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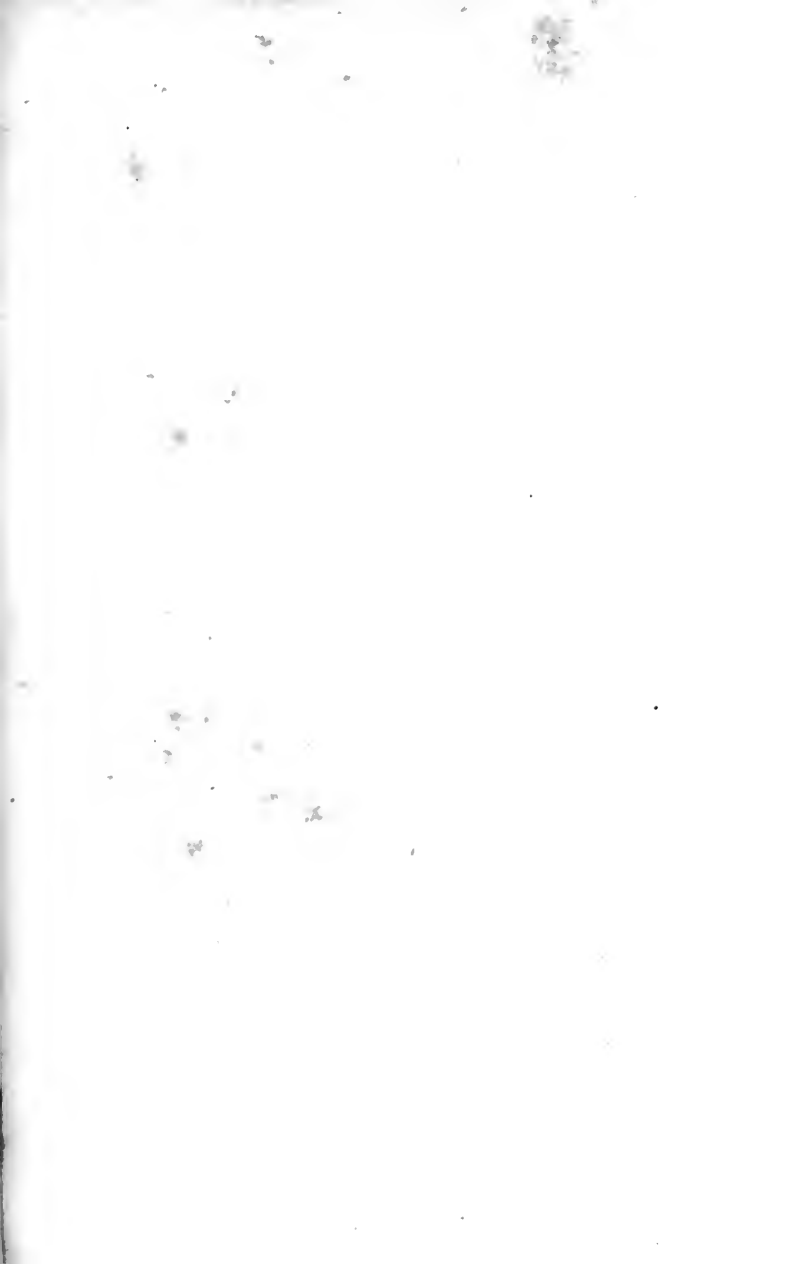
THE
GIRLS

OF THE
VINE



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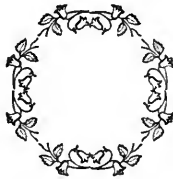
A SEQUEL

TO

THE BARON'S CHILDREN.

BY

MRS. MYERS.



PHILADELPHIA:

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1870

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SEQUEL
TO
THE BARON'S CHILDREN.

CHAPTER I.

“If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.”

THE duty of family prayer was one which was never neglected at Steinrode; but on this, the morning of the Baron's intended journey, it was performed with even more than usual solemnity. Although Faith teaches man to believe himself ever an object of care to a superintending Power— as safely watched over abroad as at home — there are few who set out for an absence of some days or weeks, without a thought of what may happen in that space of time, and so more earnestly commend themselves and their concerns to the keeping of a heavenly Protector. It was therefore with deeper feeling, and more devotional importunity than usual, that the prayer of this morning was offered, petitioning for safety and a happy reunion; or if that, in the hidden depth of purpose belonging to

Divine Wisdom, were denied, that all might meet around the great throne in Heaven; that to such of them as should be spared to pursue the stern journey of life, preserving grace should be given; chastened, if needs be, but not given over to hardness, or unbelief; afflicted, scourged, but not forsaken, or delivered up to despair. The father spoke in exhortation to his children, charging them to be kind and obedient to their mother, and careful to keep out of the way of temptation to err from the influence of bad example. He adverted to the family who were at present under their roof, and bade them be cautious in their behaviour towards them. "They do not see things in the same light as ourselves," said he, "or they would be with us at this moment; but we trust that God will yet enable them to see the true way. And for ourselves, we know that although 'here is no continuing city,' let us bless Him that we can yet look forward to one, the foundations whereof are laid in Heaven—whose Builder and whose Maker is God.'

What is that mysterious influence which operates upon the spirit, and causes it dimly to foresee what is irresistibly "borne in upon the mind," as some one has termed presentiments? What secret intimation is given of events to come, though "clouds and shadows rest" upon the future? Man's boasted wisdom reaches not so far as to solve the mystery; and it is a subject on the elucidation of which he

must remain ignorant until, divested of its veil of flesh, the spirit shall revel in the full blaze of light which we believe was its original inheritance, and which we trace in the bright gleamings that occasionally flash through the darkness that envelopes this present state. That "coming events cast their shadows before," we know; but cannot tell in what manner the premonition is made—whether from internal consciousness or external agency, or the immediate influence of some celestial guardian, commissioned by the universal Parent to watch over man, and warn him of the threatened danger. As though it were so in this case, and the dark cloud about to overshadow was dimly foreseen, all were deeply impressed with the simple service of this morning; for many times had the sun to rise and set in floods of golden light—many alternations of night and morning were to take place—many times was the earth to change her seasons of fruit and flowers—before all who knelt around that family altar, should again assemble there.

Lady Von Grosse, as yet not humbled by her adversity, never appeared to bend the knee in company with that Christian family; but the time was not far distant when that proud spirit was to be bowed, and exchange the stiff neck of rebellion for the meek and child-like deportment taught by the sanctified use of afflictions.

The breakfast-table had been withdrawn, when

Baron Lindenburg, now nearly ready to set out, remembered some business which he had to transact in the village of Steinrode, of which it was necessary a message should be sent back to the castle; he therefore proposed that the servant who was to accompany him on his travel, should proceed thither with the horses, and Felix walk over with himself. Much was the boy delighted with the prospect, inasmuch as he promised himself a short visit to Ehrenfried; but in this latter particular he was disappointed. The day was rather raw and chilly, and Felix had complained, the evening before, of a slight sore throat. Yet, hardy as the young pines upon their own native hills, they never thought of keeping within doors for a trifling indisposition; but the careful mother, calling him to her that she might fasten his collar, and secure his throat from the damp atmosphere by tying a warm comforter around it, discovered that his jacket had lost a button. It was but five minutes' work to sew it on; and while her busy fingers accomplished the task, she bade him return as quickly as possible, for there was some errand she wished him to do for herself.

“Now Felix, my dear,” said she, “I am sorry to disappoint you of your visit to Ehrenfried, but it cannot be helped at present; you and Herman shall both have holiday on Saturday, but now you must come back as quickly as possible.”

"I will, mother dear," replied he; "don't I always do what you tell me?" and he lovingly threw his arms around her neck, and looked up with his laughing blue eyes into her face.

"Not always — *lately*," she answered, with a smile, as she passed her fingers through his wavy hair, and removed the curls from his fair forehead, where she imprinted more than one maternal kiss; and if her mother's heart swelled with some pride as her eyes rested on her beautiful boy, she might well be excused for the weakness — if weakness it were — for there are few who do not acknowledge the power of beauty. It is a gift—a glorious gift from God himself, investing its possessor with more than earthly seeming; and if rightly appreciated by its owner, is a powerful talisman, making man almost a god, and woman an angel.

We have said she kissed him again and again — did she feel that she held him in her arms for the last time? Did she behold some dark brooding angel unfold his baleful wing over the head of her darling, and deem that in those mother's kisses there lay a charm that could ward off the treacherous influence? We know not how this was, but we believe that the pious prayer breathed in the secret chamber of that mother's heart, ascended up to God, who, for good and wise purposes (in a dark and mysterious providence) saw fit to shroud the early days of this beautiful boy in deep dark-

ness, and covered him with the wing of his protection, even while he permitted his impulsive spirit to be disciplined in one of the severest schools that Adversity can teach.

The Baron's leave-taking was quiet; and he felt better at leaving his family since they were not alone. Lady Von Grosse and her children were still not thinking of removal; the Count was expected to be there shortly; but better than all, aunt Angela was again with them. All seemed well, and yet gloom hung upon them, they knew not why, for the Baron's absence from home was no uncommon thing, being often obliged to be from home. Although the day was dull and gloomy, it threw none of its chilling shadow over the bright spirit of Felix, who trudged along gaily by his father's side, on their way to the village. A few words with Ehrenfried had to serve in place of the hoped-for visit; but the prospect of the whole of Saturday was enough to compensate for the disappointment. The Baron soon concluded his business with the farmer whom he wished to see, and having given the message he wished sent back, he laid his hand upon the boy's head and gave him his blessing, bidding him, when they parted, go home as quickly as possible.

Since Felix *did* disobey, it is *almost* to be regretted that he did not slight the admonition of his mother, and remain longer with Ehrenfried;

but this he did not do. How necessary it is for all ever to keep in the path of duty: had Felix done so, what years of misery had been spared! After parting with his father, he set forth vigorously to retrace his homeward road, and had already reached the forest path, when he saw Amadé and Eugene upon it. They had left the castle without observation, and the former was already exulting in the success of his scheme, when the cheerful voice of Felix hailing them from a distance once more recalled him to himself, and to the probable consequences of his perilous undertaking. Muttering curses between his teeth as he awoke to the danger of his present position, when it should be discovered in the search certain to be made for Eugene as soon as he was missed at the castle, that he had been seen with himself in the forest, and so betrayal was the sure consequence, like all other villains, he was obliged to seal his first sin with a second. Cursing, therefore, the accident that had thrown Felix in the way of his purpose, he was at the same time resolutely determined to prevent his return to the castle, caring not for the anxiety he might cause, and dreading only to be found out. Dressing his face in smiles, whilst his heart was trembling at the thoughts of its own dark purpose, he repeated the tale with which he had already cheated Eugene to Felix when he came up to them, well knowing that

the prospect of capturing a fox in a trap would not be lost upon the lively boy. He was right. The hasty impulsive Felix, in his great delight and wish to see master Reynard outwitted, forgot the request of his mother, the admonition of his father, to return as speedily as possible, and turning from the path which led to home and safety, he followed the insidious guide into the bosom of the forest, where he had said, and truly, that the snare was set. It was, perhaps, the first time in his life that Felix had so positively disobeyed the command of his parents; but we have before said that his unavoidable companionship with Eugene had not been without effect. His plastic nature, too easily impressed, had, in more than one instance, yielded to the force of his bad example, although he did not love him; and now in this, the last and greatest departure from duty of which he had been guilty, punishment, severe and tedious punishment, followed immediately on the commission of the offence. It was no doubt so ordered, or at least permitted, in mercy and in love. Severe but salutary as the chastenings of our Heavenly Father always are, who or what suffered or gainsay their wisdom, how many have been rescued by them from the headlong road to ruin; how many of the straying restored to the right path. "Before I was afflicted," said the inspired minstrel, "I went astray, but now I keep thy love." And

now God, whose broad eye sees the end from the beginning, loved the spirit he saw it necessary to chasten, and sent the discipline in early life, to save that which had brought forth no "fruit unto holiness" in nature, although many faithful hearts had to bleed for a time, and sorrow as those "without hope," until the issue of the great plot should be unfolded.

With many tales of fox-chasing and fox-cunning, irresistibly charming to boys of their age, Amadé cheated the rugged way which led them to a different and more distant part of the forest than Felix had ever yet seen. Here the oaks stood thicker upon the ground, the interlacing branches and spiry undergrowth, giving it the appearance of some primeval grove, whose sylvan solitude man had not dared to disturb; and the same stream that ran so quietly through the castle garden, meeting with many obstacles from rocks and inequalities of ground, roared with a voice like that of an angry spirit (as it rushed on its headlong course), increasing the wildness and savage grandeur of the scene. Feelings of awe had already begun to creep over the boys, as is ever the case when Man, standing in the temple of mighty Nature, is aware of the Divinity that rules the spot; but astonishment was added with almost paralyzing effect, when Amadé, applying his finger to his lips, gave a shrill whistle, which was answered

close by, and Dietrich, the wild, frightful, and revengeful Dietrich, rushed forth from the thicket, and, with a cry of maniac joy, threw himself upon Eugene. For him resistance would have been useless, had it been offered; but naturally timid, fright had now rendered him powerless, and with fainting limbs and nerveless brain, he struggled not in the hands of his captor, who bound him hand and foot with every demonstration of savage delight. No word escaped the poor boy's lips; he had fully recognized Dietrich, and he gave himself up to his enemy as submissively as the dove yields to the swoop of the falcon. Not so Felix; his first impulse was to fly; but Amadé, now fearing nothing but his escape, soon overtook him; and although the boy made stout resistance, he was at length overpowered by superior strength, and a handkerchief was forced into his mouth to stifle the cries which he had already sent forth into the still forest, hoping, but vainly, thereby to bring some help. He fought until overpowered, for Dietrich, having easily disposed of Eugene, now came to the assistance of Amadé, and bound him hand and foot with cords, with which, as it seemed, he was plentifully provided. Feeling how useless the further resistance of one weak boy against two powerful men would be, he yielded quietly to the fate, whatever it might be, that awaited him, and, more collected than his frightened companion,

endeavouring to gather some light from the conversation of the men who were so unexpectedly arisen as enemies.

“What does this mean, knave?” asked Dietrich of Amadé, with a scowl.

“I bring you two instead of one,” said Amadé, laughing. “I did not want this fighting fellow any more than yourself; but I could not help bringing him. He must not be suffered to escape, for he would go back to the castle and betray us both; no, keep him as close as you can, at least until after I have made tracks from this abominable Deutschland. He would be sure to tell what he saw, and nobody must know that I had anything to do with Eugene. But indeed I pity the poor boy, for I have always had a liking for him, and it must have been his evil genius that led him into my way this morning.”

“A bad business, a bad business,” muttered Dietrich; “what shall I do with the boy? he does not belong to any part of my plan.”

“You must take what you can get, or give up your silly purpose altogether,” said Amadé, fiercely; “I have no notion of putting my neck into the hangman’s noose; ’tis a manner of going out of the world I never fancied. You must either take both or none; and if you choose to wander about here as you have been doing, you will be sure to be discovered; in that case you will be

condemned to the death of an incendiary, before you will have had time to accomplish your plan of vengeance."

The look of threatening bestowed on him by Dietrich awed him into silence; but he folded his arms, and assuming an attitude of scornful determination, he waited until his comrade should decide and speak.

It was some time ere he did so; and then again much altercation ensued. Dietrich insisted that he had no wish to punish Felix along with Eugene; he said he knew what the boy's parents would suffer from his removal; ah! he only knew how well the grief occasioned by the loss of a child—his little Annie—his only darling; no, he had vowed revenge upon her grave, and revenge now stood in her stead to him—he could not, would not give up Eugene, now that he had him in his power. Amadé, when he again spoke, represented the extreme imprudence of letting Felix go back; in any event he must be kept some time from home, whilst Dietrich prosecuted his plan of carrying off Eugene to Poland, or at least until his own term of service had expired, which would be shortly, and he was beyond all reach of pursuit in France, where his mother lived. For although he too was kindly disposed towards Felix, he was not weak enough to expect to bind the boy to a promise of secrecy which he would be sure to break, since he would

certainly tell how he had met himself with Eugene in the forest, and then it could not be but that he would suffer punishment as being an accomplice in the abduction of the latter. "No, no," said he, as he concluded his argument, "there is nothing else that can be done; Felix must share the lot of Eugene, at least for the present, or else the whole affair is at an end."

Dietrich at length was made to comprehend what Amadé meant, and going towards the boys, bade them make no noise, neither offer any resistance, for both would be unavailing. Much of their future treatment would depend on their quiet submissiveness; at present nothing more was required of them than to do as they were told; and as their first act of obedience to their new master they were bidden to follow him in silence to a spot, towards which he led the way. He strode over the crackling undergrowth, as though quite familiar with the way, although path there was none, bearing still, as the heart of Felix told him, in a direction opposite to Steinrode. The trees at length began to grow thinner, the thickets less tangled, and patches of blue sky appearing through the foliage, showed that they were approaching the opposite edge of the forest. The neighing of a horse caused them to look up, and there by the side of a by-road made by the colliers of that region for

transporting wood to their coal-pits, stood a small miserable wagon, covered with coarse linen, to which was harnessed a stout country horse, seemingly able to carry them on a long journey, for although rough as a tinker's pony, he was in excellent condition.

A quantity of clothing, made of the roughest material, such as is worn by gipsey tinkers and collier boys, was taken from some hidden coffer within the vehicle, and our two acquaintances were directed to put on such as their conductors designated, divesting themselves of every article of their own by which they could possibly be recognised. The next act of procedure was to cut off their hair; this was speedily done by Amadé, and in the most disfiguring manner, so that in the patched and squalid dresses they were obliged to assume, no one could have recognised them as the children of nobility; for we must acknowledge those advantages of person which birth is supposed to confer are greatly aided by the auxiliary of dress. Whilst all this transforming process was going on, Amadé and Dietrich only exchanged a few words with each other—the whole business being accomplished in a few minutes, and the boys having been desired to mount up into the wagon, a request which they seemed rather reluctant to obey, they were somewhat rudely assisted to do so, after which the confederates separated. Dietrich

took his place beside them, and after threatening to punish all attempts to escape, or any refractory behaviour maintained a resolute and gloomy silence, closing his ears to the prayer they *would* utter, and deaf to the sobs which issued from their breaking hearts, he drove his stout charger rapidly over stock and stone, at a pace which occasioned such a jolting of the wagon as threatened every bone in their bodies with dislocation. That he was fearful of pursuit was evident; for he not only urged the animal to a speed absolutely cruel, but held on his way through a wild mountainous region, by solitary roads, where no human being appeared, and where no smoke, curling above the tree-tops, gave sign of human habitation.

We must leave them for awhile to pursue their disastrous journey, to look after those anxious hearts left behind: but let us just enquire what Amadé did, or how he concluded the first act of his treacherous drama, so successfully begun, and the termination of which his coward heart trembled to contemplate. He remained standing on the same spot where Dietrich left him until the sound of the wheels was entirely lost in the distance; a bright red spot glowed on his dark cheeks, and his eyes burned with unusual light. At length he roused himself.

“Would that I had never seen those unlucky jewels,” said he to himself; “they have done me

no good, but caused me to live in daily terror of detection; and now I have plunged still further into crime, and must deepen the dye by adding to it duplicity. Ah! so it is ever; one cannot stop with one sin—after the first step is taken, others must follow. But now there is nothing left for me but to play the play out. Would that this accursed term of service were at an end, for I shall never know a moment's peace until I am safe in my native country. It will be horrible for me to face my mistress, but I must do it like a man;—but I would far rather have given that haughty Melanie to Dietrich than Felix—ah! that hurts me more than all the rest. But I must act, and quickly; self-reproach will now do no good.”

He proceeded, even as he spoke, to gather up the clothing of which he and Dietrich had divested the boys, and carried them to the bank of the stream, at a place both deep and rapid, which lay about a quarter of a league from the castle, and in a direction entirely opposite to that from whence he parted with Dietrich and his captives. He laid their caps and upper garments on the shore to show that at this spot they had gone into bathe; and some yards further down, he hung a portion of their linen on some bushes that protruded from the water; and as at that place the current was particularly strong, it might be very readily supposed they had both been swept away by its rapidity, and

drowned. Having accomplished all this, he returned to the castle by a circuitous route; and entering by the porter's lodge in front, he spoke to the old woman at the gate, and went on directly to the servants' room, where he was glad to find his absence had not been noticed. Not a word was said of the children; and thus many hours passed before any one missed Felix and Eugene from among the rest. And indeed, it was not until the family were called to assemble for dinner, that any one, except the mother of Felix, thought of enquiring for them; but then each one recollected that neither of them had been seen from the time of the early breakfast hour. Then the consternation rose to a fearful height, and each heart boded misfortune.

CHAPTER II.

“And wilt thou pluck my fair son from mine age,
And rob me of a happy mother’s name?”

LADY Lindenburg, occupied with her other children, did not remark the protracted absence of Felix with any uneasiness, until the morning was far advanced. Wondering at a disobedience so unusual in any member of her family, she was prepared to chide him for his unwonted delay; but when the dinner-bell rang, and the others appeared ready to take their places at the table, her displeasure changed to alarm when she found he was not among the number.

She enquired of Herman if he had seen his brother — of the servants, if any of them had met him on his return from the village; a negative from each one was the only answer to her question. The dinner was left untouched. Filled with anxiety, the mother despatched messengers every where for tidings of her missing boy; some to the park — others to Petersmühl — although she felt assured he would not go there after her expressed wish that he should not. The forest was searched — she examined the gardens herself — but all was in vain. No one had seen him but Ehrenfried, and

the farmer to whom he had gone with his father ; both had seen him leave the village on his homeward road, but this was at so early an hour, that it gave no clue to what might have happened. Hour succeeded hour—each one increasing the weight of anxiety that pressed upon her heart, but she yielded not to the tears that would have unnerved her, until late in the evening ; then the messengers sent to a distance returned, and all brought the same answer — no traces had been found.

Until this time, Lady Von Grosse, accustomed to Eugene's long absences (for he went wherever he pleased without asking permission), was by no means alarmed ; and expressed herself to Melanie, that she thought "Lady Lindenburg was making a great rout about nothing ; she did not know why boys should always be tied to their mother's apron — 't was a sure way to keep down their spirit. For her part, she would let Eugene do as he pleased — there was nothing she loved so well as independence of character." But when the bell was rung for supper, and Eugene did not answer to the summons, then her consternation was wild and fearful. She ran shrieking through the garden ; and, unheeding the darkness, into the park.

"Eugene, my child — Eugene, come to me !" and those screams tore the hearts of all who heard them — they sounded like the cries of a maniac.

It would be impossible to describe the scene of

confusion and dismay that now took place in the orderly household at Steinrode. The servants, sad and affrighted, gathered in groups about the hall, or on the staircase; crying, whispering, or running about apparently half distracted, as they saw the agitation of their superiors. The children, with the exception of Herman and Melanie, were sobbing aloud. Old mother Spiller had penetrated to the family room, and with little Pauline on her lap, sat weeping beside Lady Lindenburg, whose fears of disaster had now amounted to certainty; yet calm, although with a face as pale as death, she once more ordered the forest to be searched—directing the men to carry flambeaux, leaving no spot unvisited. Herman had until this moment stood beside her, mastering his own emotion to comfort and assure her; although the heavy drops of perspiration that stood upon his broad white forehead, showed how deeply his brother's heart was wrung. But now he left her, determined to make one of the exploring party, going with the portion who went on foot; whilst Mr. Bulow and two of the grooms mounted on horseback, and determined to follow the windings of the stream; particularly as one of the stable-boys remembered that Eugene had asked him about getting him some worms, at the same time saying he was "going fishing one of these days!"

This afforded a slight glimmer of hope to all but

Lady Lindenburg. They might, in pursuing their sport, have gone farther than they intended, and so lost their way, being bewildered in the intricacies of the forest; or else, leaving the track entirely, had wandered to some herdsman's cottage, from which it was too late to return.

But no such hope cheated the heart of Felix's mother; she knew him too well to believe he would disobey her to such an extent as this implied; and she sat with folded hands and in silent sorrow, endeavouring to subdue the tumult raging in her mother's heart, and bring it to that submission which she had many times already experienced was demanded of those who would be children of God.

After the departure of the last party, all had become comparatively silent. Aunt Angela was a real comfort at this time to her afflicted sister, and endeavoured to be so too to Lady Von Grosse, if she would have permitted her; but that lady would not listen to a word from any one; she turned away from aunt Angela, pushed Melanie to one side when she would have approached her, and continued her fruitless roaming in the park, although the dark day had ended in a thick mist, or rather drizzling rain, which, added to the chill mountain blasts that moaned through the trees, and detached the withering leaves from their branches, would at any other time have filled her with alarm,

and now was fraught with danger to her health. But a mother's anxiety now predominated over every thing else; she heeded not the gusts that tossed the swaying branches, waving like giant arms above her head — she knew not that rain was falling, or if she did, cared not that it might be injurious to herself — her son, her idol, for she had ever loved him better than his sister, was abroad, exposed to the same inclemency, and she could not give up her search while hope remained.

Aunt Angela had deemed it best to leave her; so giving a servant orders to see that she did not wander in an unsafe direction, she once more entered the room where she had left her sister surrounded by her children, whose loud grief had been somewhat subdued by the spark of hope kindled up for a moment by the evidence of the stable-boy. No word was spoken — a half-suppressed sob from one of the sisters alone broke the silence that reigned within that room so lately cheerful; the old clock in the hall chimed the hour of ten, and the glare of torches gleaming through the windows from without, told of the servants' return. A wild shriek was heard from the garden; it was from the mother still calling on her son's name, and the cry was most agonizing. Another moment and a horse was heard galloping over the gravelled walk. A bustle without showed that the servants had pressed forward for news; but no

acclamations followed as they would have done on the reception of joyful tidings; no footsteps pressed forward to carry the lost boy to his despairing mother; a boding stillness succeeded to the previous rush; and Lady Lindenburg, crossing her hands meekly over her bosom, said, "Go, Angela, and hear the worst: I am able to bear it!"

The horseman was the groom who had accompanied Mr. Bulow, and when Angela reached the hall he was standing in the midst of a group of servants, dripping with rain, and holding the cap and clothing of Felix in his hand, from which the water was likewise streaming. No further confirmation of their fears seemed necessary; a few words explanatory of how and where he had found them was sufficient. The servants retired to the kitchen to conjecture how and where the body would be found, and to tell marvellous tales of the spirits of the Hartz, who were known to attract boys away from their parents, and "keep them ever so many years."

"Indeed," said Dolly, the chambermaid, "I should not wonder if the Berggeist* made them follow him into the water, like the fairy did Seppi, the goatherd."

"I thought of that when I saw the linen hanging on the bushes in the middle of the stream,"

* Mountain goblin.

said Eric, the groom who had found the clothes, "and I was almost afraid to venture; yes, it must be so, that is if the bodies are not found, for I suppose my poor lady will have us all out dragging the river, to-morrow."

"I thought something was to happen," said Dolly, as she hitched her chair a little closer to that of Eric, "for, this morning, the black cat looked up into my face, and mewed three times."

"And I declare," said Grettly, the dairy-maid, "old Blackhorns would not give me a drop of her milk, and kicked the pail over three times in spite of me; and that is always a sign of something."

"You are a set of silly fools," said the cook; "do you suppose the cats know what is going to happen, when *sensitive* creatures do not; or that the black cow held up her milk because master Felix, poor dear, was going to be *drowned*. The cat cried because she was hungry and wanted to be *implenished*; and the only sign about old Blackhorns was, that she *deposed* you to be a fool. Get you off to your beds; your sitting up won't do no good, and there won't be no *carousing* you in the morning."

Some of those she addressed followed her bidding and example; but others sat still, and building up a large bright wood fire in the ample hearth, their party soon became augmented by some of the

neighboring tenants, among whom the sad news was already spread, and dropped in one after another, they whiled the dreary night away with many a wild legend and tale of superstitious bearing, the truth of which they did not for a moment question, until in their excited imaginations supposition almost became belief that Felix and Eugene were spirited away by some demon of the Hartz; "but this," they added, "will be proved if the bodies are not found." The grey and misty morning found them still discussing the matter; and glad were they when the dawn called them once more to their usual occupations.

Aunt Angela had broken the tidings brought by Mr. Bulow as tenderly as possible to her sister; no violent outburst of grief resounded through that chamber of mourning — the family were silent in their woe — they knew it was by the hand of God they had been smitten. Lady Lindenburg bade her sister go to her suffering guest, who had met the party on horseback in the park on their return from the river; it was on seeing Eugene's clothes that she had screamed so wildly; and Mr. Bulow dismounting from his horse, gave the bridle to one of the grooms, and at length succeeded in persuading her to accompany him to the castle.

Some soothing cordial was given her by the benevolent hand of aunt Angela, who moved about like a minister of mercy among these afflicted ones,

her hysterical emotions after a time were quieted, and she at length sunk into a quietude resembling sleep — that quietude which, although we do not lose all consciousness, is yet sufficient to blunt the sharp edge of the mourner's sorrow, and steals over the stricken heart like twilight veiling with her dewy robe the day exhausted by the summer's heat. Then giving Melanie many charges to watch beside her mother's bedside, and stationing one of the maidens in an ante-room, she turned to her sister's chamber, and there, locked in each other's arms, they watched and wept the weary night away.

Mr. Bulow proposed that a messenger should at once be sent after Baron Lindenburg, who was stopping at a friend's house for that night. It was at no great distance, but it was necessary that the place of his sojourn should be reached before he should have left it; as early in the morning he expected to proceed on his journey. The night was becoming each moment more wild and stormy; but Eric, the groom, declared his willingness to set out at once, which he did, notwithstanding his superstitious belief in spectres and goblins, for Dolly had given him a bit of St. John's wort to tie round his neck, which she averred was efficacious enough to drive away all the Demons of the Hartz into the Red Sea.

The morning broke without any improvement in

the weather. The face of nature was clothed in gloom, which but too well corresponded with that which clouded the hearts of this afflicted family. The rain poured down steadily throughout the day — the wind swept in fierce gusts through the park, stripping the half-denuded trees of the foliage that remained — the cattle clustered together in groups by the hedges — and it was, altogether, a season when the shelter of home was to be desired; yet the grey dawn had scarcely struggled into existence, ere the servants and retainers were out to renew their search.

Great was the sorrow that now ruled in that so lately happy household. Lady Lindenburg, with her husband far distant, and bowed down to the very earth by the weight of her affliction, was yet obliged to order the arrangements necessary for the recovery of the corpses of her son and Eugene; but with the self-command she ever maintained, her own feelings were kept under restraint, and her habitual piety led her to seek comfort from a source whence it is never denied—in prayer. The evening brought the Baron back to the home he had so lately left; and night's deep shadows had already shrouded the forest, when the men engaged in dragging the river returned from their ineffectual search. There was nothing more that could be done, and the sorely-stricken parents endeavored to be silent under the Unerring Hand that had so

mysteriously wounded them. As children of a wise and benevolent Parent, who until this moment had never veiled his face in darkness, but showered blessings and sunlight on their heretofore happy path, they felt that in this present dark dispensation it was not theirs to question, but submit; they therefore gave up their Felix as one they were no more to meet until the earth should be called to judgment, and the sea to give up its dead. It would have been a comfort to have looked upon the corpse of their fair-haired boy, and visited the grave where the dear dust reposed; but since this could not be, his memory was sepulchred deep in those parental hearts, and cherished with an affection which needed no marble to remind them of the one who faded, even in his budding, from their sight.

“I told you so, Eric; I told you so,” said Dolly, as the servants once more gathered around the kitchen-fire, to give utterance to the many conjectures that had arisen on their failure to find the bodies, “I know’d you’d never get them. Ah! poor Master Felix! he will never be among us again, with his laughing blue eyes, and his merry ways. I hope, since he is not drowned, for if he was the body would have turned up somehow, that it was the Rübzahl that took him away, for they say he always uses the children well that he carries off; but the Zernbock——”

“It is a pity,” interrupted the fat cook, “that one of them had n’t carried you off, and kept you awhile, to stop your talking; but they were too sensitive to do that, for they knew that one tongue like yours would set them all in profusion.”

Dolly now began to flare up; and, forgetful of the sad occurrence which had called up the mention of the mountain demons, she began fiercely to retaliate on the cook with the very member that that worthy personage had deemed too noisy for goblin land!

“I should not wonder, Madam Greasyface,” she began, “if the Zernbock made you a visit; he only comes after ugly people.”

“None of your *arguevatins*,” interrupted the fat cook, “there comes Mother Spiller — she’ll soon settle you;” and indeed, at the same moment, the old lady entered the kitchen with an injunction that all would retire to rest as speedily as possible, as it was desirable that the house should be kept perfectly quiet. There was no gainsaying this; the strangers departed to their homes — the servants one by one went off to their several places of rest — the lights were all extinguished — and, save the melancholy chirp of the cricket on the kitchen-hearth, deep and mournful stillness reigned over the sorrowing household of Steinrode.

CHAPTER III.

“This is a lonesome place for one like you.”

FOR many days Lady Von Grosse gave way to the most boisterous demonstrations of grief, calling constantly on the name of Eugene, until those kind friends under whose roof she was dwelling, began to fear for her reason. In her day of prosperity, she had never looked beyond the enjoyment of the present life; and when the day of calamity came, she had no strong-hold to which she could flee. All that the good aunt Angela could urge was without avail; she turned a deaf ear to the admonitions, soothing as they were, of one whom she insisted could not feel as a mother who had lost her only son. She declared the sun of her existence was forever darkened, and that God had dealt hardly and unjustly with her; and that rebellious spirit, which alarmed, by the violence of its murmurs, the kind old maid, was in nowise subdued until Lady Lindenburg, conquering the sorrow of her own heart, went herself to her suffering guest, and showed her that great as was the calamity that had fallen on both, there was no affliction sent by the hand of God that he would not give them strength to bear.

The calm, pale brow of the mother, plainly attested the depth of her own feelings while she thus benevolently attempted to give comfort to another, who, although not more severely stricken than herself, had yet to learn that sweet and soothing assurance which comes like a whisper from the spirit-land—the still small voice that is heard amid the tumult and the storm of grief, which bids the trusting mourner remember, “He doeth all things well;” and she felt herself strengthened to better bear her own burden by the effort she made to assist another, to whom the same ability had not been given. Lady Von Grosse was touched by her words, for she could neither doubt their sincerity, nor question the mother’s right to feel; both were exhibited by the unmistakeable manner of the bereft, who, bowing meekly before the mandate “Be still, and know that I am God,” was yet ready to pour drops of consolation on the wounds of another, while her own heart was bleeding at every pore. Awed, therefore, by the majesty of a grief that, whilst it mourned, yet did not murmur, that of Lady Von Grosse became much lessened in its violence, when, for the first time in her life, she began to think. Until the day she had left Hausdorff, her time had passed in one giddy round of pleasure. She could not believe but that her path was to be strewn with flowers, even to the end of her earthly course; but of that end itself she

suffered no thought to intrude — its unwelcome shadow would have dimmed her sunshine. Her time, since the destruction of Hausdorff, and their consequent ruin, had been spent in lamenting their hard fate, or regrets for the pleasures she could no longer procure or enjoy. The first stroke sent by the Unerring had failed to produce the salutary effect always intended by afflictive dispensations, and now a second and more severe one was sent to repeat the teaching of the lesson; and, in great mercy, at this time it did not fail.

She now began to see how faulty she had been in committing the care of her children to strangers — in turning over to hirelings the performance of those sacred duties which is peculiarly the charge of mothers, and ought to be their pride (for woman is nowhere so truly great as in the nursery, since it is there that the first good seed is to be sown, the first gems of an evil nature to be crushed); and to the self-will and steady disobedience in which they had ever been permitted to indulge, the present calamity might mainly be attributed. Deeply now did she regret the time she had spent in the whirl of pleasure — such pleasure as if at this period offered to her, could not give one moment's soothing to her pained spirit; and Melanie, who, notwithstanding the loss of her brother, by constantly practising the same perverse and disobedient behaviour she had ever done, keep-

ing constantly by its exhibition before her the evil effects of her own negligence in regard to her children, was anything but a comfort, since it only deepened her self-reproach, and served to point her conscience with a sharper sting.

From the date of this sore affliction a very perceptible change was observed to have taken place in the family at Steinrode. The flood of their first high tide of grief had passed away; but not without having left deep and lasting traces. Their cheerfulness gradually returned; but the same boisterous merriment never. Their natural mirth, "the child of good-nature and conscious innocence of heart," was for a space subdued; but Time, as he bore them along his stream, blunted (as he always does,) the sharp edge of their sorrow, and it again beamed forth, but never so brightly as before. Herman greatly missed his companion in study and in play; the girls their fair-haired laughing brother, who was the merriest of them all, and whose joyous spirit burned ever with a light that communicated its own radiance to the rest. The Baron was grave. Lady Lindenburg—ah! there was little change in her, save her cheek was paler, and her eyes more dove-like; there was that within that passeth show—a mother's heart has depths it is not easy to fathom. Aunt Angela spent now the greater part of her time with them; and pitying the neglected and self-willed Melanie, she benevo-

lently set herself to work to eradicate the faults engendered by her erroneous education, and to prepare her mind for the reception of better things; a task in which, although at first it did not promise much success to the good old maid, yet with that spirit of true charity which "hopeth and endureth all things," she yet determined to persevere in her efforts, trusting that He in whose name she sowed the "good seed" would give the increase.

Thus the family gradually resumed the occupations and studies which the sad event we have related had for a time interrupted. The Baron, who had not given up his kind intentions in favour of the peasant boy, and since the loss of Felix, was more kindly disposed, now not only permitted that Ehrenfried should come to the castle to receive instruction from Mr. Bulow with his own children, but was determined, if the boy proved to be what he hoped, to build a cottage in the village for his mother. Thus in doing and planning good, they found balm for their own wounded spirits; and although the winter set in to them in unusual gloom—though the long corridors and high-roofed hall looked vacant and dreary—though they could not discern the same sparkling beauty in the snow-wreaths, and uttered no jests as they used to do when they looked at "old Zobtenberg" for signs of

the weather, the winter passed; and not without blessings and comfort.

Christmas came and New Year; but not with the bright anticipation and childish enjoyment of the preceding — no; remembrance was too busy for that; yet not so busy as to forget there were others to be made happy, although they were sad. No brightly illuminated Christmas-tree was placed in the hall or parlour; but the poor of the village, and tenants on the estate, received their annual presents, and more largely than usual. A long table was spread in the servants' hall, where the poor were feasted with a good dinner, and "indeed where they did eat," as Dolly confided to Eric, "as if they had never eaten before, and never thinking of poor Master Felix, whom she was now morally certain the Rübzahl had spirited away."

Public notice had been given of the disappearance of the two boys, and rewards offered for the recovery of the bodies; for few or none questioned that they were drowned. But the winter passed, and no more light was thrown on the mysterious affair than on the day of its happening; and the uncertainty of those who at first were inclined to doubt gradually yielded to belief.

Spring once more spread her green mantle over the earth; the hedges bloomed in flowery beauty, the garden stood forth in all its pride of budding loveliness, and the lark, mounting high in the

heavens, sung his songs of praise. Nature came forth from her long wintry sleep in renovated beauty; but spring to the mourner's heart brings little joy. The contrast is too painful; the trees bud out and blossom, the flowers burst forth in gladness from the earth; the forest wears again her vernal garb, and stands forth enrobed in bright and freshened foliage — there is no missing in Nature for what winter destroyed, since spring returns all; but the grave never gives back what it shrouds within its dark bosom. Does not every mourner feel his sad bereavement renewed yet more painfully as spring returns to Earth the treasures for which in winter she seemed to sorrow; but to those who weep over the graves of the loved ones who made *their* world, she brings but sadness, if they look no further than the present imperfect state. But there are those who know of better things — those who, tracing in the “unvarying serenity of purpose” with which the mighty mother performs her steady changes, bringing seed-time, and harvest in their appointed courses, the Wondrous Power by which she is alike governed and upheld — believe that for man, the favoured creature of God, there, too, is an awakening — the glorious resurrection of the body is shadowed forth in all. But Nature's budding beauty charmed not as heretofore; there was no sympathy between these scenes of their happy

childhood and their present changed feelings — they were admired but not enjoyed ; for Felix, the laughing, merry Felix, was no longer among them, and all seemed drear and desolate. Oh ! how changed every thing seemed ; yet the change was only within themselves ; for the same attention had been paid to every thing as formerly, but they could not romp and play as they had been used to do. Melanie had been throughout far less troubled than the rest ; she had never loved her brother ; he had often ridiculed her for her fashionable airs, betrayed her to her governess, and, besides, was constantly quarrelling with her. And on the whole, she felt rather better than usual ; for since his absence she had not felt her self-love wounded by her mother's partiality for her son, a preference which she never cared to conceal ; and by constantly mortifying Melanie, had the bad effect of hardening her heart against all affection for Eugene.

Time brought a salutary change to Lady Von Grosse ; sorrow and misfortune forcing her to give up the hollow enjoyments to which she had heretofore sacrificed her whole existence, gave her space to consider how false was the light by which she had been dazzled ; how foolishly — nay, wickedly, she had acted in her negligent raising of her children. She never suspected to what an extent Melanie's evil disposition had been fostered, until

at this time, when she was obliged to have her continually at her side; and how bitter was the pang that shot through her heart at the constant evidence the selfish girl gave of not being able to bestow one solitary ray of comfort on her suffering parents at a period when it would be joy to be able to cling to a promise afforded by her, of which, alas! there was not the least sign. Melanie loved no one but herself; she knew not, neither could be made to comprehend the glorious feeling of sacrificing her own happiness for the sake of procuring it for another. No thought, therefore, that by duty and kindness she might mitigate, if she could not remove, her mother's deep sorrow, ever entered her mind; therefore she did not attempt it, and moved about as usual among the subdued group, the only one whose brow wore no shadow of the sad event which had plunged them all into gloom.

