



THE GERMAN CLASSICS

Masterpieces of German Literature

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH



ON THE NORTH SEA COAST

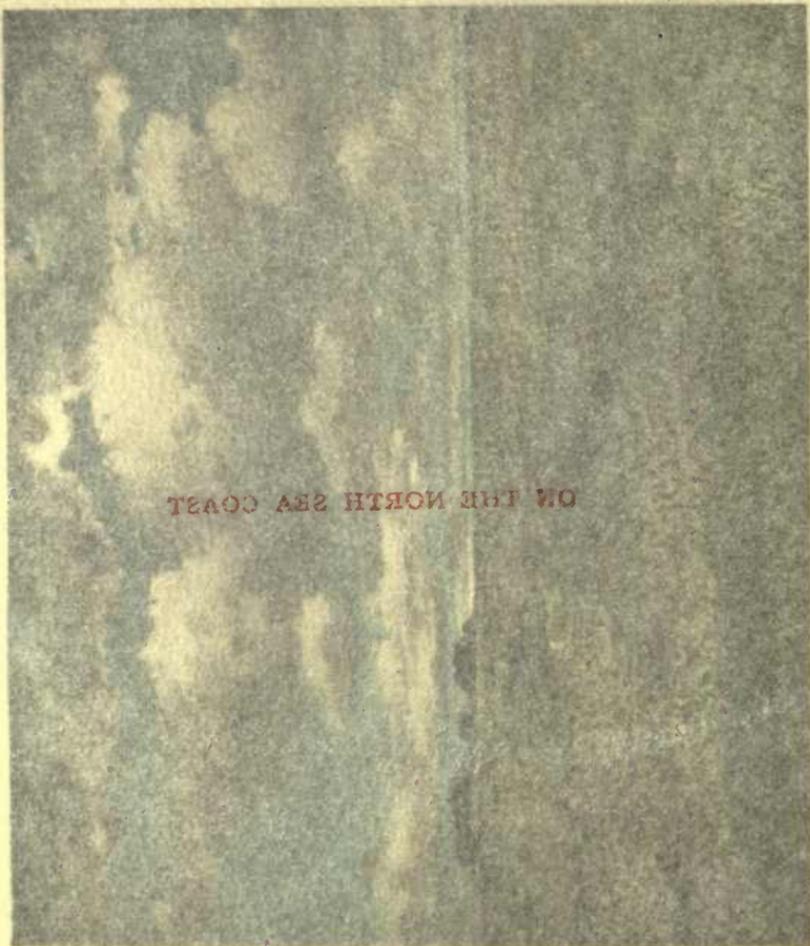
Patrons' Edition

IN TWENTY VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

THE GERMAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY

From the Painting by Jacob Alberts



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NEW YORK

CONTRIBUTORS AND TRANSLATORS

VOLUME XI

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The Life of Friedrich Spielhagen.

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The Life of Theodor Storm; Wilhelm Raabe.

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Storm Flood.

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The Rider of the White Horse; The Hunger Pastor.

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Consolation.

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To a deceased; The City; The Heath.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

THE illustrations in this volume, devoted to the writings of Spielhagen, Storm, and Raabe, are from paintings by Michael von Munkacsy, Jacob Alberts, and Karl Spitzweg. Munkacsy may be called an artistic counterpart to Spielhagen, inasmuch as he shared with him the conscious striving for effect, the predilection for striking social contrasts, and the desire to make propaganda for liberalism. Spitzweg was allied to Raabe in his truly Romantic inwardness, his joyful acceptance of all phases of life, his glorification of the humble and the lowly, and his inexhaustible humor. Alberts is probably the most talented living painter of that part of Germany which forms the background of Storm's finest novels: the Frisian coast of the North Sea.

KUNO FRANCKE.

THE LIFE OF FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN

BY MARION D. LEARNED, PH.D.

Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Pennsylvania.



HE struggle for liberal institutions, which found expression in the Wars of Liberation, the July Revolution of 1830, and the March Revolution of 1848—with visions of a German Republic, with bitter protest against the Reaction, with a new hope of a regenerated social State and a renovated German Empire—marks only the stormy stages of the liberalizing movement which is still going on in the German nation. Since 1848, radical revolt has taken on forms very different from the dreams which fired the spirits of the Forty-eighters. The sword has yielded to the pen, the scene of combat has shifted from the arsenal and the battlefield to the printed book and the Council Chamber; while the necessity of an active policy of military defense has saved the German people from the throes of bloody internal strife.

In the transition from the armed revolutionary outbreak of 1848 to the evolutionary processes of the present day, the novel of purpose and of living issues (*Tendenz-und Zeitroman*) has played an important part in teaching the German people to think for themselves and to seek the highest good of the individual and of the classes in the general weal of the nation as a whole. In the front rank, if not the foremost, of the novelists of living issues in this period of social and economic reform was Friedrich Spielhagen, whose novels were almost without exception novels of purpose.

Friedrich Spielhagen was born in Magdeburg in the Prussian province of Saxony, February 24, 1829. He was the son of a civil engineer, and descended from a family of foresters in Tuchheim. His seriousness and precocity won

him the nickname of "little old man," and also admission to the gymnasium a year before the average age of six. In 1835, when he was six years old, his father was transferred to the position of Inspector of Waterworks in Stralsund. It was here by the sea and among the dunes that the young poet spent his most plastic years, and became, like Fritz Reuter, his contemporary and literary colleague of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, the poet of the Flat Land, which he made so familiar to the German public of the '60s and '70s. Spielhagen has given his own account of the first years of his life in his autobiography entitled *Discoverer and Inventor* which is evidently modeled after Goethe's *Poetry and Fact*. Here we learn with what delight the boy accompanied his father on his tours of inspection about the harbor city, with what difficulties he contended in school, which he says was to him neither "stepmother" nor "alma mater," what deep impressions his vacation visits at the country homes of his school friends left upon his sensitive mind. Although his family never became fully naturalized in the social life of Stralsund, but remained to the end "newcomers," Spielhagen says of himself that, in his love for Pomeranian nature, he felt himself to be "the peer of the native born of Pomerania, which has come to be, in the truest sense of the word, my home land."

The sea with its endless variety of moods and scenes opened to him the secrets of his favorite poet Homer. He says: "I count it among the greatest privileges of my life that I could dream myself into my favorite poet, while the Greek original was still a book of seven seals." Following the steps of his great German model, Goethe, he tested his talents for the stage both at home, where he was playwright, manager, stage director, prompter and actor, all in one, and later on the real stage at Magdeburg only to find that he was not called to wear the buskin.

In his school days he began to read the authors of German fiction and poetry: Tieck, Arnim, Brentano, Stifter, Zschokke, Steffens, Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea* and

Faust (First Part), Lessing, Uhland, Heine's *Book of Songs*, Freiligrath, Herwegh. He also browsed about in other literatures: Byron's *Don Juan* he read first when he was seven years of age; of Walter Scott he says: "In speaking this precious name I mention perhaps not the most distinguished, but nevertheless the greatest and most sympathetic, stimulator of my mind at that time. * * * In comparison with this splendid Walter Scott, the other English and American novelists, Cooper, Ainsworth, Marryat, and whatever their names whose novels came into my hands at that time are stars of the second and third magnitude." He regards Bulwer alone as the peer of the Scottish Bard.

The English influence of the time was reflected also in the life about him, especially in the sport-life, with its horse-racing, pigeon-shooting, card-playing (Tarok, L'Hombre, Whist or Boston) and kindred pastimes. He knew "that Blacklock was sired by Brownlock from Semiramis, and Miss Jane was bred of the Bride of Abydos by Robin Hood"—an interesting sidelight on the Byronic influence of the time. This sport-life so zealously cultivated by the gentry, and his visits to the manor houses of his school friends during the vacations, afforded him glimpses into the customs and traditions of the agrarian gentry of Pomerania, and the manorial economy and reckless life of the nobles with their castles, dependents, laborers, overseers, apprentices, volunteers and the like—the first impressions of his *Problematic Characters*.

In 1847 Spielhagen left Stralsund to study jurisprudence at the University of Berlin, a journey of thirty German miles in twenty-four hours. What a revelation the great capital presented to the youthful provincial, who had never seen a railroad nor a gas jet before he began the journey! Arriving before the opening of the semester he had time to take an excursion into Thuringia, which later became so dear to him and is reflected in his *From Darkness to Light* (second part of *Problematic Characters*), *Always to the Fore*, *Rose of the Court*, *Hans and Grete*, *The Village*

Coquette, The Amusement Commissioner, and The Fair Americans. Returning to Berlin he heard, among others, Heidemann on Natural Law and Trendelenburg on Logic. The signs of revolution were already visible in the university circles, but had not as yet awakened the interests of Spielhagen, who declared that revolution was a matter of weather, and that he himself was a republican in the sense that the others were not.

The next semester Spielhagen went to the University of Bonn, wavering between Law and Medicine. The landscape of the lower Rhineland was not congenial to him. He longed for his Pomeranian shore with its dunes and invigorating sea life. In Bonn he met leaders of the revolutionary party—Carl Schurz, “le bel homme,” and Ludwig Meyer. The portrait he sketches of Carl Schurz is an outline of that which the liberator of Kinkel rounded out for himself in his long years of sturdy citizenship in America. Spielhagen warned Schurz at that time that his schemes were quixotic.

During the following vacation, on a foot-tour through Thuringia, Spielhagen witnessed the effects of the revolution and the ensuing reaction. He arrived at Frankfurt-on-the-Main just after the close of the Great Parliament. He was deeply impressed with the violence done to Auerswald and Lichnowski, and witnessed the trial of Lassalle for the theft of the jewel-casket of the Baroness von Meyendorf. His attention was thus fixed upon the personality of the great socialist reformer who was later to play such an important rôle in his novels, and of whom he said: “Lassalle set in motion the message which not only continues today, but is only beginning to manifest its depth and power, and the end of which no mind of the wise can foresee.”

In Bonn Spielhagen finally went over to classical philology, and devoted much time also to modern literature. His beloved Homer, the Latin poets, Goethe’s lyrics, *Goetz, Iphigenia, Tasso, Wilhelm Meister, The Elective Affinities, Immermann’s Münchhausen, Vilmar, Gervinus, Loebel,*

Simrock's *Nibelungen*, Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, Dickens and Shakespeare all claimed his attention. The most interesting incident of his stay at Bonn was his audience with the later Crown Prince Frederick, who had come with his tutor, Professor Curtius, to take up his studies at the university—an audience which was repeated at the Court of Coburg in 1867, when Spielhagen came face to face with his literary antipathy, Gustav Freytag.

After three years of vacillation in his university studies, he finally made peace with his father, and decided to take his degree in philology. To this end he entered the University of Greifswald and began the more serious study of esthetics, starting with Humboldt's *Esthetic Experiments*, and developing his own theory of objectivity in the novel. Meanwhile he read the English novelists Dickens, Thackeray, Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, and the Germans Lichtenberg, Rabener, Jean Paul, Thümmel, and Vischer's *Esthetics*. His essay *On Humor* and other critical works owe much to these studies. After giving his interpretation of an ode of Horace in the seminary, he worked at his dissertation, and found in Tennyson the theme for his first finished work, *Klara Vere*.

Having left the university, Spielhagen entered the army for his year of service. Here he gained valuable experience and information, which stood him in good stead in his novels. During this year he found time to delve again into Spinoza, whom he had studied in Berlin. The doctrines of this philosopher now had a new meaning for him and offered him a philosophic mooring which he had so much needed in deciding upon his career. Commenting on his reading he says: "I wished to win from philosophy the right to be what I was, the right to give free rein to the power which I felt to be dominant in my mind. I wished to procure a charter for 'the ruling passion' of my soul." This charter he found in Spinoza's words: "Every one exists by the supreme right of Nature, and consequently, according to the supreme right of Nature, every one does

what the necessity of his nature imposes, and accordingly by this supreme right of nature every one judges what is good and what is bad, and acts in his own way for his own welfare." This principle of "suum esse conservare" becomes the guiding thought in Spielhagen's life at this time. With this philosophic turn of mind came a reaction against Byron's immoral characters such as Don Juan.

He was now confronted with the problem of reconciling in his own life Freiligrath's words, "wage-earner and poet." His pedagogical faculties had been developed by the informal lectures which he had given to the circle of his sister's girl friends. After the manœuvres were over he took a position as private tutor in the family of a former Swedish officer of the "type of gentleman," as he says. In this rural Pomeranian retreat the instincts of the poet were rapidly awakened. Enraptured with the beauty of the country he adopted Friedrich Schlegel's practice of writing down his thoughts and shifting moods in the form of fragments. As the family broke up for the holidays, he strapped on his knapsack for a cross-country tour homeward, making a détour to visit an old friend at Rügen. It was here that he fell in love with Hedda, the heroine of the story *On the Dunes*. He felt love now for the first time in its real power, which was lacking in *Klara Vere*. But this new, strange passion left him only the more a poet. In one of his fragments he wrote: "The poet worships every beautiful woman as the devout Catholic does every image of the Holy Virgin, but the image is not the Queen of Heaven."

The vacation had made him discontented with his position. All the rural charm seemed changed to commonplace. He now felt a bond of sympathy with Rousseau, Victor Hugo, and George Sand, sought literary uplift in Homer, Æschylus, Shakespeare, Scott, Byron, and extended his reading to *Gargantua*, *Tom Jones*, Lamartine, *Madame Bovary*, and *Vanity Fair*, but declares he would willingly exchange *Consuelo* for *Copperfield*. It was at this

time, when Spielhagen was in unsteady mood as to his future, that he saw for the last time his old Greifswald friend, Albert Timm, who in the last three years had sadly changed from the promising student to the cynic: “‘Yes,’ he cried (from the platform of the moving train) ‘I am going to America, not of my own wish, but because others wish it. They may be right; in any case, I have run my course in Europe. Perhaps I shall succeed better over there, or perhaps not; it’s all the same. * * * Somewhere in the forest primeval! To the left around the corner! Don’t forget: to the left around the——’ and the train sped out of sight.” These parting words of his shipwrecked friend reminded Spielhagen only too keenly of his own unsettled career.

At length Spielhagen decided to go to Leipzig to prepare for a professorship of literature in the university. After a tour in Thuringia, during which he saw in Ilmenau a gipsy troupe which furnished him with the character of Cziska in the *Problematic Characters*, he again took up his study of literature and esthetics. His encounter with Kant’s philosophy and Schiller’s esthetic theories led him back to Goethe and Spinoza. In the midst of these philosophical problems, he received one day a letter from Robert Hall Westley, an English friend in Leipzig, “a gentleman bred and born,” telling him of a vacancy in English at the “*Modernes Gesamt-Gymnasium*” at that place. Spielhagen accepted the position in 1854, and in good American fashion followed the method of *docendo discimus*. Thus he finds himself again a producer.

The first fruit of his critical studies during the early Leipzig period was the completed essay *On Humor*, which was now accepted and published by Gutzkow in *Unterhaltungen am häuslichen Herd*. This, his first printed work, gave him new courage. His studies in English led him again to the English and American poets. The offer of a Leipzig firm to publish a collection of translations of American poetry added new zest to his reading in American

literature. The chief source of his translations was Griswold's *Poets and Poetry of America*. A specimen from Emerson's *Representative Men* will illustrate his skill in translating:

SPHINX.

'O tiefer und tiefer
 Muss tauchen der Geist;
 Weisst alles du, weisst du,
 Dass gar nichts du weisst;
 Jetzt zieht es dich mächtig
 Zum Himmel hinan;
 Bist droben du, steckst du
 Dir weiter die Bahn."

These translations appeared under the title *Amerikanische Gedichte*. In addition to selections from Bryant, Longfellow, Poe, Bayard Taylor, and others, he translated also George William Curtis' *Nile Notes of an Howadji*, which was published with the title *Nil-Skizzen*.

His admiration for American literature was very great, as his own words will show: "But upon this wide, entirely original, field of poetry what abundance, what variety of production! Palmettos grow by the side of gnarly oaks, and the most charming and modest flora of the prairie among the garden flowers of magic beauty and intoxicating perfume." The American poems were followed by translations of Michelet's *L'Amour* and other French and English works.

Spielhagen connected himself with Gutzkow's *Europa* and devoted himself for a time to criticism. Among the essays of this period are *Objectivity in the Novel*, *Dickens*, *Thackeray*, etc. At the suggestion of Kolatschek, an Austrian Forty-eighter, who had returned from America and founded the periodical *Stimmung der Zeit* in Vienna, Spielhagen wrote a severe criticism of Freytag's historical drama *The Fabians*. This attack upon Freytag was occasioned by the severe criticism of Gutzkow's *Magician of Rome*, published in the *Grenzboten*, edited by Julian

Schmidt and Gustav Freytag. It was Spielhagen's demand for fair play as well as his admiration for Gutzkow that drew him into the conflict.

The old home in Pomerania had been broken up by the death of his father and the marriage of his sister, and the events of his early life could now be viewed as history. Out of these events and his later experience grew his first great novel, *Problematic Characters* (1860, Second Part 1861). This novel deals with the conditions in Pomerania in particular, and in Germany in general, before 1848. The title is drawn from Goethe's *Aphorisms in Prose*: "There are problematic characters which are not adapted to any position in life and are not satisfied with any condition in life. Out of this arises that titanic conflict which consumes life without compensation." The hero, Dr. Oswald Stein, is the poet himself in his rôle as family tutor and implacable foe of the institutions of the nobility, "a belated Young German" and an incipient socialist. He falls in love with Melitta von Berkow in her Hermitage, with the impulsive Emilie von Breesen at the ball, and with Helene von Grenwitz, his pupil. Because of the latter he fights a duel with her suitor, Felix, and then goes off with Dr. Braun to begin anew at Grünwald. In the second part of this novel this unfinished story is carried to its tragic and logical conclusion, when Oswald dies a heroic death at the barricades. Although most of the chief characters drawn in the novel are types, they are modeled after prototypes in real life. Oswald, the revolutionist with a suggestion of the Byronic, echoes the poet in his early career. Dr. Braun (Franz), the man of will, is modeled on the poet's young friend Bernhard, and Oldenburg, the titanic Faust nature, is taken from his friend Adalbert of the Gymnasium days at Stralsund. Albert Timm was his boon companion at Greifswald, and Professor Berger is a composite of Professor Barthold, the historian, and Professor M——, who later became insane.

In the years 1860-62 Spielhagen was editor of the literary supplement of the *Zeitung für Norddeutschland*, doing valuable service as a literary journalist. In this position he had opportunity to prepare himself for the wider activities as editor of the *Deutsche Wochenschrift* and later (1878-84) of Westermann's *Monatshefte*. After 1862 he was identified with the surging life of Berlin.

In *The Hohensteins* (1863) the story of a declining noble family, recalling the historical novel of Scott and Hauff's *Lichtenstein*, the socialistic program of Lassalle begins to appear. Lassalle's doctrines find their spokesman in the hero, Bernhard Münzer, the fantastic but despotic agitator and cosmopolitan socialist; while the idealist, Baltasar, voices the reform program of the poet himself in the words: "Educate yourselves, Germans, to love and freedom."

In the next novel, *In Rank and File* (1866), the program of Lassalle is reflected in Leo Gutmann, a character of the Auerbach type. The mouthpiece of the poet is really Walter Gutmann, who sums up the moral of the story in these sentences: "The heroic age is past. The battle-cry is no longer: 'one for all,' but 'all for all.' The individual is only a soldier in rank and file. As individual he is nothing; as member of the whole he is irresistible." Father Gutmann, the forester, is evidently an echo of the poet's family traditions, while Dr. Paulus is an exponent of the philosophy of Spinoza. Leo's career and fall illustrate the futility of the principle of "state aid" in the reform program. Even the seven years of residence in America were not sufficient to rescue him from his visionary schemes.

In *Hammer and Anvil* (1869) the same theme is treated in a different form. The poet teaches here that the conflict between master and servant, ruler and subject, must be re-interpreted and recognized as a necessary condition of society. "The situation is not hammer *or* anvil, as the revolutionists would have it, but hammer *and* anvil; for every creature, every man, is both together, at every moment." Thus the "solidarity of interests" is the aim to be

kept in view, and is shown by Georg Hartwig, who having learned his lesson in the penitentiary now appears as the owner of a factory and gives his workmen an interest in the profits.

The most powerful of Spielhagen's novels is *Storm Flood* (1877), in which the inundation caused by the fearful storm on the coast of the Baltic Sea in 1874 is made a coincident parallel of the calamity brought about by the reckless speculation of the industrial promoters of the early seventies. As the catastrophe on the Baltic is the consequence of ignoring the warnings of physical phenomena in nature, so the financial crash and family distress which overwhelm the Werbens and Schmidts are the result of the violation of similar natural laws in the social and industrial world. The novelist has here reached the highest development of his art. The course of the narrative gathers in its wake all the elements of catastrophe, to let them break with the fury of the tempest over the lives of the characters, but allows the innocent children of Nature to come forth as the happy survivors of this wreck and ruin. The characters of Reinhold and Else, who find their bliss in true love, are his best creations. The poet has here proved himself a worthy disciple of Shakespeare and Walter Scott.

After this blast of the tempest, the poet turned to the more placid scenes of his native heath in the novel entitled *Flat Land* (1879), in which he describes the conditions of Pomerania between 1830-1840. The wealth of description and incident, the variety of motive and situation, make this story one of the most characteristic of Pomeranian scenery and life.

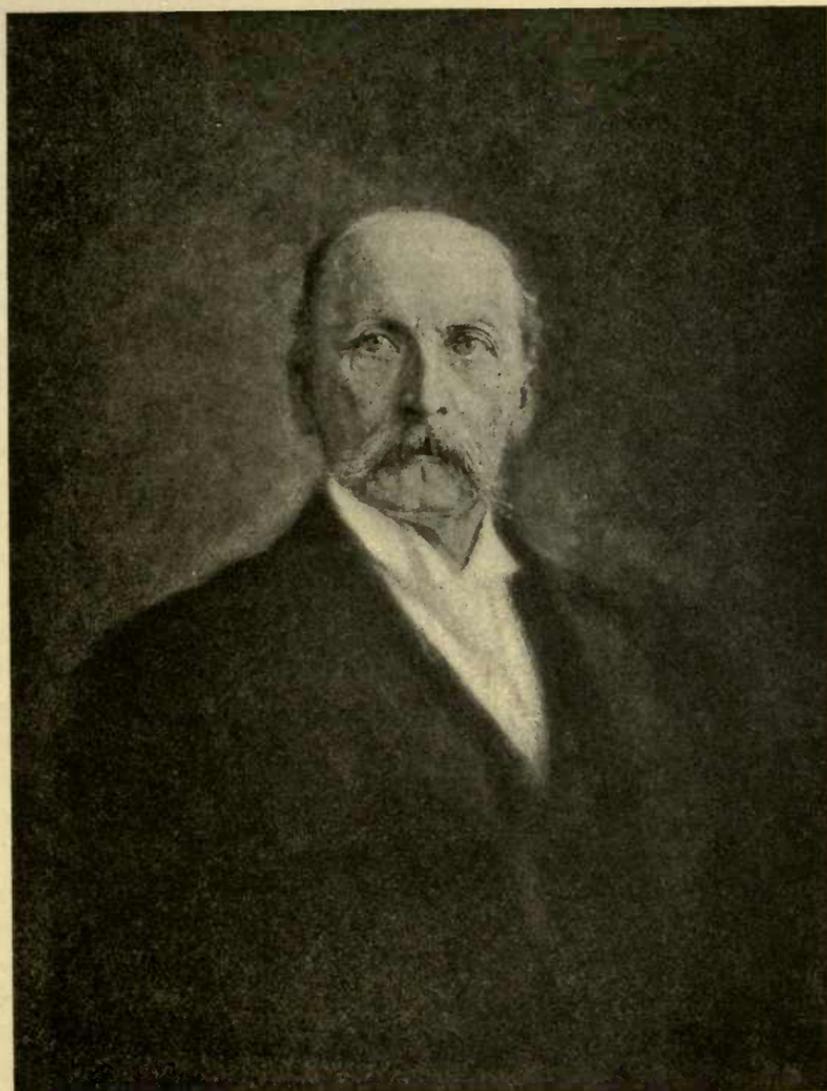
In the novel *What Is to Come of It?* (1887), liberalism, social democracy, nihilism, held in check by the grip of the Iron Chancellor, contend for the mastery. And what shall be the result? The poet answers: "There is a bit of the Social Democrat in every one," but the result will be "a high and lofty one and a new, glorious phase of an ever-

striving humanity." Here are brought into play typical characters, the Bismarckian Squire, the reckless capitalist, the particularist with his feigned liberalism.

Spielhagen's pessimism finds vent in *A New Pharaoh* (1889), which is a protest against the Bismarck régime. The ideals of the Forty-eighter are represented by Baron von Alden, who comes back from America to visit his old home only to find a new Pharaoh, who knows nothing of the Joseph of 1848. Finding the Germans a race of toadies and slaves, in which the noble-minded go under while the base triumph, he turns his back upon the new empire for good and all. "Nothing is accomplished by the sword which another sword cannot in turn destroy. The permanent and imperishable can be accomplished only by the silent force of reason."

In addition to his more pretentious novels, Spielhagen wrote a large number of shorter novels and short stories. To these belong *Klara Vere* and *On the Dunes*, already mentioned, *At the Twelfth Hour* (1863), *Rose of the Court* (1864), *The Fair Americans* (1865), *Hans and Grete*, and *The Village Coquette* (1869), *German Pioneers* (1871), *What the Swallow Sang* (1873), *Ultimo* (1874), *The Skeleton in the Closet* (1878), *Quisisana* (1880), *Angela* (1881), *Uhlenhans* (1883), *At the Spa* (1885), *Noblesse Oblige* (1888). The most important of Spielhagen's latest novels are *The Sunday Child* (1893), *Self Justice* (1896), *Sacrifices* (1899), *Born Free* (1900).

The place of Spielhagen in German literature is variously estimated. Heinrich and Julius Hart in *Kritische Waffengänge* (1884) contest his claim to a place among artists of the first rank and condemn his use of the novel for purposes of reform; while Gustav Karpeles in his *Friedrich Spielhagen* (1889) assigns him a place among the best novelists of his time. This latter position is more nearly correct. The modern disposition to cry art for art's sake, and to denounce all art which has a didactic purpose, is the offspring of ignorance of the real nature of art. In a general



Permission Berlin Photo. Co., New York

A. WEISS

FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN

way all art has a didactic purpose of varying degrees of directness. It is just this didactic purpose which has entitled the novel to its place among the literary forms, and it is this purpose which made Spielhagen's novels such a potent power in the social revolution of the later nineteenth century.

The charge has been made against Spielhagen that his characters are mechanical types used as vehicles of the author's doctrines or of the tendencies of the time. This charge is not sustained by the facts, even in the case of his first somewhat crude novel, the *Problematic Characters*, of which he says later: "There was not a squire in Rügen nor a townsman in Stralsund or Greifswald who did not feel himself personally offended." And the pronounced and clearly defined characters of *Storm Flood*, in their sharp contrasts and fierce conflicts with social tradition and natural impulse, present a vivid picture of the surging life of the New Empire.

Spielhagen possessed an intimate knowledge of literary technique. Few if any of his contemporaries had given more careful attention to the principles of esthetics and of literary workmanship, as may be seen from his critical essays and particularly the treatises, *Contributions to the Theory and Technique of the Novel*, and *New Contributions to the Theory and Technique of the Epic and Drama*.

It was but poetic justice that the novelist of the stormy days of the Revolution should be permitted to spend the declining years of his long life in the sunshine of the new Berlin, in whose making he had participated and whose life he had chronicled. He died February 24, 1911, having passed his fourscore years.

FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN

STORM FLOOD* (1877)

TRANSLATED AND CONDENSED BY MARION D. LEARNED, PH. D.
Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Pennsylvania.



HE weather had grown more inclement as evening came on. On the forward deck groups of laborers on their way to the new railroad at Sundin were huddled more closely together between the high tiers of casks, chests, and boxes; from the rear deck the passengers, with few exceptions, had disappeared. Two elderly gentlemen, who had chatted much together during the journey, stood on the starboard looking and pointing toward the island around the south end of which the ship had to pass. The flat coast of the island, rising in a wide circuit to the promontory, became more distinct with each second.

“So that is Warnow?”

“Your pardon, Mr. President—Ahlbeck, a fishing village; to be sure, on Warnow ground. Warnow itself lies further inland; the church tower is just visible above the outlines of the dunes.”

The President let fall the eyeglasses through which he had tried in vain to see the point of the church tower. “What sharp eyes you have, General, and how quickly you get your bearings!”

“It is true I have been there only once,” replied the General; “but since then I have had only too much time to study this bit of coast on the map.”

The President smiled. “Yes, yes, it is classic soil,” said he; “there has been much contention over it—much and to no purpose.”

“I am convinced that it was fortunate that the contention

* Permission L. Staackmann, Leipzig.

was fruitless—at least had only a negative result,” said the General.

“I am not sure that the strife will not be renewed again,” replied the President; “Count Golm and his associates have been making the greatest efforts of late.”

“Since they have so signally proved that the road would be unprofitable?”

“Just as you have shown the futility of a naval station here!”

“Pardon, Mr. President, I had not the deciding voice; or, more correctly, I had declined it. The only place at all adapted for the harbor would have been there in the southern corner of the bay, under cover of Wissow Point, that is on Warnow domain. To be sure, I have only the guardianship of the property of my sister——”

“I know, I know,” interrupted the President; “old Prussian honesty, which amounts to scrupulousness. Count Golm and his associates are less scrupulous.”

“So much the worse for them,” replied the General.

The gentlemen then turned and joined a young girl who was seated in a sheltered spot in front of the cabin, passing the time as well as she could by reading or drawing in a small album.

“You would like to remain on deck, of course, Else?” asked the General.

“Do the gentlemen wish to go to the cabin?” queried the young girl in reply, looking up from her book. “I think it is terrible below; but, of course, it is certainly too rough for you, Mr. President!”

“It is, indeed, unusually rough,” replied the President, rolling up the collar of his overcoat and casting a glance at the heavens; “I believe we shall have rain before sundown. You should really come with us, Miss Else! Do you not think so, General?”

“Else is weatherproof,” replied the General with a smile; “but you might put a shawl or something of the kind about you. May I fetch you something?”

“Thank you, Papa! I have everything here that is necessary,” replied Else, pointing to her roll of blankets and wraps; “I shall protect myself if it is necessary. *Au revoir!*”

She bowed gracefully to the President, cast a pleasant glance at her father, and took up her book again, while the gentlemen went around the corner to a small passage between the cabin and the railing.

She read a few minutes and then looked up and watched the cloud of smoke which was rising from the funnel in thick, dark gray puffs, and rolling over the ship just as before. The man at the helm also stood as he had been standing, letting the wheel run now to the right, now to the left, and then holding it steady in his rough hands. And, sure enough, there too was the gentleman again, who with untiring endurance strode up and down the deck from helm to bowsprit and back from bowsprit to helm, with a steadiness of gait which Else had repeatedly tried to imitate during the day—to be sure with only doubtful success.

“Otherwise,” thought Else, “he hasn’t much that especially distinguishes him”; and Else said to herself that she would scarcely have noticed the man in a larger company, certainly would not have observed him, perhaps not so much as seen him, and that if she had looked at him today countless times and actually studied him, this could only be because there had not been much to see, observe, or study.

Her sketch-book, which she was just glancing through, showed it. That was intended to be a bit of the harbor of Stettin. “It requires much imagination to make it out,” thought Else. “Here is a sketch that came out better: the low meadows, the cows, the light-buoy—beyond, the smooth water with a few sails, again a strip of meadow—finally, in the distance, the sea. The man at the helm is not bad; he held still enough. But ‘The Indefatigable’ is awfully out of drawing—a downright caricature! That comes from the constant motion! At last! Again! Only

five minutes, Mr. So-and-so! That may really be good—the position is splendid!”

The position was indeed simple enough. The gentleman was leaning against a seat with his hands in his pockets, and was looking directly westward into the sea; his face was in a bright light, although the sun had gone behind a cloud, and in addition he stood in sharp profile, which Else always especially liked. “Really a pretty profile,” thought Else; “although the prettiest part, the large blue kindly eyes, did not come out well. But, as compensation, the dark full beard promises to be so much the better; I am always successful with beards. The hands in the pockets are very fortunate; the left leg is entirely concealed by the right—not especially picturesque, but extremely convenient for the artist. Now the seat—a bit of the railing—and ‘The Indefatigable’ is finished!”

She held the book at some distance, so as to view the sketch as a picture; she was highly pleased. “That shows that I can accomplish something when I work with interest,” she said to herself; and then she wrote below the picture: “The Indefatigable One. With Devotion. August 26th, ’72. E. von W. . . .”

While the young lady was so eagerly trying to sketch the features and figure of the young man, her image had likewise impressed itself on his mind. It was all the same whether he shut his eyes or kept them open; she appeared to him with the same clearness, grace, and charm—now at the moment of departure from Stettin, when her father presented her to the President, and she bowed so gracefully; then, while she was breakfasting with the two gentlemen, and laughing so gaily, and lifting the glass to her lips; again, as she stood on the bridge with the captain, and the wind pressed her garments close to her figure and blew her veil like a pennant behind her; as she spoke with the steerage woman sitting on a coil of rope on the forward deck, quieting her youngest child wrapped in a shawl, then bending down, raising the shawl for a moment, and looking

at the hidden treasure with a smile; as she, a minute later, went past him, inquiring with a stern glance of her brown eyes whether he had not at last presumed to observe her; or as she now sat next to the cabin and read, and drew, and read again, and then looked up at the cloud of smoke or at the sailors at the rudder! It was very astonishing how her image had stamped itself so firmly in this short time—but then he had seen nothing above him but the sky and nothing below him but the water, for a year! Thus it may be easily understood how the first beautiful, charming girl whom he beheld after so long a privation should make such a deep and thrilling impression upon him.

“And besides,” said the young man to himself, “in three hours we shall be in Sundin, and then—farewell, farewell, never to meet again! But what are they thinking about? You don’t intend, certainly,” raising his voice, “to go over the Ostersand with this depth of water?” With the last words he had turned to the man at the helm.

“You see, Captain, the matter is this way,” replied the man, shifting his quid of tobacco from one cheek to the other; “I was wondering, too, how we should hold our helm! But the Captain thinks——”

The young man did not wait for him to finish. He had taken the same journey repeatedly in former years; only a few days before he had passed the place for which they were steering, and had been alarmed to find only twelve feet of water where formerly there had been a depth of fifteen feet. Today, after the brisk west wind had driven so much water seaward, there could not be ten feet here, and the steamer drew eight feet! And under these circumstances no diminution of speed, no sounding, not a single one of the required precautions! Was the Captain crazy?

The young man ran past Else with such swiftness, and his eyes had such a peculiar expression as they glanced at her, that she involuntarily rose and looked after him. The next moment he was on the bridge with the old, fat

Captain, speaking to him long and earnestly, at last, as it appeared, impatiently, and repeatedly pointing all the while toward a particular spot in the direction in which the ship was moving.

A strange sense of anxiety, not felt before on the whole journey, took possession of Else. It could not be a trifling circumstance which threw this quiet, unruffled man into such a state of excitement! And now, what she had supposed several times was clear to her—that he was a seaman, and, without doubt, an able one, who was certainly right, even though the old, fat Captain phlegmatically shrugged his shoulders and pointed likewise in the same direction, and looked through his glass, and again shrugged his shoulders, while the other rushed down the steps from the bridge to the deck, and came straight up to her as if he were about to speak to her.

Yet he did not do so at first, for he hurried past her, although his glance met hers; then, as he had undoubtedly read the silent question in her eyes and upon her lips, he hesitated for a moment and—sure enough, he turned back and was now close behind her!

“Pardon me!”

Her heart beat as if it would burst; she turned around.

“Pardon me,” he repeated; “I suppose it is not right to alarm you, perhaps without cause. But it is not impossible, I consider it even quite probable, that we shall run aground within five minutes; I mean strike bottom——”

“For Heaven’s sake!” exclaimed Else.

“I do not think it will be serious,” continued the young man. “If the Captain—there! We now have only half steam—half speed, you know. But he should reverse the engines, and it is now probably too late for that.”

“Can’t he be compelled to do it?”

“On board his ship the captain is supreme,” replied the young man, smiling in spite of his indignation. “I myself am a seaman, and would just as little brook interference in such a case.” He lifted his cap and bowed, took a step

and stopped again. A bright sparkle shone in his blue eyes, and his clear, firm voice quivered a bit as he went on, "It is not a question of real danger. The coast lies before us and the sea is comparatively quiet; I only wished that the moment should not surprise you. Pardon my presumption!"

He had bowed again and was quickly withdrawing as if he wished to avoid further questions. "There is no danger," muttered Else; "too bad! I wanted so much to have him rescue me. But father must know it. We ought to prepare the President, too, of course—he is more in need of warning than I am."

She turned toward the cabin; but the retarded movement of the ship, slowing up still more in the last half minute, had already attracted the attention of the passengers, who stood in a group. Her father and the President were already coming up the stairs.

"What's the matter?" cried the General.

"We can't possibly be in Prora already?" questioned the President.

At that instant all were struck as by an electric shock, as a peculiar, hollow, grinding sound grated harshly on their ears. The keel had scraped over the sand-bank without grounding. A shrill signal, a breathless stillness for a few seconds, then a mighty quake through the whole frame of the ship, and the powerful action of the screw working with reversed engine!

The precaution which a few minutes before would have prevented the accident was now too late. The ship was obliged to go back over the same sand-bank which it had just passed with such difficulty. A heavier swell, in receding, had driven the stern a few inches deeper. The screw was working continuously, and the ship listed a little but did not move.

"What in the devil does that mean?" cried the General.

"There is no real danger," said Else with a flash.

“For Heaven’s sake, my dear young lady!” interjected the President, who had grown very pale.

“The shore is clearly in sight, and the sea is comparatively quiet,” replied Else.

“Oh, what do you know about it!” exclaimed the General; “the sea is not to be trifled with!”

“I am not trifling at all, Papa,” said Else.

Bustling, running, shouting, which was suddenly heard from all quarters, the strangely uncanny listing of the ship—all proved conclusively that the prediction of “The Indefatigable” had come true, and that the steamer was aground.

All efforts to float the ship had proved unavailing, but it was fortunate that, in the perilous task required of it, the screw had not broken; moreover, the listing of the hull had not increased. “If the night was not stormy they would lie there quietly till the next morning, when, in case they should not get afloat by that time (and they might get afloat any minute), a passing craft could take off the passengers and carry them to the next port.” So spoke the Captain, who was not to be disconcerted by the misfortune which his own stubbornness had caused. He declared that it was clearly noted upon the maps by which he and every other captain had to sail that there were fifteen feet of water at this place; the gentlemen of the government should wake up and see that better charts or at least suitable buoys were provided. And if other captains had avoided the bank and preferred to sail around it for some years, he had meanwhile steered over the same place a hundred times—indeed only day before yesterday. But he had no objections to having the long-boat launched and the passengers set ashore, whence God knows how they were to continue their journey.

“The man is drunk or crazy,” said the President, when the Captain had turned his broad back and gone back to his post. “It is a sin and shame that such a man is allowed to command a ship, even if it is only a tug; I shall start a

rigid investigation, and he shall be punished in an exemplary manner.”

The President, through all his long, thin body, shook with wrath, anxiety, and cold; the General shrugged his shoulders. “That’s all very good, my dear Mr. President,” said he, “but it comes a little too late to help us out of our unhappy plight. I refrain on principle from interfering with things I do not understand; but I wish we had somebody on board who could give advice. One must not ask the sailors—that would be undermining the discipline! What is it, Else?” Else had given him a meaning look, and he stepped toward her and repeated the question.

“Inquire of that gentleman!” said Else.

“Of what gentleman?”

“The one yonder. He’s a seaman; he can certainly give you the best advice.”

The General fixed his sharp eye upon the person designated. “Ah, that one?” asked he. “Really looks so.”

“Doesn’t he?” replied Else. “He had already told me that we were going to run aground.”

“He’s not one of the officers of the ship, of course?”

“O no! That is—I believe—but just speak to him!”

The General went up to “The Indefatigable.” “Beg your pardon, Sir! I hear you are a seaman?”

“At your service.”

“Captain?”

“Captain of a merchantman—Reinhold Schmidt.”

“My name is General von Werben. You would oblige me, Captain, if you would give me a technical explanation of our situation—privately, of course, and in confidence. I should not like to ask you to say anything against a comrade, or to do anything that would shake his authority, which we may possibly yet need to make use of. Is the Captain responsible, in your opinion, for our accident?”

“Yes, and no, General. No, for the sea charts, by which we are directed to steer, record this place as navigable. The charts were correct, too, until a few years ago; since



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THE LAST DAY OF A CONDEMNED MAN

MICHAEL VON MUNKACSY

that time heavy sand deposits have been made here, and, besides, the water has fallen continually in consequence of the west wind which has prevailed for some weeks. The more prudent, therefore, avoid this place. I myself should have avoided it."

"Very well! And now what do you think of the situation? Are we in danger, or likely to be?"

"I think not. The ship lies almost upright, and on clear, smooth sand. It may lie thus for a very long time, if nothing intervenes."

"The Captain is right in keeping us on board, then?"

"Yes, I think so—the more so as the wind, for the first time in three days, appears about to shift to the east, and, if it does, we shall probably be afloat again in a few hours. Meanwhile——"

"Meanwhile?"

"To err is human, General. If the wind—we now have south-southeast—it is not probable, but yet possible—should again shift to the west and become stronger, perhaps very strong, a serious situation might, of course, confront us."

"Then we should take advantage of the Captain's permission to leave the ship?"

"As the passage is easy and entirely safe, I can at least say nothing against it. But, in that case, it ought to be done while it is still sufficiently light—best of all, at once."

"And you? You would remain, as a matter of course?"

"As a matter of course, General."

"I thank you."

The General touched his cap with a slight nod of his head; Reinhold lifted his with a quick movement, returning the nod with a stiff bow.

"Well?" queried Else, as her father came up to her again.

"The man must have been a soldier," replied the General.

"Why so?" asked the President.

“Because I could wish that I might always have such clear, accurate reports from my officers. The situation, then, is this——”

He repeated what he had just heard from Reinhold, and closed by saying that he would recommend to the Captain that the passengers who wished to do so should be disembarked at once. “I, for my part, do not think of submitting to this inconvenience, which it would seem, moreover, is unnecessary; except that Else——”

“I, Papa!” exclaimed Else; “I don’t think of it for a moment!”

The President was greatly embarrassed. He had, to be sure, only this morning renewed a very slight former personal acquaintance with General von Werben, after the departure from Stettin; but now that he had chatted with him the entire day and played the knight to the young lady on countless occasions, he could not help explaining, with a twitch of the lips which was intended to be a smile, that he wished now to share with his companions the discomforts of the journey as he had, up to this time, the comforts; the Prussian ministry would be able to console itself, if worse comes to worst, for the loss of a President who, as the father of six young hopefuls, has, besides, a succession of his own, and accordingly neither has nor makes claims to the sympathy of his own generation.

Notwithstanding his resignation, the heart of the worthy official was much troubled. Secretly he cursed his own boundless folly in coming home a day earlier, in having intrusted himself to a tug instead of waiting for a coast steamer, due the next morning, and in inviting the “stupid confidence” of the General and the coquettish manœuvrings of the young lady; and when the long-boat was really launched a few minutes later, and in what seemed to him an incredibly short time was filled with passengers from the foredeck, fortunately not many in number, together with a few ladies and gentlemen from the first cabin, and was now being propelled by the strokes of the heavy oars,

and soon afterwards with hoisted sails was hastily moving toward the shore, he heaved a deep sigh and determined at any price—even that of the scornful smile on the lips of the young lady—to leave the ship, too, before nightfall.

And night came on only too quickly for the anxious man. The evening glow on the western horizon was fading every minute, while from the east—from the open sea—it was growing darker and darker. How long would it be till the land, which appeared through the evening mist only as an indistinct streak to the near-sighted man, would vanish from his sight entirely? And yet it was certain that the waves were rising higher every minute, and here and there white caps were appearing and breaking with increasing force upon the unfortunate ship—something that had not happened during the entire day! Then were heard the horrible creaking of the rigging, the uncanny whistling of the tackle, the nerve-racking boiling and hissing of the steam, which was escaping almost incessantly from the overheated boiler. Finally the boiler burst, and the torn limbs of a man, who had been just buttoning up his overcoat, were hurled in every direction through the air. The President grew so excited at this catastrophe that he unbuttoned his overcoat, but buttoned it up again because the wind was blowing with icy coldness. “It is insufferable!” he muttered.

Else had noticed for some time how uncomfortable it was for the President to stay upon the ship—a course which he had evidently decided upon, against his will, out of consideration for his traveling-companions. Her love of mischief had found satisfaction in this embarrassing situation, which he tried to conceal; but now her good nature gained the upper hand, for he was after all an elderly, apparently feeble gentleman, and a civilian. One could, of course, not expect of him the unflinching courage or the sturdiness of her father, who had not even once buttoned his cloak, and was now taking his accustomed evening walk to and fro upon the deck. But her father had

decided to remain; it would be entirely hopeless now to induce him to leave the boat. "He must find a solution to the problem," she said to herself.

Reinhold had vanished after his last conversation with her father, and was not now on the rear deck; so she went forward, and there he sat on a great box, looking through a pocket telescope toward the land—so absorbed that she had come right up to him before he noticed her. He sprang hastily to his feet, and turned to her.

"How far are they?" asked Else.

"They are about to land," replied he. "Would you like to look?"

He handed her the instrument. The glass, when she touched it, still had a trace of the warmth of the hand from which it came, which would have been, under other circumstances, by no means an unpleasant sensation to her, but this time she scarcely noticed it, thinking of it only for an instant, while she was trying to bring into the focus of the glass the point which he indicated. She did not succeed; she saw nothing but an indistinct, shimmering gray. "I prefer to use my eyes!" she exclaimed, putting down the instrument. "I see the boat quite distinctly there, close to the land—in the white streak! What is it?"

"The surf."

"Where is the sail?"

"They let it down so as not to strike too hard. But, really, you have the eye of a seaman!" Else smiled at the compliment, and Reinhold smiled. Their glances met for a minute.

"I have a request to make of you," said Else, without dropping her eyes.

"I was just about to make one of you," he replied, looking straight into her brown eyes, which beamed upon him; "I was about to ask you to allow yourself to be put ashore also. We shall be afloat in another hour, but the night is growing stormy, and as soon as we have passed Wissow Hook"—he pointed to the promontory—"we shall have to

cast anchor. That is at best not a very pleasant situation, at the worst a very unpleasant one. I should like to save you from both."

"I thank you," said Else; "and now my request is no longer necessary"—and she told Reinhold why she had come.

"That's a happy coincidence!" he said, "but there is not a moment to lose. I am going to speak to your father at once. We must be off without delay."

"We?"

"I shall, with your permission, take you ashore myself."

"I thank you," said Else again with a deep breath. She had held out her hand; he took the little tender hand in his, and again their glances met.

"One can trust that hand," thought Else; "and those eyes, too!" And she said aloud, "But you must not think that I should have been afraid to remain here! It's really for the sake of the poor President."

She had withdrawn her hand and was hastening away to meet her father, who, wondering why she had remained away so long, had come to look for her.

When he was about to follow her, Reinhold saw lying at his feet a little blue-gray glove. She must have just slipped it off as she was adjusting the telescope. He stooped down quickly, picked it up, and put it in his pocket.

"She will not get that again," he said to himself.

Reinhold was right; there had been no time to lose. While the little boat which he steered cut through the foaming waves, the sky became more and more overcast with dark clouds which threatened soon to extinguish even the last trace of the evening glow in the west. In addition, the strong wind had suddenly shifted from the south to the north, and because of this (to insure a more speedy return of the boat to the ship) they were unable to land at the place where the long-boat, which was already coming back, had discharged its passengers—viz., near the little fishing village, Ahlbeck, at the head of the bay, immedi-

ately below Wissoh Hook. They had to steer more directly to the north, against the wind, where there was scarcely room upon the narrow beach of bare dunes for a single hut, much less for a fishing village; and Reinhold could consider himself fortunate when, with a bold manœuvre, he brought the little boat so near the shore that the disembarkment of the company and the few pieces of baggage which they had taken from the ship could be accomplished without great difficulty.

"I fear we have jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire," said the President gloomily.

"It is a consolation to me that we were not the cause of it," replied the General, not without a certain sharpness in the tone of his strong voice.

"No, no, certainly not!" acknowledged the President, "*Mea maxima culpa!* My fault alone, my dear young lady. But, admit it—the situation is hopeless, absolutely hopeless!"

"I don't know," replied Else; "it is all delightful to me."

"Well, I congratulate you heartily," said the President; "for my part I should rather have an open fire, a chicken wing, and half a bottle of St. Julien; but if it is a consolation to have companions in misery, then it ought to be doubly so to know that what appears as very real misery to the pensive wisdom of one is a romantic adventure to the youthful imagination of another."

The President, while intending to banter, had hit upon the right word. To Else the whole affair appeared a "romantic adventure," in which she felt a genuine hearty delight. When Reinhold brought her the first intimation of the impending danger, she was, indeed, startled; but she had not felt fear for a moment—not even when the abusive men, crying women, and screaming children hurried from the ship, which seemed doomed to sink, into the long-boat which rocked up and down upon the gray waves, while night came over the open sea, dark and foreboding. The

tall seaman, with the clear blue eyes, had said that there was no danger; he must know; why should she be afraid? And even if the situation should become dangerous he was the man to do the right thing at the right moment and to meet danger! This sense of security had not abandoned her when into the surf they steered the skiff, rocked like a nut-shell in the foaming waves. The President, deathly pale, cried out again and again, "For God's sake!" and a cloud of concern appeared even on the earnest face of her father. She had just cast a glance at the man at the helm, and his blue eyes had gleamed as brightly as before, even more brightly in the smile with which he answered her questioning glance. And then when the boat had touched the shore, and the sailors were carrying the President, her father, and the three servants to land, and she herself stood in the bow, ready to take a bold leap, she felt herself suddenly surrounded by a pair of strong arms, and was thus half carried, half swung, to the shore without wetting her foot—she herself knew not how.

And there she stood now, a few steps distant from the men, who were consulting, wrapped in her raincoat, in the full consciousness of a rapture such as she never felt before. Was it not then really fine! Before her the gray, surging, thundering, endless sea, above which dark threatening night was gathering; right and left in an unbroken line the white foaming breakers! She herself with the glorious moist wind blowing about her, rattling in her ears, wrapping her garments around her, and driving flecks of spray into her face! Behind her the bald spectral dunes, upon which the long dune grass, just visible against the faintly brighter western sky, beckoned and nodded—whither? On into the happy splendid adventure which was not yet at an end, could not be at an end, *must* not be at an end—for that would be a wretched shame!

The gentlemen approached her. "We have decided, Else," said the General, "to make an expedition over the dunes into the country. The fishing village at which the

long-boat landed is nearly a quarter of a mile distant, and the road in the deep sand would probably be too difficult for our honored President. Besides, we should scarcely find shelter there.”

“If only we don’t get lost in the dunes,” sighed the President.

“The Captain’s knowledge of the locality will be guarantee for that,” said the General.

“I can scarcely speak of a knowledge of the place, General,” replied Reinhold. “Only once, and that six years ago, have I cast a glance from the top of these dunes into the country; but I remember clearly that I saw a small tenant-farm, or something of the kind, in that direction. I can promise to find the house. How it will be about quarters I cannot say in advance.”

“In any case we cannot spend the night here,” exclaimed the General. “So, *en avant!* Do you wish my arm, Else?”

“Thank you, Papa, I can get up.”

And Else leaped upon the dune, following Reinhold, who, hurrying on ahead, had already reached the top, while the General and the President followed more slowly, and the two servants with the effects closed the procession.

“Well!” exclaimed Else with delight as, a little out of breath, she came up to Reinhold. “Are we also at the end of our tether, like the President?”

“Make fun of me if you like, young lady,” replied Reinhold; “I don’t feel at all jolly over the responsibility which I have undertaken. Yonder”—and he pointed over the lower dunes into the country, in which evening and mist made everything indistinct—“it must be there.”

“‘Must be,’ if you were right! But ‘must’ you be right?”

As if answering the mocking question of the girl, a light suddenly shot up exactly in the direction in which Reinhold’s arm had pointed. A strange shudder shot through Else.

“Pardon me!” she said.

Reinhold did not know what this exclamation meant. At that moment the others reached the top of the rather steep dune.

"*Per aspera ad astra*," puffed the President.

"I take my hat off to you, Captain," said the General.

"It was great luck," replied Reinhold modestly.

"And we must have luck," exclaimed Else, who had quickly overcome that strange emotion and had now returned to her bubbling good humor.

The little company strode on through the dunes; Reinhold going on ahead again, while Else remained with the other gentlemen.

"It is strange enough," said the General, "that the mishap had to strike us just at this point of the coast. It really seems as if we were being punished for our opposition. Even if my opinion that a naval station can be of no use here is not shaken, yet, now that we have almost suffered shipwreck here ourselves, a harbor appears to me——"

"A consummation devoutly to be wished!" exclaimed the President. "Heaven knows! And when I think of the severe cold which I shall take from this night's promenade in the abominably wet sand, and that, instead of this, I might now be sitting in a comfortable coupé and tonight be sleeping in my bed, then I repent every word I have spoken against the railroad, about which I have put myself at odds with all our magnates—and not the least with Count Golm, whose friendship would just now be very opportune for us."

"How so?" asked the General.

"Golm Castle lies, according to my calculation, at the most a mile from here; the hunting lodge on Golmberg——"

"I remember it," interrupted the General; "the second highest promontory on the shore to the north—to our right. We can be scarcely half a mile away."

"Now, see," said the President; "that would be so con-

venient, and the Count is probably there. Frankly, I have secretly counted on his hospitality in case, as I only too much fear, a hospitable shelter is not to be found in the tenant-house, and you do not give up your disinclination to knock at the door in Warnow, which would, indeed, be the simplest and most convenient thing to do."

The President, who had spoken panting, and with many intermissions, had stopped; the General replied with a sullen voice, "You know that I am entirely at outs with my sister."

"But you said the Baroness was in Italy?"

"Yet she must be coming back at this time, has perhaps already returned; and, if she were not, I would not go to Warnow, even if it were but ten paces from here. Let us hurry to get under shelter, Mr. President, or we shall be thoroughly drenched in addition to all we have already passed through."

In fact, scattered drops had been falling for some time from the low-moving clouds, and hastening their steps, they had just entered the farmyard and were groping their way between barns and stables over a very uneven courtyard to the house in whose window they had seen the light, when the rain, which had long been threatening, poured down in full force.

[Pölitz receives his guests with apologies for the accommodations and his wife's absence from the room. His manner is just a bit forced; Else, noticing it, goes out to look for Mrs. Pölitz, and brings the report that the children are sick. The President suggests that they go on to Golmberg. Pölitz will not hear of it, but Else has made arrangements—makeshifts though they are—for the trip, and insists upon leaving, even in the face of the storm. A messenger is to be sent ahead to announce them—Reinhold included, upon Else's insistence. Else goes into the kitchen, where Mrs. Pölitz pours out her soul to her—the hard-heartedness of the Count, who has never married, and her

vain labors to keep their little home in Swantow. It sets her thinking, first about the Count, then about Reinhold—was he married or not? Wouldn't any girl be proud of him—even herself! But then there would be disinheritance! Yet she keeps on thinking of him. How would "Mrs. Schmidt" sound! She laughs, and then grows serious; tears come into her eyes; she puts her hand into her pocket and feels the compass which Reinhold had given her. It is faithful. "If I ever love, I too shall be faithful," she says to herself.

Reinhold, going out to look for the boat, wonders why he left it to accompany the others to Pölitz's house; but fortunately he finds it safe. Now his duty to the General and Else is fulfilled; he will never see her again, probably. Yet he hastens back—and meets them just on the point of leaving for Golmberg.

The President has been waiting for the storm to blow over, he says. Else is fidgety, yet without knowing why; she wonders what has become of Reinhold. The President sounds Pölitz on the subject of the railway—the nearest doctor living so far away that they cannot afford to have him come. But Pölitz says that they do not want a railway—a decent wagon road would be enough, and they could have that if only the Count would help a little. A naval station? So far as they are concerned, a simple break-water would do, he tells the President. The latter, while Pölitz is out looking for the messenger, discusses with the General the condition of the Count's tenants, in the midst of which the Count himself arrives with his own carriages to take them over to Golmberg.

A chorus of greetings follows. The Count had met the General in Versailles on the day the German Emperor was proclaimed, the General had not forgotten. The company now lacks only Reinhold, and the Count, thinking that he must have lost his way, is about to send a searching

party, when Else tells him that she has already done so. The Count smiles. She hates him for it, and outside, a moment later, rebukes herself for not controlling her temper. Reinhold meets her there. She commands him to accompany them. As they are leaving Else makes a remark about the doctor, which is overheard, as she intended, by the Count, who promises to send for the doctor himself.

They proceed to Golmberg. Conversation in the servants' carriage is lively, turning on the relative merits of their respective masters—how liberal the Count is; how strict, yet not so bad, the General; while a bottle of brandy passes around. In the first carriage, where Else, the President, and the General are riding, the conversation is of the Count's family and of old families in general, then of the project before them—the railroad and the naval station. The President drops that subject, finding the General not kindly disposed to it. He and Else are both thinking of her indirect request to the Count to send for the doctor. Then Else's thoughts turn again to Reinhold—his long absence—what he would think of her command to accompany them. The Count and Reinhold in the second carriage speak hardly a dozen words. Reinhold's thoughts are of Else—how hopelessly far above him she is—how he would like to run away. They arrive at Golmberg.]

The President had dropped the remark in his note that the absence of a hostess in the castle would be somewhat embarrassing for the young lady in their company, but as it was not so easily to be remedied he would apologize for him in advance. The Count had dispatched a messenger forthwith to his neighbor, von Strummin, with the urgent request that he should come with his wife and daughter to Golmberg, prepared to spend the night there. The Strummins were glad to render this neighborly service, and Madame and Miss von Strummin had already received Else in the hall, and conducted her to the room set apart for her, adjoining their own rooms.

The President rubbed his thin white hands contentedly before the fire in his own comfortable room, and murmured, as John put the baggage in order, "Delightful; very delightful! I think this will fully reconcile the young lady to her misfortune and restore her grouchy father to a sociable frame of mind."

Else was fully reconciled. To be released from the close, jolting prison of a landau and introduced into a brightly lighted castle in the midst of the forest, where servants stood with torches at the portal; to be most heartily welcomed in the ancient hall, with its strangely ornamented columns, by two ladies who approached from among the arms and armor with which the walls and columns were hung and surrounded, and conducted into the snuggest of all the apartments; to enjoy a flickering open fire, brightly burning wax tapers before a tall mirror in a rich rococo frame, velvet carpets of a marvelous design which was repeated in every possible variation upon the heavy hangings before the deeply recessed windows, on the portières of the high gilded doors, and the curtains of the antique bed—all this was so fitting, so charming, so exactly as it should be in an adventure! Else shook the hand of the matronly Madame von Strummin, thanked her for her kindness, and kissed the pretty little Marie, with the mischievous brown eyes, and asked permission to call her "Meta," or "Mieting," just as her mother did, who had just left the room. Mieting returned the embrace with the greatest fervor and declared that nothing more delightful in the world could have come to her than the invitation for this evening. She, with her Mamma, felt so bored at Strummin!—it was horribly monotonous in the country!—and in the midst of it this letter from the Count! She was fond of coming to Golmberg, anyhow—the forest was so beautiful, and the view from the platform of the tower, from the summit of Golmberg beyond the forest over the sea—that was really charming; to be sure, the opportunity came but seldom! Her mother was a little indolent, and

the gentlemen thought of their hunting, their horses, and generally only of themselves. Thus she had not been a little surprised, too, at the haste of the Count today in procuring company for the strange young lady, just as if he had already known beforehand how fair and lovely the strange young lady was, and how great the pleasure of being with her, and of chattering so much nonsense; if she might say "thou" to her, then they could chatter twice as pleasantly.

The permission gladly given and sealed with a kiss threw the frolicsome girl into the greatest ecstasy. "You must never go away again!" she exclaimed; "or, if you do, only to return in the autumn! He will not marry me, in any case; I have nothing, and he has nothing in spite of his entail, and Papa says that we shall all be bankrupt here if we don't get the railroad and the harbor. And your Papa and the President have the whole matter in hand, Papa said as we drove over; and if you marry him, your Papa will give the concession, as a matter of course—I believe that's what it's called, isn't it? And you are really already interested in it as it is; for the harbor, Papa says, can be laid out only on the estates which belong to your aunt, and you and your brother—you inherit it from your aunt—are already coheirs? It is a strange will, Papa says, and he would like to know how the matter really is. Don't you know? Please do tell me! I promise not to tell anyone."

"I really don't know," replied Else. "I only know that we are very poor, and that you may go on and marry your Count for all me."

"I should be glad to do so," said the little lady seriously, "but I'm not pretty enough for him, with my insignificant figure and my pug nose. I shall marry a rich burgher some day, who is impressed by our nobility—for the Strummins are as old as the island, you know—a Mr. Schulze, or Müller, or Schmidt. What's the name of the captain who came with you?"

“Schmidt, Reinhold Schmidt.”

“No, you’re joking!”

“Indeed, I’m not; but he’s not a captain.”

“Not a Captain! What then?”

“A sea captain.”

“Of the Marine?”

“A simple sea captain.”

“Oh, dear me!”

That came out so comically, and Mieting clapped her hands with such a naïve surprise, that Else had to laugh, and the more so as she could thus best conceal the blush of embarrassment which flushed her face.

“Then he will not even take supper with us!” exclaimed Mieting.

“Why not?” asked Else, who had suddenly become very serious again.

“A simple captain!” repeated Mieting; “too bad! He’s such a handsome man! I had picked him out for myself! But a simple sea captain!”

Madame von Strummin entered the room to escort the ladies to supper. Mieting rushed toward her mother to tell her her great discovery. “Everything is already arranged,” replied her mother. “The Count asked your father and the President whether they wished the captain to join the company. Both of the gentlemen were in favor of it, and so he too will appear at supper. And then, too, he seems so far to be a very respectable man,” concluded Madame von Strummin.

“I’m really curious,” said Mieting.

Else did not say anything; but when at the entrance of the corridor she met her father, who had just come from his room, she whispered to him, “Thank you!”

“One must keep a cheerful face in a losing game,” replied the General in the same tone.

Else was a bit surprised; she had not believed that he would so seriously regard the question of etiquette, which he had just decided as she wished. She did not reflect that

her father could not understand her remark without special explanation, and did not know that he had given to it an entirely different meaning. He had been annoyed and had allowed his displeasure to be noticed, even at the reception in the hall. He supposed that Else had observed this, and was now glad that he had meanwhile resolved to submit quietly and coolly to the inevitable, and in this frame of mind he had met her with a smile. It was only the Count's question that reminded him again of the young sea captain. He had attached no significance either to the question or to his answer, that he did not know why the Count should not invite the captain to supper.

Happily for Reinhold, he had not had even a suspicion of the possibility that his appearance or non-appearance at supper could be seriously debated by the company.

"In for a penny, in for a pound," he said to himself, arranging his suit as well as he could with the aid of the things which he had brought along in his bag from the ship for emergencies. "And now to the dickens with the sulks! If I have run aground in my stupidity, I shall get afloat again. To hang my head or to lose it would not be correcting the mistake, but only making it worse—and it is already bad enough. But now where are my shoes?"

In the last moment on board he had exchanged the shoes which he had been wearing for a pair of high waterproof boots. They had done him excellent service in the water and rain, in the wet sand of the shore, and on the way to the tenant-farm—but now! Where were the shoes? Certainly not in the traveling bag, into which he thought he had thrown them, but in which they refused to be found, although he finally, in his despair, turned the whole contents out and spread them about him. And this article of clothing here, which he had already taken up a dozen times and dropped again—the shirt bosoms were wanting! It was not the blue overcoat! It was the black evening coat, the most precious article of his wardrobe, which he was accustomed to wear only to dinners at the ship-owners',

the consul's, and other formal occasions! Reinhold sprang for the bell—the rotten cord broke in his hand. He jerked the door open and peered into the hall—no servant was to be seen; he called first softly and then more loudly—no servant answered. And yet—what was to be done! The coarse woolen jacket which he had worn under his rain-coat, and had, notwithstanding, got wet in places had been taken away by the servant to dry. “In a quarter of an hour,” the man had said, “the Count will ask you to supper.” Twenty minutes had already passed; he had heard distinctly that the President, who was quartered a few doors from his room, had passed through the hall to go downstairs; he would have to remain here in the most ridiculous imprisonment, or appear downstairs before the company in the most bizarre costume—water-boots and black dress suit—before the eyes of the President, whose long, lean figure, from the top of his small shapely head to his patent-leather tips, which he had worn even on board ship, was the image of the most painful precision—before the rigorous General, in his closely buttoned undress uniform—before the Count, who had already betrayed an inclination to doubt his social eligibility—before the ladies!—before her—before her mischievous brown eyes! “Very well,” he concluded, “if I have been fool enough to follow the glances of these eyes then this shall be my punishment, I will now do penance—in a black dress coat and water-boots.”

With a jerk he pulled on the boots which he still held in his rigid left hand, regarding them from time to time with horror, and opened the door again, this time to go down the broad stairway, and with a steady step along the hall into the dining-room, the location of which he had already learned from the servant.

Meanwhile the rest of the company had assembled. The two young ladies had appeared arm in arm and did not allow themselves to be separated, although the Count, who had approached them with animation, addressed his words

to Else alone. He dutifully hastened to inform the young lady that the carriage had been sent off to Prora for the doctor a quarter of an hour before. He asked Else whether she was interested in painting, and if she would allow him to call her attention hastily to some of the more important things which he had brought from the gallery in Castle Golm to Golmberg to decorate the dining-room, which seemed to him altogether too bare: here a Watteau, bought by his great-grandfather himself in Paris; over there, a cluster of fruit, called "Da Frutti," by the Italian Gobbo, a pupil of Annibale Carracci; yonder, the large still-life by the Netherlander Jacob van Ness. This flower piece would interest the young lady especially, as it is by a lady, Rachel Ruysch, a Netherlander of course, whose pictures are greatly in demand. Here on the *étagère*, the service of Meissen porcelain, once in the possession of August the Strong, which his great-grandfather, who was for some years Swedish minister at the Dresden Court, had received in exchange for a pair of reindeer—the first that had been seen on the continent; here the no less beautiful Sèvres service, which he himself had in previous years admired in the castle of a nobleman in France, who had presented it to him, in recognition of his fortunate efforts to preserve the castle, which he had turned into a hospital.

"You are not interested in old porcelain?" queried the Count, who thought he noticed that the dark eyes of the young lady glanced only very superficially over his treasures.

"I have seen so few such things," said Else, "I do not know how to appreciate their beauty."

"And then, too, we are a bit hungry," put in Mieting—"at least I am. We dine at home at eight o'clock, and now it is eleven."

"Hasn't the Captain been called?" asked the Count of the butler.

"Certainly, your Grace; a quarter of an hour ago."

"Then we will not wait any longer. The etiquette of

kings does not appear to be that of sea captains. May I accompany you, Miss Else?"

He offered Else his arm; hesitatingly she rested the tips of her fingers upon it. She would have liked to spare the Captain the embarrassment of finding the company already at the table, but her father had offered his arm to Mieting's mother, and the gallant President his to Mieting. The three couples proceeded to the table, which stood between them and the door, when the door opened and the strange figure of a bearded man in black suit and high water-boots appeared, in which Else, to her horror, recognized the Captain. But in the next moment she had to laugh like the others. Mieting dropped the arm of the President and fled to a corner of the hall to smother in her handkerchief the convulsive laughter which had seized her at the unexpected sight.

"I must apologize," said Reinhold, "but the haste with which we left the ship today was not favorable to a strict selection from my wardrobe, as I have unfortunately just now noticed."

"And, as this haste has turned out to our advantage, we least of all have reason to lay any greater stress upon the trivial mishap than it deserves," said the President very graciously.

"Why didn't you call on my valet?" asked the Count with gentle reproof.

"I find the costume very becoming," said Else, with a desperate effort to be serious again and with a reproving glance at Mieting, who had come out of her corner but did not yet dare to take the handkerchief from her face.

"That is much more than I had dared to hope," said Reinhold.

They had taken their places at the table—Reinhold diagonally opposite Else and directly across from the Count; at his left, Miss Mieting, and, at his right, von Strummin, a broad-shouldered gentleman with a wide red face covered on the lower part by a big red beard; he was

possessed of a tremendously loud voice which was the more unpleasant to Reinhold as it continually smothered the low merry chatter of the young lady at his left. The good-natured child had determined to make Reinhold forget her improper behavior of a few minutes before, and the execution of this resolution was made easier for her as, now that the table-cloth graciously covered the ridiculous water-boots, she verified what she thought she had discovered at the first glance—that the Captain, with his great, bright, blue eyes, his brown face, and his curly brown beard, was a handsome man, a very handsome man. After she had tried to communicate to Else this important discovery by significant glances and explanatory gestures, and to her delight had had it corroborated by a smile and nod, she yielded to the pleasure of conversation with the handsome man, the more eagerly because she was sure that this fervor would not pass unnoticed by the Count. For she knew from experience that it would not please him, that he would even feel it a kind of personal offense when ladies, whose favor he did not seek, bestowed special attention upon other gentlemen in his presence! And the fact that this was a simple sea captain, whose social status had been discussed shortly before, made the matter more amusing and spicy in her merry eyes; besides, the conversation was entertaining enough without that. “The Captain has so many stories to tell! And he tells them so simply and frankly! You can’t believe, Else, how interesting it is!” she shouted across the table; “I could listen to him all night!”

“The child is not very discriminating in her taste,” said the Count to Else.

“I am sorry,” said Else, “she has just chosen me as her friend, as you have heard.”

“That is another matter,” said the Count.

The conversation between them could not get under way; the Count found himself repeatedly left to talk to Madame von Strummin, with whom he then conversed also—not to

be altogether silent; while Else turned to her neighbor on the other side, the President. And more than once, when Madame von Strummin was again conversing with the General, the Count had to sit and look on in silence and see how well the conversation at his table could go on without him. To fill out these forced pauses, he drank one glass of wine after another without improving his humor, which he vented on the servants because he had nobody else. It would have been most agreeable to him, to be sure, to use the Captain for this purpose, but he found him extremely odious—everything about him, his appearance, his attitude, his manners, his expression, his voice! It was the irony of fate that he himself had brought the man to his house in his own wagon! If only he had not asked the man to supper, but had left him in his room! He said to himself that it was ridiculous to be angry about the man, and yet he was angry—angry again because he could not control his feeling. He must, at any price, make the conversation general, to release himself from a state of mind which had become quite intolerable to him.

Opposite him von Strummin was shouting into the ear of the General, who seemed to listen only against his will, his views about the railroad and the naval station. The Count, for his part, had determined not to touch upon the delicate theme while at table; now any theme was agreeable to him.

“Pardon, my friend,” said he, raising his voice; “I have heard a snatch of what you have just been telling the General about our favorite project. You say continually ‘we’ and ‘us,’ but you know that our views differ in essential points; I should like, therefore, to ask you, if you must speak of the matter now, to do so only in your own name.”

“Ho, ho!” exclaimed von Strummin. “Wherein do we differ so seriously? In one point, I wish a station at Strummin just as much as you do at Golm.”

“But we can’t all have a station,” said the Count with a patronizing shrug of the shoulders.

“Certainly not; but I must, or the whole project is not worth a red cent to me,” exclaimed the other. “What! Am I to haul my corn half a mile, as before, and an hour later let the train whizz past my nose! In that case I shall prefer to vote at the Diet for the highway which the government offers; that will run right behind my new barn; I can push the wagon from the barn floor to the road. Isn’t that true, Mr. President?”

“Whether the highway will run directly behind your barn or not, von Strummin, I really do not know,” said the President. “In any case it will come through your property; as for the rest, my views have been long known to the gentlemen”; and he turned to Else again, to continue with her the conversation which had been interrupted.

