backward in shewing hospitality to the stranger, but ready to extend their complaisance to the utmost, for the trifling consideration of some fifty ducats. “This same Italy,” though the unwary spark, intoxicated by their voluptuous caresses, “is assuredly the most delightful place beneath heaven;” for he did not fail to impute the flattering reception he had experienced, in no small degree to the comely person, with which nature had favoured him. The demand, however, that was made upon his purse, soon dissipated some of these pleasing reflections, as he discovered, that instead of having made a conquest of some princess, he had only been entertained by

a courtesan, who now made a demand that nearly drained his purse. Yet did he not lose all his patience, since he was a gallant that did not consider the cost bestowed upon his pleasures, flung away: he therefore retired with as good a grace, as he could muster on such an occasion, and repaired to a tavern for the sake of diverting his spleen.

Having commenced his affairs in so notable a manner, the wild spark continued daily to indulge in revels, and in the society of mirthful faces. In all the company of brave gallants, with whom Richard now constantly associated, there was but one countenance overcast with gloom. It was that of a Spanish captain, who, though he never failed to be present at these scenes of riot, rarely bestowed a word upon the company, while his dark features were rendered still more gloomy, by the visible uneasiness that sat upon them. Still his presence was endured, as he was a man of rank and wealth, and one too who regarded lightly the expence of treating his friends evening after evening.

Richard, in the mean while, although less liberal of his purse than on the first evening of his arrival at Venice, found his finances rapidly decreasing; and reflected with no small sorrow, that this gay and joyous kind of life, must quickly terminate. His associates were not slow in observing his melancholy, or in divining the cause of it,—this being, by no means, the first instance of the kind, that had occurred within their society,—neither did they spare their taunts upon the occasion, so that our gallant was fain to venture among them the last precious relics of his purse. At this prosperous period of his history, the Spaniard called him, one evening, aside and, with unexpected courtesy, requesting that he would accompany him abroad, conducted him to a lone and retired spot. The poor youth was, at first, rather alarmed; but, at length, somewhat quieted his apprehensions by reflecting, that his companion well knew; that he had little about him worth aught, save his skin, and in that he was determined a hole should not be picked without returning the compliment.

The Spaniard, however, having first seated himself on the ruins of an old building, and compelled his companion to do the same, addressed him as follows :

“ I cannot help imagining, my dear young friend, that you stand greatly in need of that which has long become a burthen to myself—namely, the power of procuring whatever sum of money you choose, and whenever you please. This power, such as it is, I am willing to dispose of to you for a trifling consideration, besides some other advantages into the bargain.”

“ What occasion,” enquired Richard, “ can you possibly have for money, if you wish to part with the power of obtaining it yourself?”

“ The case stands thus,” returned the captain, “ I know not, whether you are acquainted with certain little spirits, that are called *bottle-imps* ; they are small black devils, inclosed in a little phial. Whoever possesses one of these, can command from it whatever worldly possession he desires most, especially abundance of gold. In return for these services, the soul of the

person who possesses the imp becomes forfeit to Lucifer, in case he die without having previously disposed of him. But this can be done only by receiving a less sum than that which he first paid for the spirit. Mine cost me ten ducats:—for nine it is yours.”

While the youth was reflecting on this extraordinary offer, the Spaniard continued, “I could, if I pleased, easily get rid of the thing, by palming it upon some one as a mere curiosity, in which manner a knavish fellow inveigled me to purchase it. But I wish not to have the weight of such an ill-deed upon my conscience, and therefore, very honestly and fairly, acquaint you with the bargain. You are still young and high-spirited, and will not fail to meet with opportunities enough of disposing of your purchase, whenever you may become as weary of, as I am even now.”

“My noble Sir,” replied Richard, “an you would not take it ill at my hands, so could I inform you, how often I have been imposed upon already, in this good city of Venice.”

“Why thou foolish varlet,” exclaimed the

enraged Spaniard, "thou needest but call to mind the brave entertainment I gave last evening, to judge whether I would cheat thee for the sake of a paltry nine ducats!"

"Who spends much, wants much:" gently observed the young merchant, "and the longest purse we know has a bottom, although not a golden one. If, therefore, you yesterday spent your last ducat, to-day you may be hankering after mine."

"Excuse me if I do not chastise thee with a cold steel for this insolence:—that I do not do it, is because I still hope that you will help to rid me of my bottle-devil. Besides it is my intention to perform penance, which would only be rendered still heavier thereby.

"Might we not, at least be favoured with some specimen of the thing's abilities?" enquired the wary merchant.

"How may that be?" answered the other. "It will neither remain with any one, nor aid any one, save him who has fairly purchased and paid for it."

The youth could not help feeling some alarm,

for the place where they were sitting, seemed a particularly lone and gloomy spot,—although the Spaniard assured him, that he would not employ compulsive means. Yet, in spite of his fears, his imagination dwelt upon the enjoyments that would be in his power, should he become possessor of the little spirit; he determined, therefore, to try whether he could obtain the bargain at a cheaper rate.

“Witless fellow that thou art,” exclaimed the Spaniard with a laugh, “it is for thy sake, and for the sake of those who shall come after thee, that I demand the highest sum I can, that I may delay, as long as possible, the time when it shall be purchased for the smallest coin possible, and the purchaser thereby become inevitably forfeit to the devil, even because he cannot sell it again at a lower price.”

“Well” said Richard, with a tone of delight, “let me but have it. I warrant me I shall not be very eager to get quit of my purchase in a hurry. If, therefore, I could have it for five ducats——”

“It is all one to me,” returned the Spaniard,

“but remember you are hastening on the minute when the evil spirit shall claim the last unhappy possessor as his own.”

With these words he delivered up to his companion, in return for his gold, a small glass phial, wherein Richard could just discern, by the light of the stars, something dark that kept leaping up and down.

By way of making an experiment he demanded, although but mentally, to have double the amount of the sum he had just expended, in his right hand, when he instantly felt ten ducats there. He now returned in glee to the tavern, and the rest of the company, who were still carousing there, were not a little astonished at perceiving what cheerful countenances were now worn by those, who were lately in so melancholy a mood. But the Spaniard quickly retired without awaiting the costly banquet which, late as it was, Richard had ordered to be prepared, having first satisfied the demands of the wary host before hand, for his pockets were now well lined with brave new ducats, which flocked thither merely at his wishing.

Those who are most anxious for a similar bargain, will best imagine what kind of a life our wild gallant now led :—unless, indeed, they should be devoted to mere sordid avarice. Even the most charitable, may well suppose that he spent not his days or nights in abstinence and fasting. The first thing he did was to choose, as the minion of his pleasures, the courtesan whose acquaintance cost him so dear at his first arrival at Venice. On this worthless creature did he lavish unheard of sums, purchasing for her a mansion in the city, and two villas, all of which he furnished with the utmost sumptuousness.

It chanced one day, as he was sitting with Lucretia, such was the name of his harlot mistress, in the garden of one of his villas, upon the bank of a little stream, that she suddenly snatched the phial which Richard constantly wore in his bosom, attached to his neck by a chain of gold. She had seized it before he was aware, and now held the little bottle up against the light. At first she was highly amused at beholding the antics of the little black figure ;

but at length shrieked out in a voice of terror : —“ Ah ! the nasty creature is a toad !” and immediately flung chain, phial, and bottle-devil, altogether into the water, where the current as quickly carried them away.

The youth endeavoured, as well as he could, to conceal his distress, lest his mistress should enquire farther into the matter, and perhaps accuse him publicly of witchcraft. He pretended therefore, that it was merely a curious toy ; then, as soon as he could, he quitted Lucretia, in order to consider what was best for him now to do. He was still in possession of his palace and villas, and had, moreover in his pockets, no inconsiderable sum, in the shape of bright ducats. But how great was his joy when, on putting his hand into his pocket to examine the latter, he discovered there his lost phial. The chain probably remained at the bottom of the stream, but the phial and its little black tenant had faithfully returned back to their owner.—“ Now then,” exclaimed he, in a burst of transport, “ now then, I find that I possess here a treasure, of which no accident, no earthly power

can possibly deprive me!" Nay, he had even kissed the very phial, had not the little jumping black figure excited his aversion, so loathsome did it appear.

If his doings were wild and mad enough before, they were now ten times worse. The infatuated youth regarded even the potentates and princes of the world with a disdainful compassion; convinced that not one of them was able to indulge in such a luxurious life as himself. Even Venice, the most opulent mart in the world, could hardly find dainties enough for his extravagant banquets. Did a well meaning friend hint at the imprudence of this continual rioting, he would indignantly reply: "Richard is my name, and my riches are boundless." Often would he, in a fit of intemperate mirth, rudely jest at the folly of the Spaniard, who had cast such a prize from him, and, as he had heard it reported, had retired into a convent.

On this earth, however, there is nothing that lasts for ever. This too our gallant soon experienced to be truth, much sooner, indeed, than he would otherwise have done, in consequence

of the intemperance with which he plunged into all sensual delights. A languor like that of death seized his exhausted frame, in spite of all the virtue of his phial, which he vainly kept invoking for health, at the first attack of his disease. Recovery visited him not, but on the contrary frightful dreams.

It seemed to him that one of the phials which were standing by his bed-side, began to set up a wild dance, jostling against the rest in a furious manner. After gazing at it for some minutes, Richard recognized it to be that in which the little spirit was inclosed, and exclaimed: "Bottle-devil, bottle-devil, thou assistest me no more, but rather destroyest that which should work my cure." Whereupon the little black thing sang in a hoarse voice:

“ Richard! Richard! prayest in vain:
Prepare thee now for eternal pain;
Therein must thou abide and endure,
Since spirit's power can work no cure.
No herb that groweth, death can heal:—
I joy, for that thou'rt mine I feel.”

After which it immediately stretched itself out,

quite long and thin, and, notwithstanding that Richard held the phial stopped as closely as possible, it crept out between his thumb and the cork: it then suddenly became a large black man, who began to dance in the most hideous manner, clapping to and fro, at the same time, his huge dusky wings; and at length placed his hairy, leathern breast upon Richard's bosom, and his grinning face upon Richard's face, so that the latter felt as if he were himself assuming the hideous figure, and in tone of wild agony screamed out for a mirror.

A cold sweat stood upon his brow, as he awoke out of the ghastly dream, and he thought that he perceived a monstrous black toad creep down beside him into his bed; but, upon putting down his hand, he felt only the phial, in which the little black figure lay panting and apparently exhausted.

How awfully long did the remainder of this horrible night seem to the sick and phrensied wretch. He dared not again to resign himself to sleep, lest the terrific vision should re-appear; hardly too, did he venture to open his wearied eyes even in the dark, lest he should perceive

the monstrous fiend squatted in some corner of the apartment. Yet did he shut his eyes but for a moment, he thought that it was again upon him, and started up with horror. He rang aloud for his attendants, but no one came, all was still as the grave; as for Lucretia he had not beheld her since he was first attacked by his disorder. Thus did he lay in a state of torturing horror, throughout the whole of that long, dreary night, the terror of which was increased, when he reflected that, if this single night appeared almost an eternity of terrors, what must seem the eternal night of hell, on which no day would ever dawn—that night to whose dreadful visions there would be no end?—He determined, at all events, upon getting rid of the fatal phial the very next morning.

When, however, the morning came, he felt his spirits so much revived, that he began to ask himself whether he had yet turned the bottle-imp sufficiently to account. Palace and villas, and all the luxuries wherewith they were furnished, seemed hardly enough; he, therefore, instantly demanded a great heap of ducats to

he placed beneath his pillow, and, on finding them there instantaneously, he then began to reflect how best to dispose of the talisman. He knew that his physician was a great naturalist, and one who sought much after all monsters, and all such wonderful productions as are generally kept in spirits; he hoped, therefore, that he should be able to pass off the bottle-imp to the learned man as a curiosity of this description; for else the doctor was too good a christian to have any thing to do with the evil creature. The deceit indeed could hardly be termed an innocent one, but need knows no niceties.

Accordingly he offered the doctor the little spirit which was now become again exceedingly lively, jumping to and fro in the bottle with great vivacity; insomuch that, anxious to examine what he considered a wonderful *lusus naturæ*, the learned man agreed to purchase it, if the price demanded for it were not too high. In order to satisfy his conscience as well as he could, Richard asked a sum as nearly approaching to five ducats as was possible: the doctor,

however, would give no more than three, which, fearing to lose his customer altogether, the other at last accepted, taking care, however, to bestow it all in alms upon the poor. But the money which he had found under his pillow, he carefully laid by, as the only fund upon which his future wealth and prosperity depended.

In the mean while, his disorder continued to increase ; he lay in a constant delirium, and had he still been tormented by the possession of the bottle-devil, there is no doubt but that he would have actually died of terror and anxiety. At length, however, he gradually grew better ; and now the only thing that seemed to retard his recovery, was his solicitude about the ducats, which he could no longer find beneath his pillow. At first he was very loth to make any enquiry after them ; when, however, he did so, no one could give any account of them. Being able to obtain no information respecting the gold, it now remained for him to consider how he might best convert his mansion and villas into money. But here, too, he was reckoning without his host, for a throng of creditors

appeared with various claims upon his estates, all duly signed by himself, and sealed with his own signet, he having, at the time of his boundless prosperity, given these papers to Lucretia to fill up as she judged proper: all that he could do, therefore, was to depart as quickly as possible with the little he could save from the fangs of these harpies; so that he quitted all his splendour very nearly a beggar.

At this juncture, his physician made his appearance, with a countenance betokening serious displeasure. "Doctor," exclaimed the unfortunate young merchant, "if it so be, that you are come hither like the rest of your fraternity with a large bill, I prithee, add another item to the account, and see, good doctor, that it be for opium, or some equally potent drug: for my last bread is now baked, as I know but too well, I having no money to buy more."

"Nay, nay," replied the physician, "things are not yet so bad as that. I am not only ready to renounce every demand upon you, but have also prepared a certain, most efficacious medicine, that will quickly revive you from this des-

pondency; all that I ask for it is, two ducats."

"And most readily will I pay them," replied the youth, which, having done, the doctor forthwith departed. On opening the box wherein he expected to find this cordial restorative, he discovered a phial, but how great was his dismay on perceiving that it was that which contained the little bottle-devil; and that, affixed to it, it had a label containing the following lines:

Thy body I strove to cure from ill,
But thou my soul hast sought to kill;
Yet, has my art, 'bove craft of thine,
Perceived full soon thy base design.
Let me then now retaliate,
To thee again revert thy fate:
Be thine once more the dreadful sprite;
And may'st thou feel his fellest might

Great, indeed, was Richard's alarm, at finding that he had re-purchased his phial, at so much lower a price. The only consolation that now remained, was to employ it as an instrument of revenging himself upon his treacherous para-

mour, which he effected in the following manner.

Having first of all summoned by a wish, a sum of money double to that which he had lost, he carried and deposited it all with the nearest scrivener, excepting one hundred and twenty pieces, with which he betook himself to the abode of the faithless Lucretia. His reception was exactly such as he supposed that his gold would procure him: his mistress was as lavish of her caresses towards him, as she had ever been on any former occasion. After some time, he displayed the curious toy he had brought, making the little black puppet, inclosed in the phial, perform abundant antics and tricks. This, he informed Lucretia, was exactly like the one which she once flung into the water. She, like the rest of her sex, was desirous of obtaining such a droll plaything; and, on the youth's sportively demanding a ducat for it, she paid it without hesitation. This bargain being completed, Richard hastened away as quickly as he could, and repaired to the scrivener, with whom he had deposited his money. He now found, however, that gold sticks so fast

to certain people's fingers, that they cannot shake it off. The honest man stared with the utmost astonishment, protesting most vehemently, that he had never clapped eyes on the young fellow before. This worthy specimen of probity, had written his receipt for the sum deposited with a kind of ink that totally disappeared in the space of a few hours: therefore, when Richard produced his voucher, he found that he had merely a piece of plain paper. He thus found himself suddenly reduced to poverty, and would, indeed, have been completely a beggar, had he not still thirty ducats remaining from what he had been squandering at Lucretia's.

He who lies in too short a bed, must even pull up his legs; who has no bed, must couch on the bare floor; who cannot afford to ride, must walk:—so was it with our merchant, who was now fain to become a pedlar.

For this purpose he provided himself with a suitable box; but with what a heavy heart did he first buckle it on, to take his stand with some small ware in those very streets where, but a few weeks before, he used to pass with a splen-

did retinue. In a little while, however, he became somewhat reconciled to this new occupation, having no lack of customers. "If I proceed at this rate," thought he, "I may yet again become a prosperous man, and that too at no very distant time. I will then return to my native Germany, where I shall find myself more comfortable than ever, after been in power of the accursed bottle-devil, and having got out of his clutches by my own skill and dexterity."

With such thoughts did our newly-made pedlar cheer and console himself, on retiring for the night to an obscure inn. On his taking off his box, several of the guests, attracted by curiosity, began to examine the various wares it contained.

"My good friend," exclaimed one of these inquisitive gentry, "prithee, what queer kind of animal is this which you have got here in this phial, and which keeps jumping about at so strange a rate?"

To his great terror Richard now, for the first time perceived, that along with the other articles in his box, he had purchased the fatal bottle-devil. Instantly did he offer it to the

bystanders for a mere trifling sum, but not one of them could endure the hideous creature, neither could Richard inform them of any particular use it was of; he, nevertheless, continued to harass them at such a rate with his entreaties to purchase it, that, at length, they thrust the impertinent chapman and his wares into the street.

In the anguish of his distress he now returned to the person who had sold him the box, and pressed him to take back the little imp, at a lower price. The fellow, however, quite out of temper at being disturbed at such an unseasonable hour, and little disposed to become a dealer in such strange commodities, bade him begone, and take his trumpery to Lucretia, for she was the person that had lately sold him the stock of trinkets, among which was that queer-looking phial.

Without waiting to hear another syllable, Richard ran off to Lucretia, as quickly as if he had a devil driving him, instead of himself carrying a devil. He found the lewd creature along with a couple of gallants. At first they rated the uncourteous pedler for daring to in-

trude upon them ; but afterwards they purchased nearly his whole stock, for Lucretia, had now recognized some of her old valuables, and also their present vendor : nor did the sight of him, in such a condition, seem by any means to damp her mirth. As to the bottle-imp, no one would purchase it ; for Lucretia protested that she could not endure to look at the ugly thing.

“ Say not so,” replied Richard, “ my fair inconsiderate : permit me but to whisper in your ear some of its virtues, and, I am sure, you will hesitate no longer.”

She now retired a little aside, and the pedlar disclosed to her all the powerful, occult qualities, of his little bottle-imp.

“ How now ! thou cheating varlet,” cried the incredulous dame, “ dost thou think to impose upon people by such fine tales as these. Were it true, I warrant me, thou hadst taken care first to provide thyself with something better than those filthy rags. Out with thee, for a knave ! Begone, or I’ll denounce thee for a sorcerer and dealer in the black art :

and then both thyself and thy devil may be burnt together.”

Both the gallants now took part in the fray, and kicked the unfortunate pedlar, and his wares, down stairs; whereupon, that the poor wight unable to resent the indignity, and terrified at the idea of being roasted for a wizard, hastened to leave Venice with all possible expedition; inso-much that, on the following day, he had quitted a territory which he now regarded as the land of all his misfortunes.

In the mean while he did not forget a nearer cause of his unhappiness, but, drawing the little dusky imp from his pocket, he cried:

“Thou miscreant devil! If I again call on thee for thy services, it is, that I may rid myself of thee for ever.”

Having thus vented the bitterness of his feelings, he forthwith desired to have a sum much more considerable than the last, and then, almost sinking under its weight, he proceeded to the next town. Here he purchased a splendid equipage, hired a numerous retinue,

and set out for Rome, convinced that there he should soon be able to find some one, who would not scruple to take his unwelcome little companion off his hands. As often as he expended a ducat, did he require the imp to replace it by another, in order that, after selling his phial, he might still have the entire sum. This seemed to him no more than a fair compensation, for the horrors he constantly endured ; for, in addition to the nightly visits of the black apparition, that never failed to come, and lay upon his breast, he saw also the bottle-devil constantly frisking about the phial, with the most horrible glee, as if now quite certain of his prey, at the expiration of the due period of his service.

Hardly had his wealth and the figure which he made, procured him admission into the first circles of Roman society, than his constant dread would not allow him to wait until a proper opportunity should offer, of freeing himself from his tormentor. He was continually offering his phial to every person, demanding for it three groschen in German money ; insomuch that he, in a short time, became to be consi-

dered as a lunatic, and was a subject of ridicule to every one. Money makes a good mood, and many a fair friends withal : so was it with our Richard ; yet no sooner did he produce his phial, and begin to talk of three groschens, than all present were glad to escape his importunity.

So great, at length, was his despair, that he could no longer endure to remain at Rome, but determined to try his fate in war, hoping that by some chance he might there, at least, get rid of the cause of his misery. He had heard, that two small Italian states were engaged in hostilities towards each other, and prepared to espouse the cause of one party. Adorned with a rich golden cuirass, and a superb crest of plumes, and armed with two light hunting pieces, an admirably tempered sword, and two beautiful daggers, did he set out, mounted on a noble Spanish steed, and attended by three followers, all of whom were bravely equipped.

A volunteer of so gallant a bearing, needed not to offer his services in vain. Richard soon saw

himself, therefore, attached to a troop of brave comrades, and led such a jovial life in camp, with drinking and singing, that his mortal apprehensions, and nocturnal visions, gradually left him. Having received a good lesson from what he had experienced at Rome, he was now cautious in offering his strange ware to sale; observing not to urge it with such suspicious earnestness. Indeed, he had hardly spoken of it to any one, hoping thereby to have an opportunity of meeting with some who would not refuse it, if offered quite unawares, and with seeming indifference.

One morning, as Richard was playing at dice with some companions, they were suddenly summoned to battle, by an alarm sounded on the trumpet. The cry was instantly "to horse!" With joyous spirits did our warrior leap upon his steed as it neighed and pawed the ground: the leaders, encouraged on their troops, the signal sounded for the combat. A troop of the enemy's cavalry advanced, apparently for the purpose of hindering their attack: yet they

soon retired before the powerful charge of their adversaries, nor were Richard and his followers the last among the pursuers. The balls now began to whiz in the air, and many a rider fell from his horse, rolling to the earth in his blood. Spite of his personal courage, Richard could not think without shuddering of the immediate peril in which he was placed, fearing that some fatal ball might, in a single moment, deliver him into the power, not only of the bottle-devil, but of the great Satan himself.—Scarcely, however, had he expressed a wish to escape from the scene of danger, ere his steed bore him away to a wood, which was situated at no great distance.

So hard did he spur the animal, and urge him to flight, that it at length stopped quite exhausted. He then alighted, being himself greatly fatigued; unbuckled his own cuirass and sword, and the trappings of his horse, and laying himself down on the grass, said: “This fighting is dangerous work at the best, but much more so with a devil in one’s pocket!”

He now wished to devise what course it would behove him next to pursue, but fell into a profound sleep.

After he had indulged in a repose of several hours, he was awakened by the sound of voices and approaching footsteps. He stirred not, in hope that he might be passed by unnoticed, but soon found that the attempt would not succeed, for a voice, of no very friendly or musical tone, thundered out: "Ho! Fellow, art thou already dead, or are we to have the honour of killing you?" Looking up perforce at this uncourteous address, the unfortunate Richard perceived a musket levelled at his breast. The fellow who held it, was a ruffianly-looking foot-soldier, and the others had already seized upon his steed and equipments as their booty. Struck with terror, he supplicated most earnestly for mercy, but if they were determined upon shooting him, requested that one of them would first purchase a little phial, which he had in his pocket.

"Senseless poltroon that thou art!" cried one of the fellows, with a grin, "to suppose

that we here barter for any thing; although that we will take the bargain off thy hands, thou needest not fear:" and so saying, he seized hold of the phial, and thrust it into his bosom.

"In God's name thou art welcome to it," cried Richard, "if thou canst keep it. Yet that thou canst not do, unless thou first purchase it."

The soldiers laughed at hearing him speak thus, and, thinking him somewhat crack-brained, rode off without paying farther attention to him. On feeling in his pocket, however, Richard found that the phial was there again, whereupon holding it up that they might see it, he called after them. The fellow who had taken it was struck with amazement; and as, on thrusting his hand into his bosom, he did not feel it, he ran back in order to recover his booty.

"Did I not tell thee," said Richard mournfully, "that it would not continue with thee. Pay me but the trifle I demand, and it is thy own."

"Juggler!" returned the soldier, "dost thou

think to defraud me of my well-earned spoils, by these conjuring tricks of thine?"

And holding the phial carefully in his hand, away he ran to overtake his companions: suddenly, however, he stopped short, exclaiming, with an oath, that it was gone again. Whilst he was searching for it on the ground, Richard called out to him once more: "Return hither, my good friend, for it is again in my pocket."

On finding this really to be the case, the soldier became more desirous of possessing so curious and wonderful a thing. On these occasions indeed it always manifested more than usual liveliness and agility, knowing that such bargains accelerated the final term of its servitude.—Three groschen, however, still seemed too much to the soldier. "Well then since thou art so unwilling to part with thy coin, let it be a single groschen, and take away thy purchase in good hour." Thereupon was the bargain concluded, the money paid, and the little bottle-devil delivered up to his new master.—While the soldier and his companions were examining the singular creature, and amusing them-

selves with its grim antics, Richard was reflecting upon his future destiny. His heart now felt quite light ; but unfortunately, his purse was quite as light as his heart ; nor did he know to what to betake himself, since he would not venture to return to his troop, although he left there not only his followers and his equipments, but all his money. He was partly ashamed of his disgraceful flight, and partly afraid lest if he returned, he should be put to death as a deserter. It then occurred to him, that it would not be amiss were he to offer to accompany these troopers, having gathered from their discourse that they belonged to the other party, among whom he was certain of remaining unknown ; and now that he had lost all his cash, and gotten rid of his little devil to boot, he felt that he had gotten back some of his courage in exchange, and was, by no means, disinclined to venture his life once again, in the hope of obtaining some valuable spoil. He accordingly gave utterance to his wishes ; and his proposal being accepted, he forthwith set off with his new comrades.

The captain was not very scrupulous in

taking into his service such a tall and well-built young fellow as Richard, who was therefore considered as fairly enlisted among them. He was still, however, displeased with his lot: for, since the last battle, the two armies remained quite inactive, without either attacking the other, a treaty of peace being in agitation. Under these circumstances, there was little danger of wounds, but, at the same time, very little opportunity of fattening on booty and plunder. Instead of the latter, the troops must perforce content themselves with their camp fare, and their scanty pay. In addition to this, while most of his comrades had already enriched themselves in the preceding engagements, Richard, the once wealthy merchant, was almost the only one who was a beggar among opulent neighbours. Very naturally, therefore, he grew weary of such a life, so that once having received his monthly pay—too inconsiderable for his wants, and yet too much for him not to attempt something with it—he determined to go to a suttling booth, and seek whether the dice would not befriend him more than either traffic or war had hitherto done.