With great pain, therefore, Lady Von Grosse saw the number of faults that had taken deep root in her daughter's heart; and now she did not only watch with all a mother's care to check their rapid growth, but was resolved to make every sacrifice of herself, in order to retrieve, as far as possible, the time she had lost.

The great bereavement she had met with in the loss of Eugene, had produced a tempest in her soul which had not passed away without effect—the mists which had enveloped her mental being

were all dispersed — misfortune had raised the veil which heretofore bounded her vision only to this world, and prevented her looking beyond it; and Adversity, like storms that are said to purify the ocean, leaving, when their fury is spent, precious pearls upon the shore, had brought forth fruits more costly than they; and now that she learned to look beyond the grave, and to know that man was not made to revel through life's short day, but for active usefulness, she was anxious that they should find a place where she might at once *begin* the education of her daughter.

The situation of forest-warden, which had been so contemptuously refused when offered by a friend in the first stage of their misfortune, was still open for their acceptance; and now so changed had Lady Von Grosse become, that it seemed to be the very spot she desired, and she besieged her husband with petitions that they might be at once permitted to remove thither, believing it to be, according to her new views, the surest atmosphere for the building up of her daughter's mental health.

The Count, less changed than herself, was tardy in responding to her wishes; he still hoped that something more suited to his tastes might be found in the capital, but as nothing turned up there for his benefit, and his wife not relaxing her importunities, he at last yielded to them.

It was on a glorious day towards the end of

summer, when the golden grain waved ripening for the harvest in the brilliant sunshine, that the Lady Von Grosse's family left the hospitable dwelling at Steinrode, where they had for so long a time been sheltered, to begin the journey towards their new and far-distant home, which lay in the very bosom of the wild and wonder-teeming Hartz.

With great emotion the two families parted from each other. Companions in suffering, they had been brought nearer to each other, and so obtained more intimate knowledge of their individual characters than could have been accomplished by any other means, and that acquaintance had not been without profit to both. Lady Lindenburg was glad to find her neighbor was not the heartless being she at one time appeared to be; approving highly of the course she proposed taking with Melanie, inasmuch as she not only showed a great deal of good sense, more than any one had given her credit for, but displayed evidence of lofty and proper feelings, such as proved her worthy of the friendship of the good; while on the other hand, Lady Von Grosse, struck with the Christian consistency displayed by the Steinrode parents, as well in their first happiness—in their well disciplined family—as in this their sore trial, and the calm submissive manner in which they bowed to meet the stroke, the courteous and unvarying kindness taught by gospel spirits of hospitality, and

extended for so long a time to herself and family — all had taught her that there was truth in the religion that they possessed; and by this pure example her heart was opened to receive its teachings. They parted then with regret from each other, there being but little likelihood of their ever meeting again; for long and dangerous paths lay between their several homes, and circumstances seemed at present to forbid even a distant prospect of re-union.

Leaving the family at Steinrode to pursue their accustomed routine of life, we will go to the Hartz with Lady Von Grosse, and see her transformed into a forester's wife, dwelling amongst and like the poor whom she had formerly so much despised.

Her husband was an amiable but weak man, without half the force of character that belonged to herself, and as such was little able to sustain her with counsel or co-operation in the task which, to prosecute successfully, filled her whole soul, and awoke energies within her to follow a task in which she vainly endeavoured to arouse him to a participation.

“He could not see,” he said, “that Melanie was worse than others; he thought she should not give herself so much unnecessary trouble; the girl would do well enough. For his part he would leave nothing undone to get them out of this dreadful place—he

was sure he should yet get an office in the capital, and then they could live as well as ever."

These remarks would silence, though they did not change the purpose of Madame Von Grosse, as she now preferred being called. Her heart had been too fully awakened, and by a power that teaches too thoroughly to be misled by such sophistry; so she let him talk on, resolved to be firm in the prosecution of what she now knew to be her duty.

They travelled many days ere they reached the solitary spot where they were to find a home so different from that to which they had been accustomed. Melanie was particularly sullen during the journey. Nature stood forth in unspeakable magnificence; mountain peaks that rose far above their heads, bathing their summits in the clouds; chains of dark and sterile rocks that skirted the base of these mountains, or some river shore, crowned on the highest point with heavy masses of time-worn towers, contrasted vividly with the green of the valleys and blue mirror of the streams that wound their crystal currents through them to the sea. The ruins on the rock served to remind the traveller of the genius of departed power, the genius that delighted in war and bloodshed, looking gloomily down on the triumphs achieved by peace, in the vine-clad hill; or fruitful valley; but for such contemplations Melanie had no taste. They

approached nearer and nearer to the mountains; the forest grew thicker, and the scenes more gloomy; and twilight reigned within its shadow long ere the sun had withdrawn his rays from the earth. To a small house in the very bosom of the deep wood, surrounded by a neatly paled garden, they bent their steps, for they had to leave the carriage in which they travelled at the outer edge of the forest, and as there was nothing but a footpath, they were obliged to walk the intervening distance. A pair of large and branching antlers nailed on the high peaked gables of the house by way of ornament, showed that this was the forest lodge; and by those who had not known such luxury as our Von Grosse acquaintances had been accustomed to, might have been hailed as a very comfortable home. But it is contrast that causes the pang in reverses that constitute a great deal of the suffering that many experience on a change of circumstances. Here there was really enough to be found for man's daily wants — shelter, plenty of food, and means to procure comforts and clothing; but those whose lives have been spent in gilded halls, cannot at once realize that “man wants but little;” and, therefore, our friends gazed in astonishment at the small rooms, naked floors, and common furniture made only of white pine, clean indeed, but no better than that used by the villagers of Hausdorff. A good substantial supper of

broiled game partly soothed the disgust of Melanie and her father; but Lady Von Grosse was satisfied — she wanted solitude, and here she was glad to be secluded, where no one knew her, or the history of her misfortunes, for the occurrence of which she felt herself so greatly to blame.

The Count soon began to love his forest craft, and became somewhat interested; but Melanie suffered the most severely from the unpleasant novelty of their altered condition. Never having been accustomed to pursue the slightest employment that promised usefulness, she found the tedium of her solitary life absolutely frightful. Lying at a distance from the high-road, they saw no passers-by, and neighbours were too far off; and besides, being all of the poorer classes — colliers, laborers, wood-cutters, and so forth — the companionship would have availed little to the Von Grosse family, even had they become acquainted with those who in rank, tastes, and education, were so different from themselves. One peasant maiden, to carry water and milk their cow, was their only servant.

Madame Von Grosse undertook the guidance of her own little household; she spared not herself in the prosecution of her new duties in this, to her, unwonted course of life, and she encouraged Melanie to, and insisted upon, her faithful performance of her allotted share of the labor. With

what reluctance did the latter encounter the heat and smoke of the kitchen, when her mother demanded her assistance, for Marie was mostly busied with out-door work; and how unwillingly did she dip her hands in water, fearful that their whiteness and delicacy should be spoiled. But it is astonishing how soon these notions pass off when their possessor is thrown among those who think little of such things. There was no one to admire her fashionable *tournure* — her graceful carriage; her French phrases, taught by Mademoiselle Adele, were laid aside as useless; for Marie, understanding nothing but the rude German spoken in her native hills, stared in astonishment whenever she heard them uttered; and Treva, the forest-boy who aided her father, was a Hungarian, and obliged for the most part to be silent, for his knowledge of German was as yet very imperfect.

The late Countess, laying aside all that she had at one time imagined she could not exist without, accommodated herself wonderfully well to her strange situation. The new light that had broken in upon her hitherto darkened heart, had wrought a change in her mental world; a transformation which none but those who “have passed from darkness unto light,” can comprehend. She went about her household occupations with quite as much cheerfulness as could be expected, and perhaps more; for the image of her lost boy still existed

in all the vividness of its first coloring in her mother's heart; but the same spirit that had once "brooded over the face of the waters," and brought the rude elements into harmony and order, had shed its peaceful influence there. Tumult, and passion, and strife, had forever subsided; old things had passed away, and, seen in another and a better light, all had become new. "Be still, and know that I am God," was the whisper that brought her back to duty when a spirit of murmuring threatened to arise; and the thought that time and opportunity for saving her spoiled and neglected daughter had been given, swallowed up every disposition to repine, in thankfulness for a boon as little deserved, as it had at one time been little desired.

Melanie scarcely recognised her mother, so great was the change. Would that we could say her own was as rapid! But the force of example, whether good or bad, bears insensibly on all; and now, accompanied by a mother's prayers, it was impossible it should altogether fail. With great wonder, therefore, she saw her perform occupations cheerfully, or as a matter of course, from which, not long since, she would have shrunk as degrading; and Melanie, who did not want for sense, began voluntarily to take her part; and she found it of use to herself, inasmuch as she was happier, and

had less time left her to spend in regrets for the gay pleasures they had lost with Hausdorff.

What great kindness is ever mingled with the discipline of our Heavenly Father! what drops of mercy are ever poured in the bitter cup of human suffering! none ever drank it yet without this mixture, and to none is accorded unmitigated woe. The same Arbiter that pronounced the curse on sin that doomed man to earn his "bread by the sweat of his brow till he again return to the earth from whence he was taken," has lightened his own seemingly heavy sentence by rendering labor pleasant, and so those once spoiled children of fortune, now condemned to forest-life, found out. Melanie experienced the possibility of being able to exist without the tableaux, children's parties, and theatres, which she had considered as the very cream of enjoyment during their residence in the capital; or even the fine clothing, parrots, doves, gold-fish, and toys, with which, at a later period, she had wished to awaken the envy of the neighbors' children, when they visited Hausdorff.

The calamity of one night had caused all these to vanish like the winter's snow, that falls upon the running stream; and yet here, without any of those resources even by the aid of which time used to pass heavily, existence could not only be endured, but was found to have charms.

There was a time when she would have disdained

to notice a being so humble as their poor Marie. But now, cut off from all other companionship, when the weather was bad, and they were confined within doors, she listened with interest to the tales she would tell of her native and far-distant valley, where she had left parents, and sisters, and brothers; and as her cheek would glow, and her eyes glisten, as she spoke of her dear ones far away, Melanie learned that human sympathies exist in as full force, if not greater, in the hearts of the lowly, than in those of whom the world and its follies have divided the affections.

Instead of lolling in a luxurious carriage, indulging in thoughts of how she was to excite the envy or admiration of those she was going to visit, her only recreation was a walk through the forest, and to a lover of nature none other is so delightful; but the poor girl's taste had never been trained in this direction, and the mysterious and wondrous treasures to be found in the stores of that benevolent and provident benefactress, were as yet as a sealed book to her.

She had not learned to trace the mighty Hand so visibly displayed around her—the rude and knotted oaks chronicled no history for her perusal—the sterile rock and barren plain were but the sterile rock and barren plain on which the sun shone, or the rain fell. They speak with a loud voice to those who look through “nature, up to

nature's God;" but to her they were mute. She saw the eagle as he soared over the cliffs—the clouds that floated through the blue expanse of Heaven—but she had never thought by what Power they were sustained. Surrounded, then, by a source of pleasure of the loftiest and purest kind, she was for a long time insensible to the enjoyments within her reach. The sweet odor of the pines was unheeded, as in her forest-walk she brushed their hanging branches aside; the breeze that swayed the oaks—the zephyrs that whispered in the foliage—the many-colored dyes with which late autumn was now clothing the moss, shrubs, and plants, were viewed with indifference. The deep and solemn stillness alarmed her—she trembled and started at the flitting of every bird.

But it is impossible to dwell thus alone, as she was, amid the potent charms of nature, and not be operated upon by their influence. She will commune with us whether we are willing or not; and as partaking a portion of herself, we must listen—the universal mother claims her right, and we yield to her benign and gentle teaching. And so our poor Melanie, though she at first understood not the voice that spoke to her from this consecrated loneliness, telling her that God is not only every where, but every where good, at length began to awake to better feelings; although it was long ere she comprehended why or how they came. She

thought of her brother, and wept. Ah! what would she not have given that he were once more with her to share her cottage-life — that she might be with him in his sports in the wood — that they might converse together as they used to do? She would no more be jealous of, nor quarrel with him; no! in that lonely forest-dwelling, she would be to him a tender and affectionate sister. The thought that all her repentance was in vain — that he was gone forever — began to soften the heart hitherto so hard, and awoke in her a determination to try and make herself the happiness of those parents who had suffered so greatly; and she found her own in the effort. Nevertheless, the remembrance of Eugene still kept its place as vividly as ever, and served not only to strengthen her in her new resolution, but was the constant subject of her meditation during the cheerless walks she took through the forest by herself.

Little by little, however, she became sensible of the charms by which she was surrounded. She was quite happy if she found some late strawberries that she could carry to her mother, or discovered some flower of which she did not know the name, or watched some lively squirrel as he leaped from branch to branch, or bounded from tree to tree. How she wished he would let her catch him! she wanted a companion so much, she would love him so well, and treat him so kindly;

but the nimble little fellow was perfectly satisfied where he was—his hollow tree was his palace, and that wild wood his park. He was not ambitious of human society; he preferred cracking his nuts himself, and where he felt at liberty to eat as many as he wanted. Although she often ran after him, he was not frightened, he could trust to his own speed; and there every day as she walked, she would see him in her path, gazing with his bright eyes upon her, nor turning to run until she came so close that she was sure he could not escape.

One day she pursued him for nearly an hour, so closely, that sometimes she believed she had only to put out her hand and take him, when, quick as lightning, he would vanish, and, after a time, reappear. A little out of humor at her want of success, and heated and weary with her fruitless chase, she sat down on a moss-covered rock to rest; but as she rose to return, with horror and affright remarked that she was in an unknown part of the forest, and far from any road. Dreading that she had lost her way, she endeavored to retrace her steps; but this was easier resolved on than accomplished. A cold autumnal wind swept through the wood, and stripped the dry leaves from the branches, strewing them so thickly on the ground that the path, if there was any, could not be discovered; her limbs trembled with weariness, her lips were parched with thirst, and she was tortured

with fear. A few stunted bushes, on whose branches some small dark-blue berries, spared by the early frost, still hung, would have served to moisten her dry palate; but she feared they were poisonous, and so did not venture to taste them. Involuntarily, at this moment she thought of her young friends the Lindenburgs—those “dancing bears,” as poor Eugene and herself had nick-named them—how they two had ridiculed them for their studies in Botany and Natural History; a very slender knowledge of which would at this moment have shown her that humble bilberries could be eaten without danger, proving a cordial of nature’s providing for the denizens of the forest. The deepening shadows of the wood, on which the sun’s rays were now obliquely falling, increased her painful feelings by reminding her of the approach of night. What would become of a timid maiden, alone and half-fainting, in that lonely spot, exposed to the chill frost of autumn, and danger from wild and roaming beasts?

Among all the sins that had arrayed themselves to appear before her in these moments of horror, the thought of what she had once caused the amiable little Ehrenfried to suffer, gave her the most pain. She imagined how he had felt when alone in the Steinrode woods, where she had sent him on an errand she knew he could not accomplish, enduring the pain from a lately-broken limb;

and repentance visited her now for all her misdeeds, with a many-pointed scourge, from which she could not turn away. She wept bitterly, and acknowledged her punishment was just.

“O, have I not been wicked and foolish?” said she aloud, in poignant self-reproach; “surely God has sent this trouble upon me for my cruelty and falsehood. I must wander all night in this wild place, and perhaps be devoured by wolves. Oh! if I can only find my way out, I will never—never do such wrong to any one again.”

Setting forward with new determination, she pressed as resolutely onward as her failing strength permitted; stumbling, at times, over some fallen branch that was half-buried by the leaves that lay thickly strewn around. With eyes dimmed by the tears she had been shedding, she had failed to perceive that her way was becoming easier, the thicket less tangled, and the trees did not stand so close together; until a cloud of smoke made itself visible above their tops, and the barking of a dog was heard. There was yet daylight enough to discern this, and most joyfully did Melanie hail both sight and sound. Fresh courage was given to her spirit, and new strength to her limbs; a few moments more, and her heart beat in grateful surprise when she came in view of a small cottage, which, from its rude appearance, was probably the home of some wood-cutter. Towards it she hastily

bent her steps, for there she hoped to find some human beings who would direct or show her the way to her home. But all at once, struck by a sudden thought, she stood still.

“How do I know,” she inquired of herself, “what kind of people live there? They might be wicked and bad, like those that Marie tells me are found dwelling in the Hartz, and will take my clothing from me, and kill me. At any rate, they will not show me the way out of this dreadful forest without I pay them for it, and how am I to do so when I have no money—I, that used to have so much;” and she began to weep anew.

Poor little maiden! how natural it was she should have no confidence in others, since her own previous life had been one tissue of falsehood and deceit. She knew of nothing but selfishness—supposed that to be poor people must necessarily be wicked—and never heard that God oftenest chose his treasured ones from among the lowliest children of the earth.

As she thus stood lingering and irresolute before the hut, desiring yet fearing to ask assistance from the occupants, the door suddenly opened, and a little boy with light curly hair, and cheeks as red as any rose, bounded towards the spot where she remained as if rooted to the ground. He did not notice her in the now fading light, but called loudly, “Micky! Micky! where are you hiding?”

Ah! you sly villain! there you are," he continued, and his bright eyes sparkled with joy as a young goat came springing from behind some bushes towards him, still holding some of the fresh leaves it had been nibbling at, between its small lips; it skipped and played as though perfectly at home with its merry companion, answering his bantering gestures with many a threatening bound, and presenting his bowed head to his youthful antagonist, as if in comic expectation of a sham battle. But just as the mimic warfare was about to commence, the boy espied our poor Melanie; and bestowing no further attention on his goat, who yet reminded him of his vicinity by some tolerably rude thrusts, he approached her; and one glance at the sweet and child-like countenance that met her gaze, was sufficient to disarm her of all suspicion.

No one could look into those clear blue eyes and doubt; his clothes were of the coarsest and poorest kind, but clean and whole; and, completely reassured by his frank bearing and uncommon beauty, she enquired:

"Do you know any one who could direct or place me on the road leading to the forest lodge? I have lost my way."

"I do not know myself, but I will go and ask my mother," was the unembarrassed answer; "but won't you come in and rest yourself a bit? You must be tired and may be hungry, if you have

been lost in the woods. It is funny you should be lost; I could not get lost, for I know all the trees, and go ever so far into the forest every day. Come now—don't be afraid of Micky; he is only in fun when he pokes me so. I learned him to do so—indeed he won't hurt you," and as if to assure the timid maiden of his protection, he took her by the hand and led her towards the cottage. One year ago, and the haughty Melanie would have shrunk from a peasant's touch as though contamination, like the plague-spot, should be communicated; but the dawning light that had now begun, dimly, indeed, as yet, to disperse the dark night that enveloped her soul, had given her a wider and better range of vision; but much had yet to be done and learned, until it should shine forth unto the full and perfect day. Grace only can effect such change; for it is only by grace any are made to know themselves, God through his goodness leading them to repentance.

CHAPTER IV.

“They ask no more than simple nature gives,
They love their mountains, and enjoy their storms.”

THE family that dwelt within the lowly hut that awakened both joy and suspicion in the mind of Melanie when she first espied it, was that of a collier, who, in his laborious task of attending his coal-pits, which were at a distance, was seldom able to be at home. The forests of the Hartz, seemingly inexhaustible, furnish great facilities for those who can earn a livelihood in this manner; and little is it to be wondered at, if some marvel-loving traveller, having no more than sufficient brains, encountering these smoke-begrimed men pursuing their lonely occupation in these vast solitudes, should have imagined them the same beings with which superstition peopled those regions long ago, and tradition has not failed to perpetuate. Melanie had never yet set foot in a place where poverty so great as this had made her dwelling; yet it was not squalid poverty, for all was clean. Four children belonged to the humble pair, three of which were seated at a rude deal table, on which the mother was placing a large earthen dish of boiled milk: a heaped-up pile of coarse black bread

served on a plate of the same primitive kind of ware, showed that good appetites were expected to give zest to a meal from which an epicure would have turned with disgust, but which to these simple children of the forest was really luxurious. The father as usual was absent; the mother was about to take her place at the table, when she missed Fritz, the little fellow who had gone out to look after his goat.

"Fritz, where are you?" she cried aloud; "we are going to supper; come quickly! we are waiting to ask a blessing—never mind your goat. Ah!" she continued, as the boy appeared in answer to the call, leading Melanie by the hand; "here we have an unexpected guest; move closer together, children; one of you—Henry—give the maiden your chair; poor thing! she looks faint and tired."

"I am, indeed," said the poor girl, timidly; "I have lost my way, and would gladly be directed how to find it back to the forest lodge, where my father lives as warden."

"Yes, you surely shall be shown the way," answered the mother, whose every feature beamed with good-humour and contentment; "Joseph my eldest boy shall go with you; but now sit up to the table and eat some bread and milk; you must be hungry after wandering so long; and you will need something to strengthen you, for the road you have to go is a long one."

Melanie, exhausted by her long walk, sunk altogether on the wooden bench, where the children very cheerfully made room for her. The collier's wife sought very carefully in the table-drawer for something she did not seem readily to find; but little Fritz, divining her intention, cried out, "Mother, you need not hunt for father's spoon, for he took it with him;" then turning to Melanie he asked her, while his blue eyes beamed with sincerity, "will you eat with my spoon—I can wait until you are done; see, my spoon is the prettiest of all, for it is new and shining."

The delicately nurtured damsel hesitated; but hunger and thirst, both severe masters, forced her to comply. How delightful did that fresh milk taste, though it was eaten with a pewter spoon, and from an earthen dish—how sweet was that coarse bread, though cut in thick slices, and partaken of with a common labourer's half-clothed children, such as, in the days of her prosperity and supercilious arrogance, she would not have suffered to come near her!

But they had no idea of the distinction which rank imposes; but free as their native oaks, or the air that blows over their native hills, they felt on a perfect equality with their new guest, and could not have been made to comprehend that there was any difference between them, or by what law those differences which the world acknowledges were

made. She was wandering and a stranger; and by the law of the gospel, which they well knew, if they were ignorant of conventional forms, they had "taken her in," and through the one of natural hospitality had supplied her want, although their own stores were so scanty, without question or demur — did she think of those then to whose prayer she had often turned a deaf ear — of the hungry who, by her order, had been sent away? They knew nothing of her rank, neither would they have cared for it if they had; and happy to make the acquaintance of one so young, they began to question her with a familiarity which could not offend, since, although open, it was far from being impertinent.

"And so you live in this pretty forest the same as we do," asked one; "I am sure you must love it — I would not live any place else. In the summer the nicest, largest strawberries ever you saw grow here; and we often gather baskets full of the best mushrooms; we will show you where to get them. And in the morning early it is so sweet to hear the birds sing before the sun is up — ah! I am sure there is no other place in the whole world so beautiful as our forest."

"I have not been here very long," said Melanic in a low voice; "but, indeed, I am often right lonesome, and the time seems very long to me in this forest where one can see nothing but trees."

“But don't you work any?” said one of the little girls who had never been lonesome, although she had lived in a wood all her life. “Don't you spin, and carry wood in winter, and gather strawberries and mushrooms in summer, and play under the tall trees as we do?” and she fastened a pair of curious little eyes upon the stranger, as if she wanted to scrutinize more closely a person who was lonesome and did no work.

“Do you not see, Magda,” said the eldest boy Joseph, “that the stranger is not so poor as we are — it is likely she knows more than we do, and does more profitable and useful work than picking strawberries, or gathering mushrooms.”

“Maybe not,” sighed Melanie to herself; but she said nothing, and cast her eyes in shame to the floor. After a few moments' silence, and feeling considerably refreshed and rested, she begged with more courtesy than she had ever exhibited in the whole course of her life, “Will you now be so kind as to show me on my way through the wood? I am afraid my mother will be very uneasy about me.”

Joseph was ready in a minute; he took his cap from the nail where it hung, and stood beside the door, waiting Melanie's movement. But she hesitated; and her voice trembled as she thanked the good woman for her supper of milk, “for,” said

she to herself, "she will, perhaps, be angry with me, and will not let her boy show me the way when she finds I have no money to give her." But she found she was mistaken; poor people can do favors without hope of reward.

"We do not want money," said the collier's wife, in answer to her humble apology; and reaching forth her hand, shook that of the little maiden heartily, bidding her "God speed, and fail not to come again." Fritz, on the claim of being Melanie's first acquaintance, accompanied her a little way as she followed her bare-footed guide; but his mother had told him not to go too far. With great regret he took leave of his new friend, saying, "Good night! good night! don't forget to come to see us soon again; I have so many pretty things to show you — a bird's nest with six young ones — but we will not rob it; you will surely not forget to come?"

"No indeed I will not," answered Melanie, as she stooped down to pat his curly hair; when, somewhat to her surprise, and, what is strange, knowing her as well as we do, not at all to her displeasure, the little fellow threw his arms around her neck and kissed her heartily. The next moment he was out of sight, but his merry voice calling out, "Micky, Micky, come now and run after me," was heard, and his joyous laugh, as he amused himself with his playful goat, resounded through

the forest, until distance precluded the further hearing.

By this time the moon had risen high in the heavens, and peering down through the nearly naked branches, danced in flickering shadows upon the ground, and illumed the forest with her silver light. Even Melanie was not altogether insensible to the holy influence of the sylvan beauty that, softened by the garish light of day, speaks not only to the imagination, but to the heart; and her heart, prepared as it gradually was becoming for the reception of good, was open to the silent eloquence of the appeal. The tall trees that looked like white-stoled priests in some lofty temple, the night breeze that whispered through them, and spoke its own mysterious language, the stars that moved in their potential courses, looking brighter, as seen through the frosty atmosphere, than usual—all were appealing to her better feelings, and contributing to strengthen the dawning interest she was beginning to have in better things. The scene of Christian contentment she had witnessed at the collier's cottage, the blessings asked in the true spirit of humble piety over a meal more frugal than any she had ever seen set before any family in her life, the cheerful and thankful enjoyment they exhibited in the reception of blessings she deemed so moderate—added greatly to the view she was beginning to have of

realities more important than those vain shadows, as she now recognized them which she had been pursuing.

Wondering at the confidence exhibited by her little companion, as he threaded the forest when no path was visible, she could not forbear asking him by what knowledge he did so.

“Joseph,” she said at last, “are you sure you are going right? how do you know you are on the right road to the lodge? If I could stray so in the middle of daylight, is there not danger that we may both get lost here in the night?”

“It would not be easy for me to lose myself in any part of this wood,” said Joseph, laughing; “and, besides, it is not dark, for the moon shines so bright up there; but I often go when it is pitch dark to relieve father at the coal-pits, and I have never lost my way.”

“Well, but how do you know that you are in the right direction?” enquired Melanie; “how do you know now that we are going towards the hunter’s lodge?”

“Father has learned me how to know that,” answered the boy; “you see that bright star up there,” pointing to the polar star, “that there one never moves like the others; and I have only to keep it before, or on one side, or behind me, as I wish to go, and know where I am; and then, too,

there is the moss on the trees, and the bark—O, I can tell very well where I am.”

Melanie's thoughts involuntarily reverted to her young friends of Steinrode; she had been mortified by, although she pretended to despise, their superior knowledge in plainer and more useful studies than those she had spent her whole time in pursuing, and now she was yet more ashamed when she was made to feel how much less she knew than this rude forest boy. She had never heard Mademoiselle Adele explain the places or motions of the heavenly bodies any more than she had been directed to contemplate the workings of the Mighty Power which upholds them in their courses; she did not even know to what sciences such studies belonged. But desirous not to appear altogether ignorant, she ventured, though hesitatingly, to remark, “I suppose your father must teach you Natural—” here she stopped; she did not know what term to conclude with; of Astronomy she neither knew the name or derivation; but she had heard the terms of Natural Philosophy, Natural History, or Natural Science, used; but she really did not know which one would best apply, so she broke off suddenly.

“Natural what?” asked her surprised companion; “I do not know what you mean; but I suppose it is something you find in books. Father tells me people have a great many; but in our

house we have only two besides our primer and spelling-books—a prayer book and bible; but see, there is your home;” and Melanie, turning her eyes as he directed, saw the white walls and paling of the garden belonging to the forest lodge distinctly through the trees. A light glimmered through the window, and Melanie at this moment felt more of a home-feeling than she had ever done in her whole life before. Full of gratitude, she begged her youthful guide to enter, that he might receive the reward he so well merited; but he was steady in refusing.

“I cannot, indeed,” he said; “I must now go in an opposite direction; it is time to relieve father at the coal-pits; he will be expecting me before this—so good night, and take care not to lose yourself again.”

“Good night,” was Melanie’s response.

“Good night,” he again repeated; and turning away, burst forth in a merry song, the cheerful carol of which was heard long after he had vanished amid the lofty trees.

Melanie, now that her mind had not much to occupy it, dwelt much upon this little adventure; the love of human companionship is so natural, that it gave her no small pleasure to have found out that there were neighbors so near, although they belonged to a class that, a short time before, she would have spurned at all intercourse with as

degrading. And now she had not only eaten, and held companionship with them, but absolutely loved to think upon those happy-looking children, that bloomed in that solitude, fresh and rosy as the wild hedge-roses, that enlivened the green sameness of the forest with their presence and their hue; and scarcely conscious of her own intention, and almost with surprise to herself, she one day, not very long after, found herself on the way to the collier's hut. Joseph had given her some directions as to the course she was to take until she reached a certain path, which would lead her forward safely; being one trodden by themselves daily in passage to and from the coal-pits.

Who would now have recognised our haughty Melanie, as she amused herself for hours in that lowly room, with a collier's children, cutting out pictures in paper for them, and teaching them plays; and at last, with great trouble to herself, made a rag-doll with her own hands, and was fully repaid for the effort it cost her, by the shouts of joy which testified its approval. For the first time in her life, she felt that she was loved and welcomed on her own account; rank was of no value in a place like this, and she no longer shrunk from the familiarity of those peasant children, as she had done from the humble courtesies of the amiable Ehrenfried, for here all were equal. She touched the hand, although hardened by toil, held out to

greet her by the bright-eyed mother, without any repugnance. She permitted the gleeful children to kiss her own, that held the little basket into which they curiously peeped, for they knew it contained treasures for themselves. In thus contributing to the happiness of others, she made her own; and finding how valuable an antidote employment was against *ennui* in a place where there was no dancing nor dressing for occupation, nor monkeys and parrots for amusement, and recalling the worsted spinning and knitting of the Lindenburgs, which she had so much laughed at, she now filled up her own spare time in similar useful works, in the shape of many caps, comforters, and even stockings, which under her mother's assistance, she knitted for her new friends. Gradually, thus she began to love work, and hate idleness; and although, at first, all did not go very smoothly—the spinning wearied her, and the knitting-needles hurt her hands—the pride she felt when her task was accomplished, the pleasure she had in bestowing the fruits of her perseverance, more than compensated her for the efforts she made in these attempts to conquer self. Nor was this the only good effect of the great change adversity was slowly but surely effecting in the character of Melanie; for in proportion as she tried to be kind and useful to those who were not of her own immediate household, so she became gentle and affectionate at home, and

particularly soothing and obedient to her mother—diffusing sunlight where she formerly chilled.

Her time, therefore, passed pleasantly; but by degrees, as the season advanced, she had to remain more within doors. Stern blasts sweeping down from the mountains, and cold rains, heralded the approach of winter. Soon ice and snow blocked up the way, and permitted little egress to the dwellers in that lonely forest-house. They seemed shut out by the freezing barrier from the rest of the world; no human being broke in upon, and pleasantly interrupted the quiet monotony of their lives—the faint sound of the distant village-bell, borne by the winds as it rung on the sabbath, alone reminded them that life was around them. For weeks together they were unable to obey its summons, for they could not penetrate through the piled-up snow-drifts that lay between them and the house of prayer. With what longing did Melanie now dwell on thoughts of the collier's family! She was really sad over the long separation; and often, often did she walk out on the snow-covered waste, to see if there was any prospect of a walk succeeding. But the voice that had been awakened within did not slumber, although nature lay buried beneath that white shroud. She who had formerly murmured at every little disappointment, was now become patient; and when she found it impossible to seek pleasure abroad, she acknowledged to her-

self how delightful it was to be able to find it at home. In the long winter evenings, she sat beside the bright wood-fire that blazed in the kitchen-hearth, learning of Marie how to spin flax, listening to her simple legends, or learning some mountain ballad, which afterwards she would sing to her mother.

At length the long and dreary winter passed away, and with great joy Melanie saw the snow melt from the foot-path, and the forest shrubs raise their heads, as if glad to be released from the folds of his cold mantle; and long before the walking was dry, she was on her way to the cottage of the Wilhelms, for that was the name of her collier friends. She often slipped on the soft snow, the mud soiled her clothing, and the unwonted toil wearied her; but she had forgotten to care for such hindrances, and she only smiled to herself as she contrasted her present plodding through the dirt on foot, with the luxurious carriage in which she used to ride; and admitted that happiness is more equally distributed between the rich and poor, by the divine Disposer, than most are willing to believe.

The children, who were clustered before the little window, saw her coming, and ran with shouts of welcome to meet her; the very dog was glad, and barked and gambolled around her in a manner that almost made her afraid. The collier held out

his blackened hand to greet her, and Melanie did not refuse to clasp it in her own. A few minutes more, and she was seated in the midst of her young friends. The treasures of the basket were displayed in the shape of dried fruits, which they devoured with great zest, as she told them tales of Mother Redcap, and fairy Pœna, which she learned whilst at Steinrode; or the more marvellous legends of the Hartz, related by Marie, of little children having been spirited away, and put into dark caverns, because they were naughty.

“O, how many new things you have learned since you were here!” said little Fritz. “But have you learned any new prayers? I have learned such a pretty one! let me say it to you;” and the child, folding his hands, and closing his eyes, looked like the angel of supplication, as his sweet infantine voice addressed the Father whom, young as he was, he had been taught to love and know.

Our Father! let me pray to Thee
A pious child to make of me.
Make me like Him who, good and wise,
Did never little ones despise.
But if in manhood I should stray
From this safe path. O, then I pray,
That even in childhood Death may bear
Me to the world where angels are.
I would be like them, and like Thee,
Saviour! who died to ransom me.

“Now I will teach you that prayer if you want to learn it. Do n't you always pray before you go

to sleep? we all do, for mother says the good angels watch over children, if they ask the kind Heavenly Father to let them."

Poor Melanie cast down her eyes to the floor—she blushed to be taught a second time by those lowly children; and as the blue eyes of her innocent little favourite sought to read an answer in hers, she was glad to turn her own away, for the question shot painfully through her heart. At Hausdorff she had never heard of such a thing as beginning and ending the day with prayer. When she was very small, her French *bonne* had always put her to sleep by the relation of some pretty tale; and as she grew older, her head was filled with love of dress and other vanities; they were her first thought in the morning, her last at night; in such a frivolous mind there was no place for prayer; and at Steinrode, as we have mentioned at an early period in our narrative, she nor her mother never would be present at the hour when the prayer was made, for both laughed at what, at that time, they called puritanical folly. Her mother, though greatly changed, had not yet become so far learned in spiritual things as to believe a child could discern the beauty of holiness; her own life was yet in its dawning; but God had prepared the means for its increase unto bright and perfect day.

Lady Von Grosse had begun to view things

differently since the supposed death of Eugene; she had often begged her to humble her heart before the Great Being who orders the destinies of men; but she did not herself comprehend the mystery of the second birth. She knew not the spiritual meaning conveyed in the words, "Except ye become as a little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven," for the Spirit alone gives power to comprehend its own teachings. Melanie was much improved, but the foundation for true piety had not been properly laid; and it is more than probable that had she this time been reinstated in her former brilliant career, the beneficial effects of Adversity's discipline would have been lost.

The question of the child, however, had penetrated her heart; her eyes filled with tears and dropped upon the floor, and the little boy was troubled to see her crying.

"Now don't be so sorry," said he, trying to comfort her, "because you do not know it. I will say it over and over, and you must tell it after me, and you'll soon get it:" and he repeated his simple prayer many and many times, and finding he was about to cry too, Melanie, to comfort him, was fain to be his scholar.

Many thoughts agitated her bosom—Eugene had never prayed; God had removed him from the earth; but was he, she asked herself, with the

angels? and her tears flowed until her visit was ended. She now knew the whole wood in their neighbourhood so well, that she feared not to traverse the forest path if it was a little later than usual; and although the whole place looked bleak and winter-stricken, she heeded it not, nor the darkness that was clustering round. Ere she reached her home, her heart was full; the spirit of prayer had begun its work; and there, in that holy consecrated spot, where Nature daily hymns her praises, was her prayer offered. She prayed with humility and sincerity, and her heart was lighter; the cold bright moon seemed to look down and smile upon her, the only witness to the vow she uttered there, to begin with assisting grace a better life. Her sleep that night was sweet and sound; her first thoughts on awakening were directed to the Great Source of light and being, from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift. From this day she went not backward—her progress was slow, for she was very ignorant; but in the course she had chosen to pursue she went on steadily, although from her faulty education she had many hindrances to contend with. It was now that her humble friends in the collier's cottage were of real value to her. They were deeply pious, although ignorant of all those forms that pass current in the world; their only lore was derived from an old book which the good woman

of the house read every day aloud. Melanie listened at first to what she heard, then opened it herself and read here and there out of curiosity ; but soon after finding the contents to interest her more deeply than she at first supposed them likely to do, she carried the book home with her, that she might read it aloud to her mother. Eva, for that was the name of its owner, readily permitted her to do so, as they had more than one ; and Melanie greatly rejoiced at the comfort Lady Von Grosse experienced from the perusal. She had never ceased to grieve for Eugene ; and at times her sorrow was great as ever ; but now it gradually grew milder ; and although her tears still flowed, they were not so bitter as before. She listened closely to the words her daughter read ; and they sunk deep into her heart — not one escaped.

“The goodness of God is, that we are not entirely destroyed. His compassions are new every morning — they have no end ; and great is his faithfulness. Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice ; have mercy also upon me, and answer me. For when *thou saidst*, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” She saw, as though a veil had been withdrawn from before her mental vision, how sinful her whole life had been, the bad use she had made of the time and gifts bestowed by her Maker in her days of prosperity, of her wild and rebellious grief in the

first period of her overwhelming calamity, which had no effect as to softening or humbling her heart, until it was followed by the loss of Eugene.

She contrasted her own conduct through the whole of that sore trial with that of Lady Lindenburg, who, strong in the faith of Heavenly Wisdom and Heavenly Protection, yielded so meekly to the blow that had fallen, although her mother's heart was as deeply stricken as her own; and now believed that nothing but the mighty change which true religion can effect, could enable any one to bear, as she had done, a change at the mention of which she had always laughed at as chimerical, having no existence but in the brain of fanatics. But now her eyes were open to behold the true light — she read in the Holy Book that the Cross is accessible to all; and thither she repaired, that beneath its shadow she might find comfort and salvation, that is only to be found there. And when at seasons almost discouraged by the remembrance of what she had been, she read how God had brought one who was as great a sinner as herself “up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.”

It is astonishing what a closely sealed book the bible is until the convicting Spirit shows what high interest belongs to its perusal. A “stumbling block and foolishness” to those who look no further

than this unsatisfying world; no sooner does the Mighty Spirit brood over the darkened heart, than all obscurity is removed—it is then their study and admiration, unfolding the “mystery of godliness, and the truth as it is in Christ.” Happy for our sufferers that they found it so; for although no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, “yet bringeth forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness” to such as endure the chastisement, all shall at length be merged in an “eternal weight of glory.”

Clouded as their minds had been, their progress in the pursuit of knowledge belonging to the divine life was at first tardy; but the humility they had now learned to exercise, led them to seek assistance from others; and Melanie becoming acquainted with the grey-haired pastor of the village church to which, when the weather permitted, she sometimes went with Eva and her children; the good man began to consider her as one of his flock, and included the forest lodge within the range of his pastoral visits; a circumstance which was productive of great pleasure to the inhabitants of that lonely abode, and of great interest to himself, inasmuch as he was one whose heart was in the advancement of his Master's kingdom.

To many minds, the change that had come over the self-willed, haughty, and falsehood-loving

Melanie, would seem incredible. But there are many who know that there is no sinner, however vile, who cannot be made a partaker of the "salvation as it is revealed by the cross of Christ;" since the Scriptures tell us of those who were justly numbered among the vilest, to whom its saving influence reached. It is indeed to such that the Bible tells us that the call is most loudly made; since "those that are whole need not a physician, but those that are sick." That they are the subjects over whom mercy weeps in secret places — whom by every means and inducement it would seek to find out, and encourage to follow him who came, not to bring the "righteous, but sinners to repentance." Melanie thought no hardship now of trudging on foot to the village-church, although the way was long, and the road rough, and her companions among the most lowly children of the earth; even braving inclement weather to do so. She had begun the battle against herself in earnest; and, aided from the true Source to which she applied, her conquest became successful. The only joy and comfort now of her deeply-bowed and mourning mother, who still wept over the loss of Eugene, though much less bitterly than at first, she studied constantly how she could soothe and cheer her; for Madame Von Grosse, as she saw what Melanie now was, compared with what she had been, was but daily made more sensible of her

great fault in the negligent raising of her children; and as she thought of Eugene, and the comfort and support he might have been to her, had he been properly instructed, the self-reproach that mingled itself in all her contemplations, occasioned a more bitter grief than even his loss.