The Count was angry at the reproof which these last words seemed to convey, the more so as he was conscious that he had not deserved it. He had not begun the discussion! Now it might and must be carried still further!

“You see,” continued he, turning to von Strummin, “what a bad turn you have done us—I must say ‘us,’ now—by this continual, disagreeable intrusion of personal interests. Of course we want our profit from it—what sensible man does not want that! But that is a secondary matter. First the State, then the other things. So I think, at least, and so does the General here.”

“Certainly I think so,” said the General; “but how is it that you bring me into it?”

“Because no one would profit more by the execution of the project than your sister—or whoever may be in possession of Warnow, Gristow, and Damerow.”

“I shall never possess a foot of those estates,” said the General knitting his eyebrows. “Besides, I have had absolutely nothing to do with the matter, as you yourself know, Count; I have not once expressed an opinion, and so am not in a position to accept the compliment you paid me.”

He turned again to Madame von Strummin. The Count’s face flushed.

“The views of a man in your position, General,” he said with a skilful semblance of composure, “can no more be concealed than the most official declaration of our honored President, even if he give them no official form.”

The General knitted his brows still more sternly.

“Very well, Count,” exclaimed the General, “be it so, but I confess myself openly to be the most determined opponent of your project! I consider it strategically useless, and technically impossible of execution.”

“Two reasons, either of which would be crushing if it were valid,” rejoined the Count with an ironical smile. “As to the first, I submit, of course, to such an authority as you are—though we could not always have war with France and her weak navy, but might occasionally have it with Russia with her strong navy, and in that case a harbor facing the enemy might be very necessary. But the impracticability, of the project, General! On this point I think that I, with my amphibian character as a country gentleman living by the sea, may with all deference say a word. Our sand, difficult as it makes the construction of roads, to the great regret of ourselves and our President, is excellent material for a railroad embankment, and will prove itself a good site for the foundation of our harbor walls.”

“Except those places where we should have to become lake-dwellers again,” said the President, who for the sake of the General could no longer keep silent.

“There may be such places,” exclaimed the Count, who, in spite of the exasperating contradictions by both of the gentlemen, now had the satisfaction at least of knowing that all other conversation had ceased and that for the moment he alone was speaking; “I grant it. But what else would that prove than that the building of the harbor will last a few months or years longer and cost a few hundred thousands or even a few millions more? And what will they say of an undertaking which, once completed, is an

invincible bulwark against any enemy attacking from the east?"

"Except one!" said Reinhold.

The Count had not thought that this person could join the conversation. His face flushed with anger; he cast a black look at the new opponent, and asked in a sharp defiant tone:

"And that is?"

"A storm flood," replied Reinhold.

"We here in this country are too much accustomed to storms and floods to be afraid of either," said the Count, with forced composure.

"Yes, I know," replied Reinhold; "but I am not speaking of ordinary atmospheric and marine adjustments and disturbances, but of an event which I am convinced has been coming for years and only waits for an opportune occasion, which will not be wanting, to break forth with a violence of which the boldest imagination can form no conception."

"Are we still in the realm of reality, or already in the sphere of the imagination?" asked the Count.

"We are in the domain of possibility," replied Reinhold; "of a possibility which a glance at the map will show us has already been more than once realized and will in all human probability be repeated at no very distant future time."

"You make us extremely curious," said the Count.

He had said it ironically; but he had only given expression to the feelings of the company. The eyes of all were fixed upon Reinhold.

"I am afraid I shall tire the ladies with these things," said Reinhold.

"Not in the least," said Else.

"I just revel in everything connected with the sea," said Mieting, with a mischievous glance at Else.

"You would really oblige me," said the President.

"Please continue!" added the General.

“I shall be as brief as possible,” said Reinhold, glancing first at the General and then at the President, as if he were addressing them alone. “The Baltic appears to have remained a world to itself after its formation by revolutions of the most violent nature. It has no ebb and flow, it contains less salt than the North Sea, and the percentage of salt diminishes toward the east, so that the flora and fauna——”

“What’s that?” interrupted Mieting.

“The vegetable and animal world, Miss Mieting—of the Gulf of Finland are almost those of fresh water. Nevertheless there is a constant interaction between the gulf and the ocean, as the two are still visibly connected—an ebb and flow from the latter to the former, and *vice versa*, with a highly complicated coincident combination of the most varied causes, one of which I must emphasize, because it is just that one of which I have to speak. It is the regularity with which the winds blow from west to east and from east to west, that accompanies and assists in a friendly manner, as it were, the ebb and flow of the water in its submarine channels. The mariner relied upon these winds with almost the same certainty with which one calculates the appearance of well established natural phenomena, and he was justified in doing so; for no considerable change had taken place within the memory of man, until, a few years ago, suddenly an east wind, which usually began to blow in the second half of August and prevailed until the middle of October, disappeared and has never reappeared.”

“Well, and the effect of that?” asked the President, who had listened with rapt attention.

“The result is, Mr. President, that in the course of these years enormous masses of water have accumulated in the Baltic, attracting our attention the less because, as a matter of course, they tend to distribute themselves evenly in all directions, and the main force is continually increasing eastward, so that in the spring of last year at Nystad, in

South Finland, a rise of four feet of water above the normal, at Wasa, two degrees further north, a rise of six feet, and at Torneo, in the northernmost end of the Bay of Bothnia, a rise of eight feet was registered. The gradual rise of the water and the uniformly high banks protected the inhabitants of those regions to a certain extent against the greatest calamity. But for us who have an almost uniformly flat shore, a sudden reversal of this current, which has for years set eastward without interruption, would be disastrous. But the reversed current must set in with a heavy storm from the northeast or east, particularly one that lasts for days. The water, forced westward by the violent storm, will seek in vain an outlet through the narrow passages of the Belt and of the Sound into the Kattegat and Skagger-Rak to the ocean, and, like a hunted beast of prey rushing over the hurdles, will surge over our coasts, rolling for miles inland, carrying with it everything that opposes its blind rage, covering fields and meadows with sand and boulders, and causing a devastation which our children and children's children will recount with horror."

While Reinhold was thus speaking the Count had not failed to notice that the President and General repeatedly exchanged knowing and corroborative glances, that von Strummin's broad face had lengthened with astonishment and horror, and, what vexed him most of all, the ladies had listened with as much attention as if it had been an account of a ball. He was determined at least not to allow Reinhold the last word.

"But this marvelous storm flood is at best—I mean, in the most favorable case for you—a hypothesis!" he exclaimed.

"Only for such as are not convinced of its inevitableness, as I am," replied Reinhold.

"Very well," said the Count; "I will assume for once that the gentleman is not alone in his conviction—yes, even more, that he is right, that the storm flood will come today,

or tomorrow, or some time; yet it appears that it does not come every day, but only once in centuries. Now, gentlemen, I have the profoundest respect for the solicitude of our authorities, which looks far into the future; but such century-long perspectives of even the most solicitous would seem beyond calculation, at any rate not induce them to neglect what the moment demands.”

As the last words of the Count were directed evidently to the General and the President, not to him, Reinhold thought he should refrain from answering. But neither of the two gentlemen replied; the rest, too, were silent; an embarrassing pause followed. Finally the President coughed into his slender white hand, and said:

“Strange! While the Captain here prophesies with a tone of conviction itself a storm flood, which our amiable host, who would be closest to it—as our Fritz Reuter says—would like to relegate to fable land, I have had to think at every word of another storm flood——”

“Still another!” exclaimed Mieting.

“Of a different storm flood, Miss Mieting, in another entirely different region; I need not tell the gentlemen in what region. Here too the usual course of things has been interrupted in the most unexpected manner, and here too a damming up of the floods has taken place, which have rushed in from west to east in an enormous stream—a stream of gold, ladies. Here, too, the wise predict that such unnatural conditions cannot last, that their consummation is imminent, that a reverse current must set in, a reaction, a storm flood, which, to keep the figure that so well fits the case, like that other flood will rush upon us with destruction and desolation, and will cover with its turbulent barren waters the places in which men believed that they had established their rule and dominion firmly and for all time.”

In his zeal to give a different turn to the conversation and in his delight and satisfaction with the happy comparison, the President had not reflected that he was really

continuing the subject and that the theme in this new form must be still more uncomfortable for the Count than in the first. He became aware of his thoughtlessness when the Count, in a tone reflecting his emotion, exclaimed:

“I hope, Mr. President, you will not associate our idea, dictated, I may be permitted to say, by the purest patriotism, with those financial bubbles so popular these days, which have usually no other source than the most ordinary thirst for gain.”

“For Heaven’s sake, Count! How can you impute to me such a thing as would not even enter my dreams!” exclaimed the President.

The Count bowed. “I thank you,” said he, “for I confess nothing would have been more offensive to my feelings. I have, of course, always considered it a political necessity, and a proof of his eminent statesmanship, that Prince Bismarck in the execution of his great ideas made use of certain means which he would certainly have done better not to have employed, because he thus could not avoid too close contact with persons, dealings with whom were formerly very odious to him at least. I considered it also a necessary consequence of this unfortunate policy that he inaugurated, was forced to inaugurate, by means of these nefarious millions, the new era of haggling and immoderate lust for gain. However——”

“Pardon me for interrupting you,” said the General; “I consider this bargaining of the Prince with those persons, parties, strata of the population, classes of society—call it what you will—as you do, Count, as of course an unfortunate policy but by no means a necessary one. Quite the contrary! The *rocher de bronze*, upon which the Prussian throne is established—a loyal nobility, a zealous officialdom, a faithful army—they were strong enough to bear the German Imperial dignity, even though it had to be a German and not a Prussian, or not an imperial dignity at all.”

“Yes, General, it had to be an imperial dignity, and a German one too,” said Reinhold.

The General shot a lowering glance from under his bushy brows at the young man; but he had just listened with satisfaction to his explanations, and he felt that he must now, even though Reinhold opposed him, let him speak. "Why do you think so?" he asked.

"I only follow my own feelings," replied Reinhold; "but I am sure that they are the feelings of all who have ever lived much abroad, away from home, as I have—those who have experienced, as I have, what it means to belong to a people that is not a nation, and, because it is not a nation, is not considered complete by the other nations with which we have intercourse, nay, is even despised outright; what it means in difficult situations into which the mariner so easily comes, to be left to one's own resources, or, what is still worse, to ask for the assistance or the protection of others who unwillingly render it or prefer not to help at all. I have experienced and endured all this, as thousands and thousands of others have done, and to all this injustice and wrong have had silently to clench my fist in my pocket. And now I have been abroad again since the war, until a few weeks ago, and found that I no longer needed to dance attendance and stand aside, that I could enter with as firm step as the others; and thus, my friends, I thanked God from the bottom of my heart that we have an Emperor—a German Emperor; for nothing less than a German Emperor it had to be, if we were to demonstrate to the Englishman, the American, the Chinese and Japanese, *ad oculos*, that they henceforth no longer carry on trade and form treaties with Hamburgers, Bremers, with Oldenburgers and Mecklinburgers, or even with Prussians, but with Germans, who sail under one and the same flag—a flag which has the will and the power to protect and defend the least and the poorest who shares the honor and the fortune of being a German."

The General, to whom the last words were addressed, stared straight ahead—evidently a sympathetic chord in his heart had been touched. The President had put on his

eye-glasses, which he had not used the whole evening; the ladies scarcely took their eyes from the man who spoke with such feeling and loyalty—the Count seeing and noting everything; his dislike for the man grew with every word that came from his mouth; he felt he must silence the wretched chatterer.

“I confess,” he said, “that I should regret the noble blood shed upon so many battlefields, if it were for no other purpose than to put more securely into the pockets of the men who speculate in cotton and sugar, or export our laborers, their petty profits.”

“I did not say that it was for no other purpose,” rejoined Reinhold.

“To be sure,” continued the Count, with a pretense of ignoring the interruption; “the further out of gunshot the better! And it is very pleasant to bask in the glory and honor which others have won for us.”

The General frowned, the President dropped his eye-glasses, the two young ladies exchanged terrified glances.

“I doubt not,” said Reinhold, “that the Count has his full share of German glory; I, for my part, am content with the honor of not having been out of gunshot.”

“Where were you on the day of Gravelotte, Captain?”

“At Gravelotte, Count.”

The General raised his eyebrows, the President put on his eye-glasses, the young ladies glanced at each other again—Else this time with a thrill of delight, while Mieting almost broke out into unrestrained laughter at the puzzled expression of the Count.

“That is, to be accurate,” continued Reinhold, whose cheeks were flushed by the attention which his last word had excited, as he turned to the General; “on the morning of that day I was on the march from Rezonville to St. Marie. Then, when it was learned, as the General knows, that the enemy was not retreating along the northern road, and the second army had executed the great flank movement to the right toward Berneville and Amanvilliers, we—

the eighteenth division—came under fire at half-past eleven in the morning in the neighborhood of Berneville. Our division had the honor of opening the battle, as the General will recall.”

Reinhold passed his hand over his brow. The dreadful scenes of those fateful days again came to his mind. He had forgotten the offensive scorn which had been couched in the Count's question, and which he wished to resent by his account of his participation in the battle.

“Did you go through the whole campaign?” asked the General; and there was a peculiar, almost tender tone in his deep voice.

“I did, General, if I may include the two weeks from the eighteenth of July to the first of August, when I was drilling in Coblenz. As a native Hamburger and a seaman I had not had the good fortune of thoroughly learning the military discipline in my youth.”

“How did you happen to enter the campaign?”

“It is a short story, and I will tell it briefly. On the fifteenth of July I lay with my ship at the Roads of Southampton, destined for Bombay—captain of a full-rigged ship for the first time. On the evening of the sixteenth we were to sail. But on the morning of the sixteenth the news came that war had been declared; at noon, having already secured a suitable substitute, I severed my connection with the ship-owners and with my ship; in the evening I was in London; during the nights of the sixteenth and seventeenth on the way to Ostende by way of Brussels, down the Rhine to Coblenz, where I offered myself as a volunteer, was accepted, drilled a little, sent on, and—I don't know how it happened—assigned to the Ninth Corps, Eighteenth Division, — Regiment, in which I went through the campaign.”

“Were you promoted?”

“To the rank of Corporal at Gravelotte; on the first of September, the day after the great sally of Bazaine, to

the rank of Vice-Sergeant-Major; on the fourth of September——”

“That was the day of Orléans?”

“Yes, General—on the day of the battle of Orléans I received my commission as officer.”

“My congratulations on your rapid advancement!” said the General with a smile; but his face darkened again. “Why didn’t you introduce yourself to me as comrade?”

“The sea captain apologizes for the Reserve Lieutenant, General.”

“Did you receive a decoration?”

“At your service! I received the Cross with my commission.”

“And you don’t wear the decoration?”

“My dress is a little disordered today,” replied Reinhold.

Mieting burst into laughter, in which Reinhold freely joined; and the others smiled—polite, approving, flattering smiles, as it seemed to the Count.

“I fear we have taxed the patience of the ladies too long,” he said with a significant gesture.

[Mieting and Else are alone in their room. Mieting declares her love for the captain, declaring he is just her ideal of a man. She then unbraids her long hair, which reaches to her feet, tells Else all her little love stories, kisses her and runs off to bed.

The gentlemen likewise prepare to retire. Reinhold excuses himself very formally, declines the Count’s offer of a carriage for his journey in the early morning, and is also about to retire, when the butler knocks on his door and tells him that the President wishes to speak to him. The President assures him of his personal interest, and asks him to look over certain papers relating to the railway and naval project and tell him whether he would be willing to work with him in the capacity of chief pilot at Wissow to succeed the old chief, soon to be pensioned. Reinhold

is quite overcome by this confidence on the part of the stranger. The President invites him to dinner at his house, when he is to give his answer. Reinhold considers the proposal—to give up all his plans—his command of a ship plying between South America and China for the great Hamburg firm, his North Pole expedition, in which he had interested many people—to give up all for this desert coast and—he had to confess it—to be near Else, though his social position was hopelessly inferior; he would be but a fool, he knew. Which course should he take? He looks out of the window and sees Venus, the star of love, shining through a rift of the clouds. He decides to accept the President's proposal. It is dawn, and he lies down for an hour's sleep.

Else lies awake for a long time thinking of the day's happenings. When she does fall asleep, she dreams wildly of searching for Reinhold, and of wrestling with Mieting, by whom she is finally awakened just before sunrise. Mieting helps Else dress and they both go out to watch the sunrise from a height overlooking the sea. Reinhold comes upon them there. He sees the ship and hastens away with a word for Mieting and a glance for Else, who returns the glance and sends him on his way with a joyous heart.

On the train to Berlin Reinhold is in the same compartment with Ottomar von Werben, Else's brother, and the two recognize each other. Reinhold tells of his adventures in hunting buffaloes and tapirs, in contrast with which Ottomar describes his tiresome occupation as an officer since the close of the war. In the conversation Ottomar tells Reinhold that he lives next door to Reinhold's uncle, and offers to help him find his uncle when they arrive, since Reinhold has not seen him for ten years. While Ottomar is looking through the crowd Reinhold recognizes his uncle, who gives him an affectionate greeting, and Ferdinande, his uncle's daughter, now a young lady of twenty-four. Reinhold introduces Ottomar to Ferdinande, but she is in a hurry to be off, and whispers in Reinhold's ear that

her father and Ottomar's father have been enemies since '48.

Reinhold, on entering his uncle's luxurious home, feels that it lacks real comfort, but thinks this may be due to the fact that he is a stranger. Then he thinks of Else—she lives next door! Aunt Rikchen greets him with hugs and kisses when he comes in. At dinner he asks about his cousin Philip, and learns that Philip almost never comes home. The question seems to have opened an old sore, as Philip is at odds with his father—an unfortunate beginning for the evening meal, Reinhold thinks.]

Meanwhile it appeared that his fears were fortunately not to be justified. To be sure, Aunt Rikchen could not open her mouth without having the thread of her discourse abruptly cut off by Uncle Ernst, and Ferdinande took little part in the conversation; but that signified little in the beginning, or was easily explained, as Uncle Ernst asked Reinhold first of all for a detailed account of his adventures and experiences during the long years since they had seen each other, and listened with an attentiveness which brooked no interruption. Now Reinhold had an opportunity to admire the very unusual fullness and accuracy of Uncle Ernst's knowledge. He could not mention a city, however distant, with whose location, history, and mercantile relations his uncle was not fully acquainted. He expressed to his uncle his astonishment and admiration.

“What do you expect?” answered Uncle Ernst. “If one is born a poor devil and has not the good fortune, like you, to roam around professionally through the world, but as a boy, a youth, and a man, has been bound to the soil and to hard work to gain his daily bread, until he has become an old fellow and can now no longer travel as one otherwise might do—what remains for him but to study the maps and nose through books to find out how grand and beautiful God has made His world.”

While Uncle Ernst thus spoke, all the roughness and bitterness vanished from his voice, all sullenness from his

rigid features, but only for a moment; then the dark cloud again gathered over his brow and eyes, like gray mists about the snows of a mountain range, which had just gleamed in the sunlight.

Reinhold could not take his eyes from the fine old face, whose expression constantly changed but never showed the slightest trace of shallowness or commonplace, remaining always dignified and strong, nor from the splendid head which, now that his abundant curly hair and bushy beard had grown quite gray, appeared more stately, more majestic than in former years. And at the same time he was compelled to think constantly of another face, opposite which he had sat but a few evenings before—that of General von Werben, with features likewise fine and sturdy, to be sure, but more composed, more concentrated, without the glowing fervor which, in Uncle Ernst, shone out in a splendid flash, or again, with threatening gleam, as if from beneath an ashy covering. Reinhold had said to himself from the beginning that it might not be long before he should have proof that this inner, scarcely subdued glow was threatening, and needed only an occasion to break forth with stormy violence; and he was not deceived.

In the narration of his journeys and wanderings he had come to the day, when, in Southampton, he received news of the outbreak of the war, and severed all his connections, gave up his other occupations and habits, and returned to Germany to fulfil his duty toward his native land which was in peril. —“The enthusiasm,” he explained, “dictated my determination; with full devotion and the use of all my intellectual and physical powers, I carried it out from beginning to end, without—I may be permitted to say so—even once growing weary, flagging, or doubting for a moment that the cause to which I had consecrated myself was a holy one, however unholy the horrible bloody vestments in which it had to be enveloped. Then when the great object was attained, in a greater, better, fuller sense than I and indeed all who had gone into the battle

with me had thought, had imagined, had desired, had intended—then I returned to my old occupation without delay, steered my ship again over the sea, in the silent happy consciousness of having done my duty; in the assurance of finding in the shadow of the German flag a bit of home everywhere, wherever the changing fate of the mariner might lead me; in the happy confidence that you in the fair Fatherland would never let the hard-won victory be lost, but would employ the precious time in filling out and completing the work so nobly planned, so vigorously begun, and that if I returned home it would be to a land full of joy and peace and sunshine in the hearts and countenances of all.

“I must confess that during the few days of my stay in my native land I have had many experiences which appeared to mock my hopes; but I have not been willing to believe that I saw aright. On the contrary, I am convinced that chance only has brought me repeatedly into contact with people who are discontented with the state of things purely for this or that personal reason, or are not entirely satisfied at least with the present conditions, as some of the gentlemen whom I met at Count Golm’s. I have not been restrained from voicing my opinion of the upper aristocracy, even as late as yesterday, in the presence of the skeptical President in Sundin, but have rather given strong and open expression to my views. And now even here—in the bosom of my family—at your table, Uncle Ernst, who have fought so often and suffered so much for the honor and welfare of the Fatherland—this silence can no longer be fully maintained; but I can surely expect a hearty understanding and unconditional approval.”

Uncle Ernst had listened in silence, with his head resting on his hand; now he suddenly lifted his head, and said with a voice that boded nothing good, “Pardon me for interrupting you to call your attention to the fact that I, too, agree not in the least with what you say. It is always well

for the speaker to know that he does not have the listener on his side."

There was an unusually sullen expression in his searching eyes. Reinhold was well aware of it; he considered for a moment whether he should be silent or continue. But even if he remained but a few days this theme would still have to be discussed frequently, and if his uncle were still of a different opinion, as could no longer be doubted, it would be worth while to hear the views of such a man. So he went on, "I am very sorry, dear uncle, on account of the theme, and—pardon me for saying so—on your account."

"I don't understand you."

"I mean the question is so great and so weighty that it requires every pair of strong shoulders to move it; and it is so worthy and so holy that I am sorry for him who will not or cannot with full conviction participate in council and action."

"Or 'cannot'!" exclaimed Uncle Ernst; "quite right! Did I not take part in counsel and action as long as I could—on the barricades, in those March days, in the national convention, and everywhere and at all times when it was within human possibility—I mean when it was possible for an honorable man to put his shoulder to the wheel, as you said? I will not mention the fact that I pushed my shoulders sore in so doing—more than once; that they tricked me and molested me, dragged me from one penitential stool to another, and occasionally, too, clapped me into prison—that belonged to the game, and better people than I fared no better, but even worse, much worse. In a word, it was a struggle—a hopeless struggle, with very unequal weapons, if you will, but still a struggle! But how is it now? It is a fair, an old-clothes shop, where they dicker to and fro over the counter, and auction off one tatter after another of our proud old banner of freedom to the man who carries them all in his pocket, and who, they know, carries them all in his pocket."

The cloud on his brow grew more lowering, his dark brown eyes flashed, his deep voice grew sullen—a storm was coming; Reinhold thought it advisable to reef a few sails.

“I am not a politician, Uncle,” he said. “I believe I have precious little talent for politics, and have at least had no time to cultivate such talent as I may possess. So I cannot contradict you when you say it is not altogether as it should be in this country. But then, too, you will grant me, as the aristocrats had to grant, that the question, viewed from the other side—I mean from abroad, from aboard ship, from a foreign harbor beyond the sea—makes a very different and much better impression; and I think you cannot blame me for thinking more favorably of the man—to put it flatly, for having a respect for him to whom we owe respect in the last analysis, a respect which the German name now enjoys throughout the world.”

“I know the song!” said Uncle Ernst. “He sang it often enough, the sly old fowler, and still sings it every time when the bullfinches won’t go into his net: ‘Who is responsible for 1864, for 1866, for 1870? I! I!! I!!!’”

“And isn’t he right, Uncle?”

“No, and a thousand times no!” exclaimed Uncle Ernst. “Has one man sole claim to the treasure which others have dug up and unearthed from the depths of the earth with unspeakable toil and labor, simply because he removed the last shovelful of earth? Schleswig-Holstein would still be Danish today if the noblemen had conquered it; Germany would still be torn into a thousand shreds if the noblemen had had to patch it together; the ravens would still flutter about the Kyffhäuser, if thousands and thousands of patriotic hearts had not dreamed of German unity, had not thought of Germany’s greatness day and night—the hearts and heads of men who were not rewarded for their services with lands and the title of Count and Prince, and were not pardoned.”

“I tell you, Uncle,” said Reinhold, “I think it is with

German unity as with other great things. Many fared in their imagination westward to the East Indies; in reality only one finally did it, and he discovered—America.”

“I thought,” said Uncle Ernst solemnly, “that the man who discovered it was called Columbus, and he is said to have been thrown into prison in gratitude for it, and to have died in obscurity. The one who came after and pocketed the glory, and for whom the land was named, was a wretched rascal not worthy to unloose the latchet of the discoverer’s shoes.”

“Well, really!” exclaimed Reinhold, laughing in spite of himself—“I believe no other man on the whole globe would speak in that way of Bismarck.”

“Quite possible!” replied Uncle Ernst; “and I do not believe another man on the globe hates him as I do.”

Uncle Ernst drained at one draught the glass he had just filled. It occurred to Reinhold that his uncle had tipped the bottle freely, and he thought he noticed that the hand which raised the glass to his mouth trembled a little, and that the hitherto steady gleam of his great eyes was dimmed and flickered ominously.

“That is the result of my obstinacy,” said Reinhold to himself; “why excite the anger of the old graybeard? Every one has a right to look at things in his own way! You should have changed the course of the conversation.”

On their way through the city he had given a brief account of the stranding of the steamer and the events that followed, so he could now without apparent effort resume the thread of his story there, and tell further how he had been kindly received by the President in Sundin and what prospects the President had held out to him. He described the manner of the man—how he at one time enveloped himself in clouds of diplomacy and, at another, spoke of men and things with the greatest frankness, while at the same time, in spite of his apparent tacking, keeping his goal clearly in view.

“You haven’t drawn a bad portrait of the man,” said

Uncle Ernst. "I know him very well, ever since 1847, when he sat at the extreme right in the General Assembly. Now he belongs to the opposition—I mean to the concealed opposition of the old solid Bureaucracy, which bears a grudge toward the all-powerful Major Domus and would like, rather, to put an end to his clever economy, the sooner the better. He is not one of the worst; and yet I could wish that you hadn't gone quite so far with him."

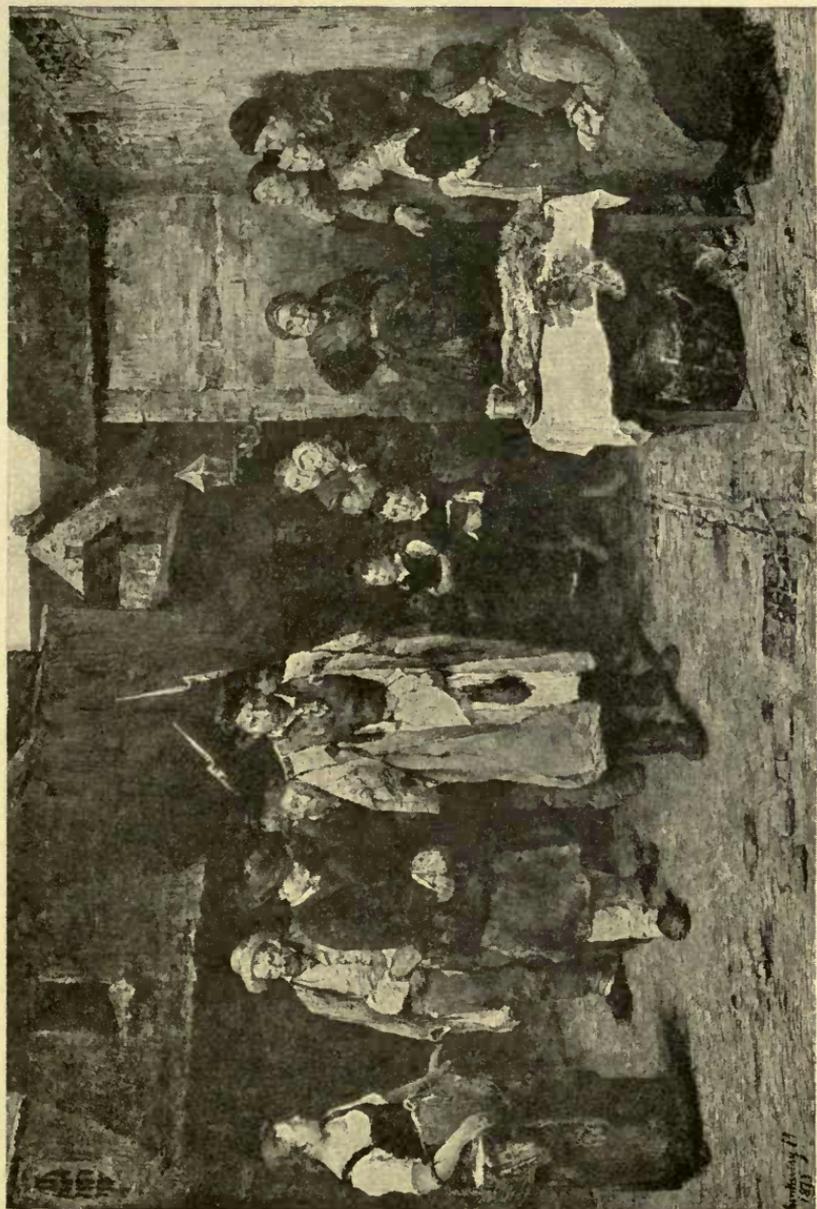
"I have not yet committed myself," said Reinhold, "and I shall not do so until I have convinced myself that I shall find in the position offered to me a sphere of action in keeping with my powers and qualifications. But, if that should be the case, then I should have to accept it."

"Should 'have to'? Why?"

"Because I have sworn to serve my country on land and sea," replied Reinhold, with a smile. "The land service I have completed; now I should like to try the sea service."

"It appears that 'service' has become a necessity with you," said Uncle Ernst with a grim smile. It was intended as scorn—so Reinhold felt it; but he was determined not to yield to his opponent on a point which concerned, not himself, but his most personal views and convictions.

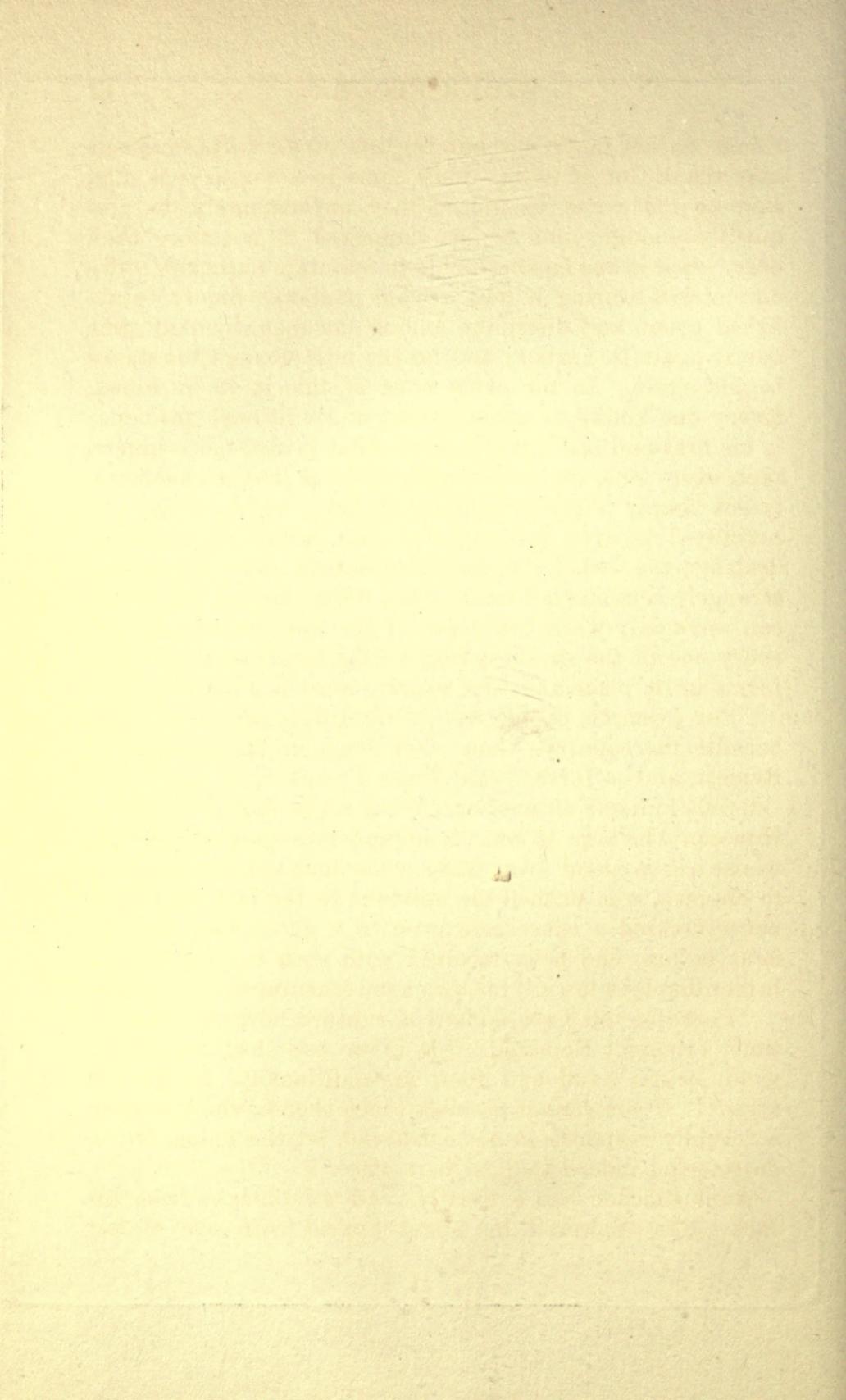
"Why should I deny," he questioned, "that the rigid Prussian military discipline has made a very profound impression on me? With us, in a small Republican community, everything is a little lax; no one understands rightly the art of commanding, and no one will submit to commands. Then we go on board ship, where one alone commands and the others must obey. But no one has learned what he is now to do; the officers lack, only too often, the proper attitude; they proceed at random with abuse and noise, where a calm firm word would be more in place; another time they let things go at sixes and sevens, and give free rein when they should keep a tight rein. The men, for their part, are the less able to endure such irregular treatment, as they are mostly rough fellows, only waiting for the opportunity to throw off restraint, which chafes them. So



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things do not move without friction of all sorts, and one may thank God if things don't come to a worse pass, and even to the worst, as indeed they unfortunately do, frequently enough, and as has happened to me more than once. And if one has been able to maintain authority without mishap during a long voyage and has finally established order and discipline among the men, by that time one is again in harbor; and on the next voyage the dance begins again. In the army none of this is to be found. Every one knows in advance that unconditional obedience is his first and last duty; indeed, what is still more important, every one, even the roughest, feels that disobedience is not simply a misdemeanor but folly, which, if it were permitted in even the slightest case, would of necessity destroy the whole organization—that our enormous, strangely complicated mechanism, which we call the Army, can work only when every one of the smallest wheels, and every one of the smallest cogs in the smallest wheel, performs in its place and time exactly what is prescribed."

"For example, people who think differently about what benefits the country—those shot down in the trenches of Rastatt, and so forth," said Uncle Ernst.

Reinhold made no answer. What reply should he make? How could he hope to come to an understanding with a man whose views about everything were diametrically opposed to his own, who pushed his opinions to the last extremity, never making a concession even to a guest who, only an hour before, had been received with such cordiality as a father displays toward his own son returning from abroad?

"Perhaps you have caused a rupture with him for all time," thought Reinhold. "It is too bad; but you cannot yield, bound hand and foot, unconditionally, to the old tyrant! If you cannot possibly touch chords which awaken a friendly response in his hard soul, let the ladies try to do so—and indeed that is their office."

Aunt Rikchen had evidently read the thought from his face. She answered his silent appeal with one of her

sharp, swift, furtive glances, and with light shrugs of her shoulders, as if to say—"He's always so! It can't be helped." Ferdinande seemed not to notice the interruption. She continued to gaze straight ahead, as she had done during the entire meal, with a strange, distracted, gloomy expression, and did not now stir as her aunt, bending toward her, said a few words in a low tone. Uncle Ernst, who was just about to fill his empty glass again, set down the bottle he had raised.

"I have asked you a thousand times, Rike, to stop that abominable whispering. What is the matter now?"

A swift flush of anger passed over Aunt Rikchen's wrinkled old-maidish face, as the distasteful name "Rike" fell upon her ear; but she answered in a tone of resigned indifference, in which she was accustomed to reply to the reprimand of her brother, "Nothing at all! I only asked Ferdinande if Justus was not coming this evening."

"Who is Justus?" asked Reinhold, glad that some other subject had been broached.

"Rike is fond of speaking of people in the most familiar way," said Uncle Ernst.

"When they half belong to the family, why not?" retorted Aunt Rikchen, who seemed determined not to be intimidated this time. "Justus, or, as Uncle Ernst will have it, Mr. Anders, is a young sculptor——"

"Of thirty and more years," said Uncle Ernst.

"Of thirty and more years, then," continued Aunt Rikchen; "more exactly, thirty-three. He has been living, who knows how long, with us——"

"Don't you know, Ferdinande?" asked Uncle Ernst.

"Ferdinande is his pupil, you know," continued Aunt Rikchen.

"Oh!" said Reinhold; "my compliments."

"It isn't worth mentioning," said Ferdinande.

"His best pupil!" exclaimed Aunt Rikchen; "he told me so himself yesterday, and that your 'Shepherd Boy' pleased the Commission very much. Ferdinande has a 'Shepherd

Boy' at the exposition, you know, suggested by Schiller's poem——”

“Uhland's poem, Aunt!”

“I beg pardon—I haven't had the good fortune of an academic education, as others have!—I don't know now what I was about to say——”

“I guess it won't make much difference,” growled Uncle Ernst.

“You were speaking of Ferdinande's ‘Shepherd Boy,’ Aunt,” said Reinhold, coming to her aid.

Aunt Rikchen cast a grateful glance at him, but, before she could answer, the bell rang in the hall and a clear voice asked, “Are the family still at the table?”

“It's Justus!” cried Aunt Rikchen. “I thought it was you! Have you had supper?”

[Justus blows in like a fresh breeze just in time for tea. He has a cheery word for each member of the family, and a hearty greeting for Reinhold. He tells Reinhold that Berlin is becoming a great metropolis, “*famös und famöser*” every day. He tells Aunt Rikchen he has a new commission for a monument. Uncle Ernst interjects that Justus sets a new head on an old figure to make a Victoria or a Germania. Uncle Ernst thinks this a good symbol of German unity. Justus assures Reinhold that this is Uncle Ernst's way; he is only envious; envy is his passion. He envies God for having made the world so beautiful! Justus then proceeds, eating and drinking everything in sight between the words, to describe his new monument—Germania on a stove mounted on a granite pedestal. On the fundamēt are to be reliefs, which Justus extemporizes on the spot, making Reinhold a national guardsman with the wrinkles of the old servant Grollmann; Uncle Ernst is to be the burgomaster, and Ferdinande the prettiest girl; General von Werben extends his hand to the burgomaster on entering the city. This awakens Uncle Ernst's protest, as he hates the General. Ferdinande falls in a faint, and

Uncle Ernst shows the effects of his wine. Ferdinande goes into the garden, and Justus and Reinhold leave the room to retire.

At breakfast Reinhold has a confidential talk with Aunt Rikchen and learns many of the secrets of the family, especially the breach between Uncle Ernst and Philip. Aunt Rikchen thinks Philip can't be so bad after all, when he stops his poor old aunt on the street and asks her if she wants any money.

Reinhold goes out of the house, with its gloomy associations, into the glorious sunshine. He sees Cilli, the blind daughter of Kreisel, Uncle Ernst's head bookkeeper, feeling her way along the iron fence, and notices that she has caught her apron in a thorn-bush. He comes to her relief and converses with her about the light, which she cannot see, and about the world, which she can only feel and hear. Her face is an animated ray of sunlight.

Reinhold starts out to find Uncle Ernst in his establishment. He passes Ferdinande's studio and inquires of the young Italian, Antonio, whether Miss Schmidt is in. Antonio makes an indifferent and rather impolite reply, that he doesn't know. After passing from one department to another, Reinhold finally finds Uncle Ernst confronted by a group of socialistic strikers, and takes a stand close by his side. "We are all socialists," cries a voice from the group. His uncle, in his rage, orders the men to go and get their pay, and discharges them, as he declares that might goes before right and revolution has become permanent. He then sends Reinhold to accompany Ferdinande to the Exhibition.]

The young man in shirt-sleeves, who had given a rather discourteous answer to Reinhold, after closing the door shook his fist, muttering a strong oath in his native tongue between his sharp white teeth. Then he stepped back into the inclosure and stole with noiseless tread to the door which separated this studio from the adjoining one. He put his ear to the door and listened a few minutes. A smile

of satisfaction lighted up his dark face; straightening up, he drew a deep breath and then, as noiselessly as a cat, stole up the iron steps of the winding staircase which led to the little room whence he had descended a few minutes before to answer Reinhold's knock.

After some minutes he came down the stairs again, this time without artfully concealing the noise, but stepping more heavily than was necessary and whistling a tune. He now had his coat and vest on, and wore patent-leather shoes on his narrow feet, at which he cast satisfied glances as he descended. Downstairs he stepped quickly before the Venetian mirror and repeatedly scanned his entire figure with the closest scrutiny, adjusted his blue cravat, pressed one of the gold buttons more firmly into his shirt front, and passed a fine comb through his blue-black curls, which shone like raven plumes. His whistling became softer and softer, and finally ceased. He turned away from the mirror, noisily moving one object after another, till he came directly up to the door at which he had listened shortly before. He reached out and seized a footstool, which he had placed against the wall at arm's length for the purpose, and now stepped upon it and put his eye to the door, as he had his ear a while before—very close; for he had with great pains bored a hole with the smallest auger, and had experienced great difficulty in learning to see through it into the adjoining room, or the place where she was accustomed to work. The blood flushed his dark cheeks as he peeped through. "Oh, bellissima!" he whispered to himself, pressing a fervent kiss upon the wood.

All at once he jumped away—noiselessly as a cat; the seat stood again by the wall, and he himself stood before the half-finished statue of a female figure of heroic size, as a knock was heard at the door on the other side—"Signor Antonio!"

"Signora?" called the young man from where he sat. He had taken up his mallet and chisel, evidently only better to play the rôle of one surprised.

“Can you come in a moment, Signor Antonio? *Fatemi il piacere!*”

“*Si, Signora!*”

He threw down the tools and ran to the door, the bolt of which was already shoved back. Notwithstanding the request, he knocked before opening it.

“*Ma—entrate!*—How finely you have fixed yourself up, Signor Antonio!”

Antonio dropped his eyelashes, and his glance glided down his slender figure to the points of his patent-leather shoes—but only for a moment. The next instant his black eyes were fastened with a melancholy, passionate expression upon the beautiful girl, who stood before him in her simple dark house-dress and her work-apron, holding the modeling tool in her hand.

“You do not need to make yourself beautiful. You are always beautiful.”

He said this in German. He was proud of his German, since she had praised his accent repeatedly during the Italian lessons he had given her, and had said that every word sounded to her, when he uttered it, new and precious, like an acquaintance one meets in a foreign land.

“I think I am anything but beautiful, this morning,” said Ferdinande. “But I need your help. My model did not come; I wanted to work on the eyes today. You have prettier eyes than your countrywomen, Antonio; do pose for me—only a few minutes.”

A proud smile of satisfaction passed over the beautiful face of the youth. He took the same attitude toward Ferdinande that she had given her statue.

“Fine!” she said. “One never knows whether you are greater as actor or as sculptor.”

“*Un povero abbozzatore!*” he muttered.

“You are not a workingman!” said Ferdinande. “You know you are an artist.”

“I am an artist as you are a princess!”

“What do you mean by that?”

"I was born to be an artist and yet am not one, as you were born to be a princess and yet are not one."

"You are crazy!"

It was not a tone of irritation in which she said this; there was something like acquiescence in it, which did not escape the ear of the Italian.

"And now you know it," he added.

She made no reply, and kept on with her work, but only mechanically. "She called you to tell you something," said Antonio to himself.

"Where were you last evening, Antonio?" she asked after a pause.

"In my club, Signora."

"When did you come home?"

"Late."

"But when?"

"At one o'clock, *ma perchè?*"

She had turned around to her little table on which lay her tools, which she was fingering.

"I only asked the question. We did not go to bed till late at night. We had a visitor—a cousin of mine—there was much talking and smoking—I got a fearful headache, and spent an hour in the garden. Will you pose again? Or shall we give it up? It is hard for you; I think you look tired."

"No, no!" he muttered.

He took the pose again, but less gracefully than before. Strange thoughts whirled through his brain, and made his heart throb.—"When did you come home?"—"I was in the garden for an hour."—Was it possible—but no, no, it was impossible, it was chance! But if he had met her alone in the garden, alone, late at night—what would he have said, what would he have done?

His eyes swam—he pressed his hands, which he should have held to his brow, to his eyes.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed Ferdinande.

His hand dropped; his eyes, which were fixed upon her, were aflame.

“What is the matter with me?” he muttered. “What is the matter with me?—*Ho—non lo so neppur io: una febbre che mi divora, ho, che il sangue mi abbrucia, che il cervello mi si spezza; ho in fine, che non ne posso più, che sono stanco di questa vita!*”

Ferdinande had tried to resist the outbreak, but without success. She shook from head to foot; from his flaming eyes a spark had shot into her own heart, and her voice trembled as she now replied with as much composure as she could command, “You know I do not understand you when you speak so wildly and fast.”

“You did understand me,” muttered the youth.

“I understood nothing but what I could see without all that—that ‘a fever consumes you, that your blood chokes you, that your brain is about to burst, that you are tired of this life’—in German; that ‘you sat too late at your club last night, and raved too much about fair Italy, and drank too much fiery Italian wine.’”

The blue veins appeared on his fine white brow; a hoarse sound like the cry of a wild beast came from his throat. He reached toward his breast, where he usually carried his stiletto—the side pocket was empty—his eyes glanced about as if he were looking for a weapon.

“Do you mean to murder me?”

His right hand, which was still clutching his breast, relaxed and sank; his left also dropped, his fingers were interlocked, a stream of tears burst from his eyes, extinguishing their glow; he fell on his knees and sobbed: “*Pardonatemi! Ferdinanda, l’ho amata dal primo giorno che l’ho veduta, ed adesso—ah! adesso—*”

“I know it, poor Antonio,” said Ferdinande, “and that is why I pardon you—once more—for the last time! If this scene is repeated I shall tell my father, and you will have to go. And now, Signor Antonio, stand up!”

She extended her hand, which he, still kneeling, pressed to his lips and his forehead.

“Antonio! Antonio!” echoed the voice of Justus outside; immediately there was a rap upon the door which led to the court. Antonio sprang to his feet.

“Is Antonio here, Miss Ferdinande?”

Ferdinande went herself to open the door.

“Are you still at work?” inquired Justus, coming in.—“But I thought we were going with your cousin to the Exhibition?”

“I am waiting for him; he has not yet appeared; just go on ahead with Antonio; we shall meet in the sculpture gallery.”

“As you say!—What you have done today on the eyes is not worth anything—an entirely false expression! You have been working without your model again; when will you come to see that we are helpless without a model!—*Andiamo, Antonio!* If you are not ashamed to cross the street with me!”

He had taken a position by the side of the Italian as if he wished to give Ferdinande the pleasure he found in contrasting his short stout figure, in the worn velvet coat and light trousers of doubtful newness, with the elegant, slender, handsome youth, his assistant. But Ferdinande had already turned away, and only said once more, “in the sculpture gallery, then!”

“*Dunque—andiamo!*” cried Justus; “*a rivederci!*”

[Ferdinande says Antonio is the only one, after all, who understands her. She then reads a letter which she has received from Ottomar over the garden wall. Ottomar speaks only of meeting her, but says nothing of seeing her father, or of more serious purposes. Reinhold knocks on her studio door, enters, and sees how the artists live in a world of their own. Ferdinande says her father does not care what she does so long as she can have her own way. Reinhold inspects her work and the studio.]

“But now I am afraid you will spoil me so thoroughly

that I shall find it difficult to get back into my simple life," said Reinhold, as he sped on at the side of Ferdinande in his uncle's equipage through the Thiergartenstrasse to the Brandenburgerthor.

"Why do we have horses and a carriage if we are not to use them?" inquired Ferdinande.

She had leaned back against the cushions, just touching the front seat with the point of one of her shoes. Reinhold's glance glided almost shyly along the beautiful figure, whose splendid lines were brought out advantageously by an elegant autumn costume. He thought he had just discovered for the first time how beautiful his cousin was, and he considered it very natural that she should attract the attention of the motley throng with which the promenade teemed, and that many a cavalier who dashed by them turned in his saddle to look back at her. Ferdinande seemed not to take any notice of it; her large eyes looked down, or straight ahead, or glanced up with a dreamy, languid expression to the tops of the trees, which, likewise dreamy and languid, appeared to drink in the mild warmth of the autumn sun without stirring. Perhaps it was this association of ideas that caused Reinhold to ask himself how old the beautiful girl was; and he was a little astonished when he calculated that she could not be far from twenty-four. In his recollection she had always appeared as a tall, somewhat lank young thing, that was just about to unfold into a flower—but, to be sure, ten years had gone since that. Cousin Philip—at that time likewise a tall, thin young fellow—must already be in the beginning of his thirties.

A two-wheeled cabriolet came up behind them and passed them. On the high front seat sat a tall, stately, broad-shouldered gentleman, clad with most precise and somewhat studied elegance, as it appeared to Reinhold, who, with hands encased in light kid gloves, drove a fine high-stepping black steed, while the small groom with folded arms sat in the low rear seat. The gentleman had just

been obliged to turn out for a carriage coming from the opposite direction, and his attention had been directed to the other side; now—at the distance of some carriage lengths—he turned upon his seat and waved a cordial greeting with his hand and whip, while Ferdinande, in her careless way, answered with a nod of her head.

“Who was that gentleman?” asked Reinhold.

“My brother Philip.”

“How strange!”

“Why so?”

“I was just thinking of him.”

“That happens so often—and particularly in a large city, and at an hour when everybody is on the go. I shall not be surprised if we meet him again at the Exhibition. Philip is a great lover of pictures, and is not bad himself at drawing and painting. There, he is stopping—I thought he would—Philip understands the proprieties.”

At the next moment they were side by side with the cabriolet.

“Good morning, Ferdinande! Good morning, Reinhold! Stunning hit that I strike you on the first day! Wretched pun, Ferdinande—eh? Looks fine, our cousin, with his brown face and beard—but he doesn’t need to be ashamed of the lady at his side—eh? Where are you going—to the Exhibition? That’s fine! We’ll meet there.—My nag acts like crazy today.—Au revoir!”

With the tip of his whip he touched the black horse, which was already beginning to rear in the traces, and sped off, nodding back once more over his broad shoulders.

“I should not have recognized Philip again,” said Reinhold. “He doesn’t resemble you—I mean Uncle and you—at all.”

In fact, a greater contrast is scarcely conceivable than that between the broad, ruddy, beardless, clean-shaven face of the young man, with his closely clipped hair, and the splendid face of Uncle Ernst, with its deep furrows and

heavy growth of gray hair and beard, or the stately pallor and aristocratic beauty of Ferdinande.

“Lucky for him!” cried Ferdinande.

“Lucky?”

“He is, as he appears, a man of his time; we are medieval ghosts. For that reason he moves about as a ghost among us—but it is not his fault.”

“Then you are on his side in the rupture between him and Uncle?”

“The rest of us at home are never asked for our opinion; you must take note of that for the future.”

“Also for the present,” thought Reinhold, as Ferdinande sank back among the cushions.

“Ghosts are never one’s favorite company, much less on such a beautiful sunny day. There are so many good happy people—sweet little Cilli, for example—and—of whom one thinks, him he meets!” As if wishing to make up in all haste for what he had foolishly neglected in the morning, he now tried to direct his thoughts to her whose image he believed he had forever in his soul, but which would not now appear.—“The throng is to blame for it,” he said impatiently.

They were in the worst of the jam now, to be sure. A regiment was marching down Friedrichstrasse across the Linden with the band playing. The throng of pedestrians pressed back on both sides, particularly on that from which they came; in the midst of them mounted and unmounted policemen were striving with persuasion and force to maintain order and keep back the throng which now and then gave audible expression to their indignation.

The annoying delay seemed to make Ferdinande impatient, too; she looked at her watch.—“Already half-past twelve—we are losing the best part of the time.” At last the rear of the battalion came along, while the van of the next battalion, with the band playing, came out of Friedrichstrasse again, and the throng of people pressed on with a rush through the small space in wild confusion.

—"On! On! Johann!" cried Ferdinande, with an impatience which Reinhold could explain only by the anxiety which she felt. They got out of one crowd only to get into another.

In the first large square room of the Exhibition—the so-called clock room—a throng of spectators stood so closely jammed together that Reinhold, who had Ferdinande's arm, saw no possibility of advance. "There are not so many people in the side rooms," said Ferdinande, "but we must stand it a little while here; there are always good pictures here; let us separate—we can then move more freely. What do you think of this beautiful Andreas Achenbach? Isn't it charming, wonderful! In his best and noblest style! Sky and sea—all in gray, and yet—how sharply the individual details are brought out! And how well he knows how to enliven the apparent monotony by means of the red flag there on the mast at the stern of the steamer, and by the flickering lights on the planks of the bridge wet with spray here at the bow—masterful! Simply masterful!"

Reinhold had listened with great pleasure to Ferdinande's enthusiastic description. "Here she can speak!" he thought; "well, to be sure, she is an artist! You can see all that too, but not its significance, and you wouldn't be able to explain why it is so beautiful."

He stood there, wrapped in contemplation of the picture.—"What manœuvre would the captain make next? He would doubtless have to tack again to get before the wind, but for that he was already a ship's length or so too near the bridge—a devilish ticklish manœuvre."

He turned to communicate his observation to Ferdinande, and just missed addressing a fat little old lady, who had taken Ferdinande's place and was eagerly gazing through her lorgnette, in company with a score of other ladies and gentlemen standing closely together in a semi-circle. Reinhold made a few vain efforts to escape this imprisonment and to get to Ferdinande, whom he saw at a dis-

tance speaking with some ladies, so absorbed that she did not turn even once, and had evidently forgotten him.—Another advantage of freedom of movement—you can also make use of that!—A picture nearby had attracted his attention—another sea view by Hans Gude, as the catalogue said—which pleased him almost better than the other. To the left, where the sea was open, lay a large steamer at anchor. On the shore, which curved around in a large bend, in the distance among the dunes, were a few fisher huts, with smoke rising from the chimneys. Between the village and the ship a boat was passing, while another, almost entirely in the foreground, was sailing toward the shore. The evening sky above the dunes was covered with such thick clouds that the smoke could hardly be distinguished from the sky; only on the extreme western horizon, above the wide open sea, appeared a narrow muddy streak. The night was likely to be stormy, and even now a stiff breeze was blowing; the flags of the steamer were fluttering straight out and there was a heavy surf on the bare beach in the foreground. Reinhold could not take his eyes from the picture. Thus it was, almost exactly, on that evening when he steered the boat from the steamer to the shore. There in the bow lay the two servants, huddled together; here sat the President, with one hand on the gunwale of the boat and the other clutching the seat, not daring to pull up the blanket which had slipped from his knees; here the General with the collar of his mantle turned up, his cap pulled down over his face, staring gloomily into the distance; and here, close by the man at the helm, she sat—looking out so boldly over the green waste of water, and the surf breaking before them; looking up so freely and joyously with her dear brown eyes at the man at the helm!—Reinhold no longer thought of the pressing throng about him, he had forgotten Ferdinande, he no longer saw the picture; he saw only the dear brown eyes!

“Do you think they will get to shore without a compass, Captain?” asked a voice at his side.

The brown eyes looked up at him, as he had just seen them in his dream; free and glad; glad, too, was the smile that dimpled her cheeks and played about her delicate lips as she extended her hand to him, without reserve, as to an old friend.

“When did you come?”

“Last evening.”

“Then of course you haven’t had time to ask after us and get your compass. Am I not the soul of honesty?”

“And what do you want of it?”

“Who knows? You thought I had great nautical talent; but let us get out of the jam and look for my brother, whom I just lost here. Are you alone?”

“With my cousin.”

“You must introduce me to her. I have seen her ‘Shepherd Boy’ down stairs—charming! I have just learned from my brother that your cousin did it, and that we are neighbors, and all that.—Where is she?”

“I have been looking around for her, but can’t find her.”

“Well, that’s jolly! Two children lost in this forest of people! I am really afraid.”

She wasn’t afraid.—Reinhold saw that she wasn’t; she was at home here; it was her world—one with which she was thoroughly acquainted, as he was with the sea. How skilfully and gracefully she worked her way through a group of ladies who were not disposed to move! How unconcernedly she nodded to the towering officer, who bowed to her from the farthest corner of the room, above the heads of several hundred people! How she could talk over her shoulder with him, who followed her only with difficulty, when he was at her side, until they reached the long narrow passage in which the engravings and water colors were exhibited.

“I saw my brother go in here,” she said. “There—no,

that was von Saldern! Let us give him up! I shall find him soon—and you your cousin.”

“Not here, either.”

“It doesn’t make any difference; she will not lack companions, any more than we. Let’s chat a little until we find them; or do you want to look at pictures? There are a few excellent Passinis here.”

“I prefer to chat.”

“There is no better place to chat than at an exhibition, in the first days. One comes really to chat, to see one’s acquaintances after the long summer when everybody is away, to scan the newest fashions which the banker’s wife and daughters have brought back from Paris—we ladies of the officers don’t play any rôle—one has an awful lot to do, and the pictures won’t run away. You are going to spend the winter with us, my brother says?”

“A few weeks at least.”

“Then you’ll remain longer. You can’t believe how interesting Berlin is in winter! And for you, too, who have the *entrée* into so many circles! Your uncle entertains in grand style, my brother says, from whom I have all my wisdom; artists go and come—as a matter of course, when the daughter herself is an artist, and pretty besides! Is she really so pretty? I’m so curious! At our house it’s more quiet, and a little monotonous—always the same people—officers—but there are some fine men among them who will appeal to you, and among the ladies a few lovely, beautiful women and girls. This is familiar talk. And then Miss von Strummin is coming—Mieting! She promised me to do so at Golmberg, with a thousand pledges, and has already written half a dozen letters on the subject—she writes every day—sometimes two letters a day; the last one was entirely about you.”

“That makes me curious.”

“I believe it; but I shall take care not to tell you what was in it; you men are already vain enough. Papa, too, is very fond of you; did you know that?”

"No, I did not know it; but I don't know of anything that would make me prouder."

"He said—only yesterday evening, when Ottomar told us about meeting you, and that he had met you in Orleans—it was too bad that you didn't remain in the army; you would have had an easy time of it. You could still reënter any moment."

"Very kind! I thought of it myself during the campaign, and, if the campaign had lasted longer, who knows? But in time of peace! A second lieutenant at thirty years—that wouldn't do!"

"Of course, of course! But how would it be with the marine? That could certainly be arranged, and you could remain in your profession."

"I should be glad to remain in that, of course," answered Reinhold, "and I am just revolving in my mind a proposal which President von Sunden has made me recently, and which would advance me at once to the rank of commander."

"To the rank of commander!" exclaimed Else with wondering eyes.

"To the rank of Pilot Commander."

"Oh!"

There was disappointment in the exclamation, which did not escape Reinhold, and he continued with a smile: "That is, the command of a few dozen rough, seasoned, seaworthy men, and of a dozen capable, seaworthy, fast sailing craft, among them, I hope, also one or two life-boats—a modest position but yet one not without honor, and certainly full of dangers; all in all, a position of sufficient importance to justify any one who does not make any great claims on life, but is willing to exercise his capabilities in the service of the world, in devoting to it and risking for it, his powers and abilities and whatever else he has to give. And I—I should incidentally remain in my profession."

They stood at a window, a little apart from the throng of people which was surging just now up and down the

long corridor with particular vivacity. Else, leaning gently against the window-sill, was looking with fixed eyes toward the street. Reinhold almost doubted whether she had heard what he said, when, suddenly lifting her head, she answered with the cheerful face of a few minutes before, "You are right—that is your real calling. Accepting the proposal which the dear old man has made to you, you have friends in all circles. Is it a question of some particular position, if I may ask?"

"Yes, I should have my post at Wissow."

"At Wissow?"

She clapped her hands and laughed. "At our Wissow? No, but that is too delightful! Then we should be half neighbors from Warnow and also from Strummin, when I make my promised visit to Mieting! Then we shall come, and you shall go sailing with us—but far, far out! Will you do it?"

"As far as you wish!"

"Done! And now we must continue our journey of discovery. Good gracious! Princess Heinrich August, with the princesses! The unfortunate Passinis! She has certainly seen me—she sees everything at a glance; I can't get away now.—But——"

"I am going!" said Reinhold.

"Yes, do; it is better! Here—give me your hand! Good-by!" She extended her hand which Reinhold held for a second; her eyes were turned again to the princess. He went down the corridor. When he turned again for a moment at the end of the corridor, he saw Else just making a deep curtsy to the princess. The noble lady had stopped and was speaking to Else.

"How will she get out of it," thought Reinhold. "She cannot say she has been in the bay window speaking with a pilot commander *in spe*."

Ferdinande had talked with her friends so long in the clock room that she thought she noticed that Reinhold, who had repeatedly looked around for her, now having

dismissed her from his mind for the moment, was fully occupied in examining the pictures. Then, bowing to the ladies, she moved on with the crowd, which pressed toward the side room, stopping a few moments at the entrance to make sure that Reinhold was not following her; then, with quick steps and wearing the expression of a lady looking for her lost companion, giving only a quick nod to passing acquaintances, she went on through this room, the sky-light room, and the fourth room, from there turning into the long series of small rooms which extended along the larger, and into which but few visitors came, even in the first days of the exhibition.

Today it was comparatively empty, although here and there scattered visitors strolled past, scanning the pictures with hasty, feverish curiosity, not stopping long anywhere, but occasionally casting a glance of admiration at an officer who appeared to be absorbed in a few medieval landscapes. Now his interest seemed satisfied; he walked quickly up the passageway, until a picture at the far end again attracted his attention; it was the same one at which Ferdinande had been looking. The light fell so unfavorably upon the picture that it could be seen to advantage only from one place, and the officer had to approach very close to the lady—brushing her gown in doing so. “Pardon!” he said aloud, and then in a low tone, which reached her ear alone, “Don’t turn round till I tell you to do so! Speak toward the corner; no one can notice it. First, thank you!”

“For what?”

“For coming.”

“I only came to tell you that I can’t bear it any longer.”

“Do I have nothing to bear?”

“No—in comparison with me.”

“I love you, as you do me.”

“Prove it!”

“How?”

“By actions, not questions!”

“But if my hands are bound.”

“Break the bonds!”

“I cannot.”

“Farewell!”

She turned toward the entrance through which she had come; he forgot all rules of propriety and stepped in front of her. They stood face to face, looking into each other's eyes.

“Ferdinande!”

“I wish to proceed!”

“You must hear me! For Heaven's sake, Ferdinande, such an opportunity will not come again—perhaps for weeks.”

She laughed scoffingly. “We have time enough!”

Again she tried to pass him; again he stopped her.

“Ferdinande!”

“Once more: Let me pass! You need an opportunity? Such a good one to get rid of me may never come again.”

He stepped aside with a bow; she might have gone unhindered, but did not do so; hot tears filled her large eyes; she did not dare to go into the throng, but turned again toward the picture, while he took the same discreet pose as before.

“Be gracious, Ferdinande! I looked forward eagerly to this moment—why do you embitter for both of us the precious minutes? You know, you must know, that I am resolved upon the last extremity, if it must be. But we cannot take the final step without considering everything.”

“We have considered for six months.”

“Over the garden wall, in words which were only half understood; in letters, which never say what we mean to say. That is nothing. You must give me an appointment, for which I have so often asked. Shall my hand never rest in yours, my lips never touch yours? And you ask for proofs of my love!”

She looked at him with a side glance, gazed into his beautiful, light-brown, nervous eyes. Two more beautiful,

two darker eyes, had looked at her an hour before with passionate fervor; she had resisted them, but she did not resist these. Her eyelids dropped. "I cannot do it," she stammered.

"Say: 'I do not wish to do it.' I have made countless proposals. I asked to be presented to your brother at the club, recently. He was delighted to make my acquaintance—gave me a pressing invitation to call upon him—to see his pictures. How easily we could meet there!"

"I am not allowed to visit my brother—have not been allowed to do so for a long time—and now, since last evening!"

"Then your cousin! He will surely come to see us; I shall return his call—your father certainly cannot show me the door!"

"I have thought of that, and prepared him for it. It would, in any case, be only a few minutes."

"Then I shall consider farther; if I only know that you wish it, I shall find a way and write you, or rather tell you as soon as you give the sign."

"I no longer dare to do it."

"Why not?"

"Some one is watching me at every step; I am not secure in his presence for a moment—Antonio—I told you about it; I am afraid."

"Yes, you are always afraid."

He made a quick, uneasy movement toward the recess of the window near which he was standing. At the same moment a strikingly handsome, well-dressed young man vanished through the door at the other end of the gallery, in which he had been standing for some time, so concealed that, by bending a little to the left, he viewed the recess of the window and the strange couple there with his falcon-like black eyes, without running great risk of being detected. In an emergency he needed only to spring into the throng which filled the larger side rooms. He had seen enough, and darted back.

When Ottomar, after looking out of the window a few seconds, turned to speak to Ferdinande a conciliatory word which was on his lips and in his heart, the place was empty.

Ferdinande had not been able to do otherwise. Her lady friends, with whom she had conversed a little while before, had just passed the door of the side room next to which she stood, fortunately without noticing her. But they had stopped close to the door—the dress of one of them was still in sight.

[While viewing the pictures, Madame von Wallbach asks her husband, Edward, who the striking figure is coming toward them. It is Count Golm, who is presented and converses with them about Italy and Paris. Else and Ottomar are referred to. Golm asks who Ottomar is. In the course of the conversation Carla intimates her relations with Ottomar, whom Golm wishes to meet. Princess Heinrich August comes along with her suite, speaking with Else, and, recognizing Golm, inquires about his island.

Philip comes upon Reinhold at the exhibition and converses with him in a friendly way, mentioning Bismarck as his great hero, much to Reinhold's delight. He then refers to his father in severe words and points out a *nouveau riche*, who but two years ago was a dabbler, and is today thrice a millionaire. Philip says that he himself is rich and is expecting large dividends soon. He asks Reinhold to share with him, but Reinhold declines, having saved a small sum himself. They step aside as the princess comes along with Else, Golm, and her suite. Philip meets Ferdinande again and talks with her. Ottomar is in the crowd, also talking to Carla, in close proximity to Ferdinande. Antonio is spying on Ferdinande and Ottomar, with curses on his lips.

Count Golm and Privy Councilor Schieler are at the Hotel Royal discussing the new projects for a north or an east harbor of the Sundin-Wissow railroad. The Count wants the east harbor; Schieler says he is no longer an

official and has no influence. The Count speaks of his debts—fifty thousand thaler, due in October, and his account not particularly good with Lübbener. Schieler tells him he should marry a rich woman; suggests Else von Werben, mentioning the fact that Wallbach, a director of the railroad, is also trustee of the Warnow estates, and that Ottomar is engaged to Wallbach's clever sister, Carla. Wallbach calculates that half of the estate, if sold to the railroad, would be worth three or four times as much as the whole of it is now, but he hesitates to give advice in the matter. The Count proposes to buy the property at a lower rate and to sell it to the railroad. But they are reckoning without their host, Valerie, Baroness Warnow, who has, with her fifty years, acquired the right of a voice in administering the affairs of the estates; but Giraldi, her chamberlain, companion, and what not, is the power behind her. Schieler then tells Golm the history of Valerie, gives him an account of the will of her husband, and convinces the Count that the interests of the railroad and of Golm are identical. Schieler and Golm then go to call on Philip Schmidt, the general promoter of the railroad.

Schieler has prepared Philip for the visit, and told him that Golm must be won over. Philip shows Schieler and Golm his pictures. The Count is pleased and flattered, and offers Philip the hospitality of Golmberg. Golm learns how Philip, a plain master mason, has come up by his intelligence, inventive genius, energy, and speculation, especially as promoter of the railroad scheme. Lübbener, previously notified by Schieler, drops in at Philip's to see Golm. Refreshments are served, and Philip, as a bluff, pretends to banish business. Victorine, a mezzo-soprano, and Bertalde, a dancing girl, and, later, Ottomar come in, and make a breezy scene. The company, as a jest, constitutes itself a committee of promoters.

General von Werben is at work in his study, Aunt Sidonie is working on her book on Court Etiquette, Ottomar has not returned from drill, Else is reading Mieting's let-

ters—one saying that Mieting will fall in love with Reinhold if Else does not want him, and that she is coming to make conquest; the second that Mieting has misunderstood Else's letter at the first reading, and having re-read it, is not coming. Sidonie and Else discuss the question of inviting Reinhold to the ball, and decide that Ottomar is to deliver the invitation in person. Else is worried at Ottomar's disturbed state of mind, and charges him with not loving Carla. Ottomar admits that he intends to marry Carla for her five thousand income, and taunts Else with having acquired her wisdom in love matters from Count Golm. Else resents this, and then tells Ottomar that his father wishes him to deliver the invitation. Ottomar demurs, and, going to his room, finds a letter on the table from his father, saying that he has paid twelve hundred thaler of Ottomar's debts—the last he will pay.

Reinhold tries to change Uncle Ernst's attitude toward his socialistic workmen. Kreisel comes in to tell Uncle Ernst that he is going to his own funeral, and to ask for his discharge, for he too is a socialist. Philip interviews his father in the interests of the railroad, offering to buy out his plant, but, meeting with a rebuff, goes away.

Cilli asks Reinhold how Uncle Ernst received her father's resignation, and then gives Reinhold an account of her blindness. Philip finds Reinhold with Cilli and accuses him with strengthening Uncle Ernst's prejudice against the railroad. Ottomar comes in to give Reinhold the invitation to the ball, and then views the work in the studio. Philip tells Justus that he will have half a street to his credit for his sculpture. Ottomar siezes an opportunity to kiss Ferdinande and make an appointment with her in the Bellevue Garden at eight o'clock. Antonio enters and takes in the situation.

Ferdinande tells Aunt Rikchen that she is to take supper with Miss Marfolk, a painter, to meet Professor Seefeld of Karlsruhe. Reinhold prepares to go to the Werben ball. Aunt Rikchen suggests to Ferdinande that she marry

Reinhold herself, greatly to her astonishment. Antonio heightens the embarrassment by coming to give Ferdinande the lesson, which was to come on the following morning. Ferdinande sends him off, takes a cab to the Grosser Stern, while Antonio follows her in another cab. Ottomar, clad as a civilian, meets Ferdinande at the Grosser Stern.]

Meanwhile the cab had gone only a short distance, as far as the entrance to Bellevue Garden. "It is entirely safe here, I swear it is," Ottomar whispered, as he helped Ferdinande alight. The cabman put his dollar contentedly into his pocket and drove off; Ottomar took Ferdinande's arm and led the confused, anxious, dazed girl into the garden; he heard plainly her deep breathing. "I swear it is safe here," he repeated.

"Swear that you love me! That's all I ask!"

Instead of answering he placed his arm about her; she embraced him with both arms; their lips touched with a quiver and a long ardent kiss. Then they hurried hand in hand further into the park till shrubbery and trees inclosed them in darkness, and they sank into each other's arms, exchanging fervent kisses and stammering love vows—drunk with a bliss which they had so long, long dreamed, but which was now more precious than all their happy dreams.