His success at play was as chequered as usual, now winning, now losing; and so did it continue, until late at night, when all the dice turned up against Richard, whose cash was now quite gone, nor would any one give him credit for a doit. He now offered to stake his cartridges, having nothing else to offer; the proposal was accepted; and, as the throw was about to be made, Richard perceived that the soldier, who had accepted the stake, was the very same who had purchased the bottle-devil, by the assistance of which he would, doubtless, be certain of winning. He would fain have cried "Hold!" but the dice had already decided in favour of his opponent. Uttering curses at his ill fate, he quitted the company, and retired in the dark to his own tent. A comrade who had been equally unfortunate at play, but whose brain was less heated by wine, now took him by the arm, and, as they were proceeding together, enquired whether he had any more cartridges in his tent?

"No," returned Richard, furiously, "did I possess any, they too should serve me for the same purpose."

“Then,” said his companion, “you would do well to provide yourself with fresh ones, for should the commissary come to examine you, and find you without them, he will order you to be shot.”

“Zounds! that were plaguy work indeed! —but I have neither cartridges nor wherewithal to procure them.”

“Thine is a sorry case indeed then,” replied the other, “for the commissary comes hither on the morrow.”

This intelligence, although it did not tend greatly to tranquillize Richard, served in some degree to sober him: he went therefore to enquire of his comrades, if any one would lend him some cartridges. All, however, flouted him as a wild, idle fellow, and bade him not interrupt them with unseasonable stuff. In the utmost apprehension, lest he should be ordered to be shot the very next day, he rummaged every where, in the hope of finding some loose coin, but could meet with no more than five *hellers*. Late as it now was, he hurried from tent to tent in order to find some one who would supply him with the cartridges. Some laughed at,

others abused him, but not one made any reply to his demand. At length, he came to a tent, the occupant of which he discovered to be the very soldier who had so lately stripped him of his cartridges at play.

“Comrade,” cried Richard, with great agitation, “if any one, it is yourself who must assist me in this extremity. But just now you plundered me of all my cartridges, nor is it the first time in my life, that you have proved the cause of my misfortunes. On the morrow the commissary comes, and he, unless I can produce my cartridges, will certainly give orders for me to be shot: you must therefore either give or lend,—at least sell me some.”

“As to either giving or lending, that I have long ago forsworn: yet, to ease your distress, I will agree to sell you some. What money therefore have you?”

“But five *hellers*,” replied Richard in a melancholy tone.

“Well,” said the soldier, “to shew thee that I am willing to do thee a comrade’s turn, there are five cartridges for thy five *hellers*.—Now then, betake thyself to thy rest, and

disturb neither me nor my neighbours any longer ;” which request, as soon as he had received what he sought, Richard instantly hastened to comply with.

On the following day, the troops were examined, and Richard passed muster with his five cartridges, at which he, for a while, considered himself supremely happy, in spite of all the misfortunes he had undergone. His felicity was, however, but of very short duration : the joy he at first felt, at finding himself out of actual danger, soon subsided, when, on retiring to his tent, he found himself obliged to dine off coarse bread, without any better sauce to it than his own reflections. “ What would I not now give,” sighed he, “ had I but one of all the ducats which in the days of my folly I so wantonly squandered away.”—Hardly had he formed the wish, when lo ! a beautiful bright golden ducat was in his hand. But, alas ! the thought of the bottle-devil, which instantly flashed across his mind, damped all the satisfaction he had otherwise felt, at finding himself possessor of so acceptable a piece of gold.

At this instant, the comrade of whom he had

purchased the cartridges entered the tent, with a look of anxiety, and said: "Friend, I have missed the phial with the little black creature, you must remember it well; it is the same that I formerly purchased of yourself. Has it happened that I sold it to you by mistake for a cartridge, for I wrapped it up in a piece of paper, and it was lying close beside them?" With a trembling hand did Richard now search in his cartridge-box, and found, the first thing he took hold of, to be the fatal phial wrapped up in the form of a cartridge.

"Ha!" cried the soldier, "this is all right. To say the truth, ugly as the creature is, I should be exceedingly loth to lose it, since I somehow cannot help fancying that it helps me to good luck. So, comrade, take one of thy *hellers* back again, and return me my bottle." Most readily did Richard accede to this demand, and the soldier departed equally pleased.

Yet was poor Richard ill at ease, after having met with his bottle-devil once more, and having had it again in his own possession, he could not help imagining that he saw it grinning at

him, between the folds of his tent, and that it would strangle him in his sleep. Much as he stood in need of refreshment, he now flung the piece of money from him; and, at length his terror, lest the accursed being should once more return while he continued there, arose to such a pitch, that he fled from the camp, and entered a thick wood, where, exhausted by alarm and fatigue, he sunk down in a wild, lonesome spot.

“ Ah me !” he exclaimed, as he lay there panting, “ that I had but a camp bottle with water to keep me from dying with faintness !” And the bottle with the water stood beside him. It was not till after he had drank a hearty draught out of it, that he thought of asking himself by what means it came there. The bottle-devil now occurred to him; when, putting his hands into his pockets, and finding the phial there, overcome with sudden horror, he fell down in a deep swoon.

While he continued in this state, his former horrible dream returned, wherein he beheld the little bottle-imp stretch himself out longer and longer, and at last fix himself, grinning

most hideously, upon his breast; he expostulated with the monster, asserting, that it no longer belonged to him, but the creature replied, with a hollow satanic laugh: "Thou bought me for a heller,—must therefore either sell me for less, or the bargain will not hold good."

Richard leaped up in horror, and thought he still beheld the terrific figure, as it re-entered the phial in his pocket. In a state of agonized phrenzy, he dashed the phial from him down a steep hollow, but, instantly afterwards, felt it again in his pocket. "Alas! alas!" screamed the unhappy wretch, "how fortunate did I at one time consider myself, at finding, that let me cast away the phial ever so far, it always returned to me—but that it does so, is now my misery—yes, my everlasting misery." And he, thereupon, began to run furiously among the wild bushwood, dashing in the dark against trunks of trees, and pieces of rock, and hearing, at every step he took, the phial clinking in his pocket.

At day break, he arrived at an open plain which had the appearance of being well culti-

vated, and had a cheerful appearance; somewhat revived by this prospect, he began to hope that what he had experienced, was merely a wild dream, and that the phial would prove to be no more than a common bottle. He took it out therefore, and held it up against the sun: but, alas! he still perceived the little black monster dancing up and down, and stretching out towards him as usual, its little ugly, mishapen arms, as if it would seize hold of him. Uttering a loud cry of agony, he let the phial fall on the ground, but only to feel it in his pocket immediately afterwards. The thing of the utmost consequence for him now to do, was to enquire every where for some coin of less value than a *heller*. Nowhere, however, could he meet with any such piece of money; so that, at length, despairing of being ever able to get rid of the monster that now threatened inevitably to become his master, he no longer thought of calling upon it for its services: his increasing horror on the contrary, would permit him to think of nothing but his miserable situation. Thus did he wander up and down, subsisting

upon charity and alms ; and as he had a wild, crazed appearance, and was continually beseeching every one for some piece of money less than a *heller*, he was considered as a madman, and was called, ‘ Crazy *Half-heller*,’ by which appellation he was soon known far and wide.

It is said that the vulture sometimes fixes itself with its talons into the back of a young deer, and thus hunts to death the poor animal, which, as it flees, in agony, still carries along with it, its savage, relentless enemy. Thus was it with poor Richard, and the satanic imp in his phial :—but instead of accompanying him through his continual and unvaried misery, let us pass over a considerable interval and arrive at an important event.

He had one day lost himself in a wild rocky country, and had set down to rest beside a little stream, whose murmuring seemed to sympathize with his affliction. A loud sound of a horse’s feet rung on the rocky surface of the ground, when there came riding upon a large, black, wild-looking steed, a man of gigantic

figure, and exceedingly terrific countenance; he was attired in a deep blood-red garment, and approached the spot where Richard was sitting.

“Wherefore so melancholy, young stranger?” said he addressing himself to the youth, who, involuntarily shuddered at his voice, as if with a vague presentiment of something evil;—“I should take thee to be a merchant:—hast thou then been making a bad bargain?—hast purchased any thing at too high a price?”

“Alas no! rather at too low a one,” returned Richard in a tremulous tone.

“Aye, so I should think indeed:” rejoined the grim horseman, with a horrible laugh. “And hast thou then got for sale a thing that they call a bottle-imp? Or am I mistaken in conjecturing you to be a crazy Half-heller?”

The poor youth was hardly able to reply “yes,” so great was his horror, expecting every instant to behold the apparition’s mantle expand itself into a pair of bloody wings, and his steed to assume a more terrific, spectral appearance, breathing forth infernal flames from its nostrils; and, lastly, that the monster would

carry off his wretched soul to the regions of eternal misery.

But the ghastly horseman said, in somewhat milder voice, and with less appalling mien: "I perceive for whom you take me: yet be comforted, for I am not he, I rather present myself to rescue you, if so may be, from his power; having for some days past been searching for you, in order to become the purchaser of your phial. To confess the truth, my friend, thou hast paid indeed a most damnable small sum for it, nor can even I myself inform you where it is possible to meet a coin of less value. But, listen and obey me. On the other side of this mountain there resides a prince who is a sad dissolute young fellow. When he comes to the chase on the morrow, I will first withdraw him from his attendants, and then cause a frightful monster to fall upon him. Wait thou here till midnight, and then proceed, just as the moon rises above that jagged rock, towards that gloomy defile to the left, but neither hurry nor loiter in thy pace, so wilt thou arrive at the spot precisely as the monster has seized the prince in his frightful paws. Attack it, but

courageously ;—it must yield to thee ; and drive it down the steep cliff into the sea. Then, as a recompense for having delivered him, demand of the prince that he cause two *half hellers* to be coined for thee ; let me have them, in order that, with one, I may become the purchaser of thy bottle-devil.”

So spoke the grisly horseman, and then, without waiting for any reply, rode off slowly into the wood.

“ But where am I to find thee when I have obtained the half-hellers ?” cried out Richard.

“ At the black fountain ; of which each old crone hereabouts will be able to inform thee ;” and then with solemn but wide outstretching pace did the horrible steed bear away its no less terrific rider.

He who has already lost nearly every thing, ventures not much by any further risk : Richard, therefore, determined, as his situation was so desperate, to follow the councils of the grisly spectre.

Night closed in, and the rising moon shortly after appeared above the craggy tops of the

rocks which had been marked out to him. The pale wanderer then raised himself tremblingly, and entered the dark defile. All seemed there cheerless and gloomy ; seldom was a pale moon-beam able to penetrate above the lofty precipices ; a dark oppressive vapour too, as if exhaled from graves, seemed to fill the narrow pass ; in other respects there was nothing particularly terrible in its appearance. Richard felt himself by no means disposed to linger in the gloomy valley, yet adhering to the strict injunction laid upon him by the mysterious horseman, he did not venture to quicken his pace, resolutely determined not to snap short at once the only slender thread that still attached him to light and hope.

After the lapse of several hours, some red streaks of dawn cast a glimmering light across his path ; a reviving breeze played upon his forehead. But, just as he was about to emerge from the deep valley, and to enjoy the forest scenery, and the azure waters of the sea, that lay expanded at no great distance before him, he was disturbed by a piercing cry of distress.

On looking around, he perceived a horrible animal attacking a youth in a magnificent hunting dress, who had fallen on the ground. Richard's first impulse was to rush instantly to the stranger's rescue; yet his courage failed him as soon as he clearly discerned the monster, and saw that it resembled a huge grisly baboon, with a stag's antlers on its forehead; and, notwithstanding the cries of the wretched man for succour, he was about to turn back. But suddenly calling to mind all that the horseman had said, and inspired by the dread of his eternal doom, he ran and attacked the monster of an ape with a knotty club, just as it had seized the unfortunate hunter in its paws to fling him up into the air, and then catch him upon his branching horns as he descended to the ground. At the approach of Richard, however, it let fall its prey, and began to flee with a hideous, terrifying cry; he pursuing it all the while, till, leaping from a precipice into the sea, it turned its frightful visage upon him, and then disappeared beneath the waves.

Flushed with success, the youth now returned

triumphantly to the hunter whom he had just rescued, and who, as he expected it would be, announced himself as the prince of that territory. After extolling the bravery of his deliverer, he requested that he would boldly demand whatever boon he should think fit.

“What!” exclaimed Richard, in a transport of joyous hope, “and are you serious? and will you pledge me your princely word that you will grant what I shall demand of you?”

Again the prince confirmed his promise, assuring him, in the most solemn manner, that he would gladly comply with whatever he should request.

“Then, I supplicate you, for the love of God, to order that some half-hellers be immediately struck for me, even though it be only two.” Whilst the prince was regarding his strange petitioner with fixed astonishment, some of his train came up, and, on hearing the adventure, and the singular boon that had been craved, one of them recognized, in the person of the suitor, the poor crazed *Half-heller*.

The prince began thereupon to laugh, whilst

Richard, clasping his knees, conjured him in the most moving manner, protesting that, unless he obtained the half-hellers, his soul was doomed to everlasting perdition.

To this the prince replied, while he still continued to laugh, "Rise up, my friend, I have pledged my princely word, and, if you persist in demanding them, I will engage to supply thee with half-hellers to thy very heart's content. But, if a still lesser coin will suit your purpose, I can accommodate thee without the aid of my mint-master, for the neighbouring provinces all maintain that my *hellers* are so light that three of them are requisite to pass for a single ordinary one."

"Were that, indeed, the case—" said Richard. "Thou art indeed the first," returned the prince, "that has ever doubted it. Should they, however, upon trial, prove not suitable for your purpose, I here promise to order some less valuable to be coined for your especial use—provided, however, that it be possible so to do."

Having said this, he gave orders that Richard should forthwith receive a whole bagfull of

hellers. The latter instantly set off at a furious rate towards the adjoining province, where he became more delighted than he had been with any occurrence for a long time past, at finding, at the very first inn, that the people were exceedingly unwilling to exchange one heller in return for three which he offered them, by way of experiment.

He now enquired his way towards the Black Fountain, when some children, who were present, ran away, shrieking with affright; and the host informed him, not without shuddering himself, that it was a place frequented by demons and evil spirits, but hardly ever visited by mortal being. He knew perfectly well, however, that the entrance to it was at no very great distance, through a cavern, at the mouth of which stood two decayed cypress trees, so that Richard could not mistake finding it; 'yet, God forbid, that he, or any other Christian person, should ever seek it!'

At hearing this account, Richard was again greatly disturbed, but let the event be what it would he must make the attempt, and therefore

set out to discover it. Even at a distance, the cavern had a most dismal and terrifying appearance: it seemed as if the two cypresses had died with horror at the ghastly hollow, which, as he approached it, displayed just above its mouth, a singular stone. It seemed to be entirely covered with grim countenances, some of which, bore a resemblance to the hideous baboon-monster on the sea-shore. Yet, on looking fearlessly and attentively, one might perceive that it was merely the rugged stone. Not without trembling, did Richard pass beneath these horrible visages. The bottle-imp now became so heavy in his pocket, that it seemed as if it wished to prevent his advancing further. This circumstance inspired him with courage to proceed: "for," thought he, "it behoves me to do that which this creature wishes I should not do." On penetrating farther into the cavern, the darkness became so great, that he could no longer discern any terrifying shapes. He now proceeded, with the utmost caution, groping his way with a stick lest he should fall into some abyss, yet found nothing but a soft, mossy

turf; and had he not heard at times, a strange groaning noise, his fears would have ceased altogether. At length, he reached the outlet of the cavern. He now found himself in a dreary hollow, quite inclosed by steep hills. On one side, he perceived the large sable steed of the mysterious customer for his phial, which was standing motionless as a brazen statue. Opposite to him was a spring gushing from the rock, and in this, the grim horseman was washing both his face and hands. But the horrid stream was of an inký hue, with which it stained whatever it touched; for when the gigantic figure turned round towards Richard, the latter perceived that his visage was become like that of a Moor, and thereby formed a terrific contrast against his blood-red garments.

“Shudder not,” cried the hideous being “this is only one of the ceremonies which I am obliged to perform in honour of the devil. Each Friday am I bound to wash myself thus, in scorn of him whom ye call your God. I am also compelled to stain my garment afresh with my own blood—it is this which gives it a hue of so much

deadly lustre :—besides a number of still more horrible ceremonies which I am obliged to undergo. I have, moreover, formed so strong a compact with the powers of darkness both for body and soul, that it is now utterly impossible for me to obtain redemption on any terms. And what do you imagine are the terms on which I have sold myself?—for a hundred thousand pieces yearly. Thus seeing how desperate is my own condition, still I am willing to serve thee, by purchasing the imp thou carriest in thy phial, and thus to frustrate the end of all his long servitude ; besides, the rescuing thee from the powers of hell, will so enrage them, that, reckless of ought else, I'll do it. Then how will their impotent curses peal through the vaults of deepest hell ; ha ! ha ! ha !” So saying, he began to laugh in the most frightful manner, that the very rocks re-echoed, and the sable steed, which had hitherto stood motionless, seemed to shrink with terror at the awful sound.

“ Now then, friend,” added he, after a while, “ hast thou brought me any half-hellers ?”

Upon Richard's shewing him his purse, he

took three of the pieces and gave him a heller in exchange; one of which he directly paid back again, as the purchase money for the bottle-devil, that now lay crouched up melancholy at the bottom of the phial, so that he felt quite heavy. At perceiving this, the unknown purchaser laughed again most violently, and exclaimed, "Nothing can avail thee, fiend: all resistance is in vain. In token, therefore, of thy obedience, let me have instantly as much gold as my strong steed can bear.' And no sooner had he uttered the command, than the enormous beast stood panting beneath the golden load. Then the blood-red horseman having mounted on its back, it began to crawl up the perpendicular sides of the rock, just as a fly does up a wall;— and disappeared for ever.

Richard stood for some minutes fixed to the spot in a stupor of astonishment and joy: but the air of that Stygian recess seemed troublous and heavy, while a hollow voice issuing from the dusky waves of the Black Fountain, exclaimed: "Now then are all our labours frustrated, for he who while doomed to destruc-

tion could attempt the rescue of another may even yet be saved himself."* Struck with horror at the sounds, although exulting at their import, Richard rushed again through the cavern to feel again the atmosphere of heaven.

He now felt assured that he was delivered of his evil fiend for ever, and looked once more on the face of nature with feelings that had long been strangers to his bosom. Throwing himself upon the grass, he gazed in an ecstasy of delight on the pure, tranquil, sunny sky, while a warm gush of tears expressed that rapture and that gratitude for which he could find no words. The young merchant now became light and gay as an innocent boy, yet without any thing resembling his former levity. With-

* The translator has given a somewhat different form to the conclusion of the tale, so as to render it more satisfactory, by not leaving it to be conjectured that the being by whom Richard is saved, is himself allied irrecoverably to the powers of darkness, else, it should seem, that he would rather have hastened the final perdition of another.

out boasting, as he might well have done, how he had contrived to outwit the powers of hell, he devoted himself henceforth to the service of heaven, and soon found himself thriving far greater prosperity, from the efforts of honest industry, than he had even enjoyed by means of the fatal talisman. And, whenever he used afterwards to relate to his awe-struck grandchildren the adventures of his early days, after uttering a pious orison for the soul of his deliverer, he would add, by way of moral to his tale, "Lust not, my dear children, after ill-gotten and ill-to-be used mammon, for it is the Bottle-Imp, that serves us to our own destruction"

THE
SORCERERS.

IN those regions in which, when the snow has dissolved upon the Carpathian Mountains, where, after heavy showers, rapid torrents rush down into the vallies, and the swollen Vistula suddenly overflows its banks, there stood upon a height, which commanded the whole country, a stately castle (built in the times of the Jegellons) which, together with the surrounding territory, belonged to the Vayvod Zochanowski. This prince had, at various periods, served his country by his influence at the Diet, and he had rendered her even greater service, by the valour which distinguished his arms, in protecting her against the inroads of the Turks and Tartars. He had now retired, with his beautiful and accomplished lady, to a favourite

country domain he inherited from his forefathers. That tranquillity and contentment however, which he promised himself, in this retreat from the cabals of court, were clouded by the death of his children. Antonia was the only surviving child of nine boys and girls. Her lovely features, and personal charms, combined with a lively imagination, increased the love her parents naturally bore her; whilst, at the same time, they created painful apprehensions. that, from the delicate state of her health, and her tender frame, she might shortly share the fate of their departed children. The amiable parents might therefore look for some allowance, if the excessive indulgence they showed her, somewhat spoilt her, as they granted her inconsiderately every wish which her puerile fancy suggested to her. Antonia never knew what contradiction was; it consequently became irksome to her; every youthful error she committed was ascribed to her lively character, and was the more readily excused; nay, even her goodness of heart was highly extolled, when she requited her companions for the severity

and ill-treatment she had shown towards them in the ebullitions of her anger.

The pious Damasus was the only person who considered this rash indulgence in another point of view, and was bold enough, particularly in the confessional, to give his advice upon it. But whenever the parents, who wished to bring up their child for the inheritance of heaven, were made to reflect upon their injudicious conduct by the exhortations of the confessor, all the good they had effected, was again frustrated by the flattery of the courtiers who surrounded them, and who extolled Antonia's merits, even in her presence, that, instead of coming to any fixed resolution, to counteract the evils of her education, they only ridiculed the old monk, for the troubles which his scruples of conscience gave him. Nay, when the latter was one day speaking earnestly upon the subject, the sister of the Vayvod's lady, who was *dame d'honneur* at the court of Warsaw, and was at this period upon a visit to the castle, answered him in a petulant manner:

“ Make yourself happy, venerable father !

what signifies it that Antonia suffers a little purgatory in the other world, so that she passes her time gay and merrily in this."

The anxious countenance however, which Damasus turned towards heaven, was not observed in the general laugh which this occasioned. Agreeably with the advice of Mary (the Vayvod's sister-in-law) a Parisian lady was written to, through a mercantile house at Warsaw, to repair to the castle, in order to finish Antonia's education. Elegance of manners, a graceful deportment, with the facility in the French language, which she soon acquired, only served to increase Antonia's vanity by the unqualified encomiums which were bestowed upon her.

The parents, at the first sight of Demoiselle Marie, were by no means prepossessed by her personal appearance, which exhibited a picked chin, a crooked nose, a toothless mouth, catlike eyes, black bushy hair, and a certain yellowish brown complexion, which mark the old French women. But, observing the improvement which their daughter made under her superin-

tendance, they began to consider her in the light of a benefactress and friend; and her influence over them daily increased. The indifference towards all the duties of religion, which at first surprized them in Marie, was now overlooked. They first ridiculed the old shivering Damasus; then brought the priesthood into contempt, and, finally, proceeded to mock even religion itself. Marie interceded, that the court Jew, Ezekiel, who had been turned away, from having been convicted of various frauds and all kinds of scandalous practices might be once more received into favour. The Jew was therefore allowed to make his re-appearance at the castle, and he came with fresh articles of dress every day, which were immediately purchased for Antonia. The vain young lady was provided with sumptuous apparel, without regard to economy, as she never expressed a wish for any thing that was not immediately granted her. She disdained to associate with any of her juvenile friends and playmates, who had once shared her confidence; and the latter were probably as anxious to abandon her

society that they might no longer be exposed to her caprices and ill humour.

Agnes alone, whose father was a country gentleman of very small fortune, renting his farm from the Vayvod, faithfully adhered to her young friend. She was only two years older than Antonia, although she assisted her mother in carrying on her household affairs, on which account her parents declined the offer made to them by the Vayvod to have Agnes educated at the same time with Antonia, representing to him, "that a poor girl, whose fortune depended entirely upon her industry and good behaviour, did not require such an education as would fit her only for the society of the opulent and persons of quality, and which, for that reason, would fill their daughter with lofty ideas and expectations, incompatible with her fortune. They adhered to this decision; although the Vayvod frequently pressed the offer at the instigation of Marie, who, disappointed at not gaining Agnes over to her purposes, viewed her only with supercilious contempt. Marie found means to assure the parents of Antonia, that the rustic

and uncultivated manners of Agnes would be prejudicial to their daughter's education, and thus endeavoured to break off the intercourse between the two young girls, whose early habits had closely attached them to each other. The ridicule passed upon Agnes, who bent her knee as often as she went by a crucifix, or a picture of the Virgin Mary, the contempt which her simple attire, for the most part the work of her own hands, excited, her blushes and bashfulness represented as awkwardness, gradually lessened the warmth of attachment towards the friend of her early youth. Agnes and her parents perceiving the charge wrought upon Antonia's mind by Marie's address, modestly withdrew; and Agnes henceforward presented herself only on birthdays and other anniversaries, either to express her humble congratulations or to offer some trifling present to Antonia.

It happened on one of these mornings, that she came when Antonia was at her toilet, at which two waiting maids, under Marie's superintendance, were busied about her person. Antonia exchanged a few friendly words with

Agnes, whilst her hair was arranging and adorning with costly jewels ; when, suddenly turning to the glass, to which, in her conversation with Agnes, she paid no attention, her cheeks began to flash with anger, and she exclaimed : “ Hey ! ” “ what stupidity ! ” addressing herself to her waiting women, “ how ugly I look ! ” “ you stupid creatures. ” One of the poor girls endeavouring to exculpate herself, when Antonia, in a rage, threw the glass at her head ; the poor girl was severely hurt by the breaking of the glass, and some drops of blood ran down her cheeks. Agnes trembled with fear : Antonia too seemed to repent of what she had done, but upon Marie calling out to her in the French language, that the greatest fault a person of quality could commit was to acknowledge herself in error, she then ordered the girl, in an angry voice, to go on with dressing her, but if she committed any other mistake, she should be punished more severely.

Agnes, shocked at Antonia’s intemperate conduct, looked out of the window without uttering a word ; and, as soon as the toilet was fin-

ished, and that Marie and the maids had retired, Antonia came up to her, and observing a tear in her eye, asked Agnes what was the matter with her? "Oh my dear lady," said she, "I am praying for you." Antonia felt some emotion, but Marie's quick return prevented the favorable impression having any effect; and Marie now endeavoured the more to keep Agnes out of Antonia's company.

Antonia had now completed her thirteenth year. Her beauty, together with the hope of becoming the possessor with her hand, of her father's splendid estates, attracted the first young noblemen of the country to the Vayvod's castle, when one festivity was followed rapidly by another. Antonia, the heroine of all these fetes, thought of nothing but entertainments and of herself, when she was taken ill; and, during the many cheerless nights which the pain she endured occasioned her, she recalled to her recollection how Agnes had sat by her bedside in similar circumstances when they were children together; and, by the tender anxiety she evinced for her, afforded her every alleviation

of her sufferings. Antonia had no sooner made this known to the mother of Agnes, when she was ordered to the castle to take care of her sick friend. With a willing heart she undertook the task. It was not merely the recovery of her friend's health, but the care of her soul that engaged her attention. Upon her touching lightly, however, for the first time, upon the idea of death, Antonia trembled with fear. Agnes threw herself on her knees before the bed, bedewed her hands with tears, and conjured her to have regard for her soul. She then began to pray; but Antonia assured her she was not in a state to accompany her in prayer, as the dread of death deprived her of the use of her intellectual faculties.