Her husband, careless as ever, and thinking only of his own gratification, made every excuse for frequent visits to the capital, where he remained for weeks at a time, on the plea of seeking for a situation; caring not that he left those lonely ones without protection save from the young Hungarian, Triva, who assisted him in his office as forest-ranger. Fortunately, he was faithful. Marie, uncorrupted by the ways of the world that lay too far off to be imitated by the dwellers in that remote region, was excellent in her capacity of a servant; and Melanie and her mother, as time rolled on, found out that they had much more to be thankful for than, on their first arrival in that lonely place, they could have possibly anticipated; so true is it that the means of happiness are ever within ourselves.

CHAPTER V.

“Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath,
For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.”

WE must now leave the family at the forest-lodge to pursue the new course of life on which they had entered, to look after the boys; whom, when we left them, Dietrich was bearing through wilds almost impervious, and roads scarcely passable, far—far from their homes. For many miles, no words were spoken save those when their captor threatened them, if they made the least outcry; their stout horse carried them briskly forward through lonely and unfrequented ways, and gradually the face of the country began to change. The Silesian Mountains had grown dim in the distance; old Zobtenberg was no longer seen, and the flat and level plains over which they now rolled rapidly, presented features of a country very different from those which they had loved to look upon in their own. The Carpathian Mountains loomed high and blue in the distance; large streams, rendered passable by fragile bridges, of which the wrecks of such as had spanned them before being carried away by the rapid torrents of autumn, lay

strewn around; wastes of scanty and discolored grass, extending in wearisome uniformity, and broken only by alternating bogs and sand-pits, as far as the eye could reach, gave the whole a desolate and monotonous aspect, which increased the melancholy of our young and hapless travellers.

For the first day, no sign of human habitation enlivened the dreary scene. There was nothing in the gloomy landscape to whisper hope, or create a softer mood in the minds of our three acquaintances; nothing in the external objects which every where met the eye, to divert them from their inward broodings. With extraordinary rapidity they hurried along. For hours, neither of the boys ventured to break the enforced silence; since the countenance of Dietrich bore evidence of his sincerity in the threatened punishment which was to follow disobedience. The day, as we have said, was drizzly and rainy; and as it advanced towards its close, became wild and stormy; heightening the horror of their condition, if indeed by any outward circumstance it could be increased. Dietrich, as they travelled, had offered them some coarse but wholesome food, which Eugene had scornfully refused, and at this time was really very sick from inanition; but Felix, who saw no use in provoking one from whose power they could not escape, thought it best to yield to him in all that he desired, although he could not imagine what were

his intentions, or by what means he had become his enemy.

While Eugene thus, by his refractory behaviour, yet the more punished himself, and lay groaning and weeping in the bottom of the waggon, Felix, though he made no noisy demonstrations of grief, was no less sad. He thought over the separation from his home, and his loved ones there — of the trouble and sorrow his sudden disappearance would cause, and self-reproach for the disobedience of which he had been guilty, added greater poignancy to his feelings.

“My dear, dear mother,” he said to himself, as he recalled her image, and her last kiss, and the quick tears coursed one after the other down his cheeks; “I have deserved to suffer, since I disobeyed you; had I only returned as you bade me, and not broken the promise I made — had I repressed the idle curiosity that led me to transgress, I should at this moment have been happy with you, instead of travelling I know not whither, or for why.”

It was late in the evening when Dietrich drew up at a spot on the waste, where a few stunted trees, and a smoke-blackened rock, showed that gypsies or travelling tinkers had occupied the spot before themselves, and promised to afford a kind of shelter from the pelting rain. He then took a bag of corn and some hay from the waggon, and

began to make some arrangements for passing the night. He unharnessed the horse; and, carefully rubbing him down, made the animal as comfortable as circumstances admitted. Felix asked permission to assist him, which the old man granted; and the boy observed that his countenance was considerably softened in its expression. Venturing on this account to speak, although almost dreading to do so, he asked their rude guide if he would not at least tell them where they were going; and he was answered with much more mildness than he expected.

“Be easy—you have nothing to fear, for you shall see your home and parents again; but now there is nothing that you can do better than to be quiet, and yield to my will.”

He then brought forth some more food, which he offered to both, and Eugene did not at this time refuse; and spreading some coarse cloths over them, after he had bidden them lie down on some straw in the bottom of the waggon, and go to sleep, he seated himself under the shelter of the projecting rock, and fell into his usual mood of gloomy musings, which were not at all interrupted by the wind and rain, that swept in driving gusts around him.

He awoke the boys at an early hour; the storm had passed away, and all looked brighter; their horses, refreshed by rest and food, trotted merrily

onwards; and Dietrich, although moody, was by no means unkind to himself, although to Eugene, who would not obey his summons to arise, he gave a sound drubbing. This he resented to the utmost of his power; but he had to yield to his enemy's superior force; but he revenged himself as far as he was able by uttering all sorts of invectives and threats of future punishment to be inflicted by his father for such treatment of a nobleman's son, which was listened to with as much indifference as they were silly and impotent.

Felix, on the other hand, soothed by the assurance that he should again see his parents and his home, resolved to submit implicitly to the singular old man, to indulge in no useless complaints, but to obey, however unreasonable his demands might be, hoping by this means to be able to shorten his term of captivity and servitude. In view not only of this, but because he could not but observe the marks of the deep sorrow which Dietrich ever exhibited, and which greatly excited his boyish compassion, although he had not the slightest idea of its cause; it was on the second day of their journey that he strove to engage him in cheerful conversation, and assist him in such occupations as he was obliged to perform for their mutual benefit in the course of their travel. This day was not so dreary as the preceding; for although Dietrich avoided the frequented roads, that on which they

now passed was at intervals enlivened by the presence of human beings. Now and then some traveller was met mounted on a mettled steed, hardly to be restrained, the graceful cap of crimson and silver, the neatly trimmed moustache and handsome form, bespeaking the Polish noble; but in the swift passage of the rider, no word for assistance could be addressed; the peasants in their sheepskin clothing, or sometimes one whose full robe and pointed cap proclaimed him a Jew, came by, and served to convince Felix, for Eugene in his sullenness did not care to know, that they were in the land of serfdom and oppression. Although human habitations and villages were again to be seen, Dietrich still carefully avoided them; and as forests had once more become frequent, it was in their deep shadow that they mostly passed the night. Felix soon learned from the old man how to kindle a fire, for the weather having grown chilly, it being late autumn, it was very necessary; and whilst he would be absent at some peasant's cottage or village, where he was obliged to go to purchase food, the boy did his utmost to have things in readiness against his return.

Eugene called him a fool for his pains, and advised that they should both get on the horse and ride off as fast as they could; until his companion represented that such a course would only make

matters worse, for what could they do in a country the language of which they did not understand, and of whose localities they were entirely ignorant. So Eugene was obliged to be convinced of the impracticability of such a scheme, although he still remained firm in his purpose of thwarting Dietrich, in spite of all that Felix could urge against the imprudence of such conduct. The cheerful compliance of the latter in all his requirements softened the heart of Dietrich greatly towards him; and one evening when he had finished his task of gathering such grass as the late autumn yet permitted, during the absence of their conductor after provisions, he began to speak in a more confidential manner to him than he had yet done.

“My poor boy,” said he, as they were both busy in attending to their four-footed companion, whilst Eugene lay stretched out sullenly before the fire his companion had kindled, “I wish I could send you home to your parents. This thing was not intended for you, and your friends are, no doubt, grieving for the loss of such a good lad; and, besides, you are the brother of that dear little girl that looks so like my own Annie, and gave me an alms without my having asked any; but I dare not do so, my own safety forbids it. And then I must not break my word to Amadé:

until he is beyond the reach of danger, you must stay with me; I will take care that you get back."

"And Eugene, too?" enquired the boy; "will you not let him go too? His parents, no doubt, grieve as much as mine; and the indulgence he has been accustomed to makes it harder for him to bear his present trial patiently than me. Won't you, good Dietrich — won't you let him go home too?"

Dietrich laughed scornfully. "No, my good youth, no," he replied in a tone of determination, as he set his teeth firmly together; "the young villain remains with me until poverty and hardship shall have taught him how to feel for others, and forced his haughty mind to bow, and humbled his hard heart. He shall be made to serve those whom he, in his day of pride, deemed little better than the brutes that perish, and whom, because they were poor, he would have trodden under foot. Do you think that, after having ventured so much on this game, and now having it altogether in my hands, I am going to give up the revenge for which I so long have panted?"

"Vengeance belongs only to God," said Felix; "leave it to him to humble the heart of Eugene; you only bring sorrow on your own soul when you thus seek to revenge yourself. Are you not a Christian — have you not heard that it is the duty of such to keep his commandments and do his

will? Do you not know the prayer in which Christ bids us ask forgiveness for 'our trespasses, even as we forgive those who trespass against us.' I know a little hymn we all learned at home; let me say it to you, Dietrich?"

"Say it if you like," answered he, a little moved by the boy's earnestness; "I believe you are a good lad, and mean well; but I tell you first, I am not much for such things."

"You would be happier if you were," answered the boy; "O Dietrich, if you knew how happy we all were at home—" his voice faltered; but regaining his firmness, after a moment's thought repeated his hymn:—

To the Saviour on earth his disciples did say,
 "Lord give us thy spirit, and teach us to pray."
 In wisdom and mildness he answered them, "Love
 Thy God and each other, as do angels above;
 Showing mercy to all who ask it of thee,
 And thy sins, though like scarlet, remitted shall be."
 Does any one wrong thee? though sorely beset,
 'Tis the spirit of Heaven the blow to forget,
 Like the breath of the wind let its thoughts pass away,
 Vengeance only is God's, and he will repay.
 Can'st thou hope for thy sin to find pardon in Heaven,
 If thy brother offending thou hast not forgiven.

By mercy alone shall mercy be met,
 When death—

Felix was here suddenly interrupted by Dietrich, who, until this moment, had listened in thoughtful

silence; but now he broke forth more passionately than our young friend had yet seen him.

“Silence, boy! silence!” he exclaimed; “wouldst thou dare to attempt to alter, with the words of thy mouth, that which I have once resolved? the purpose, to accomplish which alone I live?”

His countenance had once more resumed its wild and painful expression, which, indicative of the stormy state of his soul, had in the beginning of their journey so deeply moved the compassion of Felix. He would have poured the oil of consolation on its troubled sea — he would have directed him to the One who alone can say, “Peace!” and all is still; but fearing to awake his maniac passion by any further words, he sat down, disappointed, frightened, and dejected, near the unhappy being who was now the disposer of his fate, and gazed upon him with an interest in nowise lessened by the temporary violence he had exhibited.

But that desperate and brooding air ere long was changed for one of more human seeming. He leaned his head upon his hands, and sighed deeply; and although he spoke no word, the looks that from time to time he cast upon Felix, showed that, although the boy had ventured to touch a deeply thrilling chord, he bore him no displeasure; and the latter, recovering from his momentary alarm, once more began to hope for better things. The group that sat in that lonely spot would have pre-

sented a subject worthy of some famed pen or pencil. The night, so still and serene, with her planets all abroad, speaking without a voice to the ear, but yet with an influence louder than words; the fire kindled against the gray rock, flashing up bright and brilliant, illumed the lonely wild, and fell upon the faces of those who were to pass the night in that solitary place; revealing, as it glanced and flickered upon their countenances, the emotions that swayed the heart of each. That stern, dark man, with his despairing look, and knit brow, would have reminded us of one to whom the door of mercy and hope was about to be closed for ever; but Felix, of the angel of Pity, who never forsakes man, dropping tears over the calamities she cannot avert, and pleading, even until he has gone down to the dust of which he is a part; while Eugene, in nowise softened by the sufferings and discipline to which he had been subjected, nor operated upon by any of the influences around him, was the very impersonation of a revolted slave. The overwhelming sense of the injustice that had been perpetrated upon him, and his indomitable pride, that yet blinded him to the recognition that Dietrich in the first instance had been wronged, had closed up every avenue to better feelings in his heart, producing more acerbity than even was natural; and woe and resentment steeped his soul

in bitterness that greatly increased the asperities of his condition.

A different course of conduct would have done much in soothing the savage vindictiveness of the misguided peasant who had him in his power; but his faulty education stood in the way of this. He first despised Felix for the "cringing meanness" which led him to bow before the storm he could not resist, and afterwards hated him in the same measure as the latter succeeded in gaining the confidence and affection of Dietrich.

CHAPTER VI.

“Where trackless wilds seem lengthening as they go.”

THE travellers had now left Austrian Poland far behind, and entered the Russian division, where the national character is more vividly marked than in the former. For six days after this, they journeyed over roads to which it would be difficult to find a parallel, perhaps, in the world. Deep ruts and deep holes alternated with fallen trees and broken branches lying across the way—through forests where the land-marks were difficult to be ascertained, and over bridges of the rudest construction and doubtful stability. Their horse, which had held up wonderfully for the first few days, now began to exhibit symptoms of fatigue. Both boys became anxious to know where their journey was to end, looking inquiringly as they passed the villages which their conductor no longer avoided, in hopes that each one would prove the home, and provide the rest of which they now were greatly in need. To the few questions which Felix thought proper to address to Dietrich on this head, he would only answer, “you will get there soon enough;” but it was not until the evening of the sixth day after entering Russian Poland had long

closed in, and their wearied horse had more than once fallen, that they reached a sort of hamlet which Dietrich told them was to be the limit of their travel.

It consisted of a few miserable hovels, seemingly inhabited by the lowest class of peasants, from whose stolid indifference and unsocial selfishness, as painted in their looks, no sympathy was to be expected; the hard, coarse life to which they were subjected, successfully crushing every natural or gentler emotion. Desirable as a place of rest was, neither fatigue, nor the lateness of the hour, could scarcely make this inviting. Nearly surrounded by a forest, it appeared better fitted to furnish lairs to the denizens of the wood, rather than homes for creatures bearing the semblance of humanity, of which those who came forth on hearing the sound of wheels, could scarcely be said to do. Clothed in dresses of untanned sheep-skins, with high caps of the same material, their faces nearly hidden by beard and moustache, and squalid to the last degree, their figures struck not less painfully on the eye, than they excited repugnance and terror in the mind. Eugene shrank back in horror which he cared not to disguise, and Felix would scarcely have been able to exercise the portion of self-command he had so lately acquired, had not Dietrich spoken a few words of kindness to him, assuring him that both were safe from anything

like lawless violence, while in a rough tone he bade his companion to dismount, for that "he had now come to the place where spoiled boys were taught manners, and how to feel."

They entered one of the largest dwellings, which was the pot-house of the rude community. Several men sat drinking at a table, nearly hidden in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, conversing together in a language which the boys had never heard, and whose barbarous sounds served to increase the impression already made. Here, then, in this filthy tap-room, was the first meal consisting of warm viands, served to our young friends since they had left Steinrode; and although they witnessed its preparation, and noticed the condition of the utensils used in its cooking — all being of such a kind as rather to destroy than create an appetite — it was devoured greedily.

They approached the table where the peasants sat, in hopes of being able to understand something that would give them some idea of where they were, or their condition, but not one word was intelligible; and their consternation may be better imagined than told, when to all their questions the only answer received was that significant shake of the head which says, "I do not understand." And it was so — not one in this place spoke or understood a word of German; and to increase the uncomfortable feeling caused by this discovery,

Dietrich laughed maliciously when Eugene expressed his sense of hopelessness by a flood of tears.

In this filthy abode, reeking ever with the fumes of Russian brandy and bad tobacco, the boys had to remain many days; while Dietrich, who was seeking employment, and often obliged to be absent, gave them many charges as to what spots to limit their wanderings whilst he was abroad; more on account of dangers which might arise to themselves from going too far, than any desire to restrain. The liberty which they now enjoyed, therefore, availed them little; any attempt to move the stolid beings by whom they were surrounded, was met by a cold shrug of the shoulders, or a scornful laugh; and at last threats, although not expressed in words, yet too plainly in movements to be mistaken, forced even the haughty Eugene to perceive that silent forbearance was not only the safest, but the only course.

Sons of an oppressed race, abhorring that system of serfdom so adverse to man's nature, they all so hated anything like nobility, that had they really been aware of the true circumstances by which these unhappy boys had appeared among them, their hearts would still have been closed to the calls of sympathy and justice. In their ignorance, they could have admitted no claim from the one; in their brutal animosity to those whose power

they hated without daring to resist, they were only too glad to have an opportunity of assisting to humble those who might, from their position, one day be expected to give their voices in favor of that despotism by which they were crushed. From Dietrich's representations, they considered them only as belonging to the brood of the serpent that poisoned all their earthly enjoyment; and knowing but little more than that the nobility, whom they hated with an unspeakable hatred, commanded, and themselves were born to obey, it was felt to be a sort of triumph now, to have some power in their own hands; for nothing more clouded—nothing more barren can be imagined, than the minds of the peasants born to perpetual slavery on the Russian frontiers. To be born noble, in their estimation, was to be born wicked; and the tale that Dietrich, who was no stranger to them, had told of his own wrongs, seemed to them legitimate cause for his manner of action, and served to deepen their abhorrence of those who exercised dominion over them; a slavery to which, although imposed for centuries, they had never become inured.

The boys, therefore, turned away from those whose ferocious appearance, and savage manners, were in accordance with the place they inhabited; and they experienced sensations of relief when Dietrich took them to a small and miserable hovel, at some short distance from the hamlet; and so

separated them from all companionship with those whose neighborhood was so unpleasant, if not unsafe. Their housekeeping affairs were easily arranged. Little was needed in a place like this, and as soon as this was regulated, they were told to prepare themselves for settled and steady work. Hard indeed was the task assigned them; as Dietrich had got a job at wood-cutting, in the forest, which kept him absent the greater part of the day, that of the boys was to prepare a piece of ground belonging to the cottage for tillage, and they found it slavish to the last degree. Encumbered with stones, and overgrown with brambles, all these had to be cleared off before it could be dug; which their peasant master said it must be, ere the winter set in, or else it would produce nothing in the coming year.

Eugene, in spite of threats from his captor, and entreaties from Felix, rendered no submission; thus adding to the rigor of his lot. Sometimes he would weep throughout the whole day over his sad condition — at others, he would throw himself on the ground in sullen despair; but always refusing to bear any part in the labor, maintaining that he would rather die than work like a common peasant. In vain Felix remonstrated with him, he was deaf to all he could urge; and the only alternative to save him from the wrath of Dietrich, and corporeal punishment, was to do a double portion of the work.

himself. A severe fit of sickness, the consequence of his own imprudence, did not improve Eugene either in temper or otherwise. Dietrich did not neglect him while he was ill — ministering to him, it is true, in his own manner, but still making him as comfortable as he could in such a place, and with such means as he possessed; but Eugene remained self-willed and unbowed as ever. By the time he had fully recovered his strength, the season was far advanced; and it became too cold for one so lately an invalid, to be employed in out-door labor. It was therefore decided that he was to remain within to do household work — to clean up whatever had been used in the preparation of their food, make the fire, carry water and wood, and keep the house in order, for Dietrich was scrupulous in regard to cleanliness; and the performance of these tasks were most rigidly enforced, although, to our spoiled boy, they were more disagreeable than those which had at first been allotted to him. Their fare was of the plainest kind; black bread, cheese—or when the latter was scarce, a few eggs — milk, and on Sundays bacon, were the principal articles found upon their table; but these were eaten with a zest never known by the epicure, for they were enjoyed with appetite, and seasoned by the hunger produced by wholesome labor.

Felix, who was never treated unkindly by his rude master, but permitted to converse with him

on all subjects as freely as the peculiar mood of his mind would allow, assisted Eugene in his tasks as far as lay in his power, and would have consoled him if the latter had consented to listen. So the holy sympathies which occupied his own heart, for as he saw his master so very unhappy, the injustice of which he had been guilty in bringing himself away from his home, not being suffered to interfere between selfishness and his knowledge of Christian duty, reflected its sunlight back upon himself, and illumined the gloomy atmosphere, that else would have thrown back its shadow on his heart, and withered it beyond all hope of saving.

The valuable precepts taught in his father's house, and accompanied with prayer, had not been without effect; and although, like other boys of his age, at the time he heard them uttered, he received them only in a general sense, and without pondering on the truths they contained, the holy remembrance now came back upon him, constituting a link—may we say a spiritual link?—between himself and his far distant home: he resolved to act upon them, regarding them as a sacred legacy from the parents from whom he was torn; and so, while he went and came like a ministering angel between his two suffering companions, his efforts in doing good prevented his own life from being one of unmitigated bitterness.

Dietrich, whose heart daily grew softer as he

enjoyed sympathy to which he had long been a stranger, although the one who extended it was a boy, and at present his slave, gave him all the liberty he desired. His labor in the forest was not very severe; and sometimes, when he was so fortunate as to find a swarm of wild bees, emotions buoyant as those that had swelled his heart at Steinrode, for a moment would spring up, and feelings of real joy, as he secured his honied treasure, at the thoughts of the joyful surprise with which Eugene would greet him on his return. So true is it the elements of happiness are ever within ourselves! life had its gleams of sunshine even here! He seemed to know no weariness in promoting the comfort of those with whom he was now forced to dwell, although there was nothing congenial in either. He conciliated his rude master by a thousand kind but trifling offices; and while he tried to comfort, took half the labor off the capricious Eugene.

“Dear Eugene,” he often said, “let us be more patient; we know that this great trial could not have befallen us unless permitted by our Heavenly Father. How often have I heard my dear father say, ‘God never willingly afflicts, but it is always to accomplish some wise purpose;’ let us, therefore, submit to what we cannot help, and pray that he will make a way by which we shall be restored to our friends.”

“I will never, never obey that peasant thief,” the unsubdued boy would answer; “he never shall force me to subjection — I will resist him to the utmost; for it never shall be said the son of a Von Grosse bowed his neck to the rule of a boor.”

“You do but lengthen the days of your and my own captivity, with such conduct,” rejoined Felix; “do, Eugene, yield at least to the will of God in this matter, since our way is hedged upon every side; believe me, he will make a way for us to escape, if we only try to do our duty. I do not know why Dietrich brought us away from our home, and my heart is as sad as your own; but he is never unkind to me, and if you only would try a little to please him, I feel almost certain he would give us our liberty.”

“I never will be so mean as you are, Felix,” cried Eugene, giving way to the haughty spirit that was so peculiarly his own; “I never could stoop to conciliate peasants and serfs as you do; and I have often wondered how you, a nobleman’s son, could associate with such low fellows as you all did at Steinrode — there was that Ehrenfried for instance.”

The angry blood mounted to the temples of Felix, tinging his fair broad forehead even to the roots of his wavy hair; the impatient spirit was beginning to rise, and an hasty answer was forming on his lips; but the still small voice in his own

heart repeated the admonition of his beloved mother on the day when he was torn from her, and the sacred recollection turned his anger into sorrow; he turned away from the ungrateful Eugene, and burst into tears. All around was in accordance with his mournful feelings — the glimmering brightness of that autumnal day, alternating with shades of wintry gloom — the sunbeams that played through the scanty roofed covering of the forest, or danced on the faded and withered herbage that strewed the earth, gave to nature an unusual hue of gentle sadness—she seemed to wear a smile of languid beauty, ominous of her own swift-coming decay.

There are few minds so obtuse as not to be sensible of the effects of natural scenes in peculiar moods; and the sad and changeful appearance of this day was well calculated to extend the half-slumbering recollections which Eugene's reproach had called forth; and Felix most deeply felt the sombre influence. The name of Ehrenfried recalled the image of his happy brother—Steinrode was a talismanic word that called up all the blissful scenes of which he had been the partaker in that spot which bore the charmed name of home; but the recollection of his mother brought with it a yearning of heart which admitted of no control; and, for the first time, forgetful or careless of the displeasure of Dietrich, he wandered away far

into the recesses of the forest, to find a spot where he might pour out his feelings before the only One from whom he hoped to obtain relief—even Him before whose throne he had been taught from early childhood to bow. Here, where no human eye beheld him, he wept without restraint—he looked up to the fitful sky, where sunshine and shade were alternating, as if struggling for the mastery, and implored the Great Father of heaven to pity his desolation and, strengthen him to perform the hard duties that he was able to perceive yet lay before him.

“My mother!” he cried; “O why did I disobey her! if I had not forgotten her admonition, if I had not turned a deaf ear to the last injunction of my father, I should at this moment be happy with them all at Steinrode; but bless them all, Heavenly Father, and bless me; and let this sore trial, which thou hast permitted, work the change in my impatient spirit, which my dear mother’s precepts, earnest as they were, could not.”

He rose from his posture of supplication, feeling comforted; for there is “no horizon so dark but that humble, heartfelt prayer can lift the veil” that shrouds it, and penetrate far, far beyond. The earth may be dark and desolate, but hope in God stands forth as the pillar of fire to guide the pilgrim; and prayer avails to smooth the asperities and disentangle the perplexities of our earthly

path; and when thoughts become prayers, the peace they bring passes "all understanding."

Believing that the eye of God rested upon him here, even as it did upon the beloved ones at Steinrode, he resolved, though separated from them, to live as much like them as possible; and although his heart sickened at the thought that he no more might see that beloved home, he determined to rule his spirit as diligently as if there; the very feeling that he was thus obeying the precepts of his beloved and far-distant mother, formed a link between him and the absent; or rather it was a spiritual bond between them, which, though many have experienced, is of too subtle a nature to be analysed.

He dried his tears, and returned to the hovel, which he now called his home, and where he found Dietrich and Eugene in high dispute; the former having overheard the conversation between himself and the latter, although he had not noticed it at the time, was ready to take every advantage of the knowledge it afforded, to press the discipline demanded by such a refractory spirit; and as Felix came forward, his whip was raised to strike, a mode of correction which he ever found more effective than his voice; and though not naturally cruel, he used without compunction. Ere the blow, however, had this time fallen, Felix caught the upraised arm, and even, at the risk of provoking displeasure,

which, although it had never yet been turned towards himself, he yet dreaded, ventured to intercede for the culprit.

The soft tones of his voice mollified the wrath of the angry man. The whip was dropped, and turning his stern eyes in which tears were now glistening, he laid his hard horny hand upon the head of the fair boy who pleaded so feelingly for another, and said, "Boy, if he had been like you, I should not have been what I now am; he has himself to thank. Yet he must be taught to feel by some one, and he may find a harder master than myself among those whom he could not injure as he has done me. For your sake, and yours only, I will spare him."

Such scenes were of not unfrequent occurrence; and although Eugene abated not in the slightest his insolent behaviour to Dietrich, Felix by little and little won his love. He was not ashamed to beg him, whom he once loved to designate as a dancing bear, to stand between him and his enemy; and when Dietrich spoke of releasing Felix, and restoring him to his parents, of entreating him with many tears not to forsake him.

"O I shall die—I shall die of grief if you leave me alone in this horrible place, and with this unfeeling man. I have no one here, Felix, who cares for me but yourself, and I shall die if you forsake me."

Felix promised that the favor he had won from

Dietrich should be used to further his interest equally with his own—he would take advantage of every mood in which he dare plead for the liberation of both; “but, dear Eugene, you ought to be more patient, and try to be more obedient and yielding to the old man’s will. He would not be half so hard if you were not so rebellious.”

But alas! this was all without effect. Eugene, trained up to value himself, on account of his rank, more highly than others, could not at once learn to submit. He had never been taught to obey even his parents — no salutary restraint was ever laid upon his actions; and now, with all he was suffering, he remained the same. There are some natures that grow harder under the pressure of affliction, and his was one of that kind. No religious teaching, in the years when the plastic mind is easily impressed, had been used to show him that man is not made for himself alone. No precept, from the lips of a judicious mother, taught him to look for an all-pervading spirit in the realms of nature, or explain to him that One, great, glorious, and good, had come from above, dispensing life and hope to those who were “dead in trespasses and in sin;” and, bestowing the benefits he died to secure, impartially, bids man welcome man as his brother, and the rich to acknowledge brotherhood with the lowly. The training to such thoughts as these, with which pious mothers always endeavor

to fill the first place in the minds of their children, had been totally neglected in the education of this poor boy; and it was scarcely to be expected that the impression made by years of luxurious ease, and criminal self-indulgence, should be effaced by the privations and severities of a few weeks. A sterner ordeal than he had yet undergone was needed. With young Lindenbarg, the case was different. The instruction received at the time before the mind is distracted with the excitement that belongs to maturer years, lay deeply hidden in his heart; and now, in his day of distress, the sweet impression of the truths uttered by his mother, so strongly associated with the home he loved to recall, appeared in their full value in those moments when, but for them, no drop of comfort would have been mingled in his earthly cup.

From the day we have tried to describe, when the exercises of his own and Eugene's mind were so different, he was a changed person. His excellent education had taught him to entertain a high sense of moral duty, which, from what he had learned of Christian conduct, he thought he had practised; but now, although he could not have described his own views, he went much further than to be contented with this. He found, from the struggle he had to endure in the conquest of his own temper, that the Christian's life is one of warfare; and while his soul was pained to be

obliged to interfere in the scenes of violence which so often occurred between Dietrich and Eugene, and to witness the ungovernable rage by which the latter at times was swayed, how thankful was he to have been taught better things !

He could go, when his spirit was sad, to a source which is ever open to the broken-hearted — to the fount of mercy ; where pure and humble prayer is never rejected, and lean for support upon the arm that is never shortened so that it cannot save. It was deep anguish of soul that led him to pray — anguish such as we can scarce conceive of a child enduring, did we not know that such things are, and had we not experienced that it is deep anguish of soul which brings us to the closest communion with God. Those are the seasons, whether the subject be child or man, when the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered ; for the Searcher of hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, and will always answer, if not to our wish, according to our need.

Weeks of monotonous sameness now passed over them, varied only by seasons of deeper or greater gloom, as hope alternated with despair. Eugene was by no means improved ; and although Felix pleaded his cause most earnestly with Dietrich, he had not been able to effect anything in his favor.

“He is not in the least humbled,” was the constant answer ; “and I am determined to make him

feel what oppression is ; when did his heart know pity for any ? when did he do ought to make one human being's suffering less ?”

“ But, Dietrich,” Felix would urge, “ Eugene is to be pitied more than blamed ; remember he never was taught as I have been, and he cannot now in a moment distinguish right from wrong.”

“ He has a spirit of perverseness entirely his own ; and he shall go through a school in which it shall be tamed. Boy, urge me no further on that head, for I am not to be moved ; but for yourself I am sincerely sorry that you have been made to suffer ; and although you are now my only earthly comfort, still I will restore you to your home the first moment I can do so with safety.”

“ But you are not happy ; you surely would not wear that sad look if you were,” replied Felix ; “ the vengeance you are exercising on that poor boy has failed to bring comfort to yourself ; would it not be better to do as our Saviour has commanded, ‘ not to avenge ourselves, but give place to wrath,’ to love our enemies, and pray for them that injure us.”

“ You speak like one should,” said the unhappy man, in nowise offended by the liberty taken by his young companion, “ that has seen life without any of its shadows ; till lately you did not know that it had any. But what if, like me, you had lost your all—had known that those you loved were turned

out upon the wastes of the cold world to suffer, whilst you, enclosed within the walls of a prison, were prevented from doing what was your duty — to know that the life of your only child, the star of your existenee, the flower—the only flower that bloomed for you amid the thorns and brambles of a life of degradation and continued labor — was considered, by those who claimed *my* liberty as their right, as of less value than that of a dog; to be denied the expression of a grief so natural, and without a word of sympathy, to send money by a menial as if to pay me for the life of my only child — boy, it drives to madness yet to think of it; you could, if you had suffered all this, imagine how sweet revenge must be. The bondsman in his cheerless life cannot forget the feelings of a father, and that he is a man, any more than he can change the vile laws that have made him so, and chains him whom God has made free to the soil.”

“But neither Eugene nor his father is to be blamed for this,” said Felix; “I have often heard my father regret that things were as they are, and likewise say that the laws of feudal tenure were greatly milder in Germany than in other countries.”

“I know all that,” returned Dietrich; “but that does not make any of them right; no laws can be right which make it just for one man to tyrannize over another.”

Felix was too young to venture to talk with one

whose spirit was so embittered on a subject of such high political interest as this, "that cause betwixt the high and the low—the few that command, and the many that obey;" but, boy as he was, he thought that if Dietrich hated tyranny so thoroughly he ought not to exercise it himself on one so young as Eugene, who, although very faulty, was not to be blamed for the laws that make one a noble and the other a peasant. In the present mood of his mind, however, he did not consider it safe to urge this view of the subject; but chose rather to lead him to the contemplation of another, and induce him to study the code of laws laid down for the good of mankind in general, by one who has said, "my kingdom is not of this world."

"I know, Dietrich, this is a painful subject, and I am too much of a boy to understand it thoroughly; but it is the Scriptures that tell us that it is God who appoints to every man his condition in life, enjoining upon those doing service to do it 'as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.' But if he who was the Lord of heaven came down and took upon himself the form of a servant, and humbled himself for the salvation of many, why should we think so much of stations? and if he condescended to associate with the unlearned and lowly, ought we not rather to know from it that he

is no respecter of persons, that the rich and poor are equal in his sight, and so be contented with the lot he has assigned us."

Dietrich made no answer, but leaned his head upon his hand, and gazed moodily into the fire; but a softening change was visible in his whole deportment; and although Felix could make no impression on him in regard to Eugene, who seemed every day to grow more refractory, he ceased to correct him so frequently as at first, and contented himself with muttering something between his teeth which the boys could not understand; and as their household, in consequence of this cessation from violence, was more quiet than formerly, time sped on rather more pleasantly; and Felix, with the ever hoping spirit of youth, looked forward to better things.

CHAPTER VII.

“He that commits a sin shall quickly find
The pressing guilt lay heavy on his mind ;
None quits himself — his own impartial thought
Will chide ; and conscience will record the fault.”

AUTUMN had long since exchanged her garb of many tints for one of russet hue ; and this again was thrown off, as if for readiness to battle with the fierce winds that swept from the Carpathian mountains over the plains, and left the forest bare ; and the trees, spreading forth their naked and gigantic branches, seemed to wait with impatient quietude the storms for which they were prepared. The moaning blasts took the place of the sweet harmonies that had lately mingled there ; and cold gray skies had long before warned the feathered choristers that it was time to seek a warmer home. Heaps of fallen leaves, or fir cones, swept together by the tempests as in rushing haste they passed by, strewed the spots where wild flowers had lately bloomed ; and Nature looked sad as she prepared for her long sleep in the lap of winter. Flakes of snow began to fall ; and the boys, to whom the approach of the hoary season, as enjoyed in their

own country, had hitherto always brought anticipations of delight, as they stood, wretched enough, looking out on the dreary scene, wept now with dismay at the thoughts of what new misery it might bring to themselves, so far from home and friends, and prisoners in a place so inclement and inhospitable.

Their out-door occupations were, for the most part, suspended; but this brought no relief from the tedium of the hours they were obliged to spend in comparative idleness; books they had none, companions none—all was desolate without, and not less so was that within. No neighboring peasants ever came to the cottage, nor could they have held converse with any if they had; the language was yet entirely unknown to them; and the little they had seen of them had indisposed them for further companionship. Dietrich's occupation of wood-cutting, too, was often suspended, and he would pass nearly the whole of the day at the pot-house in the village, a circumstance at which Felix greatly wondered, for he never drank liquor of any kind, indulged in no games of chance, and held little communication with any one. The boys, consequently, were left much alone; and many were the plans they thought over to furnish amusement or occupation for themselves in the coming winter. Felix mourned over their want of books; writing materials they had none, neither

were they to be procured in the neighborhood; and the knowledge that he was unable to advance in such studies as ought to be learned at his age, added to the uncertainty of his situation, weighed heavily upon his heart, and filled it with a deeper gloom than the shadow of the unhappy circumstances in which he was placed could have done, had the means of improvement been within his reach. Eugene cared not much on this account; perhaps the tedium of the life he now was obliged to live might have driven him to read, had books been at his disposal; as it was, he did nothing but weep and complain, thus adding an additional burthen to that young, but faithful, friend, who concealed much of his own feelings in order to lighten those of another, whose education and moral training had less qualified him to bear the roughnesses of life than himself.

But the mind of man is fertile in expedients; and one soon offered itself to that of this good boy, which should be made subservient to the improvement and amusement of both. Mr. Bulow had often praised his talent for drawing, as exhibited in his copies of animals from books, or specimens of Natural History, which was a study, as in the beginning of our narrative we remarked, to which he much inclined. With coals from half-burnt wood he made his crayons; with flexible bark which he stripped from the birch and larch that

grew in abundance there, he first divesting it of the outer rind, flattened and made his tablets; and finding it to answer very well, proposed to teach Eugene to draw; and, besides, from this new discovery they need not forget their writing, since they could make letters on this primitive substitute for paper as well as figures.

Faithful to his own purpose to conciliate Dietrich, he showed him his invention and his first work, an act at which Eugene was greatly displeased, and quarrelled with him for it, taxing him with hypocrisy and meanness, in cringing, as he termed it, to "one so greatly beneath them, and one whom in his heart he loved no better than himself did."

Unmoved by the reproach, to which he listened with silence, he yet persisted in the course his heart told him was right; and the old man was by no means displeased; for although he never expressed his approbation in words, he one day presented Felix, greatly to his surprise, with a bundle of neatly prepared bark, and a few sheets of coarse paper, which he had taken great pains to obtain, and not without some expense.

So the winter came, and was less dreary than they had anticipated; and if Eugene had pursued a proper course of conduct, it is most likely spring would have found them on their way to Germany, and their home. Christmas, indeed, awoke sad recollections in the hearts of both; different as had

been the scenes of enjoyment they had separately partaken of the year before, the renewal of that festival time brought equal sadness to the trio. Dietrich was more sorrowful than usual; Felix thought of all they were then doing at Steinrode, and wondered if all were going on as formerly; and Eugene, poor boy, who had no home to think of, was more unhappy than ever; and being more unhappy, made himself in the same degree more disagreeable. Felix did the best of all; the sweet calm of peace that dwelt in his heart, the fruit of his pious submission to the trial dealt him by the Unerring Hand, had its own reward—he had bent to the storm, and was spared—it passed over and left him uninjured; had he resisted like Eugene, both would have been lost.

Dietrich, the workings of whose heart were only known to himself, had done his utmost to make them comfortable on that day. A fine fat fowl that he had purchased somewhere, graced their rude table; and some *striezel kuchen*, which he had himself instructed the neighboring peasant-woman how to bake (for they were ignorant of the preparation of this article of German cookery), gave a luxurious appearance to their hitherto not scanty, but rough *ménage*, and served still further to recall the happy scenes in which they had revelled the year before.

The winter passed slowly. Dietrich's absences

became long and frequent, and Eugene grew more unruly, and further provoked his hatred; and so time, as it rolled onward, brought no pleasing changes to the dwellers in that secluded cottage. The seasons succeeded to each other in their regular rotation. Spring smiled in her green robe — the summer brought her birds and flowers — autumn his fruits — and winter his snows; but no friend came, with cheering face, to comfort our boys, or bring tidings from those their hearts yearned to behold. We will not detail further the routine of miserable life dragged on by all three; one day served as a specimen for all the rest. Suffice it to say, that more than two years had passed in the manner we have attempted to describe, when its dull monotony was one day interrupted when Dietrich, returning from the ale-house with a sterner brow than usual, he commanded Eugene to get his clothes together, and accompany him to a village some miles distant.

“I have hired you there to a master,” said he, “who will teach you to obey. You shall there learn what it is to work, and earn your bread by the sweat of your brow.”

No words can describe the consternation caused by this announcement to both the boys, but most particularly to Eugene, who regarded a separation from Felix as his greatest possible misfortune. He had quarrelled with him — brow-beaten him on all

occasions — disregarded all his admonitions; but still, the steady patience with which all his fretfulness was borne, excited his admiration, and won his love. Felix was his all, his only comfort; and now he was to be parted from him on whom he had leaned for support in his day of trial—he who had so often turned away the wrath of his enemy, and who had himself performed his allotted tasks when he was too unable or too indolent to attempt them. He who, until lately, had known nothing but to command and be obeyed, must now go, and go alone, to be servant to a rude farmer, and submit to treatment — ah! he dared not think like what. O, how willingly would he have remained in that lowly hut, that, with Felix there, was a palace in comparison with the one anticipated, and even with that dark old man, whom now he did not so much fear; and bitterly now did he regret his own obstinacy in not having followed the counsels of his friend.

He threw himself at the feet of Dietrich, and prayed that he would not send him away. He embraced his enemy's knees, and promised obedience and amendment; begged only to be tried one week longer, that the sincerity of his intended change might be proved. But a deaf ear was turned to all entreaties both from himself and Felix; the un pitying answer was——

“Your reformation comes too late; I told you

long ago what I would do, and I always keep my word. Nor will I break it now; I have promised the farmer — the bargain is concluded — drawing back is not to be thought of now;" and, as if afraid that his own stern purpose might be melted by the witnessing of sorrow to which he was by no means insensible, he put on a darker frown than usual, and giving no time to the unhappy companions for leave-taking, he took Eugene rather ungently by the arm, and in a harsher voice than he had ever used to Felix, he commanded him not to leave the hut until his return. He turned his back upon its threshold, dragging rather than leading the hapless boy along the path that led across the forest.