So felt Ferdinande, at least, and so she said, while her lips met his again and again, and so said Ottomar; and yet in the same moment in which he returned her fervent kisses there was a feeling that he had never before known—a shuddering fear of the fever in his heart and hers, a feeling as of fainting in contrast to the passion which surrounded and oppressed him with the violence of a storm. He had sported with women before, considered his easy victories as triumphs, accepted the silent worship of beautiful eyes, the flattering words of loving lips, as a tribute which was due him and which he pocketed without thanks—but here—for the first time—he was the weaker one. He

was not willing to confess it, but knew, as a practised wrestler knows after the first grip, that he has found his master and that he will be overcome if chance does not come to the rescue. Indeed, Ottomar was already looking for this chance—any event that might intervene, any circumstance which might serve to his advantage; and then he blushed for himself, for his cowardice, this base ingratitude toward the beautiful, precious creature who had thrown herself into his arms with such confidence, such devotion, such self-forgetfulness; and he redoubled the tenderness of his caresses and the sweet flattery of words of love.

And then—that anxious feeling might be a delusion; but she, who had done what he so often, so beseechingly asked, had at last granted him the meeting in which he wished to set forth his plans for the future—she had a right, she must expect, that he would finally unfold the plan for that future with which he seemed to have labored so long, and which was just as hazy to him as ever. He did not believe, what she declared to be true, that she wished nothing but to love him, to be loved by him, that everything of which he spoke—his father—her father—circumstances which must be considered—difficulties which must be overcome—everything, everything, was only a mist which vanishes before the rays of the sun, trifles not worth mentioning, causing them to waste even a moment of the precious time, even a breath of it! He did not believe it; but he was only too willing to take her at her word, already releasing himself silently from the responsibility of results, which such neglect of the simplest rules of caution and prudence might have, must have.

And then he forgot the flying moment, and had to be reminded by her that his time was up, that they were expecting him at home, that he must not reach the company too late.

“Or will you take me along?” she asked. “Will you enter the reception-room arm in arm with me and present

me to the company as your betrothed? You shall not have cause to be ashamed of me; there are not likely to be many of your friends whom I cannot look down upon, and I have always found that to be able to look down on others is to be half noble. To you I shall ever have to look up; tall as I am, I must still reach up to you and your sweet lips."

There was a strange proud grace in the jest, and tenderest love in the kiss, which her smiling lips breathed upon his; he was enchanted, intoxicated by this lovely grace, this proud love; he said to himself that she was right—he said so to her—and that she could compare with any queen in the world; that she deserved to be a queen—and yet, and yet! If it had not been a jest, if she had demanded it seriously, what—yet she some time would demand it!

"That was the last kiss," said Ferdinande; "I must be the more prudent one, because I am so. And now give me your arm and conduct me to the nearest cab, and then you will go straight home and be very fine and charming this evening, and break a few more hearts in addition to those you have already broken, and afterwards lie at my feet in gratitude for my heart, which is larger than all theirs together."

It was almost dark when they left the silent park. The sky was all covered with clouds from which heavy drops of rain were beginning to fall. Fortunately an empty cab came along which Ferdinande could take to the Brandenburgerthor, there to step into another and thus obliterate every trace of the way she had gone. Ottomar could throw a kiss to her once more as he lifted her into the cab. And she leaned back into the seat, closed her eyes, and dreamed the blissful hour over again. Ottomar looked after the cab. It was a wretched nag, a wretched cab; and as they disappeared in the dark through the faint light of the few street lamps, a strange feeling of awe and aversion came over him. "It looks like a hearse," he said to himself; "I could hardly take hold of the wet doorhandle; I should not have had the courage to ride in the rig—the affair puts one into

a strangely uncomfortable situation, indeed. The road home is no joke, either—it is nearly nine o'clock—and besides it is beginning to rain very hard.”

He turned into the *Grosser-Stern-Allee*, the shortest way home. It was already growing dark so fast among the great tree trunks that he could distinguish only the hard walk upon which he was moving with hurried steps; on the other side of the broad bridle-path, where a narrow foot-path ran, the trunks of the trees were scarcely distinguishable from the blackness of the forest. He had ridden up and down this beautiful avenue countless times—alone, with his comrades, in the brilliant company of ladies and gentlemen—how often with Carla! Else was right! Carla was a skilful horse-woman, the best, perhaps, of all ladies, and certainly the most graceful. They had both so often been seen and spoken of together—it was, in fact, quite impossible to sever their relationship now; it would make a fearful fuss.

Ottomar stopped. He had gone too fast; the perspiration rolled from his brow; his bosom was so oppressed that he tore open his coat and vest. He had never known the sensation of physical fear before, but now he was terrified to hear a slight noise behind him, and his eyes peered anxiously into the dark—it was probably a twig which broke and fell. “I feel as if I had murder on my soul, or as if I myself were to be murdered the next moment,” he said to himself, as he continued his way almost at a run.

He did not imagine that he owed his life to the breaking of that twig.

Antonio had lain in wait all this time at the entrance to the avenue as if bound by magic, now sitting on the iron railing between the foot-path and the bridle-path, now going to and fro, leaning against the trunk of a tree, continually engrossed in the same dark thoughts, projecting plans for revenge, exulting in imagining the tortures which he was to inflict upon her and upon him as soon as he had them in his power, directing his glance from time to time

across the open place to the entrance of the other avenue into which the cab had disappeared with the two people, as if they must appear there again, as if his revengeful soul had the power to force them to come this way. He could have spent the whole night like a beast of prey that lies sullenly in his lair in spite of gnawing hunger, raging over his lost spoil.

And what was that? There he was, coming across the place, right toward him! His eye, accustomed to the darkness, recognized him clearly as if it had been bright day. Would the beast have the stupidity to come into the avenue—to deliver himself into his hand? *Per bacco!* It was so and not otherwise; then—after a short hesitation—he turned into the avenue—to the other side, to be sure; but it was all right; he could thus follow him on his side so much the more safely; then there was only the bridle-path to leap across, in the deep sand in which his first steps would certainly not be heard, and then—with a few springs, the stiletto in his neck, or, if he should turn, under the seventh rib up to the hilt!

And his hand clutched the hilt as if hand and hilt were one, and with the finger of the other hand he tested over and over the needle-point, while he stole along from tree to tree in long strides—softly, softly—the soft claws of a tiger could not have risen and fallen more softly.

Now half of the avenue was passed; the darkness could not become more dense now; it was just light enough to see the blade of the stiletto. One moment yet to convince himself that they were alone in the park; he over there, and himself—and now, crouching, over across the soft sand behind the thick trunk of a tree which he had already selected as the place!

But quickly as the passage was made, the other had now won a handicap of perhaps twenty paces. That was too much; the distance would have to be diminished by half. And it could not be so difficult; he still had the soft sand of the bridle-path to the right of the trees, while the other one

was going to the left on the hard foot-path, where his footsteps would drown any slight noise. There! *Maledetto di Dio*—a dry twig broke with a crack under his stealthy foot. He crouched behind the tree—he could not be seen; but the other must have heard it; he stopped—listened, perhaps expecting his antagonist—in any case now no longer unprepared—who knows?—a brave man, an officer—turning about, offering his front to his antagonist. So much the better! Then there would be only a leap from behind the tree! And—he was coming!

The Italian's heart throbbed in his throat as he now, advancing his left foot, held himself ready to leap; but the murderous desire had dulled his otherwise sharp senses; the sound of the steps was not toward him but toward the opposite side! When he became aware of his mistake the distance had increased at least twofold—and threefold before he could determine in his amazement what was to be done.

To give up the chase! Nothing else remained. The beast was now almost running, and then a belated cab rattled down the street which intersected the avenue, and beyond the street were crossways to the right and left. It was not safe to do the deed; there was no certainty of escape afterwards—the moment was lost—for this time! But next time!— Antonio muttered a fearful curse as he put his stiletto back into its sheath and concealed it in his coat-pocket.

The other had vanished; Antonio followed slowly along the same road, out of the park across the Thiergartenstrasse into the Springbrunnenstrasse to the front of the house in which the hated one lived. The windows were brightly illuminated. An equipage came up; an officer and richly gowned ladies, wrapped in their shawls, alighted; a second equipage followed—he was laughing and reveling up there now, and whispering into the ear of one of the fair ladies who had alighted what he had whispered ten minutes before to Ferdinande. If only he could inspire her with the poisonous jealousy which consumed his own



THE DOWN DRESS

From the Painting by Michael von Munkacsy

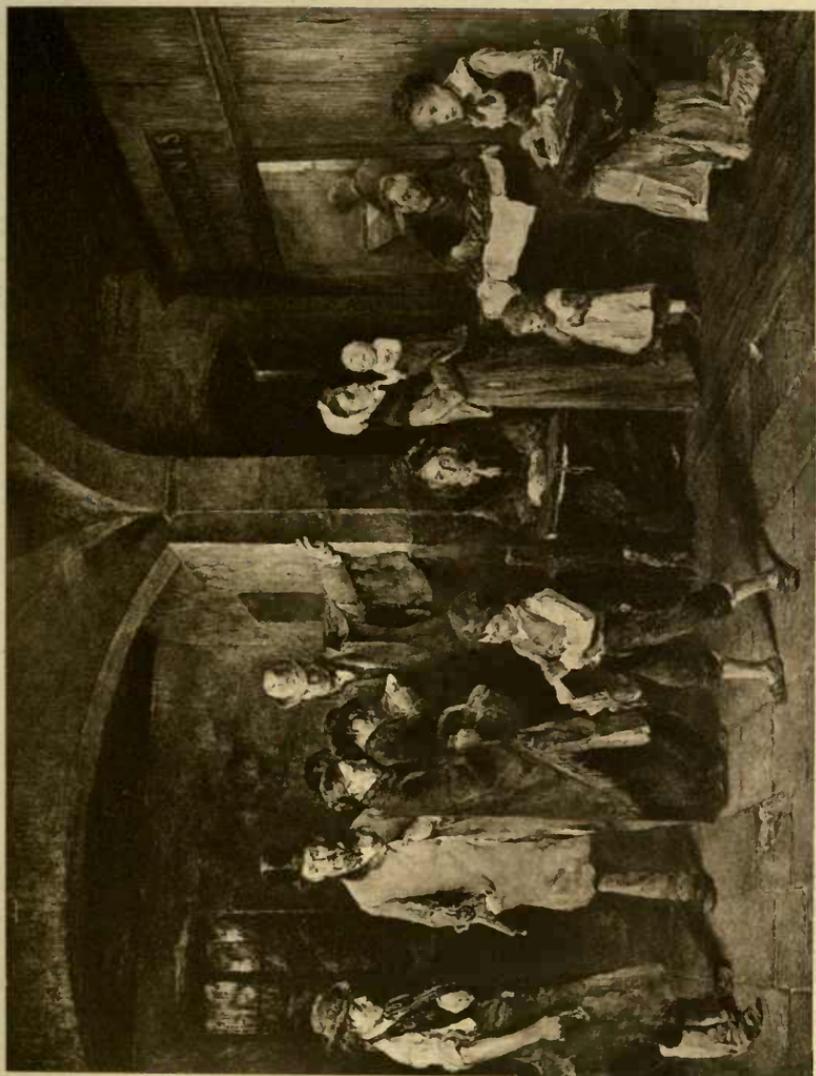
VERLAG DER BILDUNGS-VEREINE

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heart! If he could bring about something between her and him which would be insurmountable! If he could betray the whole thing to the grim signor, her father, or to the proud general, his father, or to both——

“Hello!”

A man coming along the pavement had run into him as he leaned on the iron railing of a front yard, arms folded, and had uttered the exclamation in a harsh voice.

“*Scusi!*” said the Italian, lifting his hat. “Beg your pardon!”

“Hello!” repeated the man. “Is it you, Antonio?”

“O Signor Roller! Mr. Inspector!”

“Signor Roller! Mr. Inspector! That’s enough Signoring and Inspecting,” said the man, with a loud laugh—“for the present, at least, till we have given it to the old man—to him and his nephew and his whole brood! If I could only get at the throat of all of them—could only play them a real trick! I’d be willing to pay something for it! Only I have no money! It’s all up!”

The man laughed again; he was evidently half drunk.

“I have money,” said Antonio quickly, “and——”

“Then we’ll take a drink, Signor Italiano,” exclaimed the other, slapping him on the shoulder. “*Una bottiglia—capisci? Ha! ha! I have not entirely forgotten my Italian! Carrara—marble oxen—capisci?—capisci?*”

“*Eccomi tutto a voi,*” said the Italian, taking the man’s arm. “Whither?”

“To business, to the devil, to the cellar!” exclaimed Roller, laughingly pointing to the red lantern above the saloon at the corner of the Springbrunnenstrasse.

[The three upper rooms of the General’s villa are arranged for a ball. Else appears in a blue gown, but is quite displeased with herself. All looks blue. It is Ottomar’s fault, as usual; he has gone out and not returned. And then Wallbach doesn’t love Luise, nor Luise him. The men spend so much money. Ottomar is deep in debt; War-

tenberg can't get along with his twenty thousand, and Clemda with his fifty thousand spends twice that much every year. Aunt Sidonie comes in, and is charmed with Else's tarletan; she tells Else she looks just like her princess in the book she is writing, and then refers to Count Golm as a good match for Else. Else is infuriated, says she would not marry Golm if he laid a crown at her feet. The General comes in and Schieler enters and gives the General an account of the railroad project, touching upon the sale of Valerie's estates to Golm, and suggests Golm as a prospective husband for Else.]

The Count had entered a few minutes before in his provincial uniform with the order of St. John. The reception-room had become almost filled with guests meanwhile, and it was with some difficulty that he made his way to the hostesses. Else had not spared him this trouble, to be sure; at this moment, when he caught sight of her at the door, she was eagerly continuing the conversation, which she had begun with Captain von Schönau, so eagerly that the Count, having spoken to Sidonie, stood behind her for half a minute without being noticed, till Schönau finally thought it his duty to draw her attention to the new guest with a gesture, and the words, "I think, Miss Else——"

"I think myself fortunate," said the Count.

"Oh! Count Golm!" said Else, with a well feigned surprise. "Pardon me for not seeing you at once! I was so absorbed. May I make the gentlemen acquainted: Captain von Schönau of the General Staff—a good friend of our family—Count von Golm. Have you seen Papa, Count? He is in the other room. Then, dear Schönau——"

The Count stepped back with a bow.

"That was a bit severe, Miss Else," said Schönau.

"What?"

Schönau laughed.

"You know, Miss Else, if I were not a most modest man

I should have all sorts of possible and impossible silly notions in my head."

"How so?"

"Why, my heavens, didn't you see that the Count was on the point of extending his hand and stepped back with a face as red as my collar? Such things a young lady like Miss Else von Werben overlooks only when she wishes to do so, which is hardly the case, or if she—I shall not venture to finish the sentence. Who is that?"

"Who?"

"The officer there—yonder to the left, next to the Baroness Kniebreche—see, at the right!—who is speaking to your father, a stately man—has a cross, too. How did he get here?"

Else had to decide now to see Reinhold, though her heart throbbed quickly and she was vexed at it. She was already vexed that, in her conduct toward the Count, she had exposed and almost betrayed herself to the sharp eyes of Schönau; now it was to happen again!

"A Mr. Schmidt," she said, pressing more firmly the rosebud in her hair. "Sea captain. We made his acquaintance on the journey; Papa was greatly pleased with him——"

"Really a fine looking man," repeated Schönau. Splendid manly face, such as I like to see, and not without carriage; and yet one recognizes the officer of the reserve at the first glance."

"By what?" asked Else, as her heart began to throb again.

"That you should know as well and better than I, as you associate more with the Guard than I do! Compare him with Ottomar, who seems to have been late again and wishes to atone for his sins by being doubly amiable! Just see with what perfect form he kisses the hand of old Baroness Kniebreche, and now turns on his heel and bows to Countess Fischbach with a grace which the great Vestris himself might envy! *Allons, mon fils, montrez votre talent.*

And now he converses with Sattelstädt—not a line too little, not one too much! To be sure, it is a little unfair to compare the gentlemen of the reserve with the model of all knightly form. Don't you think so?"

Else gazed straight ahead. Schönau was right; there was a difference! She would have preferred to see him as he strode up and down the deck in his woolen jacket; then she had envied him the steadiness and freedom of his movements—and when afterwards he sat at the helm of the boat, and steered it as calmly as the rider his rearing steed! If only he hadn't come just at this time!

Then Reinhold, who had been conversing with her father, excused himself with a friendly nod, and catching sight of Else, turned about and came straight toward her. Else trembled so that she had to steady herself with her left hand against the arm of the chair, for she wished to remain entirely cool and unconscious; but as he stepped up to her, his beautiful honest eyes still aglow from the gracious greeting accorded him by her father, and a certain shyness in his open manly face, which seemed to ask, "Shall I be welcomed by you, too?"—her heart grew warm and kind; even though her hand remained on the arm of the chair, she extended to him the other at full length; her dark eyes sparkled, her red lips laughed, and she said, as heartily and frankly as if there had not been a fairer name in the world—"Welcome to our house, dear Mr. Schmidt!"

He had grasped her hand and said a few words which she only half heard. She turned around to Schönau; the Captain had vanished; a flush came to her cheeks. "It doesn't matter," she muttered.

"What does not matter, Miss Else?"

"I shall tell you later, when there is to be some dancing after dinner; to be sure I don't know——"

"Whether I dance? Indeed I am passionately fond of it."

"The Rhinelander, too?"

"The Rhinelander, too! And, in spite of your incredu-

lous smile, not so badly that Miss von Werben should not give me the honor."

"The Rhinelander, then! All the rest I have declined. Now I must mingle with the company."

She gave a friendly nod and turned away, but turned quickly again.

"Do you like my brother?"

"Very much!"

"I wish so much that you might become intimate with each other. Do make a little effort. Will you?"

"Gladly."

She was now really much occupied. Reinhold, too, mingled with the company, without any of the misgivings which he had felt upon entering the brilliant circle of strangers. For he had now been received by the hostess as a dear friend of the family! Even the eyes of her stately aunt had glanced at him with a certain good-natured curiosity, formal as her bow had been; on the other hand, her father had shaken his hand so heartily and after the first words of welcome, drawing him aside with evident confidence, said to him: "I must first of all make you acquainted with Colonel von Sattelstädt and Captain von Schönau, both of the General Staff. The gentlemen will be eager to hear. Please express yourself with entire freedom—I consider that important. I have yet a special request in the matter, which I wish to communicate to you as soon as I get that far. Then I shall see you later!"

"That was already flattering enough for the simple Lieutenant of the Reserve," Reinhold had thought to himself, as he went up to Else. And she! her kindness, her graciousness! He felt like a Homeric hero, who hoped, silently indeed, that the goddess to whom he prayed would be gracious to him, and to whom the divinity appears in person, in the tumult of battle, beckoning with immortal eyes and words which his ear alone hears. What mattered it to him now that the gold lorgnette of old Baroness Kniebreche was turned upon him so long with such an unneces-

sary stare, and then let drop with a movement which only too plainly said, "That was worth the effort!" What did he care that Count Golm looked past him as long as it was possible, and, when the manœuvre once utterly failed, slipped by him with an angry, snarling, "O, O, Captain—Very happy!" That the bow of young Prince Clemda might have been a little less indifferent when he was introduced! What difference did it make to him? And those were the only signs of unfriendly feeling which he had encountered in a quite numerous company during the hour just passed. Otherwise, amiable, natural friendliness on the part of the ladies, and polite comradeship on the part of the gentlemen, officers almost without exception, had been the rule throughout; even Prince Clemda seemed to wish to atone for his coolness, suddenly coming up to him and speaking through his nose a few phrases from which Reinhold heard with some clearness: "Werben—Orleans—Vierzon—Devil of a ride—sorry——"

The acquaintance of von Sattelstädt and von Schönau was the most agreeable to him. They came up to him almost at the same time and asked him if he was inclined to give them his views concerning the practicability and value of constructing a naval station north of Wissow Hook. "We both know the locality very well," said the Colonel; "are also both—the Captain a little more than I—opposed to the project. We have conferred frequently with the gentlemen of the Ministry, of course; but nevertheless, or, rather, now in particular, it would be of the greatest interest and most decided importance to hear the view of an intelligent, entirely unprejudiced and unbiased seaman, who is fully acquainted with the conditions—if he has in addition, as you have, Captain, the military eye of a campaign officer. Let us sit down in this little room—there is another chair, Schönau! And now, I think it is best that you allow us to ask questions; we shall come most easily and clearly to the point in that way. We do not wish to tax you long."

“I am at the service of the gentlemen!” said Reinhold.

The gentlemen intended to make only the most modest use of the permission thus granted; but as Reinhold had to go more into detail at times in order to answer the questions put to him, the conversation lasted much longer than anyone had intended, and, as it appeared, than he himself had realized. Flattering as was the respectful attention with which the two officers listened to his explanations, sincerely as he admired the keenness, the exactness, and the extent of the information exhibited by each of their questions, each word—nevertheless he could not resist casting a glance through the door of the room into the reception-room where the company was still mingling freely in the accustomed manner; and through the reception-room into the smaller room on the other side of the reception-room, in which a group of younger ladies and gentlemen had collected, among whom Reinhold noticed Ottomar and the lady who had been pointed out to him at the exhibition as Miss von Wallbach, and Count Golm, and, finally, Else too. A lively discussion was going on there, so that one could hear it across the reception-room, although only an occasional word could be understood. And Schönau’s attention also was finally attracted to it. “I’ll wager,” he said, “that they are disputing about Wagner; when Miss von Wallbach is presiding, Wagner must be the subject of discussion. I would give something, if I could hear what ideas she is bringing forward today.”

“That is to say, dear Schönau, if I am not mistaken, ‘I would give something, if Sattelstädt would finally stop,’ ” said the Colonel with a smile. “Well, to be sure, we have tried the patience of our comrade longer than was right or proper.”

He rose and extended his hand to Reinhold, Schönau protested; he had thought least of all of that which the Colonel imputed to him. The Colonel shook his finger. “Shame on you, Schönau, to betray your mistress! That is, you must know, comrade, the noble Dame Musica—for her he

goes through fire and flood, and lets the naval station go to the dickens! March, march, Schönau!" And off they went.

Schönau laughed, but left, taking with him Reinhold, who followed without reluctance, as he would thus have the best opportunity of coming into the presence of Else and Ottomar, the latter of whom he had seen and saluted hastily a few minutes before.

[Ottomar returns and quite outdoes himself in his attentions to the ladies, much to the disquietude of Baroness Kniebreche and Carla. The Baroness finally brings Ottomar and Carla together, and delivers a little homily to them but without improving their relations. Ottomar thinks to himself that the four charming girls with whom he is talking would not make one Ferdinande from whom he has just parted. And suppose he did have a hostile encounter with Wallbach, it would only be the fourth in four years; and if the bullet did hit him, it would only be the end of his debts and his amours! Ottomar is asked to introduce his friend Reinhold. Clemda tells Ottomar that he is to marry Antonie in a month, and that they wish Carla to be a bridesmaid. Colonel von Bohl tells Ottomar that he can hardly begin his furlough before spring, as Clemda's time is to be extended, and then speaks of a possible post at St. Petersburg for Ottomar. Ottomar is embarrassed and runs into a group of ladies gathered around Carla, who is discoursing about Wagner. Count Golm is shrewd enough not to express his opinion about Wagner as a great musician, but Ottomar, to the great confusion of the Baroness and Carla, says he thinks the whole Wagner business is a humbug!

Supper is announced. Else implores Ottomar to take Carla to supper and repair the injury he has done, but Carla has taken Golm's arm. Else urges Ottomar not to let Golm beat him out. The polka starts. The General, seeing Reinhold disengaged, asks him whether he dances? Reinhold says he does, but is waiting for the chat which

the General had requested. The General proceeds to unfold the railroad scheme, and elicits Reinhold's opinion. At the close of the ball, the General finds a letter telling of Ottomar's escapade with Ferdinande.]

The last carriage had rolled away; the servants were cleaning up the rooms under the direction of Sidonie; Else, who had usually relieved her aunt of the duties of the house, had withdrawn with the excuse that she felt a little tired, in order to allow the pleasant echo of the delightful evening to pass through her thoughts again while she sat in the quiet of her room, undisturbed by the clatter of chairs and tables. It would not have been at all necessary for him to dance the Rhinelander with such grace; she would have given him in the waltz, also, the great flaming favor which she had placed at the bottom of the basket, and which she drew, luckily, with a bold grab, when it came her turn to fasten it with her trembling hands next to the iron cross on his breast. Yes, her hands had trembled and her heart had throbbed as she accomplished the great work and now looked up into his beaming eyes; but it was for joy, for pure joy and bliss. And it was joy and bliss also which now let her fall asleep, after she had laid her greatest treasures, the sketch-book with his picture and the little compass, upon her dressing-table, and put out the light—but again lighted it to cast a glance at the compass-box and assure herself that “it was always true” and “sought its master,” and then opened the sketch-book at the place where it always opened of itself, to look at his picture once more—no, not the picture—it was horrible!—but at the signature: “With love!” Secretly, very secretly to impress a kiss upon it, and then quickly, very quickly, to put out the light, to press her head into her pillow, and, in her dreams, to look for him to whom she was ever true, dreaming or waking—who, she knew, would ever be true to her, waking or dreaming.

Ottomar, too, had taken leave of the ladies, as the last

guests left, with a hasty, "Good-night! I'm tired enough to drop! Where is Father?" and had gone downstairs without waiting for an answer to his question. In the hall which led to his room he had to pass his father's room. He had stopped a moment. His father, who had gone down a few minutes before, was certainly still up, and Ottomar had, on such occasions, always knocked and said at least, through the open door, "Good night!" This time he did not do it. "I am tired enough to drop," he repeated, as if he wished to excuse himself for the violation of a family custom. But, on reaching his room, he did not think of going to bed. It would not have been any use as long as the blood was raging through his veins "as if I were crazy," said Ottomar, opening his uniform covered with cotillion favors, and throwing it down. He opened his vest and collar, and got into the first piece of clothing that came to his hand—his hunting jacket—and seated himself with a cigar at the open window. The night was perceptibly cool, but the cool air was grateful to him; lightning flashed from the black clouds, but he took no notice of it; and thus he sat looking out on the black autumn night, puffing his cigar—revolving his confused thoughts in his perturbed mind, and not hearing, because of the throbbing of his pulse in his temples and the rustling of the wind in the branches, that there had twice been a knock at his door; shrinking like a criminal, as now the voice sounded close in his ear. It was August.

"I beg your pardon, Lieutenant! I have already knocked several times."

"What do you want?"

"The General requests the Lieutenant to come to him at once."

"Is Father sick?"

August shook his head. "The General is still in his uniform and doesn't look sick, only a little——"

"Only a little what?"

The man ran his fingers through his hair. "A little strange, Lieutenant! I think, Lieutenant, the General——"

"The devil! Will you speak?"

August came a step nearer, and said in a whisper, "I think the General received a bad letter a while ago—it may have been half-past eleven. I didn't see the one who brought it, and Friedrich didn't know him, and he probably went away immediately. But I had to take the letter to the General myself, and the General made a curious face as he read the letter——"

"From a lady?"

August could not suppress a smile in spite of the genuine concern which he felt for his young master. "I—he said—they looked differently—one will get over that in time—a highly important letter——"

"These damned Manichæans!" muttered Ottomar. He did not understand the connection; the next note was not due for eight days—but what else could it be? His father would make another beautiful scene for him! Oh, pshaw! He would get engaged a few days earlier, if he must get engaged, if it were only finally to put an end to the disgraceful worries from which he had no rest at night in his room, and couldn't smoke his cigar in peace!

He threw his cigar out of the window; August had taken his uniform and removed the cotillion favors. "What's that for?"

"Does the Lieutenant prefer to put on his uniform?" asked August.

"Nonsense!" said Ottomar. "That was just lacking to——"

He broke off; for he could not tell August—to make the tedious story still more tedious and more serious. "I shall simply explain to Papa that in the future I do not intend to molest him further with such things, and prefer to have my affairs finally arranged by Wallbach," he said to himself, while August went on ahead with the light—the gas

lights in the hall were already extinguished—down the hall, and now stopped at his father's door.

“You may put the light on the table there, and as far as I am concerned, go to bed, and tell Friedrich to wake me at six o'clock in the morning.”

He had spoken these words more loudly than was necessary, and he noticed that his voice had a strange sound—as if it were not his own voice. It was, of course, only because everything was so still in the house—so still that he now heard the blood coursing in his temples and his heart beating.

“The damned Manichæans!” he muttered again through his teeth, as he knocked at the door.

“Come in!”

His father stood at his desk, above which a hanging lamp was burning. And the lamps were still burning on the brackets before the mirror, there was an uncanny brightness in the room, and an uncanny order, although it was just exactly as Ottomar had seen it as long as he could remember. He ought really to have put on his uniform after all.

“I beg pardon, Papa, for coming in *négligé*. I was just about to go to bed, and August was so insistent——”

His father still stood at the desk, resting one hand on it, turning his back to him without answering. The silence of his father lay like a mountain on Ottomar's soul. He shook off with a violent effort the sullen hesitation. “What do you want, Papa?”

“First, to ask you to read this letter,” said the General, turning around slowly and pointing with his finger to a sheet which lay open before him on his desk.

“A letter to me!”

“Then I should not have read it; but I have read it.”

He had stepped back from the desk, and was going up and down the room with a slow, steady step, his hands behind him, while Ottomar, in the same place where his

father had stood without taking the sheet in his hands—the handwriting was clear enough—read:

“Highly Honored and Respected General:

“Your Honor will graciously excuse the undersigned for venturing to call your Honor’s attention to an affair which threatens most seriously to imperil the welfare of your worthy family. The matter concerns a relationship which your son, Lieutenant von Werben, has had for some time with the daughter of your neighbor, Mr. Schmidt, the proprietor of the marble works. Your Honor will excuse the undersigned from going into details, which might better be kept in that silence in which the participants—to be sure, in vain—strive to preserve them, although he is in a position to do so; and if the undersigned requests you to ask your son where he was this evening between eight and nine o’clock, and with whom he had a rendezvous, it is only to indicate to your Honor how far the aforementioned relationship has already progressed.

“It would be as foolish as unpermissible to assume that your Honor is informed of all this and has winked at it, so to speak, when your son is on the point of engaging himself to the daughter of an ultraradical Democrat; on the contrary the undersigned can picture to himself in advance the painful surprise which your Honor must feel on reading these lines; but, your Honor, the undersigned has also been a soldier and knows what a soldier’s honor is—as he for his part has respected honor his whole life long—and he could no longer look on and see this mischievous machination carried on behind the back of such a brave and deserving officer by him, who more than any other, appears to be called to be the guardian of this honor.

“The undersigned believes that, after the above, there is no need of a special assurance of the high esteem with which he is to your Honor and your Honor’s entire family

“A most faithful devotee.”

The General allowed his son some minutes; now that Ottomar still stared motionless before him—only his teeth bit nervously against his pale lower lip—he remained standing, separated by the width of the room, and asked: “Have you an idea who wrote this letter?”

“No.”

“Have you the least suspicion who is the lady in question——?”

“For Heaven’s sake!” exclaimed Ottomar in anguish.

“I beg pardon; but I am in the painful situation of having to ask, since you seem inclined not to give the information which I expected.”

“What shall I explain in the matter?” asked Ottomar with bitter scorn. “It is as it is.”

“Brief and to the point,” replied the General, “only not just so clear. There still remain some points which are obscure—to me, at least. Have you anything to object to the lady—I may so express myself?”

“I should have to request you to do so otherwise.”

“Then have you anything, even the slightest thing—excepting external circumstances, and of that later—which would prevent you from bringing her into Else’s company? On your honor!”

“On my honor, no!”

“Do you know anything at all, even the slightest, concerning her family, excepting external circumstances, which would and must prevent another officer, who is not in your exceptional position, from connecting himself with the family? On your honor!”

Ottomar hesitated a moment before answering. He knew absolutely nothing touching Philip’s honor; he maintained toward him the native instinct of a gentleman who, in his eyes, was not a gentleman; but it seemed to him cowardice to wish to conceal himself behind this feeling.

“No!” said he solemnly.

“Have you acquainted the lady with your circumstances?”

“In a general way, yes.”

“Among other things, that you are disinherited as soon as you marry a lady who is not of noble family?”

“No.”

“That was a little imprudent; nevertheless I understand it. But in general, you said, she does understand the difficulties which will accompany a union between her and you in the most favorable case? Did you have her understand that you neither wish nor are in a position to remove the difficulties?”

“No.”

“But led her to believe, perhaps assured her, that you could and would remove them?”

“Yes.”

“Then you will marry the lady?”

Ottomar quivered like a steed when his rider drives the spurs into its flanks. He knew that would be, must be, the outcome of it; nevertheless, now that it was put into words, his pride revolted against any one forcing his heart, even his father. Was he to be the weaker one throughout—to follow where he did not wish to go—to allow his path to be prescribed by others?

“Not by any means!” he exclaimed.

“How? Not by any means?” returned the General. “I surely have not to do here with an obstinate boy, who breaks up his plaything because it does not amuse him any longer, but with a man of honor, an officer, who has the habit of keeping his word promptly?”

Ottomar felt that he must offer a reason—the shadow of a reason—something or other.

“I think,” he said, “that I cannot decide to take a step in a direction which would put me into the position of necessarily doing an injustice in another direction.”

“I think I understand your position,” said the General. “It is not pleasant; but when one is so many sided he should be prepared for such things. Besides, I owe you the justice to declare that I am beginning to inform myself,

now, at least, as to your conduct toward Miss von Wallbach, and I fail to find the consistency in that conduct which, to be sure, you have unfortunately never led me to expect. According to my conception, it was your duty to retire, once for all, the moment your heart was seriously engaged in another direction. In our close relations with the Wallbachs it would, indeed, have been very difficult and unpleasant, but a finality; one may be deceived in his feelings, and society accepts such changes of heart and their practical consequences if all is done at the right time and in the right manner. How you will make this retreat now without more serious embarrassment I do not know; I only know that it must be done. Or would you have pursued the wrong to the limit, and bound yourself in this case as you did in that?"

"I am not bound to Miss von Wallbach in any way except as everybody has seen, by no word which everybody has not heard, or at least might have heard; and my attachment for her has been so wavering from the first moment on——"

"Like your conduct. Let us not speak of it further, then; let us consider, rather, the situation into which you have brought yourself and consider the consequences. The first is that you have forfeited your diplomatic career—with a burgher woman as your wife, you cannot appear at St. Petersburg or any other court; the second is that you must have yourself transferred to another regiment, as you could not avoid the most objectionable conflicts and collisions in your own regiment, with a Miss Schmidt as your wife; third, that if the lady doesn't bring you property, or, at least, a very considerable sum, the arrangement of your external life in the future must be essentially different from what it has been heretofore, and, I fear, one that may be little in accord with your taste; the fourth consequence is that you by this union—even though it should be as honorable in a burgher moral sense as I wish and hope—by the simple letter of the will lose your claim to

your inheritance—I mention this here once more only for the sake of completeness.”

Ottomar knew that his father had not said everything, that he had generously kept silent about the twenty-five thousand thalers of debts which he had paid for him in the course of the last few years—that is, his entire private fortune except a very small residue—and that he could not pay back this money to his father in the near future as he had intended to do, perhaps would never be able to pay it back. His father was now dependent upon his salary, ultimately upon his pension; and he had repeatedly spoken recently of wishing to retire from the service!

His glance, which had been directed in his confusion toward the floor, now passed shyly over to his father, who was pacing slowly to and fro through the room. Was it the light? Was it that he saw him differently today? His father appeared to him to be ten years older—for the first time seemed to him an old man. With the feeling of love and reverence, which he had always cherished for him, was mingled one almost of pity; he wanted to fall at his feet, embrace his knees and exclaim, “Forgive me for the mistakes I have made!” But he felt riveted to the spot; his limbs would not move; his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; he could say nothing but—“You still have Else.”

The General had stopped in front of the life-size portraits of his father and mother, which hung on the wall—a superior officer in the uniform of the Wars of the Liberation, and a lady, still young, in the dress of the time, whom Else strikingly resembled about the forehead and eyes.

“Who knows?” he said.

He passed his hand over his forehead.

“It is late in the night, two o’clock, and the morrow will have its troubles, too. Will you be good enough to put out the gas lights above you? Have you a light out there?”

“Yes, Papa.”

“Very well! Good-night!”

He had extinguished one of the lamps in front of the mirror, and taken the other.

“Can you find the door?”

Ottomar wished to exclaim, “Give me thy hand!” but he did not venture to do so, and went toward the door saying, “Good-night!”—which had a sound of resentment, because he had almost broken into tears. His father stood at the door of his bedroom. “One thing more! I forgot to say that I reserve the right to take the next step myself. As you have so long hesitated to take the initiative, you will have to grant me this favor. I shall keep you informed, of course. I beg you to take no further step without my knowledge. We must act in conjunction, now that we understand each other.”

He had said the last words with a melancholy smile that cut Ottomar to the heart. He could bear it no longer, and rushed out of the room.

The General, too, already had his hand on the latch; but as Ottomar had now vanished he drew it back, took the lamp to the writing-desk, a drawer of which he unlocked, and drew out, where, among other ornaments of little value belonging to his deceased wife and mother, he kept also the iron rings of his father and mother from the Wars of the Liberation.

He took the rings.

“Another time has come,” he muttered, “not a better one! Whither, alas! have they vanished? And your piety, your fidelity to duty, your modest simplicity, your holy resignation? I have honestly endeavored to emulate you, to be a worthy son of a race which knew no other glory than the bravery of its men and the virtue of its women. What have I done that it should be visited on me?”

He kissed the rings and laid them back into the box, and from the several miniatures on ivory took that of a beautiful brown-haired, brown-eyed boy of perhaps six years.

He looked at it for a long time, motionless.

“The family of Werben will die out with him, and—he

was my favorite. Perhaps I am to be punished because I was unspeakably proud of him prematurely.”

[Old Grollmann, the servant, finds a similar letter directed to Uncle Ernst, and delivers it. Uncle Ernst reads it, drinks a bottle of wine, and falls asleep, after having rung for his afternoon coffee. He is found in this condition by Grollmann. Reinhold has been casting longing glances toward the Werben house over the wall. The General calls to speak with Uncle Ernst about the letter.

The General gives Uncle Ernst a brief story of his life and his social point of view, so far as they touch the family of von Werben, disclosing his aristocratic attitude. Uncle Ernst replies that he has no family history to relate, but gives a brief sketch of his own life, recalling vividly the incident in which he spared the General before the barricade, and was taken captive by him in return, and shut up in Spandau. It is a struggle between the aristocrat and the democrat of '48; a sullen silence prevails between the two men. The General finally asks, in the name of Ottomar, for the hand of Ferdinande. Uncle Ernst starts back in amazement.]

The night had had no terrors and the morning no gloom for Ferdinande. In her soul it was bright daylight for the first time in many months—yes, as she thought, for the first time since she knew what a passionate, proud, imperious heart throbbed in her bosom. They had told her so, so often—in earlier years her mother, later her aunt, her girl friends, all—that it would some time be her undoing, and that pride goes before a fall; and she had always answered with resentment: “Then I will be undone, I will fall, if happiness is to be had only as the niggardly reward of humility, which always writhes in the dust before Fate, and sings hymns of thanks because the wheels of grim Envy only passed over it but did not crush it! I am not a Justus, I am not a Cilli!”

And she had been unhappy even in the hours when enthusiastic artists, Justus' friends, had worshipped, in extravagant words, the splendid blooming beauty of the young girl; when these men praised and aided her talents, and told her that she was on the right path to becoming an artist at last—that she was an artist, a true artist. She did not believe them; and, if she were a real artist—there were much greater ones! Even Justus' hand could reach so much higher and farther than hers; he plucked fruits with a smile and apparently without effort for which she had to strive with unprecedented efforts and which would ever remain unattainable to her, as she had secretly confessed to herself.

She had expressed her misgivings to that great French painter upon whom her beauty had made such an overwhelming impression. He had evaded her with polite smiles and words; then he finally told her seriously: "Mademoiselle, there is only one supreme happiness for woman—that is love; and she has only one gift of genius in which no man can equal her—that again is love."—The word had crushed her; her art life was thus a childish dream, and love!—Yes, she knew that she could love, and boundlessly! But her eye was yet to see the man who could kindle this love to the heavenly flame, and woe to her if she found him! He would not understand her love, not comprehend, and most certainly not be able to return it; would shrink back, perhaps, from its glow, and she would be more unhappy than before.

And had not this dismal foreboding already been most sadly fulfilled? Had she not felt herself unspeakably unhappy in her love for him who had met her as if the Immortals had sent him, as if he were himself an Immortal? Had she not declared countless times in writhing despair, with tears in her eyes and bitter scorn, that he did not comprehend her love, did not understand it—would never comprehend or understand it? Had she not seen clearly that he shrank back, shuddered—not before the perils which threatened along the dark way of love—he was as bold as any



Permission Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris

MICHAEL VON MUNKACSY

TWO FAMILIES

other and more agile—but before love itself, before all-powerful but insatiate love, love demanding everything!

So she had felt even yesterday—even the moment after the blissful one, when she felt and returned his first kiss! And today! Today she smiled, with tears of joy, at her dejection. Today, in her imagination, she begged her lover's pardon for all the harshness and bitterness which, in thought and expression, she had entertained toward him, but now, with a thousand glowing kisses pressed upon his fair forehead, his loving eyes, his sweet mouth, would never again think, never again express!

She had wished to work, to put the last touches on her "Woman with the Sickle." Her hand had been as awkward and helpless as in the period of her first apprenticeship, and it had occurred to her, not without a shudder, that she had sworn not to finish the work. It was a fortunate oath, though she knew it not. What should she do with this hopeless figure of jealous vengeance? How foolish this whole elaborate apparatus for her work appeared—this room with high ceiling, these easels, these mallets, these rasps, these modeling tools, these coats-of-arms, hands, feet, these heads, these busts, after the originals of the Masters, her own sketches, outlines, finished works—childish gropings with bandaged eyes after a happiness not to be found here—to be found only in love, the one true original talent of woman—her talent which she felt was her only one, that outshone everything which men had hitherto felt and called love!

She could not endure the room this morning; now her studio had become too small for her. She went out into the garden, and passed along the walks between the foliage, under the trees, from whose rustling boughs drops of rain from the night before fell down upon her. How often the bright sunshine and the blue sky had offended her, seeming to mock her pain! She looked up triumphantly to the gray canopy of clouds, which moved slowly and darkly over her head; why did she need the sunshine and the light—

she, in whose heart all was pure light and brightness! The drizzling mist which now began to fall would only cool a bit the inner fire that threatened to consume her! Moving clouds and drizzling mist, rustling trees and bushes, the damp dark earth itself—it was all strangely beautiful in the reflection of her love!

She went in again and seated herself at the place where he had kissed her, and dreamed on, while in the next room they hammered and knocked and alternately chatted and whistled.—She dreamed that her dream had the power to bring him back, who now slowly and gently opened the door and—it was only a dream—came up to her with a happy smile on his sweet lips, and a bright gleam in his dark eyes, till suddenly the smile vanished from his lips and only his eyes still gleamed—no longer with that fervid glow, but with the dismal melancholy penetration of her father's eyes. And now it was not only her father's eyes; it became more and more—her father, great God!

She had started out of her dream, but sank back into her seat and grew rigid again. She had seen, with half-opened eyes, from the look in his eyes and the letter which he held in his hand, why he had come. So in half-waking, confused, passionate words, she told him. He bowed his head but did not contradict her; he only replied, "My poor child!"

"I am no longer your poor child, if you treat me so."

"I fear you never have been my child at heart."

"And if I have never been, who is to blame for it but you? Did you ever show me the love which a child is justified in demanding of a father? Have you ever done anything to make the life you gave me worth while? Did my industry ever wrest from you a word of praise? Did what I accomplished ever draw from you a word of recognition? Did you not rather do everything to humiliate me in my own eyes, to make me smaller than I really was, to make me dislike my art, to make me feel that in your eyes I was not and never could be an artist? Am I to blame that you never considered all this anything better than a

big play house, which you bought for me to dally and play away my useless time in? And now—now you come to wrest from me my love, simply because your pride demands it, simply because it offends you that such a useless, lowly creature can ever have a will of its own, can wish something different from what you wish? But you are mistaken, Father! I am, in spite of all that, your daughter. You can cast me off, you can drive me into misery as you can crush me with a hammer, because you are the stronger; my love you cannot tear away from me!”

“I can, and I will!”

“Try it!”

“The attempt and success are one. Do you wish to become the mistress of Lieutenant von Werben?”

“What has that question to do with my love?”

“Then I will put it in another form: Have you the courage to wish to be like those wretched foolish creatures who give themselves up to a man, out of wedlock or in wedlock—for wedlock does not change matters—for any other prize than the love which they take in exchange for their love? Von Werben has nothing to give in exchange; von Werben does not love you.”

Ferdinande laughed with scorn.—“And he came to you, knowing that you hated him and his whole family with a blind hatred, in order to tell you this?”

“He could not come; his father had to do the difficult errand for him, for which he had not the courage, for which his father had to enforce the permission of his son.”

“That is——”

“It is not a lie! By my oath! And still more: He did not even go of his own will to his father; he would not have done it today, he would perchance never have done it, if his father had been content with asking him whether it was true, what the sparrows chatter from the roof and the blackmailers wrote to the unsuspecting father anonymously, that Lieutenant von Werben has a sweetheart beyond the garden-wall or—how do I know!”

“Show me the letters!”

“Here is one of them; the General will be glad to let you have the other, no doubt; I do not think the son will lay claim to it.”

Ferdinande read the letter.

She had considered it certain that Antonio alone could have been the betrayer; but this letter was not by Antonio—could not be by him. Then other eyes than the passionate jealous eyes of the Italian had looked into the secret. Her cheeks, still pale, flared with outraged modesty.—“Who wrote the letter?”

“Roller; he has not even disguised his hand to the General.”

She gave the letter back to her father quickly, and pressed her forehead as if she wished to remove the traces of emotion. “Oh, the disgrace, the disgrace!” she muttered; “oh, the disgust! the disgust!”

The dismissed inspector had taken up his residence in her family till Ferdinande had noticed that he was audaciously beginning to pay attention to her; she had made use of a pretense of a disagreement, which he had had with her father, first to strain the social relations, then to drop them. And the bold repulsive eyes of the man—“Oh, the disgrace! oh, the disgrace! oh, the disgust!” she muttered continually.

She paced with long strides up and down, then went hurriedly to the writing-desk which stood at one end of the large room, wrote hastily a few lines, and then took the sheet to her father, who had remained standing motionless in the same spot. “Read!”

And he read:

My father wishes to make a sacrifice of his convictions for me, and consents to my union with Lieutenant von Werben. But, for reasons which my pride forbids me to record, I renounce this union once for all, as a moral impossibility, and release Lieutenant von Werben from all re-

sponsibility which he may consider he has toward me. This decision, which I have reached with full freedom, is irrevocable; I shall consider any attempt on the part of Lieutenant von Werben to change it as an insult.

Signed, Ferdinande Schmidt.

“Is that correct?”

He nodded. “Shall I send him this?”

“In my name.”

She turned away from him and, seizing a modeling stick, went to her work. Her father folded the sheet and went toward the door. Then he stopped. She did not look up, apparently entirely absorbed in her work. His eyes rested upon her with deep pain—“And yet!” he murmured—“Yet!”

He had closed the door behind him and was walking slowly across the court through whose broad empty space the rain-storm howled.

“Empty and desolate!” he murmured.—“All is empty and desolate! That is the end of the story for me and for her!”

“Uncle!”

He started from his sullen brooding; Reinhold was hastily coming from the house toward him, bare-headed, excited.

“Uncle, for Heaven’s sake!—The General has just left me—I know all.—What did you decide?”

“What we had to.”

“It will be the death of Ferdinande!”

“Better that than a dishonorable life!”

He strode past Reinhold into the house. Reinhold did not dare to follow him; he knew it would be useless.

[Giraldi and Valerie have just returned from Rome and put up at the Hotel Royal in Berlin. Valerie writes her brother, the General, a note, which Else answers. Valerie thinks the friendly answer a trap. Giraldi has another interview with Privy Councilor Schieler, “the wonder-

worker," about the Warnow estates and about enlisting the interests of Count Golm. The Count snaps eagerly at the bait held out by the company—namely, the sale of the Warnow estates through him to the company. Giraldi plans to have Golm get Else's part of the estate by marrying her. Giraldi discovers that Antonio is the original of the "Shepherd Boy" in the exhibition, and identifies him as the son of himself and Valerie. Justus had discovered Antonio in Italy and brought him home with him to Berlin. Antonio remains with Justus to be near Ferdinande. Jealousy leads Antonio to the discovery of the relation between Ferdinande and Ottomar. Ottomar's betrothal to Carla and Else's relations with Reinhold are touched upon. Giraldi goes out to receive His Excellency, tossing a few sweet phrases to Valerie, enough to show her that she is still in his grip, and that she will never be able to break his spell over her. Else calls and finds her in this frame of mind.

Aunt Sidonie calls to see Valerie and chatters long about the family and the betrothal of Ottomar and Carla. Else has thus been able to reestablish friendly relations between Valerie and her father's family.]

Giraldi had not intended to stay away so long. It was to have been only a formal call, a return of the one he had made on His Excellency yesterday morning—but that loquacious gentleman still had much to say about the things they thought they had settled yesterday—much to add—even when he was standing at the door with one hand on the knob, and the other, which held his hat, passing before his half-blinded eyes, covered by gray spectacles, in an effort to shield them from the light that came in too brightly from the window opposite.

"It seems foolish to try to warn the wisest of men," said he with a cynical smile which, on his strange face, turned into a tragic grimace.

“Especially when the warning comes from the most courageous of men,” answered Giraldi.

“And yet,” continued His Excellency, “even he is wise—you underestimate his wisdom; even he is courageous—almost to foolhardiness. He gives proof of it every day. People like him, I think, cannot be appreciated *par distance* at all; at least half of the charm which they have for their associates is in their personality. You have to be close to them, personally—come into contact with them in the same room—see them going to a Court soirée, to understand why the other beasts grovel in the dust before such lions, and, even when they wish to oppose, can do no more than swish their tails. Believe me, honored friend, separation in space is just as unfavorable to the appreciation of such truly historic greatness as is separation in time. You Romans think you can explain by the logic of facts everything that depends solely upon overpowering personality, just as our all-wise historians construe the marvelous deeds of an Alexander or a Cæsar, even to the dotting of an “i,” all very coldly, as necessarily following the bare situations in the case, just as though the situations were a machine that turns out its product, whether master or menial set it going.”

Giraldi smiled. “Thanks, Your Excellency, in the name of His Holiness; for you probably intended that brilliant little sermon for him anyway. It is a good thing, too, for His Holiness to be shown the other side of the medal once in a while, so that he may not forget fear, which is the foundation of all wisdom, and may remain mindful of the necessity of our advice and support. Only, at this moment, when the shadows of clouds that threaten all around our horizon lie dark on his soul, I would rather not represent the case to him as more troublesome, nor the man in the case more dangerous, than we ourselves see them from our knowledge of them. That is why I diligently used my very last interview to raise his dejected spirits a little. May I give Your Excellency an instance to show how

very necessary that was? Very well! His Holiness was speaking in almost the same words of the demoniac power of the arch-enemy of our most Holy Church; he calls him a robber, a Briareus, a murderer, a colossus, that plants his feet on two hemispheres, as the one at Rhodes did on the two arms of the harbor. This, Your Excellency, was my answer to His Holiness—that I could see even now the stone falling from on high, the stone which would crush the feet of the colossus. His eyes gleamed, his lips moved; he repeated the words to himself; soon he will proclaim it *urbi et orbi*, as he does everything with which we stuff him. Our enemies will laugh, but it will reassure the weak hearts among us as it visibly reassured that poor old man.”

“I would it were as true as it is reassuring,” said His Excellency.

“And isn’t it true?” cried Giral di. “Doesn’t the colossus really stand on feet of masonry? What good is all this bloated boasting of the power and the majesty and the cultural mission of the German Empire? The end of the whole story, which he carefully avoids mentioning—or at most has added very obscurely—is ever the strong Prussian kingdom. What good can it do him to change restlessly from one rôle to another, and proclaim today the universal right of suffrage, to thunder against socialism tomorrow, day after tomorrow, in turn, to censure the *bourgeoisie* as though they were rude school-boys. He is, and will always be, the *major domus* of the Hohenzollerns, whether he will or not, in moments of impatience at his most gracious lord’s wise hesitation on some point, of anger at the intrigues of the court *camarilla*, or whatever else may stir up his haughty soul. Believe me, Your Excellency, this man, in spite of the liberalism which he wears most diligently for appearances’ sake, is an aristocrat from head to foot, and, in spite of his oft-vaunted broad-mindedness, is full of medieval, romantic cobwebs; he can at heart never desire anything, and will never desire anything, but a kingdom by divine right, and, while desir-

ing a kingdom by divine right, he works away at one by the people's right. Or what else is it, when he uproots respect for the clergy in the people—not only for the Catholic clergy!—The interests of all sects have always been common, and the sympathy which a maltreated Catholic clergy awakens in the Protestant will soon enough come to light. But without clerics there will be no God, and no king by divine right—that is to say, he cuts off the branch to which he clings. Now if he were not to take the thing nearly as seriously as he does, if he were to be—which is incredible to me—so narrow-minded and frivolous as to regard it all only in the light of a question of etiquette, a dispute over precedence of the *major domus* and grandees in the state of his own creation, which he wishes to justify in the eyes of the church, then history would lead him back *ad absurdum*, for it teaches on every page that a priest never accepts this subordination; at the most, he endures it if he must. We are what we always have been, and always shall be. And, Your Excellency, that is his Achilles' heel—not to understand this, to believe that he can intimidate us by threats and frights, and make us into creatures of his will. When he sees that he will not get anywhere that way—and I hope he will not see it very soon—he will try to compromise with us, and compromise again and again, and be driven step by step into the camp of the reactionaries; he will be forced to express more and more openly the contradiction of his purpose—the kingdom by divine right and his methods which he has borrowed from the arsenal of the revolution; and this contradiction into which he is hopelessly driving, and from which the revolution must come—for no people will long endure a self-contradictory régime—is the stone which is already rolling, and will let loose the avalanche and crush the colossus.”

“*Serve him right*, and good luck to him!” said His Excellency with a sarcastic smile, and then—after a little

pause—"I am only afraid sometimes that we too shall take the *salto mortale* with him, and——"

"And stand firmer than ever on our feet," interrupted Giraldi quickly. "What have we to fear from the revolution, the people? Nothing, absolutely nothing! If people dance around the golden calf today, they will grovel so much the lower in the dust before Jehovah tomorrow. If today they enthrone the Goddess of Reason, tomorrow they will flee, like a child that has frightened itself, back to the bosom of the Mother Church. And if, as you said, Darwinism is really to be the religion of the future for Germany—very well; then we shall be Darwinians *par excellence* and proclaim the new doctrine with holy zeal from the rostra of the universities; we know well enough that Nature wraps herself the more closely in her veil the more impatiently the inquisitive pupil pulls at it, and then, when he has looked into the hollow eyes of nothing, and lies crushed on the ground, we come and raise up the poor knave and comfort him with the admonition, 'Go thy way and sin no more'; and he goes his way and sins henceforth no more in the foolish thirst for knowledge, for the burden of ignorance is lighter and her yoke is easier—*quod erat demonstrandum.*"

The corners of His Excellency's mouth were drawn apart as far as possible. Even Giraldi was smiling.

"I wish I had you here always," said His Excellency.

"To tell Your Excellency things which you have long worn off on the soles of your shoes with which you mount the rostrum."

"I generally speak from my place."

"And ever at the right place."

"It's often enough nothing but sound, and no one knows that better than I myself. One has to consider how things sound."

"And not for naught. To us across the mountain the little silver bell is the huge bell of the cathedral, whose

bronze voice calls the tardy to their duty and spurs on the brave to fiercer fight."

"And that reminds me that I myself am a tardy one this moment, and that a fierce fight awaits me today in the Chamber."

"His Excellency will not forget my little commission," said Giraldi.

"How could I!" exclaimed His Excellency. "I hope, indeed, to have a chance before the day is over to mention the matter. Of course they won't do it without a little *baksheesh*—they don't do anything there for the love of God; fortunately we always have such stuff on hand. The promise to drive the screw one turn less tight in Alsace-Lorraine and not to disturb rudely the childish pleasure of the old Catholic gentlemen in Cologne, and not to beat the drum quite so loudly in the coming discussion about the brave Bishop of Ermeland—every single one of these kindnesses is worth a General, especially if he has such antediluvian, unpractical ideas concerning the state, society and the family."

"And such a thing passes without *éclat*?"

"Absolutely without *éclat*. Oh, my honored friend, you must not consider us any longer the honest barbarians of Tacitus; we really have learned something since that time!—God help you!"

"Will Your Excellency permit me to accompany you to your carriage?"

"Under no circumstances; my body-servant is waiting for me in the hall; have him come in, please."

"Grant, Your Excellency, that now, as ever, I be your humble servant."

Giraldi was about to offer his arm to the half-blinded man, when a new caller was announced.

"Who is it?" asked His Excellency with some anxiety; "you know I must not be seen here by every one."

"It is Privy Councilor Schieler, Your Excellency."

"Oh, he!—By the way, don't trust that old sneak any

more than is necessary! He is a box that contains many good wares, but is to be handled with care. Above all things, don't trust him in the matter in question; it is quite unnecessary; his high protector can do nothing about it."

"That is why I took the liberty to turn to Your Excellency."

"One is always too late with his advice to you. Another thing: In this little clan war, as you have to carry it on here with the North German centaurs, you need what is known to be thrice necessary in real war. Are you sufficiently provided with that?"

"I was ever of the opinion that war must sustain war. Besides, I can draw on Brussels at any time for any amount, if it should be necessary."

"Perhaps it will be necessary. In any case, keep the party in hand. There is, in spite of your sanguine hopes for the future, which I, by the way, share fully, a period of lean years ahead of us first. We shall have to lead the life of a church mouse, and church-mouse precaution behooves us now more than ever. You will keep me *au courant*?"

"In my own interest, Your Excellency."

The Privy Councilor had entered; His Excellency extended him his hand. "You come as I am leaving—that's too bad. You know that there is no one with whom I would rather chat than with you. Which way does the wind blow today in Wilhelmstrasse? Did they sleep well? Did they get out of bed with the right foot or the left first? Nerves faint or firm? Is country air in demand or not? Good Heavens! Don't let me die of unsatisfied curiosity!" His Excellency did not wait for the smiling Privy Councilor to answer, but shook hands again with both gentlemen, and, leaning on the arm of his body-servant, who meanwhile had come in, left the room.

"Isn't it wonderful," said the Privy Councilor,—“this prodigious versatility, this marvelous ready wit, this quickness in attack, this security in retreat. A Moltke of guer-

illa warfare. What an enviable treasure your party has in this man!"

"Our party, my dear sir? Pardon me, I really must first stop and think each time that you don't belong to us. Won't you sit down?"

"Thank you, no. I haven't a moment to spare, and I can only tell you the most essential part in flying haste. First, in the Department of Commerce they are beside themselves over a just reported vote of the great General Staff on the Harbor matter which, as a colleague has informed me—I myself have not been able to get a look at it—is as much as a veto. The finished report is by a certain Captain von Schönau—but the mind behind it—it is an unheard of thing—is there, right in the War Department, and is, of course, none other than our friend the General. That sets us back again I don't know how far or for how long. I am beside myself, and the more so because I am absolutely at a loss in the face of this obstruction. Good Heavens! A man may have influence and could use this influence if he had to, even against an old friend, but he surely would not do that sort of thing except in the last extremity. Now what is your advice?"

"The purity of our cause is not to be clouded by intermingling with such repugnant personalities," replied Giraldi.—"If you think that you must spare an old friend, then there is, as you know, an old feud between the General and myself, and everything which I personally might do against him, or cause to be done, would properly seem to every one to be an act of common revenge—which may God Almighty forbid! If he will, he can have some incident occur which will disarm our enemy, and which doesn't need to be an accident because people call it so."

"You mean if he should die?" questioned the Privy Councilor with a shifty look.

"I don't mean anything definite at all, and certainly not his death. As far as I am concerned he may live long."

"That is a very noble sentiment, a very Christian senti-

ment," replied the Privy Councilor, rubbing his long nose. —"And it is my heart's wish, of course; and yet his opposition is and always will be a stumbling block. I wish that were our only obstacle! But Count Golm tells me now—I have just come from him—he will give himself the honor immediately after me—I have just hurried on ahead of him because I have another little bit of information about him to give you, which I'll tell you in a moment—Count Golm tells me that his efforts with the President in Sundin—he had come over in his semi-official capacity as president of the board of directors *in spe*—that they had been fruitless, quite fruitless; that he had been convinced, and unalterably, much as he would like to do it for the Count, for a thousand reasons—regard for a fellow countryman, and personal friendship, and so on. Golm, who, between you and me, is crafty enough and by no means a fool, finally hinted at the great sacrifices which we had decided to make—but all in vain. In fact, Golm says that he rather made matters worse than better by that."

"As ever when one does things by halves," said Giraldi.

"By halves, my dear sir! How do you mean that? What did they offer him?"

"Fifty thousand thalers as compensation, and the first position as director of the new road, with six thousand a year fixed salary, besides customary office rent, traveling expenses, and so forth."

"Well then, that, I suppose, is just half of what the man demanded himself!"

"He didn't demand anything."

"One doesn't demand such things; one has them offered him. Authorize the Count to propose twice as much, and I'll wager the deal is closed."

"We can't go as far as that," replied the Privy Councilor, scratching his close-cropped hair.—"We haven't the means to permit that; and the rest of us, too—and then, for the present, Count Golm is satisfied with fifty thousand; we could not offer the President twice as much without

insulting Golm. He is already not so very kindly disposed toward us, and that is the point that I should like to settle with you before he gets here. Is it really impossible for you to—I mean for us: the Board of Trustees of Warnow—to sell directly to us: I mean the corporation?

“Over the Count’s head?” cried Giraldi.—“Goodness, Privy Councilor, I think that you are bound by the most definite promises, so far as the Count is concerned, in this respect!”

“Of course, of course, unfortunately. But then even Lübbener—our financier, and at the same time——”

“The Count’s banker—I know——”

“You know everything!—Even Lübbener thinks that one could get a little assistance from a man who, like the Count, falls from one dilemma into another, and is always inclined or compelled to sell his birthright for a mess of pottage. Only we do not wish or intend to act contrary to your plans, and if you insist upon it——”

“I insist upon nothing, Sir,” replied Giraldi; “I simply follow the wishes of my mistress, which, on this point, are identical with those of von Wallbach.”

“Good Lord,” exclaimed the Privy Councilor impatiently, “I quite understand that, to keep up appearances, one would rather sell to an equal in rank than to a committee, even though the man concerned be a member of this very committee; but you ought not to forget, too, that we should have to pay direct to you just as much, or about as much, as we shall hereafter have to pay the Count.”

“The Count will not get off so cheaply as you say, either——”

“He will sell to us so much the higher,” said the Privy Councilor. “Matters will only be worse for us thereby.”

“And yet I must, to my great regret, hereby refuse my support,” replied Giraldi decidedly.

The Privy Councilor made a very wry face. “It will be best,” he said grumblingly, “if he can’t find the money—not even the hundred thousand, to say nothing of the mil-

lion, or whatever sum we may agree upon in family council as the price of the estates. For he has to yield to us; I do not know any one else in the world who would advance him so much, at once or in instalments. I can say in advance, of course, without being Merlin the Wise, that he will not get the money from us cheaply, and so it will be evened up again at the end.—But now, my honored patron, I must give place to the Count, and take leave of you. My regards to Madame, whom I have not had the pleasure, unfortunately, of meeting, but for whom I have felt the profoundest respect and have gallantly shattered many a lance, after the manner of a knight. Not in vain, for this family visit—I met Miss Sidonie down in the hall; Miss Else had already gone on ahead—is a concession which I, without immodesty, may consider the fruits of my persuasive art. *Apropos*, my dear old friend Sidonie—she wanted to know yesterday what had really been the deciding element in the matter of the engagement, which had broken Ottomar's stubborn resistance."

"Well?" asked Giraldi with unfeigned curiosity.

"I do not know," said the Privy Councilor, laying his finger on his long nose—"that is to say, my dear friend knows nothing, or she would have told me. From what the servant says—that was all she could tell me—an interview took place the night before between father and son. I have every reason to think the subject was by no means a romantic one—on the contrary, one as prosaic as it is inexhaustible, that of Ottomar's debts.—Farewell, my dear, honored patron; you will keep me informed, will you not?"

"Be assured of that!"

The Privy Councilor had gone; Giraldi kept his dark eyes fixed on the door, a smile of profoundest contempt played about his lips. "*Buffone!*" he muttered.

[Wallbachs and Ottomar call on Valerie. Giraldi asks François about the interview between Valerie, Sidonie and Else. Count Golm is announced, and speaks with Giraldi in

the outer room about the advance of the loan, and the impossible conditions which Lübbener, the banker, has made him, and mentions his visit to Philip. Giraldi confuses Philip with Reinhold, to the disgust of Golm, who informs Giraldi that Philip is a promoter of the Sundin-Berlin railroad; that he is to build the road, and is, besides, a graceful, companionable, immensely rich man. Giraldi offers Golm half a million as advance loan for a four per cent. mortgage, under promise of secrecy, telling him it is the hand of a friend, not of a usurer, that is extended to him. The Count then goes into the other room to meet the ladies.

Carla is eager to make the acquaintance of Giraldi, but Ottomar conceives a dislike for the Count, and is alarmed at the power of Giraldi; but Giraldi wins his confidence by flatteries and assurances of friendship. During the conversation Valerie compares the studied manner of Carla with the naturalness and ease of Else, and is convinced that Carla is not suited to Ottomar. The company departs, and a scene follows between Giraldi and Valerie.

The General speaks frankly with Reinhold about Ferdinande and wishes that her father would relent as he has, but Uncle Ernst is still obdurate. Justus and Reinhold converse about Uncle Ernst, and Justus asks Reinhold to sit as model for one of his reliefs. The conversation turns upon love, which Justus declares is a strange drop in the artist's blood; Reinhold begs Justus not to express his opinions of love in Cilli's hearing.

Cilli's father speculates in the railroad stocks on the sly. Cilli is to be modeled by Justus, and tells Reinhold how her friends look, although she cannot see them. She asks Reinhold if he loves Else, and when he confesses he does, Cilli tells him that she was afraid at first that he was in love with Ferdinande. Reinhold tells Cilli that he thinks Else unattainable; Cilli replies that love is always a miracle, and that Reinhold must be himself if he would win Else. Reinhold goes away greatly encouraged, and finds in

his room a letter from the President telling him that his appointment as Pilot Commander has been ratified, and that he shall appear at the ministry at his earliest convenience.

Mieting comes unannounced to visit Else, and makes conquest of the entire circle of Else's friends; even the stern old General and Baroness Kniebreche are captivated by her spritely, impulsive personality; but Mieting is not pleased with Carla as Ottomar's prospective bride. Mieting refers to the evening at Golmberg, and tries to find out Else's relations to Reinhold. She finally discovers the compass in one of Else's gowns, and finds, in conversation with Else, that she and Reinhold are in love. Justus models Mieting, who describes the meaning of artistic terms to Else in her own naïve way. She tells Else that Justus has made a model of Reinhold, which Else is to wear in the form of a medallion as big as a cart-wheel.]

Mieting followed her hero without allowing herself to be deterred by anything, even Aunt Rikchen's spectacles.—“And that is not a matter for jest,” said Mieting, as she related that evening the experiences of the session; “I would rather face the lorgnette of Baroness Kniebreche. For behind that is nothing but a pair of dimmed eyes, for which I feel anything but fear; but when Aunt Rikchen lets her spectacles slip down to the point of her nose, she only begins to see clearly, so that one might become anxious and uneasy if one had not a good conscience—and you know, Else, something unusual must have happened between you and the Schmidts, has it not? It is, to be sure, still mysterious, for the good lady mixes up everything, like cabbage and turnips; but she had nothing good to say of the Werbens, like my Papa about the Griebens, who continually dig away his line, he says; and you have dug away something from the Schmidts, and that, you will find, is the reason why Reinhold has become distant. We shall not learn it from him, but Aunt Rikchen can't keep anything secret, and we are already the best of friends. I am a good girl,

she says, and can't help being so; and the dove that brought the olive branch to the earth did not know what it had in its beak, and I saw that Reinhold, who was in the studio, winked at her, and Mr. Anders also made a really wry face and looked at Reinhold—the three know something; that much is clear, and I mean to find it out, depend upon it!"

But Mieting did not find it out, and could not, for Aunt Rikchen herself did not know the real situation and the others did not let her into the secret. Mieting's communications contributed by no means to Else's pacification, even though Else had at least had the pleasure during the first few days of hearing about Reinhold through Mieting—how he had come into the studio and kept them company for a while, and how he had looked; but even this source of consolation flowed less freely and appeared gradually to dry up entirely. One day he had been there scarcely five minutes; another day he had only gone through the studio; a third, Mieting had not seen him at all; on the fourth she did not know whether she had seen him or not. Else supposed she knew what to think of this apparent indifference—that Mieting had learned something which she did not wish to tell her, or had convinced herself otherwise of the hopelessness of her love, and that the detailed account which she gave of her other experiences and observations, in the studio, were only to serve to conceal her embarrassment.

It was, accordingly, with only divided interest that Else listened to these accounts—how Mieting rose daily in the favor of Aunt Rikchen, who was really a fine old lady and had her heart in the right place, even if her spectacles did always sit crooked on the point of her nose; and how the kind old woman had something specially touching for her, for she too would look like that in fifty years. But a pretty young blind girl, who came every day, had touched her still more deeply, because Mr. Anders wanted to model them side by side on the same relief; when she spoke, it was just as if a lark sang high, high up in the blue air on

a Sunday morning, when all is quiet in the fields; and Justus said that Nature had never but once brought forth a contrast like her and Cilli, and if he succeeded in reproducing that, people would be permitted to speak to him only with their hats in their hands.—There was another, next to Justus' studio, which aroused her curiosity, because the occupant never showed herself, and she could form no idea of a lady who kneaded clay, or hammered around on marble—least of all of a marvelously beautiful, elegant lady, such as Justus says Miss Schmidt is.—“For you know, Else, a sculptor differs in appearance from a baker only in that he has clay instead of dough in his fingers, and is powdered with marble-dust instead of flour, so that one can hardly consider such a queer human child as a decent gentleman, much less as an artist, and the only one who always looks so clean and neat, in spite of his working jacket, and is more wonderfully handsome than any one I have ever seen in my life—that one is not an artist, Justus says, for he cannot do anything but point and carve—but you, poor child, possibly do not know at all what pointing means? Pointing, you know, is that which one does with a bill-stork or a stork-bill——”

And now followed a very long and confused explanation, from which Else understood nothing but Mieting's wish to talk of anything but what was engrossing her heart.—“The work will be finished,” said Else to herself, “and the entire success of the beautiful plan will consist in my not being able to consider Reinhold's reserve as accidental.”

But the work seemed not likely to be finished.—Such a face he had never seen, said Justus; one might just as well model clouds in springtime, which changed their form every moment.—And, again, when the relief was done—“you can't believe how horrible I look, Else, like a Chinese girl!”—Justus had set himself to finish his “Ready to Help,” and—“then I cannot leave the poor fellow in the lurch, who tortures himself so; for you know, Else, it is not simply a question of the head, but of the whole figure—

the posture, gestures—of new motives, you know—but I think you, poor child, do not know at all what a motive is. Motive is when one does not know what to do, and suddenly sees something, in which, in reality, there is nothing to see—let us say, a cat or a washtub——”

It was the longest, and also the last, explanation which Mieting drew from the abundance of her newly acquired wisdom for her friend. During the next few days Else had more to do about the house than usual, and another matter urgently claimed her attention. After two months of negotiation the final conference was held at her father's house to consider the future management of the Warnow estates, in which, with the three votes of von Wallbach, Privy Councilor Schieler, and Giraldi, against the vote of the General, who had his dissenting view with his reasons recorded in the minutes, it was decided that the whole complex should be sold as soon as possible, and Count Golm be accepted as purchaser, in case the conditions of the sale arranged by the family council were agreed upon.