Agnes knew that Damasus was accustomed to leave his abode at sunrise, and go to prayers in the chapel of the castle. She went to him and found him kneeling before the altar, at which Agnes also fell down, and prayed for Antonia. Damasus, as he rose up, observed her. Agnes explained to him the motive that had brought her in search of him. The venerable

old man highly commended her, promised forthwith to say mass for Antonia, to implore the Holy Angel to come to her protection, and to visit Antonia himself. Agnes begged of him to pay his visit early in the morning, before Marie, who would hear nothing of Antonia being reminded of death, could prevent their meeting. Agnes returned to her sick friend, prepared her for a visit from the venerable Damasus, who soon after tottered into the room, supporting himself upon his staff. The old man, who, from her earliest infancy, had participated in all her little sorrows, who had endeavoured to warm her heart for every thing that was holy, and to make her acquainted with God and the duties she owed him, failed not, in the present instance, in producing a right impression. When he sat himself down at her sick bed-side, and spoke like an inspired person, of the probability of the approaching hour of death, of the goodness of the All-merciful, of the great hopes which were held out beyond the grave, of the joys of eternity; when his sanctified features and his eye became more

animated, tears began to trickle down the cheeks of Antonia. She repented of her childish errors, and felt sufficient strength to pray. She begged the further assistance of the venerable father; and every sentiment of early friendship, of sisterly love for Agnes, again awakened in her breast. She ordered a picture of our Saviour on the cross to be taken down from an adjoining room, to be placed by her bed-side forbidding the astonished Marie to have it removed. The latter now loaded poor Agnes with the bitterest reproaches, telling her that she endeavoured only to increase Antonia's malady, by holding before her the fear of death. But when the physician declared that Antonia's pulse had abated since the preceding day, and she never found herself more happy than when Damasus and Agnes were about her, Marie found herself compelled to yield, although her choked rage was depicted in every trait of her countenance.

As Antonia gradually grew better, entertainments were given to celebrate her recovery. Ezckiel made his appearance with fresh articles

of apparel and jewellery: the surrounding gentry returned the festivities that had been given them; the time was filled up with music, dance and pleasure; and the promises made to God and the holy angels were soon forgotten. The pious Damasus moreover, who had long been in a bad state of health, was found one morning lying dead in his room before a cross; and a young priest, who adapted his ideas entirely to the ton prevalent in the house, obtained his situation upon Marie's intercession. Every effort was now made to keep Agnes out of the way; and all the good impressions which had been made on the mind of Antonia, were soon obliterated. The good Agnes was deeply sensible of this. The expectation of being once with Antonia, in the presence of God and all that was holy, had taken such strong possession of her heart, that she had seized every opportunity of bringing her back to the path of righteousness. At times, Antonia appeared somewhat irritable at this assiduity; but the sincere cordiality with which her friend treated her, the amiable language and manner she adopted towards her,

brought her always back to her. Marie observed this with malignity. "My Lady," said she one day to Antonia, "since you are now grown up, I allow myself no further influence over you than you yourself grant me, but is this miserable Agnes, who is so greatly your inferior in talent, in understanding, and polite education, to become your tutoress? She ought to know of herself that the daughter of a little country gentleman is not at all adapted to be the companion of the daughter of a Vayvod." Thus she poisoned the friendship of youth. The more Agnes observed the coolness with which she was treated by Antonia, the more she redoubled her efforts to regain possession of Antonia's heart by the most zealous attention, and giving her constant proofs of the warmth of her affection. Marie considered this nothing more than troublesome impertinence; and instigated Antonia to make use of bitter words towards Agnes; until, finally, by evincing towards her the greatest indifference, she succeeded in lessening the close familiarity which had existed between these young friends.

Agnes had reared two little doves, as white as snow, and taught them to eat out of her hand. These, together with a rose-tree, which she had taken care of in her own room for several months, and other flowers, she intended to present to Antonia on her birthday. She set out early one morning with a superb nosegay and her two little doves, and again found Antonia at her toilet. She handed her the nosegay and the doves. "May every day of your life," said she, "be productive of a fine flower for eternity, and may your spirit one day ascend in mildness, innocence, and purity, to the mansions of eternal peace." While she was laying the nosegay upon Antonia's dressing table, and placing the two little doves by the side of it, Marie cast a significant look at Antonia, who, as she was reaching for a dressing pin, pushed from the table the nosegay, which was immediately seized by the lap-dog. "Oh!" said Antonia, as Agnes was about to take it away from him, "let the playful little animal have the nosegay, see how pleased he is with it, and how he pulls it about." Agnes stood as if petrified.

“Gertrude,” said Marie to one of her chambermaids with a malicious sneer, “take these doves to the cook, to be killed and dressed.”

“What?” said Agnes, stroking her doves, and casting an anxious look at Antonia.

“Well” said the latter, “what other purpose are they good for?”

“I did not bring my doves hither, to be killed,” said Agnes.

“Oh then, take them back,” replied Antonia, “for they can be of no other use to me.”

Agnes took up her doves, and left the room deeply affected. She heard Marie laughing and sneering at her upon the stairs, and resolved never more to appear at the castle.

Antonia’s guardian angel appeared now to have taken his final leave of her. She loved and valued nothing but herself. She gave herself up to the violence of her passions, without restraint; and the high wages she paid her waiting maids, together with frequent presents, indemnified them only, in some measure, for the overbearing ill-treatment they were obliged almost daily to put up with. Upon one or two

of these occasions, when their tears and complaints appeared to have re-kindled some feeling of compassion in Antonia's breast, Marie said to her in French: "Oh, such creatures neither feel nor understand such sentiments! throw them only a piece of money, now and then, and their pain is immediately paid for."— By this and other means, Antonia conceived an opinion that money did every thing. She saw gambling continually going on in her father's house, and observed, that many of the visitors made money by it. She now made a trial herself; fortune was favourable to her. This encouraged her to go on; and thus arose the passion for gambling, which now became a daily necessity. At first without disguise, she betrayed her feelings whenever she either won or lost; but Marie having warned her that this was not becoming a person of quality, she accustomed herself to conceal her passions, and, although she was inwardly consumed by rage whenever she lost, she gave the money over to the winner, with an affected smile—

Antonia was going on in this manner, when

her mother was taken ill and died. On other mournful occasions, respect to propriety had put some bridle upon her passions; but now even the death of her mother was only dissolving a troublesome tie of parental influence; and her manifestation of grief was consequently nothing but hypocrisy. She availed herself, however, of this opportunity, to induce her father, who was deeply affected, to farther expense, and to give many an entertainment, under the plea that diversion was become indispensable. A diet that was held at Warsaw, furnished a pretext for a journey to that capital, and the Vayvod was the more willing to correspond with Antonia's wishes to take her with him, as he hoped he might probably meet with some wealthy young nobleman of the country to marry her to, and thus to mitigate, in some measure, the pain arising from the loss of his dear consort, by the happiness which a good son-in-law might afford him. Antonia, under the superintendance of Marie, was totally left to herself, and the weak father rejoiced when he saw Antonia's charms pro-

duce an impression far beyond his own expectation. She was the heroine of every fete, the theme of every poet's ode; and all the young men, who could at all approach her, or obtain the favour of her hand at a dance, considered themselves truly happy. Among the rest there were two, Count Ignatius Dembinski, who possessed vast estates, and Count Stanislaus Rogowski, the only heir to an immense property. Both of these young noblemen were superior to all their cotemporaries in personal elegance, and refinement of education; and were consequently treated even in an indulgent manner, by many of the fair sex. These were the two young men who rivetted Antonia's attention. Not that she felt any inclination for one or the other, for she was only capable of loving herself; nor had she at all made up her mind, whether she would take either of them for her husband: the fame which the vain Antonia wished to carry on, with the hearts of her lovers, was, to chain them both to her triumphant chariot, to receive their homages and assurances of respect with apparent indiffer-

ence; sometimes, to favour the one, and, when the other, in consequence thereof, modestly withdrew, to regain them over to her by some apparent testimony of favourable consideration. In this manner she maintained her influence over both, and even increased the crowd of her adorers. The most distinguished beauties were now deserted, on account of Antonia, who became an object of envy of all the fair, and gained the most bitter hatred of many of them.

A masked ball was given. Antonia entered in a magnificent turkish dress, and was not unperceived by the enquiring eyes of her lovers. As soon as she took off the mask "What a beautiful, what a divine girl!" was every where whispered about the room. Surrounded by her lovers, she cast a pleasing smile upon all around her. A fresh dance was led off, and the fine figure, displayed by a spanish lady in the first couple, attracted universal attention. Nobody knew who she was; but no sooner had she taken off the mask, when she excited only one impression of pleasure and astonishment throughout the whole assembly. She was the

Countess Constance, who, in company with her mother, a very rich widow, had arrived in Warsaw a few days since from their estates in Volhynia. All eyes were now directed towards Constance, and Count Ignatius, who was at that moment engaged in a conversation with Antonia, became absent, broke off the discourse and drew near the beautiful stranger. Antonia, in order to punish him, went in search of Count Stanislaus, and painful indeed was the sensation she experienced, when she saw him getting up to dance with Constance. In a few days Antonia saw herself unnoticed and deserted, and, what still more increased her anguish, she became the laugh and ridicule of every body. She tried another method to recapture her lovers, by appearing at the next masked ball that was given, in a Romish dress; and, availing herself of the license granted by a mask, she endeavoured to fix their attention in various ways. She observed Count Ignatius writing down a word in the hand of a lady who was standing next to her. She offered him her hand to do the same. He surveyed her with a penetrating look, and, smiling at her, wrote

down the name of *Dido*. Antonia felt the severity of this allusion; and vengeance became, from that moment, the predominant passion of her breast.

There was another of her talents, which she had not hitherto called into action: this was singing. She happened to meet her rival the following day at a fete. An instrument was in the room. She sat herself down to it. Only a few old gentlemen, however, paid her some attention, and begged of her to favour them with letting them hear her voice. She used her utmost efforts, and attracted general notice, which awakened another flattering hope in her breast. When she had quitted the instrument, Constance was conducted to it by Count Stanislaus; her play was admirable; her voice charmed every one. Antonia, felt herself far surpassed, and was hardly able to conceal her rage. Marie, into whose bosom she poured out all her griefs, shrugged up her shoulders. "If we were in Italy," said she, "I would soon take the trouble to find a quieting draught for Miss Constance, and a couple of stiletos for the faithless Counts; but here in cold Poland,

I suppose, we must patiently bear all this ignominy."

Ezekiel now entered the room. He came from the estates, and brought the information, that miss Agnes had obtained a very handsome and accomplished young gentleman, for her husband; and, upon being asked what other news he brought, he added, Gertrude, who had been in the service of her ladyship Antonia, was grown quite lame, and contracted together; that she cried out day and night, that she was bewitched by another girl, who had alienated from her the affections of her intended husband; and that some *white people* were fixed upon her neck.*

* The Prussians of old believed in the assistance of little men, whom they callad *Bastukai*, who sucked the blood of men. Hence appears to have arisen the popular superstition, which still prevails in Poland and Prussia, that there existed sorcerers, who fix certain bad creatures, whom they call *white-people*, (*bjali cuderi*) by couples both on men and cattle, or send them even into their bodies, whereby the bewitched became tortured in the most dreadful manner, and finally died.

“How is that possible?” said Marie laughing.

“In the name of God,” cried the Jew, “the ladies will not deny the existence of such a thing as sorcery! I could give you thousands of instances of both men and cattle tormented by it.”

“Now,” said Antonia, turning herself to Marie, I wish Ezekiel may be in the right, and such a sorcerer were at my commands.”

“What do you say, Ezekiel,” asked Marie, “do you know of any?”

Ezekiel shook his head in a dubious manner.

“We must not,” said he, “even mention it; for no sooner does a bishop, an officer, or even a monk hear of it, than the burning pile is immediately prepared. But that such things exist as witches, I will swear to be as true, as I am an honest Jew; and one half of Warsaw knows well enough, that more than one witch inhabits Praga.”

The conversation was broken off; but the seed of the poisonous plant was now sown; and consequently Antonia, as soon as she found her-

self alone with Marie, renewed the discourse. Marie now told her a number of stories, of persons having taken revenge by means of witchcraft, and having affected marvellous things. "What is the most strange of all," added she, "there is nothing baneful in the whole doctrine of witchcraft, for it is nothing more than certain secret weeds, some plants and such things which have it in their power, to force the world of spirits, to act according to the pleasure of the person, who is in possession of this secret science." Antonia, with her head filled with these tales, went into another company, where she overheard it said, immediately as she entered, that the two young noblemen were of one opinion that Constance, was the first female dancer in all Warsaw. She was now in an ill humour, and determined she would not dance, but repaired to the gambling table. Ill luck however, persecuted her even here; Count Stanislaus held the bank. She lost as often as she staked a card, and came off in his debt a considerable sum, which she promised to send

him the day following. Shame prevented her discovering her situation to her father; and Ezekiel was applied to, to sell a great part of her jewels, the following morning. He could only dispose of them for a trifling sum. Count Ignatius was the purchaser. Antonia lost all command of herself, when she saw Constance adorned with them, the very same evening, and learnt that Count Ignatius was engaged to her. She now determined upon giving her hand to Stanislaus. She expected he would throw himself at her feet in repentance; but her adversaries knew how to play their cards; and the answer, which Count Stanislaus had given to one of his friends (who anticipated his union with Antonia) namely, that it was far from his intention to make his life unhappy, by a marriage with a proud fool, and determined gambler, soon reached the ears of Antonia.

Antonia burst into tears of rage, and flung her arms about Marie's neck. "Vengeance," cried she, gnashing her teeth, "vengeance upon these horrid men."

“How willingly, my dear child,” said the crafty old French woman “would I take vengeance for thee,” “would that witchcraft were in my power.” Thus the opinion that witchcraft alone could give consolation by affording the means of vengeance daily gained ground in Antonia’s mind. A few days afterwards appeared a ludicrous caricature, in which Antonia was held up to the most bitter shafts of ridicule. Antonia now almost lost her senses; and Marie promised her, if it were possible, to find out the sorceress which Ezekiel had confidently spoken of as existing in Praga. Antonia, overcome by mortification, now feigned illness, to avoid going into any society. Marie went out daily, and returned three times in a sorrowful mood. Antonia’s rage continually increased; whosoever came near her felt proofs of it. At length the fourth evening, when Marie returned, Antonia thought she could read something consolatory in her countenance. Marie gave her to understand by a wink, that, when all the house were asleep, and they were both together in their own room, she would

impart to her the wished for information ; and she then signified to her that she had found what she had been in search of.

“ There lives at Praga” said she, “ a woman well known by the name of the doctress. She removes, in a few days, all diseases, which physicians declare to be incurable.” “ The general opinion is, that she understands something more ; but she does every thing with the greatest secrecy. I have finally however so far prevailed upon her, as to unfold to me the nature of her connexion with the supernatural world.”

“ What is that” said Antonia, “ and will she be serviceable to our purposes ?”

“ Perhaps” rejoined Marie, “ you will soon carry these purposes yourself into execution. Listen to what Zarowka has confided to me, under the seal of secrecy. The Supreme being, which has created so many thousand worlds, cannot possibly occupy himself with looking after and controuling all the little minutiae which he has created. On that account, spirits were placed over our world, who partly act

out of their own planets, partly upon the earth itself, each in the respective sphere allotted to it. The ancients called them deities. As they have a kind of corporeal substance, and are subject to wants and passions, the fragrance of sacrifices, and proofs of reverence, are by no means unacceptable to them. Whoever is acquainted with the manner of acquiring a connexion with them, and gaining their favour, obtains, by his influence over the world of spirits, that indiscribably wonderful power, of which I have already read to you in fairy tales.”—

“And of what avail is all this prattle to me?” cried Antonia in an angry voice.

“For the present it is of no avail,” replied Marie, “but for the future it is every thing.” For, “Zarowka declares that she will not expose herself to the risk of perishing on the burning pile, on account of services which she renders you in any fit of piety and repentance, which you may please to take into your head.” “But I have prevailed upon her, by my own entreaties, to make you privy to those secrets,

which subject the whole supernatural world to your controul."

"What" said Antonia shuddering, "must I then become a witch?"

"Change this name," replied Marie, for that "of a good fairy, and every prejudice becomes removed. But I am weary from walking; I cannot keep my eyes open; therefore, good night, dear Antonia!"

Antonia combated violently with herself. Every thing that had been told her of witches and fairies, floated before her imagination; she lay in the height of a fever until morning dawned. She then fell into a gentle slumber; and during this, it appeared as if her protecting genius whispered in a dream to her soul. She saw herself upon a narrow tottering board, which conducted over a deep abyss. On one side thereof stood Damasus, as she had beheld him in the last days of his life, scarcely able to keep himself on his feet with his staff, reaching to her a cross with a trembling hand, accompanied with the words "Hold fast thereon." She was about to take hold of it, when Marie

appeared on the other side of the abyss, holding a costly fillet in her hand, worked with gold and purple, and decorated with whimsical characters, one end of which she threw to her, and ordered her to hold fast by it. Antonia stretched her hand to the fillet; a dreadful clap of thunder followed; the board gave way under her feet, and she awoke.

“You are mistress,” said Marie, as Antonia related this dream to her, “of a lively poetical imagination, but do not give way to anguish; not a step has yet been taken in the business, and, as it occasions you such painful sensations, we will say no more about the matter.”

Marie never touched farther upon the subject. Antonia, however, who could not get rid of the idea, returned into society, where she saw Constance upon the arm of her beloved, and herself deserted by her former adorers. She took her seat accidentally by the side of an old lady, who had passed in her youth, for the first beauty at court; a woman who was endowed with a good understanding, had

received an excellent education, and was now leading a miserable life. She related this in confidence to her neighbour herself.—“ My dear, said she,” our sex is very unhappy. Man gains, as his years increase, greater merit and respect; poor womankind loses every thing, together with her outward charms, and therefore, I frequently wish I were carried back to those fabulous times, in which good fairies made beauty and youth unperishable gifts.” “ You might then have taken advantage of these qualities, thought Antonia to herself; and Marie’s proposal assumed thereby a favorable aspect. The indifference with which Marie appeared to treat the subject, was the occasion of Antonia brooding over it the more. She sat one day, thus immersed in thought, when Marie entered, and asked her, if she had heard that Count Stanislaus had made his betrothment to Constance publicly known.

“ Why do you come to me,” asked Antonia, “ with such intelligence ; why do you not rather remind me of the other subject ?”

“ I thought,” replied Marie, “ that you gave

it no further consideration, and it was my wish to avoid bringing to your recollection any thing which may be obnoxious to your feelings."

Thus the matter was again brought upon the tapis. It was now agreed upon, that Antonia should represent herself as unwell the following day, and go to bed early; slip out with Marie, at the back gate of the palace, and both of them were to make the best of their way to the old sorceress in a sledge, which Ezekiel was to have in readiness for them.

All this was carried into execution. Zarowka received her with a friendly welcome, and promised to summon the spirits for the occasion of making a solemn offering, at which Antonia had nothing farther to do, than to hand over to the spirits a parchment, to be filled up by Zarowka. In all other matters, Antonia was to act according to Zarowka's instruction. Antonia enquired whether the preparations were alarming. Upon being assured that she would only have an interview with the beautiful and well proportioned deities of the Greeks and Romans, and make a covenant with them, every

thing was approved of, after a few shudders, which Marie ridiculed, as arising from an irresolute state of mind. "Antonia is not yet accustomed to travel in our way," said Zarowka, "and therefore I would wish to transport her, whilst asleep, to the proper place." She touched Antonia's forehead with a little wand; and when the latter awoke, she found herself in a wood upon a crossway, by the side of a little altar, from which a flame issued. Marie, Zarowka, and Ezekiel, were standing by her in sumptuous oriental attire. First a lamb and a dove, and then a black ram, and a raven, were offered up as sacrifices. The blood was carefully preserved. Marie then laid hold of Antonia's hand; made a small incision in it with the offering knife; let a few drops of her blood fall into the bowl; cut a lock of her hair off, and threw it into the flame. Antonia trembled. At that moment a grand music resounded; and the deities of Greece and Rome, in far more charming shapes than either the pencils or chisels of the greatest artists could have represented them, came forward. All of them appeared to tarry a few moments, and refresh their senses with the fra-

grant odour which was produced by Antonia, so often as a form appeared, spouting something liquid into the flame, and throwing into it a handfull of frankincense. At last appeared a superb triumphant chariot, upon which sat a man of dignified aspect, surrounded by a number of spirits. All that were present prostrated themselves upon the ground; and at their nod, Antonia, who held out the parchment did the same. A genie took this out of her hand, and gave it to the man upon the chariot. "You wish, said the latter to Antonia, throwing a look upon the parchment, "to be consecrated a priestess of the Gods, and made acquainted with the secrets of former ages?"

Antonia affirmed, she did.

"You are sureties for her," he asked again."

"We are sureties," cried Marie, Zarowka, and Ezekiel, steeping their fingers in the blood of sacrifice, and laying them upon Antonia's forehead.

"So I take thee," said the spirit, "for thirty years into my covenant, and mark thee with

the sign of the same." He laid a finger upon Antonia's shoulder. She felt a pain which pierced every nerve, but which quickly left her. Two genies flitted by, who put a costly antient garment upon Antonia, gave her a wand in her hand, and bound a fillet round her brow.

One of the spirits asked her :

"In what form shall I henceforth appear?"

"Assume," replied Antonia, "that of a parrot."

"I will," said the genie, "fulfil thy commands, as often as thou beckonest to me, three times with the wand in thy hand.—"

"And ye three," said the man upon the chariot, "gradually inaugurate the new priestess into the secrets of former ages."

The music resounded again; and the triumphant chariot disappeared.

"We now salute thee as our sister," said Marie and Zarowka to Antonia, and they folded her in their arms. As Ezekiel was about to do the same, Antonia repulsed him.

"Why dost thou refuse the sister's kiss" cried

out Ezekiel simpering? “we are now all equals; and he then encircled her in his arms, in spite of her resistance.

The lofty Antonia began now to feel, to what a low ebb she was sunk. In the meantime, Ezekiel spread out his mantle, upon which all present set themselves down, with Antonia in the midst of them. A wind took the mantle into the air, and left it, in a few seconds, in Zarowka’s court yard. Antonia and Marie now wrapt themselves up in their cloaks, and hastened, in Ezekiel’s sledge, to their dwelling. How thunderstruck was Antonia, upon taking the fillet from her brow; for it was exactly such a one as she had beheld in her dream, of the colour of fire; worked with gold and black magic letters; and, upon undressing herself, she beheld upon her shoulder, a spot as red as fire, in the shape of a pitchfork! “Into what hands have I fallen,” said Antonia, and looked at Marie.

“Into the hands of thy friends,” replied Marie, “and thou wilt get an insight into every thing, as thy inauguration proceeds.”

Every thing that she had brought with her was carefully concealed; Antonia's blood rolled wildly in her veins. "Wilt thou not invoke thy spirit?" asked Marie the following morning.

"What can the spirit do for me?" said Antonia anxiously.

"Hast thou forgotten Ignatius and Constance?" asked Marie, "this is their wedding day!"

"I will send them a wedding present," said Antonia. Thrice she waved her wand, when a beautiful parrot appeared upon her dressing table—"Revenge me to the height of vengeance," cried she.

"I obey thee, mistress," answered the parrot; and vanished.

Antonia now learnt that the count's horses had taken fright, as he was driving to see his bride; and that he himself had been seriously wounded by the overturning of his carriage. In this state, his servants had taken him into a small cottage, in which three children were then lying dangerously ill of the small pox.

Ignatius, who had never had this disease, was immediately seized with it. It was therefore found necessary to postpone the nuptial festivals, which Constance consented to, as far as regarded the festivities; but the marriage was solemnized. The Count's illness increased every day, and the physicians declared his death to be inevitable, Antonia, much as she had at first panted for vengeance, now perceived that vengeance did not produce happiness.

At the instigation of Marie, many a nocturnal visit was paid to Zarowka. To prepare and employ the arts of witchcraft, to injure both man and beast by conjurations, and spells, was what Antonia learnt; but she never derived real satisfaction from such pursuits.

"Are these," she would ask in a pettish manner, "are these your enjoyments?"

"Bring hither to-morrow in haste," replied Zarowka, "thy fairy clothes, and thou shalt then become acquainted with another part of our life."

Curiosity induced Antonia to be present.

The old witch, Marie and Antonia decked themselves out; and great was the astonishment of Antonia, when Marie and Zarowka laid the fillet of enchantment upon their brows, and appeared like two juvenile beauties. They struck the wainscoat with their wands, when a door, which had been hitherto concealed, flew open, and a small temple, beautifully decorated, from the sides of which rose-colored curtains hung down, received the three enchantresses. A table was covered with the most dainty meats, pine apples, and fruits from all quarters of the world, while the glass, filled with the choicest wines of Chios, of Schiras, and Cyprus, circulated freely.

“ Antonia” observed the others, “ has this life no charms for thee ?”

“ For me,” replied Antonia, “ who am no stranger to such enjoyments, far less certainly than for you.”

Zarowka then waved her wand; when the rose-coloured curtains drew up; and paintings, as if from the hands of the greatest masters, representing the most wanton and unblushing scenes

covered the walls. Antonia cast her eyes down to the ground; but the loud laughter, set up by the two others, together with the effects of the exhilarating wine, annihilated all feeling of shame. Three young men, of rare personal accomplishments, dressed in a similar manner to themselves, entered the room. Two of them appeared to be friends of the old witch; the third paid homage and attention exclusively to Antonia.

“How dost thou like thy friend?” asked Marie.

“He is as handsome as Apollo;” replied Antonia, who, being alike enflamed with wine and passion, imitated not the example of Daphne. These dissolute bacchanalian scenes, were continued every night. Antonia soon remarked in her glass that the ruddiness of youth had abandoned her fallen cheeks.

“What harm does that do thee?” said Marie smiling, “for, as soon as thou puttest on the fillet of enchantment round thy brow, thou immediately resemblest a goddess.”

But no female soul was ever indifferent to the

loss of beauty. Antonia too appeared to return somewhat to herself. Her father was taken ill. The physicians advised some change of scene, and the Vayvod went, in company with his daughter, to a neighbouring resort of pleasure, where, soon after their arrival, another carriage appeared. Constance alighted from it, and offered her hand to her husband, who had lost his eye-sight by the small-pox. "Oh, what a noble woman," said some of the bystanders. "She is a divinity," added others. She did not stay long, and soon returned, with her husband, to the city. There was only one voice in praise of her. Every person had something to say of her magnanimity, of her virtues, of her piety. In Antonia's bosom raged an hell fire. "Why am I sunk so low?" cried she, gnashing her teeth, when she was alone in her apartment, "and why is this detested Constance raised so much above me?"—She waved her wand three times, and the parrot appeared. "Take vengeance," cried she, "upon this Constance; she must not alone become miserable, but an object of universal contempt. Hasten,

execute my orders, and bring me back an account."