The day was bright and lovely — the birds sung in the branches — and zephyrs sighed through the foliage; but Felix, who remained behind according to the orders he never disobeyed, had no eye or ear for anything. How prone are mortals to believe that even in intense suffering there is no mercy extended — that in seasons of darkness no ray of light can be discovered! No cup was ever yet given to man to drink, that drops of comfort did not mitigate its bitterness — nor was he ever yet shrouded by gloom so great, but that it might have been increased. So poor Felix experienced; a few days before, when his heart was pained by an altercation carried on more angrily than usual,

between Dietrich and Eugene, he was tempted to exclaim, "Can any thing be worse than this?" Now the alternative had come, and although one cause of painful disquiet and apprehension was removed, the thoughts of the dreary solitude in which he would be left, but yet more the uncertainty of Eugene's lot; the effect, if he should survive the hardships certain to be imposed upon him, this removal would have upon his character, awoke the tenderest sympathies of his nature; and the bitterest tears he had shed since leaving Steinrode, were poured out there, as he sat solitary and alone.

Vague fears, as hour after hour passed, and Dietrich did not return, weighed upon the boy's heart, and added new horrors to his contemplations. Perhaps he never would come back — perhaps it was his own duty to take advantage of this opportunity to seek his own freedom, and more than once he started up to fly from the hated spot, but the thought "whither?" arrested the hasty step, and stayed the imprudent longing. How was he to make his way through a country of whose localities he was entirely ignorant, with whose language he was altogether unacquainted, without means of procuring subsistence on so long a journey as lay between him and his native land? He might fall into worse servitude than even the present; and besides, he felt it would be wrong, with so slight a hope of success as his plan of escape

presented, to leave Eugene in a strange land, and in a place of which neither knew the name. That they were in Poland he believed — that the mountains he saw were the Carpathian, he imagined — but of this there was no certainty; and the mighty river, that roared and rushed at no great distance from their dwelling, might prove the boundary of a people more savage than those among whom they had come.

Tears exhausted the violence of his feelings; prayer once more strengthened his courage, and prudence came to his aid, and her reasoning voice assisted in restoring his painfully excited soul to its wonted calm.

“There is nothing left for me to do,” said he to himself, “but to try and please Dietrich. I will try and bear the increased ills of my lot patiently, in hopes that I shall be able to move the heart of that stern old man. I trust I shall yet succeed in obtaining Eugene’s liberty and pardon from him. O, my mother! my dear mother!” (he wept aloud as he recalled her gentle image, and her last holy kiss), “how often have you told me my impatient spirit must be subdued, ere I could be either useful or happy! I am now in a school of discipline harder than you would have desired, but perhaps not more so than my Heavenly Father sees necessary.”

The day began to decline; and as evening spread

her shadows over the forest, gusts of wind swept through its dark recesses, and wailing among the branches like the voices of the unquiet spirits supposed to inhabit those rude regions where superstition rules, added to the desolation of the boy's condition, as well as increased the fears arising from his master's continued absence. — It was, therefore, with a feeling of relief he saw, ere darkness quite obscured the view, his tall figure advancing on the forest path; and he started up to light their miserable rush candle, and make some necessary preparations, glad to have his painful meditations broken by the presence of any human being.

Dietrich walked more slowly than usual; and Felix had time to do all he wished ere the former reached his dwelling. As he stepped over the threshold it was evident he was pleased to find that his prisoner had not taken advantage of his long absence to effect his escape; but he made no remark whatever; and to such questions as Felix dared to ask, he answered only in monosyllables, but in tones more indicative of sadness than displeasure. The boy, therefore, did not venture to mention the name of Eugene, nor to prefer the request he meditated for the liberty of both. Resolved to humor the old man in whatever mood he might be, he went on silently performing the offices which heretofore had been allotted to him who was no longer here; and having placed a dish of warm

milk porridge on the table, he called him to supper, and then seated himself sad and desponding in a corner by the fire.

Dietrich obeyed his bidding; he finished his meal, and having pushed the dish away, he leaned his arm on the table, and shading his brow with his broad hand, sat gazing on the fair boy for a long time in silence, less gloomy than sorrowful.

“He is a pretty boy and a good,” he at length muttered to himself; “I am sorry this sin rests upon my soul. Tell me, child,” said he, raising his voice, “what are you thinking of at this moment; do you not long to go back to your home and parents?”

“To my home and parents?” exclaimed Felix, starting up and clasping his hands, while tears streamed from his eyes, and sobs of emotion choked his utterance; “Heavenly Father grant it. I think of them always; long for them ever, and would wander day and night on foot, and over ways the most painful, only to see them all once more.”

“Well then you shall go,” said Dietrich abruptly, and in a voice not altogether firm; “I will give you your freedom and the means to travel; but you must first promise me solemnly — do you hear me, boy?”

But Felix understood only one sentence of what he had said. “You shall go,” sounded like a reprieve from death to a criminal; and he repeated

it again and again in joyful succession, without thinking of any condition by which the permission was fettered.

“O, you will let me go, you will let me go,” he exclaimed, as he embraced the knees of his captor, and turned his blue eyes, from whence the tears were pouring, up to look into those whose fountains had long been dry; “may God reward you, dear Dietrich! I will pray for you, and so will we all, that you may be as happy as ourselves, and no longer so sorrowful over things that cannot now be helped. But tell me, what do you desire of me, what must I promise?”

Dietrich answered slowly and in a low voice: “That you will never betray to any man what you witnessed at the time you left your home, nor what has occurred since you have lived here; never reveal the name (if indeed you know it) of this place; above all, you must deny ever having had any knowledge of Eugene. Of him you are to know nothing; he is only enduring a fate which he has but too well deserved. You can tell your parents you were carried off by gipsies, and was obliged to wander with them, until at last you found a chance to run away. Will you promise most sacredly to do this, and as sacredly to keep your word?”

“Never!” answered the beautiful boy, firmly but sadly, “never. I will never seek my home

with a lie on my lips; for my parents have taught me to abhor falsehood; and when my father would ask me where I had been; think you I would try to deceive him from whom I never yet had any concealments? My Heavenly Father," he continued, folding his hands and looking upwards, "now I know what it is to be tempted; now I feel what lures the enemy spreads to veil the deformity of sin. But I will keep Thee ever before mine eyes—thou shalt be as a lamp to my path, that my feet may never stray; no—rather let me die than sin so greatly."

Overcome by the force of his emotion, he sobbed aloud; but he soon grew calm—the victory had been obtained—the might and strength of God had interposed between him and a powerful temptation to sin; and now that the tempter was distanced, he felt himself ready to bear whatever might follow.

Think not, reader, that this picture of a child being able to discover the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," is overdrawn; or that a boy of Felix's age could so easily withstand being tempted to a sin which many might think venial, and for which sophistry might find a thousand excuses. The Scriptures say to all, "Sin not;" and the excellent education he had received—more excellent in its teaching him of Christian duty according to the precepts of the Son of God, who came to teach us

what to do and what to believe, than even in that part which was to fit him for his worldly career — had given him an ægis of which he did not know the power, or suspect the possession, until on this the day of his trial. In the day of his prosperity it shielded him from the deceitful glare that dazzled Eugene, and for which, since that was withdrawn, he had no substitute; and now, when the tempest was abroad, and he alone and exposed to its fury, it was his protection and his guide. Truth, the great principal of Christian life and conduct, had been placed in too lovely an aspect before him for him to forget her now — his duty was plain — the issue rested with God.

With his stony eyes fastened on the boy, on whose fair features the blush of excited hope had so lately glowed, only to fade into marble paleness, the astonished old man gazed long and in silence, as if awed by the majesty of virtue, although exhibited in the form of a child. At last the old man spoke.

“So then you would rather remain in this desolate region, separated from your parents for many, many long years, which you must do, since you will not promise to conceal what you know?”

“Yes,” answered Felix; “if I cannot go to them without the knowledge of a deliberate sin on my soul—without giving you a promise that would stain me with falsehood, and consequently with

crime. How could I enjoy the purity of my home by going as a liar among them — could I look my own or Eugene's parents in the face, when I knew their only son, for whom they pined, was enduring slavery in its worst form; when one word from me — one word which I dared not utter — would remove their misery? No, Dietrich, I will not go; do with me as you please; men may 'kill the body,' but I fear it not, for my trust is in Him who alone hath power to save the soul, and who will put forth his arm to help me when he sees I have profited enough by my present sufferings."

Dietrich urged his measure no further, but sat in the same spot in brooding silence, and buried his face in both his hands, as if ashamed to meet the glance of a child whose principles, so firmly based upon the Rock of Ages, so strong in the faith of heavenly protection, led him patiently to choose a lot of wrong and oppression, rather than commit what he believed a heinous sin. And now as this boy, shielded in his panoply of truth, stood before him, he recognized its beauty and its power, and, for the first time, his conscience began to accuse him, since his vengeance had been directed to the ruin of the family of Von Grosse.

Dietrich was not ignorant of the holy truths contained in the Word of God. Meditative and thoughtful by nature, while blessed with an excellent wife and happy home, he had pondered much

upon them ; but the pride it might be, that lay unsuspected by himself, and formed the root of his hatred to the nobility, while it rendered him discontented with his own lot, and led him to question the existence, or at least the justice of God, who appoints to every man his station, prevented his deriving the comfort from such study as would have been fruit to a more humble and salvation-seeking spirit. None could tell him better than he knew the precept which teaches, "avenge not yourselves," nor of that glorious example of One who loved a world that hated him, and when reviled, "even as a lamb dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth to revile again." And now that conscience, so fully awoke, had begun her admonitions, she placed his every action in the most glaring and frightful review before him, since the hour in which he had sworn revenge against his thoughtless enemy — laid his house in ashes, robbed him of his only son, and condemned him, while yet a child, to bondage and poverty, from which there was little chance he would be rescued ; and as though the enemy of souls had resolved to heap more crimes upon his soul than his vengeance contemplated, he had injured a family who pitied and would have relieved his misfortunes, involving a darling son in the reckless ruin prepared for an enemy, without compunction.

We can say but little in this case of Dietrich, as

to the extent or acceptance of his repentance; he had sinned deeply, although his wrongs were great; and he had repaid them with double interest; and we dare pass no sentence upon him; we only know that there is One "mighty to save" all that come to God by him. No spiritual malady is so desperate that He cannot cure it; no sin whose stain is so great that it cannot be washed away in the blood of atonement; none so vile but that the shadow of the Cross can give protection when some dark spirit of the pit would tempt him to despair.

Many, many were the thoughts of deep and searching import that awoke in the mind of the unhappy man; but one in particular which he could not lose sight of—if this boy, brought up in Christian faith, so abhorred all practice of wrong and injustice, that he would choose to live a life of poverty, bondage, and privation, far from his home and parents, rather than break one command of the God whom he professed to serve—if, as he said, he could not face those virtuous parents with a stain of falsehood on his soul, how should himself, when called to the great account, stand before the awful Judge in whose hands he had refused to leave his cause, but chosen rather to sacrifice his all, even to the hope of salvation, on the altar of his revenge?

He thought of his humble and quiet wife—how badly he had cared for her comfort, and of the

consequent hardships that had consigned her to the grave—of his sweet smiling innocent little Annie, whose prattle ever cheered him, and whose merry laugh could drive away his moodiness—if they were angels in heaven, as his simple belief had taught him to suppose, could he hope to meet them there—what right had one like him in that pure abode—could their purified spirits assimilate with his own, even if admitted to that world where no tears are shed?

His tortured soul now knew no peace by day or night; and contrary to his usual habit of sobriety, he tried to drown his painful reflections by visits to the village ale-house, and steep his senses in the forgetfulness caused by intoxicating draughts.

But this course of conduct did not succeed. Felix was as a thorn in his eye, a steady reproof to his conscience; and he could only hope to find peace by removing him from his path. But how to accomplish this he could not contrive; if the boy returned to his parents and told his story, both Amadé and himself could be traced and brought to justice; and the indecision he was obliged to maintain, as well as the disquietude of his own mind, soured his temper to a greater degree than heretofore; and his capricious bearing now rendered the lot of the poor boy nearly unbearable.

Yet steady to himself, and faithful to the rules laid down for his own practice, he bore all the

hard requisitions demanded by his master without murmuring.

If he was sorrowful, which truly was often the case, Dietrich was angry, and abused him ; for this he considered a reproach against himself for separating him from Eugene ; was he merry, a mood in which he was now seldom found, then the old man envied him the peace produced by a quiet conscience ; and he reproached him with hypocrisy in forcing spirits, that he might contrast his happiness with his own gloom. This was another hard trial for Felix ; but he bore it manfully — he knew patience was demanded of the martyr, and forbearance of the Christian.

Months passed away, and he heard nothing of Eugene. The spring once more mellowed into summer, the summer into autumn ; the forest again began to wear its varied livery, when one day Dietrich came home at an earlier hour than usual from his work in the wood. In felling a tree some days before, he had wounded his foot with an axe ; and although urged by Felix to keep quiet and give the wound time to heal, strong ever in his own self-will, he would not listen to him ; but, binding it up roughly, he continued to go to work as usual. Owing to this imprudence, and the heated state of his blood, fever came on ; and as he entered the hut on this afternoon, he complained of being very

sick; and ere evening came on, he was obliged to take to his bed.

It was now that Felix could fairly prove his kindness to the suffering old man. He was his only comfort; he sat at his bedside and bathed his throbbing temples; he arranged and smoothed his rude pillow; he dressed his wounded foot; bore all the querulous complaining, and all the capricious demands exacted by his sick master without impatience, or a murmur for the trouble it gave him; so that at length the unhappy being to whom he rendered such services declared his presence to be a true blessing.

One day when he had suffered more pain than usual from his wounded foot, and Felix had prepared a cooling poultice, as he approached the bed in order to apply it, Dietrich caught him by the hand, and looking up into his clear blue eyes, said, "Poor boy! I have wronged you greatly; and you may well be glad if it should go hard with me. I cannot bear it much longer; and then my death will leave you free to go wherever you choose."

"Truly," answered the boy, and his open and ingenuous countenance bore witness to the sincerity of his heart, "I have not once thought of your dying, much less wished it; and although lately you have been more harsh to me than you were at first, and I know not why it is so, yet I would do any thing to relieve your pain; if your recov-

ery depended on my wishes, you would soon be well."

"What, boy! can you wish me to be well," inquired the sick man, who understood no feeling so well as that of the desire for vengeance; "thou dost not then hate the rough and passionate old man who has made thee to shed so many, and such bitter tears?"

"I hate no one," replied Felix, innocently; "no, indeed; but I pray that God may soften your heart, and dispose it to pity and compassion. I have read in the Scriptures, 'it is an awful thing to stand before the living God;' and how, then, could I wish for the death of any man? If I did, I were no better than a murderer."

"Boy, boy," sighed Dietrich, "your words pierce through my heart like a sword. You do not hate your bitterest enemy, one that has done you so much wrong; you do not wish for his death, although by that you should secure your liberty, and regain your home! There must be truth in the religion you have learned, for it makes you consistent; but oh! what a sinner I have been! Whither shall I go for peace? Where shall I hope to find grace and mercy, in this my hour of anguish and necessity? I, that closed my ears to the prayer of the unoffending."

Deeply moved by the emotion of the despairing

old man, Felix could scarcely command his own, while, in faltering voice, he rejoined.

“I remember many passages from the Bible which would comfort you, if you would receive them, but one just now in particular; it is this — ‘If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, who died not only for our sins, but the sins of the whole world;’ and I have often heard our pastor say, ‘that although our sins be as scarlet, they could be made white as snow through Him who died to procure salvation for all that believe in Him.’ ”

He stopped, for his heart was too full to proceed; Dietrich folded his hands as if in prayer, and lay with his eyes closed, and perfectly still. The leaves of the forest rustled in the autumn breeze — the lark sung gaily as she mounted to the heavens — the sun lightened the gloomy cottage with his cheerful rays — and the impression, altogether, made upon the boy's heart, recalled images of home-joys, and created an unconquerable longing to be among his own, his loved ones again. He thought of his beautiful home, his parents, his happy brother, and joyous sisters; of the first, as looking on the sports of the latter, as they played among the honeysuckles and roses that himself once loved so well. Did they think of him, on whom one simple act of disobedience had been so severely visited? Large and heavy drops filled

his eyes, and leaning his brow against the little casement, he wept softly; for he feared to disturb the meditations of the sick man. A sob, however, which he could not repress, aroused the latter from his train of deep thought.

“Come here, Felix,” said he, in a softer voice than he had ever yet spoken, as he raised himself up in bed; “come here; I will do you all the good I can, while time is yet spared me. Dry up your tears; you shall see your home soon now. To-morrow morning you shall go to the village where Eugene is — he too shall be free.”

Felix was in doubt whether he rightly understood; but he remained silent, and Dietrich proceeded.

“You must give the money with which I will provide you, to the farmer to whom I have hired Eugene; he will then be set at liberty, and you can both go home. My hours are nearly numbered, and I cannot go before the great Judge of all with a crime, the enormity of which I could not see until lately, so great upon my soul. God, in thus opening my eyes to the truth, has been more merciful to me than I deserve. I loved Him once, but when my day of trial came, I turned away and rebelled, when I ought to have submitted. Adversity hardened my heart, and so He hid his face from me; yet He did not utterly forsake me, sinner that I am. Wronged as I was, no

thought of taking Eugene's life ever entered into my soul. I wished but to make those who had no pity, know what it is to suffer; yet my successful vengeance has brought me no soothing—no peace. No blessing could rest on the means I used to make him better; but you, my good child, your forbearance, and simple teaching of the Scripture truths you learned at home, softened my hard heart, and changed my stern purpose. I bless the hour in which you came to me; and the time will come when, in spite of all I have made you suffer, you will bless it too; for, although an ignorant man, I know the Scripture says, 'for blessed is he that turneth even one sinner from the error of his ways.' ”

He stopped for a moment, exhausted. Felix was too much moved to answer; and after a short silence, the sick man proceeded, as he took a small packet from his bosom.

“See here, boy, here is money; unjustly gained it is true, but that sin is not mine, and I have never spent one farthing of it on myself. When I set fire to Hausdorff Castle, gain was not my object; I wanted nothing but revenge. This money belongs to Eugene. I exchanged a portion of the jewels which Amadé stole, and gave to me, for it; and I only accepted of his offer to share his ill-gotten treasure, as it promised to assist me in the prosecution of my plan of revenge. Go,

then, to farmer Woida in the morning, and give him half of this money, and he will let Eugene free from his bondage; then come back to me, and I will direct you how to proceed, so that in one week from this time, you may both be at home. When you are there, so happy, do not think of me, my boy, with hatred; long ere you reach your parents, I shall be standing before the mighty Judge."

Once more exhausted, the sick man fell back on his pillow; and ere Felix had time to recover from his grateful astonishment, and thank him for this unexpected bliss, he had fallen into slumber, or rather that stupor produced by weariness. Long ere this, night had stolen over the plain, and shaded the forest; but the moon, unshrouded even by a gossamer cloud, shone forth in silvery brightness, and came peering benevolently into the rude cottage where death was waiting. All was peace without — all was quiet within — save the heart of our poor boy, which beat wildly at the thoughts of the joys the coming week was to secure. He looked upon the face of the sleeper — it wore an expression of more calmness than he had ever seen rest upon it before; and having never been in the presence of death, he could not recognise its approach.

He retired to the pallet where, heretofore, he had found rest after the fatigues of the day; but

the stormy joy that filled his whole being effectually distanced sleep. Home, and his family, seemed within his reach; and he could scarcely wait until the morning broke, so anxious was he to share this happiness with Eugene. Midnight had long passed by, ere he enjoyed a temporary oblivion; but, exhausted by the previous excitement, his slumbers were heavy, and the sun streaming into his humble chamber, showing the day to be far arisen, was the first to disturb them. Alarmed at his own slothfulness, he rose quickly, but without noise, fearful of disturbing the sick man, who seemed to sleep calmly; but as he approached the bed, the rigid muscles, and marble brow, showed the impress of a hand whose seal can never be mistaken. Yet he could not believe it to be death who had come so silently; it might be weakness, or excess of pain. He bathed the temples with vinegar, and rubbed the pulseless wrist; but the cold and stony touch affrighted him—he shrunk back in horror from the dead. He wept, and his tears only ceased when he thought of a new source of anxiety that mingled itself with his sorrow—he dreaded that as soon as Dietrich's death should be known, some of the neighboring villagers, many of them being a sort of dependent farmers, might come and claim him as a vassal. The thought was fearful; and his nerves, so much excited by all he had lately passed through, the power of reasoning was for a

time suspended; flight seemed the only means left to secure safety. Giving one last look at the corpse of one who had wrought so much wrong upon him, he left the cottage, after carefully closing the door, and ran through field and forest, taking the same direction as Dietrich had done on the day when he took Eugene to the farmer.

He had the money in his pocket, and distinctly recollected the name of Woida as belonging to Eugene's master; but that of the farm or village where he lived, Dietrich had not mentioned, and this latter difficulty troubled him not a little. He ran until nearly mid-day, but nothing like a farmer's homestead presented itself to his longing eyes; swamp and forest were passed over in dreary succession, and disappointment began to take the place of hope. At length, emerging from the wood, he came upon a level plain, where the signs of civilization became more apparent. The collier's cabin, and mud dwelling of the boor, gave place to habitations of better construction; and far towards the horizon, as seen in the unobstructed distance, smoking chimneys betokened a village. In a moment, all weariness was forgotten; joyful anticipations gave more strength to his limbs, the intervening space was speedily passed over, and a little maiden whom he met at the entrance of the hamlet, stood gazing at him in stupid astonishment as he asked the question about which he was so

anxious, forgetting that she did not understand a word he said. The name of farmer Woida at length seemed to reach her stolid perception, for she pointed to a homestead on the further side of the village, the appearance of which was anything but inviting.

At another time, our young hero would not have been slow to mark the rude and forbidding features of this abode ; but now the thought of liberty and home threw its own radiance over all, and lightened up the dreary spot ; and so dazzling was that hopeful light, that its squalid and filthy aspect was entirely lost sight of. He was sure to find Eugene within ; and in the joyful anticipation of what feelings the tidings he had to communicate would bring to his friend, his countenance beaming with an expression peculiar only to the freshness of youth, he entered, without ceremony, into the dwelling.

The whole family was seated at the supper-table — men and women, the farmer and his servants, without distinction ; and only raised their eyes in a kind of stupid wonder, to see who it was that intruded. The next moment, they proceeded in the demolition of griz and bacon, which they made to disappear with a celerity almost wonderful, considering that the feat was effected by such seemingly obtuse beings. Felix ran his eyes hastily over the rude assembly, and the glow faded from

his cheek, and the light from his eyes, as he perceived that Eugene was not among them. Not altogether despairing, although uneasy, he named the names of Dietrich and Eugene, and endeavored to make himself understood by signs, pointing in the direction of the forest and its neighboring hamlet.

The farmer stopped for half a second, and stretched his eyes to their utmost extent, as if the boy's meaning were only addressed to his sense of seeing; but as he was in the act of carrying to his mouth a spoonful of the mixture on which they were all feasting, he deemed it a matter of too much importance to be suspended; he swallowed it, and returned with redoubled vigor to the dish, bestowing not the slightest attention on our poor hero, who was fairly at a loss how to proceed.

"There is one sign," thought Felix, "that all men understand, and I will speak to him in language he cannot mistake;" and drawing the purse given him by Dietrich from his pocket, he laid half of its contents upon the table.

The countenance of the boor changed as if by magic—the gold had spoken to his heart. He cast a longing look upon the money, and spreading forth his broad hand, swept it hastily together, and buried it in his capacious pocket; at the same time speaking a few words to one of his servants, who, without the slightest visible emotion, rose in

an instant, and approached the boy. Never doubting but that the boor was about to conduct him to where Eugene was to be found, his courage once more began to revive; but what was his astonishment to find himself rudely caught up by a pair of powerful arms, and in spite of all his struggles, carried forth to the court-yard, and there thrown out, with as little ceremony as though he had been a bundle of straw, into the highway; while his unmoved conqueror returned very coolly to the house, carefully bolting the door to prevent his re-entrance.

Bitter tears, less from pain (for he was hurt somewhat by his fall) than mortification, flowed down his cheeks, but there was no alternative but submission; since explanation would be impossible, and remonstrance in vain. The only expedient that presented itself, was to remain in the neighborhood of this inhospitable dwelling; where, himself unseen, he might be able to get a sight of Eugene, whom he thought likely was employed in out-door work. "He will surely return to the house at night-fall," said he to himself; but the day passed over, and darkness came on, without bringing the object he so greatly desired to see; and now, with spirits much abated, he was obliged to yield to the claims of hunger and weariness, and betake himself to the ale-house in the village we have before mentioned as being in the neigh-

borhood. He had no great difficulty in making the host understand what he wanted. He knew the names of bread and cheese in the Polish language, and showed them by signs that he wanted lodging. All was readily supplied; and having eaten heartily of the primitive fare they provided, he laid himself down on his hard pallet, and, worn out with excitement as well as the vigil of the preceding night, his sad and boding thoughts were soon lost in the benevolent oblivion of sleep.

The morning, however, awoke him to renewed care and anxiety. He resorted once more to the spot from whence, on the preceding day, he had watched the movements at the farm-house; but after the second day had passed, and he saw one after another of the peasants go forth to their field-work, and return in the same manner at meal time, and no one at all resembling Eugene among them, his hope failed him altogether, and he felt himself fairly in a dilemma.

Poor Felix! what was he to do now? Dare he begin his journey homeward, and leave Eugene in servitude, maintaining himself by the way on the money which belonged to his friend, and which he still retained? "No! I cannot do it, it would be wrong;" and so he resolved to wait a few days longer, in which he would seek him more carefully throughout the neighborhood; for he could not go

until at least every avenue of hope as to finding him should be closed.

Sadder than ever, he returned to the inn, where he found assembled a greater number of people than usual; for it was the time of holding annual court in that district, and the magistrate of the village made one of the party on this evening.

Most of the persons present were peasants, wearing upon their physiognomy those peculiar features which are supposed to be the impress of slavery, as marked by an extreme depression, or an apathy bordering on stolidity, such as our hero remarked in the household of farmer Woida, and which even the brandy, as it circulated freely, was not sufficiently potent to alter; and so our poor Felix entered almost unobserved, and sat down in a quiet corner of the smoky room unquestioned save by one.

That one was the village justice, who, being possessed of more intelligence, and a man of more observation than most of those among whom he lived, saw, notwithstanding the rude garb in which the boy was clothed, that he differed from the peasant herd whom he met with daily; and wondering what business had brought him to this ale-house, began to question him in Polish. Finding he could not understand him, he next enquired his name, and what his business was, in German; which language, although he spoke it badly, fell like

magic on our hero's ears; and seeming like sounds from home, at once awoke his boyish confidence.

Believing he had met a friend in one who could understand the speech of his country, he told his interrogator all he desired to know, that he was seeking his friend, who was in the service of farmer Woida; that he had given the latter twenty gold pieces as compensation for his companion's liberty, but that the money had been pocketed, without releasing the boy.

The justice, whose name was Petrowsky, gazed on our young friend as he was speaking, and his glance was indicative of suspicion only; he could not read the lines of candor and truth on that fair brow — alas! he knew too much of human nature; was too well versed in the tortuous ways of men, to give much credit to any tale; knavery and double-dealing were so constantly brought before his notice, that he lived in constant distrust of all; and believing that if one man was less overreaching than his fellow, it was for want of opportunity or acumen.

“That was a large sum,” said he, after a pause, “for a boy like you to have; where did you get the money you say you gave the farmer?”

“Dietrich gave it to me; he had hired Eugene to farmer Woida, and this money was to buy him back,” was the answer of Felix.

“If Dietrich made the bargain, why did he not

go himself, and release the boy from servitude?" asked the magistrate.

"Alas! he could not, he is dead," said Felix; "he was unable to walk for some time, from a cut he had received on his foot, and then took a fever, of which he died. The morning after he gave me the money, I found him dead in his bed. O, dear sir, Eugene is a nobleman's son, and if you will only tell me how I may find him, as soon as we get home, you shall be well rewarded."

"So then you do not know," replied the person addressed, "that the young knave ran away from his master a week ago? He could have been no great loss, methinks, since there was neither search nor inquiry made for him."

A thrill of horror passed over the heart of Felix at this intelligence. "Poor boy," said he, sadly, "what will become of him, a fugitive in a strange land; and how can I hope to find him, ignorant as I am of the language. The best I can do is to go home as quickly as possible, and tell his parents what has happened. His father will find means to have him sought out and restored."

"Stop, my boy! not quite so fast, if you please," rejoined the justice; "you say Dietrich died quite suddenly; and it sounds very strange that Dietrich should give a boy of your years such a sum. The old knave did not look like one disposed to be very liberal; and as I saw him for the last few

months, more likely to spend it in draughts of brandy, than give it away. No, no, I cannot believe the half of this."

The anxiety of Felix now arose to the highest pitch; he foresaw the delay the magistrate's suspicion was likely to produce; and he resolved to tell him candidly the whole history of what had befallen both Eugene and himself; but this did not make things any better. Owing to his auditor's imperfect knowledge of the German language, more than one half of what he said was not understood; and instead of lessening, only served to increase his already aroused suspicions; for the circumstances seemed too improbable to be believed.

"The thing must be looked into," said he; "when I go to the capital I will speak to the justice *Amtmann* about it. In the meantime, you must remain here in this neighborhood; and until the affair is settled, I will take you home with me, and find work for you on my farm. You may thank your stars you have found such a good place; for if you had told the tale I have been listening to to any other, it is most likely you would have been sent to prison; as it is, I have my own suspicions that, although very young, you are a crafty knave; and have either stolen the money from the old man, or helped him to his sudden death!"

A sudden chill swept over the heart of the poor

boy as he listened to this speech, and for a moment suspended the faculties of the living being. But the warm tide again flowed forth, and he was able once more to think. In the most earnest and touching manner he besought the man, who from his calling ought to be just, to let him return to his parents, who, he was certain, mourned him as dead; and protested his innocence with an earnestness that would have weakened, if not removed, the suspicion of any one who was not predetermined to condemn.

His prayers were addressed to a deaf ear. The justice demanded the rest of the gold; and having buried it safely in his waistcoat-pocket, he set out for his home, taking our young hero with him.

The boy followed his new and self-constituted master without uttering a word; but an overwhelming sense of isolation and strangeness took possession of his whole soul; and the feeling of desolation was by no means diminished on entering the long low chamber where the farm servants, of whom he was now to be considered one, were seated around a huge stove. They were not the only occupants of the filthy room; a number of chickens, who were roosting on some crossbeams above the fireplace, gave audible tokens of their vicinity, as well as testified their displeasure at the interruption caused by the entrance of strangers. A long table much cut and hacked, surrounded with cor-

responding benches, was the only furniture; and as our poor Felix gazed upon the faces of those who were seated or stretched upon the latter, he felt that neither sympathy nor assistance was to be expected. A dogged sullenness was the prevailing expression, with which a slight shade of scorn mingled itself, as they half raised themselves to look at the new comer, who was introduced to their companionship as "a knavish young German."

His courage was entirely subdued by this new misfortune; so near the long-desired end of all his wishes—already on the first steps of the journey which led to his home—and now all this hindrance effected by the impatience of Eugene, with whom, but for his flight, he might have been many miles on his way. But complaints and reflections were alike useless; he knew the want of patience to be his own besetting sin; and as he had set himself fairly at work to overcome it, he determined firmly to adhere to his purpose, although it was with a far less buoyant spirit than heretofore.

His duties in this his new home were by no means light; being the youngest, and not a native, much more labor was heaped upon him in consequence. He had to be up first in the morning, to do such work as the others did not like to do; to help in the barn throughout the day, and in the evening to take the horses that had been used in ploughing to the meadows, and there remain himself for more

than half the night on the damp dull flats, from whose unhedged boundaries he was to prevent the fettered animals from straying.

Greatly as he suffered, as the season advanced, under these increasing hardships, it was yet all as nothing in comparison with the pangs of disappointed hope. His heart grew sick as day after day passed over without tidings from Eugene, or prospect of deliverance from the wretchedness to which he was a prey. Sadly, and in silence, he crept about, scrupulously performing the tasks required of him; but buoyancy no longer marked his step, neither did light kindle in his eye. Hunger and weariness he had learned to bear; but the unnatural pressure on the youthful spirit was beginning painfully to tell. His food was of the coarsest kind, and so small in quantity, that it scarcely served to nourish the overtaken frame; yet he was satisfied with it. The one all-absorbing subject of regret, and longing to be with his parents, swallowed up every minor consideration, and made him altogether insensible of the failure of his health; and having coupled some of the horses, and fettered others, he would leave them to graze on such herbage as they could find; and, lying down on the ground, would bury his weeping face in the fading grass, and wish to die.

The rude beings by whom he was surrounded, in whose hearts all sympathy had been crushed by

the pressure of their own bondage, and taught to believe him a criminal of the worst kind, and only screened from justice by their master's compassion, extended to him on account of his extreme youth, noticed not his faded and dejected appearance; but as though they considered it an imperative duty, they aggravated his already scarce bearable burden, by their rude and unfeeling behavior, and adding new hardships whenever they could. The principle from which such conduct was prompted, gave him more pain than the acts from which he suffered. It was his nature to be kind and friendly to all, and his education had taught him the true courtesy of being affable to every one; and his loving spirit could scarcely brook the repulses he received from the stupid boors, whom he vainly tried to conciliate. But, as we have before remarked, no life is altogether dark — no condition altogether joyless. The smile of woman has cheered the most dreary waste — the prattle of a child has poured out comfort to many a slave; and so it was in this case. One flower bloomed in this wilderness; and like a fountain of sweet waters in the desert, of which the traveller drinks that he may not die, so was this slight treasure hailed as a sacred gift from heaven, inasmuch as it recalled the failing spirit from the verge of despair.

As he turned away, one day, more disgusted than usual at the surly demeanor of those with

whom he was obliged to herd, his eye fell on a little girl of perhaps eight years old; whom his master, as he stood giving directions, held by the hand. Her large blue eyes beamed forth smilingly from among her fair silken curls, and the sweet angelic expression of her face, involuntarily brought back the image of his dear little sister Pauline; and the imaginary likeness invested the little Polish maiden with an almost supernatural beauty, in his eyes, at the moment.

Mareska, for that was her name, was his master's youngest and most favorite child; and as she stood beside her stern father, it was hard to imagine that such near relationship could exist between beings so different in appearance. She was allowed unlimited indulgence; and so, taking advantage of her liberty of roaming where she pleased, in a few hours afterwards she was seen bounding over the meadow where Felix watched his grazing charge. These visits from the little wild bird, from this time, became more frequent, and were productive of happiness to both. To him, she came like a gleam of light from another world, and rekindled the almost extinguished spark of hope. Through her influence with her father, who never denied her anything, might he not obtain the liberty for which he pined? But, independent of these selfish considerations, her presence was a real blessing: and instead of weeping away the hours,

as he used to do when sent to the meadows with the horses, he found pastime in making little wind-mills, boats, and other playthings, out of wood, for her, and was fully repaid for his trouble by her expressions of wonder and delight. Her winning ways, her kind and gentle disposition, and the gratitude with which she received these expressions of his friendly feeling towards her, rescued life from that deadness into which it had been chilled by the want of sympathy, and prevented utter stagnation.

His master had at first amused him with promises of inquiring after Eugene, and sending letters in his behalf to Steinrode; but as, in the first place, he did not half believe his story; and in the second, when he found how easily his demands were satisfied, and how diligent and faithful he was in the discharge of his duty, he resolved to keep him as his servant; and therefore never wrote, as he had promised, to a friend he said he had in Sillesia.

In order to lighten the burden of his servitude, Felix had taken some pains to learn the language; and he succeeded so far as to be able to converse tolerably well with the little Mareska, from whom alone he received any intelligence of what was going forward, since all but herself avoided him. Her visits and childish playfulness, by awakening his own young spirit from the despondent mood

into which it had fallen, had rendered life more endurable, and he performed all that was required of him, steadily and without sullenness, in hopes that every day would bring the wished for intelligence from Silesia. But the sun that rose on his unfulfilled wishes, brought no fruition at its setting; disappointment succeeded to disappointment, and his master held him at too great a distance for him to dare to question. It was only to gratify his darling Mareska herself that she was permitted to hold converse with him.

In her childish delight, she had shown her father the toys Felix made for her; and as he sometimes had to pass whole days, which the others spent as holidays in the ale-house, or elsewhere, alone in the meadow, as he watched the horses, he worked the whole time at this employment; and so became quite proficient in this sort of rude sculpture. His avaricious master now began to calculate on a new branch of profit from his services, and so purchased a small collection of common paints, with which he one day surprised him; and as he at the same time released him from the performance of some of the most menial offices, this toy-making became a favorite pastime, rather than a labor. He pitied the boy, in his heart. His patient endurance of all that had been thrust upon him, awoke a softer feeling; and although too selfish to think of giving up one whose services were, although unjustly ob-

tained, so likely to be useful to himself, he relaxed much from his early severity, and conversed with him; at times deigning even to comfort him when he inquired if an answer had come from his parents. But at last, such questions awoke his impatience; and one day, as Felix ventured to interrogate him on the unpleasant subject, he fell into a passion, and answered this time without hypocrisy.

“You may as well give up inquiring, and be contented with your lot, which is no worse than that of thousands. You remain with me for the present, and I am sure you have nothing here to complain of. When you are grown up to be a man, and able to travel, I will let you go to your home; but now, such a thing is not to be thought of, since it is not proved that you had no hand in Dietrich’s sudden death; neither how you came by the money found in your possession — honestly, I cannot suppose; since if you had, you would not have run off without telling any one your master was dead. You may thank your stars that I picked you up, for if I had not, you would at this moment have been sitting between four walls; and no cock would ever crow to tell that the day had broke on which you were to set out for your home.”

Half broken-hearted by this cruel speech, Felix turned away to the field where the bondsmen were reaping oats (for he had now been many months

with his new master, and the ever changing seasons had brought seed-time and harvest in their turns), and took his place among them. His task was to bind up the cut grain into sheaves; and silent and weeping, he prepared to fulfil it. His distress was noticed by one of the men, who, until this time, had ever been foremost to insult and wound him; and Felix had been particularly careful to avoid him, not only on this account, but such was the dark and villanous expression of his face, that it made him an object most persons would seek to shun.

When the noontide meal was brought out, and the reapers had retired to a shady spot to eat it, this man seeing our young friend refuse his portion, approached him; and putting on an aspect of comiseration, began to condole with him on the hardships of his lot, at the same time hinting that he could propose a plan by which he might easily escape from his present servitude, and reach his home.

Felix, as we have said before, was by this time sufficiently versed in the Polish language to understand his meaning; he raised his tear-swelled eyes to his comrade's face, as if to see whether he was in earnest; and his whole frame trembled from excess of joyful surprise. Looking the question he dared not venture to ask of one he had ever

approached with dread, he was met by the following proposal.

"Listen to me now, and be prudent," said the boor; — "when you are sent to the meadows to-night with the horses, do not stop there, but drive them quietly to the forest which lies at the furthest side. Myself and one other of our men will meet you there; we will tie the horses in couples, so as to drive easily, and dash on to try our fortunes in the wide world. Help us only so far as this, and it shall be our care to see that you reach home safely, and no man shall touch a hair of your head."

"Steal my master's horses?" repeated the indignant boy, and the blush of shame and displeasure stole over his pale features as he spoke; "never! I am no thief. Rather will I die in my hard master's service, herding his cattle in storms and darkness until my life shall end, than stand before my parents as a thief and traitor."

"You are a fool," said the boor, with a scornful laugh; "you will only repay one great wrong with a less. The justice holds you in his service here against all right, because he finds you useful, and you cost him but little. If you were not such a block-head, you might be sure he had never written to enquire about your parents, since he is determined to keep you as his bondsman. Your money, whether you stole it, as he says you did, or not, has gone into his own pocket; and you will never

see your home again, that I promise you, unless you fall in with what I have proposed."

"If the justice has done me wrong, and deceived me about sending to my parents," answered Felix, "God has many ways by which, in his own good time, he can deliver me from this misery. You place a great temptation before me; but, believing as I do, you cannot entice me to do what I knew to be wrong."

"Well," exclaimed Lipinsky, bursting into a fit of passion, "you will repent your refusal, sorely repent it. To your own hurt be it, since we can accomplish our purpose without you. But look you sharp, my young man — if you breathe one word, or give a hint of what has been spoken in this conversation, you and my knife shall make close acquaintance, as sure as my name is Lipinsky. So mark that, you Dutch blockhead!"

This circumstance served greatly to increase our hero's embarrassment, as well as to augment his happiness. Notwithstanding the threat uttered by Lipinsky, he believed it his duty to give his master a hint of what was intended; and as the day advanced, and no opportunity for doing so presented itself, his uneasiness grew greater as the moments flew by. With his thoughts thus painfully busy, he pursued his work, mechanically and in his usual silence; but the very blood curdled at his heart, when on raising his eyes he encountered the dark,

revengeful looks of Lipinsky, who never for a moment ceased to regard him.

The time allotted for work drew to a close; but no chance of communicating with his master had offered; and sick at heart, with an aching head, and apprehending he scarce knew what, he saw the reapers prepare to leave the field. Lipinsky kept close beside him, and prevented a word from being spoken. He trembled as with a fit of ague as the unsuspecting owner of the horses came to him as he was busy with his charge in the stable, and bade him drive them to that part of the wide meadow which was in sight of the village, but most distant from the farm-house. This was the very spot desired by Lipinsky.

“What ails thee, boy?” enquired his master, as he noticed his great agitation; “have you been at the brandy sent out to the reapers?”