He came from the council pale and exhausted as Else had never before seen him. “They carried it through, Else,” he said. “The Warnow estates, which have been in the possession of the family for two hundred years, will be sacrificed and bartered.—Your Aunt Valerie may answer for it if she can. For she, and she alone, is to blame for letting an old respected family ignominiously perish. If she had been a good and true wife to my friend—what is the use of lamenting about things that are passed! It is foolish even in my eyes, not to say in the eyes of those to whom the present is everything. And I must admit they acted quite in the spirit of our time—wisely, reasonably, in the interest of all of you. You will all be at least twice as rich as you are, if the sale turns out as favorably as the Privy Councilor prophesies. It is very unlike a father, Else, but I hope he may triumph too soon. The Count, whom he mentions as purchaser, can only pay the silly price—for the actual total value of the estates is scarcely

half a million, much less a whole million—in case he is sure they will take the enormous burden from his shoulders immediately—that is, if the scandalous project, the perilous folly of which for the State I so clearly demonstrated with the aid of the General Staff and Captain Schmidt, should go through. If it did go through, if the concession were made, still it would be a violation of the little bit of authority to which I lay claim, and I should regard it as if I had been passed over in the recent advancements. I should ask for my discharge at once. The decision is pending. For Golm it is a vital question; he will either be ruined or a Cræsus; and I shall be an Excellency or a poor pensioner—quite in the spirit of the times, which plays *va banque* everywhere. Well, as God wills it! I can only gain, not lose, for the highest and best; my clear conscience, the consciousness of having stood by the old flag, of having acted as a Werben must act, nothing and no one can take from me.”

So Else’s father spoke to her, in a state of agitation which appeared in every word, in the vibrant tone of his deep voice, although he sought to compose himself. It was the first time he had thus taken her into his personal confidence, and made her the witness of a strife which he formerly would have fought out himself in his proud silent soul. Was it chance, or was it intended? Had the vessel, already too full, only run over? Or did her father have an intimation—did he know her secret? Did he wish to say to her: “Such a decision will perhaps confront you; I wish, I hope, that you, too, will remain true to the flag which is sacred to me—that you will be a Werben?”

That was in the forenoon; Mieting had accepted an invitation for dinner, by way of exception, from a friend of her mother, after she had had her sitting. She would not return before evening. For the first time Else did not miss her friend; she was glad to be alone, silent, busy with her own thoughts. They were not cheerful—these thoughts; but she felt it her duty to work them out to the last par-

ticular, to become clear in her own mind, if it were possible. She thought that it would be possible, and felt, in consequence, a silent satisfaction, which, to be sure, as she said to herself, would be the sole compensation for all that she had secretly given up.

And in this spirit of resignation she received with calm composure the news which Mieting brought to her when she came home, and which would have filled her with sadness under other circumstances—Mieting had to go away; she had found a letter from her Mama at the house of the lady from whom she came, in which her Mama so bitterly complained of her long absence that she could not do otherwise than leave at once—that is, early in the morning. How she felt about it she would not and could not say.

It was a strange state of mind in any case; while she seemed one moment about to burst into tears, the next she broke into laughter which she tried in vain to suppress, until the laughter turned to tears again. And so she went on the rest of the evening. The next morning the feeling had reached such a height that Else was seriously concerned about the strange girl, and urged her to put off the journey until she should be quieted to some extent. But Mieting remained firm; she had decided, and Else would agree with her if she knew all, and she should know all—but by letter; she couldn't tell her verbally without laughing herself to death, and she mustn't die just now for reasons which she again could not give without laughing herself to death.

And so she went on until she got into the carriage in which August was to take her to the station. She had declined all other company most positively—"for reasons, Else, you know, which—well! You will read it all in the letter, you know, which—Good-by, dear, sweet, my only Else!"

With that Mieting drove off.

In the evening August, not without some formality, handed Else a letter which Miss Mieting had given him at the last moment before her departure with the express

direction that he should deliver it promptly at the stroke of nine in the evening, twelve hours later. It was a letter in Mieting's most confused hand, from which Else deciphered the following with some difficulty:

Six o'clock in the afternoon.

Dear Else!

Don't believe a word of all that I told you when I came home.—Oh, that won't help you any! You first read this letter—I am writing it right here at Madame von Randow's in order to lose no time—August is to give it to you when I am gone—thus, not a bit of it is true; my mother hadn't written at all; I lied; I have been lying to you and deceiving you most monstrously for a week, for I have not been going there during that time on your account, and that would have been the most injudicious procedure, as I am convinced that your Reinhold has long since noticed how matters stand with us and has kept out of the way even before we had an idea of it, and you may believe, Else, that two such men, when they are such good friends, stand by each other in such matters in a way that we girls couldn't improve upon. And for dear, blind Cilli we thought we needed to have no further concern, because she always smiled so cheerfully when we teased each other, and then, too, she couldn't see, and the eyes play such an important part in a matter of that kind, you know! Indeed, it began with the eyes, for up to that time all went well. But when he came to them he said: "At this point I shall have to determine what the color of your eyes really is; and I was puzzling my brain about that all those days." I declared they were yellow; Aunt Rikchen thought they were green; he himself thought they were brown—and Cilli, who was to decide the matter, said she was convinced that they were blue; she was so cheerful, and cheerful people must have blue eyes. So we jested to and fro and each day he began again with my eyes and, because one can't speak of eyes very well without looking into them, I looked into his eyes

while he looked into mine, and I don't know whether you have ever had the same experience, Else—when one has done that a few days, one begins to see more clearly what is going on back of the eyes—very curious things. I tell you that a shudder goes over one; one doesn't know sometimes whether to laugh at the one who is looking, and give him a snip on the nose, or to take to crying and fall on his neck.

So I had felt a few times, and this noon again—only a little worse than before. The assistants were off at dinner, and Aunt Rikchen had gone to look after the house; only he and I and Cilli were there, and Justus wanted to work on, if we were willing, to finish the work. But he didn't work industriously, as was his custom, and I noticed that, and didn't sit as quietly as usual, and we—that is, he and I—played all sorts of pranks with Lesto, who had to pretend that he was dead, and bark at me as if he were mad, and I pretended to want to hit his master, and other nonsense, till suddenly we heard the door which leads into the garden close and—Heavens! Else! how shall I describe it to you—Cilli had gone away without our noticing it; we must thus have been a bit boisterous, and for that reason became quiet now, still as mice, so that one could have heard a pin drop, if one had dropped, and I was so embarrassed, Else, so embarrassed, you know! And still more embarrassed when all of a sudden he kneeled close before me—I had seated myself, because my knees were shaking—and then looked me again in the eyes, and I looked at him, you know I had to, Else!—and asked, but very gently, what that meant. That means, he said—but also very gently—that you must once for all declare yourself. I'll give you a snip on the nose if you don't get up, said I, but still more softly—I'll get up—but so close to my ear that I could not strike his nose, but had to fall in all seriousness upon his neck, whereat Lesto, who thought the life of his master was at stake, began to bark dreadfully, and I, to pacify Lesto and to get Justus up from his knees, said yes to everything

he wished, that I loved him, that I'd be his wife, and whatever else one says at such a dreadful moment.

And now, just think, Else!—When we had spent five minutes in pacifying Lesto, and were about to leave—for I said I had sworn to be sensible, and to be a credit to you, and not to remain a second with such a dangerous man in such a lonesome spot, with all the horrible marble figures—and we went to the rear arm in arm—suddenly, Cilli came toward us from among the marble figures, as white as marble herself, but with a heavenly smile on her face, and said that we must not be angry, that the door had shut and she could not get it open, and she had heard everything—she heard so easily—and it sounded so loud in the studio. Oh, Else! I was so ashamed that I could have sunk into the floor, for I'm sure we didn't stop with words, but the heavenly creature blushed as if she had been able to see, took me by the hand, and said I should not be ashamed—one need not be ashamed—of an honorable, true love, and I didn't know at all how happy I was, and how proud I should be, but I would gradually find it out, and should be thankful for my proud joy, and love Justus very much, for an artist needs love very much more than other people. Then she took Justus' hand and said, “And you, Justus, you will love her as much as the sunshine without which you cannot live!” And, as she said that, the sunbeam fell from the high window of the studio directly upon the sweet girl, and she looked transfigured—so supernaturally beautiful, with her poor blind eyes turned upward, that at last I couldn't keep from weeping, and had great difficulty in composing myself. And she said, “You mustn't stay here in this disturbed condition; you must go home at once and tell your mother about it, and no one else before her; for the fact that I know it is an accident, for which you are not to blame.” And I promised her everything that she asked of me, and I now realize that the angel was perfectly right, for I am entirely out of my senses with joy, and can't talk anything but nonsense for very joy, and that I don't dare

to do, because I have sworn to be sensible, and to do credit to you. Tomorrow morning I leave—tomorrow evening at eight o'clock I shall be home, at half-past eight I shall have told my mama, and at nine o'clock August will give you this letter, for after Mama you come next, of course. That I told Cilli outright, and she agreed to it, and her last word was: Ask God that your friend may be as happy as you are now. That I will do, Else, depend upon it, and depend in every other respect, too, upon your friend, who loves you above all else. Your sensible Miete.

P. S. In "all," "he" is of course excepted! I'm dreadfully sorry, but it can't be helped, you know!

"The dear, foolish child!" exclaimed Else with a deep sigh, when she had finished the letter—"I grant it with all my heart." And as she thus sat and thought about it—how wonderfully it had all come about, and how happy the two would be in their love—her eyes became more set, her breathing more difficult, and then she pressed her hands to her eyes, bowed her head upon Mieting's letter, and wept bitterly.

[It is the day of the sale of the Warnow estates to Count Golm, Giraldi is busy with letters, business papers, political matters from Paris and London, and church affairs from Cologne and Brussels. The papers are in English, French, Italian and German, and he makes his comments on each document in the language in which it is written. Among the letters is one from a priest in Tivoli, referring to his child. Bertalde is announced, and says she is tired of having Ottomar in her arms yearning for Ferdinande. She tells Ferdinande of Ottomar's love. Giraldi assures her of his good will toward Ottomar, to whom he has given a hundred thalers. She caresses and kisses Giraldi for it. Antonio is announced, Bertalde is led out by François, but in the confusion Antonio recognizes the girl as the lady in black, whom he had seen in Ferdinande's studio. An-

tonio gives Giraldi a letter from Justus' desk, which Giraldi notes and returns, asking him to show him other such letters. Giraldi impresses Antonio with his marvelous power to accomplish what he wishes.]

"You shall see, Carla, he won't come today, either," said Madame von Wallbach, trying to get a more comfortable position in her arm-chair.

"*Je le plains! Je le blâme, mais—*"

Carla, who sat on the right, shrugged her shoulders, and made a *pianissimo* gesture with her right hand.

"Miss von Strummin has left, too, without making us a farewell call."

"The silly little thing!" said Carla, making the return motion with her hand.

"And Else has not even been here to excuse this rudeness."

"So much the worse for her," said Carla.

"I wash my hands in innocence," said Madame von Wallbach, rising slowly and going into the reception room, which one of the dinner guests had entered.

Carla was also just about to rise, but remained seated when she heard that it was a lady, and one, too, of little importance. She dropped her hands into her lap and looked down thoughtfully.

"He's not half so clever; sometimes he doesn't understand at all what I say.—I even believe he's *un peu bête*; but he—worships me. Why should I renounce all my admirers for the sake of a betrothed who does not trouble himself about me? Of late he has scared them all away."

The door into the vestibule opened behind her; only more intimate friends entered this room, her room, when there were small parties; the one who entered must be either Ottomar or the Count. She had not heard anything, but, as the steps approached over the rug, she passed her fingers dreamily over the piano: "The Grail is already sending for the tardy one——"

"My dear Miss Carla!"

"O dear Count!" said Carla, glancing up and extending her left hand half over her shoulder to the Count, while her right played "My Dear Swan." "Don't you want to say good-day to Luise? She is with Madame von Arnfeld in the reception room."

The Count had drawn the hand extended to him so carelessly to his lips.—"And then?" asked he.

"You may come back here—I have something to tell you."

The Count came back in half a minute.

"Bring up your chair—not so near—so—and don't be disturbed by my drumming.—Do you know, dear Count, that you are a dangerous man?"

"But, my dear lady!" exclaimed the Count, twirling the ends of his mustache.

"You must be, if Luise thinks so. She has just given me a most charming curtain lecture."

"Great Heavens! What shall I do? Everybody worships you! Why shouldn't I be allowed to do what everybody does?"

"Because you are not everybody, because"—Carla raised her eyes; the Count was always as if intoxicated when he was permitted, unhindered by the lorgnette, to look into those blue eyes, beneath whose languid drooping lids a mysterious world of tenderness and coyness seemed to be hidden.

"Because I came too late?" he whispered passionately.

"One must not come too late, dear Count; that is the worst mistake in war, politics, everywhere. You must bear the consequences of this mistake—*voilà tout!*"

She played: "Only one year at thy side could I have wished to be, as witness of thy joy."—The Count gazed before him in silence.—"He is taking that seriously," thought Carla; "I must give him a little encouragement again."

"Why shouldn't we be friends?" she asked, extending her left hand while the right intoned: "Come dwell with

me! Let me teach thee how sweet is the bliss of purest love!"

"Gladly, gladly!" exclaimed the Count, pressing a long, fervent kiss upon the extended hand. "Why shouldn't we be friends!"

"Isn't it true?—'Friendship of pure souls is so sweet!' But the world is not pure; it likes to besmirch that which shines; it demands, guarantees; give it the only possible lead in this case; get married!"

"And you advise me to do that?"

"I do; I shall have an incalculable advantage from it; I shall not lose you altogether. I cannot ask more; I do not ask more."

And Carla played with both hands: "Let thyself be made to believe there is a joy that hath no pang!"

"Great Heavens, Carla—my dear lady, do you know that something like that, in almost the same words——"

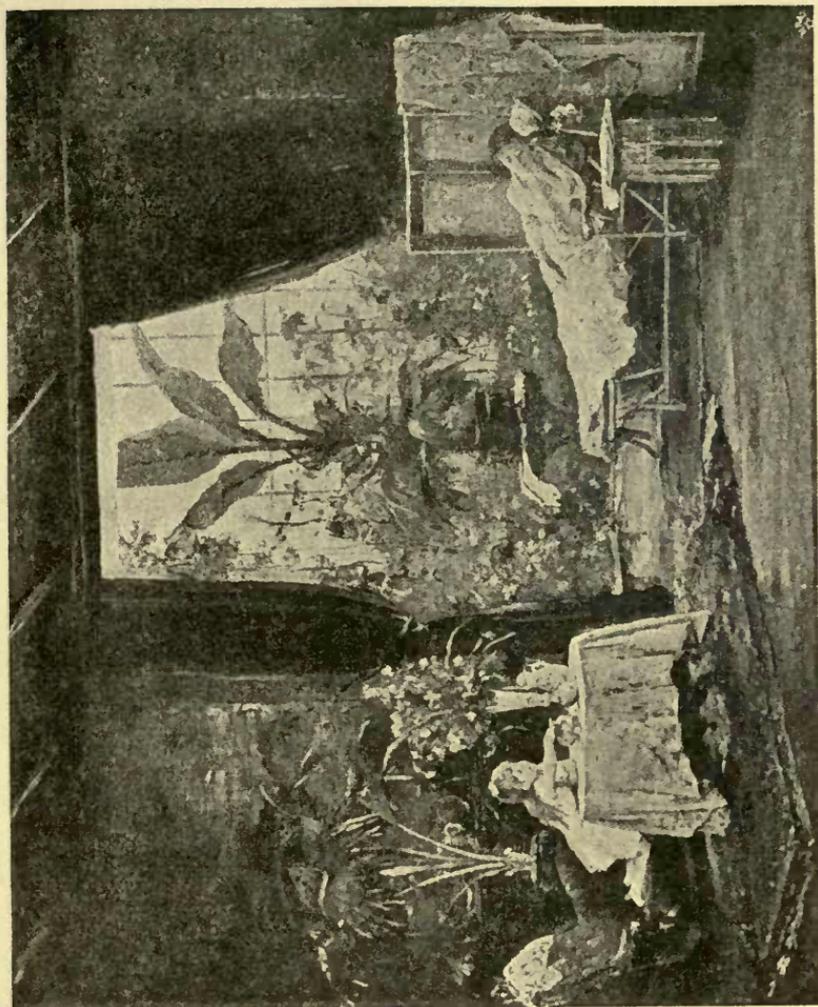
"You have just heard from Mr. Giraldi," said Carla, as the Count grew embarrassingly silent. "Just express it frankly; it will not offend me; he is the wisest of men, from whom you can conceal no secrets even if you would and—I don't wish to; you—should not wish to, either. He loves you very much; he wishes the best for you.—Believe me! Trust him!"

"I believe it," said the Count—"and I should trust him unconditionally if the union in question had not also a little bit of business flavor in it. You know I bought the Warnow estate today. I should hardly have been able to assume such a great risk, should not have assumed it at all, if they had not intimated that I should have at least half of the purchase price in the form of a dowry."

"*Fi donc!*" said Carla.

"For Heaven's sake, dear lady, don't misunderstand me!" exclaimed the Count. "It is understood, of course, that this intimation could have come from no one else in the world but Mr. Giraldi, as attorney of the Baroness——"

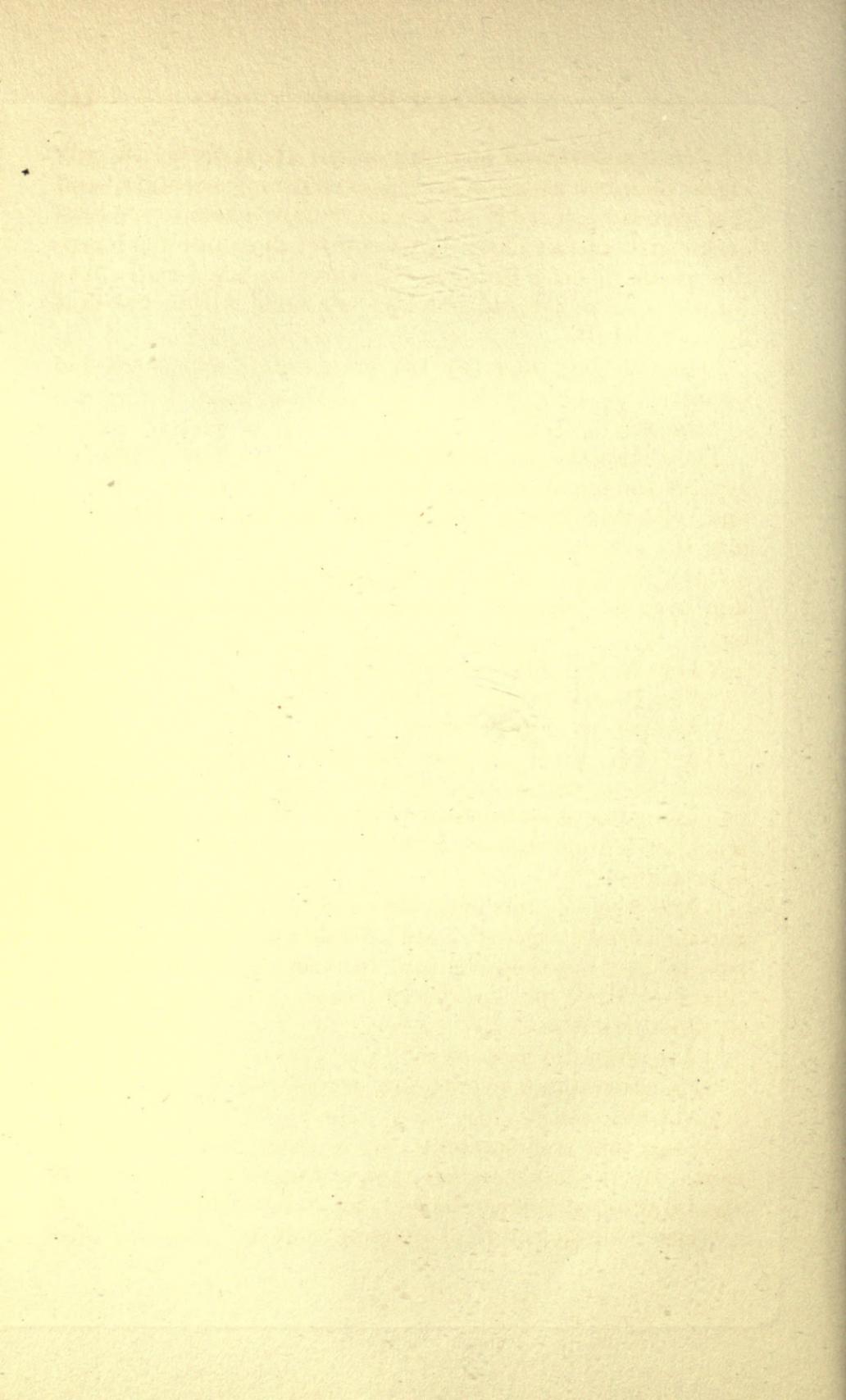
"Spare me such things, dear Count!" exclaimed Carla;



Permission Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris

THE LITTLE THIEF

MICHAEL VON MUNKACSY



"I don't understand anything at all about them! I only know that my sister-in-law is a charming creature, and that you are a terribly blasé man, before whom every honorable girl must shudder. And now let us go into the reception room. I hear Baroness Kniebreche; she would never forgive you if you did not kiss her hand within the first five minutes!"

"Give me courage for the execution," whispered the Count.

"How?"

The Count did not answer, but took her hand from the keys of the piano, pressed a few passionate kisses upon it, and, with a movement half feigned and half real, hastened into the other room.

"But he is such a fool!" whispered Carla, looking after him over her shoulder with her lorgnette as he hastened out.

"That he is," said a voice near her.

"*Mon Dieu!* Signor Giral di!"

"As ever, at your service!"

"As ever, at the proper moment! You have not yet been in the reception room? Of course not! Come! Let us chat a few minutes longer. A *tête-à-tête* with you is a much envied distinction, which even Baroness Kniebreche appreciates."

"And, besides, this respectable *tête-à-tête* is not so dangerous as the preceding," said Giral di, taking a seat on the sofa by Carla at the far end of the room, under a cluster of lights.—"Have you spoken to him?"

"Just now!"

"And what did he answer?"

"He understands everything, except——"

"Not all, then?"

"Stop that ironical smile; he is really not so insignificant. He is clever enough, for example, to inquire what special interest you can have in his union with Else."

"Don't be angry if I smile a little bit longer," said

Giraldi.—“What did you say? The Count inquired what interest I have in the matter—he, upon whose side the entire advantage lies. Very well, I grant that the sale would have been long delayed, as the General, from pure obstinacy, and your brother, for reasons of propriety, are not willing to sell directly to a committee of speculators, and demand a go-between; I admit, further, that the Count is not only the most convenient and appropriate, but also, for us, the most profitable person, because as a neighbor he can really pay more than anybody else. But that is an advantage for us which we can most profitably equalize by other advantages which we concede to him, and with the details of which I do not wish to trouble you. Believe me, Miss Carla, the Count knows all this as well as I do; and he is only pretending to be ignorant, and consequently to be hesitating for reasons which I shall mention in order: First, it is always well that one should not see the hand which tosses fortune into one’s lap—one can then be, on occasion, as ungrateful as one wishes; second, he is in love, and—who could blame him—doesn’t yet consider the matter entirely hopeless, so long as you are unmarried; third, he is not at all certain that Miss von Werben will accept him, and for this uncertainty he has well-founded reasons, which his philosophy and vanity can easily fabricate.”

“You have already repeatedly referred to the fondness which Else was supposed to have for the handsome sea captain. Much as I admire your penetration, dear Giraldi—this is the limit of my credulity.”

“And if I produce indisputable proofs—if I have it in black and white, by the hand of Else’s most intimate girl friend, that little Miss von Strummin, who left so unceremoniously in order to surprise us from the security of her island with the news of her engagement to the sculptor, Justus Anders? Please do not laugh; all that I tell you is positively true. Mr. Justus Anders, however, is the most intimate friend of the Captain; the two pairs of friends,

it appears, have no secrets between them; anyhow, Miss von Strummin keeps none from her betrothed, and to him she wrote in a letter, which arrived this morning, literally——”

Giraldi had taken out of the pocket of his dress coat a dainty portfolio, and out of this a paper, which he unfolded.—

“If anybody should come, it is a letter from Enrico Braga, the sculptor, in Milan—thus writes literally as follows:

“One thing more, beloved artist, at which Lesto would bark himself to death with delight if he could understand it, and you will be as delighted as a child, which you are: My Else loves your Reinhold with all her heart and soul, and that means something, for one who knows, as I do, that she is all heart, and has the most heavenly soul in the world. I have not the permission, and least of all the commission, to tell you this; but we must no longer play hide and seek with each other, you know; and must also encourage our poor friends, which can be best done by telling them hourly that he, or in your case, she, loves you! I have at least found it successful with Else. Oh, beloved artist! we ought really to be ashamed to be as happy as we are, when we remember how unhappy our friends are, and simply because of these abominable circumstances. If I knew the one who invented these conditions, I should like to tell him a thing or two, you bet.”

“That is indeed wonderfully interesting, and will interest the Count immensely!”

“No doubt,” said Giraldi, putting the sheet back in his portfolio.—“By the way, what a noble soul you are, indeed, not to ask from whom I got the letter! But I think we will not make it known till we are sure of one thing.”

“Of what?”

Giraldi leaned over to Carla and looked straight into her eyes.—

“That you would not finally prefer to make Count Axel von Golm happy by offering your hand to him instead of to Ottomar von Werben.”

“You are horrible, Signor Giraldi, do you know it?” said Carla, striking Giraldi’s hands with her handkerchief.

“If you say so!—For see, dear lady; that communication of Else’s maritime affections and relations would finally induce the Count to give up his suit, and hitherto we have been of the opinion that it would be most convenient for all parties concerned to marry him to Else. If you want him yourself—and so it appears—now it can be brought about; only I should not be overhasty in your case. We can prolong the game as long as we wish. And why should you not wish to drain the sweetness of the betrothal period to the last drop—the more as Ottomar—the truth does not offend noble souls—hardly knows how to appreciate the true worth of the happiness which awaits him in the arms of the most charming and gifted of women.”

“That is to say, if I am not mistaken,” said Carla, “Ottomar must do as you wish; you have him in your power. Now, dear friend, I know how powerful your hand is; but I confess I do not understand where the power lies in this case. That Ottomar has had mistresses, presumably still has—well, I, too, have read my Schopenhauer, who says nothing of monogamy, because he was never able to discover it; and I do not wish to be the woman who finds her lover less interesting because he is interesting to other women. His debts? *Grands Dieux!* Tell me one who has none! And my brother says it is really not so bad. My brother insists upon hastening our wedding, and now my sister-in-law does, too. The General himself is, as you know, uncomfortably persistent in the pursuance of his plans, and society would be beside itself if we were not on our bridal tour by the beginning of March; on the fifteenth Ottomar is to take up his appointment in St. Petersburg.”

“If we agree in other things, let us make our arrangements accordingly,” replied Giraldi; “by the middle of

February you will find that your delicately sensitive nature is no longer equal to the demands of the season, that you needs must have, before entering upon the new chapter of your life, composure and quiet which the city cannot give you, which you can find only in the seclusion of the country. And it fortunately so happens now that, at the same time, my dear friend, the Baroness, impelled by need of rest, is seeking quiet in the seclusion of Warnow. I have reserved the castle and park of the Count, who is the owner of the estates since this morning, for the months of February and March, expressly for this purpose. He will be delighted to learn that Miss von Wallbach wishes to share the retirement of the aunt of her betrothed. Not alone! The Baroness will be accompanied, at her urgent request, by Miss Else. Note that! The Count, whose business at this time—of first importance, the building of the harbor at Warnow—will make it necessary for him to sojourn in the country, will do all in his power to enliven the loneliness of the ladies. Your brother—I myself—we shall come and go. What a spectacle, to observe the awakening of spring in the country, on the shore of the sea, perhaps also dear Else's silent fondness for the man of her choice, who, in his new position—he has been for some days Pilot Commander—I believe that is what they call it—in Wissow, will be just as far from Warnow as the Count is from the castle! What do you think of my little plan?"

"Charming!" said Carla—" *À deux mains!* But can it be carried out?"

"Let that be my concern. Only give me your two pretty hands to assure me that you will support me."

"Here they are!"

"And I press upon both of them my lips as a seal of ratification."

"Now I must venture to interrupt your *tête-à-tête*," said von Wallbach, entering from the reception room.—"The company is complete; only Ottomar, whose companionship we must forego, and the Baroness are wanting."

“I forgot to state,” said Giraldi, greeting von Wallbach, “the Baroness wishes me to excuse her—an indisposition—her overwrought nerves——”

“Oh!” said von Wallbach, “what a pity! Would you have the kindness, Carla, to tell Luise? It will make no further disturbance, as I was to conduct the Baroness; you, Mr. Giraldi, Baroness Kniebreche has requested to accompany her.”

Giraldi bowed; Carla went out.

“One moment,” whispered von Wallbach, drawing Giraldi back by the arm, “I am glad, very glad, that the Baroness is not coming. This is a day of surprises. This morning, Golm, to the unspeakable astonishment of all of us—Lübbener can’t compose himself yet—paid down in one lump the half million; the concession, for whose publication we should have had to wait weeks, as there was always a question of the security, will be printed tomorrow in the *Staatsanzeiger*—yes, yes, my dear Sir, you may depend upon it! I have it with absolute certainty from Privy Councilor von Strumm, who only begs that we shall not betray him.—It is to be a delightful surprise for us, coming from the Minister; and—and—dear friend!—I am not easily disconcerted, but *c’est plus fort que moi*—from the same absolutely reliable source I learn that the General does not appear in the Army promotions, which are likewise to be published tomorrow.”

“That means?” asked Giraldi.

“That means that he has been passed over, that he—according to our notions—must retire for the sake of appearances.”

“How strange!” said Giraldi.

“So it is, and can’t be otherwise,” continued von Wallbach with emotion; “I should be able to understand the step, indeed, the necessity of it, if only by removing him our matter could be put through; as it is, however, as we have the concession in our pocket without that——”

“An unnecessary cruelty,” said Giraldi.

“Isn't it? And one that will have other consequences. I prophesy that Ottomar will not go to St. Petersburg.”

“That would be more than cruel—that would be ridiculous,” said Giraldi.

“You don't understand our conditions; our people are very consistent in such things.”

Giraldi was spared the answer. In the door of the reception room appeared, leaning on Carla's arm, the bent form of an old lady, who moved to and fro a gigantic black fan, and exclaimed with a loud metallic voice: “If Mr. Giraldi doesn't come to old Kniebreche, old Kniebreche must come to Mr. Giraldi.”

“I come on wings!” said Giraldi.

[Reinhold comes to take leave of the Werbens, hears the news that the General has not been promoted, finds Else depressed. Else pours out her heart concerning Ferdinande, her father and Ottomar, and his betrothal to Carla. Reinhold declares he loves her, and holds her in his embrace. Else kisses her compass, her talisman, and slips it back into her pocket.

Reinhold starts for Sundin to report and take his post at Wissow. At the railroad station Justus tells Reinhold of his betrothal to Mieting, but fears that Mieting's father may change his mind. Reinhold assures Justus that there is no danger of Strummin getting rich from the concession, that the railroad must be a failure, and Strummin will be glad enough to have him as a son-in-law. Justus declares that he has produced nothing worth while since he has been in love—“Oh! this love, this love!” Uncle Ernst has been elected to the city council and will be elected next year to the Reichstag. Reinhold's train moves off. Ottomar is on board, and expects to be the guest of Golm in the spring. The President enters the coupé where Reinhold is. He is much excited, having been in Berlin protesting against the concession. The whole railroad situa-

tion is ventilated. The President recalls Reinhold's first prophecy of the storm flood.

Madame and Miss von Wallbach, Else and Golm, are at dinner at Castle Warnow as the guests of Valerie. Golm's advances to Else are repelled, and he makes slighting remarks about Reinhold. Else defends Reinhold and leaves the room in disgust. Golm protests to Madame von Wallbach that Reinhold will probably object even to the removal of the dunes, because they are necessary for protection. Madame von Wallbach is disgusted at the failure of the match between Golm and Else, and threatens to go home. Golm now turns his attentions to Carla, asks her to take a ride, and steals a kiss. Carla and Else have an altercation about Ottomar and Golm, Carla having learned from Giraldi of Ottomar's relations to Ferdinande. Madame von Wallbach tells Carla she need not object to Ottomar's mistresses, for all men have them, nor to his debts, for Golm has debts too. Strummin asks Golm for the money he had loaned him, which is now needed to set up Mieting. Golm and Carla ride off alone.

Else, fatigued and disturbed, starts out for a walk in the open, while her aunt Valerie lies in a sleepy stupor in her room. Else comes through the portière just in time to see Golm kiss Carla. She now considers the bond between Carla and Ottomar broken. She contrasts their relations with her own to Reinhold, and longs to see Reinhold. She goes into the park whose regular lines oppress her. She wanders on till she comes to the Pölitz house, where she learns that little Karl, who was sick when she was there before, has died. The Pölitz family is in a bad plight, reflecting the evil character of the Count. Else listens to the sad stories of Mrs. Pölitz and her sister-in-law, Marie, whom Golm has seduced, and hurries on to Wissow Hook to see Reinhold.]

Mrs. Pölitz had said it was an hour's walk to Wissow Hook, but it seemed to Else as if the very winding way

would never end. And yet she walked so fast that she left the little empty hay wagon just as far behind her as it was ahead of her at the start. The wretched vehicle was the only sign of human activity; otherwise the brown plain lay as bare as a desert as far as the eye could reach; not a single large tree was to be seen, only here and there a few scattered willows and tangled shrubbery on the ditches, which ran this way and that, and a broader, slowly flowing brook constantly widening, which she crossed on an unsafe wooden bridge, without a railing. The brook must have come from the range of hills to the right, at the base of which Else saw, in striking contrast, the buildings of the other two Warnow estates, Gristow and Damerow. Swinging around in a great bend, she gradually ascended to Wissow Hook, which lay directly before her, while the plain to the left extended without the least undulation to the lower dunes, lifting their white crests here and there above the edge of the heath. Only once a leaden gray streak, which must be the sea, although Else could scarcely distinguish it from the sky, appeared for a few minutes in an opening through which the brook may have had its source.

For the sky above her too was a leaden gray, except that it seemed somewhat darker above the sea. In the east, then above the hills toward the west, and along the leaden gray vault here and there, scattered white spots floated, like powder smoke, motionless in the still air. Not the slightest breeze was stirring, and yet from time to time a strange whisper crept through the waste as if the brown heath were trying to rouse itself from deep sleep, and a soft, long continued sound of sadness could be heard through the heavy murky air, and then again a boundless stillness, when Else thought she could hear her heart beat.

But almost more terrible than the silence of the waste was the cry of a flock of gulls, which she had scared up from one of the many hollows of the heath, and which now, flying to and fro in the gray air, with the points of their

bills turned downward, followed her for a long time, as if in raging anger at the intruder on their domain.

Nevertheless she walked on and on, faster and faster, following an impulse that admitted no opposition to her determination, which was even stronger than the horror which seemed to come over her from the sky and ground, like the breath of spirits threatening and warning with demon voices.—And then yet another terrible dread! Even from the far distance—at the foot of the mountain promontory, rising higher—she had noticed dark, moving points, as she convinced herself, now that they were coming nearer—laborers, several hundred, who were carting dirt and filling in an apparently endless dam, which had already reached a considerable height. She could not avoid crossing the dam, and if she did not wish to make a *détour* she must intersect the long line of carters. This she did with a friendly greeting to those nearest to her. The men, who were already sufficiently bothered, stopped their carts and glared at her without returning her salutation. When she had gone a short distance further, shouts and coarse laughter resounded behind her. Turning involuntarily, she saw that a few of the band had followed her and did not stop until she turned—checked, perhaps, only by the noise which the others made. She continued her way almost running. There was now only a narrow path over the short parched grass and across the broad strips of sand with which the ascending slope of the promontory was covered. Else said to herself that she could be seen by the men until she reached the top, might be followed by them at any moment, or if she turned back—the twilight had settled about her, the men perhaps had stopped work for the day, and there was no overseer to hold their coarseness in check, the rude men having the whole endless plain as far as Warnow to insult, scare and annoy her—should she turn about at once while there was time, ask for an overseer to accompany her, perhaps try to have the hay wagon, which she had overtaken a while before and was now nearing the laborers,

carry her on, or another wagon which from her elevation she discovered far in the distance and which must have followed her?—There was only the one way over the heath.

While Else was thus considering, as if drawn by magic she hastened with beating heart up the slope, the upper edge of which was clearly distinguishable from the vault of the sky by an even line rising toward the sea. With every step the sea and the chains of dunes extended farther to the left; now her glance swept out to where the misty sky met the misty sea, and beyond the beautifully arched curve of the coast to wooded Golmberg, which had a threatening look against the blue-black background. Above the tree-tops, huddled in a vague mass, loomed the tower of the castle. Between Golmberg yonder and the height on which she stood—inhospitable as the sea itself, from which she was separated only by the yellow border of the dunes—the brown plain she was traversing; the only habitation of man—the fisher village of Ahlbeck, which now, hard by the foot of the promontory, lay almost at her feet. Yonder too, on the broad beach between the houses and the sea, extended long moving lines of workmen up to the two moles which, with their ends pointing toward each other, extended far into the sea. At the moles were a few large craft which seemed to be unloading, while a fleet of fishing-boats all moved in the same direction toward the shore. They had reefed their sails, and were being propelled only by oars. The even position of the brown sails and the uniform motion of the oars of the fishing boats were in strange contrast with the confused disorder of the white gulls, which a while ago had circled above her and now flew ceaselessly at half the elevation between her and the shore.

All this she saw, however, with the keen eye of a falcon, as a traveler on the train mechanically observes the details of the landscape he is passing, while his thoughts have long been at home, tasting the joys he will experience at sight of the loved ones from whom he has so long been separated. She dared not hope to look into his dear eyes,

to grasp his dear hands in hers, to hear the sound of his strong, yet gentle voice. She wished only to see the place where he lived.

And even this slight consolation, she thought, should be guarded. She had already gone in the same cross direction, some distance on the ridge of the hills, without obtaining a view of the other side where Wissow must be located—only a view over the edge of the plateau, a leaden gray. Perhaps if she followed the broader road which she was now approaching, and which, coming from the right, led to a pile of great boulders, whence a tall signal staff arose, and which must have been built on the top of the ridge—presumably also on the extreme edge of the promontory——!

As a matter of fact, as she ascended higher and higher a pale streak appeared over to the right—the coast of the continent—then again the leaden gray surface of the sea, upon which a sail could be discerned here and there; finally, on this side, immediately below her, a white point of dunes, which gradually grew wider in the shape of a wedge toward the promontory, till it became a small flat peninsula, in the middle of which a dozen small houses lay on the brown heath among the dunes—that was Wissow! That must be Wissow!

And now that she stood on the point which she had striven with all her physical and mental strength to reach, and, however longingly she extended her arms, the goal of her longing still lay so far, so unattainably far from her—now for the first time she thought she understood the silent dreadful speech of the waste, the loneliness about her, the rustling whisper of the heath, the voices of spirits wailing in the air: Alone! Alone! Unspeakable sorrow arose in her heart; her knees shook, she sank near the boulders upon a stone, covered her eyes with her hands and broke into loud crying, like a helpless, abandoned child.

She did not see a man, who was leaning against the signal staff observing the sea, startled by the strange sound near

him, come from behind the boulders; she did not hear him coming up to her with hurried steps across the narrow grass plot.—

“Else!”

She started up with a stifled shriek.

“Else!”

And then she cried aloud—a cry of wild joy, which echoed strangely through the noiseless stillness—and she lay on his breast, clung to him, as one drowning.

“Reinhold! My Reinhold!”

She wept, she laughed, she cried again and again, “My Reinhold!”

Speechless for joy and astonishment at the precious miracle, he drew her to him upon the rock on which she had sat; she pressed her head upon his breast.

“I so longed for you!”

“Else, dear Else!”

“I had to come, I could not do otherwise; I was drawn hither by spirit hands; And now I have you, you! O never leave me again! Take me with you down to your house yonder. There is my home! With you! With you! Do not thrust me out again into the dreary, loveless, false world there behind me! Only with you is joy, rest, peace, truth, fidelity! O your dear, true heart, how it beats; I feel it! It loves me as I do you! It has yearned for me as my poor shattered heart has for you, for you!”

“Yes, my Else, it has yearned for you, unspeakably, beyond measure. I climbed up here, because it had no peace; I only wished to cast a glance out there where I knew you to be—a last look, before——”

“Before? For Heaven’s sake!”

He had led her the few steps to the boulders and now stood, throwing his arm about her, close to the edge of the promontory, whose sullen front was so steep that she seemed to be floating in the air above the gray sea.

“See, Else, that is the storm! I hear it, I see it, as if it were already let loose! Hours may yet pass, but it will

come, it must come—as all signs indicate—with fearful violence. The metallic surface there below us, stirred into raging waves, will dash its foam up to this height! Woe to the ships which have not sought shelter in the harbor, perchance there to be secure against its wild fury! Woe to the lowlands down there below us! I wished to write to you about it this morning, for I saw it even yesterday, and tell you it would be better for you to leave Warnow; but you would not have gone if I had.”

“Never! I am too proud that you trust me, that you have told me this! And when the storm breaks loose, and I know that your precious life is exposed to danger—I will not tremble; and, if I fear, surely I will not despair. I will say all the time: ‘He could not fail to do his duty, or to be the brave man whom I love; what if he thought that I were weeping and wringing my hands, while he has to command and steer as on that evening!’ Do you know, my love, do you know that I loved you then? And do you know that you said to me that I had eyes like a seaman? O how well I remember every word; every look! And how happy I was that I did not have to give the compass back to you at once; I did not wish to keep it, you were to have it back again——”

“Then you were more honorable than I, dear! I was determined not to give the glove back to you. You had taken it off when you looked through my telescope; it lay on the deck. I picked it up; it has accompanied me so faithfully ever since—do you see? It has been my talisman! Seamen are superstitious; I swore not to part with it till I held your hand in mine forever, instead of the glove.” He kissed the little blue-gray glove before he put it back into his breast-pocket.

They had again seated themselves upon the rock, caressing, whispering fond words, jesting in happy phrases, pressing heart to heart and lips to lips, forgetful of the desolate waste in the blissful paradise of their young love, forgetful of the darkness which became more dense, forget-

ful of the storm which was brewing in the leadlike air over the leadlike sea, like the angel of destruction brooding over a world which he finally hopes to destroy forever and to hurl back into primeval chaos.

A sullen, rolling, trembling sound in the distance caused them to stop and listen; suddenly a roaring sound penetrated the air, without their noticing, even at this elevation, any motion, and this was again followed by an absolute stillness. Reinhold jumped up.

“It is coming faster than I thought; we have not a moment to lose.”

“What are you going to do?”

“Take you back.”

“That you must not do; you must remain at your post of duty; on that account you did not go to Warnow today; how could you now go so far, when the peril is so much nearer? No, no, dear; do not look at me with such concern! I must learn to live without fear, and I am going to do it; I have determined to do it. No more fear from this moment on, not even of men! I can no longer live without you, and you can no longer live without me. If I did not know it before, I know it now; and, believe me, my noble father is the first that will understand it. Indeed, he must have felt it when he told me what he wrote to you: ‘I place your fate in your own hands.’ Ottomar and your aunt share my inheritance; my proud father would not take anything from me, and you—you take me as I am, and lead me down there forever! One more glimpse of my paradise, and one more kiss! And now, farewell, farewell!”

He embraced her fondly, and was about to let her go; but he held her hand fast in his.

“It is impossible, Else; it is growing dark up here; in half an hour it will be night down there. You are not safe on the road, which cannot be distinguished from the heath, and the heath is full of deep moors—it is simply impossible, Else!”

“It must be possible! I should despise myself if I kept you from your duty; and how could you love me and not feel your love a burden if I did so? How do you know that you will not be very soon, perhaps are even now, needed down below? And the people are standing helpless, looking for their commander! Reinhold, my love, am I right or not?”

“You are indeed right; but——”

“No but, dear; we must part.”

Thus speaking, they went hand in hand, with hasty steps, down the path by which Else had ascended, and stood now at the cross-path which led in both directions—to the War-now heath over here, and to the Wissow peninsula over there.

“Only to the foot of the hill, till I know you are on the right road,” said Reinhold.

“Not a step farther! Hark! What was that?”

He, too, had heard it—a noise like that of horses’ hoofs, which struck in swiftest pace upon the hard ground behind the hill rising in their rear and making impossible a further view of the ridge of the promontory, which sloped more rapidly at that point. The next moment a rider came in sight over the hill. He was now at the top, stopped his horse, stood up in his stirrups and appeared to be looking about him.

“It is the Count!” said Else.

A deep flush came into her face. “Now, you will have to accompany me for a little distance,” said she. “Come!”

She took his arm. At that moment the Count, who had looked beyond them, to the hill, turning his eyes downward, saw them both. He gave his horse the spurs, and, galloping down the slope, was with them in an instant. He had already seen Reinhold, doubtless, but as he checked his horse and lifted his hat his face did not show the slightest trace of astonishment or wonder; he seemed rather not to notice Reinhold at all, as if he had met Else alone.

“That I call good fortune, Miss Else! How your aunt

will rejoice! She is waiting over there; the carriage couldn't go farther——”

He pointed with the butt of his whip over the hill.

“My Heavens, Miss Else! Even if you look at me twice as astonished! Your aunt is worried because you have been away so long.—Messengers in the neighborhood heard of Pölitz that you had come hither—strange notion, Miss Else, by Heavens!—your aunt insisted upon coming herself—stayed behind with Miss von Wallbach—offered to accompany her—most despairing—astounding luck! Beg permission to accompany you to the carriage, not two hundred paces.”

He leaped from the saddle and took his horse by the bridle-rein.

Reinhold looked Else straight in the eye; she understood and answered the look.

“We're very grateful to you, Count,” said he, “but shouldn't like to try your kindness a moment longer than is necessary. I shall accompany my betrothed myself to the Baroness.”

“Oh!” exclaimed the Count.

He had rejoiced in advance over the utter confusion which, in his opinion, the discovered lovers must have felt in his presence, and which would shock the Baroness if he could tell her in whose company he had the good fortune to find her niece. For, that the fellow would traipse down to Wissow with an expression of stammering embarrassment, he assumed as a matter of course, now that he had gone so far. And now! He thought he had not heard aright, he could hardly believe his eyes, when Else and the fellow, turning their backs upon him as if he were not there, walked on arm in arm. With a leap he was back in the saddle.

“Then allow me, at least, to announce the happy event to the Baroness!” he exclaimed ironically, lifting his hat as he passed, and hurrying ahead of them up the hill, beyond which he soon vanished.

“The wretch!” cried Else. “I thank you, Reinhold, that you understood, that you have freed me forever from him, from all of them! You cannot imagine how thankful I am and why I am so thankful to you! I will not now burden you, dear heart, with the hateful things which I have experienced; I shall tell you another time. Come what may, I am yours and you are mine! This joy is so great—everything else is small and insignificant compared with it!”

An open carriage was standing a short distance from them and by it a rider. They thought it was the Count, but coming nearer they saw that it was a servant. The Count had vanished with a scornful laugh, after communicating the great discovery to the Baroness, and receiving only the answer, “I thank you, Count, for your escort thus far!” The two last words had been spoken with special emphasis and, lifting his hat again, he rode off at a gallop from the road over the hills.

The Baroness left the carriage and came to meet the lovers. Else released Reinhold’s arm and hastened to meet her aunt; she told all that was necessary by impulsively embracing her. As Reinhold came up the Baroness extended her hand to him and said in a voice full of emotion, “You bring me the dear child and—yourself! Then have double thanks!”

Reinhold kissed the trembling hand.—“It is not a time for many words, Baroness,” said he, “and what I feel your kind heart knows. God’s blessing upon you!”

“And upon thee, my Reinhold!” exclaimed Else, embracing him; “God’s blessing! And joy and happiness!”

He helped the ladies into the carriage; one clasp of her dear hand, and the company was off, the servant riding ahead.

Notwithstanding the hilly ground, as the road was good and the ground firm, they could ride sufficiently fast even here upon the hill, and Reinhold had urged all possible haste. Only a few minutes had passed when the carriage had vanished from his sight behind the hills; when it

reached the plain below, and became visible again, half an hour had elapsed. He had not time to wait for that; he must not lose a minute more.

Down in Wissow the beacons were already lighted; at this moment the signal for a pilot blazed up from the sea. They would answer promptly—he knew they would; but a new situation might come any moment which would require his presence; and it would take him a quarter of an hour at a full run to get down there.

He ran down the hill in long bounds, when a rider appeared right before him in a hollow of the ground, which extended to the right in a deep depression along the length of the promontory, and stood on the path. It happened so suddenly that Reinhold almost ran into the horse.

“You seem to be in a very great hurry, now,” said the Count.

“I am in a great hurry,” replied Reinhold, breathless from his rapid running—and was about to go past the head of the horse; but the Count pulled the horse around so that his head was toward Reinhold.

“Make room!” exclaimed Reinhold.

“I am on my own ground,” replied the Count. “The road is free, and you are for freedom of all sorts.”

“Once more—Make room!”

“If I wish to do so.”

Reinhold seized the bridle of the horse, which reared high from the sharp spurs in his flank; Reinhold reeled backward. The next moment he drew his long knife, which as a seaman he always carried with him.

“I should be sorry for the horse,” he exclaimed, “but if you will not have it otherwise——”

“I only wished to say ‘Good evening, Commander’—I forgot it a while ago; Good evening!”

The Count lifted his hat with scornful laughter, turned his horse about again, and rode off to one side of the valley from whence he had come.

“That kind won’t learn anything,” muttered Reinhold,

shutting his knife again. It was a word that he had often heard from his Uncle Ernst. As he felt now, so must Uncle Ernst have felt in that moment when the dagger came down upon him—the dagger of her father. “Great Heavens!” he reflected. “Is it true then that the sins of the father are visited upon the children? That this combat, handed down from generations, was to continue forever? That we ourselves, who are guiltless, must renew it against our will and our convictions?”

A sound of thunder, still in the distance, but clear, louder and more threatening than before, rolled through the heavy air; and again a gust of wind followed it—this time no longer in the upper air, but raging along the hill and the slopes of the promontory, echoing with screeches and groans in the ravines. The next gust might strike the sea, letting loose the storm which would bring the flood.

There was another storm for which human machinations appear as child’s play, and human hate as an offense, but one feeling remains victorious—love! That Reinhold felt in the depth of his heart, as he hastened downward to redeem the minutes which had been foolishly lost, to risk his life if it must be, in spite of it all, for the lives of other men.

[Valerie having heard of the reason for Else’s absence starts out to look for her. Golm discovers Else and Reinhold and spreads the news of their betrothal. Else writes a hasty note to her father, telling him all. Upon Else’s return, Valerie expresses her sympathy, and tells her the long sad story of her life. Valerie had loved her deceased husband with a boundless love, but was carried away by a passion for Signor Giraldi, before she was married to von Warnow. The early years of her married life had been spent largely in travel; but still her heart was ill at ease. On their journeys they came to Rome, where Valerie met Giraldi again, coming hopelessly under the spell of his magic power. In the midst of it all her husband dies, leav-

ing a strange, complicated will, which disinherited the children of the General, her brother, in case they should marry outside of the nobility. After her husband's death she had Giraldi as counselor and companion, and manager of her affairs.

The storm has raged all day through the streets of Berlin, and a financial storm, still more fierce, has been raging in the Exchange, shaking many a proud counting-house to its foundations by the wild speculation in stocks. The Berlin-Sundin railway has been the storm centre, and Philip Schmidt, the great promoter, has been making full use of the French proverb, *sauve qui peut*. It is the evening of the ball at Philip's new house; guests, many and mighty, throng the burgher palace of the young promoter, whose democratic motto is to bring together poets and kings, artists and speculators. Even the venerable Baroness Kniebreche was all curiosity to see the luxury and the motley throng. The Wallbachs, the Werbens, Golm, Lübbener, Justus and Mieting, Krethe and Plethe, all are there. Toasts are drunk, speeches are made, wine flows freely, and spirits run high. The air is charged with financial and social gossip. Giraldi expects Ottomar's engagement with Carla to be broken. A duel between Ottomar and Wallbach is impending. If Valerie consents on the morrow to Giraldi's plans, there will not be left one stone of the Werben fortune upon another—dallying, temporizing, diplomatizing are the order of the day. Antonio watches Ottomar and disturbs Giraldi's mind. Schieler declares Golm a ruined man, and engages with Lübbener, who is pale with concern, in conversation about Philip. Giraldi has just drawn the last fifty thousand from Haselow, making it impossible for Haselow to help Lübbener.

Philip excuses himself to Baroness Kniebreche for a few minutes, to move around among the guests. He comes upon Lübbener and Schieler in a corner, addresses Lübbener as "Dear Hugo," and tells him that this splendor is all due to him. At the close of a laudatory speech in honor

of Philip, an officer, whom Lübbener has ordered, comes in to arrest Philip. Philip seizes Lübbener by the wrist, telling him he shall pay for it. Philip and the officer, Müller, leave the company and go upstairs, that Philip may change his clothes. They pass through one room after another until they reach Philip's bedroom. While Philip changes the officer sits and waits; he hears a rustle, but suddenly all is quiet. The time grows long. He goes to the door, only to find Philip gone and himself a prisoner. It is announced that Philip has had a stroke. The police rescue the officer. The ball breaks up. Ottomar quarrels with Wallbach, and is to give notice in the morning. Antonio is in evidence and threatens to stab Ottomar, but Bertalde interposes.

Von Wallbach writes to the General that he cannot accept Ottomar's challenge to a duel until Ottomar can clear his record of the reported scandal. Captain von Schönau offers to help the General pay Ottomar's debts, but Colonel von Bohl comes to inform the General that Ottomar's notes are all forged, that Giraldi had been paying Ottomar's notes as they came due, and promised to pay the twenty thousand, but had drawn the half million from the bank, and left during the night for Warnow. The General, instead of signing the order to pay Ottomar's debts, tears it up, sends Ottomar one of his brace of pistols, and loads the other to shoot the devil who lured his son into shame.

Ottomar is at the lodging of Bertalde, who goes to fetch Ferdinande. Ottomar plans to go to America, which Bertalde says is all nonsense. She declares Ottomar is not going to leave her room, and that Ferdinande shall stay with him—"these men act like children with their silly honor." Ferdinande writes a note to her father, and gives it to Cilli to deliver.

Cilli finds Uncle Ernst in a bad state of mind, but his heart warms as he sees the blind girl, who delivers the letter and pleads for Ferdinande. She starts home by way

of the studio, and kneels down before Justus' statue of Mieting.

Justus and Mieting are looking for furniture to set up housekeeping, and find a bargain at Isaac Lobstein's. On the way back they chat of all sorts of things, and speak of Cilli, for whom, Mieting says, they must provide, because Justus would have married her if she hadn't been blind and he so ugly! They return to the studio and find Cilli dead before Mieting's bust.

The General is at the station to take the train for Sundin on the way to Warnow. The storm has interfered with traffic, and the General is frantic. Uncle Ernst is likewise waiting for a train to Sundin. He has engaged a special, and invites the General to ride with him. Uncle Ernst pours out his soul to the General, and pleads for the children; but the General replies that all are biased by tradition in judging their fellowmen. The special train for Uncle Ernst is announced. A message from Else is handed to the General: "Come by the next train. Fearful storm. Shall perhaps have to go to Reinhold. Aunt will then be left alone with the terrible man. Come for my sake, for Ottomar's sake, for Aunt's sake, who has thrown herself on our protection. Everything is at stake. Else."

Madame von Wallbach insists upon going home, as Carla is committed to Golm, and they can no longer be the guests of Ottomar's friends. But Valerie cannot send them, because she wishes to accompany Else to Wissow Hook. The tenant, Damberg, repeats Reinhold's statement that "if the wind comes from the east there will be a bad storm flood." Valerie starts for Wissow. As they hear the surf breaking on the dunes, Else shrinks at the thought of Reinhold being in such peril. Valerie comforts her.

Giraldi arrives at Warnow, much the worse for the stormy journey. Madame von Wallbach tells him what he is, and what she thinks of him, and informs him that Valerie is going to look out for Else and Ottomar and will them her property. He is disconcerted by the calm dis-

closure of his schemes by what he has hitherto thought an insignificant woman. He bribes François to spy for him secretly, and sends him to Valerie in Wissow with a letter, charging her with having fled from him, and demanding that she return by six o'clock. Giraldi rages about the weather, "made for barbarians," while the storm shakes the castle. Count Golm sends back his jockey to get a handkerchief for Carla, while he and Carla ride on over the dunes toward the sea. The jockey declares that they will not be heard from before tomorrow, as he knows the Count and his wiles.

As the jockey rides back the Count begins his game, kisses Carla, and disarranges her hat; he excuses his conduct, as this is the first time he has been alone with the prettiest girl in the world. Carla is intoxicated with delight, and, as the Count suggests they may have to remain alone, she replies: "An eternity—with you!" She makes him swear that he will declare their engagement in the presence of Valerie, Else, and Giraldi, and will marry her within four weeks. He swears, with reservation, by his honor, but begins to ponder the bargain. Carla throws herself impulsively into his arms exclaiming: "With you. With you! Take me, take me! I am yours, yours, yours!" The Count is now bent on the boldest plunge of all; he rides for the inn at Ahlbeck, where they can spend the night. As they reach the village, all is confusion in the streets. The people are rushing from the houses, crying, howling, raging. The Count rides over a woman; the mob rush after him with curses, clubs, sticks, and knives, while Carla rides on over the dune. When the Count finally reaches her she has discovered his character, and is silent. They seek shelter at the house of Pölitz, who shouts to the Count—"Away with your butchery!" Carla finally falls to the ground and cries—"Wretch! Go away with your butchery!" The Count is undone, and weeps like a child.]

"It is half-past four o'clock," said Else; "we must go.

Stay here! I am not sure that Father has arrived yet; even if he left by the noon train, he can't be in Warnow yet; but that dreadful man is certainly there, waiting for you, will perhaps go away again without waiting for your return—"

"I must speak with him," muttered Valerie.

"And you must speak with him alone, though I don't wish you to do so; and so we must go——"

"Without taking along any consolation for you, poor child!"

"I am consoled; I am quite calm.—You must know that from the way I talk and look."

Else bent down to her aunt and kissed her pale lips.

They were sitting at the window of Reinhold's study, to the right of the entrance of the one-storied house—a rather large one in comparison with the other houses. Else had been in almost all of them—in the houses of the two chief pilots, and in five or six of the twelve houses occupied by the other twenty-four pilots; and she would have gone into the houses of the other pilots, also, and the fisher-houses, of which there might have been several dozen, but it was not necessary, because the people were standing in the doors and stretching out their hands wherever she came—wrinkled hairy hands of a few worn-out tars, who had crept out from behind the warm stove; brown strong hands of brown strong women; small hard hands of rough, flaxen-haired children, who looked up with blue eyes to the beautiful lady and did not believe their mothers when they said that she was not a princess, but the Commander's betrothed, who was to live here always, and was so happy about it! And the Commander would come back, the women said, even if it were a worse storm, the worst which Claus Rickmann had ever seen—and he was ninety-two years old, so his word must mean something! The Commander understood his business, and had six with him who also understood their business, and he had already been out three times in the new life-boat without once up-

setting, so it would not upset today, especially since his dear betrothed herself had come to meet him on his return.

So the women spoke, one after another, almost the same words, as if they had previously arranged what they should say; and then they had all said so many good things about the Commander, to the effect that he was better than the old commander, though he, too, had been a good man; and they had all said the same thing over again, one after the other, almost in the same words, with the same frank expression, and in the same tone; but Else could have heard it a thousand times more, and thanked each one individually, as if she heard it for the first time and as if it were a message from Heaven.

And then a whole host of women and girls, with a still larger number of children running beside them and after them, accompanied her to the place near the end of the peninsula, where signal-staffs and great light-buoys were placed on a high dune; and behind the dune, which offered at least some protection, a dense mass of men, in high wading boots and strange oilskin hats reaching far down behind, were looking out upon the raging sea; and, as the young lady slipped into their midst, they raised their oilskin hats, and left it to Claus Janssen, the oldest of them, to answer the young lady's questions, and listened and nodded eagerly, and, when they turned away to spy out over the sea, were careful that it was to the leeward.

And Claus Janssen related that, in the early morning, when it had grown light enough, a yacht, now anchored, had run in and brought the news that a ship was aground at the Gruenwald Oie, and was flying a signal of distress. There was such a high surf at that point that they could see only the masts and occasionally the hull and that there were people on it, hanging to the riggings. The ship—a small Dutch schooner—seemed to be well built, and could hold out a few hours or so, as it was on smooth sand, if the waves didn't wash the men overboard in the mean-

time. From the Oie no one could get to the ship—an ordinary boat would capsize immediately in the surf; half an hour later the life-boat was launched by the Commander, and they could follow it for three hours as it held its course against the storm, and they had finally seen it in the surf off the Oie. But the surf must have been very heavy, and the fog too dense, for they had lost sight of it then—even from the crow's nest, with the strongest glass—and they didn't know whether the Commander had got aboard—it was certainly a hard bit of work, because it had lasted so long; but the Commander—he would pull through. And now the young lady should go in and have Mrs. Rickmann make her a cup of tea; they would give her notice when the boat was in sight, and so far as the others were concerned the young lady should be quite at ease; the Commander understood his business, and the six who were with him understood their business, too!

And Else smiled, but not because the man said the same thing over again in the same words that the women had said, but because, after the assurance from the mouths of experienced men, a sweet peace came into her heart! she shook the hands of the speakers, the others, and then returned home with the escort of women and children, and repeated to herself, while she spoke to them in words which the storm for the most part dissipated—"He understands his business, and the six who are with him, they understand their business, too!"—as if it were a petition which she dared not express, and a song of joy which she was ashamed to sing aloud.

Then she had been in the house which was soon to be her home; had drunk tea with her aunt and pacified the exhausted creature in a room where they heard as little as possible of the storm, and had gone through the entire house with a throbbing heart, like a child led by its mother to the Christmas dinner, accompanied by Mrs. Rickmann—the granddaughter, no longer young—of old Claus Rickmann, a pilot's childless widow, who kept house for Rein-

hold. It was a modest house and modestly furnished; but she marveled at it all, as if she were wandering through an enchanted castle. And how orderly and neat it was! And how tasteful, where Mrs. Rickmann's domain in the kitchen and rooms stopped and that of the Commander began; the furniture, as if she had been asked for advice in the selection of each piece! And the great study table covered with books and carefully arranged documents and papers, and the large bookcases with glass doors, full of beautifully bound books, and another case filled with mysterious nautical instruments, and a third with beautiful shells, corals, and stuffed birds! And then Mrs. Rickmann opened a little room adjoining the study of the Commander, and Else almost shouted aloud! It was her room, next to the great salon—the same carpet, the same blue rep covering of the same sofa, the same chair, the same high wall-mirror, with gilded mantel! And it had only one window, too, in which a small arm-chair stood, and a sewing-table before the chair—so pretty! And Else had to sit down in the chair, because her knees shook, and lay her head on the table to weep a few tears of joy and give the table a kiss for him whose gentle concern enveloped her here as in a soft mantle, and who was now being tossed about out there on the raging sea, of which one had a full view from the window, risking his precious life for the lives of others!

Meanwhile the clock had struck four—although it was already as dark as if it had been six—and Mrs. Rickmann thought it was high time to get dinner for the Commander, if the ladies would not take anything but tea and zwieback. She spoke as calmly as if the Commander had been a little belated in his row-boat on a smooth sea, instead of hearing the storm raging more violently than ever at that moment and shaking the little house to its foundations. Aunt Valerie, not having slept a wink, came terrified from her room, to learn from Mrs. Rickmann that there was no reason to fear, as the house could withstand such a shock and that Wissow Hook broke the worst of it; and, as for

the flood, the house lay like the others, forty feet higher than the sea, and they would wait to see if the flood could rise that high! Then Mrs. Rickmann went out into the kitchen, after paying her respects to the ladies in the Commander's study, and here they sat at the window, which also looked out on the sea, each trying to direct her thoughts upon the subject that each knew was agitating the heart of the other, exchanging from time to time a cheering word or pressure of the hand, till Else, noticing the increasing uneasiness in the face of her aunt, insisted upon immediate departure, because the darkness was rapidly thickening and they could not possibly find their dangerous way home by night.

Mrs. Rickmann came in with her frank face red from the kitchen fire, and took a modest part in the discussion. The ladies could still wait another short hour, it would not be any darker before sunset, and the Commander must return at any moment, if his dinner was not to burn.

Mrs. Rickmann had hardly said this when a heavy hand rapped on the window, and a harsh voice cried, "Boat in sight!"

And now Else ran, as if in a confused happy dream, to the strand by the side of a man in high wading boots and a queer hat, who told her all sorts of things which she did not understand, and then was at the place where she had been on her arrival, and now up on the dune, upon which the beacons flickered in the evening air, in the midst of many other men in wading boots and queer hats, who pointed toward the sea, and addressed her, though she did not understand a word, and one of whom threw a woolen jacket around her shoulders, although she did not ask him for it, nor thank him. Then suddenly she saw the boat quite close, which she had looked for somewhere in the thick atmosphere, God knows where, and which was then at quite another place, where the shore was flat and the surf did not rage so furiously; then she saw the boat again, looking twice as large as before, rise with its entire keel

out of the white foam, and sink again in the foam and rise again, while some dozen men ran into the white foam which broke above their heads. And then one of them came through the rolling swell, in high wading boots, with such a queer hat on his head, and she gave a cry of joy and rushed toward him and clung to him, and he lifted her up and carried her a short distance till she could again set her foot on the sand; but whether he carried her farther, or they flew together, or walked, she did not know, and did not really see him till he had changed his clothes and was sitting at the dinner table, and was laughing because she filled for him one glass of port wine after another, while her aunt sat by smiling, and Mrs. Rickmann came and went, bringing mutton chops, steaming potatoes, scrambled eggs, and ham; and he, without taking his eyes from her, devouring it all with the hunger of one who had not eaten a morsel since seven o'clock in the morning. There had been no time to eat; it was hard work to get to the stranded ship; still harder to bring the poor sailors from the midst of the breakers; but it had been accomplished; they were all rescued, all eight of them. He had to put them ashore at Grünwald, which, too, was a difficult feat, and detained him long; but nothing else was to be done, as the poor sailors, who had hung in the rigging all night, were in a wretched condition; but they would survive.

Intoxicated as by the blissful fragrance of a marvelous, beautiful flower which they had plucked from the edge of an abyss, they only now noticed that Aunt Valerie had left them. Else, who kept no secret from her Reinhold, told him in hasty words what was the matter with the most miserable woman, and how they must now not lose a moment in taking the bad road homeward.

“Not a moment!” exclaimed Reinhold, rising from the table; “I shall make the necessary arrangements at once.”

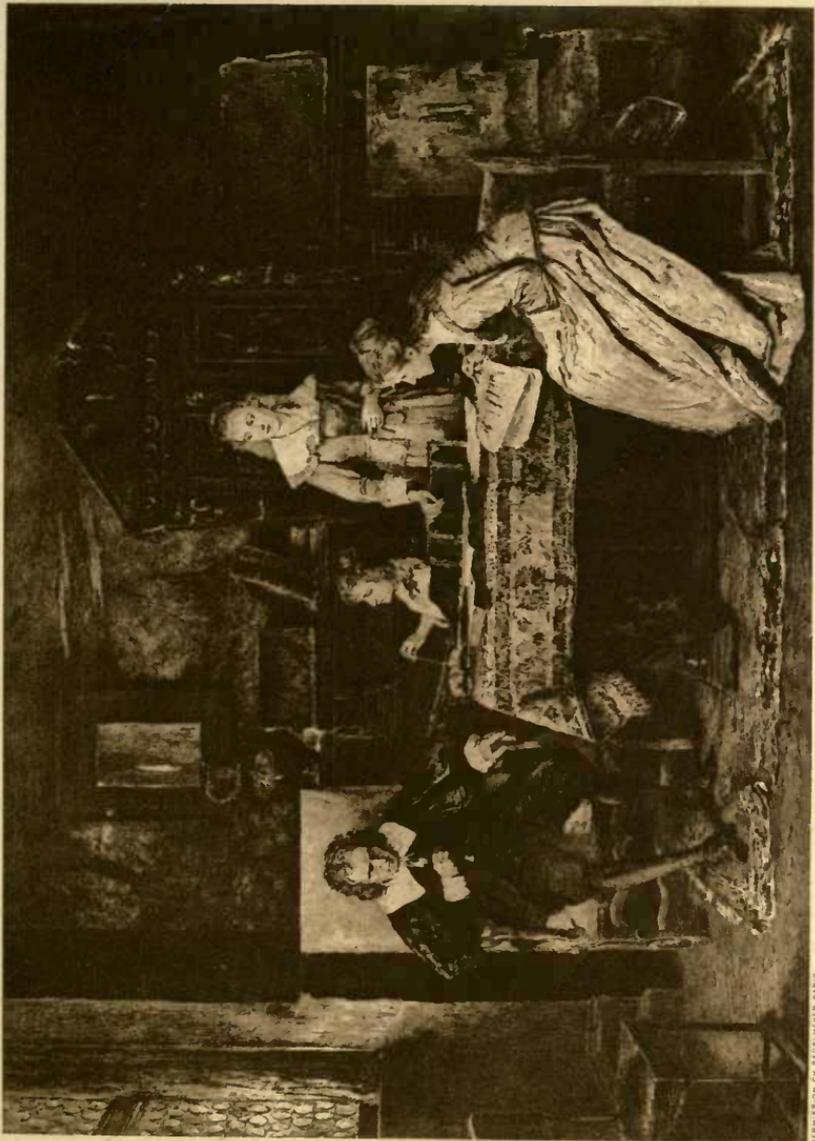
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From the Painting by Michael von Munkacsy.
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FRANÇOIS DE SÈVE, PARIS

heard the last words as she entered; "the carriage is at the door."

The happy lovers had not heard the noise of wheels in the deep sand, nor had they heard the hoofs of the horse of the rider whom Aunt Valerie had seen through the window, and whose message she had gone out of the room to receive.

He was there; he had commanded her to come!—She knew it, before she opened the letter which François handed her. She read the letter in the little room to the left, standing at the open window, while François stood outside, and then in the inclosure, and she had laughed aloud as she read it, and torn the sheet to pieces and hurled them out of the window into the storm, which carried them away in an instant.

"Madame laughs," François had said—in French, as usual when he wanted to speak emphatically.—"But I assure Madame that it is not a laughing matter, and that if Madame is not at the castle by six o'clock it will be a great misfortune."

"I shall come."

François bowed, mounted his horse again—he still held his bridle in his hand—and, giving his horse the spurs and bowing almost to the saddle, hurried away to the breathless astonishment of the children of the pilots, who had been attracted by the unusual spectacle of a horseman—while Valerie asked Mrs. Rickmann to have the carriage brought from the stable of the chief pilot in the village, and then—with heavy heart—went to separate the happy lovers. But she decided upon the last meeting with the detestable despised man, only because of those she loved and for whom she wished to save, in the impending catastrophe, what remained to be saved! It would not be much—she knew his avarice full well—but yet perhaps enough to secure the future for Else and free poor Ottomar from his embarrassments. And she smiled as she thought that

even Else could believe that all this was for her sake, for her future!—Great God!

Else was ready at once, and Reinhold did not try to detain her with a word or a look. He would have been so glad to accompany them, but that was not to be thought of. He could not now leave his post an hour; duty might call him any moment!