Two days elapsed without his returning; on the third, he was summoned by the wand. "What hast thou executed?" said Antonia.

"Nothing," replied the parrot with a melancholy tone of voice, "for I have no power over pure and innocent souls."

Antonia, in a rage, had recourse to the sorcery, with which she had been acquainted. Storms and hail, locusts and blight, destroyed the estates of Constance, who became only more firmly attached to heaven by all these evils. The Vayvod, who had been detained at Warsaw by illness, died about this time. Antonia, in order to avoid all further meeting with Constance, returned to her estates, accompanied by Marie. At the last bacchanalian scene which had taken place between Zarowka and the others, she had invited her Apollo (so she called her lover) to follow her thither; and he promised not to fail in being there.

The first person who welcomed her return to the castle, was Ezekiel. He was with her in

the room alone, as the stewards were employed in unloading her luggage; he approached her in a confidential manner, and caught her in his arms.

“Thou madman,” cried she, “how darest thou presume to do this?”

“Pardon me,” said Ezekiel; I forgot that I had not put on the enchanting fillet: I therefore appear before thee now as simple Ezekiel, and not as Apollo.”

What! cried Antonia, am I then sunk so low? Are deceit, disappointment, and shame all that I have gained by this infernal witchcraft?”

Agnes and her husband were now announced. She appeared with her son upon her arms, taking hold of her husband. They seemed as handsome and beautiful, as an holy family of Raphael. “How do you do?” asked Antonia.

“Oh,” replied Agnes, “I am unspeakably happy by the side of my husband, and this child,” pressing her son to her breast, “still heightens my happiness.”

“How far,” said Antonia to herself, “is this

stupid creature, to whom I am in every respect so superior, how far is she now above me !” Envy and rancour then took possession of her soul. She considered herself as the only unhappy mortal ; and the chief occupation of her mind, was how to do all possible injury to her fellow creatures.

Lipkowski, (this was the name of Agnes’ husband), was a man of uncommon comely appearance. The sight of him excited Antonia’s sensuality ; and every art of seduction was called into action ; but, as he felt only one sentiment for his Agnes, every magic endeavour failed. Even the parrot was ordered to attend.

“ Hast thou, then, no power over these creatures ?” asked Antonia in a rage.

“ No,” answered the spirit, “ for their guardian angels protect the innocent.”

Antonia became almost mad with rage, and Marie advised her to seek distraction. She travelled, engaged in amours, and indulged in every kind of excess ; but her heart was always stung with reflection, and she detested herself. Thus seven years had elapsed, since the dread-

ful day on the cross way, represented in her dream. She returned to the castle. Agnes and Lipkowski were still in her neighbourhood: she again endeavoured to enchain him; but, every thing failed. She therefore tried every means of destroying the happiness of this couple, and therein she fully succeeded. They were ruined by a series of untoward events; and a small cottage and garden were all that remained to them. A neighbouring proprietor, who possessed extensive forests, and knew Lipkowski to be an excellent huntsman, allowed him to sport upon his grounds, upon the condition that he would turn over to him half of the game he killed, and sell the other half.

“Oh” said Marie, who heard this, “poverty will induce Lipkowski to cheat the proprietor, and thus he will fall at last into our hands.”

Antonia heaped upon him every misery. The blossoms were consumed by mildew; caterpillars ate up the vegetables of his little garden. Agnes was taken ill; and Antonia, invisible to every one, by the power of her enchanted wand, determined upon examining

into their condition, with her own eyes. She approached the cottage. Agnes was sitting before the door, upon a miserable bench, with her eldest daughter. Both were spinning: The younger children were standing by the side of their mother, who was teaching them to pray. Antonia beheld the wan cheek of the friend of her youth and she felt a generous feeling awaken in her soul. At that moment Lipkowski approached. "Here is our dear father," cried the children. Agnes hastened a few steps to meet him, and threw herself into his arms. He gave each of them a small present. "There," said he to Agnes, "I have reserved the finest snipe for you;" the other game that I have sold, has produced sufficient for our maintenance for a few days. The good proprietor always supposes, that I reserve for him more than I keep for myself; and, therefore, always returns me something back. But I am very weary." They sat themselves down upon the bench. "Have you a draught of milk?" said he to Agnes. Agnes could not refrain from tears. "Oh," cried she, with a sob,

“our last cow died suddenly last night.” “Then I will drink water,” said Lipkowski, “and, by the side of thee, my dear wife, it is more delicious than the most costly wine.” Agnes threw her arms around him, and kissed the tears away from his cheek.—“God gave me,” continued he, “strength to suffer, and to work for you; be, therefore, of good cheer, dear soul; we are still happier than many of our fellow creatures. I would not exchange my lot with the proud Antonia, and her magnificent castle.

“How may she be going on?” asked Agnes. The tone of voice in which she said this, announced the heartfelt interest she took in her well being.

“I heard strange things reported in the town,” replied Lipkowski. “In the inn, where I just sold my game, two gentlemen were speaking of her; one of them said she was mad; the other, that something lay heavy at her heart; for the evil conscience that devours her, is visible in her countenance.”

“Poor Antonia,” cried Agnes, “I loved thee as my sister; oh! I can now do nothing for

thee ; but I and my children will pray for thee, and God will not suffer the cries of innocence to pass unheard."

Antonia had not expected a scene like this. She could hardly support herself ; and, almost unconscious of what she did, she cried out, with inward emotion, and in an audible voice, the name of Agnes. " My God !" said the latter, " that is Antonia's voice !" They all looked round, but no one could perceive her. " Perhaps," suggested Lipkowski, " she has this moment disappeared. " God be merciful to the poor soul."

Antonia felt herself moved, nay, partly consoled by the conviction that she had not rendered those wholly unhappy whom she had done so much mischief to ; and, this reflection, together with the sight of the wretched situation in which she found the friend of her early youth, suppressed that envy of their happiness, which had hitherto raged in her bosom. In a sorrowful state of mind she returned to her castle. Passing through the rooms, in which, in her youth, she had often sat by the side of

Agnes, she came, unconscious of having any purpose in view, into the sleeping room of her deceased father, which had never been inhabited since his death, and which she had consequently never visited. She opened the door softly, and stood still, quaking with fear; for she instantly perceived opposite to her, the portrait of the venerable Damasus, with a cross in his hand. A travelling painter had taken his likeness in this manner a few months before his death, and her deceased father had ordered the picture, out of respect to the deceased, to be placed in his own chamber. "Oh, that it were possible," thought Antonia, "that holy spirits could stand around us as guardian angels! Could this cross, which the pious Damasus offered me in a warning dream, bring me salvation!" She felt so glad, and at the same time so melancholy at heart; she stepped towards the window, which looked into the garden, opened it, and the sight of nature appeared to give her joy. She then heard a rustling noise, looked round about, and observed that the wind was turning over the leaves

of a book, which was lying open. Upon drawing nearer, she perceived that it was the Holy Scriptures. She cast a look upon them, and noticed the place in the eighth chapter of the apostles, where Simon, the magician, was not thought unworthy of baptism; she read further, and found Paul's conversion. The darkness of her soul became illumined with a ray of hope. She struck her breast in a repentant manner, and cried out: "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

At this moment Marie entered the room. "In what manner didst thou get here?" said she in astonishment. "I was seeking for thee in all parts of the castle." Antonia disclosed to her every thing that had passed; exhorted her also to repentance; and declared that she would go to morrow to the bishop at Cracow, and open her state of mind to him. Marie made use of all her endeavours to dissuade her from this determination; and Antonia was at last induced to make the promise, at her entreaty, to defer her intention for three days; and, if she were in the same mind on the fourth

day, then Marie promised to go with her to the bishop; for she confessed to her that the thirty years covenant with the evil spirit, were now passed; but that, could she induce another person to enter it, the benefit of this covenant would be extended to her for ten years. She had succeeded with Antonia; but, since that, nearly eight years had elapsed; and all endeavours to obtain another member of the covenant had been fruitless. Antonia now perceived for what reason she had been plunged into sin. She promised, however, to pardon the wicked Marie for all that she had done, if she would desist from crime, and return again to God. Marie appeared affected; she promised to try every effort for that purpose in the three days. Antonia confided in her; and spent her time for the most part, in the apartment, where, from her own conviction, God and the holy angels had been so merciful to her. Her heart being now more tranquil, the refreshing sleep, to which she had been so long a stranger, returned to her pillow. In the night of the third day, she felt disturbed in her

sleep. She awoke, and beheld herself in a place perfectly strange to her. Marie, Zarowka, Ezekiel, with six other sorcerers, were standing before her couch, in the attire so well known to her. "Thou designedst to betray us," said Marie, "for that reason, have we, thrice three sorcerers in council, taken away thy power, and banished thee to an uninhabited island in the Indian ocean. We have prepared for thee this abode; thy parrot will be thy only companion, and do all that is necessary for thee. Thou wilt not be missed in thy castle, for I assume thy form. Thou art not to reckon upon redemption, until I go down to the deity below, where, thou, however, wilt probably appear first; for I have already two maidens in the right road, to become sisters of the covenant." They all placed their hands upon Marie, who took upon herself the perfect form of Antonia. The latter trembled for fear when she beheld herself personified, and all the sorcerers now departed, setting up an hellish yell.

Antonia had a convenient abode. She wanted nothing necessary, although she adhered faith-

fully to her resolution, of asking nothing of the parrot, who never moved from her side, and endeavoured to entertain her with various subjects. Solitude made not, upon Antonia, the disagreeable impression, which it otherwise would have done; since she was fully convinced, that she had merited the contempt of all the world. The sorcerers transplanted much of her furniture and other materials to her new place of abode. They even provided her with books; but, upon casting her first look into them, she threw them from her in disgust, and afterwards committed them, together with various pictures which adorned her room, to the flames. Her thoughts were often employed upon the future; and she implored God, with tears in her eyes, to have compassion upon her soul. Upon various changes of the moon alone, could she, in some degree, calculate the period of her stay in the island. The trees had twice lost their leaves, and had been twice covered again with fresh foliage. She accustomed herself to consider her fate as a deserved and mild chastisement, and she

doubted not of the favour of the All-Merciful. The parrot, receiving no commissions from his mistress, but rarely presented himself. Short rambles were all the recreation she allowed herself. In a thick wood, she formed an arbour of the boughs of some trees near each other. Here she built a little altar of turf, placing thereon a picture of our Saviour on the cross, which she had carved with her knife. Before this she frequently prostrated herself; while the beating of her heart, the tears which rolled down her cheeks, the wringing of her hands in anguish, spoke more than words could express.

One day she approached the sea-side, where she discovered many remnants of wrecks of vessels, which had been thrown on the shore; and, upon turning an angle of the rock, she observed a human corpse. Notwithstanding the closed eyes and paleness of death which hung upon the countenance, she observed that the unfortunate stranger was a well formed young man. "Oh that there still be life in him, and that he may be sent to me, in

this desert, for protection and consolation!" This idea arose in her mind. She knelt down by the side of him, rubbed his forehead and hands, placed her own hand upon his heart, and thought she felt a faint beating. She redoubled her endeavours. The cheeks of the youth appeared to redden, and her joy encreased. He gradually opened his beautiful black eyes, and she raised her hands in gratitude to heaven. The parrot, at that moment, drew near. He softly enquired if she desired his assistance.

"Begone, thou curse!" cried Antonia, "I seek only assistance from God."

The youth still lay at her feet, and addressed her in the French language, calling her his deliveress, his benefactress, and kissing her hands and bedewing them with his tears. She ordered him to get up; but he was so faint that he staggered, and she was obliged to support him.

"Only come far from this place," said Antonia, "that the flood tide may not overtake you, and I will get you some cordial."

She with difficulty conducted him to her bower; but he sunk down in a swoon.

“Dost thou wish me to get medicine, or any thing to strengthen him?” cried the parrot.

Antonia rushed into the bower quite distracted, seized the cross, held it up, and hastened to the swooner.

“Merciful God,” cried she, “send me the means of saving him!”

A clap of thunder rolled through the clouds; the youth awoke, and changed himself into a negro of gigantic stature. The wings of a bat grew upon his shoulders; instead of feet he supported himself upon two frightful dragon’s tails; and, in the place of each finger, a serpent sent forth his dreadful hisses.

“Dost thou not know the power whom thou servest, and with whom thou enteredst into covenant?” cried the horrid figure.

The earth burst under him; the monster sunk into the abyss, and, before this could close, flames of fire rushed upwards.

Antonia threw herself upon her knees and returned thanks to God. With the cross in her hand, she now hastened to her abode, and found that it had disappeared. In place of it

stood a rock, in which she observed a cavern. She looked into it; and beheld, to her astonishment, her bed and furniture. She immediately became liberated from the illusion which had hitherto hung around her. She stepped softly into the cavern; but found not the smallest article of provision. "He who has hitherto assisted me, and preserved my soul from perishing," said she in humble reliance upon God, "will take farther care of me." She fasted and prayed. On the following morning she began to feel the cravings of hunger, and made all haste in search of nourishment. The sun was burning fiercely; and she wandered among the shrubs; her strength failed her. "Eternal God," cried she, "am I to die of hunger!" The parrot drew near, and offered her some delicious grapes; but she made the sign of the cross, looked towards heaven, and the tempter disappeared. She came from among the shrubs to the borders of the sea; there all was rocky and desolate. The waves were rumbling at her feet. A voice appeared to whisper to her soul: "Throw thyself into them, and put an end to

her own affairs; and the domestics and vassals, whom Marie, under the assumption of Antonia's form, had treated with tyrannical severity, were at a loss to account for the difference of treatment, they at present experienced. She preferred occupying the chamber of her deceased father; and sent messengers to invite Count Ignatius and Constance, to come and see her, with the least possible delay. The following morning she ordered her carriage to be got ready and drove to see Agnes, who still lived in the same cottage. The children, as well as Agnes and her husband, came rushing out, when they saw the magnificent equipage approach. Antonia hastened to meet them, and encircled Agnes in her arms.

“Forgive me,” said she, “my worthy, pious friend, for all that is past. I will endeavour to recompense you, as far as it is possible, and reward you too for your sufferings, in your children.”

She then prevailed upon them all to get into the carriage with her, in order to take possession of a part of the castle. Lipkowski was appointed

superintendent of the estates ; and the tenants and dependants were forgiven all their debts. She lowered their rents, and lightened their services. Antonia now heard only grateful blessings ; saw only tears of gladness ; and returned thanks to heaven, from the inmost of her soul, that she had been brought back to the path of righteousness. She then hastened to Cracow, where the bishop of this place, a venerable old man, enjoyed the highest character for piety. The day following her return, Constance and Ignatius, who had paid attention to the pressing invitation given them, arrived ; upon which she ordered the lawyers to be sent for, who drew up a deed of gift, whereby Constance was to receive one half and Agnes the other, of her whole estates, and they were both earnestly entreated to accept the donation.

“ I,” said Antonia, “ want nothing further. It is my intention to undertake a pilgrimage, to the holiest place of Christendom, and, when I have accomplished it, I will pass the remainder of my days in solitude, or in a nunnery. I have only to make one request of you, that is, to open the room

thy misery," but she gained strength, and thought of God. Casting her eyes accidentally upon the ground, she saw, with extreme joy, some oysters at her feet; she satisfied her hunger, thanked God, and picked up some of the oysters to keep in store. She now endeavoured to find her cavern again, although she suffered greatly from thirst. At that moment she heard the delightful singing of a bird: "The Creator who preserves this bird," said she, "will also not suffer me to perish," she then hastened to the spot whence the notes of the bird proceeded, and immediately came to a well, surrounded with fine Cocoa-trees. Here she quenched her thirst, and sunk into a refreshing slumber; in which she continued a considerable time. Upon her awaking, the morning sun was just rising. She found herself in her own home, with Ezekiel standing before her.

"I come to apprise thee," said he in an anxious manner, "in order that I may not be suspected, when thou goest into thy former chamber. Marie has come to her end in it, the foregoing night. She had succeeded in adding another sister to the covenant, and considered

herself secure, when the prince of darkness appeared to her yesterday evening, just as I was with her. He exclaimed in a terrific voice : “ Hold thyself ready about midnight ; for, since Antonia has escaped me, the other sister, added to the covenant, was only serviceable for the ten years that are past.” It is not in my power to describe the horror which seized Marie ; and her rage was heightened by the reflection, that thy spell is now over. Come, behold the room in which she came to her end, and thou wilt convince thyself of the necessity of no one observing what has happened.”

Antonia followed him, and found the apartment filled with a sulphureous vapour : the walls and the ground, were stained with Marie’s blood, and some lacerated members were still lying scattered about. On which she returned thanks to God, that she had escaped such a fate. Ezekiel then offered to remove, and interr the scattered remains : and, upon Antonia exhorting him to repentance and baptism, he promised to obey her, but instantly disappeared, and no farther account was ever heard of him.

Antonia now resumed the management of

rolled down her cheeks: "Eternal God, thou who convertest even the wicked unto goodness, praised be thy mercy, and thy forgiveness." "As yet," continued she, "you understand me not, but you shall in time learn every thing."

The whole of the vassals and dependants of the estates were assembled at the desire of Antonia, who came amongst them in a pilgrim's attire; and took her leave of them, and her friends. Having distributed her money among the poor and sick, she proceeded to church, attended by all present; and prayed with fervour, whilst all joined in prayer for her. They afterwards accompanied her some distance; and she was followed by the benediction of every one.

Aided by their husbands, Agnes and Constance did every thing to make the vassals that were given over to them, as happy as possible, as they had promised their friend they would.—Heaven blessed their endeavours; and the estates were brought to the highest pitch of prosperity.

Thus three years rolled away, when agreeably to the promise given to Antonia, they opened room which had been closed up; where neither the vapour of sulphur was gone, nor had the traces of the dreadful death of Marie been entirely effaced. Upon the table lay a note in Antonia's hand writing, which ran thus: "The pious bishop of Cracow, will, if you address yourselves to him, three years after my departure, impart to you, my unhappy and dreadful history. Pardon me, for all the harm I have occasioned you, and pray for me and my soul." They went, therefore, to the venerable pastor at Cracow, whose court chaplain had written down Antonia's history, under the seal of confession, just as it has been here detailed, and now imparted it to them, with the episcopal sanction, according to the commission Antonia had given him. Filled with astonishment at so terrible a narrative, they all heartily forgave her; remembered her with affection, and frequently prayed for her. At first they loped to get some account of her, but were wholly disappointed. Agnes and Constance, who lived together

which I have barred up, three years hence, and then you will find every thing disclosed to you."

She fixed an early period for entering upon her pilgrimage: nor could all the entreaties, and representations, which her friends made against such an intention, detain her among them.

"For the last time," said she, "we are assembled here, but perhaps it may be God's pleasure, that above we be united for ever."

It was a beautiful spring evening, and they were sitting together in the garden; the blossoms sent forth their fragrance and the nightingale was heard in the neighbouring woods; when Antonia stepped before them.

"Oh, my beloved," said she, "answer me one question more! what do you now think, and what are your present feelings, concerning your past sorrows?"

"I have indeed," said Ignatius, "lost my eye sight; but my good angel, Constance, guides me through life: without her, I should have idly wandered through the world,—should not have known the real value of existence, and probably should only have had this life in view, nor have ever directed my thoughts to heaven."

“And you Constance?”—asked Antonia, with emotion.

“Never,” said she, “had it not been for the misfortune, which befell my husband, should I have performed my duties as I now do, or have rendered myself so worthy of his affection. I therefore thank Providence, for having given me the means of obtaining a joyful existence here, together with the hope of a still more blissful one hereafter.”

“But what are the sentiments you entertain?” said Antonia to Agnes.

“Had it not been for the oppression of poverty, and the wants we suffered;—had it not been for those innumerable proofs of sincerest affection, which my husband daily gave me, I never could have loved and revered him as I have done, from the bottom of my heart,—never have gained the strength to discharge the most laborious duties of a wife, and a mother. I therefore, would not forego the recollection of our past sorrows for worlds.”

“Nor I certainly,” said Lipkowski, as he pressed the hand of his spouse tenderly to his breast.

“Eternal God,” cried Antonia, as the tears

as bosom friends, could never forget the truly unfortunate Antonia. A monk, who came from Rome, finally brought the intelligence, that he had seen buried in the Convent of the Penitents, a nun who, according to report, was born in Poland, and who often lamented that she was the greatest sinner upon earth, and passed her life in acts of contrition:—that she enjoyed the love and esteem of all her sisters, and had departed in peace and tranquillity, in hopes of the favor of the All-Merciful. Agnes and Constance ordered a letter to be written to Rome, and received for answer, that the deceased nun was—Antonia.



THE
ENCHANTED CASTLE.

A tradition is still preserved by many old people, (who assure us they have either seen with their own eyes, what they relate, or have heard it said by their parents, and other persons, whose assertions are deserving of full credit), that a certain enchanted castle, formerly situated at Königsberg, in Prussia, was altogether uninhabitable, on account of the hideous noises with which it resounded, particularly, about those hours at night time, at which it is said the spirits make their customary perambulations.

These noises consisted sometimes, in piteous whinings, and doleful lamentations, at others, in frightful ravings, and horrid howlings, and the hair of every person who heard them, stood on end; whilst others, who had been rash

enough to attempt inhabiting the castle, precipitately ran out of it, whenever they heard them. What was more horrible than all, was, that, no sooner had the steeple clock struck twelve, than the side gate rushed open, and a coach drawn by black horses was driven out of it. In the carriage sat a lady, who, as well as the coachman and the footman, were without heads. The neighbours, hearing the carriage rolling on rapidly, were petrified with horror, and all the passengers in the street endeavoured to get out of its way as quickly as possible. A drunken and presumptuous fellow, however, who had declared the whole to be an idle story, agreed for a wager to be in the way of the carriage as it drove by, in order to examine into the truth of these reports: but he received such a severe blow while doing so, that he bore the marks of it as long as he lived. After driving through a few streets, it regularly re-entered the castle gates, as the clock struck one; when they were immediately closed with a dreadful crash. Of the origin of this strange mystery, and of the circumstances

attending it, the following account has been preserved.

At the period when the Landgrave Albrecht, reigned as Duke of Prussia, the rich Conrad, who had been ten years a widower, lived in this castle, together with his only daughter Gertrude. Descended from a noble family, they possessed large estates, and immense wealth. Gertrude was beautiful, and finely formed, and Conrad still preserved a freshness in his old age, and enjoyed good health ; yet neither of them were happy, for they never turned their thoughts to God, or obeyed his commands, and went to church only for the sake of appearances, and to see the people. They enjoyed not the blessings which heaven had so amply bestowed upon them, as the whole aim of their life was directed only to amass wealth, whether in money or lands ; they never considered the many thousands of their fellow-creatures who possessed far less than themselves, but always viewed with a jealous and an envious eye, the smallest possessions of their neighbours.

Thus they lived dissatisfied, both with God and man, and endeavoured, in every unjust manner they could invent, and even by usury, to wring the last mite from the poor, the widow, and the orphan. Since they were thus avaricious, and, moreover, parsimonious in what regarded themselves, it is not to be supposed that they were either very liberal, or very lenient towards their menials or dependants. Yet two of their domestics Hans, and Peter who had been for many years, the instruments of their severity were treated somewhat better than the rest. From long habit, they found a pleasure in tormenting others, and frequently even exceeded the commands they received, in inflicting the punishments they were ordered to execute on the other vassals.

It was now generally observed that Conrad's riches had considerably increased; but nobody was acquainted with the real source whence this increase had been derived; for, although he had inherited only a moderate fortune from his parents, he had, in a few years, purchased considerable estates, which he had regularly paid

for in ready money. This brought many strange reports into circulation. Many of his neighbours thought he had found a treasure; others asserted, with a significant shake of the head, that his deceased wife, who, when she died, was in the bloom of life and health, had been suddenly carried off, and that she had been seen frequently going about, when all were asleep, in tears, wringing her hands, as if agitated by a wicked conscience, which disturbed her peace in the tomb. It was also said that she had never received the priest's consolation upon her death-bed. All which gave rise to much conjecture, and to many mysterious reports.

As Conrade's estates lay on both sides of the Pregel, he chose to be sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, and resided, for the most part, at Konigsburg. When least expected by his vassals, he frequently drove, even at midnight, first to one, then to another estate, and inflicted dreadful chastisements, if he did not find every thing executed according to his orders. Gertrude was in every respect the coun-

terpart of her father. Wherever therefore either of them shewed themselves upon their estates, they made every body tremble, and when they left them they were followed by the curses and execrations of all their dependants. A strange report was current that Conrad was frequently present at the same time at two or more places, which led to the supposition, that wicked spirits had assumed his form and acted accordingly. Hence it happened that, although Gertrude had already attained her twenty-fourth year, and appeared dressed equal to a princess decked with costly jewels, and seemed to those who did not know her, comparable to an angel on account of her beautiful person, she had hitherto obtained no suitor, which augmented the rancour and ill-will she bore in her heart to all mankind.

About this time, Rudolph, a nobleman of distinguished birth returned to Prussia his native country. He had served in the wars of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and afterwards under the Elector Maurice of Saxony, had received such a wound in the right arm by a shot, near

Magdeburg, that he was no longer able to wield his sword, therefore, after the treaty of Passau, when peace appeared to be re-established he came back to his native home, weary of the tumults of war. He brought with him the renown which accompanies deeds of valour, but he could neither boast of money, nor did he possess estate; he expected to find a small patrimony in his native country, but, after the demise of his father, many severe misfortunes had befallen his mother, and Rudolph, with a sorrowful heart, found his paternal estate loaded with debts, so that he enjoyed no very happy prospects for the future.

One day, at Konigsburg, while in a melancholy mood, he met Wolfe, the friend of his youth in the street, and immediately after the first interchange of salutations, he made known to him, in a confidential manner, the necessities he was in.

“What!” said Wolfe, “you are still an handsome man, in the bloom of life, and have it in your power to supplant any young fellow in a woman’s favour. Seek a rich wife, pay off the

debts which encumber your estate, and all your cares are over."

"How am I," said Rudolph, "who am become, by long absence, nearly a stranger in my native land, to find a rich wife?"

At that moment, Gertrude passed by, and Rudolph, who discovered from her deportment and dress, that she was no common person, took off his cap,—a courtesy that was not thrown away upon the lady, since it obtained for him a favourable glance in return.

"There," said Wolfe, "is a rich lady of quality for you immediately, there is only something mysterious about her."

"What is that?" inquired Rudolph.

"She is the daughter of the rich, but, at the same time, cruel and avaricious Conrad, and is said to be very similar in character to her father."

"If it is nothing more," said Rudolph smiling, "I have kept many wild countrymen in order, and shall be able to manage a woman also, however full of faults she may be; and, my dear friend, if I should succeed in gaining

her favour, and she should once become a mother, then she will certainly act according to the will of her husband, from love to her offspring."