Felix turned to answer, but a threatening look from Lipinsky fettered his tongue. The poor youth trembled only the more as he answered, “I think, sir, you must let me stay home this evening, for I am very sick.”

“Pshaw—nonsense,” rejoined the master, laughing; “you are only a little drunk; it will soon pass off; or, I suppose, being a little lofty, you would prefer lying in a warm bed, to the clear heavens and cold earth. But there, take a couple of those horse-blankets with you, and you will

sleep like a prince. Now be off at once, and do not make me impatient."

Felix was obliged to obey; and as he left the barn-yard with his horses, he heard Lipinsky's scornful laugh, and understood its meaning. Words could not express his not only anxiety but perplexity. He justly feared that the base Lipinsky would fall upon him in the night, and rob him of his horses, and perhaps take his life; or if himself should boldly tell his master of the intended wrong in the miscreant's presence, the latter, who possessed his confidence, would deny the whole matter, and have him punished as an utterer of falsehood, desirous of supplanting him in the justice's favor, by showing his own zeal in his service.

The sun had not yet disappeared behind the dark boundary of the distant forests, and the air was calm and still. Felix, stretched upon the green sward, lay vainly meditating how he could acquaint his master with the plot, or save the horses himself. He dare not drive them to another part of the meadows, since this spot had been particularly designated. The sound of approaching footsteps aroused him; he looked up, and saw the little laughing Mareska beside him. She was fairly out of breath with the speed in which she ran over the wide fields; but her whole face sparkled with delight as she handed him a little white packet,

done up in white paper, which she carried in her hand.

“I have brought you something,” said she, addressing the boy; “something that will do you good, now that you are sick. See what a nice cake it is! and you shall eat it, because you have always been so good to me, and made me such pretty toys. But do not look so sorrowful as you did this morning, when you talked to my father; I will be good to you, if he is not, for I do not like to see any one sad.”

Felix patted her curly head; and as he accepted her cake, which it would have pained her to have refused, his eye fell upon the white paper in which it was enveloped, and, quick as lightning, a thought flashed through his brain. He had a piece of red chalk in his pocket, that he used for marking the wood from which he cut the toys for Mareska; and although the twilight was beginning to fall, he drew upon the paper, with hasty strokes, the scene in which he now was placed.

It was at this time that the drawing he had practised to relieve the tedium of Dietrich's cottage, came to his aid; and as he sketched his rude draught, he acknowledged the mercy that rules over man, fitting him for his destiny, and preparing him to meet all life's emergencies.

The horses feeding quietly — himself sitting on the ground — Lipinsky (who was easily made recog-

nisable by his peculiar cap, and natural deformity of one arm shorter than the other), creeping up behind him with his naked knife — these objects formed the foreground. In the distance, bounded by the forest, were some two or three men, with ropes and halters in their hands. Badly drawn, and with such materials, it was yet striking enough to show, at the first glance, it was intended to designate something in reference to the horses. What that was, Felix trusted to the sagacity, or rather to the proverbial Polish cunning, to find out. He scarcely doubted but that, through the little Mareska, the picture would find its way to the hands of her father; the only fear was that he might be absent. If he could but have written a few words, it would have been more to the purpose; but his master could not read German, neither could he have made the circumstance known in his own limited knowledge of the Polish letters.

A short time having served to complete the rude picture, he gave it into the hands of the little Mareska, who clapped her hands for very joy, and ran off at full speed to show her treasure; not waiting to hear his injunction not to let any one see it but *papinka*. He knew that, when at home, the old man usually amused himself with his little daughter, in the evening twilight, and that she never was repulsed; whether clambering on his knee, or hanging round his neck, she was a favorite

at all times, and in all places. The boy watched her receding form, as she bounded over the wide, level field, until the thickening twilight hid it from his view; then, leaning against the trunk of a huge willow that grew at the border of the meadow, he looked anxiously in the direction of the village, to see if any uncommon movement was taking place there: but all was quiet; no sounds were heard, save the whispering of the breeze, or the monotonous chirp of the cricket. Night sunk down upon the plain; and, bathed in the cooling dews, reposed in solemn stillness. A few kindly stars twinkled in the sky; but still, the darkness was so great that any one might have approached quite close without being seen. So calm and peaceful, so holy and pure was the whole scene, it seemed almost impious to suppose its enjoyment and quiet could be interrupted by fears or deeds of bloodshed; and yet our hero could not divest himself of the apprehension of lurking danger. Worn out with the labors of the day, he dared not yield to the drowsiness which oppressed him; and although, at times, nearly conquered by sleep, he yet manfully resisted the desire, by using every expedient he could think of to keep himself awake.

Midnight had come, and nought had disturbed its solemn hush. He began to think his fears had magnified the danger — that Lipinsky had only been tampering with his honesty, to see if he was

indeed the deceiver he had been represented; and he now began to consider whether he might not conscientiously yield to the burden of fatigue and drowsiness which lay upon him. His eyes closed; his relaxed frame, and wearied mind, released from the forced action he had imposed on both, had in another moment settled into sleep; but just then a rustling noise, unlike the whispering made by the breeze among the branches, aroused both, in an instant, to the full power of action. He listened—it was no deception, for it came nearer; he looked—no light was visible from the village; nothing to show that any one was on the alert to apprehend danger, or prevent violence. He placed his fore-finger within his lips, and gave a shrill, piercing whistle; hoping that, as the wind blew in the direction towards the village, it would be heard by some one there, and so awaken alarm, and bring help.

The rustling grew more distinct; and he had scarcely time to press himself close and closer, for concealment, behind the huge trunk of the willow, before two figures rose up, as if out of the earth, just beside him. A ditch ran on this side of the meadow, nearly to the village; and, creeping stealthily along its course, they had gained the spot almost noiselessly, and, had any one been on the watch, without being observed. They stopped for a moment, looking carefully around, as if for

some one; but the friendly trunk of the spreading willow, effectually concealed the watching boy from their notice.

“I thought so,” said a voice which Felix knew to be Lipinsky’s, although he could not distinguish his figure in the dim starlight. “I thought that stupid Dutch fool would pull his head out of the noose, and give us leg bail. He has certainly run off and left old Petrowsky’s noble horses for us to do as we please with. Well, it is all the better.”

As he spoke, he carefully approached the animals, and rousing them with as little noise as possible, endeavored to drive them into the forest, which, as we have said, skirted the farthest side of the meadow. Felix strained his powers of vision until his eye-balls pained him, towards the village, in hopes of the expected help, but in vain; none came. He was about to repeat his call of alarm, when suddenly one of the men uttered a loud cry of pain, accompanied with a volley of oaths. He had approached quite close to a noble black horse, the peculiar favorite of his owner, and was about to throw the halter over his head; but the spirited animal resisted the effort, and rearing up, struck out with his fore-feet, and wounded him severely on the ancle. As he lay moaning on the earth, Lipinsky came up to see what was the matter.

“Get up, you screeching fool,” he cried, after he had first vented his rage in a hearty fit of

cursing; "what business had you to touch that horse? the wild devil won't let anybody but his master, and that Dutch thief, halter him. Get up, I tell you, and quit your whining, or else you will have the farm-people here before you know what you are about; and so your head will be knocked off to keep company with your leg."

Lipinsky did not utter this speech without many interruptions, for the unmanageable horse gave him much to do to keep him at all in bounds, for although he held him by the halter, endeavoring at the same time to couple him with two others, all had become so frightened and unruly, that the effort to fasten them required more strength than the churl had at his disposal.

Felix was aware of his embarrassment, made more plain by his continued and murmured imprecations, than could be visible in the dim light; and taking advantage of the moment, he again gave that peculiar loud and shrill whistle, commonly used as a signal. This time, the sound reached the village, as at once he knew; for the dogs were awakened, and began to bark loudly. Lipinsky now became furious, and desperate.

"Betrayed! betrayed! and by that accursed Dutchman," he cried, aloud; and approached the tree beneath whose dark shadow Felix found protection. Anxious, however, to retain possession of the horses, now that he had got it, he still

endeavored to force them towards the wood, within whose shadow lay his only chance of safety, should the alarm have reached the village; but the nearer he drew them to the willow behind which our hero stood, the more unmanageable they became, starting back and rearing, being frightened by the man who still lay moaning on the spot where he had at first fallen.

Finding his hiding-place no longer safe, Felix now left it, and set off at the top of his speed towards the homestead; calling for help with all the strength of which he was master.

“I will stop your mouth, boy, if I can do nothing else,” muttered the treacherous vassal; as, with low curses spoken between his teeth, he let go the leather thong with which he was endeavoring to lead the unruly horse, that now, dashing wildly over the plain in full force of his recovered liberty, turned his ringing footsteps directly to the village. Lipinsky knew he would not stop until he had reached his master's dwelling. Not a moment was to be lost—and he resolved effectually to silence the boy, whose evidence must betray him; and ere Felix was many yards distant from the willow, his enemy was in full pursuit. Fleet of foot, and possessed of great strength, he soon gained rapidly on the young fugitive; and at last reached within a few steps of him. Felix half turned his head, and as he saw the murderous knife

gleaming in his upraised hand, he thought himself lost. His limbs trembled, but he sped onwards; but in his haste and anxiety turning somewhat from the path, he stumbled over the protruding root of a tree, and fell headlong on the earth; rolling, as he did so, into a slight declivity, or rather what was a partially filled-up ditch.

This saved him. His pursuer, proceeding with a velocity which he could not in an instant control, bounded past him; but almost instantly he turned, rejoicing that his proposed vengeance should be so easily accomplished on his young and fallen victim. He laughed aloud, and it sounded like the rejoicing of a demon, as he looked around for him; for he could not see at once where he had so suddenly disappeared; but this one moment decided our hero's fate. Lipinsky saw, and, knife in hand, again approached him; but ere he could stoop to drag the fallen boy forth, he found himself suddenly seized and restrained by a pair of powerful arms.

Felix still lay senseless on the earth, for he had received a slight contusion on his head, by which he was completely stunned; but he at length was conscious that some one was raising him up, and rubbing his brow and hands. As he opened his eyes, a number of persons were standing around him with lighted lanterns, the glare of which fell upon the dark face of Lipinsky; who now, bound

with cords, was carefully guarded by the strongest of the party. Three or four others were preparing to carry his wounded comrade to the village; it having by this time been ascertained that his leg was broken.

The plan of our young friend had succeeded. Mareska had hardly reached home, before she sought her father; and climbing up on his knee, nearly wild with joy, was in haste to show him what she called her "beautiful picture."

"O, father! only look here!" she cried; "did you ever see such pretty horses as these that Felix has drawn for me? Just say now, does not this look like our wild Black Raven, that always kicks when you go near him?"

Petrowsky took the picture from the child's hand, and laughingly, to tease her, began to criticise the manner in which it was executed; averring that if she had not told him what figure was intended for Black Raven, he would have supposed it her mother's black cat, that had been chased out of the pantry; and the boy lying on the ground, was to show that Felix was lazy and sleepy. Mareska, who was very much displeased, had not to endure this ridicule of her favorite very long; for he, remembering the boy's singular behavior in the morning, as he now looked at the rude picture, began to think there might be more meaning in it than, at the first glance, he had supposed.

He gave up his jesting, and examined it attentively. That something menaced the safety of the horses, he felt assured; and as he looked, his cold grey eye blazed up with angry fire, and instead of giving back the drawing to the child, he thrust it into his pocket. Mareska looked at him in astonishment. She could not think how she had displeased him; for, to her, he was always indulgent. She began to cry; but, contrary to his wont, to this he paid no attention. Without speaking a word, he put her down from his knee; and giving a sign to his brother, who was on a visit there that evening, that he had business with him, they left the room together.

A long conversation, which they held together in a distant chamber, was followed by the result we have described, and ended in the apprehension of the treacherous vassals, and the deliverance of Felix. The former were committed to prison; and when Lipinsky found that nothing else would avail, he threw himself on the clemency of his master, and made a full confession. He stated that he had tried to persuade Felix to fly with him; that he had promised to take him at once to his parents, if he would but lead the horses into the forest, from whence they could have succeeded in their plan, and with less danger than was promised by a nearer vicinity to the village.

As Petrowsky listened, he rejoiced not only in

the sagacity as manifested by the shrewd expedient of the boy, but his heart was touched by the faithfulness and integrity exhibited in his service. He felt ashamed that he had treated him so badly. His conscience now reproached him for having degraded one whom, if he was not a nobleman's son, as he represented himself to be, was at least no born vassal to the low rank of a serf; and he resolved now to do all in his power to have him restored to his home and parents. But as some little shadow of doubt still clouded the confidence he was beginning to have in Felix, he could not at once resolve to give him the money he had taken from him, and a safe-conduct into Silesia. No; he would go the next day to Wilna, and ask counsel of a merchant with whom he was well acquainted, in that city, and whom, he knew, was in a business correspondence with the wool-dealers of Silesia.

This person was to write at once, to know whether such a person as Baron Lindenburg lived at Steinrode, and whether he mourned an absent son; and if our hero's tale should prove true, tell him where to come and seek him. This was the reward — the best he could have — for his honorable conduct in his master's service; and with what heartfelt sincerity he thanked his heavenly Father, who had so kindly changed the tide of sorrow, in the space of a few days, to that which was, in comparison, a full flood of joy!

CHAPTER VIII.

"I am disgraced, impeached, and baffled here."

HOPE once more lent her purple coloring to our hero's prospects; light tinged again his life's horizon, so lately bounded by darkest clouds; and in the childlike confidence in which he now looked forward for a speedy restoration to his home, almost forgot that he had sorrowed or suffered. His eyes again beamed forth its smiles of boyish gladness, his step resumed its vigor, and performed every duty required of his master in the very spirit of cheerfulness. "Home and parents," was the constant burden of his thoughts; he spoke often of his homeward journey—listened to the sound of every strange voice and rolling carriage, with a beating heart; for he expected every moment to see his father, or some messenger with whom he was to travel, arrive.

With every day his anxiety became greater, but one after another passed by, yet no tidings came. The justice at length declared his intention of going to the capital of the province, where he regularly went to attend the yearly market, and bade Felix be in readiness to go with him; for

much as he grieved to part with him, the impression made by the boy's honorable conduct had touched him too deeply for him to wish to hold him any longer in unjust bondage.

Latterly he had exempted him from menial labor, treating him more as a son than a servant; and now had fitted him out in a new suit of clothes, to which the little Mareska had added her own bright and many-colored handkerchief, and by the united effect of both, his appearance was greatly improved.

It is true, no great taste was displayed in the color, texture, or fitting of the garments; and Eugene might have laughed to see him dressed in the fashion of the better sort of farmers' sons. Into that rude and remote province no Parisian modes ever had found their way; and our hero was only too glad to exchange his peasant garb of untanned sheepskin for one whose less primitive material gave him more the appearance of a civilized being.

He really looked the farm-boy well; and his plain clothing could not hide the refinement of manner received in his early training, and which subsequent hardships had failed to obliterate.

His kindling hopes were somewhat damped by the news he heard on his reaching the town. The merchant had written to his business friend in Silesia, who returned for answer that the posses-

sor of Steinrode was no Baron Lindenbug, or any other German noble, but a rich old Englishman, who had neither wife nor children, and was at present absent on a journey to Paris and London, and the servants, who were all English, knew nothing of the family who had lived there before, their master having had possession for nearly four years.

This, the writer added, was the simple truth; there was, therefore, no doubt but that the magistrate had been deceived by some artful boy, who wished to pass himself off as the son of a nobleman, for reasons best known to himself, since he, the Silesian merchant, himself had been at Steinrode only a few weeks before, as he was on a hasty tour through the country, the object of which was to purchase wool.

It was true, as far as it went; for the person, being taken up by the traffic by which he was to profit, made but few enquiries, and those of persons least likely to know, namely, English servants, who, not understanding the language, held no intercourse with the peasantry; and, with the characteristic exclusiveness of the nation to which they belonged, sought no companionship save among themselves.

The blood mounted high to our young friend's temples as he found himself looked upon as a deceiver; but he soon forgot all uneasiness on his

own account, in anxiety to know the fate of his beloved parents. What could have happened, that they had left Steinrode? He could not think of Steinrode as owned by any other than his father. Where now was the poor boy to seek them? He turned to his master, dreading to meet his cold eye, his distrustful glance; but the man lately so stern, had been disarmed of all suspicion by the open straight-forward course steadily pursued by the boy.

“Cheer up, cheer up, my little man,” said he, kindly; “I have no more doubt of your integrity than I have of my own existence. You have sufficiently proved to me what you are, and I will do all in my power to find out where your family have removed.”

Petrowsky's friend, the merchant of Wilna, who stood by and heard what was said, now added a word or two of his own.

“H—— is a heels-over-head sort of a body,” said he; “I am going in the spring into Germany on business, and can take Silesia in my way; and it will be as well to take this boy with me, as I must have some one. We can soon find out where his family have gone.”

This decision pleased the justice quite well; but to our poor Felix, whose hopes had been so highly raised, the delay seemed cruel. He thought to have been at home in a few weeks at the farthest;

but now, after an absence of more than four years, he must remain throughout a whole winter. Why could they not let him go to Steinrode himself? he would go on foot, "yes, and willingly, too, only let him set out."

As his impatience arose to the highest pitch, he thought involuntarily of what his mother had often said, as she reproved him for this his greatest fault, "Ah, Felix, my dear Felix, you will have to learn that patience in which you are so greatly wanting, in a harder school than the present." Tears swelled in his eyes, although he checked their overflow, as the thought arose in his heart; "O, my mother, your prediction has been accomplished by a sterner ordeal than any of which you could have dreamed."

"I have another plan," said Petrowsky to the merchant, "which I think you will approve. How would it be, if I would leave this boy with you here in the city? I owe a great deal to him, which I would willingly repay; and in the remote district where I live, I cannot do for him as I feel I ought. I am sure he is a gentleman's son; hard work is not what he ought to be set to; he has been taught from books; and it is a pity he should forget what he has learned. I wish that he should go to school. See, here is money to pay the expense; it belongs to himself, and I will willingly

add more if you will help me to accomplish what I design for him."

"I will help you all I can," answered his friend, "since you tell me he is so good a boy; I will keep him in my own house, and let him go to school with my son. If he was a wild, giddy-pated fellow, I would not do so; for I have too much business to attend to, to be able to look after boys that play pranks, and for which a large city like this offers only too much opportunity. I like the boy's looks, and think I shall not have any reason to regret having kept him in my house until we are ready to set out for Silesia."

"I am sure you will not," rejoined the justice; "but, Felix, what will my little Mareska say, when she sees I have left you behind?"

Felix answered only by a smile. Some regret he felt at the thought that most probably he should never again see that gentle little child, who had been his comfort and solace when he had no brightness in life, save what was bestowed by her true and artless affection. Yet he knew childhood has no lasting regrets, and she would soon forget him; and for his own part, no consideration could have any weight put in competition with his extreme anxiety to be at home. Great was his joy now, since he must remain, to be able to go to school. How far, very far, must he be behind his brother Herman, in his studies!

He kissed the hand of his once stern master, who promised, if possible, to see him often through the winter; sent many greetings to his little favorite Mareska, and looked after the retreating carriage of him who had changed from being his oppressor into his friend, with that indescribable feeling we have when we believe we have parted forever with one to whom we have long been accustomed, until it was out of sight.

He was now happier than he had been since the day Dietrich forced him from Steinrode; for he now enjoyed, in a family of some refinement, the comforts that belong to more civilized life than that he found in the rude and distant province which had so long been his home. Those to whom the word neatness is without meaning, as was the case in the hovel of Dietrich, or the better dwelling of the justice, can have no idea of the discomfort the want of it produces to those whose refined habits make it almost as necessary as the air we breathe.

His well-washed clothes (and clean clothes are a luxury), his good bed, and neatly swept chamber, turning back the tide of habit to what it had been at Steinrode, awoke a spirit of thankfulness; and cheerfulness once more laughed out from his eyes, and the bright glow of health mantled his cheek—he looked the Felix of other days.

Henry, the merchant's son, was an amiable boy, near his own age; and he found much more pleasure

in his companionship than he had ever done in that of Eugene. As he was most anxious to make up for lost time, he was so diligent at his studies, that his example served as a spur to Henry, who was a little indolent; a circumstance which caused the good merchant to rejoice that he had received him into his household.

As the winter passed over, and the spring-time drew near, he was selfish enough to wish to retain him; but he felt that it would be cruel to detain him by any pretext whatever; for that his soul was filled with longings to be with his loved-ones, was evident from the emotion he ever exhibited when speaking of them.

At length the snows melted away, and the sun, no longer veiled by wintry clouds, shone forth with benevolent warmth, and invited the approach of spring. Felix imagined how beautiful the mountains of Silesia — the fields, the park, the gardens of Steinrode would look by the time he should have reached them; and as preparations now were really making for their departure, he could scarcely control his impatience, or wait with moderate transport the arrival of the day on which they were to set out. At length even that was named, and but one solitary cloud hung over the brightness of the spirit with which he anticipated its coming — one brooding thought that disturbed the peaceful flow of his present joy. Had he been absorbed in

self, the fate of Eugene would have given him no uneasiness; but he was now so happy himself, that he could not bear to think of poor Eugene remaining behind. Where was the unhappy boy wandering, a fugitive in a strange land, enduring all the ills of poverty and misery? no doubt, if living, a slave to some cruel master, as himself had been.

He was standing near the door of the counting room one day, buried in such meditations, when Mr. Berndt came out, with a letter in his hand. The boy whose business it was to carry letters to the post-office was nowhere to be seen; and the merchant with manifest impatience began to call him loudly; but the lad did not appear in answer to his summons.

“This is too bad,” said he; “here is a letter containing money to be sent, and that fellow out of the way; time presses—here, Felix, there is nothing left for it but that you must run quickly to the office and put this letter in the mail before it closes.”

Our hero was glad to have an opportunity of obliging; and setting off at a round pace, he soon traversed the intervening squares, and was fairly out of breath when he arrived at the place; but he found the window so completely crowded by persons who had come before, and were impatient to be served, that he could not force his way to the

box in which it was the custom to deposit the letters or parcels to be dispatched.

Fearing for the safety of his important missive in such a crowd, he cautiously concealed it in the inner pocket of his vest; and crossing his arms over his bosom, as though to insure its security, he stood on the pavement near the door, enjoying the bright sunbeams that poured their invigorating warmth on all around, and woke a pure tide of life in all.

As he stood looking at the dial-plate of the old clock on the tower of the Bath-house, whose hands showed that the time for closing the mail was not near elapsed, he observed a slender, well-dressed boy, apparently belonging to the upper class, come from a cross-street, and as he slowly walked along towards the tower, draw a small gold watch from his pocket, on which he would often stop to gaze with great seeming satisfaction.

A few coarsely clothed, dirty faced children, who were noiselessly playing in his way, gave up their sport at his angry bidding, and stood looking at the beautiful bauble he held in his hand with looks of mingled curiosity and envy. This seemed to flatter the silly boy's vanity, and he resolved to enjoy the implied preëminence it gave him to the utmost. What was it that they were children, and of the rabble? it was a sort of homage implied to himself, and that is a tribute none ever refuse.

It was easy to see how inflated he was with his fancied importance, as, still surveying his watch, he came up quite close to the tower, and remained standing at the corner of the principal street, from which many others diverge, and lead down into narrow, dark, and intricate courts, inhabited only by the outcasts of society, or into dens where vice finds a secure hiding-place; there, looking up at the dial-plate, he began to set his watch to the right time.

At this moment a boy, something larger than himself, and most miserably clothed, darted like lightning from the point we have mentioned towards him, tore the watch from his hand, and vanished as suddenly as he had appeared down one of those gloomy alleys, disappearing as effectually as if the earth had opened to afford him a hiding-place.

A thrill of horror passed through the frame of Felix, and a cry of painful surprise broke from his lips. Without waiting one moment to reflect on the important charge confided to his care, but yielding to his natural impatient and impulsive spirit, he dashed after the young thief; and trembling with excitement and terror, stopped not until he reached a cluster of dilapidated houses, in a court whence all further procedure was forbidden. There he stood before the unwashed doors, without being able to discover which the boy had entered,

if, indeed, he had entered any: so quick was his movement, it was impossible to tell. The cry of "stop thief," had brought the multitude to the spot; but, after following a little way, they had turned off in another direction; and the gradually decreasing tumult gave evidence that they were either entirely off the track, or else had lost interest in the pursuit.

Felix stood, as we have said, irresolute; he was certain he had seen the boy turn down this street, but where had he vanished? the houses seemed for the most part to be uninhabited, and although himself had followed closely on the young culprit's heels, he had seen no door open to receive him. He was about to turn back, and had already moved a few steps backward, when a slight creaking, as though some one was cautiously opening a door, caused him once more to look round. He was himself rather hidden in the shadow of one of the houses, but he saw a head gradually protruding itself from the one next him, stretching forth as if anxiously peering about to discover if the menaced danger was past. Quick as thought, Felix rushed to the opening door; and as he forced himself through the small crevice, for the boy within contested his entrance by pushing against it with all his might, and pressing his hands within both his own, exclaimed, in a voice hoarse and

broken with emotion, "Eugene, have I found you, and in such a place!"

"Felix!" said the other, half frightened, half joyful; "Oh! but I am glad you have come! we can keep together now, for I am sure you will not leave me. O, what hard, hard times I have had! But come, let us go up to my room in the attic. Happily, old Simon is not at home just now, so I can tell you all that has happened; but I dare not be seen in the street, at present."

It now, for the first time, occurred to our friend Felix in what manner Eugene had made himself master of the boy's watch. Forgetful of his errand, forgetful of his own nearly accomplished hopes, he let the absorbing interest he felt in the unhappy boy's fate, stand in the way of his duty, and he inquired, anxiously—

"But Eugene, why did you take the boy's watch from him? do you know him, and was it only to plague him? If so, it was wrong. It is wrong to cause any one needless anxiety; and now come, let us go to him; you surely did not mean any thing but a joke, and will certainly give it back."

Eugene looked down at the black and rag-strewn floor, and a deep blush overspread his features. "I will tell you all, Felix," he said, after an embarrassing silence. "I will tell you all the truth, bad as it is; perhaps you can help me to escape from this vile old Jew, into whose power I have

fallen. Oh! I thought Dietrich hard, but he was kindness itself, in comparison with this cruel man. But come up to my garret; no one will hear us there."

Felix followed him in silence, his astonishment being too great for words. Having reached the miserable spot, a more filthy than which could not be imagined, which Eugene called his chamber, he commenced his story.

"On the day when Dietrich took me to the farmer, I felt that I would rather die than live in his service; but then, Felix, you know we cannot die just when we want to. But what a home that was, with scarce enough to eat, and such rough, hard work! I complained no little; but what good did that do, since no one heard me, or if they did, no one minded me? for they did not understand my language, and had no sympathy for me. Dietrich always gave us plenty to eat; but I was not going to work for this surly boor, and so I told him; but I found when I did not work I got nothing to eat, so at length I had to yield, and set to in good earnest. He was building a new stable for his cows, and I had to carry all the stone and lime. Think of that, Felix; I, a gentleman's son, to wait thus upon a rude peasant's bidding! At night, I had to watch the horses in the fields, to keep them from straying; and I wonder I did not get my death, by lying on the damp grass."

“I had as hard work as that,” said Felix.

“But the worst of all was,” continued Eugene, “the farmer’s son was the wildest, worst boy that ever lived; and who, when I complained, or cried, always mocked me. My hands swelled, and became stiff, from the unaccustomed usage they got; they pained me, and often bled; and yet this cruel young man beat me one day unmercifully, because I let a heavy dish fall, as it burnt me. Oh! but I was glad it broke, and spilled that horrid beer-soup! I had to bear his tyranny patiently, for if I endeavored in the least to defend myself, he complained to his father; and as he could not understand my excuses, I then got two whippings instead of one. I now wished for nothing so much as an opportunity to play this fellow a sly trick, just to provoke him.”

“You were wrong there, Eugene,” interrupted Felix; “it is commanded that we ‘stir not up anger.’” Eugene took no notice of the reproof, but went on.

“Yusuff, for that was the name of my tormentor, had a pigeon-house; and it was his greatest pleasure every morning to visit and feed his pigeons. Oh! but I would have been glad to upset the ladder as he mounted, could I have done so without being seen! I had seen a marten several times, in the evening, prowling about the pigeon-roost, and remarked how carefully Yusuff

had fastened the latticed door; for he had seen the murderous fellow, as well as myself. One night, I crept from the hay-loft where I slept, and opened the door which he had taken such pains to secure; and rejoiced to think what an outcry he would make in the morning, when he saw the destruction of his favorites. But as I was coming down the ladder, after accomplishing my purpose, old Bem, the watch-dog, began to bark, which awakened my master; who got up, and saw what I was about from the window."

"How could you do so?" asked Felix; "it surely did not serve to make your lot any better."

"No, that it did not, but a great deal worse; for the next morning, on seeing the havoc made among the pigeons, suspicion fell upon me at once; and after giving me an unmerciful beating, my master put me into a sort of dark cell, used for storing potatoes, and other vegetables, in winter. A pitcher of water, and some coarse, black bread, just enough to keep me from starving, was given me; and here I had to pass four dreary days in perfect darkness. Yusuff used to look in at me, sometimes, asking me how I liked my new lodgings, and always mocking or pelting me with dirt; while he stood devouring some dainty morsel before my eyes, only to make my mouth water, and my wretched fare seem more distasteful. I knew that when I should be released from this prison, my lot

would be harder than ever; and so I resolved to flee at the first opportunity. The day of my deliverance came at last. I saved my bread as much as possible, and filled my pockets with potatoes, which I buried under the hay, after I was permitted to leave my cell; I waited hour after hour for the wished-for chance to wander I cared not where, so that I was but free. On the evening of the second day, I was ordered to take the horses to the meadow, and remain there with them. My heart trembled with joy as I hid the stores I had saved, in my pockets, and in the breast of my jacket. Could it be possible, I thought, that freedom was so near? Yusuff followed me some distance, and amused himself by setting his dog upon me; it was an ugly, ill-natured brute, by no means friendly with me; and seizing me by my leg, bit me so severely that I screamed with pain. Yusuff laughed as if ready to kill himself: while his dog held fast to me, not letting go his hold until his master called him off. Ah! Felix; I now know how cruel it is to worry the defenceless! If I live to get back to my parents, I will never do it again."

"I am glad to hear you say so. But how did you get off at last?" asked his friend; who, absorbed in Eugene's narrative, forgot how time was passing, and that the letter entrusted to his care had not been mailed.

“I had no sooner reached the border of the wood, than I left the horses to themselves; and, plunging deep into the forest, I ran I scarce knew where. The hope of obtaining my freedom, as well as the dread of being overtaken, gave me new strength; and carefully avoiding villages, of which I saw several, I kept, during the greater part of the night, on the skirts of the forest. Towards morning, I came to a half-extinguished fire, kindled, probably, by soldiers, or some wandering gipsies, the night before; for straw and half-picked bones, lying about, showed that the party had not long left the place. I scraped the embers together, and heaping some dry rubbish upon them, I roasted my potatoes, and so had food to last me all the next day. Oh! how I dreaded being taken! On the third day, when I began to feel pretty secure, my provisions gave out, and I was forced to beg. It was indeed but little I received, and I scarcely know how I got to the neighborhood of this city, which I was not able to reach, being entirely exhausted. I threw myself down, in despair, under an oak by the highway; I wanted to die, for I did not care much what became of me. The setting sun, however, warned me that it was time to seek a better place to pass the night in, than on the road-side. I had not yet risen to proceed, when I heard the rattling of wheels. I looked up, and saw the queerest old carriage,

Felix! It stopped; and a still queerer old Jew (I knew him for one by his beard) got out, and came quite to the spot where I was lying. He asked me some questions in Polish; but as I never would try to learn that horrid language, I could not understand one word. I only shook my head, but I suppose he knew what that meant; for he then enquired, in bad German, 'whose boy I was, and where I came from?'"

Our young readers, perhaps, will wonder that so good a lad as we have represented Felix to be, should so far have forgotten himself, and his obligations to the friendly merchant, as to have neglected the delivery of the important letter. The hour at which the mail was to close had long since passed, and the packet still remained, unthought of, in his bosom. Strange that he who had so lately recalled, and repented of his fault, should so soon have forgotten the necessity of constant watchfulness; but such is human nature. Virtue thrives best under the pressure of adversity; and it is often sadly the case, that the moment that pressure is removed, its salutary effects vanish with it. The recollection of all that he had suffered on account of not attending to the admonition of his parents, was lost in his impatience to hear the rest of Eugene's adventures. The cure was properly begun, but alas! not perfected; and he now begged him to proceed.

“Although the appearance of this man was every way repulsive, his matted red hair, and the knavish twinkle of his eyes, filled me with dread; but oh! when he began to speak German, Felix, was not I glad? Don't you remember how I once despised it, and now—oh! how sweetly it sounded! I could not help telling him everything—I was so glad to have some one to talk to. I told him who my parents were, and how I had been carried off from my home; nor did I conceal where I had lived last, neither the trick I had played on Yusuff, nor our subsequent quarrel. A malicious smile distorted his ugly features, making them yet more hideous; and helping me to arise, he said, with disgusting familiarity—

“‘My dear young gentleman, make yourself easy; I will take you to your parents. Get up, now, into my waggon; I have provisions there—good bread and meat—and you may eat your fill, for you are weak from long fasting.’

“I did as he bade me; and diving down among some straw which lay in the bottom, he brought forth a basket containing eatables. They were good; and as I devoured them with an appetite made ravenous by long-continued hunger, the old waggon moved on, and when it was quite dark, we came hither. Next morning, all was changed. I had a miserable breakfast, and the horrid old Jew addressed me as his servant; he also told me that

he was a dealer in old clothes, and from this time forth it must be my business to brush them up, as well as to scour all the rusty brass and copper, of which there was a goodly collection, so as to make it sell. In short, I, a nobleman's son, was to do all this dirty work; and when I told him I would not—Felix, I wish you could have seen him! Dietrich's worst mood was mildness in comparison. If my breakfast was bad, the dinner was no better—mouldy bread, and raw onions; think of onions—vulgar things, that I never could bear. I tried to remind him of his promise to send me back to my parents—that they would reward him richly if he did so; but he only laughed mockingly, as he said—

““You do not think that I believe that tale, surely. You look like a nobleman's son, in your sheep-skin jacket! If you are, you have no doubt played them some trick, as you did at the farmer's where you lived last; so that most likely they are glad to be rid of you. When you found me, you found your master; and if you do not obey me, I will take you back to farmer Woida, where the right sort of reward will await you, for leaving the horses in the wood, from whence they strayed off, or were stolen; at any rate, the farmer has lost them, as I heard when I passed through the district. You are now in my power, and shall not escape, tricky as you are. I will keep you confined

as I would an animal, until you have become perfectly tame; then you shall carry the pack for me as I go through the country trading; for I am getting old and weak, and need a stout, cunning lad, like yourself, to help me.'

"You may imagine my dismay, as well as my rage, when I listened to these words, which showed me how firmly I was in the power of this hateful man. Oh! how I abhorred him! how I spurned the abominable food he would have forced me to eat! but at last, hunger obliged me to yield.

" 'I will readily give you better,' said he, one day, as he laughed at the faces I made in token of my disgust, 'when you shall have learned how to earn it. But you must be shown how, as well as to get yourself some good clothes. Let me hear what your nobleman's education has taught you.'

"With great reluctance, I told him what my course of instruction had been, but that lately I had been learning nothing but hard work; but he shook his head, and mocked at all I named.

" 'Such knowledge as that is too slim—it is not enough to coax a dog away from the fire,' said he, contemptuously; 'if you could cipher up figures quickly, and write a good hand, you could soon make something.'

"I promised him I would make the attempt; in short, I said I would do whatever he wished, rather than wear such horrid clothes as those I now wore,

and live on those offensive onions. Simon, for that was the old Jew's name, now brought me a whole pile of account-books, which he said I must copy to look like the originals. He waked me at sunrise, and kept me writing, or furbishing up old clothes, all day; but for the most part writing or working at figures, so that my fingers were fairly benumbed, by evening. But with all my endeavors, I could not please him; he found fault with my writing and calculations, caring little for the pain and trouble it cost me, saying it would have to be a great deal better done before I could hope to make much from it. But after this, I did not stick to it—it was entirely too much trouble; and I begged Simon only to give me some employment in the open air, for the confinement in this dull, filthy room, was utterly unbearable; and besides, I was really growing sick from breathing the pestilent odor issuing from the heaps of old clothes which were piled up, and surrounded me like a wall, so that not a breath of pure air ever reached me, as I sat at work.

“‘I will do well by you,’ answered Simon to my request; ‘but you must also do something for yourself; and if you are spry and industrious, you can soon save up a sum to enable you to go home to your parents; that is, if you are not telling a lie about them. You must, however, help me in the getting off of these old clothes; for I am a

poor man, and cannot afford to feed you for nothing. But if you won't, it is all one to me whether you ever get home or not.' 'Only tell me,' interrupted I, 'how I shall earn money enough to take me from here—I care not by what means I get it, only so that I have enough to carry me to my country and home.' Simon answered me—a-a-you see, Felix, a-a-I was so very hungry—and I wanted to see my parents so badly—you are so queer, Felix, I do not like to tell you—but I must. In short, Simon said that there were a great many rich people here in this city, who had more money than they knew what to do with; and they could very well afford to spare some of it to those who were poorer. But the country was a better place to begin such work—he would take me to the country—people there left their doors open, particularly kitchen doors, where he had often seen silver spoons and other such things lying about—there was nothing needed but to be sly and quick. all that I acquired in this way should be my own—he would save or sell it for me until I had a sum large enough to bear the expenses of a journey into Germany."

"Did he mean to teach you to steal?" interrupted Felix, starting up in horror, as Eugene, flushing with shame, stopped to recover his breath. "Ah, yes; and you have only too well profited by the lessons, as I myself witnessed scarce an hour

ago. How could you listen to, or follow such iniquitous counsels? how could you think God would favor the end to be obtained by such sinful means? My poor, poor Eugene, into what miserable circumstances have you fallen!"

"After a time, according to his promise, Simon gave me better clothes, and occasionally warm food," continued Eugene, his voice choked with sobs, and entirely cast down by the speech of Felix; "but he insinuated that I should have still more if I brought him something worth while. Pewter spoons, keys, and such things as I picked up—for, Felix, I could not bring myself to steal silver, although I tried."

"The principle was as bad in the taking of the one as the other," said Felix.

Eugene, not heeding the interruption, went on: "Simon said these things were not worth the trouble of putting away; 'You will have to stay a long time with me, if you do not make some better hauls than this,' was his mocking reproach, as I brought him a handkerchief I had taken. As I, looked from the window I saw that silly boy parading his watch; Simon had gone out, and forgot to lock me up as usual. 'Ah,' thought I, 'this watch shall be the means of helping me out of this horrible place,' and so I—Felix you know the rest."

"Alas! yes," answered Felix; and as he took

the hand of Eugene, added in a tone of entreaty, "but you will not keep the watch—you dare not; neither must you remain longer with this bad man who glories in teaching you to sin. Come with me—the good merchant in whose house I have found a home, will take you too. I will tell him who you are; and only think—in eight days we will both be in Silesia. I am too happy—and now come quickly—I have a letter here, containing money, which I must put in the post-office, and then we will both go to Mr. Berndt."

As he spoke he drew Eugene to the door of the small garret-room in which they had been speaking, admitting light only from a four-paned window, and filled with piles of old clothes and worm-eaten furniture; let the day be ever so bright without, there always, as Eugene had said, existed here a twilight gloom, as though the dark spirits that within its unhallowed walls had dreamed over plans of wickedness, had left a shadow on the spot, which even the sunlight could not illumine. It was a long and narrow chamber; and objects at the further end were entirely involved in misty obscurity—the fugitive from justice—the concealed assassin—might there be shrouded without suspicion, even in the presence of its occupants; and it now contained a listener, of whose vicinity the boys had no idea.

They had nearly reached the door of the dwell-

ing, when Eugene suddenly uttered a loud scream, for at that moment Simon stood beside him, and laid his heavy hand on the boy's shoulder.

“So, so,” he croaked forth in a hoarse voice, “I have spoiled a nice plot. A conspiracy, 'it seems; you were going to run away from me. Well, you shall go, but it will be to prison; that is the only place to hold young thieves. And as for you, my young preacher of morality,” he continued, turning to Felix, “you must stay with me in his place — you will have a fine opportunity of proving the strength of the foundation you have laid for your charming edifice. But in the first place, I feel it my duty to take care of your property whilst under my roof; and so I will at once relieve the possessor of his watch, and you, my young hero, of your letter, which you say contains money.”

He was a tall, thin, but muscular man, and as he spoke he seized hold on Felix, and notwithstanding he made stout resistance, he soon succeeded in ridding him of his packet; and dragging him back to the gloomy room which they had just left, and where Eugene followed, he flung him into a corner; and having locked the door, went laughing down stairs, his heavy tread on the stone steps ringing the knell of those hopes that one moment before had existed so brightly in the hearts of those he left behind.

There they stood gazing upon each other—those

unhappy boys, more wretched than ever, shut out from all human assistance, and without any chance of escape from that dark, forlorn, and noisome room, over whose portal it might have been written, "Hope comes not here!"

As the day passed over, and Felix did not return, the evening came, and brought no tidings of the missing boy, anxiety was awakened in the household of the good merchant, which was afterwards changed into suspicion. The boy had very willingly consented to carry the letter which he knew contained money, to the post-office; he had been seen near the door by a person who knew him; and it was equally certain he had not delivered the packet, since he had no opportunity.