And Else hadn't her wrap on when a pilot came in, bringing news of a boat which had gone out at two o'clock to a steamer signaled from Wissow Hook and flying the signals of distress. They were launched in ten minutes, and in half an hour were past the Hook, but they hadn't found the steamer, which had reached the open sea around Golmberg, as they had seen after passing there on their return—it was half-past four; they had been terrified at the surf, which had risen along the dunes between the Hook and Golmberg, and held to as long as possible to ascertain whether the sea had broken through as Reinhold had predicted. They were not able to determine that at first because of the heavy surf; but as they came nearer, in order to be sure about it, Claus Lachmund first, and then the others, saw two persons on the White Dune, one apparently a woman, who did not stir, the other a man who made a sign. But, in spite of all efforts, they had not been able to get over there—indeed they were lucky to get afloat again after sailing so close to the White Dune—and had then seen that the breach had been made by the sea—certainly to the north and south of the White Dune, and possibly at other places—for they had seen nothing but water landward—how far they could not say—the fog was too dense. It must be bad in Ahlbeck, too; but they did not approach nearer, because those there, with the Hook near by, could not be in peril; but the situation of the two on the White Dune would be very serious if they were not rescued before night.

“Who can the unfortunate ones be?” asked Valerie.

“Shipwrecked sailors, Madame—who else!” replied Reinhold.

“Farewell, my Reinhold,” said Else; and then with her arms around his neck, half laughing, half crying—“Take six men again who know their business!”

“And promise me,” said Reinhold, “that the carriage shall not go down from the village to the castle unless you can see the road clearly through the hollow when you are on the height!”

The ladies had gone; Reinhold prepared for his second trip. It was not really his duty—any more than it had been in the morning; but none of the sailors—even the best of them—quite understood how to manage the new life-boat.

The two people on the Dune—he did not wish to tell Else about it—were certainly not shipwrecked, because a ship, if stranded, would have long since been signaled from the Hook. They could hardly be from Pölitz’s house, although that was nearby, because Mrs. Rickmann had told him, when he went to change his clothes, that Pölitz had sent back word by the messenger that he was dispatching little Ernst and the men with the stock to Warnow; that he himself could not leave, nor could Marie, and least of all his wife, who during the night had given birth to a boy; and that it probably wouldn’t be very bad, after all.

But now it had become serious, very serious; and even though the chief pilot, Bonsak, might have exaggerated a little, as he sometimes did on such occasions, in any case, there was peril—peril for the poor Pölitz family, whom the most sacred duties confined to the house; greater peril for the two of whom he knew nothing except that they were people who must be lost unless he rescued them.

In the great bar-room of the inn at Warnow, filled with the smoke of bad tobacco and the foul odor of spilt beer and brandy, were the boisterous carters who had come that morning, and a few cattle traders who had joined them in

the course of the afternoon, and who were now bent upon remaining. The innkeeper stood near them, trimming the tallow candles, and was talking more boisterously than his guests, for he must know better than anybody else whether a railroad direct from Golm past Wissow Hook to Ahlbeck, rather than by way of Warnow, was nonsense or not. And the Count, who had ridden out himself in the afternoon, would open his eyes when he saw the fine kettle of fish; but if one is determined not to hear, he must learn to feel. In Ahlbeck there is said to be a horrible state of things, and murder and slaughter, too; that didn't matter to the Ahlbeckers; they had lately put on airs enough with their shore railroad station, naval post. Now they would have to creep back into their hole again!

The innkeeper spoke so loud and heatedly that he did not see his wife come in and take the keys of the guest-chamber from the board by the door, while the maid took the two brass candle-sticks out of the wall cupboard, put two candles in them, lighted them, and followed her mistress. He did not turn around until some one tapped him on the shoulder and asked him where he should put his horses; the servant had said there was no more room.

"And there isn't any," said the innkeeper. "Where did you come from?"

"From Neuenfähr; the guests whom I brought are already upstairs."

"Who are the guests?" asked the innkeeper.

"Don't know. A young gentleman and a lady—persons of quality I think. I couldn't drive fast enough for them; how is one to drive fast in such weather, step by step, two mares or one—it didn't matter? A one-horse rig that came up behind me could have passed me very easily; it must have been somebody from Warnow; he turned off to the right before reaching the village."

"Jochen Katzenow was in Neuenfähr this morning," said the innkeeper; "he has a devil of a mare! Now come along; we will see; don't believe it is possible."

The man from Neuenfähr followed the innkeeper into the court, where they met the gentleman whom he had brought. The gentleman took the innkeeper aside and spoke to him in a low tone.

"That may take some time," thought the man from Neuenfähr. He went out of the door, unhitched his horses from the carriage, led them under the protecting roof of a shed, where they were protected from the worst of the storm, and left the carriage, a light, open Holsteiner, standing outside.

He had just thrown the blankets over the steaming horses, when the gentleman stepped out of the house and came up to him.

"It is possible that I shall not remain here long," said the gentleman; "perhaps only an hour. We shall then go on."

"Whither, sir?"

"To Prora, or back to Neuenfähr; I don't know yet."

"That isn't possible, sir!"

"Why not?"

"The horses cannot stand it."

"I know better what horses can stand; I shall tell you later."

The man from Neuenfähr was vexed at the domineering tone in which the gentleman spoke to him, but did not reply. The gentleman, who now had on a great-coat with white buttons—on the way he had worn an overcoat—rolled up his collar as he now went around the shed toward the street. The light from the bar-room shone brightly upon his figure.

"Aha!" cried the man from Neuenfähr; "I thought so! One gets to be a bully when he has been in the Reserves a while. Let the devil drive the Lieutenant's carriage."

Ottomar had obtained exact information from the innkeeper; the road which led directly through the village was not to be mistaken. He walked slowly and stopped repeatedly—a few times because the storm which was

blowing directly in his face prevented him from proceeding, and again because he had to ask himself what business he had in the castle. His brain was so dazed by the long journey in the open carriage through the dreadful storm, and then his heart was so disturbed; it seemed to him as if he no longer had the strength to call him a rascal to his face. And then—it had to be, must be, in the presence of his aunt, if the wretched man was not afterward to deny everything and entangle his aunt further in his web of lies, as he had entangled them all. Or was this all a preconcerted game between him and his aunt? It was, indeed, very suspicious that she had left the castle this very day so early to call the rascal to account, when they were expecting him to come. With Else, to be sure. But could not the love which she seemed to cherish for Else secretly—as everything was done in secret—could it not also be love after Giraldi's prescription; the aunt had undertaken to entice and deceive Else, just as Giraldi had deceived him. And they had both gone into the net, and the sly bird-catchers were laughing at the stupids. Poor Else—who must certainly have depended upon the fair promises, and must now contrive how she could get along as the wife of a pilot commander with a few hundred thalers, over there somewhere in that wretched fishing hamlet! That was not the cradle-song to which she listened!—These—that was to be our inheritance—the castle by the sea, as we called it, when we described our future to each other. We would occupy it together—you one wing, I the other; and, when you married the prince and I the princess, we would draw lots to see who should have it all—we couldn't both occupy it longer, because of the great retinue. And now, dearest, best of maidens, you are so far from me, awaiting your lover, who, perchance, has gone out into the storm to rescue the precious lives of a few herring fishermen, and I——

He sat down upon a rock where the road, passing by the first houses of the village, descended into a narrow ravine,

and then rose again through the depression to the castle. The rock on which he sat was on the extreme edge of the ravine, above the depression. It was held firm in its socket by the roots of a fine stately fir-tree, which must once have stood further back from the edge and now bent backward, groaning and creaking under the force of the storm, as if it would avoid falling into the abyss.

“There is no help for either of us,” said Ottomar.—“It has gradually crumbled away, and we stand like trees with their roots in the air. The rock which would gladly have held us cannot do so. On the contrary—one more heavy storm like this, and we shall both be lying down below! I wish to Heaven we were lying there, and that you had broken my skull in falling, and that the flood had come and washed us out to sea, and no one knew what had become of us!”

And she—she, whom he had just left in the wretched, squalid room of the inn, whose kisses he still felt on his lips, and who, as he went out of the room—she thought surely he would not see it—threw herself upon the sofa, buried her face in her hands, weeping! About what? About her wretched lot, which bound her to one who was weaker than she. She had the power; she would hold out through it come what might, but what could come for her? She had told him a hundred times on the way that he should not worry about the wretched money, that her father was much too proud to deny her request, the first that she had made of him so far as she could remember, the last that she should ever make of him.

And thus she had written to her father from Neuenfähr, where they had to wait half an hour for the carriage. “The matter is all settled,” she said, brushing the hair from his brow as a mother from her son who had played pranks while in school.

She was stronger; but what did she lose? Her father?—She appeared never to have truly loved him! Her pleasant life in the beautiful luxurious house?—What does

a girl know what and how much belongs to life? Her art?—She took that everywhere with her; she had said with a smile—It is enough for both of us. Of course, she would now have to support him, the dismissed lieutenant!

The fir-tree against which he was leaning creaked and groaned like a tortured beast; Ottomar saw how the roots rose and strained, and the marl wore away the steep slope, while the wind whistled and howled through the cracked branches, like shot and bullets, and a roll of thunder came from the sea as from a ceaseless volley of batteries.

“I had it so easy then!” mused Ottomar. “My father would have paid the few debts I had and would have been proud of me, instead of now sending me a pistol, as if I didn’t know as well as he that it is all over with Ottomar von Werben; and Else had spoken often and fondly of her brother, who fell at Vionville. Dear Else, how I should like to see her once more!”

He had heard from the innkeeper that the carriage with the ladies must pass here, along the only still passable road, if they came back in the evening as the coachman had said they would; the shorter way down through the lowlands was no longer intact. Ottomar wondered what the man could have meant by the lowlands. The situation was so entirely different, as he knew it, from the description; the sea appeared to break immediately behind the castle, even though he could no longer distinguish particular objects in the wet gray mist which beat upon him. The castle itself, which certainly lay close below him, seemed to be a quarter of an hour distant; he would hardly have seen it at times if lights had not continually flickered from the windows. Also among the indistinguishable mass of buildings to the left of the castle, which were probably in the court, lights flashed up occasionally, changing their position as when men run to and fro with lanterns. A few times it seemed to him as if he heard human cries and the lowing of cattle. It might all be a delusion of the senses, which began to fail the longer he sat unprotected in the

raging storm that froze the marrow in his bones. He must be off if he would not perish here like a highwayman by the roadside!

And yet he remained; but the visions passed in greater confusion through his benumbed brain. There was a Christmas tree with glittering candles, and he and Else went in at the door hand in hand, and his father and mother stood at the table upon which were dolls for Else, and helmet and sabre and cartridge-boxes for him; and he rushed with joy into the arms of his father, who lifted him up and kissed him. Then the Christmas tree became a tall fir, and its crown a gleaming candelabrum beneath which he danced with Carla, scorning the Count, who looked on with anger, while the 'cello hummed and the violins played, and the couples whirled in and out—Tettritz with Amelia von Fischbach, tall Wartenberg with little Miss von Strumin; and then followed the bivouac fires, and the trumpets of Vionville, which sounded the assault upon the batteries thundering a reply, and he called to Tettritz and Wartenberg, laughing—"Now, gentlemen, the bullet through the breast or the cross upon the breast!" and gave his steed the spurs; the horse reared in his onset with wild neighing.—

Ottomar started up and looked, dazed, about him. Where was he? At his feet roared and hissed a wide whirling stream; and now he heard a neighing quite clearly, very close to him—in the deep road on the edge of which he stood, a carriage, pushed backward against the side of the road by backing horses. With one leap he was in the rear of the carriage and at the coachman's side, up to the snorting horses, to help the man turn them about, there was just room.

"Where are the ladies?"

He saw that the carriage was empty.

"They got out—up above—were in such a hurry—over the path in the lowlands, toward the park—Good Heavens! Good Heavens! If only they got over! Good Lord!" A wave of the stream which had broken through between the

hills and the castle, and into which the coachman had almost driven, broke into the deep road and leaped up under the feet of the horses, which would no longer stand still, and dashed up the road, with the coachman, who had fortunately caught the lines and was trying to stop the animals, at their side.

Ottomar had only understood this much from the coachman's words, which the storm had drowned for the most part, that Else was in dire peril. What sort of a path was it? Where was the path?

He ran after the coachman, calling and shouting. The man did not hear.

[Else and Valerie return from Wissow Hook and reach the terrace of Golmberg. Giral-di, who has wandered out to look for them, seizes Valerie by the hand and rescues her, leaving Else on the terrace at the mercy of the storm.]

Ferdinande sprang up as Ottomar's step was heard across the hall down the creaking stair, and paced to and fro in the little room a few times, wringing her hands; then she threw herself upon the sofa again, when she finally saw Ottomar, resting her head in her hands on the arm of the sofa. But she had not been weeping, and she was not weeping now; she had no tears. She no longer had any hope, any wish but to be allowed to die for him, as she could not live for him, and as her life would be another burden, another torture, for him.

If she had only believed the officer with the smooth brow and the wide sympathetic eyes, when he said: "You deceive yourself, young lady; your flight with Ottomar is not a solution, it is only another complication, and the worst one of all! The difficulty for Ottomar lies in his wretchedly compromised honor as an officer. The appearance of things here at least, must be saved, and that is in accordance with the preliminaries which I have arranged. His life will be at the best a life in death, and I don't know whether he will be able to endure it; indeed, I doubt it; but in cases

like this it is permissible to silence one's better convictions. But there is no doubt that, if you fly with him now and the affair becomes known, as it must, for us his friends there remains no possibility of saving appearances. An officer who must resign his position because of debts, whose engagement is annulled in consequence, who, in this critical predicament, gives up also the right to call to account slanderers and tale-bearers—that can happen, unfortunately happens only too often. But thus—pardon the expression—free course is given to scandal. The man who, in such a moment, can think of anything but saving from shipwreck as much of his honor as he can, or, if nothing more is left to be saved, does not at least resign with dignity, perhaps—perhaps even to give up his life—who, instead of this, involves another being in this shipwreck, whom he declares he loves—an innocent girl, a respectable lady—that man has lost all claim to interest or sympathy. Ottomar himself must see that sooner or later. This journey of his to Warnow has, to my mind, absolutely no point. What will he do there? Call Giraldi to account? The Italian will answer him: You are not a child; you were not a child; you must have known what you were doing.—Challenge the Count? For what, when he accompanies you? Well, let him go; but alone—not with you! I entreat you, not with you! Believe me!—Love in whose omnipotence you so firmly believe, which is to help Ottomar over all difficulties as with a divine hand—it will prove itself absolutely impotent—yes, worse than that; it will completely shatter the little strength that Ottomar might have summoned. For his sake—if you will not think of yourself—do not go with him!"

Strange! While he was speaking to her with hurried yet clear words—drawing her aside even in the last moment while Ottomar and Bertalde were arranging a few things in the next room—it all passed over her like an empty sound—she scarcely knew what he was talking about. And

now it all came back to her mind—word for word—it had all been fulfilled—word for word!

All-powerful Love! Great Heavens! It was a mockery! What else had he for the visions of the future, which she had painted to him in glowing terms fresh from her overflowing breast, than a melancholy, dismal smile, dispirited monosyllabic replies, which he only made in order to say something while his heart was weighed down by the thought of his angry father, his sympathetic or scoffing comrades, or the question whether he would be able after all to force von Wallbach to fight a duel. His caresses even, when she held him in her arms with her heart full of untold anxiety, as a mother who rescued her child from the flames—she shuddered when she thought of them: as if she were a girl in love whom one must humor—a mistress whom one takes along on a journey and whom one must not allow to feel that she is a burden at the first station.

She, she—who once had dreamed that her love was an inexhaustible fount, and had reproached herself for having been so niggardly with it, for having turned her lover from her door, for having left him out in the dreary waste of life, where he must perish in anguish and despair! She, who was so haughty because she knew that she had all the world to give; that her love was like the storm which surges on, overriding everything that is not stronger than itself—like a flood which rolls on, destroying everything that does not rise into the clouds.

That had been her fear all along; he too—even he would not understand her entirely; there would be a yawning breach between her ideal and the reality, and she must not on that account sacrifice her ideal, even though her heart throbbed with even greater longing and the blood coursed through her veins even more imperiously. She had only this one greatest thing to lose in order to be poorer when it was lost than the poorest beggar—she whose implacable mind destroyed once and forever the fair dream of many years of being a true artist!

How she had fought! How she had struggled through so many dreary days, so many wakeful nights, in gloomy brooding and racking despair to the horror of which, strong though she was, she would long ago have succumbed, had not his dear illusive image flitted through her morning dreams, luring her on to other dreary days, to other nights of torture.

Now it was no longer his image; it was he himself—illusive no longer, and yet still dear! Oh, how deeply she had loved—more than ever, infinitely more in his helpless misery, than in the days of his prosperity!

If she could help him! For herself she had no wish, no longer any desire. God was her witness! And if she rested tonight in his arms, he in hers—she could think of it without feeling her pulses quicken, and without feeling that the despair which depressed her heart had vanished even for a moment. He will not draw any new strength or fresh courage from your embraces, your kisses, she said to herself. He will arise, from the couch of love—a broken man, weary of life. How should she keep her strength and courage to live—no longer for herself alone—now for both of them? If not strength and courage to live—then to die!

If she could die for him! Dying for him could say: “Behold, death is a joy and a feast for me if I may hope that you will despise life from this moment on, and, because you despise it, will live nobly and well, as one who lives only to die nobly and well!” But for his weak soul even that would be no spur, no support—only one dark shadow more to add to the other dark shadows which had fallen upon his path; and he would continue to waver upon the steady path, inactive, inglorious, to an early inglorious grave!—

Thus she lay there, deep in the abyss of her woe, not regarding the howling of the storm which shook the house continually from garret to cellar, not hearing the boisterous tumult of the drunken guests directly below her room,

scarcely raising her head when the innkeeper's wife came into the room.

The latter had intended to ask the young lady, as the guests would now certainly remain for the night, how she wished to have the beds arranged in the room; but, at the strange expression of the beautiful pale face which rose from the arm of the sofa and gazed at her with strange looks, the question had died on her lips and she had only asked the other question—if she might not make the young lady a cup of tea. The young lady had not appeared to understand her; at least she made no reply, and the innkeeper's wife thought: She will doubtless ring if she wishes anything. So she went with the light in her hand into the adjoining room, and left the door, which was hard to close, slightly ajar, in order not to disturb the young lady further, and then turned with her candle to the windows to see if they were closed; the upper bolt had stuck, and as she loosened the lower one, the storm, coming through the narrow opening, blew out the candle which she had placed upon the window-sill.

“I can find my way,” the landlady murmured, and turned toward the beds in the dusk, but stopped as she heard the door adjoining open and the young lady utter a slight scream. “Good Heavens!” thought she, “people of quality are almost worse off than we are”—for the gentleman who had returned had begun at once to speak in a tone not exactly loud, but evidently excited. What could be the trouble between the two young people? thought she, slipping on tip-toe to the door. But she could not understand anything of all the gentleman was saying, nor the few words which the lady interjected; and then it seemed to the landlady as if it was not the clear voice of the gentleman and as if the two were not speaking German. She peeped through the crack and saw, to her astonishment and terror, a wild strange man in the room with the young lady, from whose shoulders a brown coat fell to the floor as she looked in; but he did not pick it up, though continuing to

gesticulate and to speak more rapidly and loudly in his unintelligible gibberish like a crazy man, as the terrified landlady thought.

“I will not go back again!” cried Antonio, “after having run half the way like a dog behind his mistress, whom a robber has kidnapped, and ridden the other half cramped up in straw in a wagon, like an animal taken to market by the butcher. I don’t intend to be a dog, worse than a beast, any longer, and I will no longer endure it. I now know everything, everything, everything!—How he has betrayed you, the infamous coward, to run after another, and again from her to you, and has lain before your door whining for favor, while those inside have been making a match for him. His wench and that infernal Giraldi, whom I intend to throttle whenever and wherever I meet him, as truly as my name is Antonio Michele! I know everything, everything, everything—and that you will yield your person to him tonight, as you have already yielded your soul to him!”

The desperate man could not understand the half contemptuous, half melancholy smile which played about the proud lips of the beautiful girl.

“Don’t laugh, or I’ll kill you!”

And then as she arose—not from fear, but only to ward off the furious man—

“Pardon, oh! pardon me—I kill you, you—you, who are everything to me, the light and joy of my life, for whom I would let myself be torn in pieces, limb by limb! I will give every drop of my heart’s blood if you will only let me kiss the hem of your garment—kiss the ground upon which you tread! How often, how often, have I done it without your knowing it—in your studio—the place where your beautiful feet have rested, the implements which your hand has touched! And I demand so little! I am willing to wait—for years—as I have already waited for years; I shall not grow tired of serving you, of worshipping you

as the Holy Madonna, till the day comes when you will hear my prayers.”

He dropped to his knees where he stood, lifting his wild eyes and twitching hands to her.

“Arise!” she said; “you do not know what you say, and do not know to whom you speak. I can give you nothing. I have nothing to give; I am so poor, so poor—much poorer than you!”

She went about the room, wringing her hands; passed him still kneeling, and, when her garments touched his glowing face, he sprang to his feet as though touched by an electric current.

“I am not poor,” he cried; “I am the son of a prince—I am more than a prince; I am Michelangelo! I am more than Michelangelo! I see them coming in pilgrim troops, singing songs in praise of immortal Antonio, bearing flowers, waving wreaths to decorate the marvelous works of the divine Antonio! Do you hear! Do you hear? There, there!”

Up the broad village street came a confused cry of many voices, of people terrified by the news of the flood, which had broken through the dikes, and running down to the scene of the disaster. From the tower of the church nearby the tones of the bell resounded, now threateningly near, now quavering in the distance, as the storm surged to and fro.

“Do you hear?” cried the madman—“Do you hear?”

He stood with outstretched arms, smiling with his dazed eyes fixed as in blissful triumph on Ferdinande, who gazed at him with horror. Suddenly the smile changed to a terrible grimace; his eyes sparkled with deadly hate, his outstretched arm drew back abruptly, his hand clutched his breast, as now, directly under the window, a voice in commanding tone sounded clear above the cries of the multitude, through the raging storm—“A rope—a strong rope, the strongest rope you have, and small cords, as many as possible.—There are some below already! I shall be down

there before you are!" A hasty step, then three or four steps at a time, came up the stairs. The madman laughed aloud.

The landlady likewise had heard the clear voice below, and the hastening step upon the stair. There would be trouble if the young gentleman should come in while the strange, uncanny man was with the young lady. She rushed into the room at the moment when the gentleman from the other side threw open the door.

Uttering a cry of rage, with lifted stiletto Antonio rushed toward him—but Ferdinande threw herself between them, before Ottomar could pass the threshold, covering her lover with her outstretched arms, offering her own breast to the impending blow, collapsing without a sound of complaint in Ottomar's arms, while the murderer, the assassin, at the sight of the deed which he had not intended, and which, like a gleaming flash of lightning, rent the darkness of his insanity, rushed past them in cowardly, confused flight, down the stairs, through the midst of the multitude, which the tolling of the storm-bell and the cries of those passing by had frightened from the bar-room and the houses and which shrank back in terror at the strange man with his black hair waving in the wind and a bloody dagger in his hand—up the village street, running, crying, screaming, over everything that came in his way, into the howling darkness.

And—"Murder! Murder! Seize him! Stop him! Stop the murderer!" they shouted from the house.

[The driver from Neuenfähr is trying to find stable room for his horses in Warnow. A man in great haste rushes up to him and asks to be driven to Neuenfähr, offering whatever he may ask, while the mob clamors for the murderer of Ferdinande. The driver starts in the face of the flood and the storm. He is terrified and wishes to turn back. The passenger offers him five thalers, twenty thalers, a hundred thalers—anything—and tells him to drive

on—anywhere to get away from the place. The driver wonders who the raving man can be—a tramp? The murderer of Ferdinande, or the devil? The horses plunge on through the flood; the driver curses, and then prays. Instead of one passenger there are now two, grappling like fiends at each other's throats. The horses are swimming. The driver unhitches them, mounts one of them, and leaves his uncanny passengers to perish in the flood, reaching at last the little village of Faschwitz.]

“That won't do,” cried the Burgess. “Take it in again!” “Ho! Ho, heave ho!” cried the thirty who held the cable—“Ho, heave ho!”

In their haste they had constructed a kind of raft by tying together a few boards and doors from the nearest houses, and had now tentatively let it into the stream. The flood carried it away instantly and turned it upon end! the thirty had all they could do to get it back on shore again.

For the brow of the hill had become a shore by the stream which in its fury had dashed over it! And upon the brow of the hill half the village had assembled, and people still came running in breathless haste. The village was in no danger; the nearest houses were ten to fifteen feet above water; it did not seem possible that the water could rise much more, especially as it had dropped a foot during the last few minutes. The storm had gone somewhat to the north; the inrushing flood must flow in the direction of the Hook. It had also grown a little brighter, although the storm still raged on with unabating force. Those who had arrived first did not need to show the others coming up the scene of the calamity; every one could discern the white terrace over there and the female figures in black—at one time two, and now again only one, as before, who continually signaled with a handkerchief, and sat crouching in a corner as if she had given up hope and expected and awaited her fate.

And yet it appeared as if the rescue must be accom-

plished. The space was so narrow; one could throw a stone across. The best throwers had tried it, foolishly—with a thin cord attached to a stone; but the stone did not go ten feet, and blew away with the line like a spider-web. And now the huge wave rolled on into the park, dashing over the terrace, spending its force in the stream, in spite of the fact that it had washed up to the edge of the shore. The women cried aloud; the men looked at one another with serious, troubled expressions.

“Nothing can be done, children,” said the Burgess; “before we can bring the raft around, the building over there will be broken to pieces. One more such wave, and it will break into a thousand bits—I know it will; the pillars are not six inches thick, and the wood is worm-eaten.”

“And if we can get the raft over and move up toward it, we shall break it in two and upset ourselves,” said Jochen Becker, the smith.

“There are ten lying in the water instead of two!” exclaimed Carl Peters, the carpenter.

“That doesn’t help any,” said the Burgess; “we can’t let them drown before our very eyes. We will try to get twenty feet further up with the raft, and put the people right on it; I’ll go along myself. Take hold, children, take hold!”

“Ho, heave ho! Ho, heave ho!”

A hundred hands were ready to draw the raft up stream, but thirty paces would not accomplish it; it must be twice that far. The half hundred brave men had been found ready to make the attempt; the Burgess would stay by—who else should command them that held the rope?—That was the important thing!

They stood on the raft with long poles.

“Ready!”

The raft shot from the shore into the stream like an arrow.

“Hurrah!” cried those on the shore. They thought they had reached the goal; they were already afraid that the

raft would drive over into the park and upset against the trees. But it did not go any farther—not a foot; it danced upon the stream so that the six on the raft had to throw themselves flat and hold fast, and so go down the stream again, like an arrow, toward the shore on this side to the place where they were before. Only with the greatest exertion were the fifty able to hold it; only with the greatest difficulty and evident peril had the six come down again from the raft to the steep shore.

“That won’t do, children,” said the Burgess. “If only the Lieutenant would come back—they are his near kinsmen! First he chases us down here, and now he won’t come himself.”

The faint brightness which had appeared when the foaming spray had withdrawn a little had again vanished. While hitherto only the leaden gray sky and the dense storm had turned the evening into night, the real night now came on. Only the sharpest eyes could still see the black form on the terrace, though the terrace itself could still be descried by every one, and at the same time the wind was evidently growing worse and had shifted again from northeast to southeast. The water was rising fast in consequence of the counter-current setting in the direction of Wissow Hook. That would have aided them as the swiftness of the current diminished; but no one any longer had the courage to renew the hopeless attempt. If there were no way of getting a rope over and fastening it there, so that some of them could slip over the swaying bridge from here to the terrace, no rescue was possible.

So the Burgess thought, so thought the others, and so they shouted it into one another’s ears; but in the dreadful tumult no one could understand a word that was said.

Suddenly Ottomar stood in their midst. He had taken in the whole situation at a glance.—“Give me the line,” he cried, “and make a light!—The willows there!”

They understood him instantly.—The four old, hollow willows, right there on the edge—they were to set fire to



CHRIST BEFORE PILATE

From the painting by [illegible]

1850

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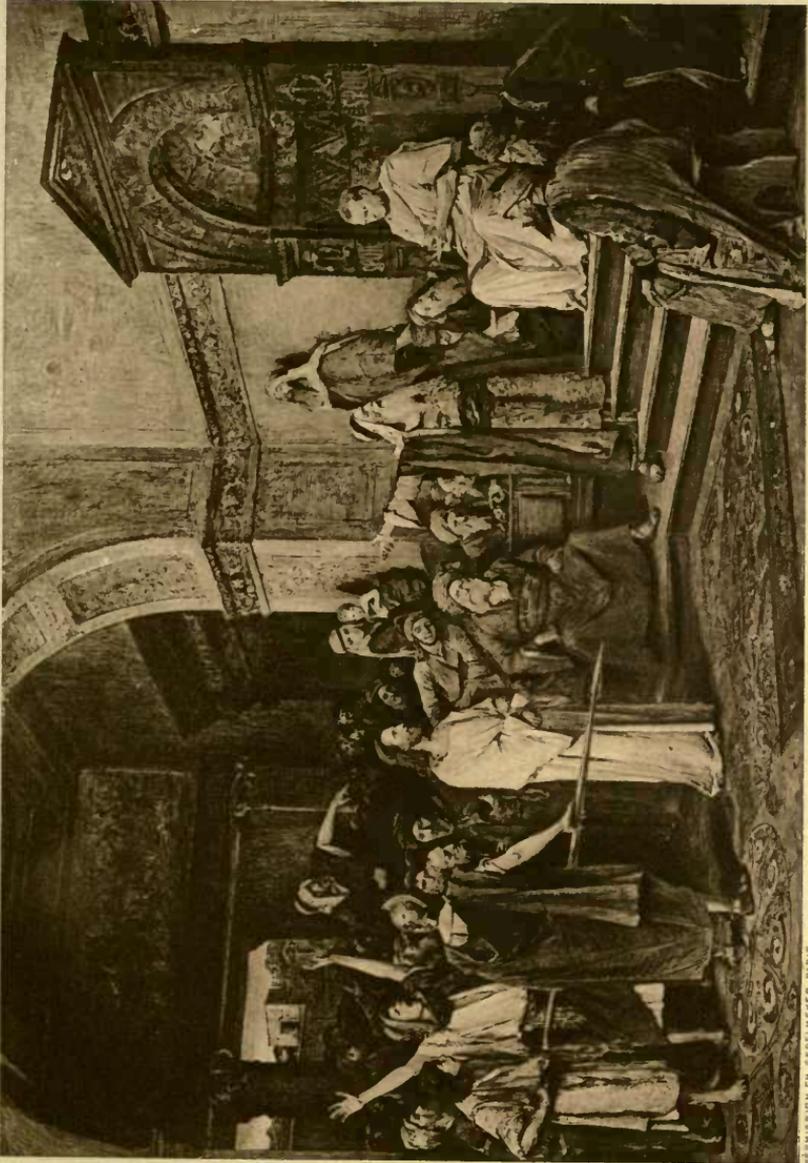
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THEATRICAL CO. - SEATTLE - 1911

them! The village would be in danger, to be sure, if it could be done; but none thought of that. They hurried to the nearest houses, they brought back pieces of oakum and resinous wood by the armful and stuffed it all into the hollow trunks, which fortunately were turned toward the west. A few fruitless attempts—and then it flamed up—sparkling, flashing—now flaring and again subsiding—casting strange, shifting lights upon the hundreds of pale faces which were all directed toward the man with the line around his breast, struggling against the stream.—Would he hold out?

More than one pair of callous hands were clasped in prayer; women were on their knees, sobbing, moaning, pressing their nails into the flesh, tearing their hair, screaming as if mad, when another dreadful wave rolled up and on over him, and he vanished in the swell.—But there he was again! It had cast him back half the distance he had traversed; but a minute later he had retrieved the lost ground. He had been driven quite a distance down stream, but had chosen well his starting point; the terrace was still far below him. It seemed a miracle that he came through the stream!

And now he was in the middle of it! It was the worst place—they knew it from their previous experience! He seemed not to advance, but, instead, gradually to lose headway.—But the terrace was still below him; if he overcame the middle of the current, he could, he must succeed!—And now he was gaining ground perceptibly—nearer and nearer, foot by foot—in a diagonal curved line toward the terrace!—

Rough, quarrelsome fellows who had been enemies all their lives, had clasped hands; women fell sighing into each other's arms. A gentleman with short gray hair and heavy gray mustache, who had just run up from the village, taking his stand close by the burning willows, almost enveloped by their flames, had followed the swimmer with steady gaze and with fervent prayers and promises—that everything,

everything, should be forgiven and forgotten, if only he should have him back again, his dear, heroic son!—He now cried out aloud—a terrible cry which the storm carried away and hurled down upon the shore where the men were standing who held the line, shouting to them to pull back—back—back!—It was too late!

Then down came the mighty fir-tree, at the foot of which the swimmer had sat an hour before—torn loose by the storm, hurled into the flood, rolling on in the whirlpool of the stream, like a giant emerging from the deep, now turning up its mighty roots which still held the rock in their grasp, and now the top; now rising erect as it had once stood in the light of the sun, and in the next moment crashing down upon the swimmer—then plunging with its top into the foaming currents and turning its roots upward as it hurried out of the light into the darker night.

They drew him back, as, strangely enough, the thin line had not broken—a dead man, at whose side, as he lay stretched out upon the shore (he had only a wide, gaping wound above his brow, like one who had died an honorable cavalryman's death) the old man with the gray mustache knelt down, kissed him upon the beautiful, pale lips, and then rose up.—“Now give me the line! It was my son! And over there is my daughter!”

It seemed madness! The young man—they had seen how he struggled!—But the old man!—Though he was old, he was nevertheless a large man, with broad high chest. He threw off his coat and vest.

“If you find, General, that you cannot hold out, give us the sign at the right time,” said the Burgess.

And now something like a miracle appeared to those who, in this short hour, had passed through such strange, horrible, fearful experiences!

The willow torches, which were all blazing at once from the roots to the spreading branches, cast a brightness almost like that of day upon the shore, upon the multitude, the stream, the terrace beyond—far into the flooded park,

up to the castle, the windows of which here and there flashed red in the reflection of the fire.

In this light, along the narrow stream upon the bottom of which the village children had formerly played, rolling like balls from the edge of the slope to the bottom—along this foaming water-course down which the spreading fir-tree was still tossing like a monster of the sea, seizing its prey with a hundred arms, sped a slender beautiful boat, which had disembarked a strange cargo at the rear landing-place of the castle, as at a dock. There they had heard how matters stood, and the man at the helm had said: "Children, it is my betrothed!" And the six with him had cried: "Hurrah for the Commander!" and "Hurrah for his betrothed!" So they now shot past with lowered mast, while the six seamen held the oars in place as in a flag-boat which brings an admiral to shore. And the flag fluttered behind the man at the helm, as with the gentle pressure of his strong hand he steered the obedient craft through the mighty swells to the point which his clear unfailing eyes kept in view, as an eagle does his prey, although his courageous heart was beating furiously in his breast.

And they shot past—on, past the multitude, which gazed breathlessly at the miracle, on, by the terrace—but only a short distance; for the man at the helm brought the boat about like an eagle in its flight, and the six seamen dipped their oars all at one stroke—and then—Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!—the oars shot up again, and the boat lay alongside the terrace, over which and the boat a gigantic wave rolled its foaming comb toward the shore, and there, subsiding, dashed the foam into the burning trees, enveloping the breathless observers on the shore in a cloud of spray; and, as the cloud dissipated, they saw, in the dim light of the extinguished fire, no longer the terrace—and the boat only as it were a shadow, which disappeared to the right in the darkness.

Then they breathed freely again, as from a single trou-

bled soul, relieved from its anxiety; and "Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" was heard as from a single throat, so that it sounded above the howling storm. The boat might vanish in the dark! But they knew that the man at the helm understood his business, and the six at the oars understood their business, too; it would come back again, bringing with it those rescued from the storm and flood!

The setting sun was just above the hills. In its magic light gleamed the surface of the water which covered the great semicircle between Golmberg and Wissow Hook. The slanting golden rays sent their blinding light into the eyes of Reinhold, who was just steering his boat from the sea into the bay, close past the White Dune, upon the steep side of which the long inrolling wave was curling, while the boat swept past by its broad crest, and the points of the uniformly rising and falling oars almost touched the edge. The glances of the men who plied the oars were directed toward the Dune as they glided on, and the scene of rescue on the night of the storm was surely in the minds of all; but not one of them said a word.

Not because it was against discipline. They knew that the Commander allowed a modest word at the right time, even when he was, as today, in full uniform, and wore the iron cross on his breast; but he had drawn the three-cornered hat far down over his face, and, if he lifted his eyes quickly once more to examine the course, they did not look threatening today; they had not yet seen threats in his eyes, any more than they had heard harsh words from his lips—but lips serious and sad. They did not wish to disturb the Commander in his thoughts—more serious and sad than the brave men might entertain or could comprehend. What were the two people to them whom they had rescued from the peril of death on this Dune, with unspeakable effort and hundredfold mortal peril to each one of them—what were the few people to them whom they had rescued because it was their duty, or the others whom

they had already rescued during the day! How the Count and the noble lady got there, what relation the two sustained to each other—why should they ask about that?

But he!

What a shudder went through him when he found the brilliant Carla von Wallbach, whom he had seen dancing and coquetting a few days before, under the light of the candelabra, through the reception room at Warnow—now a picture of extreme misery, her clothes drenched with water, her delicate limbs trembling from the icy cold, with half dazed senses, curled up in a heap scarcely like a human form, and bore her to the boat; with horror he recalled the moment when he laid her down in the boat—how she, awaking from her stupor and recognizing him, had cried out as if mad, “Save me from him, from him!”—and held him, the strange man, anxiously in her grasp, as a child its mother, so that he had to release himself by force! And when the Count, who was in a scarcely less lamentable condition, having been carried by two pilots into the boat and placed near Carla, suddenly staggered up again at the risk of falling overboard, tottered to the bow of the boat and there sat brooding in sullen disdain, disregarding everything that went on about him, until they worked their way to the Pölitz premises and made ready to bring the wretched people through the window of the garret to which they had fled, into the boat—then he sprang up and shrieked like a madman that he did not wish to be packed in with those people, that he would not have it so!—And he belabored those about him until he was deterred by the threat that they would bind him if he did not obey the orders of the Commander—at which he covered his face with his hands, and sullenly swallowed his wrath.

There was the garret, and there was the window opening—they had torn out the window and knocked out a piece of the wall to make room—and Reinhold remembered that he himself had succeeded in rescuing wretched people from this dreadful desolation, that he had been able to carry

frail human forms through the storm and blackness into the safe port of the castle, where all danger was over.

The passage from the inundated court to the castle lasted only a few minutes—the storm had hurled the boat before it like a snowflake—but those had been the only moments when his own heart trembled, not with fear, but with tender solicitude. His eyes grew moist as he now recalled it all—the mother who lay in the boat with her little one at her breast, her head upon the knees of her husband, while poor Marie, full of compassion, held the fainting Carla in her arms. How must the wretched man in the bow of the boat have felt at this sight if he once raised his eyes! The raging haste with which he jumped out and rushed away when they touched the landing of the castle to conceal himself somewhere in the darkness—it was Cain fleeing from the dead body of his slain brother.

And Reinhold's thoughts grew still more sad. He had succeeded in the greatest effort of all; he had been permitted to rescue his betrothed from certain death—and with her the unfortunate woman who loved them both, as if they had been her children and whom both loved and honored as a mother. It was indeed such a supreme joy—and yet, yet—?

How dearly this joy had been bought! Was there other joy which must be bought just as dearly? Was there everywhere happiness, with unhappiness so near at hand in its pitiless form, like the blue-black shadows yonder between the turrets and the battlements of the castle, bordered on the brightly illuminated surface? Did not even the apparently firmest ground shake, as here the wave undulates above the fields through which the ploughman formerly drove his plough, over the pasture upon which the shepherd formerly drove his flocks? Did they have to die so young, so beautiful, so richly endowed with the most splendid gifts and talents? And if they had to die because they could no longer live, no longer wished to live, death was for them only a release from inevitable destruction. What a ques-

tionable good did life appear to be, when with it is born the possibility of such a horrible fate? How could the two fathers bear it?—With fortitude no doubt—and yet, and yet——?

They had rowed around the castle in the park, and approached the shore where the willows had burned that night, the charred ends of which still rose from the sands. Several larger as well as smaller boats already lay there, which had come from Ahlbeck, and even from the distant villages along the coast. From every direction—from miles around—they had come, for in every quarter the tragic story of the youth and maiden who loved each other, who both had fled from home and found neither happiness nor a happy star, and now had died and were to be buried today, had passed from mouth to mouth.

Reinhold turned from the shore and went to the village. The President had written him that he would arrive at Warnow at a certain hour, and wished to speak to him before he presented himself to the family. Reinhold was well aware of the punctual habits of the worthy man, and had scarcely reached the place in front of the inn, where a barricade of vehicles had already assembled, when an equipage rolled up from which the President descended, and, seeing him, at once came to meet him with outstretched hand. There was something almost paternal in the silent greeting, for the President was too much moved to venture speech until they had stepped aside a few paces. He then began, with a melancholy smile:

“Prophets to the right, and prophets to the left! Yes, yes, my dear young friend! What would we give, indeed, if we had all proved to be false prophets, and our storm floods had not come! But they have come; yours has subsided quickly enough, thank God; mine will yet long rage on, Heaven pity me! Would that such brave St. Georges might appear in this case, to charge so boldly at the body of the dragon, and wrest from him his victims! I am proud of you, dear friend; there are not many who

can truly rejoice in such splendid deeds as you have been permitted to perform with the help of a gracious God. To rescue so many lives, even if your betrothed had not been among them—how happy you must be! It will not add to your joy, I think; it will not increase the bliss which fills your heart; but it is right and proper that such noble, divinely inspired conduct find recognition also in the eyes of the world. Your treatise, which at the time aroused bad feelings, has not been forgotten; if your counsel had been followed the unfortunate military port would at least never have been begun, and millions and millions would have been saved for our country, not to speak further of the disgrace. Such minds should not celebrate, the Minister thinks; in answer to my report of events here, he has sent an order by telegraph to confer upon you a medal for bravery, with a ribbon, in the name of His Majesty, and to ask you, in his own name, whether you are inclined to enter his Ministry in some capacity to be agreed upon in a personal interview with him—as reporting member to the ministry, I suppose, or even the marine ministry—it appears that the two gentlemen are competing for you. I think I know what you will answer me—that you prefer to remain here for the present. I should not like to lose you just now; but keep your future open in any case; you owe it to the general weal, and you owe it to yourself. Am I right?"

"Certainly, Mr. President," replied Reinhold; "it is my ardent desire and my firm determination to serve my King and country by land and sea whenever and however I can. Every call which comes to me will find me ready, although I will not deny that I should leave here reluctantly, very reluctantly."

"I can easily imagine so," said the President. "A man like you puts his soul into everything, devotes himself to the fulfilment of his duty, be it great or small; and that one can perform great things in a comparatively small sphere you have shown. Nevertheless the matter has also a sen-

timental side which it would be false heroism to overlook. The high recognition which your services have received from the King will be a pleasing satisfaction for your so sorely tried father-in-law, and he would feel himself quite lonely in Berlin without the presence of his daughter."

"How kind you are!" said Reinhold, with emotion. "How you think of everything!"

"Isn't it so?" rejoined the President, returning the pressure of Reinhold's hand with a friendly grip. "It is admirable! Have I not the honor to be a friend of the family? And did you not recognize me in that capacity when you communicated everything privately to me in your official report of the events of the days of the storm flood? What concerned you and the family to whom you now belong? I feel myself honored by your confidence; I do not need to tell you that it is all buried in my breast. But you are right—in such complicated circumstances one must not depend upon himself, one must call to his aid experience, the wisdom of his friends. And who would be better able than I to offer assistance in this case? I have considered everything, I have made it all clear to myself, indeed have even laid some few first lines, and have found most ready response from every quarter. We will discuss that in detail when you come to Sundin in the next few days, as you will do, I hope. For today—I must go back to the funeral at once—only this much: I am sure that the estates of your aunt, the Baroness, are intact; inasmuch as both Golm and the Society are bankrupt and must be content with any condition, even if it be only moderately acceptable. I shall not make any that are favorable to the parties, you may be sure of that! These people who have brought such unspeakable disaster upon thousands deserve no pardon. To be sure, there will remain then, at the best, only fragments of the proud fortune, for the greater part of it, I fear, has forever disappeared with that horrible man, Giraldi. Or do you think not?"

"Most certainly, Mr. President," said Reinhold. "I as-

sumed it from the beginning, and the report of the man who drove for him and with whom I afterward spoke in detail myself and cross-questioned, confirmed my assumption. The inundation between Wissow Hook and Fachwich came with such fearful violence that the first water must have been washed out more than once by that coming in from the bay, which was formed as from a bowl, together with everything in its current. Then the water which was forced out formed a monstrous stream, which surged between the continent and the island, westward into the open sea, and if the corpses are ever driven ashore after weeks, perhaps after months, anywhere——”

“Too bad, too bad!” sighed the President. “The proud, proud fortune—according to my estimation and accounts—which the dreadful man made in his last interview with the Baroness, a whole million! How much good could have been done with that! And in your hands, too! Nevertheless, on the other hand—it is a dreadful thought—such an inheritance, and now even the Baroness! Are you acquainted with the horrible details?”

“She knows that Antonio was the assassin of my poor cousin; she knows, also, that the two Italians were together in their flight, that they perished together. I hope the unspeakable horror which the man’s report contains for us will ever remain a secret.”

“She doesn’t believe in the son?”

“Not at all! It is as if God in his mercy had blinded in this direction her otherwise clear vision. She considers the whole matter a fabrication, a downright lie of Giraldi’s. You can imagine, Mr. President, that we uphold her in her belief, and are grateful to fate even for that reason which swallows up in its depths what should never have seen the light of day.”

“Of course, of course!” said the President; “that is a consolation withal. The unhappy woman has really already suffered enough. Toward your poor uncle fate has been less gracious. It is dreadful to lose such a daughter, so

fair and so highly endowed. But for a man such as your uncle must be, to judge from all I have heard of his generosity, his sense of honor, to be pursued by the ghost of a son who is followed wherever he goes by warrants and bailiffs—against that, I think, no magnanimity and no philosophy can avail—that is pitilessly horrible, without the slightest breath of atonement! Such suffering, even time, which is almighty in other things, cannot diminish; here death alone can bring relief—but the man will take good care not to die.”

“I don’t know,” said Reinhold. “He is from a family which does not fear death; however differently the unfortunate man may look at life, I can easily imagine that even to him the question comes in a form which he understands, and that he will then not hesitate a moment in forming his decision.”

The fugitive ripple of an ironical smile played about the lips of the President; he was about to say, in a happy turn of phrase, that he could understand the pride of family, even when, as in this case, it overshot the mark; but a loud cry in a heavy voice in the immediate neighborhood prevented him. The one who shouted was von Strummin, who came down the short cross street leading from the main street of the village to the parsonage in such haste that Reinhold, who had already heard of the arrival of his friend in the early morning, had no time to tell the President of the relation of the two men. On the other hand, von Strummin shouted, before he extended his hand to the President—“I have the honor, Mr. President, to present to you my son-in-law, Mr. Justus Anders, renowned sculptor—the grand gold medal, Mr. President!—came this morning with my daughter from Berlin, accompanied by your aunt, Commander—he took the arrangements in hand at once, as your aunt wished it so—had the whole lower floor cleared out—looks now like the church in Strummin! Yes, my honored President! Such an artist! The rest of us must all stand with open mouths.—And now just think,

Mr. President—the pastor cannot, or rather will not, preach the funeral sermon—declines at the last moment! We—my son-in-law and I—have just seen him—didn't even receive us—can't see any one—can't speak at all—beautifully hoarse. The parish of Golm, which the Count has promised him, still sticking in his throat!”

“Pardon, Strummin,” said Reinhold, interrupting the zealous man, “I differ widely from the pastor in his belief, but here I must take his part. He is really ill, very ill, and his illness has a justifiable cause. I know it; for my men, and, as it happened, I myself—we have had the feeble old man with us everywhere as a volunteer wherever there was need of giving help or consolation, and you know that was the case on not a few occasions.”

“Well, if you say so!” exclaimed von Strummin; “and it may be, too, that I have become suspicious, if I think I scent only a trail of our fine Count. But the Parish of Golm——”

“Dear von Strummin,” whispered the President, “why all that so loud!—And you have heard——”

“Well, for all I care!” cried Strummin; “I am only saying that the Parish of Golm——”

The two friends could not hear what Strummin, now lowering his voice at the repeated request of the President, said further in support of his theory. They remained some distance behind, shaking hands repeatedly, while tears stood in their eyes.

“Yesterday at this time we buried Cilli,” said Justus.—“Ferdinande's Pietà, which I am finishing, will stand over her grave, and declare to the world what a treasure of goodness and love and mercy lies buried there; and to these two here I will erect a monument—I showed Mieting a plan of it on the way.—She says it will be great; but how gladly I would break stone, literally, for the rest of my life, as my father-in-law said, if I could thereby awake the good, noble, brave souls to life again!—The naval uniform is very becoming to you, Reinhold! I should have modeled

you that way; we must try it again—the big gold epaulettes are fine for modeling!—And who is going to preach the funeral sermon? The General and Uncle Ernst have directed that they shall both be buried in one grave. I find that beautiful and right, and the objection that they were not even publicly betrothed entirely without basis and genuinely philistine. And here it occurs to me—Uncle Ernst must speak at the grave; he speaks so well, and it will do him good to express his thoughts!—And the General, too; they both stand together, now, like brothers. A dispatch came a while ago for Uncle Ernst; I was present when he opened it, and saw how he winced; I am convinced that it is about poor Philip; they probably caught him; it is horrible that Uncle Ernst must bear that, too—on a day like this! But he didn't tell any one except the General. I saw how they went aside, and he showed the General the dispatch, and they conversed together for a long time, and then shook hands.—Uncle Ernst! who swore that the hand which he should extend to the General would shrivel up, and who asked me, half a dozen times today, whether I thought Ottomar's comrades, who had said they were coming, would really come; it was for that reason we set the funeral so late—it would be very painful for the General if they didn't come!—As if he had no sorrows of his own! He is a heroic soul!—But your Else, too, is admirable. How she loved this brother, and how quietly and calmly she orders everything now, and has a willing ear and a cheerful kindly word for every one! 'That's more than I could do, you know,' said Mieting; 'there's only one Else, you know.'—Of course I know that! But there's also only one Mieting! Am I not right?"

"My dear son-in-law!" said Strummin, turning away.

"He has called me that two hundred times today," said Justus with a sigh, lengthening and quickening his steps.

They had reached the upper end of the deep narrow cut, where they saw the castle directly before them. A strange sight for the President, who was very well acquainted with

the situation from former days, and whom Reinhold had led a few steps up to the now very steep slope. For the stream had washed away and carried off the slope to such an extent that here and there the edge projected, and Reinhold was enabled to find and show to the President the place where the fir-tree had stood, whose fall had been so disastrous to Ottomar. Below them, between the steep slope and the castle, a stream still surged—no longer in the foaming waves and roaring whirlpools of that night of terror, but in quiet, smooth eddies, which merged to form new ones and to splash up against the keels of five large boats across which the wide temporary bridge had been made from the mouth of the ravine to the ancient stone gate of the court.

The turrets of the gate, down to the great coat-of-arms of the Warnows above the opening, gleamed in the evening sheen, and so, too, glittered the round tower of the castle and the roofs above it down to the sharply defined line of the blue-gray shadows, which the hill cast over the lower land. And farther on to the right gleamed the tree-tops of the flooded park, and beyond castle and park the still waters that entirely filled the great inlet and seemed to merge into the open sea beyond. Before the slanting, shimmering sunbeams even Reinhold's sharp eyes could not distinguish the few tops of the dunes which still towered above the water; he could scarcely make out the roofs of the Pölitz premises, or here and there on the wide surface a clump of willows on the banks of the dikes.

The President stood absorbed in deep thought; he seemed to have forgotten even Reinhold's presence.—“Some time the daylight will come,” Reinhold heard him mutter.

They walked over the pontoon bridge—the water gurgling and splashing against the sharp keels; out of the wide opening of the gate came a sullen murmur. Entering the gate they saw for the first time why the village had looked so deserted. The very large court, particularly the

part next to the castle, was filled with a multitude of perhaps a thousand people, who were huddled together in dense groups, and made room, with respectful greeting, for the gentlemen as they approached the portal. They curiously scanned the newcomers, making observations, in low tones, after they had passed. "The man who walked with the Commander was the President!" they who knew him remarked (and there were many) to the others.—"If the President—who is the chief official in the whole district, and, besides being a kind gentleman, is well disposed to every one—would come and be present at the funeral, then the Count might stay at home, Heaven willing!"—"And if the Count wants to play the rôle of gentleman among them—they would make him sorry for it"—"But Mr. Damberg says that is not to be thought of; the Count may be thankful if they spare his life, and, in any case, he would be ostracized."

The gentlemen entered the castle. A still larger and more brilliant group now appeared upon the bridge, and drew the attention of the throng thither. It was a group of officers in full dress uniform, followed at some distance by a larger number of subalterns—from the regiment of von Werben, said they who had served, and had seen Ottomar in the casket.—And the Colonel in the front was, of course, the commander of the regiment!—That he could command, those who had served in France could tell by his eyes and nose. And the Captain, who marched at his side, had been sent by the General Staff by Field-Marshal von Moltke himself; and the tall Lieutenant, also in the uniform of von Werben's regiment, was young von Wartenberg, of the von Wartenbergs of Bolswitz; and as for the old families of von Bolswitz—they had come over an hour before in their equipage, with an outrider, from their castle, three miles away. And the idea that a word of all that stupid talk about young von Werben could be true, that they didn't take him to Berlin because he couldn't have an hon-

orable burial there, and that they came all the way from Berlin to help bury him!

Justus, who had undertaken the direction of the funeral ceremonies with the greatest willingness, and had seen the officers come across the courtyard, waited in the vestibule until he could receive them and conduct them into the room on the right, where the company was assembled. Then he beckoned to Reinhold to follow him, and led him to the door at the end of the hall, which he quietly opened and immediately closed behind him. No one else would be allowed to enter, he declared,—“What do you say, Reinhold?”

The high magnificent rooms, with windows all closed, were flooded with soft light from countless tapers, hung from the walls and ceiling; and among baskets of evergreen plants and young fir-trees which stood in a beautiful ellipse, opening toward the door, rested the two caskets upon an elevated platform, covered with tapestries and flowers. The walls were decorated with old arms which Justus had taken from the armory of the castle—beautiful casts of antiques, and even originals, which a former art-loving occupant of the castle had collected, and which Justus had brought from the halls and rooms, and groups of ornamental plants and evergreens—with lighted candles among them.

“Haven’t I made it look beautiful!” he whispered; “and all in the few morning hours. They would both be delighted with it—he with the arms, and she with the sculptures. But they themselves are the most beautiful of all! I must now call the family, Reinhold, before we close the caskets; meanwhile, take your last look. You haven’t had as much opportunity as the others.”

Justus vanished through the door leading to the apartments. Reinhold ascended the steps and went between the caskets in which the two were sleeping their eternal sleep.

Yes, they were beautiful—more beautiful than they had been in life. Death appeared to have removed every trace

of earth from them, so that noble Nature might reveal herself in all her splendor. How fair, how noble, the face of this girl, and how beautiful the face of the youth, as if their souls had been truly united in death, and each had fondly given to the other what was fairest in life! So, around their lips, once so proud, a sweet, blissful, meek smile rested, for, along with the restless shifting of the nervous eyes and the impatient trembling of the fine mouth, death had blotted out all that was incomplete, imperfect, from the young man's clear features, and had left nothing but the expression of heroic will with which he had gone to his death, and of which the broad red wound on his white brow was the awful seal.

There was a slight noise in the firs behind him; he turned and opened his arms to Else. She laid her head on his breast, weeping. "Only for a moment can I feel your dear heart beating, and know that you are still left me—you, my sweet solace, my unfailling treasure!"

She arose. "Farewell, farewell, for the last time, farewell, dear brother, farewell! Fair, proud sister, how I would have loved you!" She kissed the pale lips of the two corpses; Reinhold took her in his arms and led her from the platform, down to where he saw Justus and Mieting standing, hand in hand, at a respectful distance, among the shrubbery; while, following the General, Valerie and Sidonie, Uncle Ernst and Aunt Rikchen appeared upon the platform to take leave of the dead.

Solemn, yet nerve-racking moments, the details of which Reinhold's tearful eyes could not grasp nor retain! But to Justus' keen artist's eye, one touchingly beautiful picture followed another—but, none more touching or beautiful for him, who knew these persons and their relations so well, than the last—the General almost carrying the exhausted Valerie down the steps, her head shrouded in a heavy veil of lace—she had come down from her sick room only for this occasion; while Uncle Ernst's strong form, still standing there, bent over to kind little Aunt Rikchen, and, to

quiet her, stroked with his strong hand her pale, troubled, tear-stained face.

“Do you know,” whispered Mieting; “they now feel what we felt when we stood before the dead angel—that they must love each other, you know.”

Half an hour later the funeral procession moved out of the castle gate, from one of whose turrets a large German flag, and from the other a black one, fluttered in the evening breeze; over the bridge of boats it passed, up the deep road, turning to the right along the gently sloping road to the cemetery which extended from the highest point to the chain of hills that formed the shore, a few hundred steps distant from the village—a long solemn procession!

The village children, strewing the way with evergreen, went on before the caskets—before the one decked with palms, where lay the maidenly form of the beautiful heroic girl, borne by strong pilots and fishermen who would not surrender the honor of carrying their Commander’s kinswoman to her last resting place; before that of the man, decorated with emblems of war, for whom she had died, and whom a kindly fate had allowed to die as a brave man, worthy of the decorations which he had won in battle, and which the Sergeant-Major of the company bore on a silk cushion after him—worthy he, that the trim warriors who had seen him in the days of his glory should lift him now on their shoulders, so often touched by his friendly hand in the hot hour of battle, and by the flaming bivouac-fire on the wearisome march to the great rendezvous.

After the caskets, the two fathers; then Reinhold with Else, and Justus with Mieting—Sidonie and Aunt Rikchen remaining with Valerie; the President and Colonel von Bohl, Schönau and the brilliant company of the other officers, and neighboring noblemen with their ladies; von Strummin and his spouse, the Wartenbergs, the Griebens, the Boltenhagens, the Warnekows, and the rest, the descendants of the old hereditary families; the endless train of country folk and sea folk, with the heroic form of brave

Pölitz, and the stout figure of the chief pilot, Bonsack, at their head.

A long, silent procession it was, accompanied step by step by the monotonous cadences of the rising and falling waves along the steep shore, and now and then by the shrill cry of a sea-gull, which, soaring above the gleaming water, might have regarded the strange spectacle with wonder, or by a word whispered from neighbor to neighbor, which those immediately preceding and following did not hear. Thus were uttered the low words which the General spoke to Uncle Ernst as the head of the procession reached the cemetery—"Do you feel yourself equal to the task?" And Uncle Ernst's answer was—"Not until now have I felt myself equal to it." Even Reinhold and Else, who walked behind them, would not have understood it if they had heard, nor had Uncle Ernst shown to any one but the General the dispatch of which Justus had spoken. The dispatch of serious content in the dry, matter-of-fact style of the police: Philip Schmidt recognized tonight when about to embark on the steamer *Hansa*, bound from Bremerhafen to Chile, shot himself with a revolver in his stateroom, leaving the embezzled money untouched; will be interred tomorrow evening at six o'clock.

There, under the broad hand which he slipped under his overcoat, lay the paper, and his great heart beat against it—beat again truly strong and truly proud, now that he could say to himself that his unfortunate son did not belong to the cowards to whom life is everything; that for him, too, there was a measure of disgrace which must not overflow, because in that moment he drained the beaker of life—a draught too insipid and loathsome even for his unhallowed lips.

The caskets were lowered into a common grave. At its head stood Uncle Ernst, bareheaded, and, before him in a wide semicircle, the throng, bareheaded, silent, looking up to the powerful man whose almost gigantic figure towered above the hills against the ruddy evening sky. Now

he raised his piercing eyes, which seemed to take in at a glance the whole assemblage: and now his deep voice sounded, its clear tones making every word distinct, even to the outer edge of the circle.

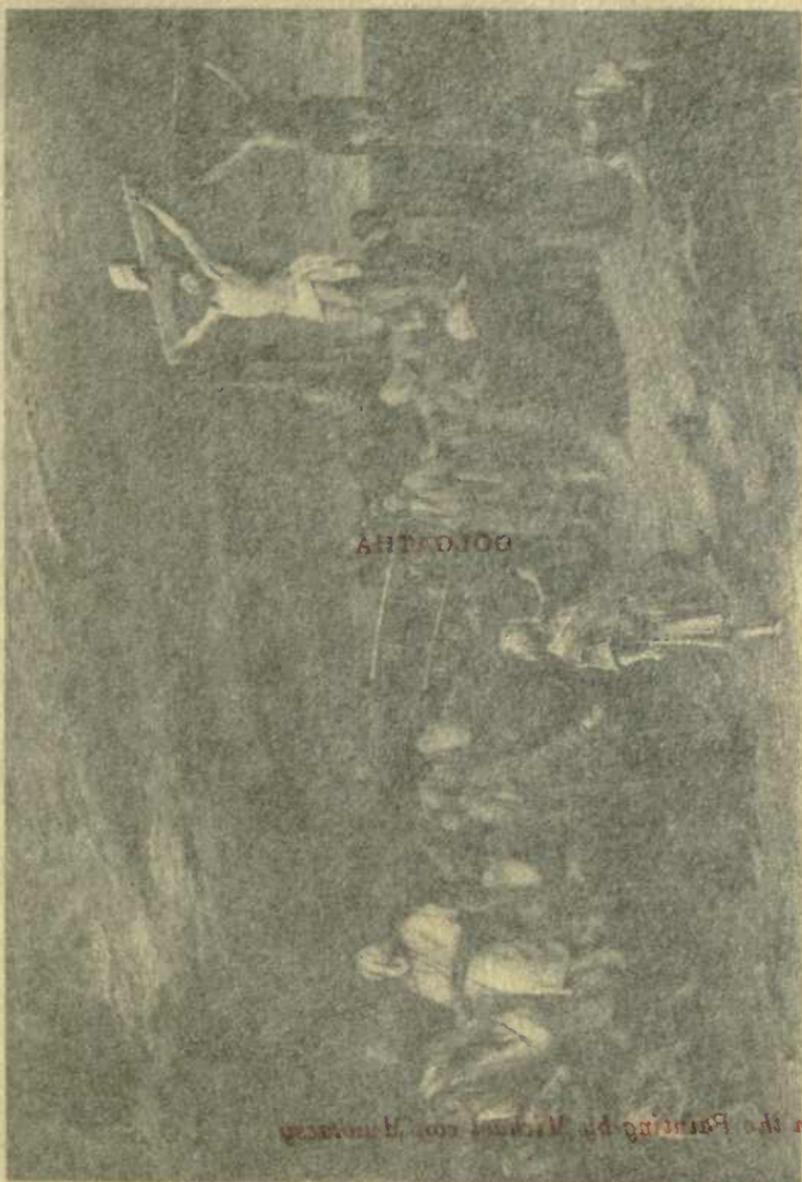
“My friends, one and all—I may call you so, for in the presence of such a great misfortune, such a fearful catastrophe, all are friends who have human faces.

“My friends! This—it had to be! It had to be! It had to be, because we had so basely, so utterly forgotten love; because we had lived on so long through the hopeless years, in barren selfishness, drowning the longing cry of our hearts with the empty sound of our iron conceit, ceaselessly keeping up the vain struggle for mine and thine—the fierce, wild struggle—without a blush and without mercy, wishing no peace, giving no pardon, regarding no right but that of the victor, who scornfully treads the vanquished under foot.

“Yes, my friends: it had to be, it had to be, that we should learn again to love one another! It is this certainty—this, and this alone it is—which can soothe our sorrow for the dear ones whom we now commit to the sacred lap of Earth; the tender blossoms which the storm has broken.

“The storm! The fearful storm, which raged through German hearts and minds and through German lands, breaking so many hearts, darkening so many minds, covering so many fields of young green crops with the horrors of destruction, filling the air with poisonous mists, so that even the brave man might ask—Has the bright German sun set forever? But no! It shines upon us again! It sends us, as it sets, its last golden beams, promising a new, bright day, full of honest toil and true, golden harvest!

“Oh; thou, serene light of Heaven, and thou, Sacred Sea, and thou, life-giving Earth—I call you to witness the vow which we make at the graves of these who parted from us all too soon: To put from us, from now on, all that is small and common, to live in the future in the light of truth, to love one another with all our hearts! May the God of truth



From the Painting by Michael van Nieuwenhuysen

REPRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

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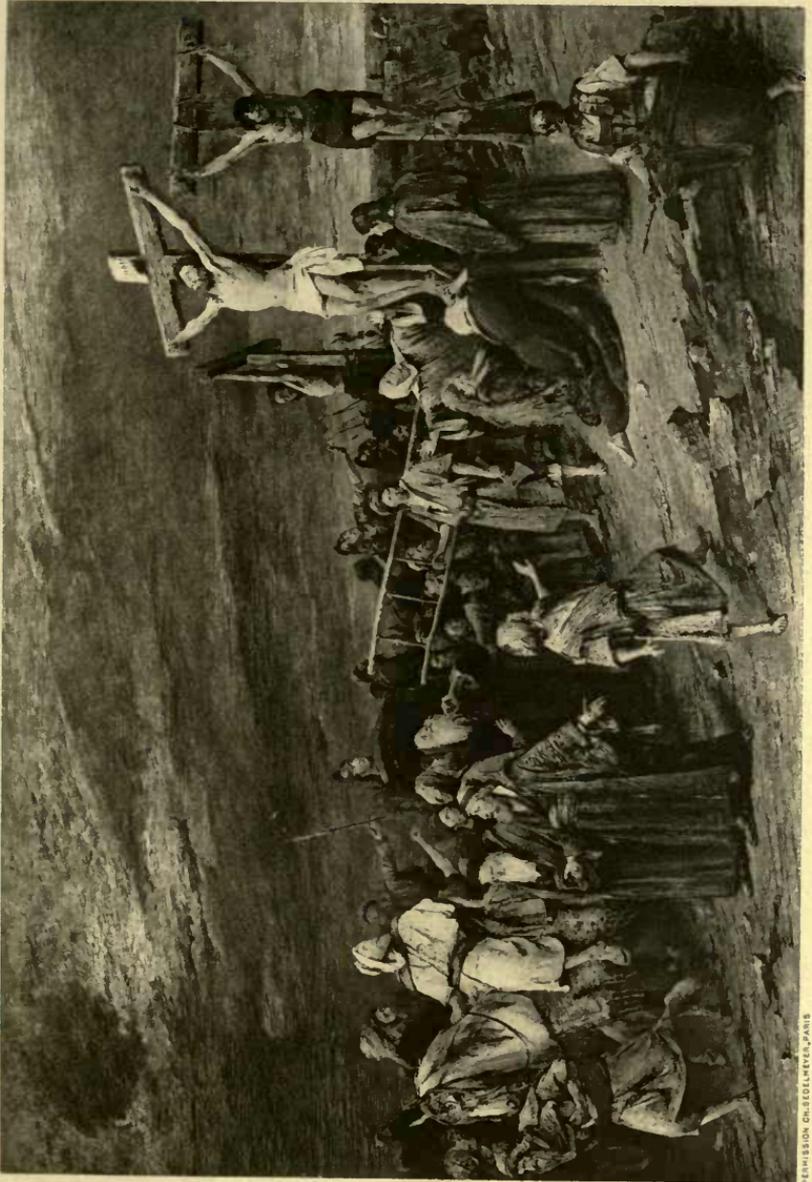
GOLGATHA

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From the Painting by Michael von Munkácsy



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and love grant that to the honor of humanity, and to the glory of the German name!"

The voice of the speaker ceased. But the echo of his words quivered in the hearts of his hearers, as they silently stepped forward to show the last honors to the dead. The rays of the setting sun spread over the sky, lighting up the scene, and the sky lovingly reflected them back to earth.

THE LIFE OF THEODOR STORM

BY EWALD EISERHARDT, PH.D.

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ANS THEODOR WOLDSSEN STORM was born on the fourteenth of September, 1817, in the little town of Husum on the west coast of Schleswig-Holstein. His paternal forefathers were Low Germans; his mother's family, named Woldsen, was of Friesian origin. For many generations the Storms had been hereditary tenants of the mill in Westermühlen near Husum; for centuries the Woldsens had belonged to the aristocracy of Husum, composed of prominent merchants from whose ranks the burgomasters and senators rose. Theodor Storm's father was an attorney in Husum and commanded universal respect on account of his unselfishness, punctilious sense of honor, and clear-sightedness in juristic matters. The poet's mother is described as a woman of graceful and attractive appearance, distinguished by an unaffected emotional nature and keen mental penetration. Eduard Mörike spoke of her personality as being "so clear, so luminous, so provocative of love."

The Storms were not rich, but their home was permeated with that sense of solid comfort, based on the consciousness of efficiency and pride of ancestry, so often found in the burgher circles of Germany. Of particular importance to the children was the presence in the family of their maternal grandmother. She was full of overflowing kindness toward her grandchildren, and hence to them the home possessed the magic of a spot where, as in fairy tales, all wishes might be fulfilled, a veritable refuge in all times of need. She succeeded, moreover, in awakening in them strong family feeling; for she loved to tell about her own youth, her parents and brothers and sisters whose portraits and silhouettes, in old-fashioned costumes and with

quaint cues, hung on the walls. It was owing mainly to his mother's family that the poet, even in his early youth, was brought into somewhat close touch in his native place with all the different classes of people and many kinds of characters; for on the vessels, in the factories, and in the houses of the Woldsens and Feddersens—Storm's maternal grandmother was a Feddersen—numbers of the inhabitants of the little town had employment, and their relations with these families were not entirely of a business nature but were rooted in mutual confidence.

Of equal importance for his development were the scenes with which the boy became familiar through his father's family. His paternal relatives were settled on considerable estates in the neighborhood, the family mill in Westermühlen being managed by his father's eldest brother. There the boy found an Eldorado in the holidays. There, while wandering through the woods and over the heath, he first held converse with nature; there, where another spirit rested on house and garden than in the town, he first vaguely felt the atmosphere peculiar to certain places; there, where he saw men now favored, now threatened, by external powers and always dependent upon them, his eyes were first opened to the relations between man and nature in all their many-sidedness.

Compared with what his home and family offered him, all that school could give the future poet was of no significance. Until the autumn of 1835 he attended the preparatory school of the town and was then sent to the Gymnasium in Lübeck for a year and a half. After leaving there he devoted himself to the study of law, first in Kiel, which he left only to return after three terms spent in Berlin; and it was in the former place that he concluded his studies and passed his final juristic examination in the autumn of 1842.

At that time Storm had already made several efforts to express himself in lyric poetry. At the age of nine he had written his first poem, and it is characteristic that the

occasion of it was the death of a dearly loved sister. Later, during his school-days in Husum and Lübeck, he filled two small books with poems, and even made a vain attempt to reach the public with his *The Building of St. Mary's at Lübeck*. His poetical talent was most deeply stirred, however, while he was in Kiel for the second time, when he became intimate with the historian Theodor Mommsen and his brother Tycho. As a result of this inspiring friendship the three young men published, in 1843, the *Songs by Three Friends*. Our poet's contributions to it were chiefly in the sphere in which throughout his whole life he was to show himself a master—namely, in love lyrics; and even these early poems sound, in common with many of his later writings, the note of resignation. Doubtless this quality was largely innate in his nature, but it was also nursed and fed by an experience through which he passed in his youth. As a young student Storm loved a child, Berta von Buchau, and, while she was still a young girl, asked her hand in marriage, only, however, to meet with a refusal. The poems dedicated to this love are rich and varied in tone; they range from the ironic and humorous to the exuberant and graceful, make the lover find gratification in the service of his love, are prompted by doubt, raise lamentations and accusations, pray for the lost love's happiness and ask her to bear him in remembrance, and finally they die away in grief and sadness. The most artistically finished poem of this group and the one that gives deepest utterance to Storm's peculiar poetical talent is *Twilight*. It avoids all extremes in feeling, seeks to produce the single, deeply felt mood that created it, and gives in a few apparently chance touches a clear and definite situation.