"You have good faith," replied Wolfe, "and if you are in earnest, I will to-morrow intercede in your behalf, and I hope the event will prove favourable to you."

It was agreed that, on the following morning, Rudolph was to accompany Wolfe, who undertook to present him to Conrad.

Upon entering the house, Gertrude, who was dressed, and just going out, met them accidentally at the door. Wolfe, presenting Rudolph to her, begged she would turn back, as their visit principally related to herself. Rudolph, who now viewed her more attentively, and was even better pleased with her than he had been the preceding day, did not conceal from her the impression, which the first sight of her had occasioned him yesterday. Gertrude, who had been all along anxious for a suitor, now blushed for joy, for she had scarcely expected to have been so favourably noticed by so elegant

a man. She replied, with an affected coyness, that every thing depended upon her father. Wolfe, however, observing the effect produced by his friend's abrupt declaration to Gertrude, thought it necessary to strike the iron whilst it was hot, and begged of her to put in a favourable word herself to her father; and, as Rudolph urged her, in the most pressing way, to pay attention to what he said, she gave him her hand, as an earnest of her consent. Rudolph kissed it tenderly, and she conducted them to the old gentleman, to whom she presented him, and who was not a little surprised at the apparent intimacy.

The first salutations being over, Wolfe acquainted Conrad with the object of their visit. Conrad, always absorbed in interested views, spoke of difficult and expensive times, observing that every father, upon giving away his daughter, was bound to enquire, how she was to live in the event of her becoming a widow; and that he consequently wished to be accurately informed of Rudolph's property. Upon the latter candidly confessing to him, the silen-

derness of his income, Conrad shrugged up his shoulders. Rudolph, whose friendly glances Gertrude had not suffered to escape unnoticed, gently pressed her to plead, as she had promised him, in his behalf. Conrad was just about to dismiss them with a refusal, when Gertrude insinuated to her father, his future expectations from the favour of his sovereign, and begged of him to bear in mind, that a prudent and economical housewife could, in the mean time, make what they had suffice. Conrad now saw the bent of his daughter's inclinations, and, with his usual circumspection, told them he would take three days to think of it. Wolfe, in the mean time, invited Gertrude to visit his wife and daughters. She engaged to be with them at noon the same day. Rudolph did not fail to be of the party, and he now gave her the first earnest of a bridegroom's kiss. Conrad, constantly pressed by his daughter for his sanction to her nuptials with Rudolph, and seeing that his daughter's happiness was at stake, finally consented, at the expiration of the three days he had appointed, and their marriage was accordingly concluded.

The joys of the honeymoon were not of long duration. Rudolph soon acknowledged to his friend, that he led a life of continual vexation, and disappointment; the consolation, however, arising from a hope of happier days, never wholly forsook him. Conrad died shortly afterwards, and matters appeared for a moment to assume a more favourable aspect. Gertrude became a mother, and Rudolph hoped that parental affection would soften her heart. He at times, thought he should attain his end; but Gertrude soon returned to her old ways; and, when weary of the reproaches she constantly gave him about his poverty, of the severity, the avaricious and uncharitable conduct she evinced towards him, he resolved to separate from her; he again cast his eyes upon his little Elizabeth, and made up his mind to submit to Gertrude's ill humours, and to educate his daughter in such a manner, that she might not be the counterpart of her mother. She bore him also a son. The little Rudolph became a fresh tie, and, although the wicked and obstinate Gertrude, would never deign to comply with any thing Rudolph proposed, he

succeeded in partly counteracting the evil she occasioned. Old Conrad had ordered a contract to be drawn up before marriage, with the greatest circumspection, by a notary, and in the presence of witnesses; in which contract, it was positively stipulated, among other conditions, that, in the case of a separation ensuing from any cause whatever, Rudolph was not to have the least pretension to any part of his wife's property. He was therefore obliged, if he did not wish wholly to neglect his interest, to put up with her bad temper, which, by degrees, habit made somewhat less intolerable to him.

Four years elapsed since this truly unhappy marriage had taken place, when Gertrude took it into her head, to betray extreme jealousy: Rudolph could never notice any female, or offer her the least trifle accompanied with a kind word, without her instantly becoming an object of Gertrude's deadly hatred, which she suffered no opportunity to escape her of making sufficiently visible. When Gertrude was one day ordering a poor girl to be severely cha-

stised on account of some little error she had committed, and which her own despicable jealousy had given rise to: Rudolph, who did not dare to intercede in her behalf, sent little Elizabeth for that purpose. As the latter embraced her mother's knee, the mother, who had observed who had sent her, became mad with rage, and kicked her away from her with her foot. Elizabeth reeled backwards, fell upon the fire-place, and remained motionless. She finally came to herself; but the physician who was called in, declared that she would never be fully re-established; and the poor child expired a few weeks afterwards. Rudolph now demanded a separation from Gertrude, and insisting that the son should not be entrusted to so barbarous a mother, he desired to take this charge upon himself. The judges, having learned the cruelty of Gertrude towards poor Elizabeth, granted this demand, and ordered that Gertrude should pay a yearly allowance of 200 marks for her son's education. The mother bewailed her fate, as if she had been thereby reduced to the most abject misery, and

loaded both father and son, with the most bitter reproaches. They both removed for ever from her sight.

Some twenty years afterwards, Rudolph died. The son, who had discovered an inclination for a military life, had been sent into Germany, and had fought in the imperial army against the Turks in Hungary, where he formed a sincere friendship with a certain Baron Venningen. When the campaign was over, and the Emperor had disbanded his army, young Rudolph was desirous of returning to Prussia. Venningen, however, invited his friend to accompany him to Frauconia, and spend a few months with him in that country; a proposal which Rudolph did not decline, as the various events which had taken place during the war, had united them in the strictest bonds of friendship. Once when the brave Venningen, pushed on too forward with his troops, was surrounded by the Turks, and was in the greatest danger of losing both his liberty and his life. Rudolph then exhorted his men not to allow christians who were their brethren, to be sacrificed before

their eyes to infidels; but encouraged them to venture every thing, and place their reliance upon God. His address was listened to by his brave followers, and many of the fugitives joined them. They pressed upon the enemy with courage, Venningen was liberated, and the Turks fled. Early in the conflict, a Spahi or Turkish horseman, aimed a heavy blow with his sword at Rudolph, who fell from his horse from the severe wound he received. Venningen, in grateful remembrance of what Rudolph had done for him, took care of him in a brotherly manner, and ordered him to be brought to Agram. As the town was already full of wounded, he prevailed upon the monks of a convent to receive him, and to afford him all the assistance which his present state required. Rudolph's wounds, however, being very dangerous, the monks told him that, although God might probably preserve his life, he must nevertheless pay regard to the state of his soul. Rudolph confessed to them, that he was not of their religious persuasion, and the monks urged him, by prayer and exhortation, to return to the

bosom of the church. Venningen also, zealously devoted to the creed of his fathers, urged him, by the most sincere and friendly entreaties, not to leave this world in so lamentable and hopeless a manner, but accept the consolation the church could afford him. Rudolph, who was a brave warrior, although little informed of the articles of their faith, when he saw death approaching, agreed to the desire of the monks and of his friend Venningen, and thereby increased the real regard the latter had always entertained for him. Rudolph now, however, recovered apace, as if the blessing of God had attended the prayers of those worthy individuals.

When the two noble heroes arrived at the paternal estate of Venningen, they were received by the father, Eberhard Von Venningen, with great joy, and the old gentleman soon conceived an affection for Rudolph, as if he had been really his own son. It was no wonder, therefore, that Rudolph should not appear altogether indifferent to Rosalia. Rudolph, who amidst the clamour of war had hitherto

never known what real love was, when he now enjoyed a life of tranquillity and ease, and the fair Rosalia was ever before his eyes, felt overpowered by the most burning passion. The young Venningen, who failed not in observing this, was glad, in the opportunity of becoming more closely connected with his friend, whilst Rosalia felt a warm sentiment of interest towards the handsome man, of whose high courage, and noble achievements, in the wars against the Turks, Venningen had to relate something fresh every day.

Whenever they sat in an evening at table, and the glass went cheerfully round, the old gentleman always requested them to tell him some new anecdotes of the Turkish wars; and whenever nothing fresh occurred to their recollection, the son was engaged, (since the old gentleman was never weary of hearing it), to relate in what manner Rudolph had saved him. Young Venningen was recapitulating this subject one evening, with a joyful and grateful heart, and when he came to the part where Rudolph fell lifeless from his horse, a tear escaped

the eye of the fair Rosalia. Rudolph, delighted in his good fortune in inspiring such sensations, modestly observed: "My friend relates only what I had the good fortune to bear a part in, but says nothing of the manner in which he rewarded me."—He then related, in a lively manner, and with great emotion, how Venningen had brought him out of the thick of the battle; had taken a brotherly care of him; watched by the side of his sick bed; nursed and prayed for him; and had always given attention to the salvation of his soul. The tears fell copiously from the eyes of the fair and pious Rosalia, when Rudolph exclaimed: "These precious tears, this noble reward, the happiness of your acquaintance, tender hearted lady, I have to thank my friend for; and if the manifestation of these tears does not deceive me, and if I am not indifferent to you, allow me to ask your hand of your noble uncle."—"Oh Rosalia," exclaimed young Venningen, springing from his chair with joy, "do not mar the warmest hope of my life, make my friend happy." He seized Rosalia's hand,

placed it in Rudolph's, then took both of them to his father, and said: "Bestow your blessing upon this fond and deserving couple." The venerable old man was unable to utter a word for joy, he pressed Rudolph and his niece to his heart, then exclaimed: "May God and the holy angels shower down upon you the highest happiness." Rosalia and Rudolph now sunk into each others arms, and all felt themselves indescribably happy.

On the following morning, old Venningen said to them: "Children, joy yesterday, in a manner, renovated my youth; I forgot to tell you, Rudolph, that Rosalia is poor. My once wealthy family has been much reduced by war, and other untoward events. Accustomed to the old splendour which my house kept up, I never laid by any thing, particularly as my only son is well provided for by my estates; but these estates are all of them mortgaged, and I am therefore,—with the best intentions, not in a situation, to give any dowry to Rosalia." Poor Rudolph, who had hitherto only thought of love, now felt as cold as ice, upon reflecting that his

mother, who hated him bitterly, would bestow nothing on him as long as she lived; and there was every probability she might still live long enough, as she was only about fifty years old. Rosalia's eyes dwelt upon him full of expectation. He determined upon concealing nothing from her, and began by informing her, that his mother had separated from his father, that she hated him bitterly, and, therefore, never suffered him to appear before her; and upon his writing to her, before his departure from Prussia, she left the first letter he wrote unanswered, and returned the last unopened, with bitter reproaches. "She is rich:" continued he, "her fortune must come to me after her death; for I am her only son, and my grandfather Conrad,—(mentioning the family name, which, as well as that of Rudolph, is not inserted here for various reasons.) As soon as old Venningen heard this name, he clapped his hands together for joy, and exclaimed: "Praise be to God and the holy angels, for having brought you to my house!"—They were all thunderstruck.

Venningen now related the following particulars: "When Luther's doctrine was first received in Prussia, and almost every person acknowledged it, Ulric Venningen, the head of the German Order, adhered faithfully to the doctrine of his forefathers; and whoever was devoted to the good German Order, and had any of its property in his hands, as well as the priests who abandoned the country, and wished to see many treasures of the church preserved, committed them secretly to the care of the worthy Ulric. For those, who left the country, were not allowed to carry such things with them, but every thing fell to the lot of the new proprietor of the country; and all the property belonging to the German Order, which was found in the possession of any individual, was taken away from him. On this account, Ulric considered of the best means for securing such treasures, in the event of his leaving the country himself, and of afterwards secretly transferring them to Germany for the benefit of the Order. Being well acquainted with your grandfather Conrad, and knowing that, in adopting the

new doctrine, he had changed his principle, not from conviction, but for worldly advantages, which chiefly engrossed his attention, he concluded an arrangement with him, whereby Conrad was secretly to receive, and be accountable for, the treasures deposited with him; giving two receipts for them of the same tenor and date, in order that, if the one was lost the other might be forthcoming. It was stipulated that, whoever presented him such a receipt, was to have three-fourths of the treasures delivered over to him, and that he was to keep a fourth for his own trouble; if, however, he should refuse to give what he had received, the receipt was to be handed over to the Prussian authorities, who would demand the delivery of every thing, and not give him the smallest compensation for his trouble. Conrad appeared above the possibility of any suspicion attaching his honour, and soon after Ulric abandoned Prussia.”

“Fifteen years afterwards, when no person would have supposed that property of any kind belonging to the German Order existed in

Prussia, Ulric sent his cousin Ferdinand Venningen to bring away his treasure, who, in order not to cause the purport of his mission to be suspected gave himself out for a merchant, and, taking ship at Lubeck, arrived, after a pleasant voyage, at Konigsburg. The captain of the vessel, in which Ferdinand sailed, informed us of this afterwards. We have, till this day, heard nothing further about him. Whether he has been discovered, and kept in such close custody, that he has had no opportunity of sending any tidings of himself, or whether he has been destroyed, cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty; for hitherto no man has been found who possessed sufficient boldness to persist in the adventure, and go to Prussia with the second receipt; although an offer has been made to me on the part of the Order, (as Ulric gave over every thing to me at his death,) that, if I would either undertake to bring away these treasures myself from Prussia, or get them brought away by my son, we should be entitled to a second fourth of their value. God and the Holy angels have sent

you, Rudolph, to us : you have adopted our persuasion, and will certainly shew yourself worthy of the religion you profess, and assist the worthy Order. One fourth of these treasures will be sufficient to make an ample provision for you and Rosalia : and your mother, being already entitled to a fourth by the stipulation, will, however avaricious she may be, doubtless acknowledge the just demand, rather than expose herself to the risk of losing every thing by a public exposure to the Prussian authorities. I will hand over to you the necessary documents to put you in possession of the treasure : go therefore to Prussia, since God will assist you in the cause of justice.”

Rudolph perceived, from this relation of Venningen, that he would have to encounter considerable difficulties ; but love and hope alike encouraged him to proceed upon his mission. He had a faithful servant of his own, and Venningen gave him, for a guide, a man of the name of Martin, who, though not young, was still in the vigour of health, and had been a faithful and zealous servant of the house of Venningen

from his earliest years. Thus attended, Rudolph set out for the place of his destination, accompanied by the blessings of the whole family, and the prayers and tears of Rosalia. He met with nothing that could frustrate his plans upon the journey, but, when he arrived within three days distance from Konigsburg, he put up, in the evening, at an inn in a village which was crowded with peasants, who were returning from a neighbouring fair. They were all sitting round a table, and among them were two old men, talking of past times. They spoke of the manner in which the Orders had been expelled, lamented that every thing in the country had undergone a rapid change, that many noble estates had been mortgaged, and many an individual had suddenly come into possession of vast riches. "Still," said one of the old men, "I would not have upon my conscience the troubles which disturb many of them. I formerly knew a rich man, whose name was Conrad. He grew rich, but nobody could ascertain whence he derived his riches; many persons were of opinion that he came by them

through the evil spirit.—At least strange things were going on in his family.—His wife, who was once a religious, respectable matron, fell into a deep melancholy, and was constantly shedding tears, and wringing her hands. An aunt of mine, who was then a servant in the house, told me that, on her deathbed, she asked for the assistance of a priest. My aunt was running to call one, but Conrad ordered her to come back, and reproached her bitterly for her officiousness; and the poor woman went out of this world without the comforts of religion. Conrad also, who hardly ever visited the church, died suddenly, which gave rise to strange reports among the people. His daughter is still alive, and is a prey to avarice; the uncle is an exile in distant countries, and is said to have renounced our persuasion.”

Rudolph listened, attentively, to all that was said. He felt strange sensations within his breast, and went into the open air: the sky was overcast, and lightning flashed, at intervals, in the distant horizon. He stood absorbed in thought; when a sort of rustling over his head

attracted his attention. On looking up, he saw an owl hovering over him. "Art thou," said he, "according to the vulgar error, a messenger of death?—I can charge my conscience with no crime; and this life has no charms for me, deprived of my Rosalia." The following day was cloudy and rainy. Rudolph continued his journey, wrapt in profound reflection. Upon approaching an inn in the evening, he observed a Jew standing at the door. He was an old man, with a long grey beard, and was saying his evening prayer. Some persons, who were at the inn, were disposed to turn him into ridicule. Rudolph would not allow this, but desired they would leave alone the old man, who was serving his God according to the custom adopted by persons of his persuasion. The old Jew did not suffer this to pass unnoticed; and, upon Rudolph's enquiring of him whence he came, he told him he was from Amsterdam, that he was a Rabbi, and had devoted the whole of his life to the literature of his nation. Rudolph asked him in what this consisted? whereupon the Jew entered into dissertations upon various

subjects, and spoke of the Kabala as a secret science, which discovered the future.—Rudolph smiled at this : whereupon the Rabbi said : “ You need not believe in it unless you please ; but I will tell you your fortune, and you will then probably acknowledge old Mordecai to be no idle prophet.” He then took up a large book, and writing some Hebrew characters in it, mumbled certain strange words adding : “ You have escaped great danger ; your prospects have only lately brightened ; but what lies before you is melancholy and dark. Be therefore upon your guard ; since your fortune and life are in danger.”—“ Both are in the hands of God,” said Rudolph, “ therefore I enjoy consolation.”

“ He did not turn a deaf ear to the old man’s discourse, and when he came to Braunschweig the following evening, his mind felt so oppressed, that he went early the next morning to church, confessed, and took the sacrament. He continued his journey and said to his faithful Martin : “ Be it as it may, I am prepared for every thing—nay, even for death.” They arrived at Konigsburg towards the evening

and put their horses up at an inn close by the house of Rudolph's mother. He had never been in the house from his childhood, but his father had pointed it out to him. He suffered under an extraordinary perturbation of mind, when he entered it. He ordered old Martin to stand at the doorway of the house, in order to be ready to give him any assistance he might want, and which he would make known to him by some sign agreed upon between them. Rudolph knocked a considerable time at the door of the house, and when Peter opened it, he informed him that he wished to speak immediately with Madame Gertrude, and was conducted forthwith into her own room. He had occasionally got a distant glance at his mother in the early days of boyhood, but he had never exchanged a word with her; and now standing so near her side, he wished to make himself known to her, to drop at her knees, and implore her blessing. But when he cast a look upon the long haggard figure with pale, sunken cheeks, an invisible power appeared to restrain him. He said with a trembling voice: "I bring you the dutiful

respects of your son Rudolph, who is my friend."

"If nothing else brought you here, said Gertrude angrily," you might have spared yourself the trouble."

"Your son is grown a fine youth, has distinguished himself by his valour in the Turkish war, and has received a golden chain of honour, from his imperial majesty."

"And," replied she, "is become an apostate ; can you deny that ?"

"Be not angry with your son," said Rudolph. "Had you seen how he lay mortally wounded at Agram, where no priest was to be met with of your persuasion, who could give him any consolation, you would not be surprized, taken care of as he was, by the pious, honest monks, at his having availed himself of the consolation offered him, and adopted their faith."

"I have no benison for such a son," exclaimed Gertrude, "rather let my imprecation rest both on his head, and on his father's soul. He has prepared for himself his own misery by his weakness in renouncing his religion.

He dare not return to this country, for he would become an object of universal detestation and contempt, and, in leaving my fortune to others, the world will be perfectly satisfied that I have only done an act of retributive justice. You may now return, and acquaint him with my determination."

She then, with a contemptuous sneer, rose from her seat. Rudolph shuddered: he too plainly perceived that he had nothing to expect from his mother. The memory of Rosalia awakened his resolves, and he determined upon venturing every thing to recover the treasure, and declared that he was the Baron Venningen.

Gertrude's jaundiced cheek appeared still more ghastly. She answered him with an hypocritical indifference. "What have I to do with Venningen?"

"You must be aware" said Rudolph, "that Ulric Venningen, entrusted to your father a very considerable treasure, of which you are become entitled to a fourth part, for having taken care of it; and, in case of your refusal to restore it to the rightful owner, I am instructed

to make known the whole transaction to the public authorities, who will immediately take possession of the whole property, and I shall thereby secure to myself an appropriate reward for the discovery I shall have made."

She cast a furious look at Rudolph, and exclaimed: "Let whoever ventures to hint at any such thing, beware my vengeance, and the punishment due to his audacity."

"I have the seals and letters of your father in my hands," said Rudolph.

"Shew me them," said she.

He did so at a distance; "for," added he, "I will not entrust them out of my possession."

She gazed eagerly upon the parchment held before her. At times she appeared to be clenching her hand together, as if endeavouring to make a snatch at it; at others, she trembled, and said with a forced smile, "Let the Venningens have the property, so that my son is allowed no share in it. I see by these documents that you are the right owner. The whole of this treasure is carefully preserved in a vault at one of my estates. But how will you remove

it ? my servants must know nothing of it, otherwise we shall both be betrayed."

"I have with me two confidential servants," said Rudolph.

"Then we will go this day to my estate, replied Gertrude, and divide every thing. When you have seen the whole of the treasures, you will be able to consider of the best manner to be adopted for bringing them away ; I will remain at the estate, while you return to Konigsburg. You must provide horses and carriages ; your own servants must be the drivers. Come to me at midnight, and take the property into your possession, for I am glad of an opportunity of transferring it from my own hands, as I always dreaded the possibility of being betrayed. It is also no small satisfaction to me to receive my own share of it."

Rudolph called to mind young Venningen, who had been sent after the treasures, and disappeared at Konigsburg. He also reflected upon the warning given him by Mordecai. He withdrew for a few moments, stepped under the doorway to old Martin, ordered him to

saddle the horses, and to remain with Conrad, the second servant, in a bye street ; afterwards to follow the carriage slowly, and put up at the village where he would stop ; and, on the following morning, they were to endeavour to remain unobserved near the castle. If Rudolph's cap appeared at the window, it was a sign that every thing was going on well ; but, if his white pocket handkerchief was displayed, it was a warning that his person was in danger, and they were to make all possible haste to his succour.

“ And, if in the meantime you should be murdered ?” asked Martin.

“ I have a shirt of mail under my waistcoat,” replied Rudolph, “ a pair of holster pistols, and a good sword. It will not be an easy matter to do me any injury ; and, in case of extreme danger, I will discover who I am.”

Martin was satisfied with this. About midnight, Gertrude's carriage with black horses drove by. She and Rudolph got into it, attended by Hans and Peter ; while Martin and Conrad followed at a convenient distance, that they

might neither lose sight of the carriage, nor approach too near it. Rudolph observed a profound silence, and felt great anxiety at heart. Gertrude appeared inclined to sleep, when, suddenly rousing herself, she said: "What a cold night it is! as soon as we arrive, I will get some warm spiced wine prepared, and we will both comfort ourselves with it." On their arrival Gertrude ordered some refreshments to be brought, and the wine was got ready, and after Rudolph drank off the last cup of the spiced wine, which had been poured out for him, Gertrude said: "Now good night," "to-morrow morning we will do all that we have to do, and return to Konigsburg."

Rudolph then retired to his own chamber. The windows of all the rooms throughout the castle were provided with iron bars. Rudolph tried if those of his own room were fast. He bolted the door inside, examined the wainscoat and the floor to see if any concealed door was to be found, and, upon not discovering any, he was ashamed of having been so suspicious. He recommended his soul

to God, and threw himself upon his bed. He was suddenly attacked with a dreadful pain in his bowels, and the idea of his having been poisoned by his own mother, floated before his mind in all its horrors. He tried to open the door, but it was bolted on the outside. He threw open the window which looked into a large garden, cried for assistance, but nobody heard him. He endeavoured to split the door with his sword, but his strength failed him. Upon his pains encreasing, he considered himself in danger, and, agreeably to the concerted signal with Martin, he displayed a white handkerchief, fastening it to the grating outside of the window, sunk to the earth, and soon expired. At day break, Martin observing the handkerchief waving at the window, hastened to Conrad. Both got over the garden hedge; all was yet asleep. They discovered the gardener's ladder, and placed it against the open window. Martin ascended the ladder. "Jesu!" cried he, when he beheld Rudolph's body. It was no longer time to think of saving him; vengeance was all they thought of. They repaired accordingly

without delay to Konigsburg, and gave the magistrates a detailed account of all that had occurred.

Out of delicacy to a noble family, and as nothing certain could be collected from the deposition given by two unknown persons, one of the judges was sent to Gertrude's house. She was within.—upon the judge reading to her the the deposition, she inveighed against the villainy and corruption of mankind, calling her servants to witness she had not been out of the town for some days. Upon the neighbours being examined, and giving their testimony that Gertrude had returned on the preceeding evening, the suspicion, that had arisen against her, became strengthened.

Hans and Peter were sent to goal with all possible secrecy; where, being threatened with the pain of torture, they confessed the crime of which they had been guilty, and added that Conrad, with their assistance, had some years ago murdered one of the young Venningens, and concealed the body in a cellar of his house. His remains were dug after and discovered.

Rudolph's corpse was found in the same bye chamber, wherein he had died, and was given over to his servants, at their entreaty. They carried it to his native country, and buried it with appropriate honors. In a vault were found some boxes, filled with silver and golden cups, candlesticks, crosses, incensories, reliques, shrines and such church utensils, all of which, together with the estates, fell to the government of the country. Gertrude, although accused of being the murderess of her son, evinced the most hardened heart, and appeared wholly unaffected. She said death put an end to every thing, and would hear nothing about repentance. On account of her family, she was condemned only, together with Hans and Peter, to be put to death by the guillotine; and the sentence was secretly carried into execution at night-time in the castle at Konigsburg, in a subterraneous chamber which, from the secret executions which had taken place in it, had, from time immemorial, gone by the name of the criminal justice room. Martin and Conrad received a handsome sum of money for their travelling expences, and returned to Franconia.

Old Venningen and his son, but above all Rosalia, were in anxious expectation of some account from Rudolph. The last letter they had received was from Braunsberg. Their anxiety daily increased; and Venningen was no longer able to console the grieving Rosalia, for he was in need of consolation himself. One day as Rosalia was standing at the window in tears, looking towards the road, she suddenly gave a loud shriek, and sunk in a swoon. They all hastened to her relief. Young Venningen who now went to the window, saw two men on horseback, who proved to be Martin and Conrad. Upon not seeing Rudolph with them, he was filled with dreadful forebodings. Alas, there was but too good foundation for his fears, and they were soon informed of all that had passed. They ordered mass to be said repeatedly for the soul of their departed friend. Rosalia took the veil, and died some years afterwards abbess of the convent she had entered, enjoying the respect due to a saint, on account of her piety, and the acts of benevolence she performed.