The old distrust of Felix being a deceiver began once more to take possession of the merchant's mind—it was so easy to believe, that, now so near the contemplated journey into Silesia, where his imposture was sure to be made known, he had deliberately taken himself off, now that he had a large sum of money in his possession.

But all search (and nothing was left undone,) proved fruitless. Felix had been seen running down the suspicious street with every mark of uncommon anxiety; but where he found, or was likely to find admittance, no one could even conjecture.

Vexed to be disappointed, and mortified at being so successfully deceived by one whom he had

begun to love so well, Mr. Berndt set out by himself on his journey into Silesia, and gave up all intention of enquiring after the Lindenburg family, firmly believing that none such existed; and, besides, he hated to speak the name, inasmuch as it served only to remind him how he had been outwitted.

The police, however, indefatigably endeavored to trace out our young friend—advertisements appeared in the papers—notices were pasted upon the corners of the streets, describing his person, and denouncing him as having committed a robbery—all of which he happily remained ignorant. It was a knowledge which would have added greatly to the pains of his imprisonment—bad enough to be shut up in such a place as he was, and in the power of such a man as Simon, the Jew, without this.

Under these circumstances, this roguish personage concluded it his best plan to absent himself for a time from the city, himself having been frequently an object of suspicion to the police; but although his tumble-down looking dwelling had so often been watched as the place where many a deed of darkness was perpetrated, this wily sharper conducted his movements so cautiously, that he never could be detected. With his small, twinkling eyes, blinking incessantly to the right or left, he went in and out of his narrow street with the

stealthy pace of a cat. No one heard his footsteps until he was close beside them; and many averred that his tall, but crouching form cast no shadow. When danger came so close as to be dreaded, his occupation as a pedlar gave him an excuse for leaving the city, which he did; driving on his successful trade in some remote province, where he was not known.

When he opened the letter which he had taken from Felix, he found the enclosed sum very considerable; and concluding from this, as well as the reward offered for his apprehension, that the search was not likely soon to be relaxed, he resolved to be on the safe side, and not only retain the merchant's money, but receive a ransom for the boys when he should have taken them into Silesia, to their parents; for he no longer doubted Eugene's having told him the truth of his being a nobleman's son, since Felix, whom he was too shrewd an observer to believe a knave, had corroborated his statement. Exulting, therefore, in the chance of money-making which had so unexpectedly arisen, he amused himself by watching the officers, whilst they watched himself. He shut the boys up, so that they could not escape (for his dwelling afforded more places for concealment than those we have mentioned), secreted the watch and money taken from them in a vault in his cellar, where, notwithstanding his seeming poverty, rich treasure was concealed; and

taking up his bag, he slung it over his shoulder, and sung out "old clothes!" in every street in the city.

As no one had been seen to enter the dwelling, for Simon had means of egress known only to himself, the police, deceived by the old man's apparent indifference, relaxed much of their vigilance; thus giving him the opportunity he wanted, to remove his prisoners beyond all reach of discovery. For many days, he had hidden them in one of the dark nooks of the garret before described; but, anxious as he was for their removal, he did not dare attempt it until he saw that the coast was perfectly clear.

A night, so wild and stormy that it had driven all who had homes to seek their shelter, and sufficient to excuse the messengers of the law from pursuing their discovery, even if they had made one, was the time chosen for this purpose. His old waggon had been got ready in the morning; and, entering it alone, he drove out of the city, only to return by another way, where he left it at a place, and in the care of one to whom himself and his movements were well known. He had a brother-in-law who was a cabinet-maker, and who lived in a distant province on the very borders of Russia; and his taking two boys there could create no suspicion, even if the police advertisements had reached that remote spot; since it might be sup-

posed that he intended to place them as apprentices to the business. Little of the truth could be gained from themselves, since Eugene could never learn to speak Polish so as to be understood; and although Felix succeeded much better, it would avail but little, since out of the family of his brother-in-law, who was a German Jew, they would hear little except Russian spoken.

He was not a little surprised, however, when Felix utterly refused to leave the garret-chamber. The boy, perfectly assured of his own integrity, had no idea but that others were so also. He had no doubt that search would be made for him as soon as missed; but never dreamed that he would be suspected of theft. All the time of his imprisonment, he had listened with characteristic impatience to every noise that approached from the street; believing it some one coming to procure his liberation. He therefore, as we have said, declared his resolution not to leave that house, or the city, without making an outcry that should be heard; but for this the hoary villain was prepared. He drew the advertisement, containing a description of our hero's person, and offering a reward for his apprehension, from his pocket, and with a smile of malicious meaning, opened and handed it to him to read; stating, at the same time, that Eugene also was watched by the police for having stolen the watch; and that his removing them at

this time was truly an act of intended kindness, and to prevent both from meeting the punishment threatened by the law; which, as they had no witness to prove their innocence, they would be sure to suffer.

With what anguish our unlucky hero listened to his statement! The blood chilled round his heart at the reproach thus publicly cast upon his fair fame—denounced and followed as a common thief—what availed either resistance or resolution? He buried his face in his hands for a moment, as if in mute despair; then, mastering, by a powerful effort, the emotion that attended the destruction of the long-cherished hope of being restored to his home, now so nearly accomplished, he rose calmly, and told the Jew he was willing to go wherever he might choose to lead. Simon smiled, and replied, “that he was glad to see him at last brought to reason; that he had better be as quiet as possible, since the least noise might bring the police upon them, which must end in the ruin both of Eugene and himself.”

Taking his trembling companion by the hand, our hero mechanically followed his wily conductor down a dark back stair; and leaving the house by a different door than that which they had entered, they soon gained the street. Unheeding the storm which was furiously raging, Simon led his charge through little-used thoroughfares, and narrow

alleys, groping his way through the darkness, but still threading his winding course with the coolness of one accustomed to peril. They gained the spot where he had left his waggon, without interruption, and bidding the boys get in, he took the reins in his own hands; when, driving off at a rapid rate, the city was soon left behind.

Eugene gave way, as usual, to a violent fit of sobbing. Felix mourned over the repetition of his fault, which had once more led to such untoward consequences; and uttering no word of complaint, he yielded to the destiny which seemed to pursue him, and rendered now more unbearable by the severity of his self-reproach. Poor boy! he had learned some hard lessons, but there were some harder ones yet to come. The world's teachings are ever severe, and they end but with life.

We must now part company, for a time, with the unhappy young travellers, and leave them to battle with the fate that awaited them; although further than ever from the accomplishment of their wishes, and though their hearts grew heavier as each mile increased the distance between them and their Fatherland. But we leave them in company with the hoary villain who had them in his power, to journey once more, through rain and storm, over the vast wild plains of Poland; and go back to Steinrode, where we have not been for a long time

CHAPTER IX.

“Hold fast thy truth, young man; leave age its subtleties,
And gray-haired policy its maze of falsehood.”

THINGS were greatly altered in the old Lindenburg Castle, since we left it to follow the fortunes of Felix and Eugene. Lady Lindenburg had at first borne up wonderfully under the supposed death of her darling boy; but the not finding either of the bodies, created an uncertainty in her mind, producing a nervous irritation that greatly affected her health. She felt that had he sickened and died in her presence, she could have borne it. She would have wept a mother's tears, as she yielded the precious dust of her child to the earth of which it was a part; she would have bowed to the stroke of bereavement, coming from the hand of a Father who never chastises but in love, with the submission of a Christian; but she could not divest herself of the idea that he might be living, since they had no proof of his death — living far away from her, and most likely suffering.

She knew that gipsies had sometimes stolen or decoyed boys away — that they were carried to remote provinces, or put on board of ships, to

serve as sailors — and she oftentimes, when the winds blew furiously from the giant hills, and wailed or blustered round the walls of the stout old castle, would think of her vanished boy, and imagine him as swinging from the giddy masts, or tossing on the raging ocean.

Baron Lindenburg had left nothing undone to find out if the boys were still in life. Advertisements were put up in all parts of the kingdom — messengers sent every where — and large rewards offered for their recovery, or at least some clue to their fate.

All proved vain ; and himself and all the family, except the mother, at length gave him up as dead, and wore not only outward mourning, but were oppressed with the real sorrow of heart, and such as could not easily be laid aside.

Felix, more lively and playful than his brother, was missed by all—the servants not less than those more nearly connected ; and when the first Christmas after his departure came round, no festivities marked the season — it would have recalled too vividly and too painfully the contrast between the present and the latter.

The servants at first remarked that an unusual gloom and restlessness hung about Amadé, the servant of Lady Von Grosse ; and as they talked the sad occurrence over beside the kitchen fire, at length began to notice that he would not join in

any of their conjectures as to the sudden disappearance of the boys, hooting at Dolly's belief in the Rubezahl, but oftener maintaining a moody silence.

In less than a month, however, his term of service had expired, and he had started for his own country. Since then no tidings of him had been heard by any one at Steinrode.

At length Lady Lindenburg's health became so seriously affected, that her physician declared change of scene and air to be necessary for the prolongation of her life — her health, he doubted, was lost irrecoverably. This was sad news for her family to hear; they could not bear the thought of parting with her; but her husband, who deemed no sacrifice too great to be made for the preservation of such a valuable life, resolved that there should be no separation of the domestic circle, until made by the irrevocable mandate.

A sojourn of some years under the milder climate of Italy was, therefore, decided upon; and circumstances turned up most unexpectedly, to furnish facilities for their carrying it into speedy execution.

While his heart was aching under the pressure of grief occasioned by the loss of his son, and foreboding a gloomy issue from his wife's failing health, Steinrode — the beloved Steinrode — had lost its beauty and its charm for him; and an eccentric Englishman, generally, although mis-

takenly, considered misanthropic, having more money than he knew what to do with, had "come to Germany," as he said, "to buy an estate, improve the condition of the peasantry, and get rid of his own countrymen."

Travelling round for this purpose, he was pleased with the appearance of Steinrode; and having heard, in the course of his questioning in the village, of the proprietor's going abroad with his family for an indefinite time, he made a liberal proposal to purchase, which the Baron, scarcely taking time for consideration, hastily accepted.

Lady Lindenburg was greatly distressed at the idea of forever parting with Steinrode, so long the home of the Baron's ancestors, but her husband urged, that to them, it never could have the charm of other days. Felix, who would have taken his place when himself was no longer able to fill it, was gone forever; and Herman, who wished, and was capable of entering upon a learned profession, could not leave his books, to be troubled with farming.

"At any rate, wife," he added, "you cannot recover in this climate, and I care not where I live so as you only are spared to me."

Lady Lindenburg had nothing more to say. The bargain was concluded, the old servants were either pensioned off in the village, or recommended to the notice of the new proprietor; and Steinrode,

the old feudal hold on whose tower the Lindenburg banner had floated for generations, passed into the hands of an alien and a stranger. But when the time for departure came, it was not without great feelings of regret that the Baron prepared to leave the home of his ancestors. Every spot was visited, even to the one where the last trace of his son was seen; and it was only these sad recollections which, by darkening the remembrance of former joys, gave him perhaps more strength to overcome the longing he sometimes felt to return, after he had left his native place.

Until his arrangements were concluded, for it took some time to complete them, the family resided in the capital; but they had left Germany long before Felix exchanged his rude home with Dietrich for Petrowsky; and when the latter made interest with Mr. Berndt to enquire after them, no one had been applied to who knew anything of where they had gone. Unwillingly as the children one and all left Steinrode, they parted with even more regret from Ehrenfried, who, since the loss of Felix, had become their favorite playfellow.

Steinrode had been sold, furniture and all, just as it stood; and when the juvenile portion of the family were about to depart, they had all something to leave in the peasant boy's charge. The Englishman was a bachelor; and, as the halls were no

more to echo with the merry laugh of childhood, all their school-books, toys, dolls, and so forth, were carefully put away in a small store-room at the very top of the house, the door of which was locked, and the key given to Ehrenfried, who was to remain with the queer old Englishman at the castle. With many tears Pauline gave her darling canary-bird back to the care of his former owner; her tears, however, were only tears of regret at parting — she knew full well that charge of carefulness was unnecessary; Peepy would be well taken care of.

The Baron, not less for the boy's own sake, than on account of his lost son, Felix, who had so dearly loved this interesting peasant child, had placed a small capital at safe interest for his use; and not contented with this act of benevolence from himself, had made interest with the present eccentric possessor of Steinrode in his behalf. Rich, childless, and liberal, his heart, although a little warped, was not steeled against the claims of real merit. He listened to the Baron's representations, and when he looked into the clear blue eyes that so ingenuously met his own gaze, he had insight enough into human nature to see that they were true.

He took the book-loving boy under his protection, made him his constant companion, instructed

him himself, which he was well able to do, for his own store of knowledge was large and varied; and he had his reward, since he was twice blessed. He found amusement and a companion for the time he would else have found tedious, and had a solid satisfaction in witnessing the success which attended his efforts to instruct. The sequel will prove how greatly the subject of their joint care deserved the confidence of both his benefactors.

CHAPTER X.

“Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
Spot lovelier far, to him, than gardens famed
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned
Aleinoas, host of old Laertes' son.”

WE must now pass over a space of eight years, which intervened since the day on which Felix and Eugene had disappeared, in such an enigmatical manner, from Steinrode. Much as the habits of the indwellers were changed, different as were the forms that moved about performing the various duties of steward, gardener, or farm-bailiff, the outward features of the place remained the same. It was summer, and the evening sun shed a flood of golden light on the hill-sides, where thousands of wild flowers basked in the genial rays; the yellow grain already ripening to the harvest, waving gracefully in the soft breeze, and like gentle undulations of the sea, gave back his brilliant coloring. As far as nature was concerned, it was the same Steinrode of other days. All spoke of peace, plenty, and quiet. The milk-maid sung her rural ballad, as she stood, pail in hand, waiting for her patient charge; and the Ranz de Vaches

rung, not unmusically, through meadow and grove, from the lungs of the lusty herdsman, as he drove glossy-skinned cows in rank, and kept time with his step to his own music. The whole scene was in perfect keeping—a calm picture of rural enjoyment, so shut out from the noisy world, so apparently peaceful, that no one would suppose sorrow had ever been there.

On the road which led from the village to the park, and close beside the gate which opened to it from the garden (the same which we endeavored to describe to our readers in the early part of our narration), was seen a tall, fine-looking youth, with a small bundle on his shoulder. His dress was plain, and rather rough, but it could not conceal the lithe, active play of his muscles; his form, straight as a young Hercules, was cast in nature's most perfect mould; his bright, fair hair, clustering around his leather cap, partly shrouded his fair temples; and health had painted roses with her own hand, upon his downy cheek. Young and handsome as he was blooming and active, the marks of deep emotion were visible in his noble features; and as his hand rested on the latticed gate, it was evidently seen to tremble. At length he opened it, and entered, walking slowly over the clean gravel-walk, and stopping once or twice, stood looking towards the castle, with tear-moistened eyes.

The gardener had one or two assistants busy in another part of the garden, who had not marked his approach; and meeting with no hindrance, the young wanderer sought not the regular entrance, nor the principal walk; but like one well acquainted with the place, sought out particular spots of interest, and still advancing by the further side, at length stopped beside the broad pool upon which the evening sun was playing. Its pure mirror shone like a sheet of burnished gold; and as it reflected back his beams, as if there ought to be no light without a corresponding shadow, the overhanging shrubs that bordered its sides, mingled their dancing shadows with it; and some lively fish, springing up from below, dashed the water-drops around; and they sparkled in all the beauty of prismatic coloring, as they fell back into the stream, and once more mingled in its quiet flow. Beautiful as the scene was—the distant but plainly distinct hills, the fruitful fields, the gay hues of the garden, and the clear, pure sky, all speaking loudly of nature's loveliness, and her Creator's goodness—the young traveller bestowed on it but little of his attention; his dark blue eyes were fixed upon an arbor covered with branching vines, beneath whose shade two persons were seated.

One was a large man, who, with his back toward the stranger, was bending over a book which he held in his hand; whilst the other, a youth, appa-

rently about our traveller's age, leaned over a map spread out upon the table before him, and which he seemed to be studying very intently. The stranger, with increasing emotion, approached slowly, and came quite to the party without being observed. The bloom on his cheek grew yet more vivid, and bright tears trembled in the large blue eyes. The reader was too intent upon his book to be interrupted by the slight rustling he made. He advanced, still unseen, until within a few steps of him; and letting fall his wanderer's staff, he stretched forth his trembling arms, and exclaimed, "My father!"

The person addressed turned round hastily to see who was the intruder; and the features of one who was a perfect stranger, gazing in mute wonder, met the eyes of the disappointed traveller. A loud cry of painful surprise broke involuntarily from the lips of the latter; but in the same moment, and ere a word could be uttered either in explanation or reply, the youth who had been busy in examining the map, sprung over the table, and threw himself into the still extended arms of the stranger.

"O, Felix! is it yourself?" "Ehrenfried!" cried both, at once; and after a long separation, we find these early friends once more united. But what pen can paint the joy of either? Could the grave have opened, and given up its dead, Ehrenfried's surprise would not have been greater. It

were hard to tell what feeling predominated, as he lay in that close embrace, and felt the warm breath upon his cheek. The tangible evidence given by the pressure of those arms that he had so long believed were cold in the grave, was almost too much, and he was near fainting.

He soon, however, recovered, and a hasty explanation followed, which served to quiet the apprehensions of Felix, who was scarcely less moved than his friend. Ehrenfried introduced him to the new master of Steinrode, who gave him not only a cordial welcome to his old home, but such news of his parents as was calculated to gladden his heart. With feelings almost of bewilderment, he found himself treading the old stone-paved halls of Steinrode. There were the same wide stairs—the never-forgotten family clock, that told the time of his birth, and measured his early and happy hours—ah! it chimed not less regularly whilst he was absent and suffering, and it would do so when he had departed on the journey from where none ever return. Seated in the same room, where long ago we saw them assembled, and listened to their childish voices, Felix almost wondered whether or not he had been dreaming. Had he really been with Dietrich, and in Poland—Petrowsky—Simon—Eugene—all the scenes through which he had passed, flitted rapidly before his mind's eye, like the fleeting shadows cast by a phantasmagoria.

He could lay hold on nothing. The furniture was all the same—the polished oaken tables and chairs—his mother's curtains—the bright stove, too, was there, recalling the pleasant winter evenings; but where were the loved ones who once clustered round it?

Supper was served, but he was too happy to think of eating; but by the time it was over, he had grown calmer, and was able to listen to the account the kind Englishman gave him of his family. Four years ago they had returned from Italy; and since then had lived in the capital, where Baron Lindenburg occupied an important place at court. A few weeks ago, he had written to the present possessor of Steinrode, in which he mentioned that his wife, who was still very feeble, had been seized with an unconquerable longing to see Steinrode once more; and he had resolved to gratify her by setting out as soon as he heard his English friend would not be displeased by a visit. At the same time, he enquired if he knew of any estate in the neighborhood which was to be sold, for there was nothing his family so much desired as to be in that neighborhood again; and as for himself, his greatest wish was to spend his last days in the retirement afforded by country life. He was weary of courts, and the bustle of the capital; and to find a spot that afforded him a view of the scenes that he had loved to look upon in his

early days, he would be willing to pay almost any price.

As the old man concluded his narration, although the advancing twilight had already begun to shroud the earth in her gray mantle, Felix took up his pilgrim staff, and prepared to set forth on his journey to the capital, but his host held him back.

“No, no,” said he, “you do not stir from Steinrode this night, that you don’t. I am a queer old man, and have always had my own way as well as my own notions; and I have got a plan in my head which will please you all. What that is you shall soon know; for the present, all you have to do is to remain quietly here for a day or two.”

“Ask any thing of me but that, dear sir,” answered Felix, still holding his staff and placing his cap on his head, “any thing else I will do; but think, after an absence of eight years, how could I linger even at Steinrode, when I knew where my family are to be found—my parents who must believe me dead? No, I must go.”

“And travel all night and be sick, and lay by to-morrow,” returned the Englishman, drily. “Boy-like, boylike; but it won’t do. I see I will have to tell you more than I intended. Your parents are to be here on the day after to-morrow; and as they have left the capital some days ago, and are now on their journey, it would answer no good purpose for you to set out on foot, since, not know-

ing what road they intended to take, you might miss them on the way."

Felix still stood irresolute—he knew not how to remain, and the old man went on. "Boy, if you are as hard to be persuaded to do wrong as you are difficult to manage in this case, you will yet prove a treasure to your family. So it seems I shall have to tell you more than I wish to; for I love to have those little mysteries. That is one of my hobbies. Your father wishes to buy a country place; he shall have Steinrode again at the same price I gave him for it. It is a pleasant home, but I don't like a tame life; I must travel; and so I have determined to make a voyage to America, taking Ehrenfried with me. Now all you have to do at present is to give up to my whim, since by doing so you will likely see your parents sooner than by taking your own way."

Felix found himself obliged to yield, which he did very reluctantly. He deemed every moment wasted in which he was not on the road which led to the capital and his dear ones; but when Ehrenfried added his entreaties, and spoke of the preparations they two would make on the next day; this prospect, as well as his own fatigue, which was every moment becoming more powerfully felt, decided him to conquer his characteristic impatience.

He retired to rest at an early hour, but he could

not sleep—it was the same room, the same bed he had shared with his brother Herman; and busy thought, overmatching his worn-out frame, ran riot in the feverish excitement caused by the agitating circumstances through which he had passed on that day.

He thought over what the meeting between himself and his parents would be—what his brother and sisters would think were he to start up suddenly before them—did they really believe he was dead, as Ehrenfried had told him they did—ought they not to be first written to, in order to prepare them for so great a surprise? But no; a letter could not reach them before they would have arrived at Steinrode; and, although thought rapidly succeeded to thought, and plan to plan, he still remained undecided. In vain he turned his pillow again and again to cool his heated temples, and invite sleep. The balmy god, with a caprice peculiarly his own, and unlike the world, flies from the couch of joy—he would not obey the summons of our hero, and midnight found him still feverish and wakeful. Memory held her page open before him, and he must read it whether he wished or not to do so.

“This will not do,” he said at last; “I shall be unfit to bear the meeting myself if I keep on this way.”

He arose from his bed and went to the window,

through which the moon was shining, making every object in that dear old room distinct, chronicling the record of the times gone by so vividly, that it almost seemed to him he had never been absent from it. He raised the sash and looked out on the landscape below, which, bathed in her silver light, lay spread out as if in holy quiet before him. No breeze rustled in the branches — the shadows cast by the trees lay motionless on the ground, the dim distant outline of the hills, the fringed border of the dark forest, and the hedged fields with here and there a cottage chimney rising visible in the clear light — all those objects on which his fancy dwelt whilst a slave in a strange land, were now in reality before him. No cloud was in the sky — no sound disturbed the universal hush; and pure, calm, and holy as it all looked, it could not fail to exert an influence on his excited frame.

He gazed long, and as he did so, soothing came; for to a lover of Nature her preachings are never in vain. He indeed recalled the childish light-hearted feelings with which he had last regarded them, and contrasted with his present experience. Shadow and storm-clouds had since then passed thickly over his life; but now was not the repose, so beautifully typified by the scene without, to follow, its enjoyment to be greatly enhanced by the remembrance of what he had endured?

And after all what was it he had been made to

suffer? hardships, it was true; but at worst, only man's experience. His teachings had begun while he was yet a boy; and he had surely had nothing to complain of, since it enabled him to enter upon the important duties of life, and undertake them for himself with a prudence and foresight belonging to maturer years. He regarded them, sustained and delivered as he had been, as earnest of the favor and kindness of his Heavenly Father, to cure him of the besetments of his own evil nature, and to teach him that patience which is "necessary to do good works."

He had not only been taught by his severe trials that man "in this world must have tribulation," but had been visited in the same dark season with the promised "peace."

He was no longer in dreams, but in reality, at his much-loved home, waiting the arrival of those who were his earthly treasures. Joy and gratitude filled his heart—he felt he had nothing to complain of—God had done all things well, and he now saw the wisdom of his providence, although at the time the "affliction was grievous."

Alone, surrounded only by the influences which speak to the soul and not to the ear, he felt the Mighty presence. He knelt on the same spot where his childish prayers had been uttered, and tears flowed forth profusely — tears which, issuing from the purest spring of man's nature, cannot

fail to soothe. They did, and angels registered the accompanying petition; for his later life proved that the boon he had asked for on earth, was ratified in heaven.

After a time he returned to the couch he had left, and the tears he had shed proved as a "bath and balm to the soul." Sleep came now without much urging to his pillow; and the sun rose bright above the hill-tops, and his senses were still locked in balmy slumber, when Ehrenfried knocked at his door, and bade him rise, for breakfast had been waiting for some time.

"Ah! my young traveller," said his merry old host, "you have let the sun beat you by a long way; had you set out for the capital, as you intended last night, you would have, no doubt, reached there ere this time, since you are such an early riser. But come, you look pale, you are to be excused; some breakfast will set you up again; here it comes. I do not know," he continued, "how you will like our English toast and coffee, after your Polish gritz and bacon, or beer-soup with a bit of toasted cheese running round in it. The Poles are a very good sort of people, as I found out when I travelled among them years ago; but they lord it a little too hardly over the peasants. We don't do so in England."

Felix smiled as he took the chair placed for him at the table. "So, sir, you have tasted gritz and

bacon; there is worse food in the world than that."

"So there is, my boy, so there is," he answered; "I am glad to see you are of the right sort; not ready to find too much fault with the bridge, although a rude one, which has carried you safely over. And the rough Polish fare to which you have been accustomed has done you no harm; it must be wholesome, if not very palatable, since it has given you a complexion that any fair lady might envy."

"He always had it," rejoined Ehrenfried, laughing.

"Well," replied the host, "it is still saying much for it or the climate, that it has not spoiled it; but come," he continued, as he placed a large slice of toast on the plates of each of the boys, "eat heartily, for I intend you shall work to-day. When the Lindenburg family left Steinrode, they took nothing away with them; Ehrenfried knows all about it; I want everything fixed as nearly as possible as it was when they were here, even to the school and toy room. I know many people think me odd; but I have my own notions. Now arrange everything as you know it used to be, so as to have all ready for their arrival to-morrow; for I expect not only your parents, Felix, but the whole family to take possession."

The boys joined heartily in the occupation which was to create so great a surprise; and to Felix, whose mind had dwelt constantly on Steinrode as it looked when he left it, it was an easy task to direct what arrangements were to be added to those already existing.

Nevertheless, they had much time to spare; and to fill up the hours that would else have dragged heavily, the young friends visited all the spots where years ago they had played together—the garden where Eugene had ordered Ehrenfried to pull off his boots (how changed their conditions now), the grassy bank where the latter had sunk exhausted in his search after Melanie's bracelet; and lastly, they went to Petersmiehl, and the cottage where Ehrenfried had lived with his mother. The windows were closed, and the garden overgrown; it looked slovenly and ill-kept.

"She don't live there now," said Ehrenfried in answer to his question, "but at Steinrode; farmer Shultze turned her out of it three years ago. You know she rented it from him until his son Robert, out of malice to me, turned his father against her by some falsehood he told; she was greatly troubled at first, but it turned out all for the best. Since that time we have both lived at the castle, where she has the charge of the dairy, and I act as the English gentleman's secretary, when I am not at school."

“He seems to be a very kind man,” responded Felix.

“He is,” returned Ehrenfried; “but I have you and Herman to thank for all the good that has happened me. Who could have thought that the kindness that brought you to Petersmühl, and led you to give books, and teach your own lessons just as you had learned them to a poor, sick, and ignorant peasant boy, should have borne such valuable fruit? If you had not awakened me to such a love of learning, and a desire to gain knowledge, I would have been a poor ignorant boy still; and with all the industry I could use would only be able to provide my mother a living of the poorest sort; and now she has every comfort. See how many blessings have sprung from your kindness.”

“But what has become of Robert?” enquired Felix, interrupting him less from curiosity than embarrassment at hearing his own praises.

“O, that is a sad history,” answered Ehrenfried. “Farmer Shultze purchased a large property a few miles from here, and died almost immediately after. Robert was not contented to live as his father had done, but gave up the management of his affairs to a steward, who turned out to be an unprincipled man, and betrayed the poor fellow into the hands of sharpers, who soon ruined him. From the time he became of age he had been advised to be careful of this man, and to undertake the management

of his own affairs; but he was deaf to all his friends could urge; and so, never having loved books or intellectual pleasures, and being without employment wherewith to fill up his time, in order to dissipate the hours that hung so tediously upon him, he began to frequent the low ale-houses in the village, where he formed companionships that led him to the practice of every species of vice. A love of gambling brought him to the lowest grade of human depravity; for, finding himself completely impoverished, and having had no education by which he could obtain an occupation, even that of the poorest paid teacher, he found himself entirely without resources. As to bodily labor, he deemed it too far beneath him; and, reduced to actual want, he at last sunk so low as to join a plan of house-breaking, proposed by his desperate associates. An attempt was made by them to rob the dwelling which his father had purchased, and he had so carelessly let slip from his possession. He joined the undertaking, and one of the party turned traitor, and all was discovered when just on the point of succeeding. They were all taken by the police, and now——”

“And what has been his fate?” interrupted Felix, impatient to hear the conclusion.

“He is no longer in this world,” was the answer; “he died in prison, a year ago. It seemed a merciful interposition of Providence; for if he had not

suffered a public execution, he would have been sentenced to the galleys for life."

"The way of the wicked is hard," said Felix, thoughtfully; "and they that enter into companionship with the ungodly, find their path leads unto death. I have much to tell you of what I have seen and suffered since last I trod these well-remembered paths; and although in the midst of the wicked, beset by snares and temptations, I bless God I was preserved from becoming like those who would have led me astray."

"Tell me, Felix, tell me all," said Ehrenfried; "I am impatient to know how you and Eugene were spirited away, and what befel you in that barbarous province of Russian Poland."

"Not now," answered Felix; "I am at present too anxious; every moment I expect to see the carriage that brings my parents. I start at every noise like a nervous maiden. It is a long story, and will take time to tell; let us go back to the house at present; maybe some tidings of the visitors may have arrived."

Ehrenfried assented. They returned to the castle, and found Mr. Norman (for that was the name of the English gentleman,) reading a letter.

"They will not be here until the day after tomorrow," said he, in answer to the boys' look of enquiry; "but be patient, you will have more time to prepare for the meeting."

“Cannot I go some miles on the road they will travel, and so see them sooner? Every minute seems an hour, and every day a week, until I see those dear faces once more — those faces that for more than eight years I have beheld only in dreams.”

“It is so uncertain which way they will take,” said Mr. Norman, “that you by going forward may miss them by the very means you take to hasten the meeting. No, no; remain quietly here until they come; you will but have the more time to make Steinrode look as it used to do eight years ago. They will be ready to suppose they have been asleep and dreaming for that length of time, when they find Steinrode unchanged, and Felix here. We know there are fabled sleepers, and visions of enchantment; and as these Silesian hills belong to the very realm of superstition, they may be ready to think some mischievous goblin has been playing them a trick.”

“My parents are too good Christians to be superstitious,” said Felix, laughing; “but I was a true believer in all good Dame Spiller’s marvellous stories of the pranks of the Hartz demons. I do wonder what the old lady will say when she sees me!”

“That the Rübzahl has brought you back the same as he spirited you away,” rejoined Ehrenfried, entering into the merry mood of the others;

“but come, Felix, let us go to work; and while we are waiting for the arrival, there will be time to tell and hear your story.”

They took up their caps, and left the castle; and as they wandered on the same paths, and through the same fields over which he had so often bounded in the frolicsome time of his boyhood, as he went with his brother to visit Ehrenfried, he related to the latter the adventures through which he had passed, in the greater part of which we have already followed him.

CHAPTER XI.

“We bear our fortunes in our own strong arms.”

As our readers lost sight of the young adventurers on the stormy night when the old Jew, after carefully closing them up in his waggon, drove cautiously out of the city, so we will take up the thread of our narrative from that point. Closely as he had been watched by the police, for a length of time, the crafty old villain concerted his plans so well, that he was once more able to elude their vigilance. It was a night of horror; and none but a murderer seeking his victim, or a criminal flying from justice, would have dared its fury. The thunder rolled, but its voice, although like that of a threatening spirit, was unheeded—the lightning played in forked streams—and the wildly raving tempest threatened destruction to all exposed to its rage; but the hoary old sinner, in whose soul a continual tempest ever fermented, cared not for the strife of elements, or convulsion of nature. As though he knew himself under the protection of some evil power, whose potent rule could chain the storm, and fetter its wrath, he drove his affrighted horse stoutly forward, uncaring

for the pealing thunder, yet straining every listening nerve to distinguish noise of pursuit; and looking back, to try if in the blinding flashes he could discover any pursuing forms. None were in sight, and with each mile his confidence increased. After midnight, the storm subsided; and although dark and angry clouds still obscured the sky, the moon broke out at intervals through the mist; and by her struggling light the young travellers saw that they had left the high-road, and were again entering on a rude and savage district.

As each mile disclosed some new feature of barbarous wildness, that forcibly reminded them of scenes they had passed through with Dietrich, their young hearts sunk within them at the idea of once more encountering the horrors of a remote province in Russian Poland, which they had no doubt was at this time their point of destination. As the day struggled into existence, and they could, by watching the course of the clouds, which were driving wildly before the wind, determine to what point of the compass their course was steering, their feelings were little short of despair. Eugene, as usual, was loud in his lamentations; but Felix, tortured by self-reproach, uttered not a word. He looked out on the bleak and seemingly interminable plains, varied only by patches of heath, and on which, at times, a brilliant spot of sunlight rested, as it broke forth from the driving clouds; con-

trasting, by its vividness, with the sombre hue that rested on all else around; and as it would vanish as rapidly as it had arisen, was only too true an emblem of the bright and evanescent hope that had so lately illumed the dreary waste of his own cheerless existence.

But youth is ever hopeful. The very alternation of light and shadow cast upon the face of nature by the drifting cloud and flying sunbeam, awoke a better spirit in the youth's heart. "The sunbeam," said he, "is hidden by the cloud, and the darkness, in its turn, is driven away by the cheering ray. So it is in life, at least as I have found it; all is not brightness, neither is all gloom. I will hope on, and hope ever;" and with such thoughts he began at last to feel comforted.

The wind still swept by in wintry gusts, but its shrill whistle was unheeded; and wondering what could be Simon's intention, or to what place he was taking them, he gave himself up to more mature deliberation than was to be expected from one of his years; surveying the land-marks, and noting all conspicuous objects on the sterile plains over which they were passing, in the prospect of such observations one day aiding them in effecting their escape. They travelled over those flat plains for many days, when one evening, after objects became indistinct in the advancing twilight, their conductor drew up before the door of a house, at one end of a

village, which Simon informed them was the residence of his brother-in-law, the cabinet-maker, with whom they were to remain.

“At this place,” said Felix, in his relation to Ehrenfried, “we had not the best times; we were kept constantly at work in the shop, and up late and early. This was harder on Eugene than on myself; for he was always averse to doing anything, and every day became more discontented. I comforted him as well as I could, and helped him out of many unpleasant circumstances, into which he had fallen by his own perverseness. From day to day, I looked for Simon’s return; I knew he had gone into Silesia, and I was assured the reward he hoped to receive, when he found our story true, would induce him to come back that way, and take us to our homes. Horwitz, our new master, also waited anxiously for news from his brother-in-law; but as none came, and month after month passed away, he at length placed us in the shop as regular apprentices, declaring that we must serve the full time, as he was unable to support us except on such terms. He was a very different person from Simon, and by no means unreasonable in his demands. He exacted a steady obedience, but was as upright and honest as his brother-in-law was knavish; and whilst he represented his own inability to send us into Silesia, explained that it could do us no harm to learn a respectable trade,

since it would at last furnish us with the means to travel homewards, if Simon should fail to return with tidings.

“So, then, for three tedious years we had to serve a pretty tough time of apprenticeship; my heart was often heavy enough; but I had the good fortune to gain my master’s confidence and favor through some slight services I rendered him, and finding I understood figures, he made me his book-keeper. You know I always loved to draw. I made some designs — designs from the remembrances of Steinrode — for him on paper; and as the pieces of furniture made from those patterns were approved, and opened a new source of profit, Horwitz made me several presents of small sums of money, and promised to relinquish the last year of my apprenticeship. O, how happy I was to hear it. Besides, I could, by working at odd hours, earn something for myself; this I carefully laid away every week; and counting it over, found I would soon have enough to carry me into Silesia. But, now anxious as I was to go home, I could not bear to leave Eugene behind. I entreated our master to give him his freedom; but I could not prevail upon him to do so. He said ‘he had nothing but trouble with him; he was self-willed and lazy; and he would not release him from his last year, unless for an indemnifying sum.’

“Indeed, I did not much wonder; for it was

true he had little right to be indulgent and kind. Eugene had not at all improved, but remained as untractable as ever; not only disobedient and negligent of his duties, but tried, by the playing off of some petty tricks on members of the household, and every other means, to provoke and irritate his master. The money that he received for carrying home furniture, he spent as regularly for some unnecessary dainty; and in spite of all I could urge, would not take the least trouble to conciliate his master, or lay anything up to bear the expense of his hoped-for journey.

“One day as I was searching for something in an unused part of the house, my eyes fell upon an old cupboard that stood almost out of sight in a corner; although nearly dropping to pieces through age and decay, the quaint and old-fashioned carving attracted my attention. I imagined it might once have graced the hall of some barbarian king, in some by-gone age; and having always a reverence for these old chroniclers, I begged my master to let me repair it, for I thought it well worth the trouble. Laughing at my enthusiasm, he consented, saying I might ‘have the old thing for my trouble; that it had been in that corner ever since he could remember, and he had heard his father say it had been many generations in the family, although none of them knew how it came into their possession.’

“Although it was a holiday, I began at once to work upon it. In the meantime, Eugene sat at the shop window, looking moodily out into the street. I begged him on this morning, as I had done often before, to get at some work at spare times to help himself a little. I told him, too, how willingly I would work if he would aid me, in order to raise the requisite sum to pay Horwitz for the release of his last year. As it would require a long time for me to do so, since he had nothing laid by, neither would assist, I deemed it best for myself to go at once into Silesia, to seek my own and his parents, and they could at once send the necessary sum. With this proposition he was greatly discontented.

“‘No, indeed,’ said he; ‘I would rather wait until you can gather the necessary sum; you have the knack of earning money, which I have not; so do not talk of going. How do you think I could stay in this horrible place alone?’

“You may think, Ehrenfried, how this behaviour vexed me; what pain that selfishness which thought only of its own desire, and cared not for my longing even to sickness for home, gave me. I thought of a passage I had once read, ‘that selfishness, like the sand of the desert, drank up all, and returned nothing.’ I made him no answer, but began to work on my old cupboard, while he still sat idle, and gazing out of the window.

“But I must now tell you that, with the consent as well as advice of my master, in the early part of my apprenticeship I had written twice to my parents. To the first no answer came; the last came back with these words written on it: ‘No family of that name at Steinrode—left many years ago.’ Not altogether discouraged, I then wrote a third, and directed it to aunt Angela, who lived in the capital; but this too was returned, with the tidings written also on the cover, ‘that the lady addressed had been many years abroad, perhaps in England, most likely in Italy; but her residence in either country was unknown.’

“There was now nothing left for me but to wait patiently for the term of my apprenticeship to expire, and then set out myself to seek my family in whatever part of the world they might be sojourning. I therefore gave up writing, as I was indebted to my master for postage money;* and to a boy without means of making any, as I was at that time, it was no easy matter to repay.

“One day, as I was very busy with my plan of repairing the old cupboard, I observed on one side a singular piece of carving, which did not match with the rest, and of greatly superior workmanship. I wondered how it had ever come to be

* Postage is a much more important item of expense in Europe than in our own country.

placed there ; and the idea struck me, that by removing it I could use it more advantageously by ornamenting some other piece of furniture with it. I accordingly got my tools, and began to endeavor to loosen it ; but it was so tightly imbedded in the wood, that my efforts were vain ; I could not move it an inch. I called to Eugene to come and help me ; but his ill-humor had not gone off, and without turning his head from the street on which he continued to gaze, he answered sullenly,

“ ‘ Indeed I will not do any such thing ; I work enough other days, and I am not going to take any unnecessary trouble on holidays.’ ”

“ I said nothing more to him, but continued to work away with all my strength at the piece of carving, which seemed to be made of iron rather than wood. At length by a powerful effort, just as I contemplated giving it up as a hopeless job, it yielded ; and at the same moment a concealed drawer flew open, and a large sum of money, in rouleaux of gold and silver, lay before my eyes. Eugene, awakened from his indifference, now stood near me ; and as he surveyed the treasure with the gloating look of a miser, he exclaimed, joyfully, ‘ See there, Felix, we are rich now without any trouble, or wronging any one. With this money I can get my freedom ; and now leave off working at the old cupboard, and let us go home !’ ”

He made a movement towards the drawer, as

if to grasp the gold, but I caught his hand and held him back.

“‘Without wronging any one?’ I repeated quietly; ‘do you think it your right to take possession of this money? It does not belong to either you or myself.’

“‘Now, Felix,’ rejoined he, ‘I hope you are not going to be such a fool as to tell this secret to our master? the treasure does not belong to him, I am sure.’

“‘If not to him, much less to you,’ said I in answer: taking up the rouleaux of gold out of the drawer, I put them in my pocket, and took my way towards the family room, where I knew I should find our master. Eugene, by this time in a towering passion, sprang after me; and seizing me by the collar, endeavored to possess himself of the money. His attack was so sudden, that it cost me some trouble to defend myself.