In February, 1843, Storm established himself as an attorney in Husum, and with this step his happiest years began. He was once more in his home, away from which there had never been any real happiness for him; his parents were both still vigorous and he was surrounded by loving broth-

ers and sisters. In the social life of the place, which seems to have centred in his father's house, he was a favorite, and his influence on the spirit of the little town was felt when he founded and conducted a musical society, which soon was able to appear successfully in public. His happiness reached its climax when, in the autumn of 1846, he married his cousin Konstanze Esmarch.

Konstanze was a really beautiful woman of fine and generous proportions, with large yet delicately modeled features and fresh youthful vigor. Storm himself is described as a man of scarcely medium height, slender and of a somewhat stooping carriage. His appearance can have been impressive only by reason of his bright blue eyes and the high forehead beneath his abundant blond hair. Less irritable than her husband, less passionate and eager in her desires, Konstanze met life more evenly, firmly, and clearly, and thus, though lacking talent of any kind, she exerted a far-reaching and beneficial influence on the poet's nature. "When she came into the room it always seemed to me as if it grew lighter," he once said of her.

For some years, during which three sons were born to them, they lived most happily in Husum until the shadow of political events fell across their house. After a vain struggle for freedom, the dukedoms of Schleswig and Holstein were subdued by Denmark; and as Storm, even after their subjection, continued openly to proclaim his German sentiments he finally found himself obliged, in 1853, to leave his home.

During the ten years spent in Husum Storm's lyric talent came to full and characteristic development. The influence of Heine's *Book of Songs*, so apparent in the poems of his school and student days, is hardly seen any more. Eichen-dorff's poems and his novel, *Poets and Their Disciples*, do indeed still echo strongly, and we feel the influence of Mörike's lyrics in this period more clearly than before. But all this is insignificant in comparison with Storm's own creative power and the wealth that flowed to him out of his

own life. As he was particularly happy at that time, it is natural that qualities should appear in his work which are too often overlooked in forming an estimate of his character and which were more strongly developed in this period than in any other. It is true that we still hear sad tones, even complaints of lost love and of love's suffering and loneliness, but the majority and the best poems are written in a contented, confident, energetic, even jubilant key. It is his love for his wife, of whom he sang so much, that transfigures life to the poet. Beneath her hand pain is stilled, in her arms life and death are overcome, and her presence turns the alien place into home. Separated from the world and from the day nothing can surpass the moments when he receives from her love's last and highest gifts. To the sound of clear bells on moonlight nights peace on earth and good-will to men seem to descend upon the little family circle over which God himself keeps watch. It was in those days, too, that the poet succeeded in writing his song of "the gray town by the sea" which nature has treated so slightly and yet so singularly, and to which his whole heart goes out; for it is, after all, his mother town. Indeed, he hails with rejoicing the world, the beautiful, imperishable world, and every true heart that does not allow itself to be subdued but enjoys the golden days and has learned to gild the gray ones. He is even full of hope as regards the fate of his home country. In spite of all defeats, in spite of all disgrace and distress, he prophesies a new spring for her and calls the poet blessed who may then win for her "the jewel of poetry." It is only when he actually has to leave his home and move away with his wife and children that he begins to doubt as to his own return; then his hope changes into the prayer that at least his sons may once be able to go back, for "no man thrives without a fatherland."

In 1853 Storm had entered the Prussian service, and for three years held the position of assistant judge in the circuit court in Potsdam. There he was not content, in

spite of the cordiality with which he was received, especially by Berlin poets, artists, and lovers of art. If we understand him aright, he was oppressed by the feeling that in the society of Potsdam the worth of the individual was determined by the office he held and by his descent, and that the human being in that State was sacrificed to the citizen and the official, the man to the soldier. During those years Storm's poetical production faltered, and it was fortunate for him that in the autumn of 1856 he was transferred as a circuit judge to Heiligenstadt in Central Germany. This cozy little town in the mountains appealed exceedingly to his nature, and on the whole he was able to live there much as he had been accustomed to in Husum. In addition, the improvement in his financial condition and the lesser burden of his professional work undoubtedly contributed to the re-awakening in him of the poet.

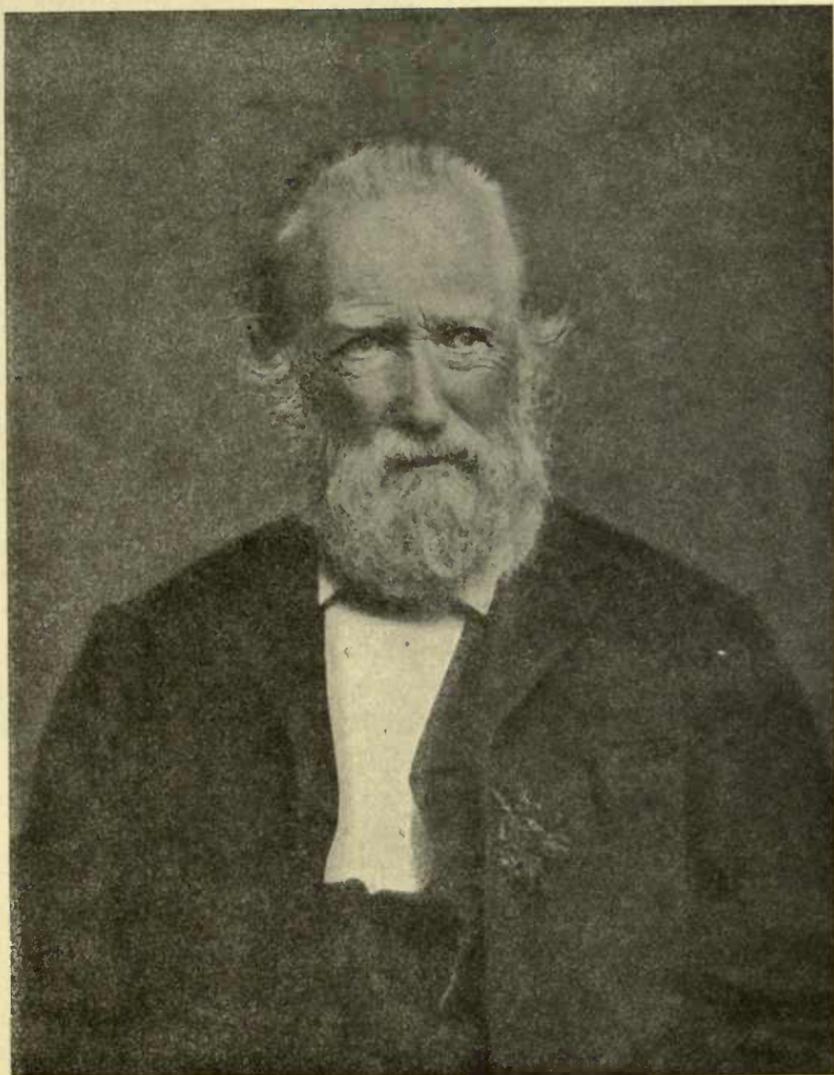
He was not so productive in lyric poetry as during the years in Husum, but, as regards artistic value, the poems of this period certainly do not stand below those of the earlier one. He tries his hand at folk-poetry and succeeds in striking its key of heartiness, simplicity, and spontaneity. He clothes the popular theme of the enamoured miller's daughter in a garment of artistic form, and yet, by means of roguish humor and naïve frankness, manages to sound the note of the folk-song. He employs one of the most telling means for lyric effect by drawing parallels between the conditions in nature and those in men, and in doing this he awakens the most delicate harmonies by portraying both conditions without pointing out the relation between them, or by placing an individual in the midst of a somewhat minutely described landscape and leading us to imagine him in a state that corresponds with that of nature.

But in contrast to those just mentioned the greater number of his poems are of a subjective kind. Again the poet writes of his wife, from whom after all comes every joy that he experiences away from home, and he only draws her all the closer to his heart since the passing years have

imprinted the first signs of age on her gentle features. His love is mixed with yearning for the time when they were both young and—for his home. The yearning for home is at one time expressed in almost classically pure words, "nach drüben ist sein Auge stets gewandt" (his eye is ever roaming toward the other land); at another it merely underlies and glimmers through the devotion with which he paints a scene from home; at still another the poet's blood surges high and "fury and longing for home wrestle for his heart." At last he can no longer stifle his indignation; he calls upon the very dead to arise and to battle again, and in ringing words shouts to the world "*die deutschen Gräber sind ein Spott der Feinde*" (the German graves are mocked by enemies).

Even more strongly than in his political poems the specifically manly quality in Storm's poetry appears in what we may call his confessional lyrics. There he gives us his thoughts about immortality: that, in common with all creation, man too rebels against dissolution, and that the belief in immortality is only the final, refined, and spiritualized form of this rebellion. But the true man stands above his own fate and will not sacrifice reason even to the most seductive promises. The church stands opposed to such high development of the individual; Storm thinks poorly of it, and forbids the priest to attend at his grave.

As in the realm of the mind the poet opposes the church, so in the social sphere he attacks feudalism and the bureaucracy. Those whose national feeling is not deep and comprehensive enough to allow them to feel at one with the people he stigmatizes as the drop of poison in German blood. He holds up to ridicule those who need the pretentiousness of power in order to be happy and would like to gain it at the cost of the people's liberty. But in pithy words Storm advises his sons to keep to the truth uncompromisingly, to despise outward success, but to spare no pains in striving for true worth, not to sacrifice self-respect to consideration for others but always to remember that in



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THEODOR STORM

this life, after all, every one can stand only on his own feet.

The years in Heiligenstadt are of special importance in Storm's whole artistic activity, inasmuch as poetry is gradually pushed into the second place by his prose works. At that time Storm was known to the greater public hardly at all by his lyrics but only by *Immensee* (1849) and similar tales. Hence he was recognized as the author of lyric stories expressive chiefly of "transfigured resignation." This characterization, however, is only partially justified, for resignation finally disappears from Storm's stories and the share that the lyric element has in his tales changes entirely in the course of time. Of a number of his earlier narratives and sketches it can actually be said that they were written less for the sake of the tale than on account of the mood they express. And, in *Heiligenstadt*, Storm, who in all spheres sought untiringly for pure form, finally reached that kind of prose in which feeling and imagination have the widest scope, the "Märchen." He writes *The Rain-Witch*, perhaps the most perfect artistic fairy tale of German literature, in which he not only surpasses Goethe and the Romanticists but also himself. For, in Storm's own words, his *Hinzelmeier* is only a "fantastic-allegorical creation," *Bulemann's House*, written in the style of E. T. A. Hoffmann, "an odd story," while *The Mirror of Cyprianus* appears rather "in the elegant robe of the saga."

The last of these works was not finished in Heiligenstadt, but when Storm was back in his old home again. For in March, 1864, he had returned to Husum, where he was given the office of "Landvogt" (district magistrate), to which were attached authority in police matters and the administration of justice.

In taking this step he had followed the call of his fellow-citizens, for the death of Frederick VII. of Denmark had once more awakened in the Duchies the hope of freedom. The longed-for happiness of his return, however, was marred; for, instead of becoming independent, Schleswig-

Holstein was finally made a Prussian province, and he was still more deeply stricken by a loss in his family. In May, 1865, his wife Konstanze died after the birth of her seventh child. Storm did indeed marry again—his second wife Dorothea Jensen was a friend and relative of his and Konstanze's, and this marriage too was happy—but his further poems bear witness to what he lost in Konstanze. One of his stories, also, *Viola Tricolor* (1873), deals with the problem how a man can cultivate the memory of his dead wife without doing injury to his love for the living one; he called it a "Selbstbefreiung" (self-justification).

The evening of Storm's life was not spent in Husum, where memories threatened to engulf him, but in the village of Hademarschen near-by, whither he moved in 1880, when he retired from office. Here he was destined still to develop abundant artistic activity as a novelist until his death on the fourth of July, 1888.

After the completion of his imaginative writings a decided change in Storm's prose style began to take place. Formerly the lyrical element lay like a haze over and about objects and persons, and even now it does not disappear. Yet it no longer blurs and obliterates the outlines and connections, but rather streams out of the objects represented, as a fragrance rises from a flower. The first beginnings of this style are already noticeable in *At the Castle* (1861), in which the problems of class differences and of enlightenment form to a certain extent the backbone of the narrative, and in *At the University* (1862), which for a story of Storm's at that period contains a great wealth of incidents. But it was in such works as *In the Village on the Heath* and *At Cousin Christian's* that the poet first attained a purely objective narrative style. That he himself realized this is clear from his correspondence. On the twenty-fourth of January, 1873, he writes to Hebbel's biographer Kuh with reference to *In the Village on the Heath*: "I think I have shown by this that I can also write a story without the atmosphere of a distinct mood (Dunstkreis

einer bestimmten Stimmung). I do not mean a mood which is spontaneously developed during the reading from the facts given, but a mood furnished *a priori* by the author."

Hand in hand with the development of this "epic" style goes the transition to realism which we find also in Storm's poems. In prose it is best represented by works like *Eekenhof* and *Der Herr Etatsrat*, or *Hans and Heinz Kirch* and *Two-Souled*. Here the poet shrinks from no harshness. We find striking portraits the lines of which are drawn with a sharp, unflattering touch. Psychic conditions of the most brutal kind are portrayed and are made the more telling because it is almost only their effects that are given. In the same way the external world stands chiefly before us in its appearances while the conditions that have led to these appearances are neglected. Finally, Storm endeavors to step beyond the bounds of pure narrative. He seizes upon material of a dramatic nature and seeks to retain—nay more, to bring out—its dramatic character, even in the epic form. In one of his letters he calls the "Novelle" the epic sister of the drama, and goes on to say that it treats of the deepest problems of human life and requires for its perfection to be centred about some conflict. Such are works like *The Sons of the Senator*, where individual will is pitted against individual will; *Renate* or *At the Brewer's*, where individuals struggle against a multitude who are sunk in error and superstition; and, above all, *The Rider of the White Horse*, where the individual wrestles with the mass, the man with the most elementary forces of nature.

The Rider of the White Horse is Storm's last complete work and also, as we believe, the one that best reflects the whole man, as far as that is possible with a poet of such varied development. The scene is laid in his home, which is characterized with vividness and grandeur in its setting of marsh and sea. Like the stories of his youth it glorifies love, the love of two beings who are faithful to each other unto death, and at the same time it touches themes which

deeply occupied Storm in his age, such as the problem of heredity in *Karsten Kurator*, or the relation between father and son in *Hans and Heinz Kirch* or in *Basch the Cooper*. The charm of youth, to which our poet was always most susceptible, invests the chief characters, and they have that chaste reserve that holds all internal life sacred. Happiness is won, but it ends in tragedy, the tragedy which has taken the place of the resignation of his youthful works and which, after all, was more deeply rooted in Storm than the joyfulness that is sounded in *Psyche*. It is a man of sober intellect who tells the whole story and yet, like human life itself, it stands out against a mystic background. Remembrance of long ago has clarified everything, loving comprehension fills everything with deepest sympathy. It was granted to Storm to stand on a pinnacle of art at the end of his life, a pinnacle which he had to leave, but from which he did not need to descend.

THEODOR STORM

THE RIDER OF THE WHITE HORSE (1888)

TRANSLATED BY MURIEL ALMON



THE story that I have to tell came to my knowledge more than half a century ago in the house of my great-grandmother, the wife of Senator Feddersen, when, sitting close up to her armchair one day, I was busy reading a number of some magazine bound in blue cardboard, either the *Leipziger* or *Pappes Hamburger Lesefrüchte*, I have forgotten which. I still recall with a tremor how the old lady of more than eighty years would now and then pass her soft hand caressingly over her great-grandchild's hair. She herself, and that day, have long been buried and I have sought in vain for those old pages, so I can just as little vouch for the truth of the facts as defend them if anyone should question them. Only one thing I can affirm, that although no outward circumstance has since revived them in my mind they have never vanished from my memory.

On an October afternoon, in the third decade of our century—thus the narrator began his tale—I was riding in very bad weather along a dike in northern Friesland. For more than an hour I had been passing, on the left, a bleak marsh from which all the cattle had already gone, and, on the right, uncomfortably near, the marsh of the North Sea. A traveler along the dike was supposed to be able to see islets and islands; I saw nothing however but the yellow-gray waves that dashed unceasingly against the dike with what seemed like roars of fury, sometimes splashing me and the horse with dirty foam; in the background eerie twilight in which earth could not be distinguished from sky, for the moon, which had risen and was now in its second quarter, was covered most of the time by driving

clouds. It was icy cold. My benumbed hands could scarcely hold the reins and I did not blame the crows and gulls that, cawing and shrieking, allowed themselves to be borne inland by the storm. Night had begun to fall and I could no longer distinguish my horse's hoofs with certainty; not a soul had met me; I heard nothing but the screaming of the birds, as their long wings almost brushed against me or my faithful mare, and the raging of wind and water. I do not deny that at times I wished myself in some secure shelter.

It was the third day of the storm and I had allowed myself to be detained longer than I should have by a particularly dear relative at his farm in one of the northern parishes. But at last I had to leave. Business was calling me in the town which probably still lay a few hours' ride ahead of me, to the south, and in the afternoon I had ridden away in spite of all my cousin and his kind wife could do to persuade me, and in spite of the splendid home-grown Perinette and Grand Richard apples which were yet to be tried. "Just wait till you get out by the sea," he had called after me from the door, "you will turn back then; we will keep your room ready for you!"

And really, for a moment, as a dark layer of clouds made it grow black as pitch around me and at the same time a roaring gust threatened to sweep both me and my horse away, the thought did flash through my head: "Don't be a fool! Turn back and sit down in comfort with your friends." But then it occurred to me that the way back was longer than the one to my journey's end, and so, drawing the collar of my cloak closer about my ears, I trotted on.

But now something was coming along the dike towards me. I heard nothing, but I thought I could distinguish more and more clearly, as a glimmer fell from the young moon, a dark figure, and soon, when it came nearer, I saw that it was riding a long-legged, lean white horse. A dark cloak fluttered about the figure's shoulders and as it flew

past two burning eyes looked at me from a pale countenance.

Who was it? Why was it here? And now I remembered that I had heard no sound of hoofs nor of the animal's breathing, and yet horse and rider had passed close beside me.

Wondering about this I rode on. But I had not much time to wonder; it was already passing me again from behind. It seemed to me as if the flying cloak brushed against me and the apparition shot by as noiselessly as before. Then I saw it farther and farther ahead of me and suddenly it seemed to me as if its shadow was suddenly descending the land-side of the dike.

With some hesitation I followed. When I reached the spot where the figure had disappeared I could see close to the dike, below it and on the land-side, the glistening of water in one of those water-holes which the high tides bore in the earth during a storm and which then usually remain as small but deep-bottomed pools.

The water was remarkably still, even stiller than the protection of the dike would account for. The rider could not have disturbed it; I saw nothing more of him. But I did see something else that I greeted with joy; below me, on the reclaimed land, a number of scattered lights shone. They seemed to come from the long, narrow Friesian houses that stood singly on mounds of different heights; while close before me, halfway up the inside of the dike, stood a large house of the same sort. All its windows on the south side, to the right of the door, were illuminated; behind them I could see people and even thought I could hear them, in spite of the storm. My horse had already turned of its own accord onto the path down the side of the dike that would lead me to the house. It was evidently a public house, for in front of the windows I could see the beams, resting on two posts and provided with iron rings, to which the cattle and horses that stopped there were tied.

I fastened mine to one of the rings and then commended

it to the care of the hostler who came to meet me as I stepped into the hall. "Is there a meeting here?" I asked him, hearing distinctly the sound of voices and the clatter of glasses through the open door of the room.

"Something of the kind," he replied in Low German, and I learnt later that this dialect in the place had been current, together with the Friesian, for over a hundred years. "The dikegrave and commissioners and some of the others interested! It's on account of the high water!"

Entering I saw about a dozen men sitting at a table which ran along under the windows; on it stood a bowl of punch over which a particularly stately man seemed to preside.

I bowed and asked to be allowed to sit down with them, which request was readily granted. "You are keeping watch here, I suppose," I said, turning to the stately man; "it is dirty weather outside; the dikes will have all they can do!"

"Yes, indeed," he replied; "but we here, on the east side, think we are out of danger now; it is only over on the other side that they are not safe. The dikes there are built, for the most part, after the old pattern; our main dike was moved and rebuilt as long ago as in the last century. We got chilled out there a little while ago, and you are certainly cold too," he added, "but we must stand it here for a few hours longer; we have our trustworthy men out there who come and report to us." And before I could give the publican my order a steaming glass was pushed towards me.

I soon learnt that my friendly neighbor was the dikegrave. We got into conversation and I began to tell him my singular experience on the dike. He grew attentive and I suddenly noticed that the conversation all around us had ceased. "The rider of the white horse!" exclaimed one of the company and all the rest started.

The dikegrave rose. "You need not be afraid," he said across the table; "that does not concern us alone. In the

year '17 too it was meant for those on the other side; we'll hope that they are prepared for anything!"

Now the shudder ran through me that should properly have assailed me out on the dike. "Pardon me," I said, "who and what is this rider of the white horse?"

Apart from the rest, behind the stove, sat a little lean man in a scant and shabby black coat. He was somewhat bent and one of his shoulders seemed to be a little crooked. He had taken no part whatever in the conversation of the others, but his eyes, which in spite of his sparse gray hair were still shaded by dark lashes, showed clearly that he was not sitting there merely to nod off to sleep.

The dikegrave stretched out his hand towards him. "Our schoolmaster," he said, raising his voice, "will be able to tell you that better than any of the rest of us here—only in his own way, to be sure, and not as correctly as Antje Vollmers, my old housekeeper at home, would do it."

"You're joking, Dikegrave," came the somewhat thin voice of the schoolmaster from behind the stove, "to put your stupid dragon on an equality with me!"

"Yes, yes, Schoolmaster!" returned the other; "but tales of that kind you know are said to be best preserved among the dragons!"

"To be sure," said the little man. "We are not quite of the same opinion in this matter," and a smile of superiority passed over his delicately formed face.

"You see," the dikegrave whispered in my ear, "he is still a little haughty. He studied theology once, in his youth, and stuck here in his home as schoolmaster only on account of an unfortunate betrothal."

In the meantime the schoolmaster had come forward out of his corner and seated himself beside me at the long table. "Go on Schoolmaster, let us have the story," called a few of the younger ones in the party.

"To be sure," said the old man turning to me, "I am glad to oblige you; but there is much superstition inter-

woven with it and it requires art to tell the tale without including that."

"Please don't leave that out," I replied, "trust me to separate the chaff from the wheat myself."

The old man looked at me with a smile of understanding. "Well, then," he said, "in the middle of the last century, or rather, to be more exact, before and after the middle, there was a dikegrave here who understood more about dikes, drains and sluices than peasants and farmers usually do; yet even so it seems hardly to have been enough, for he had read but little of what learned experts have written about such things, and had only thought out his own knowledge for himself from the time he was a little child. You have probably heard, sir, that the Friesians are good at figures and undoubtedly you have heard some talk too about our Hans Mommsen of Fahretoft, who was a peasant and yet could make compasses and chronometers, telescopes and organs. Well, the father of this dikegrave was a bit like that too; only a bit, to be sure. He had a few fields in the fens where he planted rape and beans, and where a cow grazed. Sometimes in autumn and spring he went out surveying, and in winter when the northwester came and shook his shutters, he sat at home sketching and engraving. His boy generally sat there with him and looked up from his reader or his Bible at his father measuring and calculating, and buried his hand in his blond hair. And one evening he asked his father why that which he had just written had to be just like that and not otherwise, and gave his own opinion about it. But his father, who did not know what answer to give, shook his head and said: "I can't tell you why, it is enough that it is so; and you yourself are mistaken. If you want to know more go up to the attic tomorrow and hunt for a book in the box up there. The man who wrote it was called Euclid; you can find out from that book."

The next day the boy did go up to the attic and soon found the book, for there were not many in the whole

house; but his father laughed when the boy laid it down before him on the table. It was a Dutch Euclid, and Dutch, although after all it is half German, was beyond them both.

“Yes, yes,” he said, “the book was my father’s, he understood it. Isn’t there a German one there?”

The boy, who was a child of few words, looked quietly at his father and only said: “May I keep it? There is no German one there.”

And when the old man nodded he showed him a second little volume, half torn. “This one too?” he asked again.

“Take them both,” said Tede Haien; “they won’t do you much good.”

But the second book was a little Dutch grammar, and as most of the winter was still to come it did help the lad enough so that finally when the time came for the gooseberries to bloom in the garden he was able to understand nearly all of the Euclid, then very much in vogue.

“I am not unaware, Sir,” the narrator interrupted himself, “that this same incident is told of Hans Mommsen; but, here with us, people used to tell it of Hauke Haien—that was the boy’s name—before Mommsen was born. You know how it is, when a greater man arises, he is credited with everything that his predecessors may have done, in earnest or in fun.”

When the old man saw that the lad cared nothing about cows or sheep and scarcely even noticed when the beans were in blossom—which after all is the joy of every man from the marshlands—and that his little place might indeed get on with a peasant and a boy, but not with a semi-scholar and a servant, and also because he himself had failed of prosperity, he sent his big boy to the dike, where from Easter till Martinmas he was to wheel his barrow of earth with the other laborers. “That will cure him of Euclid!” he said to himself.

And the lad pushed his wheelbarrow, but he kept the Euclid in his pocket all the time, and when the workmen ate their lunch or stopped for a bite in the late afternoon

he sat on the bottom of a wheelbarrow with the book in his hand. And in autumn when the tides began to be higher, and the work had sometimes to be stopped he did not go home with the others, but stayed, and sat on the slope of the dike, his hands clasped round his knee, and watched for hours how the gray waves of the North Sea dashed up higher and higher towards the grass-line of the dike. Not until the water came in over his feet and the foam splattered in his face did he move up a few feet higher and then sit on there. He heard neither the splashing of the water nor the screaming of the gulls and shore-birds that flew above and around him, almost touching him with their wings, and flashing their black eyes into his; nor did he see how night came and enveloped the broad, wild desert of water in front of him. All that he saw was the hem of the water outlined by the surf which, when the tide was in, struck again and again with its heavy beat on the same spot in the dike and washed away the grass-line on its steep side before his very eyes.

After staring at it long he sometimes nodded his head slowly, or, without looking up, drew a soft line in the air with his hand as if he would thus give the dike a gentler slope. When it grew so dark that all earthly things vanished from his sight and only the tide continued to thunder in his ears, he got up and trotted home half wet through.

One evening when he came home in this state, his father, who was cleaning his measuring instruments, looked up and turned on him. "What have you been doing out there so long? You might have been drowned; the water is eating right into the dike today."

Hauke looked at him stubbornly.

"Don't you hear what I say? You might have been drowned."

"Yes," said Hauke; "but I didn't get drowned."

"No," replied the old man after a time and looked at him absent-mindedly—"not this time."

"But," went on Hauke, "our dikes are no good!"

“What’s that, boy?”

“The dikes, I say!”

“What about the dikes?”

“They’re no good, Father.”

The old man laughed in his face. “Is that so, boy? I suppose you are the child prodigy of Lübeck!”

But the lad would not allow himself to be confused. “The water-side is too steep,” he said; “if it should happen again as it has already happened more than once we may all drown in here, behind the dike too.”

The old man pulled his tobacco out of his pocket, twisted off a piece and pushed it in behind his teeth. “And how many barrows did you wheel today?” he asked crossly, for he saw that working at the dike could not cure the boy of working with his mind.

“I don’t know, Father; about the same as the others; perhaps half a dozen more. But—the dikes must be built different.”

“Good,” said his father with a laugh; “you may get to be dikegrave; then, build them different.”

“Yes, Father,” returned the boy.

The old man looked at him and swallowed once or twice; then he went out. He did not know what answer to give the lad.

When, at the end of October, work on the dike came to an end Hauke Haien still continued to find more pleasure in a walk out towards the north, to the sea, than in anything else. Just as the children of today look forward to Christmas, he looked forward to All Saints’ Day, when the equinoctial gales burst over the land, an occasion for lamentation in Friesland. In spite of wind and weather he was certain to be found at the time of the high spring tides lying out on the dike all by himself; and when the gulls shrieked, when the waves dashed high against the dike, and in rolling back washed out whole pieces of sod into the sea, Hauke’s angry laughter was something worth hearing.

“You can’t do anything right,” he shouted out into the noise, “just as people don’t know how to do anything!” And at last, often when it was quite dark, he would turn away from the broad, bleak expanse and trot home along the dike till he reached the low door under his father’s thatch, and his tall, overgrown figure slipped through and into the little room beyond.

Sometimes he brought a handful of clay with him. Then he sat down beside his father who had begun to let him go his own way, and, by the light of the thin tallow candle, kneaded all kinds of dike-models, laid them in a shallow dish of water and tried to imitate the way in which the waves washed out the bank. Or he took his slate and drew on it profiles of dikes on the water-side as he thought they ought to be.

It never entered his head to associate with the boys who had been his companions in school, and apparently they cared nothing about such a dreamer. When it came winter again and the frost had taken hold he wandered out along the dike farther than he had ever been before to where the ice-covered surface of the shoals stretched before him as far as the eye could reach.

In February, during continuous frost, dead bodies were found washed up on the shore; they had lain out by the open sea on the frozen shoals. A young woman who had seen them being carried into the village stood and chattered to old Haien: “Don’t think that they looked like people,” she exclaimed, “no, they looked like sea-devils! Big heads like this,” and she held up her hands with the fingers stretched out, far apart from each other, “black and wrinkled and shiny like freshly baked bread! And the crabs had nibbled them; the children screamed when they saw them.”

Such a description was not exactly new to old Haien. “They have probably been washing about in the sea since November,” he said indifferently.

Hauke stood beside them in silence. But as soon as he

could he crept away out to the dike; no one could say whether he wanted to hunt for more corpses or whether the horror that still hung about the now deserted spots where the others had been found attracted him. He ran on farther and farther till he stood all alone in the bleakness where only the winds swept across the dike and where there was nothing but the plaintive voices of the great birds as they wheeled quickly by. On his left lay the wide empty marsh, on the other side the never-ending shore with the great expanse of shoals now glistening with ice; it seemed as if the whole world lay in white death.

Hauke remained standing on the dike and his keen eyes glanced far in all directions; but there were no more dead to be seen; only where the invisible currents moved under it the ice field rose and sank like a stream.

He ran home; but on one of the following evenings he was out there again. The ice was now broken in places: clouds of smoke seemed to rise out of the cracks and above the whole surface of the shallows was spread a net of steam and fog that combined strangely with the dusk of the evening. Hauke gazed at it with fixed eyes, for dark figures moved up and down in the fog, and as he watched them they seemed to be as large as men. There, far away on the edge of the smoking fissures, they walked back and forth, full of dignity but with long noses and necks and odd, terrifying gestures; suddenly they began to jump up and down in an uncanny way, like imps, the big ones over the little ones and the little ones towards the others; then they spread out and lost all form.

“What of them? Are they the spirits of those who were drowned?” thought Hauke. “Ahoy!” he shouted loudly into the night; but the forms heeded him not, merely continued their strange doings.

Then he suddenly thought of the fearful Norwegian sea-ghosts about whom an old captain had once told him, who instead of a head and face had only a tuft of sea-grass on their necks; he did not run away however, but dug the

heels of his boots deep into the clay of the dike and gazed at the weird antics that went on before his eyes in the growing dusk. "Are you here with us too?" he asked in a hard voice. "You shall not drive *me* away."

Not till the darkness had covered everything did he start for home, walking with a stiff, slow step. But from behind him there seemed to come the whirring of wings and resounding laughter. He did not look round, neither did he quicken his step, and it was late when he reached home, but he is said never to have spoken to his father or anyone else of this experience. Only many years later, after God Almighty had laid the burden of an half-witted child upon him, he took the girl out on the dike with him at the same time of day and of the year and the same thing is said to have happened again out on the shallows. But he told her not to be afraid, those creatures were only herons and crows that looked so big and dreadful in the fog as they caught fish in the open cracks.

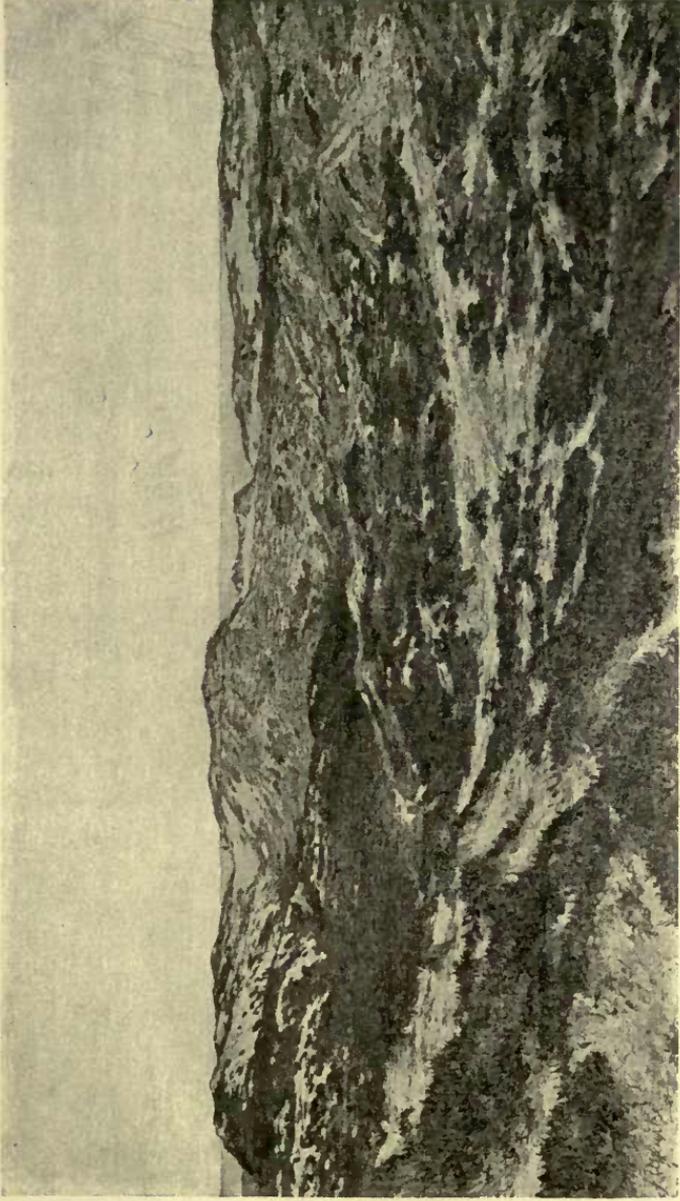
"God knows, Sir!" the schoolmaster interrupted himself; "there are all kinds of things in the world that may confuse an honest Christian's heart; but Hauke was neither a fool nor a dunce."

As I did not reply he was about to go on, but suddenly there was a stir among the other guests who hitherto had listened in silence, only filling the low room with dense tobacco smoke. First one or two, then nearly all of them turned towards the window. Outside—we could see through the uncurtained windows—the wind was driving the clouds, and light and darkness were madly intermingled; but it seemed to me, too, as if I had seen the haggard rider shoot by on his white horse.

"Wait a bit, Schoolmaster," said the dikegrave softly.

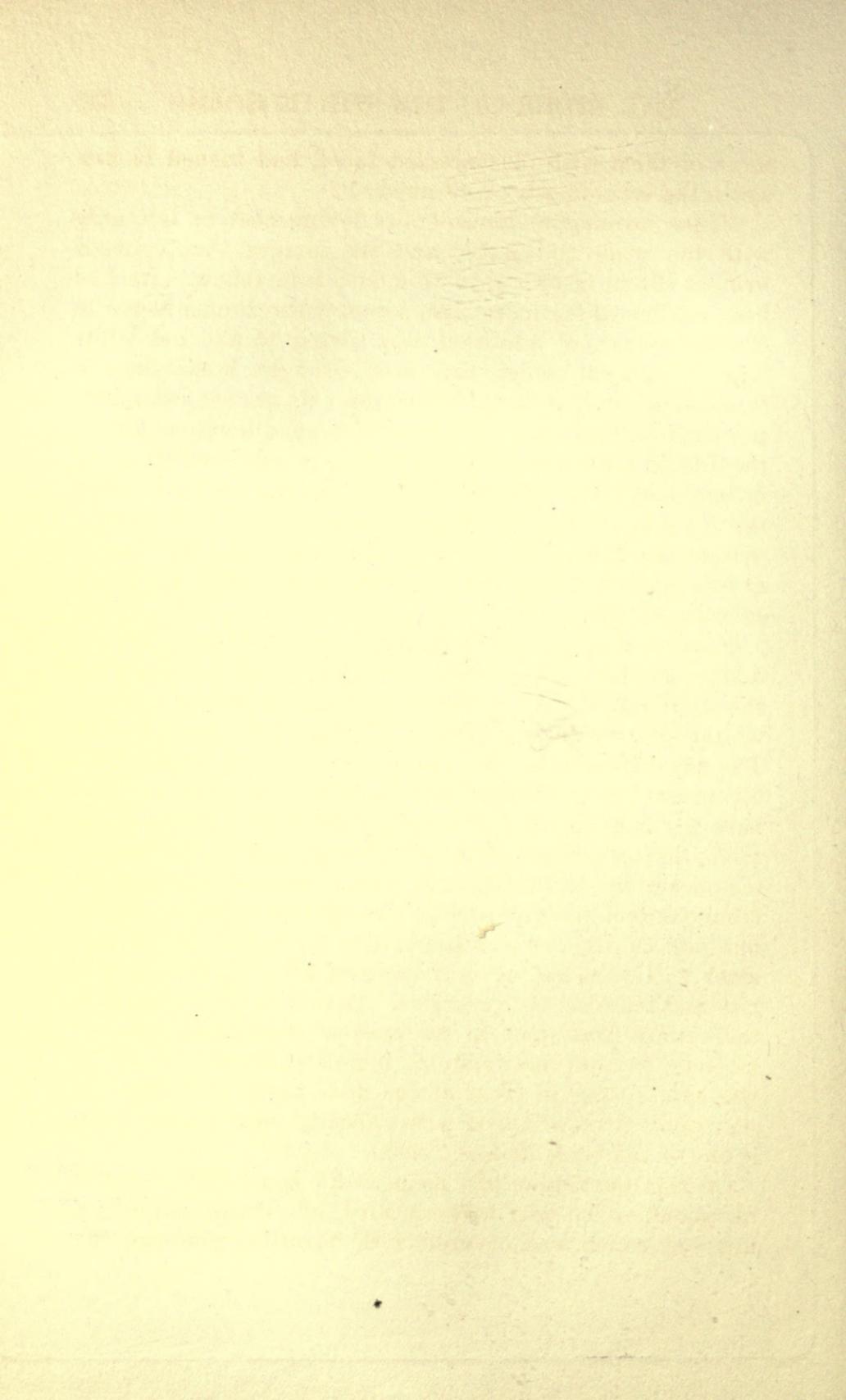
"You need not be afraid, Dikegrave," replied the little story-teller. "I have not slandered him and have no reason to do so," and he looked up at him with his wise little eyes.

"Well, well," said the other, "just let me fill your glass again." And after that had been done and the listeners,



JACOB ALBERTS

DUNES ON THE NORTH SEA



most of them with disconcerted faces, had turned to him again the schoolmaster continued:

“Thus keeping to himself and loving best to live only with the wind and water and the images that solitude brings, Hauke grew up to be a tall, lean fellow. He had been confirmed for more than a year when things began to change with him, and that was owing to the old white Angora tom-cat which had been brought home from a Spanish sea voyage to old Trien’ Jans by her son, who later perished on the flats. Trien’ lived a good distance out on the dike in a little cottage and when she was working about in her house this monster of a cat used to sit in front of the door and blink out at the summer day, and the lap-wings that flew by. When Hauke passed the cat mewed at him and Hauke nodded; they both knew what was going on between them.

Once, it was spring, and Hauke often lay out on the dike as was his habit, farther down nearer the water, among the shore-pinks and the sweet-smelling sea-wormwood, and let the sun, which was already strong, shine down on him. The day before, when he was on the uplands, he had filled his pockets with pebbles and when the low tide had laid bare the flats and the little gray sand-pipers hopped over them, piping as they went, he suddenly took a stone out of his pocket and threw it at the birds. He had practised this from childhood and generally managed to bring one down; but just as often it was impossible to go out on the mud after it; Hauke had often thought of bringing the cat with him and teaching it to retrieve. Here and there, however, there were firm spots in the mud or sandbanks and then he could run out and fetch his plunder himself. If the cat was still sitting in front of the door as he passed on his way home it mewed wild with rapacity until Hauke threw it one of the birds he had killed.

On this particular day as he went home, his jacket on his shoulder, he only had one bird, of a kind unknown to him but which was covered with beautiful plumage that

looked like variegated silk and burnished metal. The cat looked at him and begged loudly as usual. But this time Hauke did not want to give up his prey—it may have been a kingfisher—and paid no attention to the animal's desire. "Turn and turn about," he called to him, "my turn today, yours tomorrow; this is no food for a tom-cat!" But the cat crept up cautiously towards him; Hauke stood and looked at him, the bird hanging from his hand and the cat stopped with its paw raised. But Hauke seems not to have understood his friend thoroughly, for, as he turned his back on him and prepared to go on his way he felt his plunder torn from his grasp with a jerk, and at the same time a sharp claw dug into his flesh. A sudden fury like that of a beast of prey surged in the young fellow's blood; he grabbed madly about him and had the robber by the neck in a moment. Holding up the powerful creature in his fist he strangled it till its eyes obtruded from the rough hair, not heeding the strong hind claws that were tearing the flesh from his arm. "Ho, ho!" he shouted and gripped it still tighter; "we'll see which of us can stand it longest!"

Suddenly the hind legs of the great cat dropped lifelessly from his arm and Hauke went back a few steps and threw it towards the cottage of the old woman. As the cat did not move he turned and continued his way home.

But the Angora cat had been its mistress's treasure; it was her companion and the only thing that her son, the sailor, had left her when he came to his sudden end on the coast hard by, while trying to help his mother catch prawns in a storm. Hauke had scarcely taken a hundred steps, sopping up the blood from his wounds with a cloth as he went, when a loud outcry and lamentation from the direction of the cottage struck on his ear. He turned and saw the old woman lying on the ground in front of it while the wind blew her gray hair about the red handkerchief that covered her head. "Dead!" she shrieked, "dead!" and stretched out her thin arm threateningly towards him: "you shall be cursed! You killed him, you useless vaga-

bond; you weren't worthy to stroke his tail." She threw herself on the animal and gently wiped away with her apron the blood that flowed from its nose and mouth. Then she again began her loud lamentation.

"Will you soon be through?" called Hauke to her, "then let me tell you this: I will get you a tom-cat that is satisfied with the blood of rats and mice!"

With this he went on his way, not apparently paying heed to anything. But the dead cat must have confused his head all the same, for when he came to the village he went on past his father's house and all the others too, out a long way on the dike towards the south, where the town lies.

In the meantime Trien' Jans too wandered out in the same direction; she carried a burden in her arms wrapped in an old blue-checked pillow slip, holding it carefully as if it had been a child; and her gray hair blew about in the gentle spring breeze. "What are you carrying there, Trina?" asked a peasant who met her. "More than your house and home," she replied and went on eagerly. When she came near to old Haien's house, which stood down below, she turned down the "Akt" as we call the cattle-paths and footways that run up or down the side of the dike.

Old Tede Haien was just standing out in front of the door looking at the weather. "Well, Trien'!" he said as she stood before him, panting and digging the point of her stick into the ground. "What have you got new in your bag?"

"First let me come in, Tede Haien! Then I'll show you," she said with an odd gleam in her eyes.

"Come in then," said the old man. Why should he bother about the foolish woman's eyes?

And when they were both inside she went on: "Take the old tobacco box and writing things away from the table—what do you want to be always writing for? There! And now wipe it off nice and clean!" And the old man, who was beginning to be curious, did everything that she told

him. Then she took the blue pillow slip by the corners and shook the body of the great cat out on the table. "There you have him," she cried, "your Hauke has killed him." Whereupon she began to cry bitterly. She stroked the thick fur of the dead animal, laid its paws together, bowed her long nose over its head and whispered indistinct words of endearment into its ear.

Tede Haien watched the scene. "So," he said, "Hauke killed him?" He did not know what to do with the blubbering woman.

She nodded grimly: "Yes, by God, he did it!" and she wiped away the tears from her eyes with her gnarled gouty hand. "No child, nothing alive any more!" she sobbed. "And you know yourself how it is with us old ones, after All Saints' Day's over our legs freeze at night in bed and instead of sleeping we listen to the northwester rattling at the shutters. I don't like to hear it, Tede Haien, it comes from where my lad went down in the mud."

Tede Haien nodded and the old woman stroked her dead cat's coat. "And this one here," she began again, "in the winter when I sat at my work and the spinning wheel and hummed he sat beside me and hummed too and looked at me with his green eyes! And when I was cold and crept into bed—it was not long before he sprang up too and laid himself on my shivering legs and then we slept warm together!" And the old woman looked at the old man standing beside her at the table with smouldering eyes as if she wanted his assent to this memory.

But Tede Haien said slowly: "I know a way to help you, Trien' Jans." He went to his strong box and took a silver coin out of the drawer. "You say that Hauke has robbed you of your pet and I know that you don't lie; but here is a crownpiece of Christian IV.; go and buy yourself a dressed lambskin to keep your legs warm. Besides, our cat will soon have kittens and you may pick out the largest of them. The two together ought to make up for an Angora tom-cat that is weak with old age. And now take the creature and

carry it into town to the knacker, for aught I care, and hold your tongue about its having lain here on my respectable table!"

While he was speaking the woman had taken the crown and hidden it in a little bag that she wore under her skirts; then she stuffed the cat back into the pillow-case, wiped the spots of blood from the table with her apron and stumped out of the door. "Don't forget about the young kitten," she called back as she went.

Some time later, as old Haien was walking up and down in the little room, Hauke came in and threw his bright bird onto the table; but when he saw the blood-stains which were still recognizable on its white, scoured top he asked with apparent carelessness, "What's that?"

His father stood still. "That is the blood that you shed!"

The boy flushed hotly. "Oh, has Trien' Jans been here with her cat?"

The old man nodded. "Why did you kill it?"

Hauke bared his torn arm. "That's why," he said; "he snatched my bird away from me."

The old man said nothing. He began to walk up and down again for some time; then he stopped in front of his son and looked at him absently. "I have settled the matter of the cat," he said after a moment, "but you see Hauke, this cottage is too small; two masters can't *hold* it—it is time now, you must get yourself something to do."

"Yes, Father," replied Hauke; "I have thought the same myself."

"Why?" asked the old man.

"Well, a fellow boils within, if he has not enough to do to work it off."

"So," said the old man, "and that's why you killed the Angora? That might easily lead to something worse!"

"You may be right, Father; but the dikegrave has sent his servant-boy off; I could do that work."

The old man began to walk up and down again and

squirted a stream of black tobacco-juice from his mouth. "The dikegrave is a dunce, as stupid as an owl! He is only dikegrave because his father and grandfather were dike-graves before him and because of his twenty-nine fens. When Martinmas comes round and the dike and sluice accounts have to be made up he feeds the schoolmaster on roast goose and mead and wheat-cracknels, and just sits there and nods when the other man runs over the columns of figures and says: "Yes, indeed, Schoolmaster, may God reward you! What a man you are at figures!" But if at any time the schoolmaster can't or won't, then he has to do it himself and he sits and writes and crosses out again, and his big stupid head grows red and hot and his eyes stand out like glass balls as if what little brain he has was trying to get out there."

The boy stood up straight before his father and was amazed that he could make such a speech; he had never heard him talk like that before. "Yes, he is stupid enough, God knows," he said; "but his daughter Elke, she can figure!"

The old man looked at him sharply. "Oh ho, Hauke!" he exclaimed, "what do you know of Elke Volkerts?"

"Nothing, Father; only the schoolmaster told me so."

The old man made no answer to this; he merely shifted his tobacco quid slowly from one cheek to the other. "And you think," he said then, "that when you're there you will be able to help figure too."

"Oh, yes, Father, I could do that all right," answered the son and his mouth quivered with earnestness.

The old man shook his head: "Well, as far as I am concerned, you may try your luck!"

"Thank you, Father!" said Hauke, and went up to the attic where he slept. There he seated himself on the side of the bed and thought and wondered why his father had questioned him about Elke Volkerts. He knew her of course, the slender eighteen-year-old girl with the narrow, brown-skinned face and the dark brows that met above the

defiant eyes and narrow nose; but he had scarcely spoken a word to her till now. Well, if he should go to work for old Tede Volkerts he would look at her more closely to see what kind of a girl she was. And he would go right away so that no one else should get the place ahead of him, for it was still quite early in the evening. And so he put on his Sunday suit and best boots and started on his way in good spirits.

The long low house of the dikegrave could be seen from far away, for it stood on a high mound, and the highest tree in the village, a mighty ash, stood near it. In his youth the grandfather of the present dikegrave, the first one in the family, had planted such a tree to the east of the front door; but the first two saplings died and so, on his wedding morning, he had planted this tree which with its ever wider-spreading top still murmured in the unceasing wind, as it seemed, of by-gone days.

When, some time later, Hauke's tall, overgrown form ascended the high mound, the sides of which were planted with turnips and cabbages, he saw above him, standing beside the low door, the daughter of the master of the house. One of her somewhat thin arms hung loosely at her side, her other hand seemed to be feeling behind her for an iron ring, two of which were fastened to the wall, one on either side of the door, so that a rider coming to the house could tie up his horse. She seemed to be looking out over the dike to the sea where, in the still of evening, the sun was just sinking into the water and sending its last ray to gild the brown-skinned girl who stood there watching.

Hauke slackened his steps and thought to himself: "She does not look half bad that way!" And then he had already reached the top. "Good evening," he said going up to her, "what are your big eyes looking at now, Jungfer Elke?"

"At something that happens here every evening," she replied, "but which cannot always be seen every evening." She let the ring drop from her hand so that it fell back

clanging against the wall. "What do you want, Hauke Haien?" she asked.

"Something that I hope won't displease you," he said. "Your father has turned out his servant-boy so I thought I might get the place."

She looked him over from head to foot. "You still look rather too slight to be strong, Hauke," she said, "but two good eyes would serve us better than two good arms." She looked at him with an almost lowering glance as she spoke, but Hauke did not falter. "Come along then," she went on, "the master is in the house, let us go in."

The next day Tede Haien and his son entered the large room of the dikegrave. The walls were covered with glazed tiles on which to please the eye, there was here a ship under full sail or an anchor on the shore, there a recumbent ox before a peasant's house. This durable wall-covering was broken by an immense wall-bed, the doors of which were now closed, and a cupboard through the glass doors of which all sorts of china and silverware might be seen. Beside the door leading into the adjoining parlor a Dutch clock was let into the wall behind glass.

The stout, somewhat apoplectic, master of the house sat in an armchair on a bright-colored woolen cushion at the end of a table that had been scoured until it shone. His hands were folded over his stomach and his round eyes were contentedly fixed on the skeleton of a fat duck; knife and fork lay on a plate in front of him.

"Good day, Dikegrave," said Haien and the dikegrave slowly turned his head and eyes towards him. "Is it you, Tede?" he replied, and the fat duck he had just eaten had had its effect on his voice. "Sit down, it's a long way over here from your house to mine!"

"I've come," said Tede Haien, sitting down at right angles to the dikegrave on a bench that ran along the wall. "You've had trouble with your servant-boy and have agreed to take my boy in his place!"

The dikegrave nodded: "Yes, yes, Tede; but—what do you mean by trouble? We people from the marsh have something to take for that, thank God!" And he picked up the knife that lay before him and tapped the skeleton of the poor duck caressingly. "That was my favorite bird," he added with a comfortable laugh; "it would eat out of my hand!"

"I thought," said old Haien not hearing the last words, "that the fellow did a lot of mischief in the stable."

"Mischief? Yes, Tede; mischief enough, to be sure! The lazy mutton-head had not watered the calves, but he lay dead drunk in the hayloft and the creatures moomed with thirst the whole night, so that I had to lie in bed till noon to make up my sleep. No farm can go on that way!"

"No, Dikegrave, but there is no danger of that where my son is concerned."

Hauke stood against the door-post with his hands in his side pockets; he had thrown his head back and was studying the window casing opposite him.

The dikegrave raised his eyes and nodded to him: "No, no, Tede," and now he nodded to the old man too, "your Hauke will not disturb my night's rest; the schoolmaster has already told me that he would rather sit before a slate and reckon than over a glass of spirits."

Hauke did not listen to this speech of encouragement for Elke had come into the room and was clearing away the remains of the food from the table with her light, quick hands, glancing at him furtively with her dark eyes, as she did so. Now his glance too fell upon her. "By God," he said to himself, "she does not look half bad that way either."

The girl had left the room. "You know, Tede," the dikegrave began again, "God has denied me a son."

"Yes, Dikegrave, but do not let that trouble you," answered the other. "For the brains of a family are said to come to an end in the third generation; your grandfather,

as we all still know today, was the man who protected the land!"

After thinking for some moments the dikegrave looked almost puzzled. "How do you mean that, Tede Haien?" he asked, and sat upright in his armchair; "I am in the third generation myself."

"Oh, that's so! No offence, Dikegrave; that's just what people say." And Tede Haien with his lean form looked at the old dignitary with somewhat mischievous eyes.

The latter went on unconcernedly: "You must not let old women's talk put such foolishness as that into your head, Tede Haien; you don't know my daughter, she can figure two or three times as well as I myself! I only wanted to say that besides his work in the field your Hauke can gain considerable here in my room with pen or pencil and that won't do him any harm!"

"Yes, indeed, Dikegrave, that he will; there you're quite right!" said old Haien and began to arrange for several benefits to be included in his son's contract which had not occurred to the boy the evening before. Thus besides the linen shirts that Hauke was to receive in the autumn in addition to his wages, he was also to have eight pairs of woolen stockings; then he was to help his father with the work at home for a week in the spring and so on. The dikegrave agreed to everything; Hauke Haien seemed to be just the right man for him.

"Well, God have mercy on you, my boy," said the old man as soon as they left the house, "if you are to learn from him how the world goes!"

But Hauke answered quietly: "Let it be, Father; everything will turn out all right."

And Hauke was not wrong; the world, or what the world meant to him, did grow clearer to him the longer he stayed in that house. This was more the case perhaps, the less a superior judgment came to his aid, and the more he was obliged to depend on his own strength, on which he had been

accustomed to rely from the beginning. There was one person in the house to be sure whom he did not suit at all and that was Ole Peters, the head man, a capable workman but a fellow with a very ready tongue. The former lazy and stupid but stocky second man on whose back he had been able to load a whole barrel of oats and whom he could knock about as he chose had been more to his liking. He could not get at Hauke, who was much quieter and mentally far superior to him, in this way; for Hauke had such a very peculiar way of looking at him. Nevertheless he managed to find work for him which might have been dangerous to his body as it was not yet firmly knit, and when he said: "You should have seen fat Niss; it was all play to him!" Hauke took hold with all his strength and managed to do the job even though he had to overexert himself. It was fortunate for him that Elke was generally able to countermand such orders either herself or through her father. We may well ask ourselves what it is that sometimes binds perfect strangers to each other; perhaps—they were both born mathematicians and the girl could not bear to see her comrade ruined by doing rough work.

The breach between the head man and his subordinate did not grow better in winter when, after Martinmas, the different dike accounts came in to be examined.

It was on a May evening, but the weather was like November; inside the house the surf could be heard thundering out beyond the dike. "Here, Hauke," said the master of the house, "come in here; now you can show whether you can figure!"

"I have got to feed the yearlings first, Master," replied Hauke.

"Elke," called the dikegrave, "where are you, Elke? Go to Ole and tell him to feed the yearlings; Hauke must come and figure!"

And Elke hurried to the stable and gave the order to the head man, who was just occupied in putting away the harness that had been used that day.

Ole Peters took a snaffle and struck a post near which he was standing as if he would smash it to bits: "The devil take the damned scribbling farm-hand!" She overheard the words as she closed the stable-door behind her.

"Well?" asked her father as she came back into the room.

"Ole is going to do it," she answered biting her lips a little, and sat down opposite Hauke on a coarsely carved wooden chair such as at that time the people here used to make in their own homes during the winter evenings. She took out of a drawer a white stocking with a red-bird pattern on it and went on knitting; the long-legged creatures in the pattern might have been herons or storks. Hauke sat opposite her deep in his calculations, the dikegrave himself rested in his armchair, blinking now and then sleepily at Hauke's pen. As always in the dikegrave's house, two tallow-candles burned on the table and in front of the windows with their leaded glass the shutters were closed outside and screwed tight from within; the wind might bluster as it would. At times Hauke raised his head from his work and glanced for a moment at the stockings with the birds on them or at the narrow, quiet face of the girl.

All at once a loud snore came from the armchair and a glance and a smile flew back and forth between the two young people; then followed gradually quieter breathing; one might have begun a little conversation, only Hauke did not know how. But as she stretched out her knitting and the birds became visible in their entirety he whispered across the table:

"Where did you learn that, Elke?"

"Learn what?" the girl asked back.

"To knit birds?" asked Hauke.

"Oh, that? From Trien' Jans, out at the dike, she can do all sorts of things; she served here once in my grandfather's time."

"But you weren't born then, were you?" asked Hauke.

"No, I hardly think I was; but she often came to the house afterwards."

"Is she so fond of birds? I thought she only liked cats."

Elke shook her head. "She raises ducks, you know, and sells them; but last spring after you killed her Angora, the rats got at the ducks in the back of the duck-house. Now she wants to build another one at the front of the house."

"Oh!" said Hauke and gave a low whistle, drawing his breath in through his teeth, "That is why she has dragged all that clay and stone down from the upland. But if she does that she will build on the road on the inside of the dike; has she got a permit?"

"I don't know," said Elke; but Hauke had spoken the last word so loud that the dikegrave started up out of his slumber. "What permit?" he asked and looked almost wildly from one to the other. "What is the permit for?"

But when Hauke had explained the matter to him he tapped him on the shoulder laughing. "Well, well, the inside road is wide enough; God have mercy on the dikegrave if he has got to bother about every duckhouse as well!"

It made Hauke's heart heavy to think that he had been the means of delivering the old woman's ducklings up to the rats and he allowed himself to let the dikegrave's excuse stand. "But Master," he began again, "there are some that would be better off for just a little nip and if you don't want to do it yourself just give the commissioner a nudge who is supposed to see that the dike regulations are carried out."

"How, what's the lad saying?" and the dikegrave sat perfectly upright while Elke let her elaborate stocking fall and listened.

"Yes, Master," Hauke went on, "you have already had the spring inspection; but all the same Peter Jansen has not harrowed out the weeds on his piece till today. In summer the goldfinches will play merrily about the red thistle-blossoms there! And close beside it there's another piece—I don't know whom it belongs to—but there's a regular hollow in the dike on the outside. When the weather's

fine its always full of little children who roll about in it, but—God preserve us from high water!”

The old dikegrave's eyes had grown steadily bigger.

“And then,” began Hauke again.

“Well, and what else, young man?” asked the dikegrave; “haven't you done yet?” and his voice sounded as if his second man had already said too much to please him.

“Yes, and then, Master,” went on Hauke, “you know that fat girl Vollina, the daughter of Harders, the commissioner, who always fetches her father's horses home from the fens,—once she's up on the old yellow mare with her fat legs then it 's: ‘Cluck, cluck! Get up!’ And that's the way she always rides, right up the slope of the dike!”

Not till this moment did Hauke notice that Elke's wise eyes were fixed on him and that she was shaking her head gently.

He stopped, but the blow that the old man gave the table with his fist thundered in his ears. “The devil take it!” he roared, and Hauke was almost frightened at the bellow that filled the room. “She shall be fined! Make a note of it, Hauke, that the fat wench is to be fined! Last summer the hussy caught three of my young ducks! Go on, make a note of it,” he repeated when Hauke hesitated; “I think she really got four!”

“Oh, come, Father,” said Elke, “don't you think it was the otter that took the young ducks?”

“A giant otter!” the old man shouted snorting. “I think I know that fat Vollina from an otter! No, no, it was four ducks, Hauke. But as for the other things you've chattered about, last spring the chief dikegrave and I lunched together here in my house and then we went out and drove past your weeds and your hollow and we didn't see anything of the sort. But you two,” and he nodded significantly towards his daughter and Hauke, “may well thank God that you are not a dikegrave! A man's only got two eyes and he's supposed to use a hundred. Just run through the

accounts of the straw work on the dike, Hauke; those fellows' figures are often altogether too careless."

Then he lay back again in his chair, settled his heavy body once or twice and soon fell into a contented sleep.

Similar scenes took place on many an evening. Hauke had keen eyes and when he and the dikegrave were sitting together he did not fail to report this or that transgression or omission in matters relating to the dike, and as his master was not always able to shut his eyes, the management gradually became more active before anyone was aware of it, and those persons who formerly had kept on in their accustomed sinful rut, and now unexpectedly received a stroke across their mischievous or lazy fingers, turned round annoyed and surprised to see where it came from. And Ole, the head man, did not fail to spread the information far and near and thus to turn those circles against Hauke and his father, who, of course, was also responsible; but the others, on whom no hand descended or who were actually anxious to see the thing done, laughed and rejoiced that the young man had succeeded in poking the old one up a bit. "It is only a pity," they said, "that the fellow hasn't the necessary clay under his feet; then later on he'd make a dikegrave like those that we used to have; but the couple of acres that his father has would never be enough!"

When in the following autumn the chief dikegrave, who was also the magistrate for the district, came to inspect, he looked old Tede Volkerts over from top to toe while the latter begged him to sit down to lunch. "Upon my word, Dikegrave," he said, "it's just as I expected, you've grown ten years younger; you've kept me busy this time with all your proposals; if only we can get done with them all today!"

"We'll manage, we'll manage, your Worship," returned the old man with a smirk; "this roast goose here will give us strength; yes, thank God, I am always brisk and lively still!" He looked round the room to see if Hauke might

not perhaps be somewhere about; then he added with dignity; "and I hope to God to be spared to exercise my office a few years longer."

"And to that, my dear Dikegrave," replied his superior rising, "let us drink this glass together!"

Elke, who had arranged the lunch, was just going out of the room door with a soft laugh as the two men clinked their glasses together. Then she fetched a dish of scraps from the kitchen and went through the stable to throw them to the fowls in front of the outside door. In the stable she found Hauke Haien just pitching hay into the cows' cribs, for the cattle had already been brought in for the winter owing to the bad weather. When he saw the girl coming he let his pitchfork rest on the ground. "Well, Elke!" he said.

She stopped and nodded to him. "Oh, Hauke, you ought to have been in there just now!"

"Should I? Why Elke?"

"The chief dikegrave was praising the master!"

"The master? What has that got to do with me?"

"Well, of course, he praised the dikegrave!"

A deep red spread over the young man's face. "I know what you are driving at," he said.

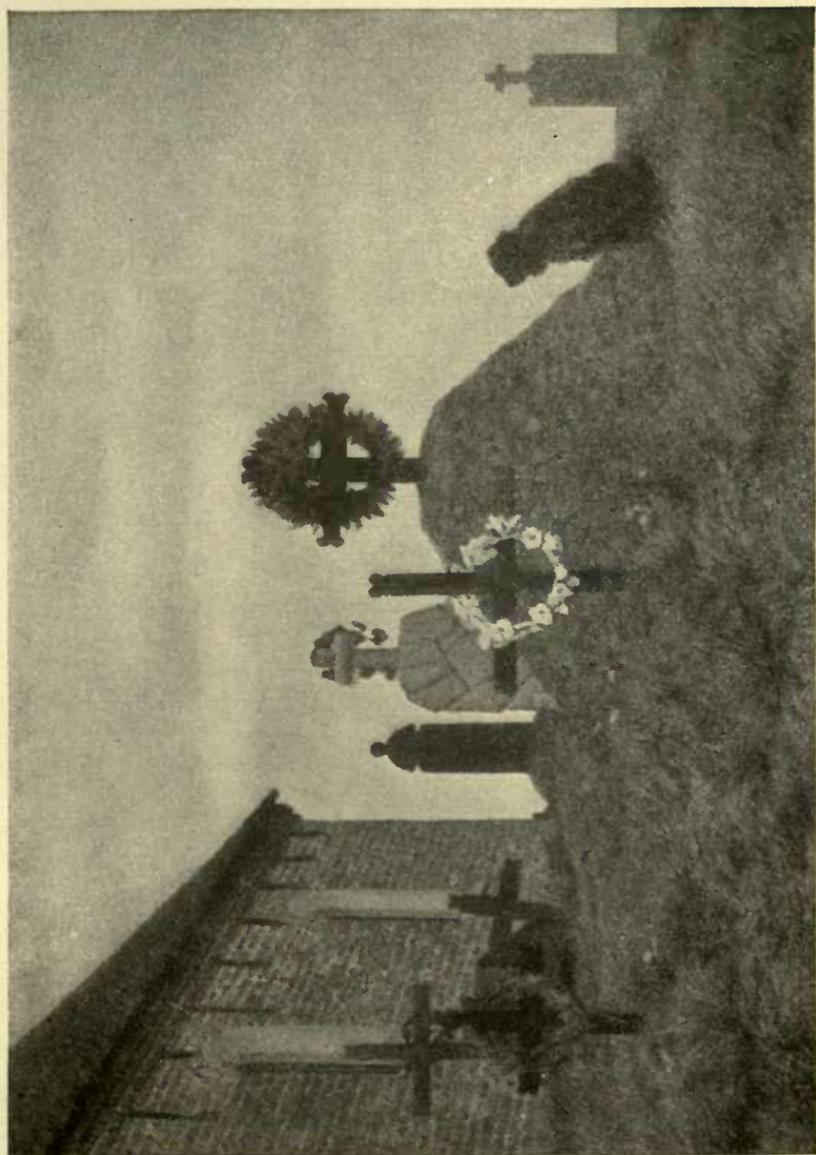
"You needn't blush, Hauke; after all it was you whom the chief dikegrave praised!"

Hauke looked at her half smiling. "But it was you too, Elke," he said.

But she shook her head. "No, Hauke; when I was the only one that helped he didn't praise us. And all I can do is to figure; but you see everything outside that the dikegrave ought to see himself; you have cut me out!"

"I didn't mean to, you least of all," said Hauke shyly, pushing aside one of the cows' heads. "Come, Spotty, don't eat up my fork; I'll give you all you want!"

"Don't think that I am sorry," said the girl after thinking a minute; "after all it's a man's business!"



JACOB ALBERTS

CHURCHYARD ON A NORTH SEA ISLAND

Hauke stretched out his arm towards her. "Give me your hand on it, Elke."

A deep scarlet shot up under the girl's dark brows. "Why? I don't lie," she cried.

Hauke was about to answer, but she was already out of the stable, and standing with the pitchfork in his hand he could only hear the ducks and hens outside quacking and cackling around her.

It was in January of the third year of Hauke's service that a winter festival was to be held. "Eisboseln" (winter golf) they call it here. There had been no wind along the coast and a steady frost had covered all the ditches between the fens with a firm, smooth crystal surface so that the divided pieces of land now formed an extensive course over which the little wooden balls filled with lead, with which the goal was to be reached, could be thrown. A light north-east breeze blew day after day. Everything was ready. The uplanders from the village lying to the east across the marsh and in which stood the church of the district, who had won the previous year, had been challenged and had accepted. Nine players had been picked out on each side. The umpire and the spokesmen had also been chosen. The latter, who had to discuss disputed points when a doubtful throw was in question, were generally men who knew how to present their case in the best light, usually fellows who had a ready tongue as well as common sense. First among these was Ole Peters, the dikegrave's head man. "See that you throw like devils," he said, "I'll do the talking for nothing."

It was towards evening of the day before the festival. A number of the players had gathered in the inside room of the parish tavern on the uplands, to decide whether or not a few applicants who had come at the last minute should be accepted. Hauke Haien was among the latter. At first he had decided not to try, although he knew that his arms were well trained in throwing. He feared that Ole Peters,

who held a post of honor in the game, would succeed in having him rejected and he hoped to spare himself such a defeat. But Elke had changed his mind at the eleventh hour. "He wouldn't dare to, Hauke," she said; "he is the son of a day laborer; your father has a horse and cow of his own and is the wisest man in the village as well."

"Yes, but what if he should do it in spite of that?"

She looked at him half smiling with her dark eyes. "Then," she said, "he'll get turned down when he wants to dance with his master's daughter in the evening." Thereupon Hauke had nodded to her with spirit.

Outside the tavern the young people, who still wanted to enter the game, were standing in the cold, stamping their feet and looking up at the top of the church-tower, which was built of stone and stood beside the public-house. The pastor's pigeons, which fed in summer on the fields of the village, were just coming back from the peasants' yards and barns where they had sought their grain and were now disappearing into their nests under the eaves of the tower. In the west, above the sea, hung a glowing evening crimson.

"It'll be good weather tomorrow!" said one of the young fellows walking up and down stamping, "but cold, cold!" Another, after he had seen the last pigeon disappear, went into the house and stood listening at the door of the room through which there now came the sound of lively conversation; the dikegrave's second man came and stood beside him. "Listen, Hauke, now they're shouting about you," and within they could distinctly hear Ole Peters' grating voice saying, "Second men and boys don't belong in it."

"Come," said the other boy and taking Hauke by the sleeve he tried to pull him up to the door. "Now you can hear what they think of you."

But Hauke pulled himself away and went outside the house again. "They didn't lock us out so that we should hear what they said," he called back.

The third applicant was standing in front of the house. "I'm afraid I shan't be taken without a hitch," he called

to Hauke, "I am hardly eighteen years old; if only they don't ask for my baptismal certificate! Your head man will talk you up all right, Hauke!"

"Yes, up and out!" growled Hauke and kicked a stone across the way, "but not in."

The noise inside increased; then gradually it grew still; those outside could hear again the gentle northeast wind as it swept by the top of the church tower. The boy who had been listening came back to the others. "Who were they talking about in there?" asked the eighteen-year-old boy.

"Him," the other answered and pointed to Hauke; "Ole Peters tried to make out he was still a boy, but they were all against that. And Jess Hansen said, 'and his father has land and cattle.' 'Yes, land,' said Ole Peters, 'land that could be carted away on thirteen barrows!' Finally Ole Hensen began to speak: 'Keep still there,' he called, 'I'll put you straight; tell me, who is the first man in the village?' They were all quiet a minute and seemed to be thinking, then someone said 'I suppose it's the dikegrave!' And all the others shouted, 'Well, yes; it must be the dikegrave!' 'And who is the dikegrave?' asked Ole Hensen again; 'and now think carefully!' Then one of them began to laugh softly and then another until at last the whole room was just full of laughter. 'Well, go call him then,' said Ole Hensen; 'you surely don't want to turn away the dikegrave from your door!' I think they're still laughing; but you can't hear Ole Peters' voice any more!" the boy finished his report.

Almost at that moment the door of the room inside was flung open and loud, merry cries of "Hauke! Hauke Haien!" rang out into the cold night.

So Hauke went into the house and did not stop to hear who the dikegrave was; what had been going on in his head during these moments nobody ever knew.

When, some time later, he approached his master's house he saw Elke standing down at the gate of the carriage-

drive. The moonlight glistened over the immeasurable white-frosted pasture-land. "Are you standing here, Elke?" he asked.

She only nodded: "What happened?" she said. "Did he dare?"

"What would he not do?"

"Well, and?"

"It's all right, Elke. I can try tomorrow."

"Good-night, Hauke!" and she ran lightly up the mound and disappeared into the house.

Hauke followed her slowly.

On the following afternoon a dark mass of people was seen on the broad pasture-land that ran along towards the east on the land side of the dike. Sometimes the mass stood still, then, after a wooden ball had twice flown from it over the ground which the sun had now freed from frost, it moved gradually forward away from the long, low houses that lay behind it. The two parties of winter golfers were in the middle, surrounded by all the young and old who were living or staying either in these houses or on the uplands. The older men were in long coats, smoking their short pipes with deliberation, the women in shawls and jackets, some of them leading children by the hand or carrying them in their arms. Out of the frozen ditches which were crossed one after another the pale shine of the noonday sun sparkled through the sharp points of the reeds; it was freezing hard. But the game went on uninterruptedly, and all eyes followed again and again the flying wooden ball, for the whole village felt that on it hung the honor of the day. The spokesman of the home side carried a white staff with an iron point, that of the upland party a black one. Wherever the ball ceased rolling this staff was driven into the frozen ground amid the quiet admiration or the mocking laughter of the opposing party and whoever first reached the goal with his ball won the game for his side.