Three days after the execution of Gertrude

as the watchman at Konigsburg was announcing the midnight hour, the side gate of the Castle burst open and the carriage drove out of it and returned in the same manner we have already described. Some of the neighbours, who could give no credit to what the watchman related, waited on the following night for the midnight hour, and were ocular witnesses of the monstrous and ghastly sight. The castle large and beautiful as it was, was perfectly uninhabitable ; and it therefore received the name of the haunted or enchanted castle. After the various dilapidations, which the hand of time had made in it another building was erected upon its site. No spectres were longer seen ranging about it, and all who dwelt in it led a peaceable and undisturbed life. It has, however, maintained the the name of the Enchanted Castle down to the present day.

WAKE
NOT
THE DEAD.

Wake not the Dead :—they bring but gloomy night
And cheerless desolation into day ;
For in the grave who mouldering lay,
No more can feel the influence of light,
Or yield them to the sun's prolific might ;
Let them repose within their house of clay—
Corruption, vainly wilt thou e'er essay
To quicken :—it sends forth a pest'lent blight ;
And neither fiery sun, nor bathing dew,
Nor breath of spring the dead can e'er renew.
That which from life is pluck'd, becomes the foe
Of life, and whoso wakes it waketh woe.
Seek not the dead to waken from that sleep
In which from mortal eye they lie enshrouded deep.

“ **W**ILT thou for ever sleep ? wilt thou never
more awake, my beloved ? but henceforth re-
pose for ever from thy short pilgrimage on

earth? O yet once again return! and bring back with thee the vivifying dawn of hope to one whose existence hath, since thy departure, been obscured by the dunnest shades. What! dumb? for ever dumb? Thy friend lamenteth, and thou heedest him not? He sheds bitter, scalding tears, and thou reposest unregarding his affliction? He is in despair, and thou no longer openest thy arms to him as an asylum from his grief? Say then, doth the paly shroud become thee better than the bridal veil? Is the chamber of the grave a warmer bed than the couch of love? Is the spectre death more welcome to thy arms than thy enamoured consort? O return, my beloved, return once again to this anxious, disconsolate bosom." Such were the lamentations which Walter poured forth for his Brunhilda, the partner of his youthful, passionate love: thus did he bewail over her grave at the midnight hour, what time the spirit that presides in the troublous atmosphere, sends his legions of monsters through mid-air; so that their shadows, as they flit beneath the moon and across the earth, dart as wild, agitating thoughts that

chase each other o'er the sinner's bosom :—thus did he lament under the tall linden trees by her grave, while his head reclined on the cold stone.

Walter was a powerful lord in Burgundy, who, in his earliest youth, had been smitten with the charms of the fair Brunhilda, a beauty far surpassing in loveliness all her rivals; for her tresses, dark as the raven face of night, streaming over her shoulders, set off to the utmost advantage the beaming lustre of her slender form, and the rich dye of a cheek whose tint was deep and brilliant as that of the western heaven: her eyes did not resemble those burning orbs whose pale glow gem the vault of night, and whose immeasurable distance fills the soul with deep thoughts of eternity, but rather as the sober beams which cheer this nether world, and which, while they enlighten, kindle the sons of earth to joy and love. Brunhilda became the wife of Walter, and both equally enamoured and devoted, they abandoned themselves to the enjoyment of a passion that rendered them reckless of aught besides, while it lulled them in a fascinating dream. Their sole apprehension

was less aught should awaken them from a delirium which they prayed might continue for ever. Yet how vain is the wish that would arrest the decrees of destiny! as well might it seek to divert the circling planets from their eternal course. Short was the duration of this phrenzied passion; not that it gradually decayed and subsided into apathy, but death snatched away his blooming victim, and left Walter to a widowed couch. Impetuous, however, as was his first burst of grief, he was not inconsolable, for ere long another bride became the partner of the youth.

Swanhilda also was beautiful; although nature had formed her charms on a very different model from those of Brunhilda. Her golden locks waved bright as the beams of morn: only when excited by some emotion of her soul did a rosy hue tinge the lily paleness of her cheek: her limbs were proportioned in the nicest symmetry, yet did they not possess that luxuriant fullness of animal life: her eye beamed eloquently, but it was with the milder radiance of a star tranquillizing to tenderness rather than

exciting to warmth. Thus formed, it was not possible that she should steep him in his former delirium, although she rendered happy his waking hours: tranquil and serious, yet cheerful, studying in all things her husband's pleasure, she restored order and comfort in his family, where her presence shed a general influence all around. Her mild benevolence tended to restrain the fiery, impetuous disposition of Walter: while at the same time her prudence recalled him in some degree from his vain, turbulent wishes, and his aspirings after unattainable enjoyments, to the duties and pleasures of actual life. Swanhilda bore her husband two children, a son and a daughter; the latter was mild and patient as her mother, well contented with her solitary sports, and even in these recreations displayed the serious turn of her character. The boy possessed his father's fiery, restless disposition, tempered, however, with the solidity of his mother. Attached by his offspring more tenderly towards their mother, Walter now lived for several years very happily: his thoughts would frequently, indeed, recur to Brunhilda, but without their

former violence, merely as we dwell upon the memory of a friend of our earlier days, borne from us on the rapid current of time to a region where we know that he is happy.

But clouds dissolve into air, flowers fade, the sand of the hour-glass runs imperceptibly away, and even so, do human feelings dissolve, fade, and pass away, and with them too, human happiness. Walter's inconstant breast again sighed for the extatic dreams of those days which he had spent with his equally romantic, enamoured Brunhilda: again did she present herself to his ardent fancy in all the glow of her bridal charms, and he began to draw a parallel between the past and the present; nor did imagination, as it is wont, fail to array the former in her brightest hues, while it proportionably obscured the latter; so that he pictured to himself, the one much more rich in enjoyment, and the other, much less so than they really were. This change in her husband did not escape Swanhilda; whereupon, redoubling her attentions towards him, and her cares towards their children, she expected, by this means, to re-

unite the knot that was slackened; yet the more she endeavoured to regain his affections, the colder did he grow,—the more intolerable did her caresses seem, and the more continually did the image of Brunhilda haunt his thoughts. The children, whose endearments were now become indispensable to him, alone stood between the parents as genii eager to effect a reconciliation; and, beloved by them both, formed a uniting link between them. Yet, as evil can be plucked from the heart of man, only ere its root has yet struck deep, its fangs being afterwards too firm to be eradicated; so was Walter's diseased fancy too far affected to have its disorder stopped, for, in a short time it completely tyrannized over him. Frequently of a night, instead of retiring to his consort's chamber, he repaired to Brunhilda's grave, where he murmured forth his discontent, saying: ‘Wilt thou sleep for ever?’”

One night as he was thus reclining on the turf, indulging in his wonted sorrow, a sorcerer from the neighbouring mountains, entered into this field of death for the purpose of gathering, for

his mystic spells; such herbs as grow only from the earth wherein the dead repose, and which, as if the last production of mortality, are gifted with a powerful and supernatural influence. The sorcerer perceived the mourner, and approached the spot where he was lying.

“Wherefore, fond wretch, dost thou grieve thus, for what is now a hideous mass of mortality—mere bones, and nerves, and veins? Nations have fallen unlamented; even worlds themselves, long ere this globe of ours was created, have mouldered into nothing; nor hath any one wept over them: why then should thou indulge this vain affliction for a child of the dust—a being as frail as thyself, and like thee the creature but of a moment?”

Walter raised himself up:—“Let you worlds that shine in the firmament” replied he, “lament for each other as they perish. It is true, that I who am myself clay, lament for my fellow-clay: yet is this clay impregnated with a fire,—with an essence, that none of the elements of creation possess—with love: and this divine passion, I felt for her who now sleepeth beneath this sod.”

“Will thy complaints awaken her : or could they do so, would she not soon upbraid thee for having disturbed that repose in which she now is hushed ?”

“Avaunt, cold-hearted being : thou knowest not what is love. Oh ! that my tears could wash away the earthy covering that conceals her from these eyes ;—that my groan of anguish could rouse her from her slumber of death !—No, she would not again seek her earthy couch.”

“Insensate that thou art, and couldst thou endure to gaze without shuddering on one disgorged from the jaws of the grave ? Art thou too thyself the same from whom she parted ; or hath time passed o’er thy brow and left no traces there ? Would not thy love rather be converted into hate and disgust ?”

“Say rather that the stars would leave you firmament, that the sun will henceforth refuse to shed his beams through the heavens. O that she stood once more before me ;—that once again she reposed on this bosom !—how quickly should we then forget that death or time had ever stepped between us.”

“Delusion ! mere delusion of the brain, from heated blood, like to that which arises from the fumes of wine. It is not my wish to tempt thee ;—to restore to thee thy dead ; else wouldst thou soon feel that I have spoken sooth.”

“How ! restore her to me,” exclaimed Walter casting himself at the sorcerer’s feet. “Oh ! if thou art indeed able to effect that, grant it to my earnest supplication ; if one throb of human feeling vibrates in thy bosom, let my tears prevail with thee : restore me my beloved ; so shalt thou hereafter bless the deed, and see that it was a good work.”

“A good work ! a blessed deed !”—returned the sorcerer with a smile of scorn ; “for me there exists nor good, nor evil ; since my will is always the same. Ye alone know evil, who will that which ye would not. It is indeed in my power to restore her to thee : yet, bethink thee well, whether it will prove thy weal. Consider too, how deep the abyss between life and death ; across this, my power can build a bridge, but it can never fill up the frightful chasm.”

Walter would have spoken, and have sought to prevail on this powerful being by fresh entreaties, but the latter prevented him, saying: "Peace! bethink thee well! and return hither to me to-morrow at midnight. Yet once more do I warn thee, 'wake not the dead.'"

Having uttered these words, the mysterious being disappeared. Intoxicated with fresh hope, Walter found no sleep on his couch; for fancy, prodigal of her richest stores, expanded before him the glittering web of futurity; and his eye, moistened with the dew of rapture, glanced from one vision of happiness to another. During the next day he wandered through the woods, lest wonted objects by recalling the memory of later and less happier times, might disturb the blissful idea, that he should again behold her—again fold her in his arms, gaze on her beaming brow by day, repose on her bosom at night: and, as this sole idea filled his imagination, how was it possible that the least doubt should arise; or that the warning of the mysterious old man should recur to his thoughts.

No sooner did the midnight hour approach,

than he hastened towards the grave-field where the sorcerer was already standing by that of Brunhilda. "Hast thou maturely considered?" enquired he.

"Oh! restore to me the object of my ardent passion," exclaimed Walter with impetuous eagerness. "Delay not thy generous action, lest I die even this night, consumed with disappointed desire; and behold her face no more."

"Well then, answered the old man," return hither again to-morrow at the same hour. But once more do I give thee this friendly warning, 'wake not the dead.'"

In all the despair of impatience, Walter would have prostrated himself at his feet, and supplicated him to fulfill at once a desire now increased to agony; but the sorcerer had already disappeared. Pouring forth his lamentations more wildly and impetuously than ever, he lay upon the grave of his adored one, until the grey dawn streaked the east. During the day, which seemed to him longer than any he had ever experienced, he wandered to and fro, restless and impatient, seemingly without any

object, and deeply buried in his own reflections, inquiet as the murderer who meditates his first deed of blood: and the stars of evening found him once more at the appointed spot. At midnight the sorcerer was there also.

“Hast thou yet maturely deliberated?” enquired he, “as on the preceding night?”

“On what should I deliberate?” returned Walter impatiently. “I need not to deliberate: what I demand of thee, is that which thou hast promised me—that which will prove my bliss. Or dost thou but mock me? if so, hence from my sight, lest I be tempted to lay my hand on thee.”

“Once more do I warn thee,” answered the old man with undisturbed composure, ‘wake not the dead’—let her rest.”

“Aye, but not in the cold grave: she shall rather rest on this bosom which burns with eagerness to clasp her.”

“Reflect, thou may’st not quit her until death, even though aversion and horror should seize thy heart. There would then remain only one horrible means.”

“Dotard!” cried Walter,” interrupting him, “how may I hate that which I love with such intensity of passion? how should I abhor that for which my every drop of blood is boiling?”

“Then be it even as thou wishest,” answered the sorcerer; “step back.”

The old man now drew a circle round the grave, all the while muttering words of enchantment. Immediately the storm began to howl among the tops of the trees; owls flapped their wings, and uttered their low voice of omen; the stars hid their mild, beaming aspect, that they might not behold so unholy and impious a spectacle; the stone then rolled from the grave with a hollow sound, leaving a free passage for the inhabitant of that dreadful tenement. The sorcerer scattered into the yawning earth, roots and herbs of most magic power, and of most penetrating odour, so that the worms crawling forth from the earth congregated together, and raised themselves in a fiery column over the grave: while rushing wind burst from the earth, scattering the mould before it, until at length the coffin lay uncovered.

The moon-beams fell on it, and the lid burst open with a tremendous sound. Upon this the sorcerer poured upon it some blood from out of a human skull, exclaiming at the same time:—
“Drink, sleeper, of this warm stream, that thy heart may again beat within thy bosom.” And, after a short pause, shedding on her some other mystic liquid, he cried aloud with the voice of one inspired: “Yes, thy heart beats once more with the flood of life: thine eye is again opened to sight. Arise, therefore, from thy tomb.”

As an island suddenly springs forth from the dark waves of the ocean, raised upwards from the deep by the force of subterraneous fires, so did Brunhilda start from her earthy couch, borne forward by some invisible power. Taking her by the hand, the sorcerer led her towards Walter, who stood at some little distance, rooted to the ground with amazement.

“Receive again,” said he, “the object of thy passionate sighs: mayest thou never more require my aid; should that however happen, so wilt thou find me, during the full of the

moon, upon the mountains in that spot and where the three roads meet.”

Instantly did Walter recognize in the form that stood before him, her whom he so ardently loved; and a sudden glow shot through his frame at finding her thus restored to him: yet the night-frost had chilled his limbs and palsied his tongue. For a while he gazed upon her without either motion or speech, and during this pause, all was again become hushed and serene; and the stars shone brightly in the clear heavens.

“Walter!” exclaimed the figure; and at once the well-known sound, thrilling to his heart, broke the spell by which he was bound.

“Is it reality? is it truth?” cried he, “or a cheating delusion?”

“No, it is no imposture: I am really living:—conduct me quickly to thy castle in the mountains.”

Walter looked around: the old man had disappeared, but he perceived close by his side, a coal-black steed of fiery eye, ready equipped to conduct him thence; and on his back lay all

proper attire for Brunhilda, who lost no time in arraying herself. This being done, she cried: "Haste, let us away ere the dawn breaks, for my eye is yet too weak to endure the light of day." Fully recovered from his stupor, Walter leaped into his saddle, and catching up, with a mingled feeling of delight and awe, the beloved being thus mysteriously restored from the power of the grave, he spurred on across the wild, towards the mountains, as furiously as if pursued by the shadows of the dead, hastening to recover from him their sister.

The castle to which Walter conducted his Brunhilda, was situated on a rock between other rocks rising up above it. Here they arrived, unseen by any, save one aged domestic, on whom Walter imposed secrecy by the severest threats.

"Here will we tarry," said Brunhilda, "until I can endure the light, and until thou canst look upon me without trembling: as if struck with a cold chill." They accordingly continued to make that place their abode: yet no one knew that Brunhilda existed, save only that

aged attendant, who provided their meals. During seven entire days, they had no light except that of tapers; during the next seven, the light was admitted through the lofty casements only while the rising or setting-sun faintly illumined the mountain-tops, the valleys being still enveloped in shade.

Seldom did Walter quit Brunhilda's side: a nameless spell seemed to attach him to her; even the shudder which he felt in her presence, and which would not permit him to touch her, was not unmixed with pleasure, like that thrilling, awful emotion felt when strains of sacred music float under the vault of some temple; he rather sought, therefore, than avoided this feeling. Often too as he had indulged in calling to mind the beauties of Brunhilda, she had never appeared so fair, so fascinating, so admirable when depicted by his imagination, as when now beheld in reality. Never till now had her voice sounded with such tones of sweetness; never before did her language possess such eloquence as it now did, when she conversed with him on the subject

of the past. And this was the magic fairy-land towards which her words constantly conducted him. Ever did she dwell upon the days of their first love, those hours of delight which they had participated together when the one derived all enjoyment from the other: and so rapturous, so enchanting, so full of life did she recall to his imagination that blissful season, that he even doubted whether he had ever experienced with her so much felicity, or had been so truly happy. And, while she thus vividly pourtrayed their hours of past delight, she delineated in still more glowing, more enchanting colours, those hours of approaching bliss which now awaited them, richer in enjoyment than any preceding ones. In this manner did she charm her attentive auditor with enrapturing hopes for the future, and lull him in dreams of more than mortal extacy; so that while he listened to her syren strain, he entirely forgot how little blissful was the latter period of their union, when he had often sighed at her imperiousness, and at her harshness both to himself and all his household. Yet even had

he recalled this to mind would it have disturbed him in his present delirious trance? Had she not now left behind in the grave all the frailty of mortality? Was she not cheerful as the morning hour in spring—affectionate and mild as the last beams of an autumnal sun? Was not her whole being refined and purified by that long sleep in which neither passion nor sin had approached her even in dreams? How different now was the subject of her discourse! Only when speaking of her affection for him, did she betray any thing of earthly feeling: at other times, she uniformly dwelt upon themes relating to the invisible and future world; when in descanting and declaring the mysteries of eternity, a stream of prophetic eloquence would burst from her lips.

In this manner had twice seven days elapsed, and, for the first time, Walter beheld the being now dearer to him than ever, in the full light of day. Every trace of the grave had disappeared from her countenance: a roseate tinge like the ruddy streaks of dawn again beamed on her pallid cheek; the faint, mouldering

taint of the grave was changed into a delightful violet scent; the only sign of earth that never disappeared. He no longer felt either apprehension or awe, as he gazed upon her in the sunny light of day: it was not until now, that he seemed to have recovered her completely; and, glowing with all his former passion towards her, he would have pressed her to his bosom, but she gently repulsed him, saying: "Not yet: spare your caresses until the moon has again filled her horn."

Spite of his impatience, Walter was obliged to await the lapse of another period of seven days; but, on the night when the moon was arrived at the full, he hastened to Brunhilda, whom he found more lovely than she had ever appeared before. Fearing no obstacles to his transports, he embraced her with all the fervour of a deeply-enamoured and successful lover. Brunhilda, however, still refused to yield to his passion. "What!" exclaimed she, "is it fitting that I who have been purified by death from the frailty of mortality, should become thy concubine, while a mere daughter of the earth bears the

title of thy wife: never shall it be. No, it must be within the walls of thy palace, within that chamber where I once reigned as queen, that thou obtainest the end of thy wishes,—and of mine also,” added she, imprinting a glowing kiss on his lips, and immediately disappeared.

Heated with passion, and determined to sacrifice every thing to the accomplishment of his desires, Walter hastily quitted the apartment, and shortly after the castle itself. He travelled over mountain and cross heath, with the rapidity of a storm, so that the turf was flung up by his horse's hoofs; nor once stopped until he arrived home.

Here, however, neither the affectionate caresses of Swanhilda, or those of his children could touch his heart, or induce him to restrain his furious desires. Alas! is the impetuous torrent to be checked in its devastating course by the beauteous flowers over which it rushes, when they exclaim: “Destroyer, commiserate our helpless innocence and beauty, nor lay us waste?”—the stream sweeps over them un-

regarding, and a single moment annihilates the pride of a whole summer.

Shortly afterwards, did Walter begin to hint to Swanhilda, that they were ill-suited to each other;—that he was anxious to taste that wild, tumultuous life, so well according with the spirit of his sex, while she, on the contrary, was satisfied with the monotonous circle of household enjoyments:—that he was eager for whatever promised novelty, while she felt most attached to what was familiarized to her by habit; and lastly, that her cold disposition, bordering upon indifference, but ill assorted with his ardent temperament: it was therefore more prudent that they should seek apart from each other, that happiness which they could not find together. A sigh, and a brief acquiescence in his wishes was all the reply that Swanhilda made: and, on the following morning upon his presenting her with a paper of separation, informing her that she was at liberty to return home to her father, she received it most submissively: yet, ere she departed, she gave him the following warning: “Too well do I conjecture

to whom I am indebted for this our separation. Often have I seen thee at Brunhilda's grave, and beheld thee there even on that night when the face of the heavens was suddenly enveloped in a veil of clouds. Hast thou rashly dared to tear aside the awful veil that separates the mortality that dreams, from that which dreameth not, O! then woe to thee, thou wretched man, for thou hast attached to thyself that which will prove thy destruction." She ceased: nor did Walter attempt any reply, for the similar admonition uttered by the sorcerer flashed upon his mind, all obscured as it was by passion, just as the lightning glares momentarily through the gloom of night without dispersing the obscurity.

Swanhilda then departed, in order to pronounce to her children, a bitter farewell, for they, according to the custom of his nation, belonged to the father; and, having bathed them in her tears, and consecrated them with the holy water of maternal love, she quitted her husband's residence, and departed to the home of her fathers.

Thus was the kind and benevolent Swanhilda, driven an exile from those halls, where she had presided with such grace ;—from halls which were now newly decorated to receive another mistress. The day at length arrived, on which Walter, for the second time, conducted Brunhilda home, as a newly-made bride. And he caused it to be reported among his domestics, that his new consort had gained his affections by her extraordinary likeness to Brunhilda, their former mistress. How ineffably happy did he deem himself, as he conducted his beloved once more into the chamber which had often witnessed their former joys, and which was now newly gilded and adorned in a most costly style : among the other decorations were figures of angels scattering roses, which served to support the purple draperies, whose ample folds o'ershadowed the nuptial couch. With what impatience did he await the hour that was to put him in possession of those beauties, for which he had already paid so high a price, but, whose enjoyment was to cost him most dearly yet ! Unfortunate Walter ! revelling in bliss, thou

beholdest not the abyss that yawns beneath thy feet, intoxicated with the luscious perfume of the flower thou hast plucked, thou little deemest how deadly is the venom with which it is fraught, although, for a short season, its potent fragrance bestows new energy on all thy feelings.

Happy however, as Walter now was, his household were far from being equally so. The strange resemblance between their new lady and the deceased Brunhilda, filled them with a secret dismay,—an undefinable horror; for there was not a single difference of feature, of tone of voice, or of gesture. To add too to these mysterious circumstances, her female attendants discovered a particular mark on her back, exactly like one which Brunhilda had. A report was now soon circulated, that their lady was no other than Brunhilda herself, who had been recalled to life by the power of necromancy. How truly horrible was the idea of living under the same roof with one who had been an inhabitant of the tomb, and of being obliged to attend upon her, and acknowledge her as

mistress! There was also in Brunhilda, much to increase this aversion, and favour their superstition: no ornaments of gold ever decked her person; all that others were wont to wear of this metal, she had formed of silver: no richly coloured, and sparkling jewels glittered upon her; pearls alone, lent their pale lustre to adorn her bosom. Most carefully did she always avoid the cheerful light of the sun, and was wont to spend the brightest days in the most retired and gloomy apartments: only during the twilight of the commencing, or declining day did she ever walk abroad, but her favourite hour was, when the phantom light of the moon bestowed on all objects a shadowy appearance, and a sombre hue; always too at the crowing of the cock, an involuntary shudder was observed to seize her limbs. Imperious as before her death, she quickly imposed her iron yoke on every one around her, while she seemed even far more terrible than ever, since a dread of some supernatural power attached to her, appalled all who approached her. A malignant withering glance seemed to shoot

from her eye on the unhappy object of her wrath, as if it would annihilate its victim. In short, those halls which, in the time of Swanhilda were the residence of cheerfulness and mirth, now resembled an extensive desert tomb. With fear imprinted on their pale countenances, the domestics glided through the apartments of the castle; and, in this abode of terror, the crowing of the cock caused the living to tremble, as if they were the spirits of the departed; for the sound always reminded them of their mysterious mistress. There was no one but who shuddered at meeting her in a lonely place, in the dusk of evening, or by the light of the moon, a circumstance that was deemed to be ominous of some evil: so great was the apprehension of her female attendants, that they pined in continual disquietude, and, by degrees, all quitted her. In the course of time even others of the domestics fled, for an insupportable horror had seized them.

The art of the sorcerer had indeed bestowed upon Brunhilda an artificial life, and due nourishment had continued to support the re-

stored body; yet, this body was not able of itself to keep up the genial glow of vitality, and to nourish the flame whence springs all the affections and passions, whether of love or hate; for death had for ever destroyed and withered it: all that Brunhilda now possessed was a chilled existence, colder than that of the snake. It was nevertheless necessary that she should love, and return with equal ardour the warm caresses of her spell-enthralled husband, to whose passion alone she was indebted for her renewed existence. It was necessary that a magic draught should animate the dull current in her veins, and awaken her to the glow of life and the flame of love—a potion of abomination—one not even to be named without a curse—human blood, imbibed whilst yet warm, from the veins of youth. This was the hellish drink for which she thirsted: possessing no sympathy with the purer feelings of humanity; deriving no enjoyment from aught that interests in life, and occupies its varied hours; her existence was a mere blank, unless when in the arms of her paramour husband, and therefore

was it that she craved incessantly after the horrible draught. It was even with the utmost effort that she could forbear sucking even the blood of Walter himself, as he reclined beside her. Whenever she beheld some innocent child, whose lovely face denoted the exuberance of infantine health and vigour, she would entice it by soothing words and fond caresses into her most secret apartment, where, lulling it to sleep in her arms, she would suck from its bosom the warm, purple tide of life. Nor were youths of either sex safe from her horrid attack: having first breathed upon her unhappy victim, who never failed immediately to sink into a lengthened sleep, she would then in a similar manner drain his veins of the vital juice. Thus children, youths, and maidens quickly faded away, as flowers gnawn by the cankering worm: the fullness of their limbs disappeared; a sallow hue succeeded to the rosy freshness of their cheeks, the liquid lustre of the eye was deadened, even as the sparkling stream when arrested by the touch of frost; and their locks became thin and grey, as if

already ravaged by the storm of life. Parents beheld with horror this desolating pestilence devouring their offspring; nor could simple or charm, potion or amulet avail aught against it. The grave swallowed up one after the other; or did the miserable victim survive, he became cadaverous and wrinkled even in the very moru of existence. Parents observed with horror, this devastating pestilence snatch away their offspring—a pestilence which, nor herb however potent, nor charm, nor holy taper, nor exorcism could avert. They either beheld their children sink one after the other into the grave, or their youthful forms withered by the unholy, vampire embrace of Brunhilda assume the decrepitude of sudden age.

At length strange surmises and reports began to prevail; it was whispered that Brunhilda herself was the cause of all these horrors; although no one could pretend to tell in what manner she destroyed her victims, since no marks of violence were discernable. Yet when young children confessed that she had frequently lulled them asleep in her arms, and elder ones

said that a sudden slumber had come upon them whenever she began to converse with them, suspicion became converted into certainty, and those whose offspring had hitherto escaped unharmed, quitted their hearths and home—all their little possessions—the dwellings of their fathers and the inheritance of their children, in order to rescue from so horrible a fate those who were dearer to their simple affections than aught else the world could give.