“I kept him at bay for some time; but his anger getting the better of his prudence, he snatched up the knife I had been using from the work-bench where I had thrown it, and pierced me in the side. A little pinchbeck watch, which my master had given me, broke the force of the blow, and saved my life. The stroke was not deep, but the wound bled profusely; yet only for the watch, and my life would have been the sacrifice, and Eugene forever unhappy; since the murderer’s act

would have been the consequence of his own rashness only. I bound up the wound myself as well as I could, for Eugene was of no use to assist; as sincere in his repentance as he had a few minutes before been furious in his anger, he now lay rolling upon the floor, reproaching himself with what he had done, and bidding me do as I pleased with the money—'he wanted none of it.'

"I left him to complain and weep as long as he chose, and went to our master; who was greatly pleased with what he called my honesty, as well as the receipt of the money. He told me the old cupboard had been possessed by his family for many generations; and it was only on that account that he had not broken up the unsightly old thing years ago. He supposed the gold must have been hidden in the drawer, for safe-keeping, in the time of the 'Thirty Years' War;' those lawless days, when persons were obliged to secrete almost everything, to secure it from the violence of marauding soldiers. Of course, the money belonged to him, but he was no niggard; he took one of the rouleaux, and giving it to me, wished me 'good luck!' I accepted it without hesitation; and going back to Eugene, who had risen from the floor, and was again seated at the window, apparently in great trouble, I laid the whole of it in his cap.

"'Now go to our master,' said I; 'pay what he asks as the price of your last year, and to-morrow

morning we will pack up our traps, and set out for Silesia.' Eugene stared at me in mute wonder; then, throwing his arms around my neck, he embraced me warmly for a moment, and without uttering a word, rushed out of the house.

"I did not attempt to follow, nor question him; but having no doubt that he would do as I advised, I walked down into the village, and purchased two portmanteaus, dreaming of nothing else than that we should both set out on our journey—the next morning. I was greatly astonished, on my return, at not being able to find Eugene. I asked the children—they did not know where he was; I applied to Horwitz—he had seen nothing of him. It was evident he had not gone to him with the money I had given him, as our master was at home the whole day. As the day advanced, I became more and more uneasy; evening fell, but the truant did not return. I proposed to Horwitz that we should seek him, and he consented; but we both had to return without having found him.

"Horwitz went to bed; but, uncertain what I ought to do, I could not sleep; I therefore resolved to sit up awhile, in hope of his coming. After an hour or two had passed, I heard a knock at the door. I knew whose it was, and hastened joyfully to open it, when Eugene, with flushed and inflamed features, stood before me. But you may imagine how I felt when I saw that he was beastly drunk;

he laughed wildly when he saw me, and when I enquired where he had been, he answered, in all the pride of drunken insolence,—‘What business is it of yours? Do you think you are to be my master, because you gave me some money that you earned very easily? O, it has flown away as lightly as it came! See there! my pocket is empty, and I am under no obligation to you.’

“A sad foreboding arose in my heart, of which the tidings of the next day fully verified the truth. Instead of going to seek our master in his own house, Eugene went to a miserable ale-house in the suburbs (it seemed he was in the habit of frequenting it, unknown to me); on this holiday occasion, he found many apprentices there; and among them, one haughty boy, rather richer than the rest, and being the only son of a doting mother, he had money at all times, and for all purposes. This youth had never liked Eugene, and now, in a mocking manner, asked him ‘if he would not treat the company to wine; as he had always given himself out to be a nobleman’s son, he ought to show, by his liberality, that he really was so. Eugene, too hot-headed to treat this silly speech from one half-drunk with the contempt it deserved, called loudly for wine, tossed a piece of gold pompously on the table, in payment, and boasted that he had plenty more. He pledged his companions, and drank deeply; the wine mounted to his brain,

and he began to look with great interest on a party of strangers, who were playing cards at a table near him. He saw how easily large sums were won—why might not the same good fortune be his? Then he could have enough to spend upon pleasures he had not known for a long time, and without the striving and grinding of perpetual toil. He knew the game——ah! Ehrenfried! you remember how we used to tell you of the Hausdorff children driving the time away with playing cards—and when the strangers at last invited him to join their party, he was only too willing to accept of the invitation. At first, he won considerably; and his spirits rose as he contemplated the sum that lay beside him. What I had given him was to pay for his freedom—the little we both had would only serve to defray the expense of a journey on foot; but Eugene had a spirit above this, that is, when it could be helped. How much better, and how much more suitable it would be, for the heir of the Von Grosse family to go home in a post-chaise; ‘his father never travelled with a knapsack on his back, like a wandering tinker, and he would not disgrace his family by doing so.’

“He staked more than all he had won; and with beating heart, and trembling hands, watched the course of the cards. He lost—and as part of the money I had given him to pay for his freedom, was gone, with that desperation which always

marks the gambler, he determined to risk what yet remained, in the hope of winning back that which was lost. With feelings of increasing anguish, he staked one thaler after another, until he had emptied his pockets of every farthing. The players, seeing he had nothing more to lose, now rose up from the table, and declared the play was ended. To this, however, Eugene would by no means consent; he insisted that they should continue the game, so as to give him a chance of retrieving his losses; he said he would go home for more money, which he could easily get by applying to me.

“The players then began to inquire who he was; and finding that he was only a cabinet-maker’s apprentice, became very angry; they reproached him with having deceived them by representing himself as the son of a nobleman, so that he might thrust himself into better company than that to which his birth entitled him; and this, as may well be supposed from our knowledge of his character, provoking an insolent answer, brought on a contest which ended by their throwing him out into the street.

“It was not until the evening of the next day that Eugene was sober enough to give me these particulars. Ashamed of his behavior, and sincerely repentant, he begged me no longer to delay my journey into Silesia; to find his parents, if possible, and send his father to liberate him. I

considered this the safest, as well as the shortest plan; and so, shouldering my knapsack, I bade farewell to my master, and to Eugene, who stood looking after me with a face expressive of so much sorrow, that I was once almost tempted to return, and stay to work out the time demanded for his ransom. But prudence prevailed over sympathy. My heart grew lighter as each mile lessened the distance between myself and Steinrode; and as I saw the sterile plains of Poland gradually exchange for the cultivated fields of Germany — as the glorious mountains of my Fatherland shut out the view of that inhospitable and despotic region where I had so long been made to bear the yoke of slavery, I cannot tell you what I felt. It was joy — pure, unmitigated joy. I was proud of having been born a son of Teutonic forefathers — I gloried that mine was the land of learning and invention — and this high tide of enthusiasm did not at all subside until I saw the Silesian hills. The Giant's Crest, with his mantle of eternal snow — old Zobtenberg, with his cap full of storms — there they were, looking just as they had done in the happy days of my boyhood; but my spirits sunk when I thought of those who had looked upon them with me — ah! where were they? I journeyed on; I recollected hamlets and fields — I hailed the towers of Steinrode from afar — there was the forest, the brook, and the park; but although I met many

forms wearing the peasant dress once so familiar, there was not one face whose lineaments reminded me of any one I had ever known. You know the rest, Ehrenfried; and now, perhaps you can give me some clue whereby I can find the Von Grosse family; for in my own happiness, I must not forget that Eugene is still in slavery, and waiting for his father to release him."

This was a question which neither Ehrenfried nor his patron could answer, and Felix was obliged to await the coming of his family; they alone, it was likely, knew to what part of the country they had withdrawn. In the few months they had lived in this neighborhood, their conduct had not been such as to create many friends; and so, when they left, no one cared to enquire whither they had gone, or how they fared.

Mr. Norman treated Felix as if he had been his own son, bidding him consider himself at liberty to do at Steinrode just as he had been used to in by-gone days; and the latter was rejoiced to find in Ehrenfried, now grown to be a man, the same unassuming, gentle spirit, he had so loved him for when a child. Entirely unspoiled by his prosperity, and the indulgence shown him by his eccentric patron, Felix found him even more worthy of the friendship he had formed with him in earlier days—need we say it was again warmly renewed?

But with all this happiness around him, his heart

pined for the arrival of his family. In the morning, he would be sure that ere that day's sun had sped his course, he would have been folded to his mother's heart; but day after day passed, and still they came not. The sickening pang of hope deferred began to weigh heavily upon our hero's heart; and it was only by being kept busy in carrying out the plan of his singular host, namely, to make everything look as much as possible as they did when the family left Steinrode, that he was able to control his impatience to be with them. It was indeed no small relief to his nervous longing for their arrival, that he was obliged to direct everything; the furniture must be placed just as it had been when they dwelt here—the curtains all put up—and whatever articles of English comfort had found their way among the heavy specimens of German house-keeping, were, by the orders of Mr. Norman, laid aside.

But in the garden, his task was peculiarly pleasant; his memory bore the truest record of all as it had been arranged there. There, under that linden, and beside those beautiful oleanders, the little bench was placed, where his mother, on summer afternoons, would sit to work or read. The bench had decayed, and fallen down, but he had it renewed. There, on the other side, in a corresponding shade, had stood the table around which they had often sat, when choosing to take their

evening meal in the open air. The old camp-chairs had been stored away; but now, brought out from their dusty nook in an unused corner of the castle, they were again placed around it, as though the family had just arisen from the repast. Nor was the old gymnasium forgotten—the two youths entered heart and hand in this; it was neatly put up again, and the space around it filled with fine sand.

Their business of arranging was nearly completed, when one evening, Mr. Norman received a letter from the Baron, telling him they might be expected on the next day. O, how happy was Felix! he read the letter again and again; and although he passed a sleepless night, he was up by daylight, to put the finishing touches to what was already begun. Garlands of flowers, such as the sisters used to make to decorate the walls of the vestibule and the old stone hall, were not wanting. They waved in graceful festoons from the antlers of slaughtered deer, that hung there as trophies of some chase-loving ancestor's skill; Ehrenfried and Felix, themselves not wanting in taste for flowers, succeeded well in this; for who does not succeed, when the labor is one of love? Nothing was forgotten. Vases filled with flowers, remembered to have been favorites with his mother, were placed in the chamber formerly her own; on the garden-table, lay a volume which she had always

loved to read; and near it, to bring back as nearly as possible the appearances of other years, a little basket, full of keys borrowed from the house-keeper, was seen—a gentle hint that Lady Lindenburg was not deficient nor negligent in a matter involving so much of comfort as does the knowledge of being able to conduct and manage the affairs of a large household.

The day passed on, and Time, who neither hastens nor delays his course, brought round the hours at which they might begin to look out for the carriages in which they were to travel. At length they were in sight.

“Can it be possible!” thought Felix, “that within this hour I shall meet my parents. But the meeting with my mother—it will not do to surprise her; I must not come to before her until Mr. Norman or Ehrenfried has told her all;” and scarcely able to restrain his own impatience, he retreated to a small patch of shrubbery in the garden, himself concealed by the friendly thicket, where he could see and hear all.

The carriage drove up to the hall door, and its occupants alighted. Felix's heart beat audibly, as two well-remembered forms ascended the stone steps that led up to the hall—could they really be those of his parents—after nearly nine years of absence and sore trial, did he truly behold them, or was it only a dream, such as he had often had

in sleep. The lady turned her head towards the spot where Felix was concealed, and her features were distinctly revealed to the anxious son, who could scarcely resist the impulse he felt to rush forward to meet her. But one glance was sufficient to show him how greatly nine years had changed those features. She looked much older, was very pale, and her step was feeble and languid. Ah! sorrow records her march much more strongly than time! her impressions are sterner and even more indelible!

But who are those tall, slender maidens, graceful and elegant as those brought up in court atmosphere, who, bounding up the steps, stood gazing round on the prospect, as if too much delighted in viewing the beauties without, to think of exchanging the sight for the comforts within — could they be his sisters, the joyous companions of his childhood; who, wild as the birds of Steinrode forest, had gambolled over the very spot with himself?

He had almost called aloud to them — an exclamation of joy was ready to burst from his lips; but he restrained it. He pressed his hands close upon his wildly throbbing heart, a film overshadowed his eyes, and he was near fainting.

They entered the castle, but it was only for a few minutes, and to lay off their travelling mantles. The Baron and Lady Lindenburg were talking to their host; and the happy maidens felt at liberty

to run wherever they pleased. They chose the garden first; although not strictly within the rule of politeness, they could not resist the temptation to visit those never-forgotten spots where their childish sports had been enjoyed.

The sun was near setting, and their English host had directed an early supper, or rather lunch, to be set out on the table in the garden. The air was mild and balmy; and the soft shadows cast by the overhanging branches on the spot below, made this particularly pleasant to those who (as is much the usage in Europe,) are accustomed to take their evening meal in the open air.

Baron and Lady Lindenburg and their host were now seen advancing to the spot where the servants had spread out the repast. The latter called his guests' attention to some English improvement he had made; and while the gentlemen stopped to examine it, the mother walked forward to join her daughters in the garden.

This was the time chosen by Mr. Norman to make the disclosure of Felix's existence and presence; but he had a roundabout way of his own for doing every thing; and he must finish talking over his English fixtures before he entered on the subject in which Baron Lindenburg might well be supposed to be most interested. Before he had concluded the first part of his conversation the *denouement* had been made. Lady Linden-

burg, as we stated, left the gentlemen to join her daughters. *Little Pauline* of other days was now a lively girl of fourteen; her eyes were as blue and gentle as ever; she carried her straw bonnet hanging by its strings carelessly over her arm, her bright curls floating in the summer breeze, and her fair features radiant with health and happiness. Not altogether out of the ranks of childhood, notwithstanding her rapid growth, she bounded on before the rest, skipping through walk and alley, as frolicsome as at the earlier period of our story. At one end of the gravelled path she suddenly stopped and uttered an exclamation of surprise; for there, right in the way before her, was a little carriage made of basket-work, full of dolls, and strewn over with flowers.

“O, mother, dear mother, only look here,” she exclaimed, as she bent over what had once been her favorite possession; “surely some kind fairy has brought my old waggon from Elfland, to remind me of my childhood’s Paradise. Just see, Adie—Emma, there is Rosalie, my own sweet wax doll that poor Felix gave me for a Christmas gift. Ah: poor, dear Felix!” she stopped, for the sisters made a sign that this was a subject on which their mother had better not be agitated; and while they stood smiling and wondering over the little toy waggon, a canary bird set up his sweet warbling just above their heads. Pauline looked up.

“O, what a good fairy this has been, to take such care of all that belonged to me — there is Peepy, my own Peepy!” she exclaimed, clapping her hands in joyful glee. “Am I not happy! how much rather I would live in the country! I do wish father would stay here all the time; it is so much more pleasant to look at the fields and mountains, and hear the birds, than to be pent up among high brick walls and narrow streets, in the capital.”

“That is not Peepy, I am sure,” said Emma, laughing; “Peepy would be too old to sing so lively; but I think the new warbler must be a relation, he is so much like the the old bird. But I agree with you in liking the country the best,” she continued, as she broke a branch of blooming Euphrasy from its graceful stem, and twined it into the curls of the happy Pauline, who, forgetful of the years that had passed, was a child again, amusing herself as she used to do long ago, by drawing her doll-laden wagon along the walk.

“Indeed, Adie,” said Emma, “there is no concert that I have heard in the capital half so fine as that I have heard from the larks this morning, as we travelled at sunrise. How sweetly their songs rose from the ripe green fields on which the dew-drops, glittered like diamonds in the crown of a prince. Indeed, I wish with Pauline, father would stay in the country.”

“And give up the Opera, the glorious court-

ball, and the parade of the royal guards, held just before our window?" asked Adelaide, smiling.

"O, I know what you mean," was the laughing answer; "you are jeering me now, Adie, because at first I expressed my great admiration for those things; but the charm of novelty was soon over, and I often wished myself back here among those green and odorous woods, resounding with the song of birds. I longed for the flower-beds I had made myself, and where I found more pleasure in watching the seeds spring up, than in all the exotics in painted vases, with which the court gardener used to send to decorate our parlor; and this morning, as I saw the merry calves and lambs, as they were let loose from the stable, how they skipped and played, I could not help confessing how much more amusing it was to watch their movements, than the stiff manœuvres of the royal guard. That does very well for a little while; but it is the same thing over and over again, and one soon tires of it. But when I lived here I never grew weary of anything."

"Not even of spinning worsted?" asked Adie, smiling mischievously.

"O, that was long ago," was Emma's answer.

By this time they had approached quite close to the spot where Felix was concealed by the shrubbery. The beating of his heart became painful, and hardly to be borne.

“Is it not wonderful, mother,” asked Pauline, “that things are so little altered? I can scarcely realize that nearly eight years have passed since we left Steinrode, all is so much the same. It must be that kind Ehrenfried who has prepared all this for our reception; but why is he not here to welcome us? Nothing is wanting but——”

“Felix, my lost son Felix!” sighed the mother, and she covered her streaming eyes with trembling hands. Convulsive sobs burst from her, in spite of her efforts for self-control. The sisters, clustering round her, supported her in their sustaining arms; and deeply grieved to see her thus shaken, essayed to speak words of comfort. But just then a rustling in the shrubbery attracted their attention; and not without some alarm they beheld a strange youth emerge from the recess, and approach the group with form and features visibly agitated by some great emotion. But ere they had time to express surprise, or call for assistance, the stranger rushed forward and fell at the feet of the weeping mother. She looked up—the maternal heart keeps its own record—one glance was enough for recognition—the flashing glance, expressive of the joy of his soul, that spoke from the blue eyes of her never-forgotten boy, was all-sufficient.

“Felix! my own lost Felix! whence hast thou come!” was all that she could utter; and completely overcome, she sunk fainting in the arms of her long-lost son.

CHAPTER XII.

“He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blest abode of men;
While round him night resistless closes fast;
And every tempest, howling o’er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.”

It was a wild and stormy night; fierce blasts from the north, and tempestuous drivings of rain swept round the lonely forest lodge in the Hartz mountains; the old trees groaned and creaked, tossing their half-denuded branches wildly, as if in despair for the unequal battle they were waging against the strife of elements. No living creature was to be seen abroad; men and cattle had alike sought a place of shelter. Fires burned brightly in the dwellings, whose closed windows and doors were barred alike against intruders and the cold.

The evening had long since deepened into night, when a pale, wayworn, and thinly clad wanderer knocked at the outer door of the forest house, and begged admittance. It was sometime before any movement was heard from within; at length a peasant maiden opened it, and cautiously looking out, asked him what he wanted, at the same time bidding him to make the least noise, as there was a sick person within. He shook the rain-drops

from his thread-bare clothing, and humbly begged for shelter through the night. He had lost his way in the darkness, and had wandered through the forest until completely exhausted; "and surely," he added, "if you have any compassion for creatures of your own kind, you will not, in such a fearful night, refuse a place of shelter to one sick and astray."

The peasant girl grumbled something forth which sounded like "you had better go elsewhere; we do not keep an ale-house, in which to lodge strangers; the village is only three miles distant;" when her mutterings were interrupted by a young girl dressed in deep mourning; who, opening an inner door, looked out, and enquired, in a soft and gentle tone, "Marie, did I not hear some one speaking?"

"Oh! such a savage-looking man!" whispered Marie, in answer to her enquiry; "his face all covered with moustache and beard; he looks like a very suspicious character, and takes our nice forest lodge for an ale-house. I am sure he must be some vagabond soldier, for there are plenty of them running about. It is always dangerous to harbor them, and then to-night we are all alone; for Triva the huntsman has not returned from S— where he went to sell skins. If he could not travel on account of the badness of the weather to-night, you may be sure this fellow means no good in running about in such a storm."

“Forgive me, lady,” begged the stranger, in a tone of deep humility; “I mean you no harm. I have been wandering in this unknown region, without knowing one step of the way; and it is the third night I have been unable to procure lodging under a roof—the damp earth of the forest has been my only bed, and I have been an invalid for some time. If you will only give me a bundle of straw in a corner, or even in the stable——”

“Poor man!” interrupted the maiden; “we would be hard-hearted indeed, were we to refuse you what you ask, in such a frightful night as this. I cannot say ‘go farther.’ You are a stranger to us—you have heard we are alone—we two helpless women—and my mother is very ill; come in, then, but be very quiet, as the least noise will make her worse. Marie shall get you some warm supper, and make up a straw bed for you; more than this, I have not to offer.”

The stranger thanked her, and would have followed the grumbling damsel to the kitchen; but Melanie (for it is herself we recognise in the mourning garments of an orphan), again spoke, and her voice—oh! how unlike that of the imperious Melanie of former years—fell sweet as sounds from Heaven on the ears of the wanderer.

“Come into this room, there is a good fire here. You are wet through, and look sick; but be very

quiet, for my mother is sleeping now, and every thing depends on her not being disturbed."

She gave him a chair in the corner, beside the brightly-blazing fire; and placing herself before a spinning-wheel which stood beside a table on which a small iron lamp, such as was used by the commonest peasants, was burning, she began most industriously to spin. The stranger spread out his broad hands to meet the warmth of the cheerful blaze; and, soon revived by the genial glow, began to look round the plain and scantily furnished room; he noted but little of what it contained, for his gaze was riveted on the fair features of the maiden. She was tall, slender, and very pale; an expression of deep sadness, not natural in one so young, rested on her face; her soft and glossy brown hair was parted over her white forehead, and simply braided in a comb. No ornament of beads, tinsel, or riband, such as the peasant maidens love to display, found a place on her person. She wore a coarse, but clean linen apron over her black dress, which was made of no fine material; and the stranger remarked that her whole figure and bearing wore a stamp of something like nobility, although her hands, once so soft and delicate, were now as red and rough as those accustomed to the rudest work.

At the least rustle or movement from the inner chamber, she would stop her wheel to listen, and

steal cautiously into the sick room, to watch the feverish breathing of the sick slumberer. Marie brought in some warm supper for the stranger; half famished as he was, even this did not divert him from his scrutiny of the maiden. And as he hastily devoured the food, so grateful to one in his circumstances, with still increasing sympathy, for which himself could not account, he continued still to gaze on her, watching every movement and turn of feature with an interest almost painful to himself, although he could divine no cause by which it was called forth.

The hours wore away far into the night, yet she relaxed not her industry; she spun as though life and death hung upon the completion of her task; and when her weary eyelids fell, and she nodded over the wheel which she turned mechanically, she would rouse herself again, and spin only the more vigorously, as if to atone for the momentary interruption.

At length Marie entered with a lamp in her hand; she, mentioning that she had prepared a bed for the stranger, asked her "if she did not know it was midnight, or had she no intention of going to bed at all that night?"

"I do not know that I can," answered the interrogated; "my work is not done; and did you not tell me the yarn merchant would be here early in the morning?"

“Yes, I did say so, but what of that? You have not slept for two whole nights, and such doings will make you sick,” said the peasant girl. “The yarn merchant will not care if you disappoint him; for he will come again in a week or so, and you can give him the yarn then, if it is not ready now.”

“You do not know all, Marie,” answered Melanie, with a slight blush; “he is to bring me something I sent for by him, when he went to S——. to market — a little jar of raspberry jelly, and some other articles that my mother wanted. Ah! she longed so much to have them; but she does not know I sent. So you see, Marie, I must finish my task, so as to be able to pay for them; and after that — O I will sleep gloriously!”

“What do you think your mother would say if she knew you had set up working for two whole nights to procure these things?” asked Marie; “the upshot of the thing is, you will be sick, and my mistress more troubled than all that you have done for her comfort is worth.”

“Hush——Marie!” whispered Melanie, glancing at the stranger. “You won’t tell mother, I know; you would not spoil my pleasure so much, I am sure. And now, my good girl, go to bed; rest is more needful for you than myself.”

The damsel, finding she was not to be moved from her purpose, poured some oil in the now dimly

burning lamp that stood on the table; and having re-lighted her own, prepared to leave the room, first telling the stranger she would show him where to sleep, and bidding Melanie "good night."

"Give the stranger the woollen comforter, Marie," Melanie called after her; "the garret room is so cold—I wish we had a warm bed to give him."

"A thousand thanks for your kindness, lady," said the rough-looking stranger, completely overcome by the gentleness of the maiden; a quality, the exhibition of which he but seldom met with, directed to himself; he sighed deeply, as though oppressed with painful recollections, and following the servant girl, began to ascend the rude stairs which led to the garret chamber, through which the winds whistled and swept, as though they were keeping high holiday.

"Tell me," said he to Marie, as they left the room, "is this family so poor that the young girl has to spin all night in order to procure comfort for her sick mother? Has she no husband—has she no father? I mean, is the kind maiden an orphan?"

"She is," was the answer; "her father died six months ago; and since then her mother, giving herself up to grief, has been more sickly than before. But it is not only grief now they have to bear, but trouble, too. The new forester is to

come in a few weeks to take possession of his place ; they will then have to leave this house and forest-wood that they love so well, for he has a large family, and they will want all the room that they can get. What Madame and Mélanie will do, Heaven only knows ; where can they go ? I am distressed for them ; altogether empty-handed, and in a country where they know no one."

"Has the mother no relatives—no son or brother?" was the question of the stranger.

"O, yes indeed," said Marie ; "she had a son. She has many a time told me the sad tale of his having been drowned. Yes, and in her sleep she will so often call out 'Eugene—Eugene!' and then she will wake up and cry so bitterly—it breaks my heart to hear her."

"Eugene!" repeated the stranger, musingly ; "and what is the name of the sick lady?"

"I believe it is Grotz, or Grice, or Grosse, some such name," replied Marie ; "we never call her anything but Madame. They came here from Silesia ; and Melanie has often told me of a beautiful castle where they lived, which was burnt down. They belong to the nobility, I am sure ; and I am sure Madame may well grieve over the loss of her riches, for it is a fine thing to be rich ; but it is not for that so much as for her son she frets so constantly. Her grief is killing her, and she is wrong to give way to it so, for she ought to think

how desolate her good daughter will be if she dies."

"Grosse—Von Grosse!" almost shrieked the stranger; "O what mysterious Providence has led me to this spot, only to have my conscience pierced with new and sharper stings!"

He clasped his emaciated hands over his agitated face, and was silent; but large tears trickled from between his fingers, and fell on his bushy beard. Marie was too much frightened to ask the cause of this new emotion; and turning hastily from him, she fled down the narrow stairs, flinging the door after her with a force that shook the whole house.

The stranger seated himself on the lowly couch that had been prepared for him; and leaning his head on his hand, remained buried in painful reverie. He felt not the cold wind that swept through the open walls, and shook the rattling windows—he heard not the rain that pelted without, and heeded not the solemn crash which sometimes boomed through the forest, telling that some giant oak, some moss-covered chronicler of ancient days and Druid rites, had fallen. The intensity of the emotion which swayed his heart was plainly visible in the perturbed-features and agitated frame; but after a time the painful expression subsided—some ray of comfort seemed to have streamed in upon his troubled soul; for rising from his couch-

ing posture, he had so long maintained, he folded his hands together, and prayed aloud :

“ I understand what thou wouldst have me do, O righteous, sin-forgiving God ! who, in thy mysterious Providence, has led me through my wandering to this spot, to give me an opportunity to undo the wrong, the remembrance of which has caused me such bitter repentance, poisoning every moment of life's enjoyment with its sting. Have mercy yet further upon me, Heavenly Father ; help me to find the son of whom I robbed this family, whilst the poor mother is still in life ; and then, if I can again fall on the place where I concealed the treasure which is justly theirs, their deep poverty will be at an end.”

He remained in a musing attitude for some time longer, as if resolving some plan ; at length he rose, and tearing a leaf from his pocket-book, wrote a few lines upon it with a pencil, the dim light of the lamp which Marie, in her fright, had left behind, placed upon the floor of that rude chamber, scarcely serving to make objects discernible.

Having finished a task which seemed to bestow comfort in its prosecution, he laid down on his hard pallet and slept soundly until the day began to break. He rose with the first ray ; and going down into the kitchen, he found the peasant girl had already kindled a fire, and was preparing a breakfast of warm milk and bread for him. In

answer to his question, she told him Melanie was still sleeping, and her mother had seemed to grow better towards morning. With many thanks he ate heartily of the simple fare Marie had provided; but to her invitation to remain until Melanie should have arisen, he at once answered that he could not.

“I have a long journey before me, and must go farther; for I have important business to attend to, business which must on no account be delayed. But thank the kind young lady for me, and give her this note; tell her good days are yet in store for her—and now farewell!”

Even as he spoke these words he left the house; and with the hasty pace of one bound on an errand of life or death, set off through the forest. The surprised maiden looked after him; but although she had followed to the door, she saw but his retreating form as it vanished between the tall trees of the wood, on which the gray light and sacred stillness of morning still was reposing.

She did not, however, disturb Melanie to give her the stranger's note, of which she could not read one word herself; and busying herself in household and dairy cares, and deeming it of little importance, she laid it on the kitchen table, where Melanie, on rising, found it.

No note or written document ever found its way to that lonely house, for the inhabitants seemed

shut out from human sympathy and human intercourse; and wondering what it could mean, she took it up and ran hastily over the illegible writing. A bright glow overspread her pallid face, and her features beamed with rays of sudden and pleasant emotion.

“Mother, mother!” she exclaimed, forgetting all her prudence and acquired self-command in the excess of her joy, in the news she had to tell; “Eugene is living, and we shall see him again!”

“What is it you tell me?” cried the mother, starting up from her sick bed as lightly as if youth and health had returned in a moment; “did you say, Melanie, that my son was living? O, merciful Father! how can I thank Thee!”

With these words she fell back fainting on her pillow, while Melanie, alarmed at the effect of her own precipitancy, hung over her in agony, believing her sudden announcement of the unexpected tidings to have killed her.

She wept while she administered such simple remedies as were within her reach; but Lady Von Grosse remained in a most critical state until the evening, when Melanie was comforted by the arrival of the physician, who declared her mother's disorder had now reached the crisis; and he thought that on awakening from the quiet sleep into which she was fallen, she would find herself greatly better.

Three whole days elapsed before Melanie had much to encourage her; but at length the wished-for change became visible; yet there was still a long time between this and recovery, during which period she sacrificed every feeling of self, and attended the beloved sufferer with the most anxious solicitude. From the suddenness with which the news was told, the shock had been very great. But still it proved the best medicine for Lady Von Grosse. Once on the way of recovery, her convalescence was rapid; she forgot her grief for the loss of her husband, in joy for the hoped-for restoration of her son. Weakness, poverty, the knowledge that they must soon leave their quiet forest home, without knowing where they were to go, gave her no uneasiness, no care; she read again and again the half-effaced lines left by the unknown lodger for Melanie; and there was comfort for her in every letter. It ran as follows:—

“To Mademoiselle Melanie:—Your kindness has been shown to one altogether unworthy—one who has injured you almost past the power of restitution. But I hope it is not yet too late; perhaps I may be able to restore in part that of which I robbed you. I will try to do so. Know then that Eugene yet lives. I know his place of abode, and I will hasten to it, and bring him back to the arms from whence I tore him. Your servant has told me you would soon be obliged to leave the forest

lodge. If you do so, go no further than the town of W——; leave your address at the council-house, and unless life should fail me, I will be the bearer of good tidings to you!"

Many were the cogitations of both mother and daughter as to who the enigmatical stranger might be; they could not read the riddle, and so gave it up—it was of little importance in comparison with the knowledge that Eugene was alive.

The period which they so greatly dreaded now arrived, namely, that of vacating the forest lodge for the reception of the new warden and his family. He wrote to let them know he would arrive in the course of few days; and they made their arrangements for leaving with less than half the pain they had anticipated. A new source of comfort had arisen; and although the hope of fruition was still at a distance, like the stars that cheer in a cloudy night, there was sufficient radiance streaming from it to dispel the gloom that would have otherwise enveloped them.

Their preparations were soon made, for they had little they could call their own. All their once numerous articles of luxury were diminished to a few pieces of such furniture as were indispensable for the commonest wants—some cooking utensils, and a scanty wardrobe—and with these, comprising all their earthly goods, Madame Von Grosse betook herself to W——, as had been enjoined on

her by the stranger. Here she hired a small garret room; and together with Melanie, resolved to earn a support by taking in work.

With many tears the latter had bade adieu to the collier's family, who had been her only friends in those days of discontent and loneliness that marked the first year of her residence in the Hartz forest. But sad as they were in the retrospect, they were yet greatly brighter than the prospect promised by the future, should Eugene fail to return. She dared not think of such an alternative, for hope then would die out completely.

The forest children, kind and attached as ever, had all prepared some farewell gift; each one had something of which the sight must bring back remembrance of the little foresters; and Fritz, who was now a large boy, and still remained Melanie's favorite, had put forth his best efforts, and made a very neat bird-cage, in which he placed a tame bullfinch, whose merry notes, he said, would each day serve to cheat her into the belief that she was still in the Hartz forest. The collier's wife, however, gave her the best gift of all—the Bible which she had formerly lent her—the book whose light had served as a lamp to her own path, and from whose fount of healing Melanie had received her first drops of consolation, and from whence gladness had flowed in upon her mother's darkened soul. Her heart swelled as she received the touch-

ing gift, and most gratefully she accepted it, especially as she knew her humble friend to possess another.

The parting between them was sad, but not hopeless. Many were the days they had enjoyed with each other, those dwellers in that wild forest. Widely as the conventional forms of rank and education had separated them, here the claims of human sympathy demanded and prevailed, breaking down all the strong barriers which pride and fancied superiority once had raised. They here learned that there is *but one* great human family, that all are more or less dependent on each other for mutual happiness; and in recognizing the superior advancement of the collier and his wife in all things pertaining unto holiness, they were able to realize that "God is no respecter of persons, but chooses the humble to confound the wise."

Grieving yet hoping from each other, they parted, believing that although they might never gaze on each other's faces on earth, yet, as numbered among Christ's ransomed, their intercourse should be renewed in heaven. And thoughts like these we well know soften the pang of separation, although the grave utters no response to *our* "farewell."

In more narrowed circumstances than ever, Melanie and her mother took possession of their garret chamber in W——, plying their needles busily

throughout the day, but always appropriating a portion of the evening to the perusal of God's holy word. Gay and glancing equipages rolled along in the street below, bearing their thoughtless occupants to ball or theatre; but our two friends, having experienced the change effected by renewing grace, saw them without envy, for they read "those who truly seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing."

They wondered now that they had ever prized such fleeting vanities, so as to make their pursuit the whole end of a life bestowed for better purposes; and were thankful that their eyes were opened to behold the right way—they experienced how hard it was to find the way to heaven through the intoxicating pleasures and excitements of the gay world—how greatly the stings of repentance exceeded the charms of folly or allurements of sin; and now they blessed the hand of the Eternal Father, that had so sorely smitten only that it might save from death.

A whole month passed away since the exciting evening of the stranger's arrival at the forest lodge; but we may say the impression of his visit faded not for a moment from the minds of either mother or daughter. Every knock at the street door, every quick step in the passage or on the stairs, caused the glow of expectation to color the wasted cheeks of the anxious mother, and made

the sister start; but the one as often faded back into the pallor of disappointment, and the other experienced the sickening pang of hope deferred, for neither Eugene nor the stranger came.

To add to their disappointment, they found that, with the closest application to their sewing, they were only able to earn what was sufficient to procure them food. Unaccustomed to such work, they could not pursue it as rapidly as could those who had known nothing else; and Melanie trembled with apprehension at the thought that when the day for payment of the rent came round, she had not one single penny laid away to meet it. This, however, she carefully concealed from her mother; and when the Enemy assailed her with doubts of God's goodness, and distrust of his promises, she resolutely applied to her book—the comforting gift of her humble friend in the Hartz forest; and, like that poor but confiding Christian, she ever found comfort. The tide of unbelief was turned away, the light of hope illumined the pages as she read, “Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith the Lord; be not dismayed, for I am with thee. I will make an end of all wickedness, but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in a measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.”

Her tears would flow more calmly when she dwelt on passages fraught with consolation to the

sorrowing: "Wait on the Lord, and do good; verily thou shalt be fed; for he will not chide continually, nor keep his anger forever; but he is full of compassion, and delighteth in mercy; therefore commit thy way to God; trust in him, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." And though there seemed no earthly help on which she could lean in the trial that her heart so painfully foreboded, she was able to contemplate the dark prospect without despair.

But a few days more were wanting until the dreaded rent-day would arrive. Melanie had denied herself everything but that which was barely necessary; but her mother, who was still delicate, knew no want, so careful had been this good daughter to provide her with comforts which she had resolution enough to do without.

Which of our readers could now recognize the selfish, affected, pleasure-loving Melanie, in this dutiful, self-denying daughter, whose Christian character was now fashioned from the example of one who "came to save the world that hated him," and scoffed at goodness it could not comprehend. It is no overdrawn picture — the prayerful reading of the Scriptures, attended by the Spirit's blessing, effects such changes every day; for not more wonderful than a second birth, to which our Saviour compared it, is the transforming influence of that Spirit's operation on the heart.

As we have before stated, but a few days were now to intervene between the present time and that on which the landlord would expect to receive the rent for their garret. In spite of her faith, Melanie had felt sad all day, for at times human nature will prevail over grace; yet she had worked very busily until the deepening twilight forced both herself and mother to lay aside the sewing on which they had been employed.

Madame Von Grosse sat by the window looking out at the stars, as one by one they began to "light up their watch-towers" in the sky, cheering the darkening heavens by their rays, even as the promises of God do the heart obscured by grief. Melanie was busy preparing their supper of meal porridge, and was stirring it so lustily that she scarcely heard a gentle knock at their room door. But she *did* hear it, and her heart beat nervously — was it the landlord? No light burned in the little chamber; but the moon, shining in with friendly look, made objects distinct enough for her to pursue her avocation. She advanced to open the door at whosoever bidding it might be, and a man, whose features she could not distinguish in the uncertain light, entered, and walked without a word into the middle of the room. Both females were silent, for they could not comprehend the meaning of this intrusion. But at length the stranger spoke.

“Mother — sister!” he exclaimed, “have you forgotten me? Have you no welcome for the wanderer, or do you not care to have your Eugene back again?”

Such a meeting as this cannot be described — hearts keep their own record of such scenes, suffering no stranger to intermeddle or to scan; so we will pass over that *sacred* hour in silence, only saying that three happy hearts beat in perfect unison, as they made that hour of meeting a *sacred* one, for they knelt down before the God whom they now *all* served, to thank him that the lost, the long-believed dead son, was restored. It was like a resurrection from the grave; and with the deepest humility they bowed to the greatness of Him whose goodness and mercy had so exceeded their deserts, their fears, and even their hopes.

At length they found time for question and answer — to tell to each other what had severally befallen. But Eugene could not help acknowledging to himself, and with shame too, how much less of salutary fruit his trials had brought forth to him than his sister. He felt how greatly she exceeded him in all that was noble and good. Knowing what she had been, and contrasting it with what she now was, and remembering, too, all that Felix had tried to teach him, and how greatly severe discipline had improved the character of his friend, he was convinced there was something more

than words at the bottom of the change he had witnessed in them all; and felt that much was wanting in himself.

Love now effected what hardship had failed to do. As he looked at his mother's bowed form and wasted features, at Melanie's rough swelled hands and anxious eyes, he formed a strong resolution—he would be patient, he would seek steady employment, and he would work and lighten, if he could not remove, the burden which pressed so heavily on those dear ones; and this resolution, as he made it in a proper spirit, he kept through life.

“But tell us, dear brother,” said Melanie, as they were talking over matters one evening, “tell us, if you can, who was that stranger that begged a night's lodging of us, while we lived at the forest lodge? it was he who first gave us to hope that you were living.”

“Could you not recognize our old servant Amadé?” answered Eugene.

“Not possible it was he!” replied the sister; “why did he fear to tell us his name, or make himself known?”

“A guilty conscience makes men cowards. He had wronged us all too much to be happy in finding himself so unexpectedly in your presence, and obliged to ask a favor of you; for he it was who decoyed me away. But I will tell you his story as

he told it to me. About the time he entered into mother's service, he fell into bad company, and turned gambler, loving play so much that he often lost in one hour all that he could earn in a month. At length he got into debt; his companions pressed him for payment; and his mother, who was a widow and owned a small property, in her blind indulgence gave him her last penny. But even this was not enough; he staked the little homestead, all she had to support her in her old age, and lost it. He was in despair; he loved his mother, and could not bear the thought that she should be reduced to beggary in her old age. But his love of gambling was not diminished. He left his home and country, and came to Germany, less with the hope of entering into service, than that of finding less skilful players than in France, from whom he might expect to win that which would make up, if not exceed, his losses.

“This plan did not succeed as he wished. He found the laws of chance, and the lovers of gambling the same here as in the country he had left; and having entered your service, dear mother, he bethought himself of another medium by which he might as suddenly become rich as that promised by a lucky throw of the dice. He staked all the money he earned; he lost continually; and in his despair, as he told me, there was no crime he

would have hesitated to commit, for his whole soul was given up to the desire of gain.

“The birth-day festival opened a glorious prospect to his avarice. He saw the valuable casket with its sparkling gems standing upon your dressing table; and determined, when opportunity offered, to appropriate some few of them to his own use.

“‘It can be no sin,’ thought he; ‘the Countess has so many she can never miss them; and my old mother is suffering. No; I will do this for her sake, for she ruined herself to pay gambling debts for me!’

“He waited on the company throughout the day; but it was not until the evening, when the guests, servants and all, left the castle to see the fireworks exhibited in the garden, that he could find a fitting time to carry out his plan. To the invitation of some one of his fellows to witness the spectacle, he replied that ‘fireworks were so common in his country, that the sight would be nothing new to him; they might, therefore, all go, and he would stay behind and watch the castle.’ So far all succeeded. They went, and he was left; he knew where the key of the casket was kept; and putting it in the lock, he turned it, and the costly treasure lay before his gloating eyes.