There was very little conversation in the crowd; only when a capital cast was made the young men or women

sometimes broke into a cheer, or one of the old men took his pipe out of his mouth and tapped the thrower with it on the shoulder, saying, "That was a throw, said Zacharias, and threw his wife out of the attic window," or "That's how your father used to throw, may God have mercy on his soul!" or some other pleasant words.

The first time he cast luck had not been with Hauke; just as he threw his arm out behind him to hurl the ball a cloud which had covered the sun till then passed away from it and the dazzling rays struck him full in the eyes; his cast was too short, the ball fell on a ditch and stuck in the uneven ice.

"That doesn't count! That doesn't count! Throw again, Hauke!" shouted his partners.

But the uplanders' spokesman objected: "It must count. What's cast is cast."

"Ole! Ole Peters!" shouted the men from the marsh. "Where is Ole? Where the devil can he be?"

But he was there already. "Don't shout so! Is there something wrong with Hauke? That's just how I thought it would be."

"Oh, nonsense! Hauke must throw again; now show that you've got your mouth in the right place."

"I certainly have that!" shouted Ole, and he went up to the other spokesman and made a long harangue. But the sharp cuts and witty points that usually filled his speech were lacking this time. At his side stood the girl with the enigmatical brows and watched him sharply with angry eyes; but she might not speak for the women had no voice in the game.

"You're talking nonsense," shouted the other spokesman, "because reason is not on your side. Sun, moon and stars treat us all alike and are in the sky all the time; it was a clumsy cast and all clumsy casts count!"

Thus they talked at each other for a while, but the end of it was that, according to the umpire's decision, Hauke was not allowed to repeat his cast.

“Forward!” cried the uplanders and their spokesman pulled the black staff out of the ground and the next player took his stand there when his number was called and hurled the ball forward. In order to see the throw the dikegrave’s head man was obliged to pass Elke Volkerts. “For whose sake did you leave your brains at home today?” she whispered to him.

He looked at her almost fiercely and all trace of fun disappeared from his broad face. “For your sake,” he said, “for you have forgotten yours too.”

“Oh, come! I know you, Ole Peters!” answered the girl drawing herself up, but he turned his head away and pretended not to hear.

And the game and the black staff and the white one went on. When Hauke’s turn to throw came again his ball flew so far that the goal, a large whitewashed hogshead, came plainly into sight. He was now a solidly built young fellow and mathematics and throwing had occupied him daily since he was a boy. “Oh ho! Hauke!” the crowd shouted; “the archangel Michael could not have done better himself!” An old woman with cakes and brandy made her way through the crowd to him; she poured out a glass and offered it to him: “Come,” she said, “let us be friends; you are doing better today than when you killed my cat!” As he looked at her he saw that it was Trien’ Jans. “Thank you, Mother,” he said; “but I don’t drink that stuff.” He felt in his pockets and pressed a newly coined mark-piece into her hand. “Take that and drink this glass yourself, Trien’; then we shall be friends again!”

“You’re right, Hauke!” returned the old woman obeying him. “You’re right; it is better for an old woman like me than for you!”

“How are you getting on with your ducks?” he called after her as she was going away with her basket; but she only shook her head without turning round and clapped her old hands in the air. “It’s no good, Hauke; there are too

many rats in your ditches; God have mercy on me! I must find some other way of earning my bread." And with this she pushed her way into the crowd again, offering her spirits and honey-cakes as she went.

At last the sun had sunk behind the dike and in its place had left a reddish violet glow that flamed up into the sky; now and then black crows flew by and seemed for the moment to be of gold; it was evening. On the fields however the dark crowd of people kept on moving farther and farther away from the black houses in the distance behind them towards the hogshead; an exceptionally good cast might reach it now. It was the marsh party's turn and Hauke was to throw.

The chalky hogshead stood out white in the broad shadows that now fell from the dyke across the course. "You'll have to leave it to us, this time!" cried one of the uplanders, for the contest was hot and they were at least ten feet in advance.

Hauke's tall, lean figure stepped out of the crowd; the gray eyes in his long Friesian face were fixed on the hogshead; his hand, which hung at his side, held the ball.

"The bird's too big for you, eh?" came the grating voice of Ole Peters close to his ear, "shall we exchange it for a gray pot?"

Hauke turned and looked at him steadily. "I'm throwing for the marsh," he said. "Where do you belong?"

"To the marsh too, I imagine; but you are throwing for Elke Volkerts, eh?"

"Stand aside!" shouted Hauke and took his position again. But Ole pressed forward with his head still nearer to him. Then suddenly, before Hauke himself could do anything, a hand gripped the intruder and pulled him backwards so that he stumbled against his laughing comrades. It was not a large hand that did so, for as Hauke hastily turned his head he saw Elke Volkerts beside him pulling her sleeve to rights, and her dark brows were drawn angrily across her hot face.

The power of steel shot into Hauke's arm; he bent forward a little, weighed the ball in his hand once or twice, then he drew his arm back and a dead silence fell on both sides; all eyes followed the flying ball, it could be heard whistling through the air; suddenly, far away from the spot where it was thrown, the silver wings of a gull hid it as, shrieking, the bird flew across from the dike. But at the same moment it was heard in the distance striking against the hogshead. "Hurrah for Hauke!" shouted the marshlanders and the news ran loudly through the crowd: "Hauke! Hauke Haien has won the game!"

But Hauke himself as they all crowded about him had only felt for a hand at his side and even when they called again: "What are you waiting for, Hauke? Your ball is lying in the hogshead!" he only nodded and did not move from the spot; not until he felt the little hand clasp his firmly did he say: "I believe you're right; I think I've won!"

Then the whole crowd streamed back and Elke and Hauke were separated and swept along by the crowd towards the tavern on the road that turned up by the dike-grave's mound towards the uplands. But here they both escaped and while Elke went up to her room Hauke stood at the back, in front of the stable door and watched the dark mass of people wandering up to the tavern, where a room was ready for the dancers. Night gradually fell over the open country; it grew stiller and stiller about him, only behind him he could hear the cattle moving in the stable; he fancied he could already catch the sound of the clarinets in the tavern on the uplands. All at once he heard the rustle of a gown round the corner of the house and firm little steps went down the footway that led through the fens up onto the uplands. Now, in the dusk, he could see the figure swinging along and he knew that it was Elke; she too was going to the dance in the tavern. The blood rushed up into his throat; should he not run after her and go with her? But Hauke was no hero where women were con-

cerned; weighing this question he remained standing till she had disappeared from his sight in the dark.

Then, when the danger of overtaking her had passed, he too went the same way till he reached the tavern up by the church, and the talking and shouting of the crowd before the house and in the passage, and the shrill tones of the violins and clarinets within, surrounded him with a deafening noise. Unnoticed he made his way into the "guild-hall." It was not large and was so full that he could scarcely see a step in front of him. In silence he stood leaning against the door-jamb and watched the moving throng; the people seemed to him like fools; he did not need to fear either that anyone would think of the struggle in the afternoon or of who had won the game an hour ago. Each man had eyes only for his girl and turned round and round with her in a circle. He was seeking for one only and at last—there she was! She was dancing with her cousin, the young dike commissioner—but she had already disappeared again and he could see only other girls from the marsh and the uplands for whom he cared nothing. Then suddenly the violins and the clarinets ceased and the dance was at an end; but already another was beginning. The thought passed through Hauke's mind whether Elke would really keep her word, if she might not dance past him with Ole Peters. He almost screamed at the idea; then—well, what would he do then? But she did not seem to be dancing this dance at all and at last it came to an end and another, a two-step, which was just beginning to be popular then, followed. The music started with a mad flourish, the young fellows rushed up to the girls, the lights on the walls flared. Hauke nearly dislocated his neck trying to distinguish the dancers; and there, the third couple, was Ole Peters and—but who was the girl? A broad fellow from the marsh stood in front of her and hid her face. But the dance went on madly and Ole and his partner circled out where he could see them. "Vollina! Vollina Harders!" Hauke almost shouted aloud and gave a sigh of

relief. But where was Elke? Had she no partner or had she refused them all because she did not want to dance with Ole? The music stopped again and then a new dance began but still he did not see her. There was Ole, still with his fat Vollina in his arms! "Well," said Hauke to himself, "it looks as if Jess Harders with his twenty-five acres would soon have to retire! But where is Elke?"

He left the door and pushed his way further into the room; suddenly he found himself standing before her as she sat with an older friend in a corner. "Hauke!" she exclaimed, raising her narrow face to look at him; "are you here? I didn't see you dancing!"

"I haven't danced," he replied.

"Why not, Hauke?" and half rising she added: "Will you dance with me? I wouldn't with Ole Peters; he won't come again!"

But Hauke made no move to begin. "Thank you, Elke," he said, "but I don't know how well enough; they might laugh at you; and then * * *" he broke off suddenly and looked at her with feeling in his gray eyes as if he must leave it to them to finish what he would say.

"What do you mean, Hauke?" she asked softly.

"I mean, Elke, that the day can have no happier ending for me than it has had already."

"Yes," she said, "you won the game."

"Elke!" he said with scarcely audible reproach.

A hot red flamed up into her face. "There!" she said, "what do you want?" and dropped her eyes.

A partner now came and claimed her friend and after she had gone Hauke spoke louder. "I thought I had won something better, Elke!"

Her eyes searched the floor a few seconds longer; then she raised them slowly and a glance, filled with the quiet strength of her being, met his and ran through him like summer warmth. "Do as your feeling tells you, Hauke," she said; "we ought to know each other!"

Elke did not dance again that evening and when they

went home they went hand in hand; from the sky above the stars sparkled over the silent marsh; a light east wind blew and made the cold severe, but the two walked on without many wraps as if spring had suddenly come.

Hauke had thought of something, to be used perhaps only in the uncertain future, but with which he hoped to celebrate a secret festival. Accordingly he went to town the next Sunday to the old goldsmith Andersen and ordered a thick gold ring. "Stretch out your finger till I measure it," said the old man and took hold of Hauke's third finger. "It's not as big as most of you people have," he went on. But Hauke said: "I'd rather you measured my little finger," and he held it out to him.

The goldsmith looked at him somewhat puzzled; but what did he care what the whim of a young peasant might be. "We'll probably find one among the ladies' rings," he said, and the blood mounted into Hauke's cheeks. But the ring fitted his little finger and he took it hastily and paid for it with bright silver. Then, with his heart beating loudly and as if it were a solemn act, he put it into his waistcoat pocket. And from then on he carried it there day by day with a restless yet proud feeling, as if his waistcoat pocket were made only to carry a ring in.

So he carried it for years, in fact, the ring had to leave that pocket for a new one; no opportunity to escape presented itself. It had indeed passed through Hauke's head to go straight to his master; after all, his father belonged in the village and held land there. But in his calmer moments he knew well that the old dikegrave would have laughed at his second man. And so he and the dikegrave's daughter lived on side by side, she in girlish silence, and yet both as if they walked hand in hand.

A year after the winter festival Ole Peters had left the dikegrave's service and married Vollina Harders; Hauke had been right; the old man had retired and instead of his fat daughter his brisk son-in-law now rode the yellow mare

to the fens and on his way back, it was said, always up the side of the dike. Hauke was now head man and a younger fellow had taken his former place. At first the dikegrave had not wanted to advance him. "He's better as second man," he had growled, "I need him here with my books!" But Elke had said, "Then Hauke would leave, Father!" That frightened the old man and Hauke had been made head man but he still kept on as before helping in the administration of the dike.

After another year had passed he began to talk to Elke about his father's growing feeble, and explained that the few days that the master allowed him in summer in which to help at home were no longer enough; the old man was overworking himself and he, Hauke, could not stand by and see it go on. It was a summer evening; the two were standing in the twilight under the great ash in front of the door of the house. For a time the girl looked up in silence at the bough of the tree; then she answered, "I did not want to say it, Hauke; I thought you would find the right thing to do yourself.

"Then I must go away out of your house," he said, "and cannot come again."

They were silent for a time and watched the sunset glow that was just sinking into the sea over behind the dike. "You must know best," she said; "I was at your father's this morning and found him asleep in his armchair; he had a drawing-pen in his hand and the drawing-board with a half finished drawing lay before him on the table. Afterwards he woke and talked to me for a quarter of an hour but only with difficulty, and then, when I was going, he clung to my hand as if he were afraid that it was for the last time; but * * *"

"But what, Elke?" asked Hauke, as she hesitated to go on.

A few tears ran down over the girl's cheeks. "I was only thinking of my father," she said; "believe me, it will be hard for him to lose you." And with an effort she

added: "It often seems to me as if he too were preparing for his end."

Hauke did not answer; it seemed to him as if the ring in his pocket suddenly moved but before he could suppress his indignation at this involuntary stir Elke went on: "No, don't be angry, Hauke! I trust and believe that even so you will not forsake us!"

At that he seized her hand eagerly and she did not draw it away. For some time longer the two stood there together in the growing dusk till their hands slipped apart and they went their different ways. A gust of wind struck the ash-tree and rustled through its leaves, rattling the shutters on the front of the house; but gradually the night fell and silence lay over the vast plain.

The old dikegrave yielded to Elke's persuasion and allowed Hauke to leave his service although the latter had not given notice at the proper time. Two new men had since been engaged. A few months later Tede Haien died, but before he died he called his son to his bed: "Sit down here beside me, child," he said in a feeble voice, "close beside me! You need not be afraid; the one who is with me is only the dark angel of the Lord who has come to call me."

And the grief-stricken son sat down close to the dark wall-bed: "Speak, Father, tell me all that you still have to say!"

"Yes, my son, there is still something," said the old man and stretched out his hands on the counterpane. "When you, only a half-grown boy, went into the dikegrave's service you had it in your mind to be a dikegrave yourself some day. You infected me with the idea and gradually I too came to think that you were the right man for that. But your inheritance was too small for you to hold such an office. I have lived frugally during the time you were in service. I thought to increase it."

Hauke pressed his father's hands warmly and the old man tried to sit up so that he could see him. "Yes, my

son," he said, "the paper is there in the top drawer of the strong chest. You know, old Antje Wohlers had a field of five and a half acres; but in her crippled old age she could not get on with the rent from it alone; so every Martinmas I gave the poor creature a certain sum and more too, when I had it; and for that she made over the field to me; it is all legally arranged. Now she too is lying at the point of death; the disease of our marshes, cancer, has overtaken her; you will not have anything more to pay!"

He closed his eyes for a time; then he added: "It isn't much; but still you will have more than you were accustomed to with me. May it serve you for your life in this world!"

Listening to his son's thanks the old man fell asleep. He had nothing more to attend to, and a few days later the angel of the Lord had closed his eyes forever, and Hauke came into his paternal inheritance.

On the day after the funeral Elke came to his house. "Thank you for looking in, Elke!" was Hauke's greeting.

But she answered: "I am not just looking in; I want to tidy the house a little so that you can live in comfort. With all his figures and drawings your father had not time to look about him much and death too brings confusion; I'll make it a little homelike for you again!"

He looked at her with his gray eyes full of trust: "Tidy up, then," he said; "I like it better too."

And so she began to clear up the room. The drawing-board which still lay there was dusted and put away in the attic. Drawing-pens, pencils and chalk were carefully locked away in a drawer of the strong chest. Then the young servant was called in and helped to move the furniture of the whole room into a different and better position so that there seemed to be more light and space. "Only we women can do that," said Elke, smiling, and Hauke, in spite of his grief for his father, looked on with happy eyes and helped too when it was necessary.

And when, towards twilight—it was at the beginning of

September—everything was as she wanted it for him, she took his hand and nodded to him with her dark eyes. “Now come and have supper with us; I had to promise my father to bring you back with me; then when you come home later everything will be ready for you.”

When they entered the spacious living-room of the dikegrave, where the shutters were already closed and the two lights burning on the table, the old man started to get up out of his armchair but his heavy body sank back again and he contented himself with calling out to his former servant: “That’s right, Hauke, I’m glad you’ve come to look up your old friends again! Just come nearer, nearer!” And when Hauke came up to his chair he took his hand in both his podgy ones and said: “Well, well, my boy, don’t grieve too much, for we must all die and your father was not one of the worst! But, come, Elke, bring the roast in; we need to strengthen ourselves! There is a lot of work ahead of us, Hauke! The autumn inspection is coming on; the dike and sluice accounts are piled as high as the house; then there’s the recent damage to the dike on the western koog—I don’t know which way to turn my head; but yours, thank God, is a good bit younger; you are a good lad, Hauke!”

And after this long speech in which the old man had laid bare his whole heart, he fell back in his chair and blinked longingly at the door through which Elke was just entering with the roast. Hauke stood beside him smiling. “Now sit down,” said the dikegrave; “we mustn’t waste time; this dish doesn’t taste good cold.”

And Hauke sat down; it seemed to him a matter of course that he should share in Elke’s father’s work. And when later the autumn inspection came and a few months more had been added to the year, he had really done the greater part of it.

The narrator stopped and looked about him. The shriek of a gull had struck the window and outside in the entrance

the stamping of feet was heard as if someone were shaking off the clay from his heavy boots.

The dikegrave and the commissioners turned their heads towards the door. "What is it?" exclaimed the former.

A stout man with a sou'wester on his head entered. "Sir," he announced, "we both saw it, Hans Nickels and I: the rider of the white horse has thrown himself into the water-hole!"

"Where did you see that?" asked the dikegrave.

"There is only the one hole; in Jansen's fen where the Hauke Haien Koog begins."

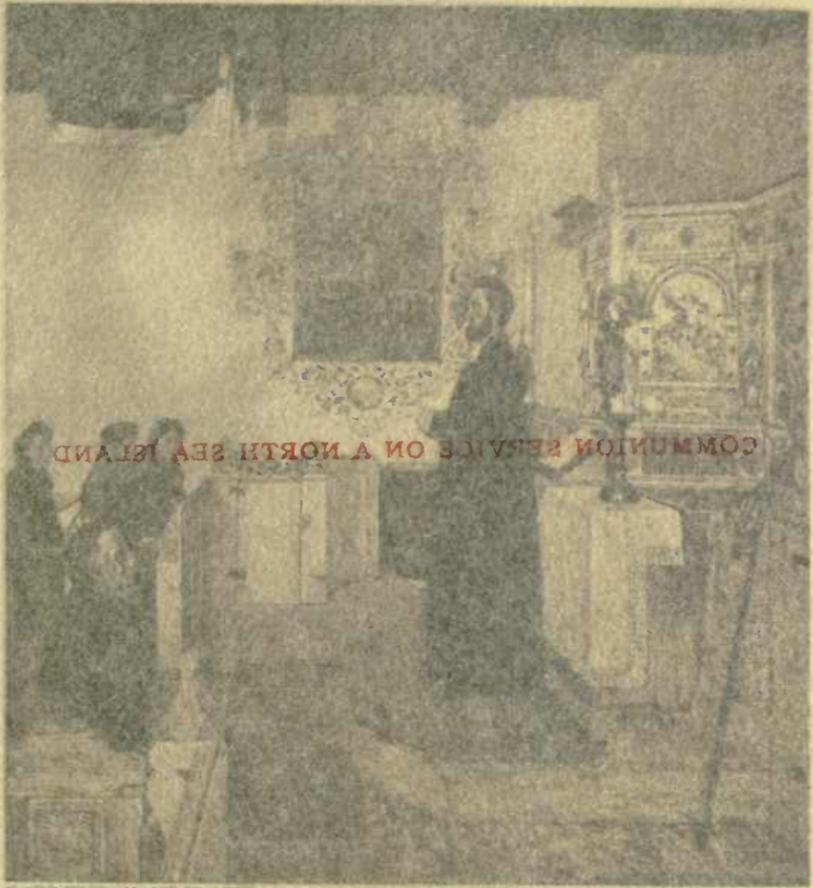
"Did you only see it once?"

"Only once; and it only looked like a shadow; but that doesn't mean that it was the first time."

The dikegrave had risen. "You will excuse me," he said, turning to me, "we must go out and see where the mischief is brewing." He went out with the messenger and the rest of the company rose too and followed him.

I was left alone with the schoolmaster in the large bare room; we now had a clear view through the uncurtained windows which were no longer hidden by people sitting in front of them, and could see how the wind was driving the dark clouds across the sky. The old man still sat in his place, a superior, almost compassionate smile on his lips. "It has grown too empty here," he said, "will you come upstairs with me to my room? I live here in the house, and, believe me, I know the weather here near the dike; we have nothing to fear for ourselves."

I accepted gratefully; for I too was beginning to feel chilly there, and after taking a light we climbed the stairs to an attic-room which did indeed look towards the west like the other, but whose windows were now covered with dark woolen hangings. In a bookcase I saw a small collection of books and beside it the portraits of two old professors; in front of a table stood a large easy-chair. "Make yourself at home," said my friendly host and threw a few pieces of peat into the still faintly burning stove,



From the Painting by Jacob Alberts

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COMMUNION SERVICE ON A NORTH SEA ISLAND

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on the top of which stood a tin kettle. "Just a few minutes! It will soon begin to sing and then I will brew a glass of grog for us; that will keep you awake."

"I don't need that," I answered; "I don't grow sleepy following your Hauke on his way through life."

"Really?" and he nodded to me with his wise eyes after I had been comfortably settled in his easy chair. "Let me see, where were we?— Oh yes, I know. Well then!"

Hauke had come into his paternal inheritance, and as old Antje Wohlers had also succumbed to her illness, her field had increased it. But since the death, or, rather, since the last words of his father, something had grown up in him, the seed of which he had carried in his heart since his boyhood; more than often enough he repeated to himself that he was the right man when there should have to be a new dikegrave. That was it. His father who surely understood it, who, in fact, had been the wisest man in the village, had, as it were, added these words to his inheritance as a final gift; Antje Wohlers' field, which he also owed to him, should form the first stepping-tone to this height. For, to be sure, a dikegrave must be able to point to far more extensive property than this alone. But his father had lived frugally for lonely years and had bought this new possession with the money thus saved; he could do that too, he could do more than that; for his father's strength had been gone, while he could still do the hardest work for years to come. Of course, even if he did succeed in that way, yet the keen edge that he had put on his old master's administration had not made friends for him in the village, and Ole Peters, his old antagonist, had lately come into an inheritance and was beginning to be a well-to-do man. A number of faces passed before his inward vision and they all looked at him with unfriendly eyes; then wrath against these people took hold of him and he stretched out his arms as if he would seize them; for they wanted to keep him from the office to which he alone was suited. And these thoughts did not leave him; they were always there and so

side by side with honor and love there grew up ambition and hatred in his young heart. But he hid them deep within him; even Elke did not suspect their existence.

With the coming of the New Year there was a wedding. The bride was a relative of the Haiens, and Hauke and Elke were both there as invited guests; in fact they sat side by side at the wedding breakfast owing to the failure of a nearer relative to come. Only the smile that passed over both their faces betrayed their joy at this. But Elke sat listless in the noise of the conversation and the clatter of glasses that went on about them.

“Is there something the matter?” asked Hauke.

“Oh, no, not really; there are only too many people here for me.”

“But you look so sad!”

She shook her head; then they were both silent again.

Gradually a feeling as if he were jealous because of her silence grew in him and he took her hand secretly under cover of the tablecloth; it did not start but closed confidently round his. Had a feeling of loneliness taken hold of her as she watched her father growing older and weaker day by day? Hauke did not think of putting this question to himself but he ceased to breathe now as he drew the gold ring from his pocket. “Will you leave it there?” he asked, trembling as he slipped it onto the third finger of her slender hand.

The pastor’s wife was sitting opposite them at the table; suddenly she laid down her fork and turned to her neighbor: “Good gracious, look at that girl!” she exclaimed, “she’s pale as death!”

But the blood was already coming back into Elke’s face. “Can you wait, Hauke?” she asked softly.

The prudent Friesian stopped to think for a moment. “For what?” he said then.

“You know well; I don’t need to tell you.”

“You are right,” he said; “yes, Elke, I can wait—if only the time’s within reason!”

“Oh God, I’m afraid it’s near! Don’t speak like that, Hauke, you are talking of my father’s death!” She laid the other hand on her breast: “Till then,” she said, “I will wear the ring here; never fear, you will never get it back as long as I live.”

Then they both smiled and his hand pressed hers so that at any other time the girl would have screamed aloud.

During this time the pastor’s wife had been looking steadily at Elke’s eyes which now burned as with dark fire beneath the lace edging of her little gold-brocaded cap. But the increasing noise at the table had prevented the older woman from understanding anything that was said; she did not turn to her neighbor again either, for budding marriages—and that is what this looked like to her—even if it were only because of the fee that budded for her husband at the same time, she was not in the habit of disturbing.

Elke’s premonition had come true. One morning after Easter the dikegrave Tede Volkerts had been found dead in his bed; his countenance bore witness to a peaceful end. He had often spoken in the previous months of being tired of life and had had no appetite for his favorite dish, a roast joint, or even for a young duck.

And now there was a great funeral in the village. In the burying ground about the church on the upland, lying towards the west, was a lot surrounded by an iron fence. In it the broad, blue grave-stone had been lifted up and was now leaning against a weeping ash. A figure of Death with a very full and prominent set of teeth had been chiseled on the stone and below stood in large letters:

Dat is de Dot, de allens fritt,
Nimmt Kunst un Wetenschop di mit;
De kloke Mann is nu vergān
Gott gāw em selik Uperstān.

This is Death who eats up all,
Art and science go at his call;
The clever man has left us forlorn
God raise him on resurrection morn!

This was the resting place of the former dikegrave, Volkert Tedsen. Now a new grave had been dug in which his son, the dikegrave Tede Volkerts, was to be laid. The funeral procession was already coming up from the marsh below, a throng of carriages from all the villages in the parish; the one at the head bore the heavy coffin, the two glossy black horses from the dikegrave's stables were already drawing it up the sandy slope to the uplands; the horses' manes and tails waved in the brisk spring breeze. The churchyard was filled to the walls with people, even on top of the brick gate boys squatted with little children in their arms; all were anxious to see the burying.

In the house down on the marsh Elke had prepared the funeral repast in the living-room and the adjoining parlor; old wine stood at every place; there was a bottle of Langkork for the chief dikegrave—for he too had not failed to come to the ceremony—and another for the pastor. When everything was ready she went through the stable out to the back door; she met no one on her way; the men had gone with the carriages to the funeral. There she stood, her mourning clothes fluttering in the spring breeze, and looked across to the village where the last carriages were just driving up to the church. After a while there was a commotion there and then followed a dead silence. Elke folded her hands; now they were probably lowering the coffin into the grave: "And to dust thou shalt return!" Involuntarily, softly, as if she could hear them from the churchyard she repeated the words; then her eyes filled with tears, her hands which were folded across her breast sank into her lap; "Our Father, who art in heaven!" she prayed with fervor. And when she had finished the Lord's prayer she stood there long, immovable, she, from now on the owner of this large lowland farm; and thoughts of death and of life began to strive within her.

A distant rumble roused her. When she opened her eyes she saw again one carriage following the other in rapid succession, driving down from the marsh and coming to

wards her farm. She stood upright, looked out once more with a keen glance and then went back, as she had come, through the stable and into the solemnly prepared living rooms. There was no one here either, only through the wall she could hear the bustle of the maids in the kitchen. The banquet table looked so still and lonely; the mirror between the windows was covered with white cloth, so were the brass knobs of the warming-oven; there was nothing to shine in the room any more. Elke noticed that the doors of the wall-bed in which her father had slept for the last time were open and she went over and closed them tight; absently she read the words painted on them in gold letters among the roses and pinks:

“Hest du din Dågwerk richtig dan
Da kommt de Slåp von sülvst heran.”

If you have done your day's work right
Sleep will come of itself at night.

That was from her grandfather's time! She glanced at the cupboard; it was almost empty but through the glass-doors she could see the cut-glass goblet which, as he had been fond of telling, her father had won once in his youth tilting in the ring. She took it out and stood it at the chief dikegrave's place. Then she went to the window, for already she could hear the carriages coming up the drive. One after another stopped in front of the house, and, more cheerful than when they first came, the guests now sprang down from their seats to the ground. Rubbing their hands and talking, they all crowded into the room; it was not long before they had all taken their places at the festive table on which the well-cooked dishes were steaming, the chief dikegrave and the pastor in the parlor; noise and loud conversation ran along the table as if the dreadful silence of death had never hovered here. Silently, her eyes on her guests, Elke went round with the maids among the tables to see that nothing was missing. Hauke Haien too sat in the living-room besides Ole Peters and other small landowners.

After the meal was over the white clay pipes were fetched out of the corner and lighted and Elke was busy again passing the coffee cups to her guests, for she did not spare with that either today. In the living-room, at her father's desk, the chief dikegrave was standing in conversation with the pastor and the white-haired dike commissioner Jewe Manners. "It is all very well, Gentlemen," said the former, "we have laid the old dikegrave to rest with honors; but where shall we find a new one? I think, Manners, you will have to take the dignity upon you!"

Smiling, the old man raised the black velvet cap from his white hair: "The game would be too short, Sir," he said; "when the deceased Tede Volkerts was made dikegrave, I was made commissioner and I have been it now for forty years!"

"That is no fault, Manners; you know the dike affairs so much the better and will have no trouble with them!"

But the old man shook his head: "No, no, your Grace, leave me where I am and I can keep on in the game for another few years yet!"

The pastor came to his aid. "Why," he said, "do we not put into office the man who has really exercised it in the last years?"

The chief dikegrave looked at him. "I don't understand you, pastor."

The pastor pointed into the parlor where Hauke seemed to be explaining something to two older men in a slow earnest way. "There he stands," he said, "the tall Friesian figure with the clever gray eyes beside his lean nose and the two bumps in his forehead above them! He was the old man's servant and now has a little piece of his own; of course, he is still rather young!"

"He seems to be in the thirties," said the chief dikegrave, measuring Hauke with his eyes.

"He is scarcely twenty-four," returned Commissioner Manners; "but the pastor is right; all the good proposals for the dike and drain work and so on that have come from

the dikegrave's office during the last years have come from him; after all, the old man didn't amount to much towards the end."

"Indeed?" said the chief dikegrave; "and you think that he would be the man now to move up into his old master's place?"

"He would be the man," answered Jewe Manners; "but he lacks what we call here 'clay under his feet'; his father had about fifteen, he may have a good twenty acres; but no one here has ever been made dikegrave on that."

The pastor opened his mouth as if he were about to speak, when Elke Volkerts, who had been in the room for some little time, suddenly came up to them. "Will your Grace allow me a word?" she said to the chief officer, "it is only so that an error may not lead to a wrong!"

"Speak out, Miss Elke!" he answered; "wisdom always sounds well from a pretty girl's mouth."

"—It is not wisdom, your Grace; I only want to tell the truth."

"We ought to be able to listen to that too, Jungfer Elke."

The girl's dark eyes glanced aside again as if she wanted to reassure herself that no superfluous ears were near. "Your Grace," she began then, and her breast rose with strong emotion, "my godfather, Jewe Manners, told you that Hauke Haien only possesses about twenty acres, and that is true for the moment; but as soon as is necessary Hauke will have as many more acres as there are in my father's farm which is now mine; this with what he now has ought to be * * *"

Old Manners stretched his white head towards her as if he were looking to see who it was that spoke. "What's that?" he said, "what are you saying, child?"

Elke drew a little black ribbon out of her bodice with a shining gold ring on the end of it. "I am engaged, Godfather," she said; "here is the ring, and Hauke Haien is my betrothed."

“And when—I suppose I may ask since I held you at the font, Elke Volkerts—when did this happen?”

“It was some time ago, but I was of age, Godfather Manners,” she said; “my father was already growing feeble and, as I knew him, I did not want to trouble him with it; now that he is with God he will see that his child is well cared for with this man. I should have said nothing about it till my year of mourning was over, but now, for Hauke’s sake and on account of the koog, I have had to speak.” And turning to the chief dikegrave she added: “Your Grace will pardon me, I hope!”

The three men looked at one another. The pastor laughed, the old commissioner contented himself with murmuring “Hum, hum!” while the chief dikegrave rubbed his forehead as if he were concerned with an important decision. “Yes, my dear girl,” he said at last, “but how is it with the matrimonial property rights here? I must confess I am not thoroughly at home in these complicated matters.”

“That is not necessary, your Grace,” answered the dikegrave’s daughter, “I will transfer the property to Hauke before the marriage. I have my own little pride,” she added, smiling; “I want to marry the richest man in the village!”

“Well, Manners,” said the pastor, “I suppose that you, as godfather, will have no objection when I unite the young dikegrave and the daughter of the old one in marriage!”

The old man shook his head gently. “May God give them his blessing!” he said, devoutly.

But the chief dikegrave held out his hand to the girl. “You have spoken truly and wisely, Elke Volkerts; I thank you for your forceful explanations and I hope also in the future and on more joyous occasions than this to be the guest of your house; but—the most wonderful thing about it all is that a dikegrave should be made by such a young woman.”

“Your Grace,” replied Elke, who looked at his kindly

face again with her serious eyes, "the right man may well be helped by his wife!" Then she went into the adjoining parlor and silently laid her hand in Hauke Haien's.

It was several years later. Tede Haien's little house was now occupied by an active workman with his wife and children. The young dikegrave Hauke Haien lived with his wife in what had been her father's house. In summer the mighty ash rustled in front of the house as before; but on the bench which now stood beneath it generally only the young wife was to be seen in the evening sitting alone with her sewing or some other piece of work. There was still no child in this home and Hauke had something else to do than to spend a leisure evening in front of the house, for in spite of the help he had given the old dikegrave the latter had bequeathed to him a number of unsettled matters pertaining to the dike, matters with which Hauke had not liked to meddle before; but now they must all gradually be cleared up and he swept with a strong broom. Then came the management and work of the farm itself, increased as it was by the addition of his own property, and moreover he was trying to do without a servant boy. And so it happened that, except on Sunday when they went to church, he and Elke saw each other only at dinner, when Hauke was generally hurried, and at the beginning and end of the day; it was a life of continuous work and yet a contented one.

And then the tongues of the busy-bodies disturbed the peace. One Sunday after church a somewhat noisy gang of the younger landowners in the marsh and upland districts were sitting drinking in the tavern on the uplands. Over the fourth or fifth glass they began to talk, not indeed about the king and the government—no one went so high in those days—but about the municipal officials and their superiors and above all about the municipal taxes and assessments, and the longer they talked the less they were satisfied with them, least of all with the new dike assess-

ments; all the drains and sluices which had hitherto been all right now needed repairs; new places were always being found in the dike that needed hundreds of barrows of earth; the devil take it all!

"That's your clever dikegrave's doing," shouted one of the uplanders, "who always goes about thinking and then puts a finger into every pie."

"Yes, Marten," said Ole Peters, who sat opposite the speaker; "you're right, he's tricky and is always trying to get into the chief dikegrave's good books; but we've got him now."

"Why did you let them load him onto you?" said the other; "now you've got to pay for it."

Ole Peters laughed. "Yes, Marten Fedders, that's the way it goes with us here and there's nothing to be done. The old dikegrave got the office on his father's account; the new one on his wife's." The laughter that greeted this sally showed how it pleased the company.

But it was said at a public house table and it did not stop there; soon it went the rounds on the uplands as well as down on the marshes; thus it came to Hauke's ears too. And again all the malicious faces passed before his inward eye and when he thought of the laughter at the tavern table it sounded more mocking than it had been in reality. "The dogs!" he shouted and looked wrathfully to one side as if he would have had them thrashed.

At that Elke laid her hand on his arm: "Never mind them! They would all like to be what you are!"

"That's just it," he answered rancorously.

"And," she went on, "did not Ole Peters himself marry money?"

"That he did, Elke; but what he got when he married Vollina was not enough to make him dikegrave!"

"Say rather; he was not enough himself to become dikegrave!" And Elke turned her husband round so that he looked at himself in the mirror, for they were standing between the windows in their room. "There stands the

dikegrave," she said; "now look at him; only he who can exercise an office holds one!"

"You are not wrong there," he answered, thinking, "and yet * * * Well, Elke, I must go on to the eastern sluice; the gates don't lock again."

She pressed his hand. "Come, look at me a minute first! What is the matter with you, your eyes look so far away?"

"Nothing, Elke; you're right."

He went; but he had not been gone long when he had forgotten all about the repairs to the sluice. Another idea which he had half thought out and had carried about with him for years, but which had been pushed into the background by urgent official duties, now took possession of him anew and more powerfully than before as if suddenly it had grown wings.

Hardly realizing where he was going he found himself up on the seaward dike, a good distance to the south, towards the town; the village that lay out in this direction had long disappeared on his left; still he went on, his gaze turned towards the water-side and fixed steadily on the broad stretch of land in front of the dikes; anyone with him could not have helped seeing what absorbing mental work was going on behind those eyes. At last he stopped; there the foreland narrowed down to a little strip along the dike. "It must be possible," he said to himself. "Seven years in office! they shan't say again that I am dikegrave only on my wife's account!"

Still he stood and his keen glance swept carefully over the green foreland in all directions; then he went back to where another small strip of green pasture-land took the place of the broad expanse lying before him. Close to the dike however a strong sea current ran through this expanse separating nearly the whole outland from the mainland and making it into an island; a rough wooden bridge led across to it so that cattle or hay and grain carts could pass over. The tide was low and the golden September sun glistened

on the bare strip of mud, perhaps a hundred feet wide, and on the deep water-course in the middle of it through which the sea was even now running. "That could be dammed," said Hauke to himself after watching it for some time. Then he looked up and, in imagination, drew a line from the dike on which he stood, across the water-course, along the edge of the island, round towards the south and back again in an easterly direction across the water-course and up to the dike. And this invisible line which he now drew was a new dike, new too in the construction of its profile which till now had existed only in his head.

"That would give us about a thousand acres more of reclaimed land," he said, smiling to himself; "not exactly a great stretch, but still——"

Another calculation absorbed him. The outland here belonged to the community, its members each holding a number of shares according to the size of their property in the parish or by having legally acquired them in some other way. He began to count up how many shares he had received from his own, how many from Elke's father and how many he had bought himself since his marriage, partly with an indistinct idea of benefit to be derived in the future, partly when he increased his flocks of sheep. Altogether he held a considerable number of shares; for he had bought from Ole Peters all that he had as well, when the latter became so disgusted at losing his best ram in a partial inundation that he decided to sell. But that was a rare accident, for as far back as Hauke could remember only the edges were flooded even when the tides were unusually high. What splendid pasture and grain land it would make and how valuable it would be when it was all surrounded by his new dike! A kind of intoxication came over him as he thought of it, but he dug his nails into the palms of his hands and forced his eyes to look clearly and soberly at what lay before him. There was this great dikeless area on the extreme edge of which a flock of dirty sheep now wandered grazing slowly; who knew what storms and tides

might do to it even within the next few years; and for him it would mean a lot of work, struggle, and annoyance. Nevertheless, as he went down from the dike and along the foot-path across the fens towards his mound, he felt as if he were bringing a great treasure home with him.

Elke met him in the hall; "How did you find the sluice?" she asked.

He looked down at her with a mysterious smile: "We shall soon need another sluice," he said, "and drains and a new dike!"

"I don't understand," replied Elke as they went into the room. "What is it that you want, Hauke?"

"I want," he said slowly and stopped a moment. "I want to have the big stretch of outland that begins opposite our place and then runs towards the west, all diked in and a well-drained koog made out of it. The high tides have left us in peace for nearly a generation, but if one of the really bad ones should come again and destroy the new growth, everything might be ruined at one blow; only the old slipshod way of doing things could have let it go on like that so long."

She looked at him in amazement. "Then you blame yourself!" she said.

"Yes, I do, Elke; but there has always been so much else to do."

"I know, Hauke; you have done enough!"

He had seated himself in the old dikegrave's easy-chair and his hands gripped both arms of it firmly.

"Have you the courage to do it?" asked his wife.

"Indeed I have, Elke," he said hastily.

"Don't go too fast, Hauke; that is an undertaking of life and death and they will nearly all be against you; you will get no thanks for all your trouble and care!"

He nodded: "I know!" he said.

"And suppose it doesn't succeed!" she exclaimed again; "ever since I was a child I have heard that that water-

course could not be stopped and therefore it must never be touched."

"That is simply a lazy man's excuse," said Hauke; "why should it be impossible to stop it?"

"I never heard why; perhaps because it flows through so straight; the washout is too strong." Suddenly a memory came back to her and an almost roguish smile dawned in her serious eyes. "When I was a child," she said, "I heard the hired men talking about it once; they said that the only way to build a dam there that would hold was to bury something alive in it while it was being made; when they were building a dike on the other side—it must have been a hundred years ago—a gypsy child that they bought from its mother at a high price had been thrown into it and buried alive; but now probably no one would sell her child."

Hauke shook his head. "Then it is just as well that we have none, or they would probably require it of us!"

"They wouldn't get it!" said Elke, and threw her arms across her own body as if in fear.

And Hauke smiled; but she went on to another question: "And the tremendous expense! Have you thought of that?"

"Indeed I have, Elke; we shall gain in land much more than the expense of building the dike, and then too the cost of maintaining the old dike will be much less; we shall work ourselves and we have more than eighty teams in the parish and no lack of young hands. At least you will not have made me dikegrave for nothing, Elke; I will show them that I am one."

She had crouched down in front of him and was looking at him anxiously; now she rose with a sigh. "I must go on with my day's work," she said slowly stroking his cheek; "you do yours, Hauke."

"Amen, Elke," he said with an earnest smile; "there is work here for both of us!"

And there was work enough for both, though now the

husband's burden became even heavier. On Sunday afternoons and often late in the evening Hauke and a capable surveyor sat together, deep in calculations, drawings and plans; it was the same when Hauke was alone and he often did not finish till long after midnight. Then he crept into his and Elke's bedroom, for they no longer used the stuffy wall-beds in the living-room, and so that he might at last get some rest, his wife lay with closed eyes as if asleep although she had been waiting for him with a beating heart. Then he sometimes kissed her brow, whispering a word of endearment, and laid himself down to wait for the sleep which often did not come to him till cock-crow. During the winter tempests he would go out on the dike with paper and pencil in his hand and stand there drawing and making notes while a gust of wind tore his cap from his head and his long tawny hair blew across his hot face. As long as the ice did not prevent it he would take one of the men-servants and go out in the boat to the shallows and measure the depth of the currents there with a rod and plumb-line, whenever he was in doubt. Elke often trembled for him, but the only sign she showed of it when he came home again was the firmness of her hand-clasp or the gleaming light in her usually quiet eyes. "Have patience, Elke," he said once when it seemed to him that his wife did not want to let him go; "I must be perfectly clear about it myself before I make my proposal." At that she nodded and let him go. His rides into town to the chief dikegrave were no trifle either, and they and all the work of managing the house and farm were always followed by work on his papers late into the night. He almost ceased to associate with other people except in his work and business; he even saw less of his wife from day to day. "It is a hard time and it will last a long while yet," said Elke to herself and went about her work.

At last, when the sun and spring winds had broken up the ice everywhere the preparatory work came to an end. The petition to the chief dikegrave to be recommended to

a higher department was ready. It contained the proposal for a dike to surround the foreland mentioned, for the benefit of the public welfare, especially of the koog and not less of the Sovereign's exchequer as, in a few years, the latter would profit by taxes from about one thousand acres. The whole was neatly copied, packed in a strong tubular case, together with plans and drawings of all the localities as they were at present and as planned, of sluices and drains and everything else in question, and was provided with the dikegrave's official seal.

"Here it is, Elke," said the young dikegrave, "now give it your blessing."

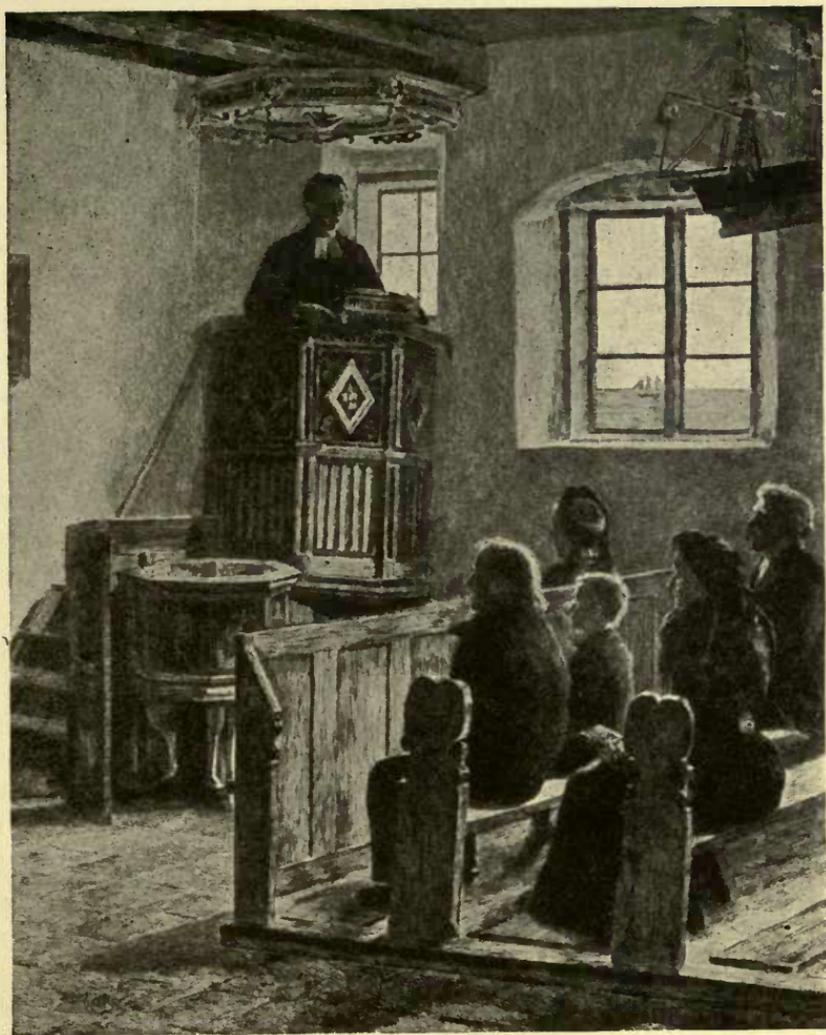
Elke laid her hand in his: "We will hold fast to each other," she said.

"That we will."

Then the petition was sent into town by a messenger on horseback.

"You will notice, my dear sir," the schoolmaster interrupted his tale as he looked at me with kindness in his expressive eyes, "that what I have told you up to now I have gathered during nearly forty years of activity in this district from reliable accounts from what has been told me by the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of enlightened families. Now in order that you may bring this into harmony with the final course of events I have to tell you that the rest of my story was at the time and still is the gossip of the whole marsh village when, about All Saints' Day, the spinning wheels begin to whirr.

About five or six hundred feet north of the dikegrave's farm, as one stood on the dike, one could see a few thousand feet out in the shallows and, somewhat farther from the opposite bank, a little islet called "Jeverssand" or "Jevershallig." It had been used by the grandfathers of that day as a sheep pasture, for at that time it had been covered with grass; but even that had ceased because several times the low islet had been flooded by the sea, espe-



A NORTH SEA ISLANDER'S CONGREGATION JACOB ALBERTS

cially in midsummer, and the grass had been damaged and made unfit for the sheep. So it happened that, except for the gulls and other birds that fly along the shore, and perhaps an occasional fishhawk, nothing visited it any more; and on moonlight evenings, looking out from the dike, only the foggy mists could be seen as they hung lightly or heavily above it. When the moon shone from the east on the islet people also thought they could distinguish a few bleached skeletons of drowned sheep and the skeleton of a horse, though how the latter had come there no one could explain.

Once, towards the end of March, late in the evening, the day-laborer who lived in Tede Haien's house and the young dikegrave's man Iven Johns stood together at that spot and gazed out fixedly at the islet, which could scarcely be distinguished in the misty moonlight; apparently something unusual had caught their attention and kept them standing there. The day laborer stuck his hands in his pockets and shook himself. "Come on, Iven," he said, "that's nothing good; let us go home!"

The other one laughed, but a shudder could be heard through his laughter. "Oh, nonsense! It's a living creature, a big one! Who in the devil's name could have driven it out there onto that piece of mud! Look! Now it's stretching its head over towards us! No, it's lowering its head, it's eating! I thought there was no grass there! Whatever can it be?"

"What business is that of *ours*?" answered the other. "Good night, Iven, if you won't go along; I'm going home."

"Good-night then," the day laborer called back as he trotted home along the dike. The servant looked round after him a few times, but the desire to see something uncanny kept him where he was. Then a dark, stocky figure came along the dike from the village towards him; it was the dikegrave's stable boy. "What do you want, Karsten?" the man called out to him.

"I?—nothing," answered the boy; "but the master wants to speak to you, Iven Johns."

The man had his eyes fixed on the islet again. "All right; I'm coming in a minute," he said.

"What are you looking at?" asked the boy.

The man raised his arm and pointed to the islet in silence. "Oh ho!" whispered the boy; "there's a horse—a white horse—it must be the devil who rides it—how does a horse get out there on Jevershallig?"

"Don't know, Karsten; if only it's a real horse!"

"Oh, yes, Iven; look, it's grazing just like a horse! But who took it out there; there isn't a boat big enough in the whole village! Perhaps after all it's only a sheep; Peter Ohm says, in the moonlight ten stocks of peat look like a whole village. No, look! Now it's jumping—it must be a horse!"

The two stood for a time in silence, their eyes fixed on what they could see but indistinctly over there. The moon was high in the sky and shone down on the broad shallow sea whose rising tide was just beginning to wash over the glistening stretches of mud; no sound of any animal was to be heard all around, nothing but the gentle noise of the water; the marsh too, behind the dike, was empty; cows and oxen were all still in their stalls. Nothing was moving; the only thing that seemed to be alive was what they took to be a horse, a white horse, out on Jevershallig. "It's growing lighter," said the man breaking the silence; "I can see the white sheep bones shining clearly."

"So can I," said the boy, stretching his neck; then, as if an idea had suddenly struck him, he pulled at the man's sleeve. "Iven," he whispered, "the horse's skeleton that always used to lie there, where is it? I can't see it!"

"I don't see it either, that's queer!" said the man.

"Not so very queer, Iven! Sometimes, I don't know in what nights, the bones are said to rise up and act as if they were alive."

"So?" said the man; "that's old wives' superstition!"

"May be, Iven," said the boy.

"Well, I thought you came to fetch me; come on, we must go home. There's nothing new to see here."

The boy would not move till the man had turned him round by force and pulled him onto the path. "Listen, Karsten," he said when the ghostly island was already a good bit behind them, "they say you're a fellow that's ready for anything; I believe you'd like best to investigate that yourself."

"Yes," replied Karsten, shuddering a little at the recollection, "yes, I'd like to, Iven."

"Are you in earnest?" asked the man after Karsten had given him his hand on it. "Well then, tomorrow evening we'll take our boat; you can go over to Jeverssand and I'll wait for you on the dike."

"Yes," replied the boy, "we can do that. I'll take my whip with me."

"Yes, do!"

In silence they went up the high mound to their master's house.

The same time the following evening the man was sitting on the big stone in front of the stable door as the boy came up to him cracking his whip. "That makes an odd whistle!" said Iven.

"To be sure, look out for yourself," answered the boy; "I have plaited nails into the lash."

"Come along then," said the other.

As on the day before the moon was in the eastern sky and shone down clearly from its height. Soon they were both out on the dike and looking over at Jevershallig that stood like a spot of fog in the water. "There it is again," said the man; "I was here after dinner and it wasn't there, but I could distinctly see the white skeleton of the horse lying there."

The boy stretched his neck. "It isn't there now, Iven," he whispered.

“Well, Karsten, how is it?” asked the man. “Are you still itching to row over there?”

Karsten thought for a moment; then he cracked his whip in the air. “Undo the boat, Iven!”

Over on the island it looked as if whatever was walking there raised its head and stretched it out towards the mainland. They did not see it any longer; they were already walking down the dike and to the place where the boat lay. “Now, get in,” said the man after he had untied it. “I’ll wait till you come back. You must head for the east shore, there was always a good landing there.” The lad nodded silently and then rowed out, with his whip, into the moonlit night. The man wandered along the dike back to the place where they had stood before. Soon he saw the boat ground near a steep dark spot on the other side to which a broad water-course flowed, and a short, thickset figure sprang ashore. Wasn’t that the boy cracking his whip? Or it might be the sound of the rising tide. Several hundred feet to the north he saw what they had taken to be a white horse, and now—yes, the figure of the boy was going straight towards it. Now it raised its head as if startled and the boy—he could hear it plainly—snapped his whip. But—what could he be thinking of? He had turned round and was walking back along the way he had gone. The creature on the other side seemed to go on grazing steadily, he had not heard it neigh; at times white stripes of water seemed to pass across the apparition. The man watched it as if spellbound.

Then he heard the grounding of the boat on the side on which he stood and soon he saw the boy coming out of the dusk and towards him up the side of the dike. “Well, Karsten,” he said, “what was it?”

The boy shook his head. “It wasn’t anything,” he said. “Just before I landed I saw it from the boat and then, when I was once on the island—the devil knows where the beast went, the moon was shining brightly enough; but when I came to the place there was nothing there but the

bleached bones of half a dozen sheep and a little farther on lay the horse's skeleton with its long, white skull and the moon was shining into its empty eye-sockets!"

"Hmm!" said the man; "did you look carefully?"

"Yes, Iven, I stood close up to it; a God-forsaken lapping that had gone to sleep behind the bones flew up shrieking and startled me so that I cracked my whip after it a few times."

"And that was all?"

"Yes, Iven, I didn't see anything else."

"And it's enough," said the man, pulling the boy towards him by the arm and pointing across to the islet. "Do you see anything over there, Karsten?"

"As I live, there it is again!"

"Again?" said the man; "I was looking over there the whole time and it never went away; you went right towards the uncanny thing."

The boy stared at him; a look of horror that did not escape the man appeared on his usually saucy face. "Come," said the latter, "let us go home; seen from here it is alive and over there it is only bones—that is more than you and I can understand. Keep your mouth shut about it; things like that must not be questioned."

So they turned and the boy trotted along beside him; they did not speak and the marsh lay in unbroken silence at their side.

But after the moon had declined and the nights had grown dark something else happened.

Hauke Haien had ridden into town at the time the horse-fair was going on, without however having anything to do with that. Nevertheless towards evening when he came home he brought a second horse with him; but its coat was rough and it was so thin that its ribs could be counted and its eyes lay dull and sunken in their sockets. Elke had gone out in front of the door to meet her husband. "For heaven's sake!" she exclaimed, "what's the old white horse for?" For as Hauke came riding up in front of the

house and drew rein under the ash she saw that the poor creature was lame too.

But the young dikegrave sprang laughing from his brown gelding. "Never mind, Elke, it didn't cost much."

"You know that the cheapest thing is usually the dearest," his wise wife answered.

"Not always, Elke; this animal is four years old at the most; look at him more carefully! He has been starved and abused; our oats will do him good and I will take care of him myself so that he shan't be overfed."

During this conversation the animal stood with his head lowered; his mane hung down long over his neck. While her husband was calling the men Elke walked round the horse looking him over, but she shook her head: "We never had such a nag as this in our stable!"

When the stable boy came round the corner of the house he suddenly stopped with terror-stricken eyes. "Well, Karsten," said the dikegrave, "what's the matter with you? Don't you like my white horse?"

"Yes—Oh, yes, master, why not?"

"Well, then, take both the horses into the stable but don't feed them; I am coming over there in a minute myself."

Cautiously the boy took hold of the white horse's halter and then hastily, as if to protect himself, he seized the rein of the gelding which had also been trusted to his care. Hauke went into the house with his wife; she had warm beer ready for him and bread and butter were also at hand.

He was soon satisfied and, rising began to walk up and down the room with his wife. "Now let me tell you, Elke," he said, while the evening glow shone on the tiles in the walls, "how I happened to get the animal. I stayed at the chief dikegrave's about an hour; he had good news for me—some changes will undoubtedly have to be made in my plans; but the main thing, my profile, has been accepted and the order to begin work on the new dike may get here any day now."

Elke sighed involuntarily: "Then it is to be done after all!" she said apprehensively.

"Yes, wife," replied Hauke; "it's going to be uphill work but that is why God brought us together, I think. Our farm is in such good order now that you can take a good part of it on your shoulders; think ten years ahead—then our property will have greatly increased!"

At his first words she had pressed her husband's hand assuringly in hers, but his last remark brought her no joy. "Who will the place be for?" she said. "Unless you take another wife instead of me; I cannot bear you any children."

Tears rushed to her eyes; but he drew her close and held her tight in his arms: "Let us leave that to God," he said; "but now, and even then, we shall be young enough to enjoy the fruits of our labor ourselves."

She looked at him long with her dark eyes while he held her thus. "Forgive me, Hauke," she said, "at times I am a despondent woman."

He bent his face to hers and kissed her. "You are my wife and I am your husband, Elke! And nothing can change that."

At that she put her arms close round his neck. "You are right, Hauke, and whatever comes will come to us both." Then, blushing, she drew away from his arms. "You were going to tell me about the white horse," she said softly.

"Yes, I will, Elke. I've already told you that I was in high spirits over the good news that the chief dikegrave had given me; and just as I was riding out of the town, there, on the dam, behind the harbor, I met a ragged fellow; I didn't know whether he was a vagabond or a tinker or what. He was pulling the white horse on the halter after him and the animal raised its head and looked at me with pleading eyes, as if it were begging me for something; and at the moment I was certainly rich enough. 'Hello, fellow!' I shouted, 'where are you going with the old nag?'

“He stopped and the white horse stopped too. ‘Going to sell it,’ he said and nodded to me with cunning in his eyes.

“‘To anyone else, but not to me!’ I said merrily.

“‘Why not?’ he answered; ‘it’s a fine horse and well worth a hundred thalers.’

“I laughed in his face.

“‘Oh, you needn’t laugh,’ he said; ‘you needn’t pay me that! But I can’t use the beast; it would starve with me. It would soon look different if you had it a little while.’

“So I jumped down from my gelding and looked at the animal’s mouth and saw that it was still young. ‘How much do you want for it?’ I asked, for the horse was looking at me again as if begging.

“‘Take it for thirty thalers, sir,’ said the fellow, ‘and I’ll throw in the halter.’

“And so, Elke, I took the brown, clawlike hand that the lad offered me and it was a bargain. So we have the white horse, and cheap enough too, I think. Only it was curious; as I rode away with the horse I heard laughing behind me and when I turned my head I saw the Slovak standing there, his legs apart, his arms behind his back, laughing like the devil.”

“Phew!” exclaimed Elke; “if only the white horse doesn’t bring you anything from his old master! I hope he’ll thrive for you, Hauke.”

“He shall thrive for his own sake, at least as far as I can manage it!” And with that the dikegrave went out to the stable as he had told the boy he would.

But this was not the only evening on which he fed the horse; from then on he always did it himself and kept it under his eye all the time; he wanted to show that he had made a good bargain and at least the horse should have every chance. And it was only a few weeks before the animal began to hold up its head; gradually the rough hair disappeared, a smooth, blue-mottled coat began to show and when, one day, he led it about the yard, it stepped out daintily with its strong, slender legs. Hauke thought of

the tattered, adventurous fellow who had sold it: "The chap was a fool, or a scoundrel who had stolen it!" he murmured to himself. Soon, whenever the horse heard his step in the stable it would throw its head round and whinny to him, and then Hauke saw that its face was covered with hair as the Arabs like to have it while its brown eyes flashed fire. Then he led it out of the stall and put a light saddle on it, but he was hardly on its back before a whinny of joy broke from the animal and off it flew with him, down the mound onto the road and then towards the dike; but the rider sat tight and once they were on top the horse quieted down and stepped lightly, as if dancing, while it tossed its head towards the sea. Hauke patted and stroked its smooth neck but the caress was no longer necessary; the horse seemed to be entirely one with its rider and after he had ridden out a bit on the dike towards the north he turned it easily and rode back to the yard.

The men were standing below at the entrance to the driveway, waiting for their master to come back. "There, John," the latter called, as he sprang from his horse, "take him and ride him down to the fen, to the others; he carries you as if you were in a cradle!"

The horse tossed his head and whinnied loudly out into the sunny open country, while the man unbuckled the saddle and the boy carried it off to the harness-room; then he laid his head on his master's shoulder and suffered himself to be caressed. But when the man tried to swing himself up onto his back he sprang suddenly and sharply aside and then stood quiet again, his beautiful eyes fixed on his master. "Oh ho, Iven!" cried the latter, "did he hurt you?" and tried to help his man onto his feet.

Iven rubbed his hip hard. "No, master, it's not so bad; but the devil can ride the white horse!"

"And so will I!" added Hauke, laughing. "Take the rein and lead him to the fen, then."

And when the man, somewhat ashamed of himself, obeyed, the white horse quietly allowed himself to be led.

A few evenings later the man and the stable-boy were standing together at the stable door; behind the dike the evening glow had paled, and on the inner side the koog lay in deep dusk; occasionally the lowing of some startled cow came from the distance or the shriek of a lark as a weasel or water rat put an end to its life. The man was leaning against the door-post smoking a short pipe, the smoke of which he could no longer see; he and the boy had not yet spoken to each other. The latter had something on his mind, but he did not know how to approach the silent man with it. "Look, Iven," he said at last. "You know the horse's skeleton on Iverssand?"

"What about it?" asked the man.

"It isn't there any more; not in the daytime nor by moonlight; I've been out on the dike at least twenty times."

"I suppose the old bones have fallen apart!" said Iven, and went on smoking calmly.

"But I was out there by moonlight too; there's nothing walking about over on Jeverssand!"

"Well," said the man, "if the bones have fallen to pieces I suppose it can't get up any more."

"Don't joke, Iven! I know now; I can tell you where it is."

The man turned towards him with a start. "Well, where is it then?"

"Where?" the boy repeated impressively. "It's standing in our stable. It's been standing there ever since it has not been on the islet. It's not for nothing that the master always feeds it himself. I know what I'm talking about, Iven."

The man puffed away violently for a while. "You're a bit off, Karsten," he said at last; "our white horse? If ever a horse was alive it's he. How can a bright lad like you believe in such an old woman's tale!"

But the boy could not be convinced: if the devil was in the horse why shouldn't it be alive? On the contrary, so

much the more for that! He started every time that he went into the stable towards evening, where even in summer the animal was sometimes bedded, when he saw it toss its fiery head towards him so sharply. "The devil take it!" he would murmur, then, "we shan't be together much longer."

So he began to look about him secretly for a new place, gave notice, and on All Saints' Day entered Ole Peters' service. There he found attentive listeners to his story of the dikegrave's devil-horse. Ole's fat wife, Vollina, and her stupid father, the former dike commissioner Jess Harders, listened to it with pleasurable shuddering, and later repeated it to everyone who had a spite against the dikegrave or who enjoyed tales of that kind.

In the meantime towards the end of March the order to begin work on the new dike had been received through the chief dikegrave. Hauke's first step was to call together the dike commissioners and they all assembled one day in the tavern up by the church and listened while he read the main points to them from the various documents: from his petition, from the report of the chief dikegrave, finally from the decision in which, above all, the profile that he had proposed was accepted, so that the new dike would not be steep like the other but slope gradually on the water-side; but they did not listen with cheerful or even satisfied faces.

"Yes, yes," said an old commissioner, "we are in for it now and no protests can help us, for the chief dikegrave is backing up our dikegrave."

"You're right enough, Dethlev Wiens," said another; "the spring work is at the door and now we've got to make miles of dike, so of course we must drop everything else."

"You can finish all that this year," said Hauke; "things won't move as fast as that."

Few of them were ready to admit it. "And your profile!" said a third, bringing up a new subject; "on the outside, towards the water, the dike will be wider than Law-

renz's child was long! Where are we to get the material? When will the work be done?"

"If not this year, then next; that will depend mainly on ourselves," said Hauke.

A laugh of annoyance passed through the company. "But why all this useless work? The dike is not to be any higher than the old one," shouted a new voice; "and that's been standing for more than thirty years I think!"

"That's right," said Hauke; "the old dike broke thirty years ago, then thirty-five years before that and again forty-five years before that; since then, although it still stands there steep and contrary to reason, the highest tides have spared us. But in spite of such tides the new dike will stand for a hundred and then another hundred years; it will not be broken through because the gentle slope towards the water offers no point of attack to the waves and so you will gain for yourselves and your children a safe and certain land, and that is why our sovereign and the chief dikegrave are backing me up; and it is that, too, that you ought to be able to see yourselves, for it is to your own advantage."

As no one seemed anxious to give an immediate answer to this an old white-haired man rose from his chair with difficulty. It was Elke's godfather, Jewe Manners, who still held office as commissioner at Hauke's request. "Dikegrave Hauke Haien," he said, "you are putting us to a great deal of trouble and expense and I wish you had waited for that till God had called me home; but—you are right, no one with reason can fail to see that. We ought to thank God every day that, in spite of our laziness, he has preserved that valuable piece of foreland from storm and water for us; but now it is the eleventh hour when we ourselves must take hold and try with all our knowledge and ability to save it for ourselves without depending any more on God's long-suffering. I am an old man, my friends; I have seen dikes built and broken; but the dike that Hauke Haien has projected, by virtue of the understanding that

God has given him, and that he has succeeded in getting our sovereign to grant—that dike no one of you who are alive here today will ever see break; and if you yourselves will not thank him your grandchildren will one day not be able to refuse him the crown of honor that is his!”

Jewe Manners sat down again, took his blue handkerchief from his pocket and wiped a few drops from his forehead. The old man was still known for his thoroughness and inviolable uprightness, and as those assembled were not ready to agree with him they continued their silence. But Hauke Haien took the floor and they all saw how pale he had grown. “I thank you, Jewe Manners,” he said, “for being here and for speaking as you have spoken; the rest of you, gentlemen, will please regard the new dike, for which indeed I am responsible, at least as something which cannot be changed now. Let us accordingly decide what is to be done next!”

“Speak,” said one of the commissioners. Hauke spread the plan of the new dike out on the table. “A few minutes ago,” he said, “one of you asked where we should get all the necessary earth. You see here that as far as the foreland extends out into the shallows there is a strip of land left free outside the line of the dike; we can take the earth from there and from the foreland that runs along the dike, north and south from the new koog. If we only have a good thick layer of clay on the water side, we can fill in, on the inside or in the middle, with sand. But now we must find a surveyor to stake out the line of the new dike on the foreland. The one who helped me to work out the plan will probably suit us best. Further, we must make contracts with several cartwrights for single tipcarts in which to haul the clay and other material. In damming up the water-course and on the inner sides, where we may have to do with sand, we shall need, I can’t say now how many hundred loads of straw, perhaps more than we shall be able to spare here in the marsh. Let us consider then, how all this is to be obtained and arranged; and later we shall also want a

capable carpenter to make the new sluice here on the west side towards the water."

The commissioners had gathered round the table, looked indifferently at the map and now gradually began to speak, but, as it seemed, more for the sake of saying something. When they came to discuss the engaging of a surveyor one of the younger ones said: "You have thought it out, dikegrave; you must know who would be best fitted for the work."

But Hauke replied: "As you are all under oath you must speak your own, not my opinion, Jacob Meyen; and if you can do better I will let my proposal drop."

"Oh well, it will be right enough," said Jacob Meyen.

But one of the older men did not think so. He had a nephew who was a surveyor, such a surveyor as had never been seen here in the marsh country; he was said to know even more than the dikegrave's blessed father, Tede Haien!

So the merits of both surveyors were discussed and it was finally decided to give the work to them both together. It was the same thing when they came to consider the tip-carts, the straw supply, and everything else, and Hauke arrived home late and almost exhausted, on the gelding which he still rode at that time. But he had no sooner sat down in the old easy chair which had belonged to his predecessor, who, though more ponderous, had lived more lightly, than his wife was at his side. "You look so tired, Hauke," she said, stroking the hair away from his forehead with her slender hand.

"I am, a little," he answered.

"And how is it going?"

"Oh, it's going," he said with a bitter smile; "but I must turn the wheels myself and I can be glad if somebody else does not hold them back."

"But they don't all do that, do they?"

"No, Elke; your godfather, Jewe Manners, is a good man; I wish he were thirty years younger."

A few weeks later, after the dike-line had been staked out and most of the tip-carts delivered, the dikegrave called a meeting in the parish tavern of all those who had shares in the koog which was to be surrounded by the new dike, and also of the owners of land that lay behind the old dike. His object was to lay before them a plan for the distribution of labor and expense, and to hear any objections they might have to make. The latter class of owners would have to do their part, too, inasmuch as the new dike and the new drains would diminish the cost of maintenance of the older ones. This plan had been a difficult piece of work for Hauke, and if, through the kind offices of the chief dikegrave, a dike messenger and a dike clerk had not been assigned to him he would not have finished it so soon, although every day for some time he had been working late into the night. Then, when, tired out, he sought his couch, he did not find his wife waiting for him in pretended sleep as formerly; she too had now such a full measure of daily work that at night she lay in imperturbable slumber as if at the bottom of a deep well.

When Hauke had read his plan and spread out again on the table the papers which had already lain in the tavern for three days so that they might be examined, it appeared that there were serious men present who regarded this conscientious diligence with deference, and after calm deliberation submitted to the dikegrave's just demands. Others, however, whose shares in the new territory had been sold either by themselves or their fathers or other former possessors, protested against being made to bear part of the cost of the new koog, in which they no longer had any interest, without considering that the new works would gradually disburden the old territory. And others again who were blessed with shares in the new koog shouted that they wanted to sell them, that they would let them go at a low price; for on account of the unjust demands made of them they could not afford to hold them. But Ole Peters, who was leaning against the doorpost with wrath in his face,

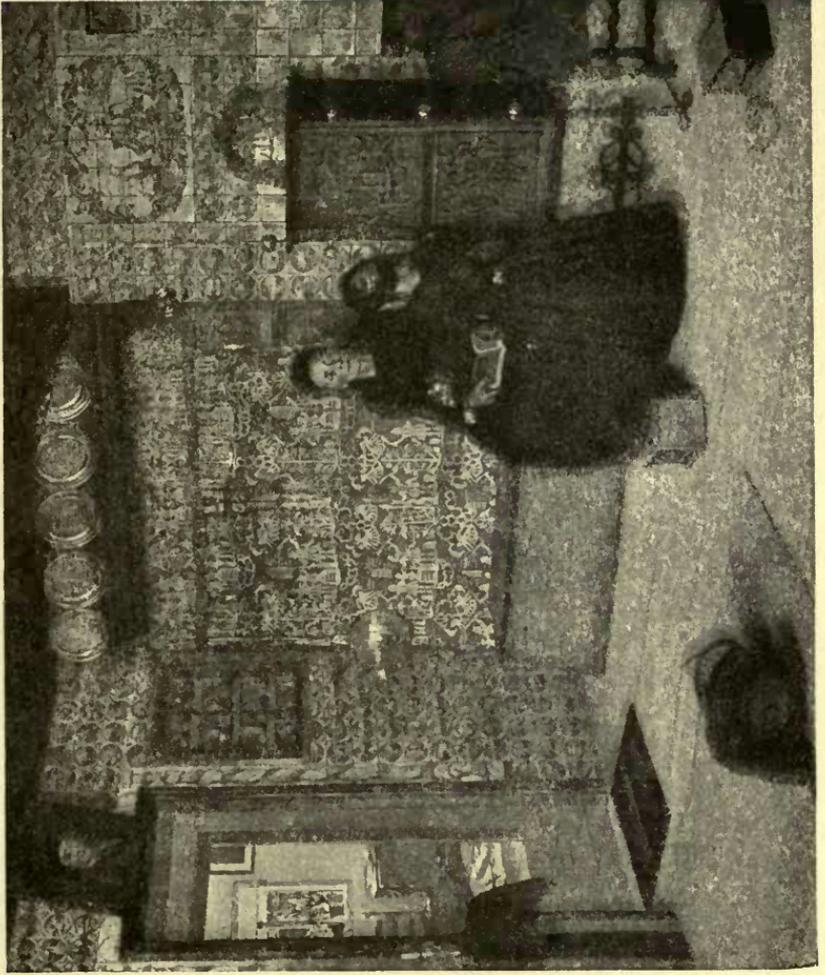
called out: "Think it over first and then trust to our dikegrave! He knows how to figure! After he already had most of the shares he persuaded me to sell him mine, and as soon as he had them he decided to build a dike around this new koog."