Thus did the castle daily assume a more desolate appearance; daily did its environs become more deserted: none but a few aged decrepid old women and grey-headed menials were to be seen remaining of the once numerous retinue. Such will, in the latter days of the earth, be the last generation of mortals, when child-bearing shall have ceased, when youth shall no more be seen, nor any arise to replace those who shall await their fate in silence.

Walter alone noticed not, or heeded not, the desolation around him; he apprehended not death, lapped as he was in a glowing elysium

of love Far more happy than formerly did he now seem in the possession of Brunhilda. All those caprices and frowns which had been wont to overcloud their former union had now entirely disappeared. She even seemed to dote on him with a warmth of passion that she had never exhibited even during the happy season of bridal love; for the flame of that youthful blood, of which she drained the veins of others, rioted in her own. At night, as soon as he closed his eyes, she would breathe on him till he sank into delicious dreams, from which he awoke only to experience more rapturous enjoyments. By day she would continually discourse with him on the bliss experienced by happy spirits beyond the grave, assuring them that, as his affection had recalled her from the tomb, they were now irrevocably united. Thus fascinated by a continual spell, it was not possible that he should perceive what was taking place around him. Brunhilda, however, foresaw with savage grief that the source of her youthful ardour was daily decreasing, for, in a short time, there remained nothing gifted with youth, save Walter

and his children, and these latter she resolved should be her next victims.

On her first return to the castle, she had felt an aversion towards the offspring of another, and therefore abandoned them entirely to the attendants appointed by Swanhilda. Now, however, she began to pay considerable attention to them, and caused them to be frequently admitted into her presence. The aged nurses were filled with dread at perceiving these marks of regard from her towards their young charges, yet dared they not to oppose the will of their terrible and imperious mistress. Soon did Brunhilda gain the affection of the children, who were too unsuspecting of all guile to apprehend any danger from her; on the contrary, her caresses won them completely to her. Instead of ever checking their mirthful gambols, she would rather instruct them in new sports; often too did she recite to them tales of such strange and wild interest as to exceed all the stories of their nurses. Were they wearied either with play or with listening to her narratives, she would take them on her knees and

lull them to slumber. Then did visions of the most surpassing magnificence attend their dreams: they would fancy themselves in some garden, where flowers of every hue rose in rows one above the other, from the humble violet to the tall sun-flower, forming a party-coloured broidery of every hue, sloping upwards towards the golden clouds, where little angels, whose wings sparkled with azure and gold, descended to bring them delicious cates, or splendid jewels; or sung to them soothing melodious hymns. So delightful did these dreams in short time become to the children, that they longed for nothing so eagerly as to slumber on Brunhilda's lap, for never did they else enjoy such visions of heavenly forms. Thus were they most anxious for that which was to prove their destruction:—yet do we not all aspire after that which conducts us to the grave—after the enjoyment of life? These innocents stretched out their arms to approaching death, because it assumed the mask of pleasure; for, while they were lapped in these exstatic slumbers, Brunhilda sucked the life-stream from

their bosoms. On waking, indeed, they felt themselves faint and exhausted, yet did no pain, nor any mark betray the cause. Shortly, however, did their strength entirely fail, even as the summer brook is gradually dried up: their sports became less and less noisy; their loud, frolicksome laughter was converted into a faint smile; the full tones of their voices died away into a mere whisper. Their attendants were filled with horror and despair; too well did they conjecture the dreadful truth, yet dared not to impart their suspicions to Walter, who was so devotedly attached to his horrible partner. Death had already smote his prey: the children were but the mere shadows of their former selves, and even this shadow quickly disappeared.

The anguished father deeply bemoaned their loss, for, notwithstanding his apparent neglect, he was strongly attached to them, nor until he had experienced their loss, was he aware that his love was so great. His affliction could not fail to excite the displeasure of Brunhilda: "Why dost thou lament so fondly," said she,

“ for these little ones ? What satisfaction could such unformed beings yield to thee, unless thou wert still attached to their mother ? Thy heart then is still hers ? Or dost thou now regret her and them, because thou art satiated with my fondness, and weary of my endearments ? Had these young ones grown up, would they not have attached thee, thy spirit and thy affections more closely to this earth of clay—to this dust, and have alienated thee from that sphere to which I, who have already passed the grave, endeavour to raise thee ? Say is thy spirit so lumpish, or thy love so weak, or thy faith so hollow, that the hope of being mine for ever is unable to touch thee ?” Thus did Brunhilda express her indignation at her consort’s grief, and forbade him her presence. The fear of offending her beyond forgiveness, and his anxiety to appease her soon dried up his tears ; and he again abandoned himself to his fatal passion, until approaching destruction, at length awakened him from his delusion.

Neither maiden, nor youth, was any longer to be seen, either within the dreary walls of the

castle, or the adjoining territory:—all had disappeared; for those whom the grave had not swallowed up, had fled from the region of death. Who, therefore, now remained to quench the horrible thirst of the female vampire, save Walter himself? and his death she dared to contemplate unmoved; for that divine sentiment that unites two beings in one joy and one sorrow was unknown to her bosom. Was he in his tomb, so was she free to search out other victims, and glut herself with destruction, until she herself should, at the last day, be consumed with the earth itself: such is the fatal law, to which the dead are subject, when awoke by the arts of necromancy from the sleep of the grave.

She now began to fix her blood-thirsty lips on Walter's breast, when cast into a profound sleep by the odour of her violet breath, he reclined beside her quite unconscious of his impending fate: yet soon did his vital powers begin to decay; and many a grey hair peeped through his raven locks. With his strength, his passion also declined; and he now fre-

quently left her in order to pass the whole day in the sports of the chase, hoping thereby, to regain his wonted vigour. As he was reposing one day in a wood beneath the shade of an oak, he perceived, on the summit of a tree, a bird of strange appearance, and quite unknown to him; but, before he could take aim at it with his bow, it flew away into the clouds; at the same time, letting fall a rose-coloured root which dropped at Walter's feet, who immediately took it up, and, although he was well acquainted with almost every plant, he could not remember to have seen any at all resembling this. Its delightfully odoriferous scent induced him to try its flavour, but ten times more bitter than wormwood, it was even as gall in his mouth; upon which, impatient of the disappointment, he flung it away with violence. Had he, however, been aware of its miraculous quality, and that it acted as a counter-charm against the opiate perfume of Brunhilda's breath, he would have blessed it spite of its bitterness: thus do mortals often blindly cast away in displeasure, the

unsavoury remedy that would otherwise work their weal.

When Walter returned home in the evening, and laid him down to repose as usual by Brunhilda's side, the magic power of her breath produced no effect upon him; and, for the first time during many months did he close his eyes in a natural slumber. Yet hardly had he fallen asleep, ere a pungent, smarting pain disturbed him from his dreams; and, opening his eyes, he discerned, by the gloomy rays of a lamp, that glimmered in the apartment, what for some moments transfixed him quite aghast, for it was Brunhilda, drawing with her lips, the warm blood from his bosom. The wild cry of horror which at length escaped him, terrified Brunhilda, whose mouth was besmeared with the warm blood. "Monster!" exclaimed he, springing from the couch, "is it thus that you love me?" "Aye, even as the dead love," replied she, with a malignant coldness.

"Creature of blood!" continued Walter, "the delusion which has so long blinded me is at an end: thou art the fiend who hast destroyed

my children—who hast murdered the offspring of my vassals.” Raising herself upwards, and, at the same time, casting on him a glance that froze him to the spot with dread, she replied: “It is not I who have murdered them:—I was obliged to pamper myself with warm youthful blood, in order that I might satisfy thy furious desires—thou art the murderer!”—These dreadful words summoned, before Walter’s terrified conscience, the threatening shades of all those who had thus perished; while despair choked his voice. “Why,” continued she, in a tone that increased his horror, “why dost thou make mouths at me like a puppet? Thou who hadst the courage to love the dead—to take into thy bed, one who had been sleeping in the grave, the bed-fellow of the worm—who hast clasped in thy lustful arms, the corruption of the tomb—dost thou, unhallowed as thou art, now raise this hideous cry for the sacrifice of a few lives?—They are but leaves swept from their branches by a storm.—Come, chase these idiot fancies, and taste the bliss thou hast so dearly purchased.” So saying, she

extended her arms towards him ; but this motion served only to increase his terror, and exclaiming: " Accursed Being,"—he rushed out of the apartment.

All the horrors of a guilty, upbraiding conscience became his companions, now that he was awakened from the delirium of his unholy pleasures. Frequently did he curse his own obstinate blindness, for having given no heed to the hints and admonitions of his children's nurses, but treating them as vile calumnies. But his sorrow was now too late, for, although repentance may gain pardon for the sinner, it cannot alter the immutable decrees of fate—it cannot recall the murdered from the tomb. No sooner did the first break of dawn appear, than he sat out for his lonely castle in the mountains, determined no longer to abide under the same roof with so terrific a being ; yet vain was his flight, for, on waking the following morning, he perceived himself in Brunhilda's arms, and quite entangled in her long raven tresses, which seemed to involve him, and bind him in the fetters of his fate ; the powerful fascination of

her breath held him still more captivated, so that, forgetting all that had passed, he returned her caresses, until awakening as if from a dream he recoiled in unmixed horror from her embrace. During the day he wandered through the solitary wilds of the mountains, as a culprit seeking an asylum from his pursuers; and, at night, retired to the shelter of a cave; fearing less to couch himself within such a dreary place, than to expose himself to the horror of again meeting Brunhilda; but, alas! it was in vain that he endeavoured to flee her. Again, when he awoke, he found her the partner of his miserable bed. Nay, had he sought the centre of the earth as his hiding place; had he even imbedded himself beneath rocks, or formed his chamber in the recesses of the ocean, still had he found her his constant companion; for, by calling her again into existence, he had rendered himself inseparably hers; so fatal were the links that united them.

Struggling with the madness that was beginning to seize him, and brooding incessantly on the ghastly visions that presented them-

selves to his horror stricken-mind, he lay motionless in the gloomiest recesses of the woods, even from the rise of sun till the shades of eve. But, no sooner was the light of day extinguished in the west, and the woods buried in impenetrable darkness, than the apprehension of resigning himself to sleep drove him forth among the open mountains. The storm played wildly with the fantastic clouds, and with the rattling leaves, as they were caught up into the air, as if some dread spirit was sporting with these images of transitoriness and decay: it roared among the summits of the oaks as if uttering a voice of fury, while its hollow sound rebounding among the distant hills, seemed as the moans of a departing sinner, or as the faint cry of some wretch expiring under the murderer's hand: the owl too, uttered its ghastly cry as if forboding the wreck of nature. Walter's hair flew disorderly in the wind, like black snakes wreathing around his temples and shoulders; while each sense was awake to catch fresh horror. In the clouds he seemed to behold the forms of the murdered; in the

howling wind to hear their laments and groans; in the chilling blast itself he felt the dire kiss of Brunhilda; in the cry of the screeching bird he heard her voice; in the mouldering leaves he scented the charnel-bed out of which he had awakened her. "Murderer of thy own offspring," exclaimed he in a voice making night, and the conflict of the element still more hideous, "paramour of a blood-thirsty vampire, reveller with the corruption of the tomb!" while in his despair he rent the wild locks from his head. Just then the full moon darted from beneath the bursting clouds; and this sight recalled to his remembrance the advice of the sorcerer, when he trembled at the first apparition of Brunhilda rising from her sleep of death;—namely, to seek him, at the season of the full moon, in the mountains, where three roads met. Scarcely had this gleam of hope broke in on his bewildered mind than he flew to the appointed spot.

On his arrival, Walter found the old man seated there upon a stone, as calmly as though it had been a bright sunny day, and completely

regardless of the uproar around. "Art thou come then?" exclaimed he to the breathless wretch, who, flinging himself at his feet, cried in a tone of anguish: "Oh save me—succour me—rescue me from the monster that scattereth death and desolation around her."

"I am acquainted with all," returned the sorcerer; "thou now perceivest how wholesome was the advice—'WAKE NOT THE DEAD.'"

"And wherefore a mere mysterious warning? why didst thou not rather disclose to me, at once, all the horrors that awaited my sacrilegious profanation of the grave?"

"Wert thou able to listen to any other voice than that of thy impetuous passions? Did not thy eager impatience shut my mouth at the very moment I would have cautioned thee?"

"True, true:—thy reproof is just: but what does it avail now;—I need the promptest aid."

"Well," replied the old man, "there remains even yet a means of rescuing thyself, but it is fraught with horror, and demands all thy resolution."

"Utter it then, utter it; for what can be more

appalling, more hideous than the misery I now endure?"

"Know then," continued the sorcerer, "that only on the night of the new moon, does she sleep the sleep of mortals; and then all the supernatural power which she inherits from the grave totally fails her. 'Tis then that thou must murder her."

"How! murder her!" echoed Walter.

"Aye," returned the old man calmly, "pierce her bosom with a sharpened dagger, which I will furnish thee with; at the same time renounce her memory for ever, swearing never to think of her intentionally, and that, if thou dost involuntarily, thou wilt repeat the curse."

"Most horrible! yet what can be more horrible than she herself is?—I'll do it."

"Keep then this resolution until the next new moon."

"What, must I wait until then?" cried Walter, "alas ere then, either her savage thirst for blood will have forced me into the night of the tomb, or horror will have driven me into the night of madness."

"Nay," replied the sorcerer, "that I can

prevent ;” and, so saying, he conducted him to a cavern further among the mountains. “ Abide here twice seven days,” said he ; “ so long can I protect thee against her deadly caresses. Here wilt thou find all due provision for thy wants ; but take heed that nothing tempt thee to quit this place. Farewell, when the moon renews itself, then do I repair hither again.” So saying, the sorcerer drew a magic circle around the cave, and then immediately disappeared.

Twice seven days did Walter continue in this solitude, where his companions were his own terrifying thoughts, and his bitter repentance. The present was all desolate and dread ; the future presented the image of a horrible deed, which he must perforce commit ; while the past was empoisoned by the memory of his guilt. Did he think on his former happy union with Brunhilda, her horrible image presented itself to his imagination with her lips defiled with dropping blood : or, did he call to mind the peaceful days he had passed with Swanhilda, he beheld her sorrowful spirit, with

the shadows of her murdered children. Such were the horrors that attended him by day : those of night were still more dreadful, for then he beheld Brunhilda herself, who, wandering round the magic circle which she could not pass, called upon his name, till the cavern re-echoed the horrible sound. "Walter, my beloved," cried she, wherefore dost thou avoid me ? art thou not mine ? for ever mine—mine here, and mine hereafter ? And dost thou seek to murder me ?—ah ! commit not a deed which hurls us both to perdition—thyself as well as me." In this manner did the horrible visitant torment him each night, and, even when she departed, robbed him of all repose.

The night of the new moon at length arrived, dark as the deed it was doomed to bring forth. The sorcerer entered the cavern ; "Come, said he to Walter, let us depart hence, the hour is now arrived:" and he forthwith conducted him in silence from the grave, to a coal-black steed, the sight of which recalled to Walter's remembrance the fatal night. He then related to the old man Brunhilda's nocturnal visits, and anx-

iously enquired whether her apprehensions of eternal perdition would be fulfilled or not. "Mortal eye," exclaimed the sorcerer, "may not pierce the dark secrets of another world, or penetrate the deep abyss that separates earth from heaven." Walter hesitated to mount the steed. "Be resolute," exclaimed his companion, "but this once is it granted to thee to make the trial, and, should thou fail now, nought can rescue thee from her power."

"What can be more horrible than she herself?—I am determined:" and he leaped on the horse, the sorcerer mounting also behind him.

Carried with a rapidity equal to that of the storm that sweeps across the plain, they in brief space arrived at Walter's castle. All the doors flew open at the bidding of his companion, and they speedily reached Brunhilda's chamber, and stood beside her couch. Reclining in a tranquil slumber; she reposed in all her native loveliness, every trace of horror had disappeared from her countenance; she looked so pure, meek and innocent that all the sweet hours of their endearments rushed to Walter's

memory, like interceding angels pleading in her behalf. His unnerved hand could not take the dagger which the sorcerer presented to him. "The blow must be struck even now:" said the latter, "shouldst thou delay but an hour, she will lie at day-break on thy bosom, sucking the warm life-drops from thy heart."

"Horrible! most horrible!" faltered the trembling Walter, and turning away his face, he thrust the dagger into her bosom, exclaiming: "I curse thee for ever!"—and the cold blood gushed upon his hand. Opening her eyes once more, she cast a look of ghastly horror on her husband, and, in a hollow dying accent said:—"Thou too art doomed to perdition."

"Lay now thy hand upon her corse," said the sorcerer, "and swear the oath."—Walter did as commanded, saying:—"Never will I think of her with love, never recall her to mind intentionally, and, should her image recur to my mind involuntarily, so will I exclaim to it: be thou accursed."

"Thou hast now done every thing," returned the sorcerer;—restore her therefore to the earth, from which thou so foolishly recalled her; and

be sure to recollect thy oath : for, shouldst thou forget it but once, she would return, and thou wouldst be inevitably lost. Adieu : we see each other no more." Having uttered these words he quitted the apartment, and Walter also fled from this abode of horror, having first given directions that the corpse should be speedily interred.

Again did the terrific Brunhilda repose within her grave ; but her image continually haunted Walter's imagination, so that his existence was one continued martyrdom, in which he continually struggled, to dismiss from his recollection the hideous phantoms of the past ; yet, the stronger his effort to banish them, so much the more frequently and the more vividly did they return ; as the night-wanderer, who is enticed by a fire-wisp into quagmire or bog, sinks the deeper into his damp grave the more he struggles to escape. His imagination seemed incapable of admitting any other image than that of Brunhilda : now he fancied he beheld her expiring, the blood streaming from her beautiful bosom : at others he saw the lovely bride of his youth, who reproached him with

having disturbed the slumbers of her tomb : and to both he was compelled to utter the dreadful words, "I curse thee for ever." The terrible imprecation was constantly passing his lips ; yet was he in incessant terror lest he should forget it, or dream of her without being able to repeat it, and then, on awaking, find himself in her arms. Else would he recall her expiring words, and, appalled at their terrific import, imagine that the doom of his perdition was irrecoverably passed. Whence should he fly from himself? or how erase from his brain these images and forms of horror? In the din of combat, in the tumult of war and its incessant pour of victory to defeat ; from the cry of anguish to the exultation of victory—in these he hoped to find at least the relief of distraction : but here too he was disappointed. The giant fang of apprehension now seized him who had never before known fear : each drop of blood that sprayed upon him seemed the cold blood that had gushed from Brunhilda's wound ; each dying wretch that fell beside him looked like her, when expiring, she exclaimed : "Thou

too art doomed to perdition," so that the aspect of death seemed more full of dread to him than aught beside, and this unconquerable terror compelled him to abandon the battle-field. At length, after many a weary and fruitless wandering he returned to his castle. Here all was deserted and silent, as if the sword, or a still more deadly pestilence had laid every thing waste : for the few inhabitants that still remained, and even those servants who had once shewn themselves the most attached, now fled from him, as though he had been branded with the mark of Cain. With horror he perceived that, by uniting himself as he had done with the dead, he had cut himself off from the living, who refused to hold any intercourse with him. Often, when he stood on the battlements of his castle, and looked down upon desolate fields, he compared their present solitude with the lively activity they were wont to exhibit, under the strict but benevolent discipline of Swanhilda. He now felt that she alone could reconcile him to life, but durst he hope that one, whom he had so deeply agrieved, could

pardon him, and receive him again? Impatience at length got the better of fear; he sought Swanhilda, and, with the deepest contrition, acknowledged his complicated guilt; embracing her knees he beseeched her to pardon him, and to return to his desolate castle, in order that it might again become the abode of contentment and peace. The pale form which she beheld at her feet, the shadow of the lately blooming youth, touched Swanhilda. "Thy folly," said she gently, "though it has caused me much sorrow, has never excited my resentment or my anger. But say, where are my children? To this dreadful interrogation the agonized father could for a while frame no reply: at length he was obliged to confess the dreadful truth. "Then we are asundered for ever," returned Swanhilda; nor could all his tears or supplications prevail upon her to revoke the sentence she had given.

Stripped of his last earthly hope, bereft of his last consolation, and thereby rendered as poor as mortal can possibly be on this side of the grave, Walter returned homewards; when, as

he was riding through the forest in the neighbourhood of his castle, absorbed in his gloomy meditations, the sudden sound of a horn roused him from his reverie. Shortly after he saw appear a female figure clad in black, and mounted on a steed of the same colour : her attire was like that of a huntress, but, instead of a falcon she bore a raven on her hand ; and she was attended by a gay troop of cavaliers and dames. The first salutations being passed, he found that she was proceeding the same road as himself ; and, when she found that Walter's castle was close at hand, she requested that he would lodge her for that night, the evening being far advanced. Most willingly did he comply with this request, since the appearance of the beautiful stranger had struck him greatly ; so wonderfully did she resemble Swanhilda, except that her locks were brown, and her eye dark and full of fire. With a sumptuous banquet did he entertain his guests, whose mirth and songs enlivened the lately silent halls. Three days did this revelry continue, and so exhilarating did it prove to Walter, that he seemed

to have forgotten his sorrows and his fears ; nor could he prevail upon himself to dismiss his visitors, dreading lest, on their departure, the castle would seem a hundred times more desolate than before, and his grief be proportionably increased. At his earnest request, the stranger consented to stay seven days, and again another seven days. Without being requested, she took upon herself the superintendance of the household, which she regulated as discreetly and cheerfully as Swanhilda had been wont to do, so that the castle, which had so lately been the abode of melancholy and horror, became the residence of pleasure and festivity, and Walter's grief disappeared altogether in the midst of so much gaiety. Daily did his attachment to the fair unknown increase ; he even made her his confidante ; and, one evening as they were walking together apart from any of her train, he related to her his melancholy and frightful history. " My dear friend," returned she, as soon as he had finished his tale, " it ill beseems a man of thy discretion to afflict thyself, on account of all this. Thou

hast awakened the dead from the sleep of the grave, and afterwards found,—what might have been anticipated, that the dead possess no sympathy with life. What then? thou wilt not commit this error a second time. Thou hast however murdered the being whom thou hadst thus recalled again into existence—but it was only in appearance, for thou couldst not deprive that of life, which properly had none. Thou hast too, lost a wife and two children: but, at your years, such a loss is most easily repaired. There are beauties who will gladly share your couch, and make you again a father. But you dread the reckoning of hereafter:—go, open the graves and ask the sleepers there whether that hereafter disturbs them.” In such manner would she frequently exhort and cheer Walter, and, so successful were her efforts, that, in a short time, his melancholy entirely disappeared. He now ventured to declare to the unknown the passion with which she had inspired him, nor did she refuse him her hand. Within seven days afterwards the nuptials were celebrated with the utmost magnificence: with the first

dawn of day commenced the labours of those who were busied in preparing the festival ; and, if the walls of the castle had often echoed before to the sounds of mirth and revelry, the very foundations now seemed to rock from the wild tumultuous uproar of unrestrained riot. The wine streamed in abundance; the goblets circled incessantly : intemperance reached its utmost bounds, while shouts of laughter, almost resembling madness, burst from the numerous train belonging to the unknown. At length Walter, heated with wine and love, conducted his bride into the nuptial chamber : but, oh horror ! scarcely had he clasped her in his arms, ere she transformed herself into a monstrous serpent, which, entwining him in its horrid folds, crushed him to death. Flames crackled on every side of the apartment ; in a few minutes after, the whole castle was enveloped in a blaze that consumed it entirely : while, as the walls fell in with a horrid crash, a voice exclaimed aloud—WAKE NOT THE DEAD.



AUBURN EGBERT.

IN the neighbourhood of the Harz mountains, there lived a knight who was commonly called Auburn Egbert. He was about forty years of age, of a middle stature, and his short auburn hair, lay smooth and close upon his pale emaciated countenance. His time was chiefly spent in retirement; he never mingled in the quarrels of his neighbours, and he was rarely seen without the circle of his own castle walls. His wife was equally fond of solitude with himself; both appeared to love each other with the warmest affection; and their only complaint was, that Heaven had not blessed their marriage with children.—Egbert was seldom troubled with guests, and, when he was, nothing

on their account was changed in the ordinary stile of his living; frugality resided at his board, and every thing seemed to be arranged by economy herself. On such occasions, Egbert was lively and cheerful. It was only when alone, that his neighbours observed in him a certain shyness of manner, and a silent reserved melancholy.

No one came so frequently to the castle as Philip Walther; a man whom Egbert was attached to, because he found him possessed of similar tastes with those he was most given to himself. Walther's own residence was in Franconia; but he had lately tarried for more than half a year in the neighbourhood of Egbert's castle, collecting plants and fossils, and his chief occupation consisted in arranging them. He had a small property of his own, sufficient to render him independent, and on that he lived. Egbert frequently accompanied him in his solitary walks, and with every year, a more intimate friendship arose between them.

There are certain moments in which we all feel uneasy at the possession of a secret, un-

known to some dear and particular friend, however, carefully we may have hitherto concealed it; the soul then feels an irresistible impulse to communicate itself, to open its inmost recesses to a friend, in order that he may become so much the more our friend. It is in such moments that feeling souls discover themselves to each other; and it also sometimes happens, that the one starts back from an acquaintance with the other.

It was on a foggy evening, in the autumn of the year that Egbert and his wife and friend were seated round a fire on the hearth; the flames cast a cheerful light through the room, and played against the ceiling; the gloominess of the night was only reflected through the windows, and the trees without shook with a humid coldness. Walther complained of the long walk he had to take; and Egbert proposed, that he should remain with them; that they should pass half the night in friendly conversation, and that then he might sleep in an adjoining chamber. Walther accepted the proposal; the wine and supper were brought

in ; a fresh log was laid upon the fire, and the conversation of the friends became more lively and confidential.

When supper was removed, and the servants dismissed, Egbert took Walther by the hand and said: " My good friend you must let my wife relate to you the story of her youth, 'tis indeed an extraordinary narrative." " With pleasure," replied Walther ; and they now resumed their places round the fire.

By this time it was midnight, and the moon only shown at intervals through the fleeting clouds which obscured her. " You must not consider me importunate," said Bertha, as she began her tale, " but my husband tells me you think so nobly, that it would be an act of injustice to conceal any thing from you ; only do not conceive my narrative a fable, however extraordinary it may sound.

" I was born in a small village ; my father was a poor herdsman. The domestic economy of my parents was not of the best kind, for it frequently happened, that they did not know from whence they should procure our bread

for the day's consumption. But what increased my affliction, was the frequent bickerings of my father and mother, concerning their poverty; on which occasions, they loaded each other with the bitterest reproaches. Of myself, I constantly heard, that I was a silly stupid child, who was incapable of doing the most trifling thing; and in truth, I was extremely awkward and helpless. I let every thing fall out of my hands, I learned neither to sew or to spin, I could give no assistance in the house-keeping, and the only thing I had any conception of, was the wants of my parents. On such occasions, I frequently sate myself down in a corner, and filled my imagination with the manner in which I would assist them, should I suddenly become rich; how I would shower down upon them heaps of gold and silver, and delight myself with their astonishment. I then saw spirits float before me, who discovered to me subterranean treasures, or who presented me with a number of small pebbles, which were suddenly transformed to diamonds;

in short, I occupied myself with the most wonderful fancies, and when I was obliged to rise, in order to give my assistance in any thing, I was still more awkward, because my head yet ran round with all these extraordinary notions.