“‘Only one chain, or a few rings,’ he said to himself, and he buried his hand among the gems;

but at that moment something fluttered behind him. The large chamber was but dimly lighted; and he could not discern objects at the further end. But his hair rose upon end as he believed himself detected, for a hoarse voice, proceeding from one corner, cried out, 'Villain! Knave!'

"He waited not to discover who was the accuser, but, catching up the open casket in his arms, he fled like one bereft of reason; and he felt that he was pursued, for he heard the rushing of wings behind him as he ran. He reached the long corridor, and was proceeding to grope his way in darkness to the back stair; but all at once a bright light sprung up around him, making every object visible in its fearful glow. Horror-stricken, he turned to seek another outlet, still clasping the open casket in his arms, although he yet believed himself pursued by demons. It must have been our parrot, Melanie, that frightened him by its voice; you remember we used to take great pleasure in hearing him repeat those words.

"He sought the stairs which led to the front entrance, for the flames were now bursting forth from the chambers and galleries, where they had been so successfully kindled. On the first landing place he met a ferocious-looking man with matted hair, and whose expression of wild despair, as he brandished a flaming torch in his hand, applying it to everything combustible within his reach,

served to picture to his now heated fancy one of the lost spirits escaped for a season from the pit, and come to spread destruction and ruin over the scene that, a few hours before, was so fair.

“‘Come along! come along!’ he cried in the tone of a mocking fiend; ‘help me to kindle up the fires, that they may all warm themselves, you and me too! it is nice to be warm!’ and the maniac laugh with which he concluded his speech rang out above the now crackling flames; and in it Amadé recognized the insane prisoner Dietrich. Scarce knowing what he did, and dreading that the peasant would destroy him, groping in the casket, he grasped a handful of jewels from the store, and handing them to him, bade him take them as some requital for his wrongs. Dietrich received them with great indifference, thrusting them into his vest pocket. Amadé was only too much rejoiced when the former told him that all he desired in return for his keeping silence in reference to the loss of the casket, would be to give him a hiding-place for a few days, as he was certain he would be pursued. He directed him, therefore, without hesitation, to the cottage where his mother now lived; and knowing Dietrich’s proverbial honesty, he committed the casket to his charge, and sent him at once on his way.

“No suspicion was attached to Amadé, for he was among the most busy in extinguishing the

flames, and seeking for the lost treasure. In the meantime, whilst the consequent bustle was going forward, the prisoner, with his costly charge, reached the desired asylum, where both himself and it were successfully hidden, although justice left no means untried to find out whither he had fled.

“ His revenge, however, was but half satisfied ; and having Amadé now completely in his power, he next demanded of him the betrayal of myself into his hands. I have already told you how this was done. You remember, mother, Amadé’s term of service was nearly expired at that time ; he greatly dreaded that Dietrich would return ; and anxious to secure his ill-gotten gain in a safer place than it was at present, he left you ; and telling every one he was going back to France, he thus put them completely off the track of his whereabouts, if any suspicion should ever arise. But instead of this, he withdrew into a distant duchy on the borders of Poland, where he purchased a small inn, together with a spot of farming-land.

At first all went well — his customers were pleased, and his cattle thrived ; his means were increased ; he laid by a smart sum of money, still depositing it in the casket, where yet many of the jewels remained. But his old passion for play revived ; and the more riches he acquired, the more avaricious he became. And not contented to gain

wealth by fair play or honest endeavors, he sought the quicker method to obtain, which he so greatly desired, by fraud. He procured loaded dice, played falsely, and was detected; gens-d'armes, sent by the provincial authorities, appeared suddenly, and surrounded his house; but Amadé succeeded in making his escape, bearing with him the treasured casket concealed within the folds of his cloak.

“Not daring to seek the habitations of men, he wandered in unfrequented districts; and it was when forced by hunger he entered at times into some obscure village, in order to purchase coarse food, which he devoured in some mountain cavern, where he had spread the couch of leaves that served him for a bed. It was on returning from such an errand on a stormy evening that, mistaking the path that led to his cavern home, he strayed into a different part of the forest. The light of torches glimmered from among the trees; and to the voice of the tempest were added the oaths and imprecations of men. His pursuers were on the track. He turned to flee he knew not whither; but his progress was considerably hindered by the weight of the casket, from which he never parted by night or day.

“But what was gold now, when his life was at stake — valueless as the earth on which he trod; and throwing it among a heap of loose stones that

lay in a little hollow, where the ground was covered with a thick undergrowth, he rolled some of the largest over the opening, so as effectually to conceal it; and creeping on his hands and feet for some distance through the spiky shrubbery, not heeding the wounds made on his hands and face, he succeeded in escaping the observation of his pursuers. At length the lights ceased to stream on the deep darkness of the wood, and the voices died away in the distance; and although at another time the surrounding horrors would have spoken only of death and danger to the alarmed culprit, how cheering now was the sombre shadow — what soothing came in the unaccompanied voice of the still raging tempests!

“He arose to his feet and looked round; the trees, much less dense, assured him to be near the end of the forest; and when the morning dawned, clear, calm, and beautiful, he found himself at its edge. Smoke issuing from the distant cottages told of man and domestic comforts; but the out-cast dared not seek sympathy in the one, or participation in the other.

“Filled with sad and repentant thoughts, as he stood gazing upon the scene he feared to approach, he was startled by a loud scream. He turned in dismay; and close beside him was a little girl, who, with a basket on her arm, had come thus early to the forest to pick berries, which grew in abundance

there. He enquired what it was had frightened her ; but without making any answer, she screamed but the louder as he tried to drive away her fears ; and when he attempted to lead her by the hand, fled with the speed of the lapwing, occasionally looking back to see if the frightful-looking man, covered with blood and dust, was following. Her cries awakened the attention of some wood-cutters who were at work near the spot. They hastened to see what was the matter ; and without waiting to question the stranger, whose appearance was so very suspicious, they overpowered him at once ; and putting him in a cart, carried him to the nearest market-town, where he was brought before a magistrate to answer for himself.

“ Among the crowd collected to witness his examination, were one or two persons who had known him in his public capacity. They gave evidence of his being not only a notorious gambler, but one who played falsely ; the trial was short, and he was sent to the house of correction. At this time he learned from an old neighbor, who compassionately visited him in his prison, that his house and all the goods had been seized upon by his creditors, and sold ; his mother dead — died from hardship, poverty, and grief ; and the worm of remorse, preying upon the heart of the unhappy son, he wished for the death which he yet feared to meet.

“It was now that, left to solitude and reflection, and hating the life which he feared to take, for although he had formerly mocked at all religion, and said within his heart ‘there is no God,’ the conviction of an all-prevailing Power so forced itself upon his tortured mind, that, though sorely tempted, he could not determine to rush uncalled into the dread presence of the Mighty Judge. He had read the words, ‘It is appointed to all men once to die, and after that the judgment;’ and the sentence echoed fearfully into the inmost recess of his soul. He thought over every wicked act of his past life — the space so mercifully given to man for the preparation of a holier and more blissful state—of the vile ingratitude he had shown to his mother, who, in her blind affection, had sacrificed her earthly all for his sake — of the sorrow and wrong he had wrought on the Von Grosse family, who had received and trusted him when he was a fugitive, driven from his early home and from the society of his fellow men. Whilst with that family he was received into the friendly castle of Steinrode; and there, where Piety sprinkled the sweet dews daily from her cup of consolation, some few drops had reached him; and though at the time considered of no account, they came now in his hours of affliction like soothing balm to the diseased. ‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest,’ were

words that he could not but remember; and they now gave sweet assurance that there was no sin of dye so deep that it could not be washed away in the all-atoning blood of Him, the pure and perfect, who, having suffered and died, 'had passed into the heavens,' where, as man's Advocate, he ever lives to make intercession for all who come to God through Him.

"Whilst thoughts of this kind, mingled with some of more worldly character, were revolving in his mind, a felon was brought in to share the cell he had heretofore occupied alone. His loose dress, pointed cap, and flowing beard, at once proclaimed him a Jew; and in the natural course of communication which ensued between them, they soon became quite confidential in their intercourse. Amadé, in his distress of mind, made a full disclosure of all his guilt to Simon (for my old master had got to the right place at last), perhaps in hopes that one so much older than himself could help him plan some way of escape, or maybe that the confession served to lighten his own mind.

"The Jew, it seemed, had made no effort to find out where the parents of Felix and myself were gone, but engaged in new thefts, which promised to be more speedily profitable than such a search, and the police had at last been able to detect and secure him.

"As Amadé, in the nights when he could not

sleep, related his story concerning the robbery of the rich casket, and abduction of myself and Felix, not withholding our own and family names, the hardened Simon laughed at him, calling him 'a whining fool;' and then, by way of boasting of superior strength of mind, vaunted of his own deeds, together with the dexterity by which he had so long eluded the vigilance of the police; and concluded by declaring that he could tell his 'chicken hearted companion all about me, and where I was at that time.' He also recounted, in a triumphant manner, how he had got me into his power, and what pains he had taken to make me as accomplished a thief as himself. 'I wanted a companion,' said he, 'for I am getting old and stiff, and the boy was tall and slender, and could accomplish much that a large man could not.' In short, mother — you must spare me the shameful remembrance. Let me only say that Felix was the good angel sent from heaven to save me from becoming like Simon and Amadé, who, with many others, chose to gather gain in forbidden paths, rather than earn their bread as God had commanded man to do, by the sweat of his brow.

“At last Amadé was released from prison; and as his repentance was really sincere, he resolved to seek an humble service, whereby he might gain an honest living. But he soon found that a tarnished reputation is not easily retrieved. No

man wished to employ the liberated convict; no one pitied his destitution; no one believed in his intended reformation.

“Hunger and want at this time almost compelled him to pilfer, in order to supply their pressing demands; but true to the resolution he had formed, he yielded not; for it was his fixed purpose to be honest. Some few little turns he found to do, and for which bread, barely sufficient to keep him from starving, was given; but anything like regular employment, for which he might demand regular wages, was out of the question. At length a good-natured farmer took him into his barn to thresh. This was hard work for him, who never wielded a flail in his life; and now for little more than the rough food he ate, he labored sixteen hours out of the twenty-four; but so great was the change that had come over him, he performed his task without a murmur. He thanked God for the asylum he had found; but, alas! it was not long until he had to seek another.

“His fellow-laborers found out by some means that he had served his time in the house of correction, and utterly refused to work in company with one who had been so publicly disgraced. The farmer pitied him, and remonstrated with his men; but it was of no avail. They insisted that Amadé or themselves must be parted with. The

master had no alternative, and he was obliged to dismiss him.

“Almost despairing, he once more resumed his wanderings; and as he strayed from place to place, his heart again grew harder under the cruelty and unfeeling treatment he met with from his fellow men. He felt himself powerfully tempted to go back to the ways of wickedness, palliating the sin by saying to himself, ‘If I steal, it shall only be a few farthings, which nobody will miss, or else some food to keep me from starving.’

“No opportunity, however, occurred to put his purpose into execution, until on the evening when, wandering through the region of the Hartz mountains, he came upon the lonely forest lodge, which, lying so remote, so shut out from all other habitations, seemed almost to invite to depredation. But heaven spared him the sin; here, for the first time, he was met by gentleness and compassion, his heart was again softened; he gave up the unrighteous thoughts that were revolving in his soul, and he determined to beg rather than steal.

“When he heard from the servant girl the name of the family who had so unhesitatingly sheltered him in that inclement night — when the circumstances she recounted assured him that the inmates of the cottage were those he had so deeply wronged, repentance once more became busy at his heart, and he resolved, as far as lay in his power, to

endeavor to redress that wrong. He sought me out almost immediately; and calling my master to one side, had a long and private conversation with him; when it was ended the latter, looking much troubled, bade me get ready, for I might set out at once for home, at the same time offering to lend me money for the journey.

“It was on the same night that Amadé, whom I could scarcely recognize as our former footman, so changed was his whole appearance, occupying the same chamber with myself, told me the tale I have related to you. What arguments he used to persuade my stern master, I know not; and I could not ask him, for when I awoke in the morning he was gone, and no one knew at what hour he had departed. It made little matter to one so happy as I now was, in my haste to leave my Russian home. I could scarcely wait to eat some breakfast, but tied up my few articles of clothing in a bundle, and threw myself into the mail waggon, which brought me safe to this place and to you, from whom I hope never again to be separated.

“I am determined to do my best, dear mother, to make your declining years pass in comfort, and to share Melanie's burden, be it what it may. In the first place, I will seek a mechanic, for whom I can do journey-work by day, and in the evenings I will copy documents for a lawyer, with whom I

made acquaintance as I travelled hither. I have been wicked, thoughtless, ah! and in days past, cruel and disobedient; but Adversity has taught me salutary things; and I trust God will give me strength to maintain my good resolutions."

Eugene had finished his narrative, and for some moments the little party remained silent; but at length Lady Von Grosse rose from her chair, and folding both her children to her heart, blessed God for the wonderful Providence that had so worked together for the good of all; but above all, she prayed that her returned son might be strengthened in the pursuit of every good work, and kept secure from the allurements of vice, and above the temptations of the world.

Although Eugene's money, by the expenses of his journey, had melted away to his last penny, and he had not the most distant idea of finding his family in such straitened circumstances, yet on this night he was happier than ever he had been in all his life before. He enjoyed, in anticipation, the pleasure he should have in being the support and stay of his mother and sister; and slept soundly, although he had no better bed than the hard floor, on which Melanie had spread a few blankets, to which she added her own pillow, choosing to do without it herself, for the pleasure of giving it to her brother.

Who ought ever to despond while he knows

that "God is in heaven," watching over all for good? In the evening, when Melanie and her mother gazed on the sunset glow, it was with hearts sad in the prospect of coming difficulties; but a happy night was theirs; and when the morning shed her light once more upon the earth, the sun poured forth his early beams upon bright countenances, and as grateful beings as any that existed in the whole compass of the great city of W——.

CHAPTER XIII.

“They spoke of many a banished scene,
Of what they once had thought and said,
Of what had been and might have been,
And who was changed, and who was dead.”

PLEASANT indeed were the days passed by the guests at Steinrode; but time will move onward, and duty will call imperatively; and so in this case. The days flew like hours, for they were crowned with delight; but sooner than was wished by any of the party, the Baron began to speak of returning to the capital, where the affairs of his office at court demanded his presence, and where Herman had been left behind to pursue his college studies.

Mr. Norman had, as yet, given no hint of his meditated plan of the disposal of Steinrode to its former owner; but when Baron Lindenburg declared that they must set out for home on the morrow, the eccentric old man took him by the hand, and shaking it warmly, said, “You have been disappointed in your wish to purchase a suitable property in this neighborhood, and I doubt whether you can anywhere find one that would please you so well as this old castle. Stay where you are

then, my good friend ; I see it is hard for you all to think of leaving Steinrode ; and for yourself, I know you would rather again be the possessor of your ancestral domain, than to fill the most exalted post your king can offer you. Lady Lindenburg will get well here, since all painful remembrance is removed, and Steinrode be to you all the pleasant home of other days. I have loved it, too ; but I am of a restless nature — I cannot remain long in any place. Besides, I love a little bustle, and I long to mingle with the world again ; and I have for some time been planning a voyage to America, where I propose taking my good Ehrenfried with me, as he seems as much filled with the love of travel as myself. Steinrode, therefore, if you wish it, shall be given back into your hands fettered with this condition only, that when weary of wandering, I may feel the need of rest, you will receive me for a short space as your guest, and my young companion — will you not find a place for him too ? My trunks are already packed," he continued, laughing, as the Baron endeavored to express the grateful astonishment he felt at this unexpected fulfilment of the heart's wish he had not dared to utter. "Ehrenfried and myself set out in the morning, and you must all stay here, if it is only to see the harvest gathered, and the flowers that, hid in their beds by thousands, are yet to bloom before the withering winds of Autumn

come. I am a queer old man, but I love, in pursuing my own notions, to make others happy."

New joy was diffused among the Lindenburg family, when the father communicated the intelligence that Steinrode was once more to be their home. That of the parents was calm and quiet; but the children—they were almost boisterous. Felix would have felt but half satisfied at leaving the old castle; but now he saw himself prospectively the farmer he had ever wished to be, tilling the old acres over which his ancestors had trodden, and filling, as his father had done, the place of landlord and benefactor to those born on the soil, after he had passed away like the others, whose faded portraits in the old hall alone reminded the gazer that they *had* been.

The maidens—did they not long for the scenes, the bright glittering court scenes, left behind in the capital? O no; all was bright and pleasant there; they had many valued friends, many sweet associations springing from the intercourse, the employments and pleasures of a city life; but Steinrode—dear Steinrode—it was the sweetest place in the world. And now it was particularly so—the glorious summer sunlight, the cool gray shadows of the forest, the thousands of bright colored flowers that clothed the hillsides, the yellow waving grain, the songs of birds in the grove, and sweet odours from the garden— who would be

willing to exchange these for the dull, hot brick walls of a city? Ehrenfried himself, though burning with desire to visit those wondrous western realms of which he had read so much, could not leave it without bitter regret.

Felix and himself were to exchange letters regularly, and the latter was to make large collections of the plants and insects found in that tropical clime, which he was to send from time to time to his friend, whose long servitude in Poland had not in the least abated his love of Natural History.

The day came only too soon when Mr. Norman and the peasant boy were to leave Steinrode, perhaps forever; and all were sad and melancholy at the parting. With heavy hearts they listened to the clang of the post-horn that called the travellers from that quiet home; and some tears fell as the rumbling mail-coach vanished in the distance, and bore with it the friends they had learned to love.

Silent and sad, they were still seated at the breakfast table, which was spread in the old parlor, whose wide open windows permitted all sounds from without to enter, when the rolling of a carriage over the gravelled road in the front avenue roused them from their musing, and awakened their attention. They rose at once and looked out, wondering who those early visitors could be, and their eyes were greeted and their hearts gladdened by seeing the placid face of aunt Angela, and

hearing the hearty cheer which Herman gave as he thrust his smiling face through the open blinds of the carriage.

Oh! the meeting between the two brothers, who could describe it? No one; for no one can enter into the hidden depths of the heart—they could not have explained their emotions; and we will only say that they lay in each other's arms, whilst heart beat to heart; and answered each other in pulses that spoke to the spirit, but found no utterance in words. There was joy this day at Steinrode; such joy as to human beings is seldom permitted, whose remembrance no after sorrow can ever obliterate, and whose impression never altogether fades, even in the turmoil of busy life; for could brothers, like these thus reunited, forget? how could anything separate hearts thus joined?

Much of the former mode of life was resumed at Steinrode; occupations in the morning, and the family meetings round the fire in the winter evenings. Lady Lindenburg daily improved in health since she had found her long-mourned son again; and with great gratitude to heaven, she saw that Adversity had been sanctified to him. She resumed her house-keeping duties by degrees; but they were not hard, for old mother Spiller, still fresh and hale, remained at the head of the kitchen

concerns, and kept Dolly and the fat cook in due bounds.

Greatly were they all delighted to have Felix restored; and although Dolly would have been better pleased had he recounted adventures in Fairyland rather than his hardships in Poland, she bore her disappointment quite rationally, notwithstanding the cook often reminded her of all that had been said at the kitchen fire, on the night of his mysterious disappearance. Mother Spiller, as she laid her withered hand on his bright clustering locks, and looked into the laughing blue eyes she had so loved in childhood, could scarcely believe that the tall youth, with firmness and character written on every feature, proclaiming him a man in spirit, while the downy cheek and insipient moustache spoke him yet a boy in years, was the same she had nursed; but she found that, though hardened to battle with the storms of life, he had lost none of his natural amiability; and that union of gentleness with determination in the cause of right, ever so beautiful in their blending, detracted nothing from the character of her favorite, who, in a short time, became a greater one with her than ever.

Aunt Angela was the same as ever; the advance of years had infused no sourness into the disposition of her who was now a determined old maid.

Crow's-feet lurked around the corners of her once beautiful eyes, and threads of silver shone among her dark locks; but she covered the one with a plain cap, and the winning smile that played on every feature of her pleasant face prevented all notice of the other. Ready as ever to promote the happiness of those around her, she still was projecting plans for the improvement or amusement of those she loved so well; and entered, if not into the feelings of youth, at least into the participation of it, as it was called forth by her own efforts in the domestic circle.

"Tell me, girls," said she one evening, when they were all gathered around her except Pauline, "tell me, are you not sorry to have missed the great party given by the Princess Sulkony? You have lost all that by coming to the country; all the world was there, Emma."

"Where you there, aunty?" asked Pauline, who just looked in for a moment.

"No indeed; what business would a plain old maid like myself have there?" was her reply; and then, in a jesting manner, described the affair as she had heard of it from some of the guests who were present. The dresses worn were splendid; the ladies blazed with jewels; the arrangements—nothing was ever seen in the capital to equal them; it was all fairy-like, a scene of perfect enchantment.

Adie made no other answer than by laughingly jingling her mother's bunch of keys close to her good aunt's ear, much to the annoyance of the auricular nerves; and Emma, flying to the open piano, after playing a short symphony, struck into a song, half lively, half serious.

Who cares for the town, when the country's so fair,
With its cool shady woods, and soft summer air;
Where flowers on the hillsides more brilliantly glance,
Than fair ladies robed for the court or the dance.

Where the violet sends forth her sweet breath on the
breeze,

And voices are whispering among the green trees;
Mysterious and holy they fall on the ear,
Like music that swells from a loftier sphere;
And speaks of a world where in beauty arrayed
No blossom e're withers, no flowers e'er fade.

O give me the country, with valley and plain,
With rude mountain crest and soft waving grain;
Which speak to the heart while charming the eye,
Of the goodness that still every want will supply.

When o'er the gay city still evening shall fall,
And fair dames issue forth enrobed for the ball,
The court, or the revel—I would not be there,
For here in our home 'tis the season for prayer.
And listening angels that bend from the skies,
Smile on us while watching our pure sacrifice.

Pauline, who had too much business on her hands to care for the princess or her party, waited until her sister had finished her ballad, (for although

not present at the beginning, she had come in in time to hear the latter part of the description,) and now coming up to her aunt, she opened her apron, which, until this moment, she had held gathered in a bundle before, and displayed the treasure it contained. A dozen of black and yellow chickens, not more than a day old, set up a chirping as they met the light, and peals of laughter burst from all.

“That will do, little sister,” cried Felix; “you are our *little* Pauline still, though grown so tall; but what are you going to do with your chickens? have you the charge of the poultry-yard?”

“Not altogether,” said she, laughing; “you see I can now not only bear to be laughed at, but I can laugh with you, even when myself is the subject; but I have brought my chickens here to have them named. I want the largest called Felix. But indeed, dear aunty, I have no time to grieve over the loss of the party. Who would be shut up in a ball-room, though ever so much decorated, when they can run over the fields, where the fresh flowers are growing, and smell so sweet? And in our tulip-beds there are a more richly dressed company than that of the Princess Sulkony; and as for dancing, my chickens jump about and are a thousand times more active than the best of them, not excepting Major D——, in his nice white kid gloves!”

“Indeed!” said her aunt in mock astonishment; you must have learned such renunciation of what you cannot obtain from Gellert’s Fables, that you so loved when a child — something like the fox when he could not reach the grapes.”

And the happy maidens, full of the gleesome spirit of youth, entwined their arms around the neck of their beloved aunt, and half smothered her, as they stopped her jesting mouth with kisses.

CHAPTER XVI.

“His purpose is not to *appear* just, but to *be*.”

LEAVING the Steinrode family in the possession of as much happiness as ever falls to the lot of man, we look once more into the attic chamber which the Lady Von Grosse still occupied with her children, in the great city of W——. The Easter holidays had come; and never had a more beautiful morning risen upon the earth than that which heralded the Monday of Whitsuntide. The city bells rung out a merry peal, and cheerful tones of gleeful children echoed from the street—all told of a rejoicing world; but the sleepers in that low-roofed room awoke not. The bullfinch in his cage, which hung above Melanië's bed, twittered and piped his loudest; but she did not awake until in its fluttering he shook down some hemp-seed into her face, and then, astonished at her own slothfulness, in an instant she was up.

Dressing hastily, but quietly, for fear of disturbing her mother, she first performed her devotional duties, which now she never forgot; and next began her preparations for the family breakfast, a task which it was always her's to execute.

But as she left the room to get something she wanted, she perceived the door of the outer room where Eugene slept was open, and himself absent. Astonished at this movement, she was also disappointed; for she had prepared a little surprise for both, and she felt that if he was not at the table her plan would but half succeed.

Both her mother and Eugene were particularly fond of coffee; and as that was a luxury in which they seldom allowed themselves to indulge, she had made some sacrifices, in order to procure a small quantity, whereby to prepare a sort of feast on this high holiday; and was now cooking it, instead of their usual milk porridge, in another part of the house.

All was ready before her mother awoke; her little table was spread with a nice white cloth, cups were placed on a waiter, and the sugar basin was filled with sugar.

"Melanie, my dear," said the astonished mother, when on rising she saw the preparation for what they now considered a sumptuous breakfast, "where did you get all this? Eugene told me his master had not paid him for his last week's work, and I hope you have not gone in debt to provide us with a Whitsun feast."

"No indeed, mother," was the reply, "I did not do any such foolish thing. I took a simpler, and I hope, a wiser plan. I have so much hair

that it gives me a great deal of trouble, and makes me break so many combs. One day, not long since, when I went into the hair-dresser's shop to buy one, he noticed the great quantity, and remarked that I could spare a good handful, and not miss it; besides I could get a good price for it. So I cut out some locks and took them to him, and he paid me willingly and well; and now I have not half so much trouble to keep it in order. It often took up more time than I had to spare, and I am sure, mother, you can't miss it; I have one trouble less, and one pleasure more, since I am able to get up a little feast for you and Eugene on this glorious holiday."

The mother was about to answer, but at that moment the room door opened, and Eugene entered, bearing a packet in one hand, and a bunch of odorous spring flowers in the other.

"There, Melanie," said he, as he handed her the bouquet, "that is for you—you love flowers so well, and are kept so closely at work in this dull chamber, that you see nothing of gardens or flowers, except it may be now and then through some open gates; so that is your gift. Here, mother, is something of a different sort for you." Laughing as he spoke, he opened the paper parcel, and a large brown *Streitzel koche*, freshly baked and odorous with spices, lay within. "I know you loved it, mother; and as for myself, I often thought

of the Hausdorff *Streitzels* when I was munching gritz in Poland. But I must say, I believe the gritz did me more good than the cakes at the castle.

"My dear good children," said Lady Von Grosse, "I do not regret the luxuries of Hausdorff now; heaven has granted me purer, better blessings in this my poverty than I ever knew there. The Holy Spirit, whose office is love, has operated upon your hearts; and since I have found acceptance with God, and receive daily testimony that you, my beloved ones, are likewise of the household of faith, I want nothing more. I am superabundantly rich—the measure of my happiness is full and overflowing."

Eugene kissed the hand that rested caressingly on his sunburnt brow; and then turning to his sister, said, in a tone of half command and half entreaty, "Come, Melanie, you are house-keeper, cook, and everything else. Let us have breakfast, I am sure it will be a glorious one, for I think from the signs on the table you have something very good behind the scenes. Whether yourself or some good fairy has provided it, bring it forth now, for I have a great appetite for this holiday meal. Give me your cup, mother, I will pour out (you know Mademoiselle Adele used to say that was the French fashion,) while Melanie cuts the cake."

But, notwithstanding his great appetite, Eugene

had yet to wait for his breakfast; for ere Melanie could place the odorous beverage on the table, a knock was heard at the door. Eugene rose to open it, and a man, whom they knew to be a letter carrier, handed him a letter and parcel. But now an unforeseen difficulty arose; the postman must have his fee, and there was not one farthing in the house. Eugene groped in one pocket after another, but all were alike empty. He blushed to the temples while the man stood waiting; his master owed him a week's wages, and had promised to pay him at noon, but what of that—he wanted it now. Melanie cast down her eyes to the floor; she had nothing left from her holiday purchases.

“Who would have thought of us getting a letter, we have no friends,” she said to herself; ah! I am afraid I have been too extravagant, for maybe the sugar was too great a luxury for us, now that we are so poor.”

“I can come again,” said the good-natured postman, as he remarked the embarrassment of the family; “I know this young man to be the same who held back the wild horse of the Count Von Holm, when he was about to tread on my child, whom he had thrown down. The Count is a good-hearted gentleman, though a little too fond of frolic; and he was returning from a wine party when he rode over my boy, who was playing in the street. He has been asking for the brave young tradesman

who sprang out of the window of a workshop and held back the horse at his own risk; he called on me to say that ten ducats were ready for the young man's acceptance as soon as he chose to claim them. He did not know where to find you, nor I neither; but I know you to be the same, and I hope God will reward you for that kind act a thousand times."

"Did you really do this, my son," cried the overjoyed mother, "and never mentioned it to your sister or myself?"

"I did not think it worth talking about, mother; it was no more than any one else would have done," answered Eugene; and turning once more to the postman, said, "You will have to trust me for a short time, my good man, for I really have not a penny at present. But I will not be long in your debt. I will carry you the money this evening; and you may tell your boy I am coming to see him. In the meantime, carry him this piece of cake for me. So now, Melanie, you may pour out yourself; fill up a brimming cup for me, for I am too hungry now to care about French fashions, or think much about Mademoiselle Adele."

The pleased postman closed the door and disappeared. Lady Von Grosse and her children sat down to their delayed breakfast; and as they laughed and chatted over their holiday fare, they forgot the letter and its accompanying present for

a short space. But when they opened the missive, it was with great surprise they found it from Amadé, from whom they never expected to hear. It ran thus:—

“To Lady Von Grosse:—Heaven be praised, I found the spot in the wood where I left the casket, and it safely hidden beneath the stones. I am glad to restore what remains of the jewels into the hands of the true owners, whom I am sure will now make a better use of them than I did of those that are gone. The money that lies in the bottom of the box you may use; it was fairly gained, and is your own, most of it being the price of the jewels I sold. Think of me as one deeply repentant, and forgive the wrong I wrought upon you. May God, who in mercy led me to see my sinful ways, and strengthened me to resist temptation, bless you all. I shall see you no more in this world. The ship is ready to sail, and in another hour I shall be on the way to America.—Amadé.”

And there, forming a strong contrast to all else in that humble room, and the rude table whereon it lay, the bright gems within that casket of polished steel flashed and glittered in the brilliant sunshine that came dancing through the window. He shone as gaily on those few precious stones, the sole remainder of their once princely possessions, as he had done on the smoking ruins of their lordly castle of Hausdorff: for Nature, in all man's

changes remains the same. The seasons alter according to the appointment of heaven; the sun holds on his course, the rains "fall alike on the just and unjust," and seed-time and harvest come at their times of the Almighty bidding. Yet man and his concerns are not unmarked by the Heavenly Eye—the sun in his glory seems to mock the sad, and tempests lower around the gay and the happy. To them is appointed terms which they cannot pass; but to man, the chosen creature of its mercy, heaven is ever accessible.

The little group gazed in silence on those glittering gems; the deep emotion and various thoughts that filled the heart of each was too great for words. Eugene was the first to speak.

"Now, mother," said he, "my way is clear. I can now pay my debt of borrowed money to Horwitz, and set up a cabinet-making shop for myself. I am determined never to indulge in a life of idleness; I must have something to do; and with God's help, I will persevere in trying to do good."

Lady Von Grosse answered not, for she had not heard one word of what her son had spoken. She was lost in deep thought, for she recognised now more plainly than ever the wonder-working Hand of God, which had led them through such deep waters to a secure haven. What were they—the thoughtless, the deeply sinning—that He should thus seek to reclaim their wanderings by a chastise-

ment that had so tended to the healing of their souls? She felt that it was all of mercy; and the beautiful passage of Holy Writ occurred to her musing mind: "Can man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? will he enter with thee into judgment?" No, not for this, but because he loves the creatures he has made, and wills not that any should perish. Has he not manifested this love in that he opened a Way to everlasting life? has he not, in the person of the Saviour, exhibited Truth in her loveliest form before him? Has he not, in his great compassion, given his Son as a Great High Priest, who, touched with the feelings of man's infirmities, stands forth his "Advocate" and friend?

She who once had been the owner of a lordly castle, and was now the inmate of a low-ceiled garret room, acknowledged this present time to be the happiest portion of her life, inasmuch as she now knew what a great treasure she possessed in her children. But would they have proved such a blessing to her old age as they promised to be, had they not been taught in the school of Adversity? And as she thought over the bitter sorrow caused through the wrong done her by her faithless servant, Amadé, she felt that from her heart she

could forgive him; no bitterness filled her soul against one, whose sin against herself had been the means of bringing forth an end so desirable.

Eugene did not on this holiday go out to seek the revel, nor the companionship of his fellow-workmen. He thought over what was now his duty; and sitting down at the table, he wrote several letters. The first was to Horwitz, to whom he enclosed money to the amount of his debt, and another very long one to Felix, in which he detailed all his adventures since the time of their separation, his present abode and prospects, and the repentance and fate of Amadé and the villainous old Simon, who, we before forgot to say, had met the punishment he so well merited, being condemned to the galleys for life.

Melanie, too, in her present improved condition did not forget those who had befriended her in her days of darkness; she busied herself in preparing some useful presents for the collier's family; and as each one was remembered, she made up quite a large packet, which she afterwards heard had reached them in safety.

Eugene's letter found its way to Steinrode, where it was received with real joy. Baron Lindenburg, not having heard of the Count's death, had written twice, and the new forest warden had answered the last one. After stating that his predecessor had died away from home, and his

own appointment to the place, he coldly mentioned that the widow and her daughter had left the forest lodge to make room for his family, and were gone he knew not where. It is astonishing that human beings, liable to meet the same misfortunes, sympathize so little with each other; but so it is; we see or feel it every day.

The interest, however, of this Christian family was not diminished in the fate of those whose affairs were, for a time, so strangely blended up with their own; and when Felix answered Eugene's letter, the Baron bade him say he thought they had better remove to the neighborhood of Steinrode, which, in a short time afterwards, they really did.

Again they were entertained for a time beneath its hospitable roof; but not again was their sojourn productive of pain to their kind host. The spirit of grace had so changed their hearts, that they could not have been recognised by any one as the arrogant, overbearing children of other days, who had been wont to compare the now graceful Lindenburgs to dancing bears.

Eugene purchased a small piece of ground, on which he built a neat house and work-shop, carrying on his business with all industry and diligence. Baron Lindendurg sustained him both by counsel and pecuniary aid, witnessing with great delight, from day to day, the wonderful transformation made in his character.

Lady Von Grosse now lived contented and in great comfort with her children ; differently, indeed, from the manner in which she had done at the time we first introduced her to our readers ; but happier by far in her humbler life, than she had ever been in her days of luxury. Eugene was affectionate and kind ; Melanie everything that her mother could wish ; and a pleasant day was always anticipated at Steinrode when they made a weekly visit there, a rule which they regularly observed.

Eugene succeeded well in his undertaking. He purchased his materials with great foresight, managed his affairs with the caution that belonged to more experienced years ; and the consequences of his thrift were soon visible in his increasing prosperity. He soon ceased to work himself, for his business, ere long, became so large that he had enough to do to keep his books, and conduct the arrangements of his buying and selling. And right happy was he, that once idle, self-willed Eugene, in the knowledge that his industry had prepared so pleasant a home for his mother in her old age, and that he could furnish Melanie with not only necessary comforts, but many things which she once did not think of enjoying, and now considered luxuries.

Felix assisted his father in the farming and management of the broad lands of Steinrode, and bid fair to make quite as good a landlord when he

should be called on to fill his place. The tenants loved him, the poor blessed him, and to his family he was a treasure. The blemish of impatience, which had once marred his character, became entirely obliterated; and the thoughtlessness that had more than once led to such sad consequences, was carefully guarded against. Not but that natural propensities sometimes rose up to tempt him in his steady purposes, but Adversity had taught him to resist their influence, and Grace strengthened him to overcome.

Herman, according to his wish ever from boyhood, prosecuted his studies as a physician, for which his calm, steady disposition well fitted him. He settled in the capital, and in time rose to eminence and distinction; and until he had an establishment of his own, and had chosen a helpmate for life, aunt Angela conducted the affairs of his household. There, then, under his roof the Lindenburg family passed a month every winter; yet always returning with joyful longing to Steinrode, that dear old home of which they never tired.

The best of news reached them from time to time from that distant land whither Ehrenfried and his patron had gone. Many letters were interchanged between Felix and his friend; and many beautiful specimens of entomology and botany were sent by the latter, to increase the collection at Steinrode; for the former, in becoming a farmer,

had lost none of his love for Natural History, but studied the science, and made discoveries in it, that gave him a name conspicuous among accomplished Naturalists.

Years passed over, and it seemed as if Time in his flight still increased their happiness and their blessings. Piety was the foundation of their joy; why should it not be lasting? They knew that all things on earth are subject to change; but theirs was the faith that bade them look further than this world, whose fashion is soon to pass away. They knew, too, that when the "house of the earthly tabernacle" was destroyed, they were told of hope for "one not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," and although "on earth there is no continuing city," they could confidently look forward to "one whose builder and whose maker is God."

At length a letter came from Mr. Norman to the Baron. He wrote that having sojourned in the New World until he was weary of hot suns, orange groves, reptiles, and fevers, he intended returning in the course of a few months with Ehrenfried, whom he had formally adopted as his son. He bade him apprise the young man's mother, who was still living, and through the joint care of the good old Englishman and the Baron, in great comfort, in a cottage of her own, that they would proceed immediately to Steinrode, "where," said the old man in his letter, "according to our agree-

ment, I wish to make a long visit in your happy family.

The tidings were received joyfully by all. Ehrenfried's mother folded her hands in acknowledgment to heaven, while tears flowed down her aged cheeks. The Lindenburg children (for we still will call them so,) hastened to tell Eugene and Melanie the news. A deep blush dyed the cheeks of the latter, as she heard the name of Ehrenfried — she had not forgotten the affair of the bracelet, and her heart was pained at the idea of meeting one whom she had once used so ill.

“I will try by every means in my power to make him forget it,” said she to Felix.

Eugene was overwhelmed with shame, as he recalled his own arrogant behaviour to the gentle peasant boy.

“But his is a noble spirit,” said he, “and he will forgive us, I am sure. Felix, I will make him love me; I will leave no means untried to win his confidence; and then, once more united in the social circle, there shall not be found, neither far nor near, better friends than the ‘NEIGHBORS’ CHILDREN.’”

THE END.

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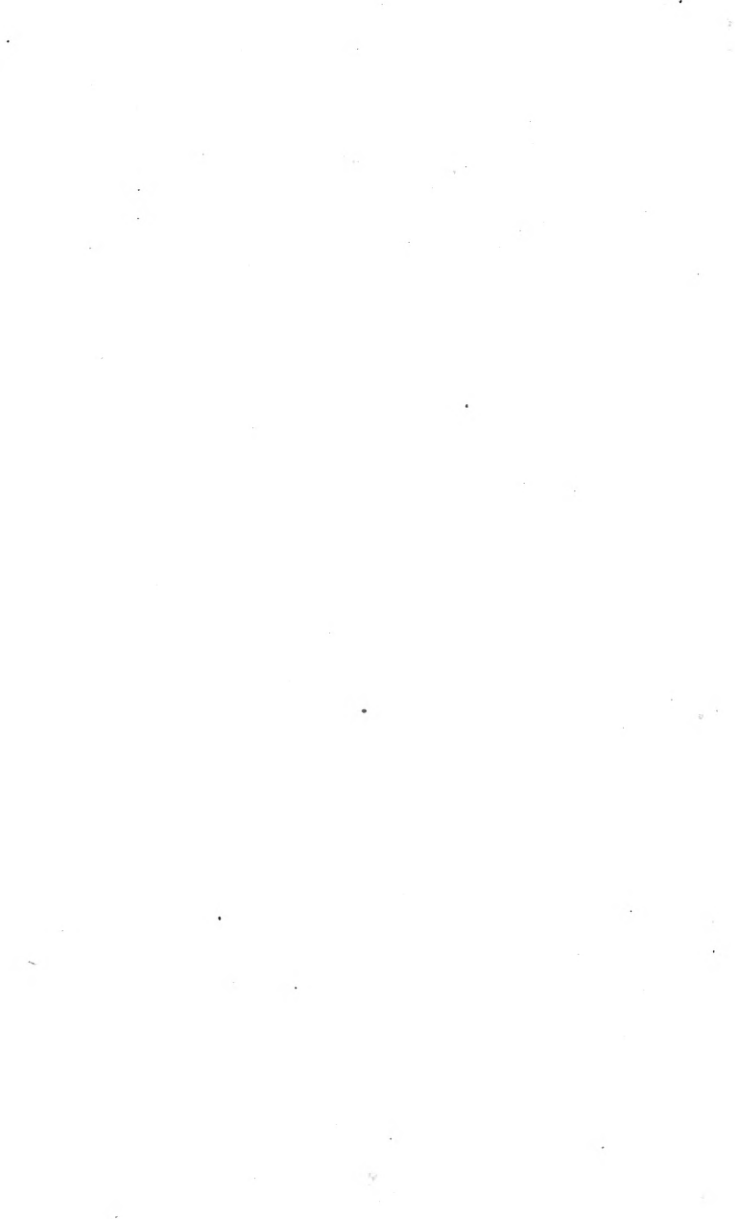
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