“ My father was always extremely cross to me for being such a useless burthen in the house ; he, consequently, treated me harshly, and it was seldom I heard a friendly word from him. In this manner, I reached my eighth year, and serious preparations were now made for making me learn or do something. My father believed it was either caprice or indolence in me, that I might pass my days in idleness ; and under this impression, he first assailed me with terrible threats. Finding these to be of no avail, he punished me in the most cruel manner ; and concluded with assuring me, that a similar chastisement should return, with every succeeding day, if I still continued such a useless creature.

“ The whole night through I wept bitterly ; I felt so totally desolate, and my case so extremely pitiable, that I wished to die. I feared the

break of the approaching day; I knew not what I should set about; I wished myself every possible dexterity; and could, on no account, conceive what had made me more stupid than all the other children of my acquaintance. I was almost in despair.

“ I arose with the dawn of morning, and almost without knowing what I did, I opened the door of our little cottage. I stood in the open field; I was soon in the wood, into which, the day as yet had scarcely penetrated; I ran continually forwards, without looking once behind me; I felt no lassitude, for I feared my father would overtake me, and irritated by my flight, treat me still more cruelly. By the time I had reached the other side of the wood, the sun was somewhat high; I now saw something dusky lying before me which was covered by a thick fog. Sometimes I was obliged to clamber over hills, sometimes to follow the path which wound between the rocks, and I now surmised I must be among the neighbouring mountains, the thought of

which, in such a solitude, awakened my fears. For in the plain where we lived, I had never seen any hills, and the very name of mountains, when I heard them mentioned, was to my childish ear, a frightful sound. I had not the heart to go back; even my very anxieties drove me forwards. I often looked round with terror as the wind passed over me through the trees; or the sound of the distant axe echoed through the stillness of the morning; and, at length, as I met the colliers and miners going to their labour, and heard a foreign accent, I had nearly swooned with affright.

“I passed through several villages, and begged for food; for I now felt hungry and thirsty; and managed tolerably well when any questions were put to me relative to myself. In this manner, I had wandered for about four days, when I struck into a little foot-path which continually brought me more distant from the high road. The rocks now around me, assumed a much more singular form. They were craggs, so piled upon each other, that it

seemed as if the first breeze of wind would precipitate them to the earth. I was undetermined whether I should proceed further. Hitherto, during the night, I had slept in the woods, or in the temporary huts of the shepherds, for it was at the finest season of the year; here, however, I found no human dwelling, nor in such a wilderness could I hope to meet with one. The rocks became constantly more terrific. I was obliged frequently to pass close beside yawning precipices; and, at length, the path lost itself under my feet. I became totally comfortless; I wept and screamed aloud, but the valley of rocks only echoed back my voice, in a manner which increased my terrors. The night now drew on; and I sought out a seat of moss, on which I might repose. I could not sleep; during the night I heard the most singular sounds, which I either ascribed to the cries of wild beasts, to the wind moaning through the rocks, or the voices of strange and uncommon birds.

“ I prayed fervently, and first fell asleep towards the morning.

I awoke as the day shone in my face. Before me rose a steep rock. I climbed to the top of ³⁸ it, with a hope of discovering an outlet to the wilderness, or peradventure of beholding the habitations of men. On reaching the summit, I could only perceive that every thing, as far as my eye could reach, as well as all around me, was covered with a misty vapour; the morning was gray and lowering, and my eye could discover neither tree or meadow, no, not even a bush, except a few single shrubs, which sad and solitary, shot forth from the narrow clefts in the rocks. It is impossible to describe the desire I felt of beholding a human being, even though his appearance would have filled me with fear of him. At the same time, I was oppressed with a dreadful hunger; I sate myself down and determined to die. After a time, the love of life overpowered my resolution; I collected my drooping spirits, and, amid tears and broken sighs, I walked the whole day long; towards its close, I was hardly conscious of what I did; I was fatigued and exhausted; I scarcely wished to live and yet was fearful of death.

As the evening advanced, the country around appeared somewhat more cheerful; my thoughts, my wishes revived; the love of life awoke in all my veins. I fancied I now heard the murmuring of a distant mill; I doubled my footsteps, and how well and how light did I feel, when, at length, having reached the limits of the barren rocks, I saw lying before me woods and meadows, and a range of distant mountains. I felt just ^{as if I had} as if I had emerged from the regions of torment, into paradise; the solitude and my helplessness appeared in no way terrific to me.

“ My joy indeed was considerably lessened, on finding a waterfall instead of the hoped for mill; I collected a draught from the brook in my hand, when, suddenly, I heard a gentle cough at some distance from me. Never was I so agreeably surprized as at this moment. I advanced, and at the corner of the wood, I perceived an old woman who seemed to be resting herself. She was almost entirely clothed in black; a black hood covered her head and the

greatest part of her ~~face~~, and in her hand she held a small crutch. ~~As~~ I approached her, and solicited her assistance, she desired me to sit down beside her, and offered me some bread and a little wine. While I sate, she sang in a screaming tone a religious hymn. When she had finished it, she told me I might follow her.

“ I was much rejoiced at this offer, strange as the voice and the manner of the old woman appeared to me. With the aid of her crutch she walked tolerably swift ; and, at every step, distorted her countenance in such a manner, that, at first, I could not refrain from laughing. The barren rocks seemed gradually to retire behind us. We crossed a delightful meadow, and then passed through a wood of considerable extent. Just as we came out of the wood, the sun went down, and I shall never forget the aspect and the scene upon that evening. Every thing was dissolved in the softest vermilion and gold ; the tops of the trees were brightly tinged by the rays of the

setting sun ; an ecstatic glow lay upon the fields : the concave of heaven beamed like an unfolded paradise ; and the purling of the fountains, and, from time to time, the murmurs of the trees, cast a gentle sound amid the serenity of the scene, more like the emotions of a pensive, than an animated joy. My young soul now first imbibed a foreboding of the world and its events. I forgot both myself and my leader ; my spirits and my eyes could only rove amid the golden clouds.—We now ascended a hill planted with birch-trees ; a green valley filled with the same was perceived from the top ; and, amid the trees below, lay a small cottage. A lively bark now saluted our ears, and presently a nimble little dog sprang forwards to the old woman, capering and wagging his tail : he then came to me, looked at me on every side, and again turned to the old woman with the same friendly greetings. As we descended the hill I heard a wonderful song, which appeared to come from the cottage, and as if a bird were to sing thus :

The green-wood tree
So lonely,
Allureth me ;
And only,
In solitude
I find delight.

The woods prolong
So clearly,
My jocund song
And dearly,
I love the wood
By day or night.

These words were constantly repeated, and, should I describe their effect, it was almost like French horns and bugles mingling their notes at a distance. My curiosity was now wonderfully excited; I entered the cottage without waiting for the old woman's command. It was now light, every thing was arranged with preciseness: a few goblets stood upon a shelf, odd-shaped vessels upon a table: in a brilliant cage, suspended at the window, was a bird, and he it really was who sang the words. lx

The old woman panted and coughed, she seemed as if she would never recover; she now patted and stroked the little dog; now spoke to the bird, who only answered her with his usual song: she, moreover, conducted herself exactly as if I were not present. Whenever I looked upon her, a cold shivering would run over me; for her face was in constant motion, and her head so shook with age that I could by no means ascertain what she really looked like. As soon as she had recovered herself, she lighted a candle, spread a very small table, and brought forth the evening's repast. She then looked towards me, and bade me take one of the reed-bottomed chairs. I sate directly opposite her; and the candle stood between us. She folded her bony-wrinkled hands, and prayed aloud; still making the same distortions of countenance, so that I was very near bursting into laughter again—but I restrained myself lest I should make the old woman angry.

“After supper she prayed again, and then shewed me to a bed in a low narrow chamber: she slept in the eating room. I did not remain

long awake, for I was already half asleep; but I awoke several times during the night, and I then heard the old woman cough, and speak to the dog; and, at intervals, to the bird, who appeared to be dreaming, and sang only single words of his song. This, together with the rustling of the birch-trees before the window, and the song of a distant nightingale, made such a wonderful medley, that it seemed as if I did not wake, but that at each time I fell into a more extraordinary dream.

“In the morning the old woman awakened me, and shortly after set me to work. She desired me to spin, and this I now soon got into the method of. I had likewise to look after the dog and the bird. I soon learned to manage the house-keeping, and every object around became familiar to me; it now appeared to me that every thing must be as it was. I no longer thought the old woman had any thing singular about her, that the house was out of the common, and lay remote from all mankind; or that there was any thing extraordinary in the bird. I was always struck with

his beauty, for his plumage shone with every possible colour: the most beautiful sky-blue, and the most glowing red, alternately mingled on his neck and body; and, when he sang, he puffed himself proudly out, so that his feathers acquired additional brilliancy. 42

“ The old woman frequently went out in the morning, and did not return until the evening. On such occasions I went with the dog to meet her, and she called me her child and her daughter. At length I became heartily attached to her; as in fact the mind, particularly in childhood, accustoms itself to every thing. In the evening she taught me to read; I soon made progress, and afterwards, in my solitude, it became a source of infinite pleasure, for she had some books, written in an ancient character, containing the most marvellous stories. ¶ The recollection of my then mode of life, always affects me in a singular manner, even at the present day. Visited by no human creature, confined to so small a family circle, even the dog and the bird made an impression upon me, as in other cases only long known friends can produce. I have never been able since to recollect the extra-

ordinary name of the dog, often as at that time I called him.

“ It was thus that I had lived four years with the old woman, and might be about twelve years of age, when she chose to give me more of her confidence, and disclosed a secret to me. Every day the bird laid an egg, containing either a pearl or a diamond. I had daily observed her occupied about something in secret at the cage, but I had never troubled myself further about it. She now commissioned me in her absence, to take out the eggs, and preserve them carefully in the odd-shaped vessels I have mentioned. She left me my food, and her absences became of greater duration,—weeks, aye, months elapsed; my spinning-wheel hummed, the dog barked, the wonderful bird sang, and every thing in the neighbourhood was so tranquil withal, that during the whole time I do not recollect a single storm of rain or thunder; no person lost their way hither; no wild beast came near our dwelling—I was contented, and laboured on from one day to the other.

“ Our happiness, perhaps, would be complete,

could we continue our lives in this undisturbed manner to the end.

“ From the little which I read, I filled my imagination with wonderful notions of the world and mankind ; every thing was taken from myself and my companions ; if the subject turned on lively people, I could not conceive them to be otherwise than the little dog ; ladies arrayed in splendid robes always looked like the bird, and I thought every old woman must be like my wonderful old dame. I had also read something of love, and now acted in my imagination, the most extraordinary stories with myself. I fancied the handsomest knight in the world ; I endowed him with every perfection, without properly knowing, after all my labours, how he appeared ; but I could really compassionate myself, when he did not return my love. I then spoke long moving speeches to myself, and sometimes aloud, in order to win him. You smile—we are, indeed, all of us past this time of youth.

“ I now felt best pleased when alone, for I was then mistress of the house. The dog was

44 — exceedingly attached to me, and did every thing I wished; the bird replied to all my questions with his song; my spinning-wheel revolved in its lively round, and I really never felt a wish for change. When the old woman returned from her long perambulation she praised my attention—said her house-keeping was much better conducted since I had belonged to it; praised my growth, and my healthy appearance; and, in fact, demeaned herself towards me, as if I had been her daughter.

W “Thou art a good child;” she once said to me, in her hoarse guttural tone; “shouldst thou continue in this course, all will be well with thee; but, when we once depart from the path of rectitude, prosperity ceases, and punishment always ensues, be it ever so late.” I did not pay much attention to her while she was saying this, for, in all my movements and in my whole being, I was extremely volatile; but at night it recurred to me again, and I was at a loss to conceive her meaning. I reflected anxiously upon every word; I had, indeed, heard of riches, and at length it occurred to me that her pearls

and diamonds might be things of value. This idea soon became clearer to me. But what could she mean by the path of rectitude? the import of her words were still not wholly intelligible to me.

“ I was now fourteen years of age, and it is a misfortune for mankind, that we do but attain our understanding in order to lose the innocence of our souls. I now clearly saw that it entirely depended upon myself during the old woman’s absence, to take the bird and the precious stones, and with these to seek that world I had read so much about. It might, perhaps, at the same time be possible to meet with this very handsome knight, whom I still held in my remembrance.

“ At first this thought was no more than any other thought, but when I sat at my wheel, it constantly returned even against my will, and I so lost myself in its mazes, that I already saw myself, in fancy, most magnificently attired, and surrounded by a train of knights and princes. When I had thus forgotten myself, I became heartily grieved on looking up, and finding

myself still in the old habitation. In other respects, if I did my work, the old woman troubled herself no further about my behaviour.

“ One day my hostess went forth, and told me that this time her absence would be longer than usual; that I must pay particular attention to every thing, and not let the time hang heavy upon my hands. I took leave of her with a certain uneasiness of mind, for it seemed as if I should never see her again. I followed her with my looks for a considerable time, I knew not wherefore I was so uneasy; it was almost as if my intention stood before me without my being clearly conscious of it.

“ Never did I feed the dog and the bird with such assiduity; they lay more upon my mind than ever. The old woman had been absent some days, when one morning I rose with a fixed determination of forsaking the cottage, of taking the bird with me, and seeking out the world, as it was called. My mind seemed confined and oppressed; I still wished to remain, and yet the thought was hateful to me: I felt a singular struggle in my soul, like the contention

between two opposing spirits. At one moment the tranquil solitude of the place appeared so charming, and then the idea of a new world, with all its wonderful varieties, so filled me with transports.

7 “ I knew not what to do; the dog jumped upon me incessantly, the rays of the sun lay brightly upon the fields, the vivid green of the birch-trees glittered in the light; I felt a sensation as if I had something to do, which must be done speedily; I therefore seized the little dog, bound him fast in the room, and then took the cage under my arm. The dog barked and moaned at this unusual treatment, looked at me with imploring eyes; but I was afraid to take him with me. However, I took one of the vessels filled with precious stones, and put it into my pocket, the others I left where they stood.

“ As I went out of the door, the bird turned round his head with a singular expression of manner; the dog made many endeavours to come after me, but he was compelled to remain behind. I avoided the way towards the barren rocks, and proceeded in an opposite direction.

The dog barked and moaned continually, and the sound of his cries moved me to the very heart; the bird sometimes attempted to begin his song, but probably the motion of being carried made it inconvenient to him. The further I advanced, the barking became fainter, and at last, it entirely, ceased. I wept, and was very near returning; but the desire of seeing something new, impelled me forwards.

“ I had already passed the mountains, and traversed the adjoining woods, when the evening approached, and compelled me to enter a village. As I walked into an inn, I was overwhelmed with bashfulness; I was shewn into a room with a bed in it, and I slept tolerably tranquil, except that I dreamed of the old woman who seemed to threaten me.

My journey was pretty uniform, but the further I went, the more I was tormented with the idea of the old woman and the dog: I thought it possible he might starve without my assistance, and in every wood I feared the old woman would suddenly start out upon me. Thus, amid tears and sighs, I continued my way;

whenever I rested, and placed the cage upon the ground, the bird sang his wonderful song; and on such occasions, I was filled with the most lively recollections of the beautiful abode I had deserted. So forgetful is human nature, that I thought my present journey much more miserable than that I had made in my childhood: I wished to be again in the same situation.

“ I sold some of the diamonds, and, after a peregrination of a few days, I reached a small village. Immediately upon entering it, I felt myself affected in a most singular manner; I felt terrified, and knew not wherefore; but I soon recollected myself, for it was the same village in which I was born. What was my astonishment! what tears of joy ran down my cheeks, occasioned by a thousand extraordinary recollections! Considerable changes had taken place; new houses had been built; others, which at that time were but just erected, had fallen into decay.

“ I also found some traces of a fire, and every thing was much smaller and more confined

than I had anticipated. My joy at the thought of seeing my parents again after so many years, was infinite. I found out our little cottage, the well-known threshold, the latch of the door, was just the same as formerly—it seemed but yesterday that I had leaned against it; my heart beat impetuously, I opened it hastily—but the room was filled with strangers, who stared at me in astonishment. I asked for the shepherd Martin; they told me, both he and his wife had been dead these three years. I instantly retired, and left the village weeping aloud.

“ I had figured to myself, the pleasure of surprising them with my wealth; by a most singular accident, I had obtained the reality of what in my childhood I had only dreamed—and now all was in vain; they could not rejoice with me; and that which during my life I had most desired, was eternally lost to me.

“ I hired a small house and garden in a pleasant country town, and engaged an attendant. The world did not fill me with so much wonder as I had expected; but, by degrees, I forgot

the old woman and my former abode somewhat more, and, upon the whole, lived very contentedly.

“The bird had ceased to sing for a considerable time. I was therefore not a little terrified, upon his suddenly bursting out one night, and indeed with an altered song. He now sang :

The green-wood tree
So lonely,
Is far from me
Though only
In solitude
I find delight :

The woods prolong
So clearly,
No more my song
But dearly,
Thy turpitude
Shall do me right.


“I could not sleep the whole night through, every thing came anew with my recollection ; and I felt more than once I had done wrong.

When I rose in the morning, the sight of the bird was really unpleasant to me; he looked at me continually, and his presence vexed me. His song never ceased for a moment; and was louder and far more sonorous than usual. The more I looked at him, the more uneasy he made me; at length I opened the cage, I thrust in my hand and seized him by the neck; I pressed my fingers powerfully together; he looked at me with an imploring look, I withdrew my hold, but he was dead. I buried him in the garden.

“My fears were now directed to my attendant. I reflected upon what I had done myself—that she too might rob, or perhaps, murder me.

“Sometime previous to this I had formed an acquaintance with a young knight who pleased me much; I gave him my hand—and, with this, Mr. Walther, my story is at an end.”

“You should have seen her then,” exclaimed Egbert, eagerly, “her youth, her beauty, and, what inconceivable charms her lonesome education had given her! In my eyes, she appeared



a miracle ; and I loved her with indescribable affection. I had no property, but through her love I attained to this prosperity ; we retired hither, and as yet we have not regretted our union for a moment."

"But over our prating," said Bertha, "it is become late in the night. Let us retire to rest." She rose and went towards her chamber. Walther wished her a good night, and said, as he kissed her hand :

"Noble lady, I thank you ; I can exactly fancy you with your wonderful bird, and the manner in which you fed the little STROHMIAN." Walther likewise retired to rest. Egbert alone, filled with restlessness, wandered up and down the hall. At length, he exclaimed, "What a fool is man ? I first induce my wife to communicate her story, and now this confidence distresses me. Will he not divulge it to others ? Will he not—for such is human nature—feel a fatal desire for our diamonds, and hence contrive plans for obtaining them ?"

It struck him, that Walther had not taken leave of him as he ought to have done, after such

mark of confidence. When the soul is once bent upon suspicion, it finds a confirmation in every trifle. Egbert now reproached himself for this ignoble distrust of his honest friend; and yet he could not entirely shake it off. With these ideas he ranged about the whole night, and slept but little. In the morning, Bertha was unwell, and could not appear at the breakfast-table; Walther seemed to trouble himself very little about it, and quitted the knight, with evident indifference. Egbert could not fathom his conduct; he visited his wife, and found her in a fever. She affirmed, that the narrative of the preceding night must have agitated her thus. From this evening, Walther seldom visited the castle of his friend, and when he did, he went away after saying a few unmeaning words. Egbert was alarmed in the highest degree by such conduct; towards Bertha, and Walther, he strove to conceal his feelings; but both must have perceived his internal uneasiness.

Bertha's illness became daily more serious; the physician was alarmed; the roses vanished

from her cheeks; and her eyes became constantly more inflamed. One morning, she desired her husband might be called, and ordered her attendants to withdraw. As Egbert approached, she said:

“My dear husband, I have something to communicate which has almost deprived me of my reason, which has undetermined my health, unimportant as such a trifle may appear in itself. You know that whenever I spoke of my childhood, in spite of all my endeavours I never could recollect the name of the little dog, with whom I had so long an intercourse: on that evening, when Walther took leave of me, he suddenly said, “I can exactly fancy the manner in which you fed the little STROHMIAN.” Was this accidental? or did he divine the name? does he know the dog, think you, and did he name him purposely? And how is this man connected with my destinies? I sometimes contend with myself, that I do but fancy this extraordinary circumstance; and yet it is certain, but too certain. A violent fright overpowered me, on being thus assisted to my recollec-

tion by a perfect stranger. What say you, Egbert?

Egbert cast a look of the deepest commiseration upon his suffering wife; at first he remained silent, but after reflecting a little, he uttered a few consolatory words, and then left her. With indescribable anguish of mind he paced backwards and forwards, through one of the most retired chambers in the castle. Walther for many years had been his only companion—and now—this was the only man in the world whose existence distressed and pained him. It seemed to him, as if he should feel happy and cheerful if this single being could be swept out of his way. He took down his fowling-piece with a hope of finding amusement in shooting.

The day was chill and stormy; a deep snow lay upon the ground, and covered the drooping branches of the trees; Egbert paced rapidly forward; the perspiration stood upon his brow; he met with no game, and this increased his displeasure. On a sudden he perceived something moving at a distance; it was Walther

collecting mosses from the trees; without knowing what he did, Egbert levelled his piece; Walther looked round, with a silent, yet menacing gesture; but the bullet had fled and Walther fell to the earth.

Egbert was easy and tranquilized in his mind, and yet a feeling of dread impelled him towards his castle; he had a long way to walk, for he had wandered far into the woods.

On his arrival at the castle, he found Bertha was dead; previous to her decease, she had spoken much that was unintelligible, about Walther and the old woman.

Egbert now passed a considerable time in solitude and retirement; his mind had ever been pensive and sad, for the extraordinary story of his wife had filled him with apprehension, and he was always in alarm, lest some unfortunate event might ensue; but now he was entirely fallen. The murder of his friend stood incessantly before his eyes; his life became a series of constant self-reproaches. To dissipate his thoughts, he occasionally visited a neighbouring town, where he mixed by degrees in

society, and sometimes joined in the passing festivities. He felt desirous of finding a friend, to fill up the dreadful vacancy in his soul; and yet when he thought of Walther, his mind recoiled at the very idea, for he felt satisfied, that even a friend could not lessen his misery. He had lived so long with Bertha, in a state of delightful tranquility; Walther's friendship had blessed him for so many years, and now—both were so suddenly torn from him, that his life appeared more like a wonderful tale, than a really human career.

A young knight whose name was Hugo, attached himself to the grave and sorrowful Egbert, and appeared to feel an affection for him. Egbert was more than usually surprized, and met the young knight's advances the more eagerly, because he had so little expected them. Both now were frequently together; the stranger shewed Egbert every courtesy; the one scarcely ever rode out without the other; they met in every company; in short, they became inseparable. Egbert, however, was only happy for the moment; he conceived Hugo only loved

him from error; that he knew neither him or his story; and again, he felt the same impulse to communicate all the occurrences of his life, that he might be assured whether Hugo were really his friend. His scruples, and the fear of detection, then held him in check. On such occasions, he became so completely convinced of his infamy, that he believed no man could possibly feel an esteem for him to whom he was not a perfect stranger. Still, however, he could not command his inclinations; during a solitary ride, he disclosed his whole secret to his friend, and then enquired whether Hugo could possibly entertain affection for a murderer. Hugo was moved, and endeavoured to console him; Egbert followed him with a lightened heart to the town.

It seemed however to be the curse of Egbert's character, that he should harbour suspicion, just at the moment of confidence; for scarcely had they entered the public room, when the countenance of his friend displeased him. He thought, he observed a malicious smile upon

it ; that Hugo spoke but little with him ; that he conversed much with those who were present though he seemed to leave him unnoticed. Among the company was an old knight, who had ever conducted himself with hostile feelings towards Egbert, and had often enquired in a very particular manner about his wealth and his wife. With this man Hugo associated ; they conversed apart and frequently pointed towards Egbert. The latter now saw his suspicions confirmed ; he conceived himself betrayed, and became a prey to the most violent rage. While still gazing on them, he suddenly saw Walther's face, all his features, his whole well-known figure ; he looked again and felt convinced it was no one else but Walther who conversed with the old man. His horror was indescribable ; he darted from the room, wholly distracted ; left the town that same evening, and returned to his castle by circuitous paths.

Like a troubled spirit he now hastened from room to room, his thoughts wandered incessantly, he passed from one horrible idea to

others still more horrible ; and no sleep visited his eyes. He often thought himself insane ; and that his own imagination alone created these circumstances ; he then recollected Walther's features, and every thing became more inexplicable. He resolved on trying if travel would tranquillize his mind ; his ideas of friendship, his wish for society, he now abandoned for ever. He rode forth without fixing upon any settled route ; he even paid little attention to the country before him. After passing several days in this way, he found himself suddenly lost among the windings of some rocks, where no outlet was discoverable. At length he met an aged peasant, who conducted him to a path opposite a water-fall ; as a requital, Egbert was desirous of bestowing upon his guide a few pieces, but the peasant refused them.

“What does it matter,” said Egbert to himself ; “I could almost imagine now, this man to be Walther.” At the same time he turned round to look, and it was Walther. Egbert spurred his horse to its fullest speed ; he galloped through

wood and field, till at length the poor beast being totally exhausted sank to the earth. Little concerned about this, he continued his journey on foot. Half dreaming he ascended a hill ; his ear was saluted by a near and lively bark ; the rustling of birch-trees murmured between, and presently he heard in wonderful notes the following song :

The green wood tree,
So lonely
Allureth me,
And only,
In solitude
I find delight.
The woods prolong
So clearly,
Again my song
And dearly,
I love the wood
By day or night.

Egbert now lost all sense of reason and consciousness ; he could not extricate his mind from

the mazes which entangled it. Did he now dream or had he formerly dreamed of a wife Bertha? his brain became confused amid rapid alternations of thought; the world around him was enchanted, and he master of no idea, of no recollection.

An old woman, bent double by age, with a crutch in her hand, crept coughing along the hill. "Dost thou bring me my bird, my jewels, and my dog," she screamed out to him. "See how injustice punishes itself; I was thy friend Walther, I was thy Hugo.

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Egbert, "in what a terrible solitude then have I passed my life! And Bertha was thy sister." Egbert fell to the earth. "Why did she maliciously abandon me? Without this, all would have ended well; her time of trial was past. She was the daughter of a knight who brought her up at a herdsman's—the daughter of thy father. "Oh! why" exclaimed Egbert, "have I always foreboded this horrible idea?"—"Because thy father formerly told thee, that he had a daughter whom he

dared not educate at home on account of his wife—his daughter by another woman.” Egbert lay delirious and dying upon the earth; in hollow and confused tones, he heard the old woman speak, the dog bark, and the bird repeat its song.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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