After he had spoken there was dead silence in the meeting for a moment. The dikegrave stood at the table on which he had spread out his papers before; he raised his head and looked at Ole Peters. "You know well, Ole Peters," he said, "that you slander me; you do it nevertheless because you know, as well, that a good deal of the mud with which you pelt me will stick! The truth is that you wanted to get rid of your shares and that I needed them at that time for sheep breeding; and, if you want to know more, I can tell you that it was the abusive words that you used in the tavern, when you said that I was only the dikegrave on my wife's account, that aroused me; I wanted to show you all that I could be a dikegrave on my own account, and so, Ole Peters, I have done what the dikegrave before me should have done long ago. And if you bear me a grudge because at that time your shares became mine—you hear yourself that there are men enough here who are offering theirs at a low price now, merely because this is more work than they want to do."

A murmur of applause broke from a small part of the men assembled and old Jewe Manners, who stood among them, shouted: "Bravo, Hauke Haien! God will give you success in your undertaking."

They were not able to finish, however, although Ole Peters was silent, and they did not disperse till supper time. A second meeting was necessary before everything could be arranged, and then only because Hauke took it upon himself to provide four teams for the following month instead of the three that would properly have fallen to his lot.

Finally when the bells were all ringing through the country for Whitsuntide the work had been begun. Un-



JACOB ALBERTS

LIVING-ROOM IN A FRISIAN FARMHOUSE

ceasingly the tip-carts moved from the foreland to the dike-line where they dumped their loads of clay, while an equal number were already making the return trip to the foreland for new loads. At the dike-line itself stood men with shovels and spades to shovel the clay into place and level it; tremendous wagons of straw were brought and unloaded; the latter was used not only to cover the lighter material such as the sand and loose earth on the inside of the dike, but also, when portions of the dike had been finished and covered with sod, a firm coat of straw was laid over that to protect it from the gnawing waves; overseers were appointed who walked hither and yon, and, in time of storm, stood with wide-open mouths shouting their orders through the wind and weather. Among them rode the dikegrave on his white horse, which he now used exclusively, and the animal flew here and there with its rider as he gave his short, dry orders, praised the laborers or, as sometimes happened, dismissed a lazy or incompetent man without mercy. "It's no use!" he would say at such times; "we can't have the dike spoiled on account of your laziness!" While he was still far away as he rode up out of the koog they heard his horse snorting and all hands began to work with a better will: "Look alive! Here comes the rider of the white horse!"

While the workmen were stretched off on the ground in groups eating their lunch Hauke rode along the deserted works and his eyes were keen to discover spots where careless hands had handled the spade. If, however, he rode up to the men and explained to them how the work must be done, they did indeed look up and went on chewing their bread patiently, but he never heard a word of agreement or any other remark from them. Once at that hour, it was already late, when he found a place in the dike where the work had been particularly well done; he rode up to the next group of lunchers, sprang from his horse, and asked pleasantly who had done such good work there, but they merely looked at him shyly and sullenly and named

slowly a few men as if they did it against their will. The man whom he had asked to hold his horse, which was standing as quiet as a lamb, held it with both hands and looked, as if in fear, at the animal's beautiful eyes which, as usual, were fixed on its master.

"Well, Marten," said Hauke; "why do you stand as if you had been struck by lightning?"

"Your horse is as quiet, sir, as if it were thinking of some mischief."

Hauke laughed and took hold of the rein himself, when the horse at once began to rub its head caressingly against his shoulder. A few of the workmen looked fearfully over at horse and rider; others, as if all that did not concern them, continued to eat their lunch in silence, now and then throwing a crumb to the gulls which had remembered this feeding-place, and, balancing on their slender wings, tipped forward almost onto their heads. The dikegrave stood for a while, absently watching the begging birds as they caught the pieces thrown to them in their bills; then he sprang into the saddle and rode away without looking round at the men; the few words which they now spoke sounded to him almost like mockery. "What is it?" he said to himself; "was Elke right when she said they were all against me? Even these servants and small owners for many of whom my new dike means added prosperity?"

He spurred his horse so that it flew down to the koog like mad. He himself knew nothing, to be sure, of the uncanny nimbus that his former stable-boy had thrown about the rider of the white horse; but if only the people had seen him then as he galloped along, his eyes staring out of his lean face, and his horse's red nostrils cracking!

Summer and autumn had passed by; the work had gone on till near the end of November; then frost and snow had called a halt; the men had not been able to finish and it was decided to leave the koog lying open. Eight feet the dike rose above the level of the ground; only to the west towards the water where the sluice was to be laid a gap

had been left; also above, in front of the old dike, the water-course was still untouched. Thus, as for the last thirty years, the tide could flow into the koog without doing much damage there or to the new dike. And so the work of men's hands was consigned to the great God above, and placed under his protection until the spring sun should make its completion possible.

In the meantime preparations had been made in the dikegrave's house for a happy event; in the ninth year of their married life a child was born to him and his wife. It was red and shriveled and weighed its seven pounds as new-born children should when, like this one, they belong to the female sex; only, its cry had been strangely muffled and did not please the midwife. But the worst was that on the third day Elke lay in a high fever, wandered in her speech and did not know either her husband or the old nurse. The wild joy that had seized upon Hauke at the sight of his child had turned into tribulation. The doctor had been fetched from the town; he sat beside the bed, felt Elke's pulse, wrote prescriptions and looked helplessly about him. Hauke shook his head; "He can't help; only God can help!" He had figured out a kind of Christianity for himself; but there was something that prevented his praying. When the old doctor had driven away he stood at the window staring out into the winter day and, while the patient screamed aloud in her delirium, he clasped his hands together tightly; he did not know himself whether it was an act of devotion or due to his tremendous fear of losing control of himself.

"Water! The water!" whimpered the sick woman. "Hold me!" she screamed; "hold me, Hauke!" Then her voice died down; it sounded as if she were crying; "into the sea, out into the ocean? O, dear God, I'll never see him again!"

At that he turned and pushed the nurse away from the bed. He dropped on his knees, put his arms round his

wife and held her close: "Elke! Elke! Oh, know me, Elke, I am right here with you!"

But she only opened wide her eyes burning with fever and looked about her as if helplessly lost.

He laid her back on her pillows; then, twisting his hands together, he cried: "Oh Lord, my God, do not take her from me! Thou knowest I cannot be without her!" Then he seemed to recollect himself and added softly: "I know, indeed, Thou canst not always do as Thou wouldst, not even Thou; Thou art all-wise; Thou must do according to thy wisdom—Oh Lord, speak to me if only by a breath!"

It was as if a sudden stillness had fallen; he heard nothing but gentle breathing; when he turned to the bed his wife lay there in calm slumber; only the nurse looked at him with horrified eyes. He heard the door move: "Who was that?" he asked.

"The maid, Ann Grete, went out, sir; she came to bring the child-bed basket."

"Why do you look at me so confusedly, Mrs. Levke?"

"I? I was frightened at your prayer; such a prayer will never save anyone from death!"

Hauke looked at her with penetrating eyes: "Do you too, like Ann Grete, go to the conventicle where the Dutch jobbing tailor Jantje is?"

"Yes, sir; we both hold the living faith!"

Hauke did not answer her. The dissenting conventicle movement which was in great vogue at that time had also put forth blossoms among the Friesians; artisans who had come down in the world, or schoolmasters who had been dismissed for drunkenness, played the chief part in it, and girls, young and old women, loafers and lonely people assiduously attended the secret meetings in which anyone could play the priest. Of the dikegrave's household Ann Grete and the stable-boy, who was in love with her, spent their free evenings there. Elke, to be sure, had not failed to express her misgivings about this to Hauke; but it had been his opinion that no one should interfere in matters

of faith; the conventicle would not hurt anyone and it was at least better than the tavern!

So it had gone on, and therefore too he had kept silence this time. But others did not keep silent about him! The words of his prayer circulated from house to house; he had denied God's omnipotence, and what was a God without omnipotence? He was an atheist; perhaps the affair of the devil-horse might be true, after all!

Hauke heard nothing of this; in those days he had eyes and ears only for his wife; even the child had vanished from his mind.

The old doctor came again, came every day, sometimes twice, then he stayed all night, wrote another prescription, and the man, Iven Johns, galloped off to the apothecary's with it. And then his face lost something of its seriousness, he nodded confidentially to the dikegrave: "We'll pull through! With God's help!" And one day—was it that his art had triumphed over the disease or, after Hauke had prayed, had God been able to find another way out after all—when the doctor was alone with the patient he spoke to her and the old man's eyes beamed: "Mrs. Haien, now I can tell you confidently, today the doctor has his holiday; things were bad with you, but now you belong to us again, to the living!"

At that a flood of joy broke from her dark eyes: "Hauke, Hauke, where are you?" she cried, and when in response to her clear call he rushed into the room and up to her bed, she threw her arms around his neck: "Hauke, my husband, I'm saved! I'm going to stay with you!"

The old doctor drew his silk handkerchief from his pocket, passed it over his forehead and cheeks and went out of the room nodding his head.

On the third evening after this day a pious orator—it was a slipper-maker who had been dismissed from work by the dikegrave—preached in the conventicle at the Dutch tailor's, and explained to his hearers God's qualities: "But whoever denies God's omnipotence, whoever says:

'I know Thou canst not do as Thou wouldst'—we all know the wretched one; he lies like a stone upon the community—he has fallen away from God and seeks the enemy of God, the lover of sins, to be his comforter; for man must reach out for some staff. But you, beware of him who prays thus; his prayer is a curse!'

This too was carried about from house to house. What is not in a small community? And it also came to Hauke's ears. He did not speak of it, not even to his wife; only at times he embraced her vehemently and held her close: "Be true to me, Elke! Be true to me!" Then her eyes looked up at him full of astonishment: "True to you? To whom else should I be true?" But after a little while the meaning of his words came to her: "Yes, Hauke, we are true to each other, not only because we need each other." And then he went about his work and she about hers.

So far that would have been well; but in spite of all his absorbing work there was a feeling of loneliness round him, and defiance and reserve towards others crept into his heart; only towards his wife did he always remain the same, and morning and evening he knelt by his child's cradle as if that were the place of his eternal salvation. With the servants and laborers however he grew stricter; the awkward and careless whom formerly he had reproved quietly were now startled by the sudden harshness of his rebuke and Elke sometimes had to go softly and put things right.

When spring approached work on the dike began again; the gap in the western line of the dike was now closed by a cofferdam dike, in the form of a half-moon both towards the inside and towards the outside, in order to protect the sluice which was now about to be built. And, like the sluice, the main dike grew gradually to its height, which had to be attained by more and more rapid labor. The dikegrave, who was directing the work, did not find it easier; for in place of Jewe Manners, who had died during the winter,

Ole Peters had been appointed dike commissioner. Hauke had not wanted to try to prevent it; but, instead of the encouraging words and affectionate slaps on his left shoulder that went with them, which he had so often received from his wife's old godfather, he met with secret resistance and unnecessary objections from his successor, which had to be battered down with unnecessary reasons; for Ole did indeed belong to the men of consequence but, as far as dike matters were concerned, not to the wise men; and moreover the "scribbling farm-hand" of before was still in his way.

The most brilliant sky again spread out over sea and marsh, and the koog grew gay with strong cattle whose lowing from time to time interrupted the wide stillness; high in the air the larks sang unceasingly; one did not hear it till, for the length of a breath, the song was silent. No bad weather disturbed the work and the sluice already stood with its unpainted timber-structure without having needed the protection of the temporary dike even for one night; God seemed to favor the new work. Frau Elke's eyes also laughed to her husband when he came riding home from the dike on his white horse; "You've grown to be a good horse, after all," she would say and pat the animal's smooth neck. But Hauke, when she held the child, would spring down and let the tiny little thing dance in his arms; and when the white horse fixed its brown eyes on the child he would say perhaps, "Come here, you shall have the honor too!" Then he would put little Wienke—for so she had been christened—on his saddle and lead the horse round in a circle on the mound. Even the old ash-tree sometimes had the honor; he would seat the child on a springy bough and let it swing. The mother stood with laughing eyes in the door of the house, but the child did not laugh. Its eyes, on either side of a delicate little nose, looked rather dully out into the distance, and the tiny hands did not reach for the little stick that her father held out to her. Hauke did not notice it and of course he knew nothing

of such little children; only Elke, when she saw the bright-eyed girl on the arm of her work-woman whose child had been born at the same time as hers, sometimes said sorrowfully: "My baby isn't as far along as yours, Stina!" and the woman, shaking the sturdy boy whom she held by the hand, with rough love, would answer: "Oh, well, children are different; this one here stole the apples out of the pantry before he had passed his second year!" And Elke stroked the curly hair out of the fat little boy's eyes and then secretly pressed her own quiet child to her heart.

By the time October was coming on the new sluices on the west side stood firm in the main dike, which closed on both sides, and now, with the exception of the gaps at the water-course, fell away with its sloping profile all round towards the water sides and rose fifteen feet above the ordinary tide. From its northwest corner there was an unobstructed view out past Ievers Islet to the shallows; but the winds here cut in more sharply; they blew one's hair about and anyone who wanted to look out from here had to have his cap firmly on his head.

At the end of November, when wind and rain had set in, there only remained the opening close up to the old dike to be stopped, on the bottom of which, on the north side, the sea-water shot through the water-course into the new koog. On both sides stood the walls of the dike: the gulf between them had now to be closed. Dry summer weather would undoubtedly have made the work easier but it had to be done now in any case, for if a storm broke the whole construction might be endangered. And Hauke did his utmost to carry the thing to a finish now. The rain streamed down, the wind whistled; but his haggard form on the fiery white horse appeared, now here, now there, out of the black mass of men who were working above as well as below, on the north side of the dike, beside the opening. Now he was seen down by the tip-carts which already had to bring the clay from far out on the foreland, and of

which a compact body was just reaching the water-course and sought to dump its load there. Through the splashing of the rain and the blustering of the wind were heard from time to time the sharp orders of the dikegrave, who wanted to be the sole commander there that day; he called up the carts according to their numbers and ordered those who pushed forward back; "halt" sounded from his lips and the work below ceased. "Straw, a load of straw down here!" he called to those above, and from one of the carts on the top a load of straw plunged down onto the wet clay. Below, men jumped into it, tore it apart and called to those above not to bury them. And then new carts came and Hauke was already above once more, and looked down from his white horse into the gulf, and watched them shoveling and dumping; then he turned his eyes out to the sea. It was blowing hard and he saw how the fringe of water crept farther and farther up the dike and how the waves rose higher and higher; he saw too how the men were dripping and could scarcely breathe at their hard work for the wind, which cut off the air at their mouths, and for the cold rain that streamed down over them. "Stick to it, men! Stick to it!" he shouted down to them. "Only one foot higher, then it's enough for this tide!" And through all the din of the storm the noise of the workmen could be heard; the thud of the masses of clay as they were dumped, the rattling of the carts and the rustling of the straw as it slid down from above went on unceasingly. Now and then the whining of a little yellow dog became audible, that was knocked about among the men and teams, shivering and as if lost; but suddenly there sounded a piteous howl from the little creature, from down below in the gulf. Hauke looked down; he had seen it being thrown into the opening from above; an angry flush shot up into his face. "Stop! Hold on!" he shouted down to the carts, for the wet clay was being poured on without interruption. "Why?" a rough voice from below called up to him; "surely not on account of the wretched beast of a dog?"

“Stop! I say,” shouted Hauke again; “Bring me the dog! Our work shall not be stained by any outrage!”

But not a hand moved; only a few shovels of sticky clay still flew down beside the howling animal. Thereupon he put spurs to his horse, so that it shrieked aloud and dashed down the dike, and all stood back before him. “The dog!” he shouted; “I want the dog!”

A hand slapped him gently on the shoulder as if it were the hand of old Jewe Manners; but when he looked round it was only a friend of the old man’s. “Take care, dikegrave!” he whispered to Hauke. “You have no friends among these men; let the dog be!”

The wind whistled, the rain streamed; the men had stuck their spades into the ground, some of them had thrown them down. Hauke bent down to the old man: “Will you hold my horse, Harke Jens?” he asked; and the man had scarcely got the reins into his hand before Hauke had jumped into the chasm and was holding the little whining creature in his arms; and almost in the same instant he was up again in the saddle and galloping back up the dike. His eyes traveled over the men who were standing by the wagons. “Who was it?” he called. “Who threw the creature down?”

For a moment they were all silent; for anger flashed from the dikegrave’s haggard face and they had superstitious fear of him. From one of the teams a bull-necked fellow stepped up to him. “I did not do it, dikegrave,” he said and biting a little end off a roll of chewing tobacco he calmly stuffed that into his mouth before he went on; “but whoever did it did right; if your dike is to hold, something living must go into it!”

“Something living? In what catechism did you learn that?”

“In none, sir,” replied the fellow and an insolent laugh came from his throat; “even our grandfathers knew that, who could certainly have measured themselves with you in

Christianity! A child is still better; if that can't be had, a dog probably does instead!"

"Be silent with your heathenish doctrines!" Hauke shouted at him; "it would fill it up better if you were thrown in!"

"Oh ho!" The shout rang out from a dozen throats and the dikegrave found himself surrounded by wrathful faces and clenched fists; he saw that these were indeed no friends; the thought of his dike came over him with a shock; what should he do if they should all throw down their shovels now? And as he looked down he saw again old Jewe Manners' friend going about among the workmen, speaking to this one and that, laughing to one, tapping another on the shoulder with a friendly smile, and one after the other took hold of his spade again; a few moments more and the work was once more in full swing. What more did he want? The water-course would have to be closed and he hid the dog securely enough in the folds of his cloak. With sudden decision he turned his white horse towards the nearest wagon: "Straw to the edge!" he shouted commandingly and mechanically the teamster obeyed; soon it rustled down into the depths and on all sides the work stirred anew and all hands took hold busily.

The work had gone on thus for another hour; it was after six o'clock and already deep dusk was descending; the rain had ceased. Hauke called the superintendents to him as he sat on his horse: "Tomorrow morning at four o'clock," he said, "every man must be at his place; the moon will still be up; with God's help we shall be able to finish then! And one more thing," he called as they were about to go. "Do you know this dog?" and he took the trembling animal out of his cloak.

They replied in the negative; only one of them said: "He's been running about begging in the village for days; he doesn't belong to anyone!"

"Then he is mine," said the dikegrave. "Don't forget—tomorrow morning at four o'clock!" and rode away.

When he got home Ann Grete was just coming out of the door; she was cleanly and neatly dressed and it passed through his mind that she was just on her way to the tailor in the conventicle: "Lift up your apron!" he called to her and as she involuntarily obeyed he threw the little dog, covered with clay as he was, into it. "Take him to little Wienke; he shall be her little playfellow! But wash and warm him first, thus you will be doing a deed that is pleasing to God, for the creature is almost benumbed."

And Ann Grete could not refuse to obey her master, and so on that evening she did not get to the conventicle.

And on the following day the last touch of a spade was put to the new dike; the wind had gone down; now and again the gulls and avocets hovered above the land and water in graceful flight; from Jevershallig resounded the thousand-voiced honking of the barnacle geese that even at that time of year were enjoying themselves on the coast of the North Sea, and out of the morning mist, which hid the broad expanse of marsh, a golden autumn day gradually rose and illumined the new work of men's hands.

A few weeks later the chief dikegrave came with the government commissioners to inspect it. A great banquet, the first since the funeral repast at the time of old Tede Volkerts' death, was given in the dikegrave's house. All the dike commissioners and the men having the largest holdings of land in the new koog were invited. After dinner the dikegrave's carriage and all those of the guests were got ready. The chief dikegrave put Elke into the gig, before which the brown gelding stood stamping; then he jumped in himself and took the reins; he wanted to drive his dikegrave's clever wife himself. So they drove off merrily from the mound and out into the road, up the way to the new dike and along the top of that round, recently reclaimed koog. In the meantime a light northwest wind had sprung up and the tide was driven up on the north and west sides of the new dike; but it could not fail to be

noticed that the gentle slope broke the force of the waves. The government commissioners were loud in their praise of the dikegrave, soon drowning the doubts that the local commissioners now and then hesitatingly uttered.

This occasion too passed by; but there was still another satisfaction in store for the dikegrave one day when he was riding along the new dike sunk in quiet self-congratulatory thought. The question might well occur to him why the koog, which never would have been there but for him and in which the sweat of his brow and his sleepless nights were buried, had now been named "the new Caroline Koog," after one of the princesses of the ruling house; but it certainly was so: in all the documents pertaining to it that was the name used, in some of them it was even written in red Gothic letters. At that point he looked up and saw two laborers with their farm implements coming towards him, one some twenty paces behind the other: "Wait for me, then," he heard the one that was following call; but the other, who was just standing at the path that led down into the koog, called back: "Some other time, Jens! It's late; I've got to dig clay here!"

"Where?"

"Why here, in the Hauke-Haien-Koog!"

He called it aloud as he ran down the path as if he wanted the whole marsh that lay below to hear. But to Hauke it was as if he heard his fame proclaimed; he rose in his saddle, put spurs to his horse and looked with steady eyes across the broad scene that lay at his left. "Hauke-Haien-Koog!" he repeated softly; that sounded as if it could never be called anything else. Let them be as obstinate as they would, his name could not be downed; the princess' name—would it not soon exist only in mouldy old documents? The white horse galloped on proudly and in Hauke's ears the words continued to ring: "Hauke-Haien-Koog! Hauke-Haien-Koog!" In his thoughts the new dike almost grew to be an eighth wonder of the world; in all Friesland there was none to equal it! And he let the white

horse dance; he felt as if he stood in the midst of all Friesians; he towered above them by a head and his keen glance swept over them with pity.

Gradually three years had passed since the building of the new dike; the latter had proved successful and the expense of repairs had been but slight. In the koog white clover was now blooming nearly everywhere and when you walked across the protected pastures the summer breeze wafted a whole cloud of sweet scent towards you. It had been necessary to replace the nominal shares with real ones and to assign permanent holdings to each of the men interested. Hauke had not been slow in acquiring a few new ones himself, before that; Ole Peters had held back stubbornly; no part of the new koog belonged to him. Even so it had not been possible to make the division without vexation and dispute; but it had been done nevertheless, and this day too lay behind the dikegrave.

From then on he lived a lonely life, devoting himself to his duties as a farmer and a dikegrave, and to his immediate family; his old friends were no longer alive and he was not fitted to make new ones. But under his roof was peace which even his quiet child did not disturb; it spoke little; the continual questioning that is peculiar to brighter children seldom came from its lips and when it did it was usually in such a way that it was difficult to answer; but the dear, simple little face almost always wore an expression of content. The little girl had two playfellows and that was all she wanted: when she wandered about the mound the little yellow dog that Hauke had saved always accompanied her, jumping and springing, and whenever the dog appeared little Wienke was not far away either. The dog was called "Perle" and her second comrade, a peewit-gull, was "Klaus."

It was a hoary old woman who had installed Klaus at the farm; the eighty-year-old Trien' Jans had no longer been able to make a living in her cottage on the outside dike, and

Elke had thought that the worn-out servant of her grandfather might still find with them a few peaceful hours at the end of her life and a comfortable place to die. So half by force she and Hauke had fetched the old body to the farm and settled her in the little northwest room of the new barn, which the dikegrave had been obliged to build when he enlarged his place a few years before. A few of the maids had been given their rooms next to hers so that they could look after her at night. All round the walls she had her old household goods; a strong box made of red cedar, above which hung two colored pictures of the prodigal son, a spinning wheel which had long since been laid aside and a very clean four-post bed in front of which stood a clumsy foot-stool covered with the white skin of the deceased Angora cat. But she also still had something living, and had brought it with her: this was the gull Klaus that had stuck to her for years and been fed by her; when winter came, to be sure, it flew south with the other gulls and did not come again till the wormwood exhaled its sweet odor along the shore.

The barn lay somewhat farther down the mound; from her window the old woman could not see out over the dike to the sea. "You've got me here like a prisoner," she murmured one day when Hauke came in, and pointed with her gnarled finger to the fens which lay spread out below. "Where is Jeverssand? Out there above the red or above the black ox?"

"What do you want with Jeverssand?" asked Hauke.

"Oh, never mind Jeverssand," grumbled the old woman. "But I want to see where, long ago, my lad went to God!"

"If you want to see that," replied Hauke, "you must go and sit up under the ash-tree; from there you can look well out over the sea."

"Yes," said the old woman; "yes, if I had your young legs, dikegrave!"

For a long time such were the thanks for the aid that the dikegrave and his wife had given her; then all at once

there was a change. One morning Wienke's little head peeped in at her through the half-open door. "Well!" called the old woman, who was sitting on her wooden chair with her hands clasped, "what message have you got to tell me?"

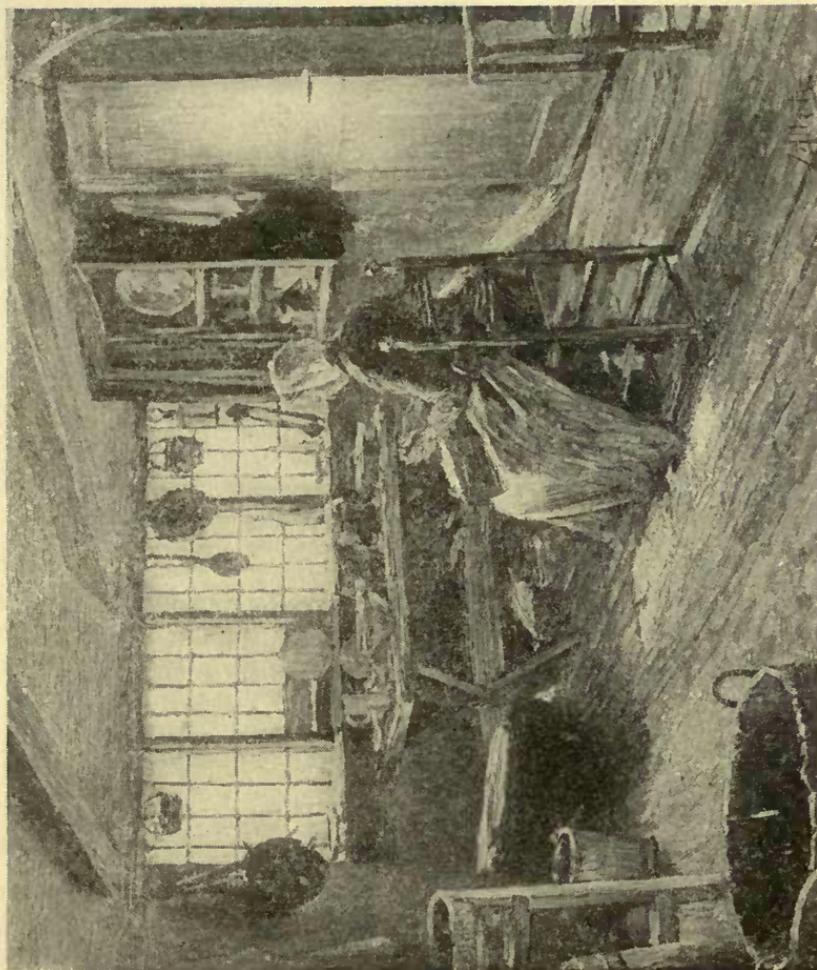
But the child came silently nearer and looked at her unceasingly with indifferent eyes.

"Are you the dikegrave's child?" asked 'Trien' Jans, and, as the child lowered her head as if nodding, she continued: "Sit down here on my footstool then! It was an Angora tomcat—as big as that! But your father killed him. If he were still alive you could ride on him."

Wienke looked at the white skin dumbly; then she knelt down and began to stroke it with her little hands as children do a living cat or dog. "Poor Tomcat!" she said, and continued her caresses.

"There," exclaimed the old woman after a while, "now it's enough; and you can still sit on him today; perhaps your father only killed him for that!" Then she lifted the child up by both arms and set her down roughly on the stool. But as Wienke sat there silent and immovable, only looking at her all the time, she began to shake her head: "Thou art punishing him, Lord God! Yes, yes, Thou art punishing him!" she murmured; but pity for the child seemed to come over her after all: she put out her bony hand and stroked the little girl's sparse hair and an expression came into the child's eyes as if she liked the touch.

From now on Wienke came to see the old woman in her room daily. Soon she sat down of her own accord on the Angora footstool and 'Trien' Jans gave her little pieces of meat or bread of which she always kept some on hand, and let her throw them on the floor; then the gull shot out of some corner, screeching, with outstretched wings, and fell upon them. At first the child used to be frightened and screamed at the big flapping bird; but soon it was like a game they had learnt, and as soon as she stuck even her head through the crack of the door the bird shot out



JACOB ALBERTS

A QUIET CORNER

towards her and lighted on her head or shoulder till the old woman came to her aid and the feeding could begin. Trien' Jans, who in general could not bear even to have anyone stretch out his hand towards her Klaus, now looked on patiently while the child gradually won the bird entirely away from her. It let Wienke catch it willingly; she carried it about and wrapped it in her apron, and, when, on the mound, the little yellow dog sometimes sprang about her and jumped jealously at the bird, she would cry out: "Not you, not you, Perle!" and would lift the gull so high in her little arms that it would free itself and fly away shrieking across the mound, and the dog would try to secure its place in her arms by jumping and rubbing against his little mistress.

When Hauke's or Elke's eyes chanced to fall on this odd group, like four leaves all held fast on one stem by only a common lack, a tender glance would indeed fly towards their child; when they turned away there remained in their faces only pain which each bore for himself, for they had never yet unburdened their hearts to each other about the child. One summer morning as Wienke was sitting with the old woman and the two animals on the big stone in front of the barn door, her parents, the dikegrave with his white horse behind him, the reins over his arm, passed by; he was going out on the dike and had fetched his horse from the fens himself; on the mound his wife had slipped her arm through his. The sun shone down warmly; it was almost sultry, and now and then there came a puff of wind from the south-southeast. The child must have found it tiresome where she was: "Wienke wants to go," she called, shook the gull from her lap, and reached for her father's hand.

"Come along then," he said.

But Elke exclaimed: "In this wind? She'll be blown away!"

"I'll hold on to her; and the air is warm today and the water merry; she can see it dance."

So Elke ran into the house and fetched a little shawl and a cap for her child. "But there's going to be bad weather," she said; "see that you hurry and go and get back again soon."

Hauke laughed: "That won't catch us!" and lifted the child up to his saddle in front of him. Elke remained out on the mound for a while and, shading her eyes with her hand, watched the two trotting out on the road and over to the dike; Trien' Jans sat on the stone and mumbled something incomprehensible with her faded lips.

The child lay without moving in her father's arm; and it seemed as if, oppressed by the thundery air, she were breathing with difficulty. He bent his head to her: "Well, Wienke?" he asked.

The child looked at him for a while. "Father," she said, "you can surely do that! Can't you do everything?"

"What ought I to be able to do, Wienke?"

But she was silent; she seemed not to have understood her own question.

It was high tide; when they came up on the dike the reflection of the sun on the great expanse of water shone in her eyes, a whirlwind drove the waves up high in an eddy, and others followed and beat splashingly against the shore; she clasped her little hands so fearfully about her father's fist in which he held the reins that the white horse bounded to one side. Her pale blue eyes looked up in confused terror to Hauke: "The water, Father, the water!" she cried.

But he freed himself gently and said: "Be quiet, child, you are with your father; the water won't hurt you!"

She smoothed the pale blonde hair away from her forehead and ventured to look out at the sea again. "It won't hurt me," she said trembling; "no, tell it not to hurt us; you can do that and then it won't hurt us."

"I can't do that, child," replied Hauke seriously; "but the dike on which we're riding protects us and it was your father who thought that out and had it built."

Her eyes looked at him as if she did not quite understand

that; then she hid her strikingly small head in her father's loose coat.

"Why do you hide yourself, Wienke?" he whispered to her; "are you still frightened?" And a trembling voice came from the folds of his coat: "Wienke doesn't want to see; but you can do everything, can't you, Father?"

A distant clap of thunder rolled up against the wind. "Oh ho!" exclaimed Hauke, "there it comes!" and turned his horse to go back. "Now we'll go home to Mother."

The child drew a deep breath, but not until they had reached the mound and the house did she raise her little head from her father's breast. Then in the room when Elke had taken off the little shawl and the cap she remained standing like a little dumb ninepin in front of her mother. "Well, Wienke," said the latter and shook the little girl gently, "do you like the great water?"

But the child opened her eyes wide: "It speaks," she said; "Wienke is frightened."

"It doesn't speak; it only roars and surges."

The child looked off into the distance. "Has it legs?" she asked again; "can it come over the dike?"

"No, Wienke, your father takes care of that, he is a dikegrave."

"Yes," said the child and clapped her hands with an idiotic smile; "Father can do everything—everything." Then suddenly, turning away from her mother, she cried: "Let Wienke go to Trien' Jans, she has red apples!"

And Elke opened the door and let the child out. After she had shut it again she looked up at her husband, and an expression of the deepest sorrow lay in the eyes which hitherto had always brought consolation and courage to his aid.

He held out his hand and pressed hers as if there were no need of any further word between them; but she said softly: "No, Hauke, let me speak: the child that I have borne to you after waiting for years will always remain a

child. O, dear God! She is feeble-minded; I must say it before you once."

"I have known it a long time," said Hauke, and held tight the hand that his wife wanted to draw away from him.

"And so we are still alone after all," she said.

But Hauke shook his head: "I love her and she throws her little arms around me and presses herself close against my breast; I would not do without that for any treasure!"

The woman looked darkly ahead of her: "But why?" she said; "What have I, poor mother, done to deserve it?"

"Yes, Elke, I too have asked that, asked Him who alone can know; but, as we both know, the Almighty gives men no answer—perhaps because we should not understand it."

He had taken his wife's other hand and drew her gently to him: "Don't let yourself grow disturbed and be hindered in loving your child, as you do; you can be sure she understands that."

At that Elke threw herself on her husband's breast and wept her fill and was no longer alone with her sorrow. Then suddenly she smiled at him; after pressing his hand vehemently she ran out and fetched her child from old Trien' Jans' room, and took her on her lap and fondled and kissed her till the little girl said stammeringly: "Mother, my dear Mother!"

Thus the people on the dikegrave's farm lived quietly together; if the child had not been there much would have been lacking.

Gradually the summer went by; the birds of passage had passed through, the air was empty of the song of the larks; only in front of the barns where they picked up grains of corn, while the threshing was going on, occasionally one or two could be heard as they flew away screeching; everything was already hard frozen. In the kitchen of the main house old Trien' Jans sat one afternoon on the wooden step of a stairway that led up from beside the range to the attic. During the last few weeks it seemed as if she had returned to life; she came gladly into the kitchen some-

times, and saw Elke at work there; there could no longer be any question of her legs not being able to carry her there, since one day when little Wienke had pulled her up there by her apron. Now the child knelt at her side and looked with her quiet eyes into the flames that flickered up out of the stove-hole. One of her little hands clasped the sleeve of the old woman, the other lay in her own pale blonde hair. Trien' Jans was telling a story: "You know," she said, "I was in your great grandfather's service as a housemaid and then I had to feed the pigs; he was cleverer than them all—then, it is terribly long ago, but one evening, the moon was shining and they closed the outer sluice and she could not get back into the sea. Oh, how she screamed and tore her hard shaggy hair with her little fish-hands! Yes, child, I saw it and heard her screaming myself! The ditches between the fens were all full of water and the moon shining on them made them sparkle like silver and she swam from one ditch into the other and lifted her arms and struck what were her hands together so that you could hear it a long way off, as if she wanted to pray; but, child, those creatures cannot pray. I was sitting in front of the door on a few beams that had been brought up there to be used in building, and looking far out across the fens; and the water-woman still swam in the ditches, and when she raised her arms they too glittered like silver and diamonds. At last I did not see her any more and the wild geese and gulls that I had not heard the whole time began to fly through the air again, hissing and cackling."

The old woman ceased; the child had caught up one word. "Could not pray?" she asked. "What do you say? Who was it?"

"Child," said the old woman, "it was the water-woman; those are accursed creatures who can never be saved."

"Never be saved," repeated the child and her little breast heaved with a deep sigh as if she had understood that.

"Trien' Jans," came a deep voice from the kitchen door and she started slightly. It was the dikegrave Hauke Haien

who was leaning there against the post. "What are you saying to the child? Haven't I told you to keep your legends to yourself or to tell them to the geese and hens?"

The old woman looked at him with an angry glance and pushed the little girl away from her: "Those are no legends," she murmured half to herself, "my great-uncle told me that."

"Your great-uncle, Trien'? Why just now you said you had experienced it yourself!"

"It's all the same," said the old woman; "but you don't believe, Hauke Haien; I suppose you want to make my great-uncle out a liar." Then she drew nearer to the range and stretched her hands out over the flames in the grate.

The dikegrave threw a glance towards the window; it was scarcely dusk as yet outside. "Come, Wienke," he said and drew his feeble-minded child to him; "come with me; I want to show you something from out on the dike! Only we shall have to walk; the white horse is at the blacksmith's." Then he went with her into the living-room and Elke tied thick woolen shawls about the little girl's throat and shoulders; soon after her father took her out on the old dike towards the northwest, past Jeverssand, to where the flats lay broad before them almost farther than the eye could reach.

Part of the time he carried her, part of the time he led her by the hand; the twilight deepened gradually; in the distance everything disappeared in mist and vapor. But there, where one could still see, the invisibly swelling currents of the shallows had broken the ice, and, as Hauke had once seen it in his youth, smoking fog now rose from the cracks along which the uncanny, impish figures were once more to be seen hopping towards one another and bowing and suddenly stretching out wide, in a terrible fashion.

The child clung to her father in fear and covered her little face with his hand: "The sea-devils!" she whispered tremblingly between his fingers; "the sea-devils!"

He shook his head: "No, Wienke, neither water-women

nor sea-devils; there are no such things; who told you about them?"

She looked up at him dully but did not answer. He stroked her cheeks tenderly: "Just look again," he said; "those are only poor hungry birds. Just see how the big one spreads his wings now; they are catching the fish that come into the steaming cracks."

"Fish," repeated Wienke.

"Yes, child, all those creatures are alive like us, there is nothing else. But God is everywhere!"

Little Wienke had fixed her eyes on the ground and held her breath; she looked as if she were gazing into an abyss terrified. Perhaps it only seemed so; her father looked at her long; he bent down and looked into her little face, but no feeling of her imprisoned soul was visible in it. He lifted her in his arms and stuck her benumbed hands into one of his thick woolen gloves: "there, my little Wienke," and the child probably did not hear the tone of intense tenderness in his words—"there, warm yourself close to me! You are our child after all, our only one. You love us——" The man's voice broke, but the little girl pressed her head tenderly into his rough beard.

Thus they went home full of peace.

After the New Year, trouble once more entered into the house; the dikegrave was seized with a marsh fever; it went hard with him too, and when, under Elke's nursing and care, he recovered, he scarcely seemed to be the same man. The languor of his body also lay upon his mind, and Elke was worried to see how easily content he was at all times. Nevertheless towards the end of March he was moved to mount his white horse and ride out again for the first time along the top of his dike. It was on an afternoon and the sun, which had been shining earlier in the day, had long since been concealed by the haze.

A few times during the winter there had been high tides but they had done no serious damage; only over on the

other bank a herd of sheep on an islet had been drowned and a bit of the foreland had been washed away; here on this side and in the new koog no harm worth mentioning had been done. But in the previous night a stronger gale had raged and now the dikegrave himself had to ride out and inspect everything with his own eyes. He had already ridden all along the new dike, beginning below at the southeast corner, and everything was in good condition, but as he came towards the northeast corner where the new dike ran up to the old one, the former was indeed uninjured, but where before the water-course had reached the old one and flowed along beside it, he saw that a great strip of the grass-line had been destroyed and washed away, and a hollow had been eaten in the body of the dike by the tide, which moreover, had thus laid bare a whole maze of mouse-passages. Hauke dismounted and inspected the damage from near-by: the destructive mouse-passages seemed unmistakably to continue on beyond where they could be seen.

He was seriously frightened; all this should have been thought of and prevented at the time the new dike was built; as it had been overlooked then it must be taken care of now! The cattle were not yet out on the fens, the grass was unusually backward; in whatever direction he glanced it all looked bleak and empty. He mounted his horse and rode back and forth along the bank: the tide was low and he did not fail to perceive that the current from outside had bored a new bed for itself in the mud and had come from the northwest against the old dike: the new one however, as far as it was involved, had been able to withstand the onslaught of the waves owing to its gentler profile.

A new mountain of annoyance and work rose before the dikegrave's mental vision: not only would the old dike have to be strengthened here but its profile would also have to be approximated to the new one; above all, the water-course, from which danger now threatened again, would have to be diverted by new dams or brush hedges. Once more he rode along the new dike to the extreme northwest corner

and then back again, his eyes fixed on the newly channeled bed of the water-course, which was plainly to be seen at his side in the bared mud. The white horse fretted to go on, and snorted and pawed the ground, but Hauke held him back; he wanted to ride slowly and he wanted also to master the inner disquietude which was fermenting and seething within him with ever-increasing strength.

If a storm should come bringing with it high tides—such a one as in 1655, when men and property were swallowed up uncounted—if it should come again as it had already come several times!—a hot shudder trickled over the rider—the old dike, it could never stand the violent attack that would be made on it! What, what could be done then? There would be one way, and one way only, to save perhaps the old koog, and the property and life in it. Hauke felt his heart stand still, his usually strong head whirl; he did not speak it aloud, but within him it was spoken clearly enough: your koog, the Hauke-Haien-Koog, would have to be sacrificed and the new dike broken through.

Already he saw in imagination the rushing flood breaking in and covering grass and clover with its salt seething froth. His spur gashed into the white horse's flank, and with a cry it flew forward along the dike and down the path that led to the dikegrave's mound.

His head full of inward alarm and confused plans, he came home. He threw himself into his armchair and when Elke entered the room with their daughter he stood up again, lifted the child up and kissed her; then he drove the little yellow dog away from him with a few light blows. "I've got to go up to the tavern again!" he said and took his cap from the peg on the door, where he had only just hung it.

His wife looked at him troubled: "What do you want to do there? It's already growing dark, Hauke."

"Dike affairs," he murmured. "I'll meet some of the commissioners there."

She followed him and pressed his hand, for by the time he had finished speaking he was already outside the door.

Hauke Haien, who hitherto had made all his decisions alone, now felt anxious to hear a word from those whose opinions he had formerly regarded as scarcely worth considering. In the inn he found Ole Peters sitting at the card table with two of the commissioners and a man who lived in the koog. "You've come from out on the dike, I suppose, dikegrave," said the former picking up the half-dealt cards and throwing them down again.

"Yes, Ole," replied Hauke; "I was out there; it looks bad."

"Bad? Well, it will cost a few hundred sods and some straw work I suppose; I was out there too this afternoon."

"We shan't get off as cheap as that, Ole," answered the dikegrave. "The water-course is there again and even if it doesn't strike against the old dike from the north now, it does from the northwest."

"You ought to have left it where you found it," said Ole dryly.

"That means," replied Hauke, "you're not concerned in the new koog and therefore it should not exist. That is your own fault. But if we have to plant brush hedges to protect the old dike the green clover behind the new one will more than make up for that."

"What do you say, dikegrave?" cried the commissioners; "hedges? How many? You like to do everything the most expensive way!"

The cards lay on the table untouched. "I'll tell you, dikegrave," said Ole Peters leaning his arms on the table, "your new koog that you've foisted on us is eating us up. Everyone is still suffering under the cost of your broad dike; now it's consuming the old dike too and you want us to renew that! Fortunately it's not so bad; it held this time and will continue to do so. Just mount your white horse again tomorrow and look at it once more."

Hauke had come to the tavern out of the peace of his home. Behind the words he had just heard, which after all were fairly moderate, there lay—he could not fail to recognize it—an obstinate resistance. It seemed to him

that he lacked the strength he had formerly had to cope with it. "I'll do as you advise, Ole," he said: "only I'm afraid I shall find it as I saw it today."

A restless night followed this day; Hauke tossed sleeplessly about on his pillow. "What is the matter?" asked Elke, kept awake by worry about her husband; "if there is anything on your mind tell it to me; we have always done that."

"It is not of any consequence, Elke," he replied; "there are some repairs to be made to the dike, to the sluices; you know that I always have to think such things out in my mind at night." He said nothing further; he wanted to keep himself free to act as he chose. Without his being conscious of it his wife's clear insight and strong mind were an obstacle to him in his present weakness and involuntarily he avoided it.

On the following morning as he came out onto the dike he saw a different world from the one he had found the day before; it was indeed low tide again but the day was growing and the rays from the bright spring sun fell almost perpendicularly on the shallows which extended as far as the eye could reach; the white gulls glided calmly hither and thither and, invisible above them, high under the azure sky the larks sang their eternal melody. Hauke, who did not know how nature can deceive us with her charm, stood on the northwest corner of the dike and sought the new bed of the water-course which had given him such a shock the day before; but with the sunlight darting directly down from the zenith he could not even find it at first; not until he shaded his eyes with his hand from the dazzling rays did it show itself unmistakably. Nevertheless the shadows in the dusk of the evening before must have deceived him; it was outlined but very weakly now; the mouse-passages that had been laid bare must have been more responsible for the damage done to the dike than the tide. To be sure, it must be changed; but by careful digging and, as Ole Peters had said, by fresh sodding and a few rods of straw work the damage could be repaired.

“It wasn’t so bad, after all,” he said to himself with relief, “you made a fool of yourself yesterday!” He called the commissioners together and the work was decided upon, for the first time without any objection being raised. The dikegrave thought he felt a strengthening calm spreading through his still weakened body; and in a few weeks everything was neatly carried out.

The year went on but the older it grew the more clearly the newly laid grass shot up green through its covering of straw, with the more agitation did Hauke walk or ride past this spot. He turned away his eyes, he rode close along the inside of the dike; several times when he would have had to pass the place and his horse was ready saddled for him to start he had it led back into the stable; then again, when he had nothing to do there, he would suddenly hurry out there on foot just so as to get away quickly and unseen from his mound; sometimes too he had turned back, he had not been able to trust himself to examine the dismal place anew; and finally he had felt as if he would like to tear everything open again with his hands; for this bit of the dike lay before his eyes like a prick of conscience that had taken form outside of him. And yet his hand could not touch it again and he could speak of it to no one, not even to his wife. Thus September had come; in the night a moderate wind had raged and finally had shifted to the northwest. On the following dull morning, when the tide was low, Hauke rode out on the dike and a start ran through him as he let his eyes rove over the shallows; there, coming from the northwest he suddenly saw it again and cut through more sharply and deeply, the new spectral bed of the water-course; exert his eyes as he might, it refused to disappear.

When he came home Elke took his hand; “What is the matter, Hauke?” she asked, looking into his gloomy face; “surely there is no new misfortune? We are so happy now; I feel as if you were at peace with them all.”

In the face of these words he could not express his confused fear.

“No, Elke,” he said, “no one makes an enemy of me; only it is a responsible office to protect the community from God’s sea.”

He freed himself so as to avoid further questioning from the wife that he loved. He went into the stable and shed as if he had to inspect everything; but he saw nothing around him; he was only intent on quieting his prick of conscience, on trying to convince himself that it was a morbidly exaggerated fear.

“The year of which I am telling you,” said my host, the schoolmaster, after a while, “was the year 1756, which will never be forgotten about here; in Hauke Haien’s house it brought with it a death. At the end of September the almost ninety-year-old ‘Trien’ Jans was found dying in the room which had been given up to her in the barn. According to her desire she had been propped up against her pillows and her eyes looked through the little leaded panes into the distance; there must have been a thinner over a denser layer of air lying there along the sky for at this moment there was a clear mirage and the sea was reflected like a glistening strip of silver above the edge of the dike so that it shone dazzlingly into the room; the south end of Jeverssand too was visible.

At the foot of the bed crouched little Wienke and held her father’s hand tightly in one of hers as he stood close by. Death was just engraving the Hippocratic face on the dying woman and the child stared breathlessly at the uncanny, incomprehensible change in the plain countenance with which she was so familiar. “What is she doing? What is it, Father?” she whispered fearfully and dug her finger nails into her father’s hand.

“She is dying,” said the dikegrave.

“Dying,” repeated the child and seemed to fall into confused thought.

But the old woman moved her lips once more: “Jins! Jins!” a shrill cry of distress broke from her and she stretched out her bony arms towards the reflection of the

sea that glistened outside: "Help me! Help me! You are above the water. * * * God have mercy on the others!"

Her arms sank, there was a slight cracking of the bedstead; she had ceased to live.

The child drew a deep sigh and raised her pale eyes to her father: "Is she still dying?" she asked.

"She has finished!" said the dikegrave, and took the child in his arms. "She is far away from us now, with God."

"With God," repeated the child and was silent for a while as if she were thinking over the words. "Is it good to be with God?"

"Yes, best of all." But in Hauke's heart the dying woman's last words tolled heavily. "God have mercy on the others!"—the words sounded softly within him. What did the old witch mean? Can the dying prophesy?

Soon, after Trien' Jans had been buried up by the church, there began to be ever louder talk of all kinds of misfortune and curious vermin that were said to have frightened the people in northern Friesland. And it was certain that on the Sunday in Mid-Lent the golden cock had been thrown down from the top of the tower by a whirlwind; and it was true too that in midsummer a shower of large insects fell from heaven like snow so that it was impossible to open one's eyes and they lay nearly as high as a hand on the fens and no one had ever seen anything like it. But after the end of September when the head-man and the maid Ann Grete came back from town where they had driven with grain and butter for the market, they climbed down from their wagon with faces pale with fear. "What is it? What is the matter with you?" cried the other maids, who had come running out when they heard the sound of the wagon.

Ann Grete in her traveling dress stepped breathlessly into the roomy kitchen. "Oh, hurry up and tell us!" called the girls again, "where is the misfortune?"

"Oh, may our dear Jesus protect us!" cried Ann Grete. "You know from the other side, across the water, that old Molly from Siegelhof—we always stand together with our

butter at the corner near the apothecary's—she told me about it and Iven Johns said too, 'that means a misfortune,' he said, 'a misfortune for the whole of northern Friesland; believe me Ann Grete!' And"—she lowered her voice—"perhaps after all it's not all right with the dikegrave's white horse."

"Ssh! Ssh!" said the other maids.

"Yes, yes; what does it matter to me! But over there, on the other side, it's going on worse than with us! Not only flies and vermin, blood too has fallen like rain from heaven; and on the Sunday morning after that when the pastor went to his washbasin there were five death's-heads, the size of peas, in it, and they all came to see it; in the month of August horrible red-headed caterpillars went through the land and ate up the grain and flour and bread and whatever they could find and no fire was able to destroy them!"

Ann Grete suddenly ceased; none of the maids had noticed that their mistress had come into the kitchen. "What tales are you telling there?" she asked. "Don't let your master hear that!" And as they all wanted to begin to tell her she went on, "It's not necessary; I heard enough of it; go about your work, that will do you more good!" Then she took Ann Grete with her into the sitting-room to go through her market accounts with her.

So in the dikegrave's house none of the family paid any attention to the superstitious gossip that was going about; but it was different in the other houses and the longer the evenings grew the more easily did it find its way in. Everyone lived as if in an oppressive atmosphere and secretly people said to themselves that a misfortune, and a heavy one, would fall on northern Friesland.

It was in October, before All Saints' Day. A strong wind had blown from the southwest all day; in the evening the crescent moon was in the sky, dark brown clouds drove past and a medley of shade and dull light flew across the earth; the storm was growing. In the dikegrave's room the

empty supper table still stood; the men had been sent into the stable to look after the cattle; the maids were busy in the house and in the attics seeing that the doors and windows were securely fastened so that the storm should not gain an entrance and do damage. Hauke stood beside his wife at the window; he had just swallowed down his supper; he had been out on the dike. He had gone there on foot early in the afternoon; here and there, where the dike looked weak, he had had pointed stakes and sacks of clay or earth piled up; everywhere he had left men to drive in the stakes and make dams with the sacks in front as soon as the tide should begin to damage the dike. The largest number he had placed at the corner towards the northwest at the intersection of the old and new dikes; their instructions were not to leave the places assigned to them except in case of necessity. That was what he had left behind him and then, scarcely a quarter of an hour ago, he had come back to the house wet and disheveled and now, his ear fixed on the gusts of winds that rattled the leaded panes, he gazed out absently into the wild night; the clock behind the pane of glass in the wall was just striking eight. The child, who was standing beside her mother, started and buried her head in her mother's dress. "Klaus!" she called, crying, "where is my Klaus?"

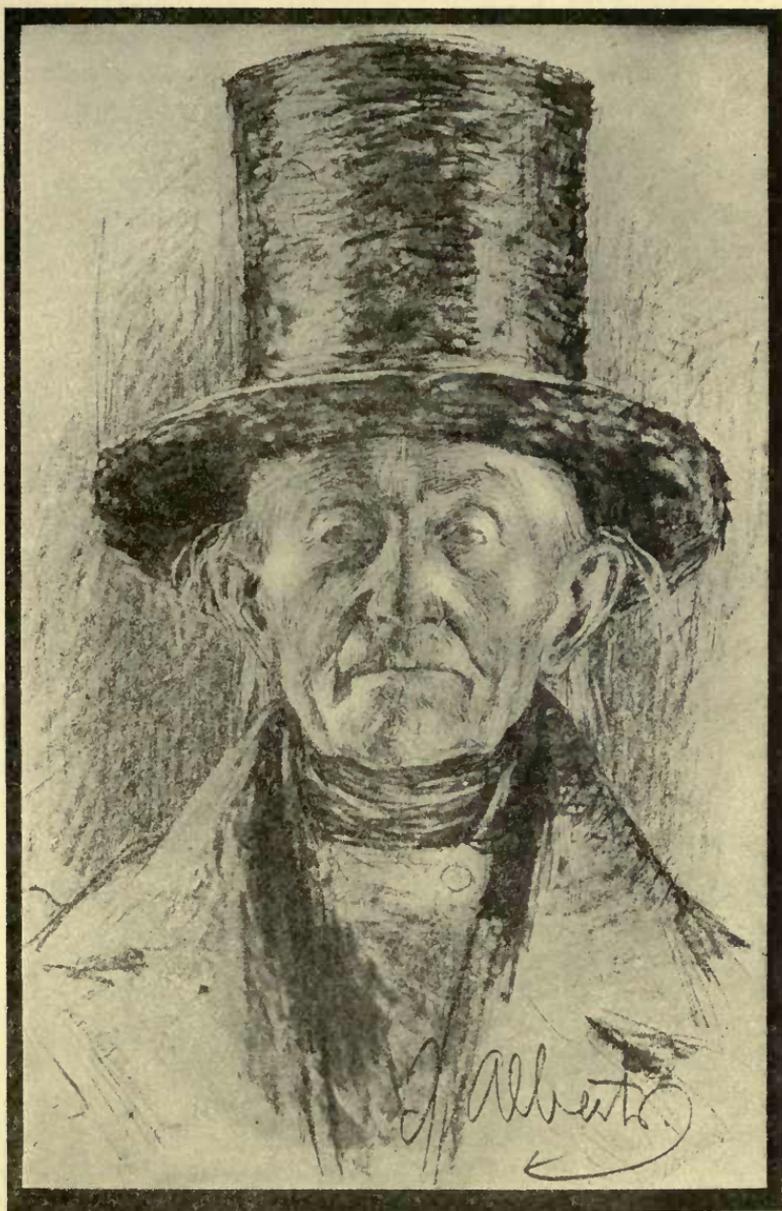
She might well ask, for this year, as indeed the year before, the gull had not flown away for the winter. Her father did not heed the question, but her mother lifted the child in her arms. "Your Klaus is in the barn," she said, "he has a warm place there."

"Warm?" said Wienke, "is that good?"

"Yes, that's good."

The master still stood at the window. "It won't do any longer, Elke," he said; "call one of the girls, the storm will break in the panes; the shutters must be screwed on!"

At her mistress's word the maid had run out; they could see from the room how her skirts were blown about; but when she unfastened the catch the wind tore the shutter out of her hand and threw it against the window so that a



A GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL

JACOB ALBERTS

few broken panes flew into the room and one of the lights flared and went out. Hauke himself had to go out to help and it was only with great difficulty that the shutters were at last got into place. When they opened the door again to come into the house a gust of wind followed them that made the glass and silver in the cupboard shake and clatter; upstairs in the house above their heads the beams trembled and cracked as if the gale were trying to tear the roof off the walls. But Hauke did not come back into the room. Elke heard him walking across the floor towards the stable. "The white horse! The white horse, John; quick!" She heard him call the order; then he came into the room, his hair tumbled but his gray eyes sparkling. "The wind has shifted!" he cried, "to the northwest, at half spring-tide! No wind; we have never experienced such a storm!"

Elke had grown as pale as death: "And you must go out there again?"

He seized both her hands and pressed them convulsively: "That I must, Elke."

Slowly she raised her dark eyes to his and for a few seconds they looked at each other; but it was like an eternity. "Yes, Hauke," answered the woman; "I know well that you must!"

There was a sound of trotting before the front door. She flung herself on Hauke's neck and for a moment it seemed as if she could not let him go; but that too was only for a second. "This is *our* fight," said Hauke; "you are safe here, no tide has ever come up to this house. And pray to God to be with me too!"

Hauke wrapped himself in his cloak and Elke took a scarf and wound it carefully round his neck; she wanted to say a word, but her trembling lips refused to utter it.

Outside the white horse neighed so that it sounded like a trumpet in the howling storm. Elke went out with her husband; the old ash creaked as if it were being split asunder. "Mount, master," called the man, "the white horse is as if mad; the rein might break." Hauke threw

his arms round his wife: "I shall be here again at sunrise!"

Already he had leapt onto his horse; the animal reared; then, like a war-horse rushing into battle, it charged down the mound with its rider out into the night and the howling of the storm. "Father, my Father!" cried a child's plaintive voice after him: "my dear Father!"

Wienke had run out after them in the dark; but she had not gone more than a hundred steps before she stumbled against a heap of earth and fell.

The man Johns brought the crying child back to her mother; the latter was leaning against the trunk of the ash, the boughs of which lashed the air above her, staring out absently into the night in which her husband had disappeared; when the roaring of the gale and the distant thunder of the sea ceased for a moment she started as if frightened; she felt as if everything was trying just to destroy him and would be dumb instantly when it had got him. Her knees trembled, the wind had blown her hair down and now played with it at will. "Here is the child!" John shouted to her; "hold her tight!" and he pressed the little girl into her mother's arms.

"The child? I'd forgotten you, Wienke!" she exclaimed; "God forgive me." Then she hugged her to her breast as closely as only love can and dropped on her knees: "Lord God, and Thou, my Jesus, let us not become widow and orphan! Protect him, Oh dear God; only Thou and I, we alone know him!" And there was no more interruption to the gale; it resounded and thundered as if the whole world were coming to an end in one vast reverberation of sound.

"Go into the house, Missis!" said Johns; "come!" And he helped them and led the two into the house and into the sitting-room.

The dikegrave, Hauke Haien, flew forward on his white horse towards the dike. The narrow path was like a mire, for excessively heavy rain had fallen in the preceding days; nevertheless the wet sticky clay did not seem to hold

the horse's hoofs, it moved as if treading on a firm dry road. The clouds drove across the sky in a mad chase; below, the wide marsh lay like an unrecognizable desert filled with agitated shades; from the water behind the dike came an ever-increasing dull roar as if it must swallow up everything else. "Forward, my white horse!" cried Hauke; "we're riding our worst ride!"

At that moment a sound like a death cry came from under his mount's hoofs. He pulled up and looked round; at his side, close above the ground, screeching mockingly as they went, moved a flock of white gulls, half flying, half tossed by the gale; they were seeking protection on shore. One of them—the moon shone fleetingly through the clouds—lay crushed on the path: it seemed to the rider as if a red ribbon fluttered from its neck. "Klaus!" he cried. "Poor Klaus!"

Was it his child's bird? Had it recognized horse and rider and tried to seek shelter with them? He did not know. "Forward!" he cried again, and the white horse had already lifted his hoofs for a new race when suddenly there was a pause in the storm and a deathlike silence took its place; it lasted but an instant, then the gale returned with renewed fury; but in the meantime the rider's ear had caught the sound of men's voices and the faint barking of dogs and when he turned his head back towards the village he distinguished, in the moonlight that broke forth, people on the mounds and in front of the houses busy about wagons that were loaded high; he saw, as if in flight, still other wagons driving hurriedly towards the upland; the lowing of cattle being driven up there out of their warm stables, met his ear. "Thank God, they are saving themselves and their cattle!" his heart cried; and then came an inward shriek of terror: "My wife! My child! No! No; the water will not come up to our mound!"

But it was only for a moment; everything flew by him like a vision.

A fearful squall came roaring up from the sea and into its face horse and rider stormed up the narrow path to the

dike. Once on top Hauke halted his steed with force. But where was the sea? Where Jeverssand? Where lay the opposite shore? Nothing but mountains of water faced him, rising up threateningly against the night sky, seeking to overtop one another in the dreadful dusk, and beating, one over the next, on the shore. They came forward with white crests, howling, as if the roar of all the terrible beasts of prey in the wilderness were in them. The white horse pawed the ground and snorted out into the din; but it came over the rider as if here all human power were at an end; as if night, death, chaos must now set in.

Still he considered: after all it was a storm-tide; only he himself had never seen such a one as that; his wife, his child, they were safe on the high mound, in the solid house; but his dike—and pride shot through his heart—the Hauke-Haien-Dike, as the people called it; now was the time for it to prove how dikes must be built!

But—what was this? He was at the angle between the two dikes; where were the men whom he had ordered here, whose work it was to watch this spot? He looked north up the old dike; for he had sent a few up there too. Neither here nor there could he see a soul; he rode out a piece; but still he was alone: only the souging of the storm and the surging of the sea that filled the air to an immeasurable distance smote deafeningly on his ear. He turned his horse back; he came again to the deserted corner and let his eyes pass along the line of the new dike; he saw distinctly, the waves rolled up here more slowly, less violently; it almost seemed as if there were other water there. “It will stand, all right!” he murmured and felt a laugh rise within him.

But his inclination to laugh soon passed as his eyes glanced farther along the line of his dike: on the north-west corner—what was that? He saw a dark swarm of moving beings; he saw how industriously they stirred and hurried—there could be no doubt, they were men! What were they trying to do, what work were they doing on his dike now! And already his spurs were in the white horse’s flanks and the animal was flying with him thither; the gale

came from the broad side, at times the gusts came with such force that they were almost swept down from the dike into the new koog; but horse and rider knew where they were riding. Hauke already perceived that probably a few dozen men were working industriously there together and already he saw distinctly that a gutter was cut right across through the new dike. Violently he reined in his horse. "Stop!" he cried, "stop! What devil's work are you doing here?"

The men had ceased shoveling with a start when they suddenly perceived the dikegrave among them; the wind had carried his words to them and he saw that several were trying to answer him; but he only caught their vehement gestures, for they all stood at his left and what they said was carried away by the gale which was so violent out here that it hurled them against one another so that they were obliged to crowd together. Hauke measured with his quick eyes the gutter that had been dug and the height of the water which, in spite of the new profile, dashed up almost to the top of the dike and splattered horse and rider. Only ten minutes more work and then—he saw it distinctly—then the high tide would break through the gutter and the Hauke-Haien Koog would be buried by the sea!

The dikegrave beckoned one of the laborers to the other side of his horse. "Now, speak," he shouted, "what are you doing here, what is the meaning of this?"

And the man shouted back: "We've got to break through the new dike, sir! So that the old dike doesn't break."

"What have you got to do?"

"Break through the new dike!"

"And flood the koog? What devil ordered you to do that?"

"No, sir, no devil; the commissioner Ole Peters has been here; he gave the order!"

Anger flamed up into the rider's eyes: "Do you know me?" he shouted. "Where I am Ole Peters has no orders to give! Away with you! Back to your places where I left you."

And as they hesitated he dashed into the group with his horse: "Away, to your own or the devil's grandmother!"

"Be careful, sir," shouted one of the group and struck at the madly careering animal with his spade; but a kick from the horse knocked the spade from his hand, another fell to the ground. At that moment there suddenly arose a shriek from the rest of the group, a shriek such as only deathly terror wrests from the human throat; for a moment all, even the dikegrave and the horse, stood as if paralyzed; only one of the laborers had extended his arm like a signpost; he pointed to the northwest corner of the two dikes, where the new one ran up to the old one. Only the raging of the wind and the surging of the water could be heard. Hauke turned in his saddle: what was that there? His eyes grew large: "By God! A breach! A breach in the old dike!"

"Your fault, dikegrave," shouted a voice from the group. "Your fault! Take it with you before God's throne!"

Hauke's face, first red with anger, had grown pale as death; the moon which shone on it could not make it whiter; his arms hung limp, he scarcely knew that he held the rein. But that too only lasted for a second; already he drew himself up, a hard groan broke from his mouth; then dumbly he turned his horse and with a snort it raced away with him to the east along the dike. The rider's glance flew sharply in all directions; thoughts were whirling in his head: What blame had he to bear before God's throne? The break through the new dike—perhaps they would have accomplished it if he had not called "stop!" But—there was another thing and his heart grew hot, he knew it only too well—the summer before, if only Ole Peters' evil mouth had not held him back then—that was where it lay! He alone had recognized the weakness of the old dike; he should have pushed on the new work in spite of everything: "Lord God, I confess it," he cried out suddenly aloud into the storm. "I have discharged my office badly."

At his left, close to his horse's hoofs, raged the sea; before him, now in complete darkness, lay the old koog with its mounds and homes; the moon's pale light on the sky had disappeared entirely; only at one spot did light shine through the darkness. And something like comfort crept into the man's heart; it must be shining over from his own house, it seemed to him like a message from his wife and child. Thank God, they were safe on the high mound! The others, certainly, they were already in the upland village; more light glimmered from there than he had ever seen before; yes, even high up in the air, probably from the church-tower, light shone out into the night. "They will all have gone away," said Hauke to himself; "to be sure, on more than one mound a house will lie in ruins, bad years will come for the flooded fens; drains and sluices to be repaired! We must bear it and I will help, those too who have done me harm; only, Lord, my God, be merciful to us men!"

He turned his eyes to the side, towards the new koog; about it foamed the sea; but in it lay the peace of night. Involuntarily triumphant rejoicing rose in the rider's breast: "The Hauke-Haien-Dike, it must stand; it will hold after more than a hundred years!"

A roar like thunder at his feet roused him from these dreams; the white horse did not want to go on. What was that? The horse jumped back and he felt how a piece of the dike in front of him plunged down into the depths. He opened his eyes wide and shook off all meditation: he had stopped close to the old dike, the horse's front feet had been on it. Involuntarily he jerked the horse back; at that moment the last veiling of clouds swept from the moon and the mild planet illumined the horror that seething and hissing rushed down before him into the old koog.

Hauke stared at it senselessly; it was a deluge, come to swallow up man and beast. Then a light shone again into his eyes; it was the same one that he had seen before; it was still burning on his mound; and now as, encouraged, he looked down into the koog he perceived that behind the

confusing whirl that dashed down clamorously before him, only a breadth of about a hundred feet was inundated; beyond that he could clearly distinguish the way that led up from the koog. He saw still more: a carriage, no, a two-wheeled gig came driving madly up towards the dike; a woman, yes, and a child too, were sitting in it. And now—was not that the shrill bark of a little dog that was borne by on the wind? Almighty God! It was his wife, his child! They were already coming quite close and the foaming mass of water was rushing towards them. A shriek, a shriek of desperation broke from the rider's breast: "Elke!" he shouted; "Elke! Back! Back!"

But wind and sea were not merciful, their raging tossed his words away; only the wind had caught his cloak and nearly flung him from his horse; and the approaching vehicle flew on steadily towards the rushing flood. As he looked he saw his wife stretch out her arms as if up towards him: had she recognized him? Had longing, had deathly anxiety about him driven her out of her secure house? And now—was she shouting a last word to him? These questions shot through his mind; they remained unanswered: all words from her to him, from him to her were lost; only an uproar as if the world were coming to an end filled their ears and excluded all other sounds.

"My child! Oh Elke, Oh faithful Elke!" cried Hauke out into the storm. Another large piece of the dike in front of him gave way and thunderingly the sea plunged in after it; once more he saw below the horse's head the wheels of the conveyance rise up out of the chaotic horror and then disappear in a whirl. The fixed eyes of the rider who stood so solitary on the dike saw nothing further. "The end!" he said softly to himself; then he rode to the edge of the abyss where, below him, the waters rushing uncannily were beginning to flood his home village; he still saw the light shining from his house; he felt that the soul had gone out of it. He raised himself high in the saddle and drove his spurs into the white horse's flanks; the animal reared and nearly fell over backwards; but the

man's strength forced it down again. "Forward!" he cried once more as he had so often urged it on to a steady ride. "Take me, God; spare the others!"

Another pressure of the spurs; a shriek from the white horse that rose above the gale and the roar of the waves; then from the plunging stream below a dull splash, a brief struggle.

The moon looked down from above and illumined the scene; but on the dike beneath there was no longer any life save that of the savage waters which soon had almost completely covered the old koog. But still the mound where stood Hauke Haien's home rose up out of the swelling flood, the light still shone from there; and from the upland where the houses gradually grew dark, the solitary light from the church steeple threw its wavering beams across the seething waves.

The narrator ceased; I reached out for the filled glass that had long been standing before me; but I did not put it to my mouth; my hand remained lying on the table.

"That is the story of Hauke Haien," my host began again, "as I had to tell it according to my best knowledge. Our dikegrave's housekeeper, of course, would have made another tale; for this too people have to report: after the flood the white skeleton of the horse was to be seen again in the moonlight on Jevershallig as before; everyone in the village believed he saw it. So much is certain: Hauke Haien with his wife and child went down in that flood; I have not been able to find even their graves up in the churchyard; the dead bodies were undoubtedly carried back through the breach by the receding water out to sea, at the bottom of which they gradually were dissolved into their original component parts—thus they had peace from men. But the Hauke Haien Dike still stands now after a hundred years, and tomorrow if you ride to town and don't mind going half an hour out of your way you will have it beneath your horse's hoofs.

“The thanks Jewe Manners once promised the builder that the grandchildren should give have not come, as you have seen; for thus it is, sir: they gave Socrates poison to drink and our Lord Jesus Christ they nailed to the cross! It is not so easy to do such things as that any longer; but—to make a saint of a man of violence or a malicious bull-necked priest, or to make a ghost or a phantom of night of an able fellow just because he is a whole head above the rest of us—that can be done any day.”

When the earnest little man had said that he got up and listened at the window. “It is different out there now,” he said, and drew the woolen curtain back; it was bright moonlight. “See,” he continued, “there are the commissioners coming back, but they are separating, they are going home; there must have been a break over on the other side; the water has fallen.”

I looked out beside him; the windows upstairs, where we were, lay above the edge of the dike; it was as he had said. I took my glass and finished it: “I thank you for this evening,” I said; “I think we can sleep in peace!”

“That we can,” replied the little man; “I wish you a good night’s sleep from my heart!”

In going down I met the dikegrave below in the hall; he wanted to take home with him a map that he had left in the tap-room. “It’s all over,” he said. “But our schoolmaster has told you a story of his own, I suppose; he belongs to the rationalists!”

“He seems to be a sensible man.”

“Oh yes, certainly; but you can’t mistrust your own eyes after all. And over on the other side, just as I said it would be, the dike is broken!”

I shrugged my shoulders: “We will have to take counsel with our pillows about that! Good night, dikegrave!”

He laughed. “Good night!”

The next morning, in the most golden of sunlights, which had risen on a wide devastation, I rode along the Hauke Haien Dike down to the town.

TO A DECEASED*



UT this is more than I can bear,
 That still the laughing sun is bright,
 As in the days when you were there,
 That clocks are striking, unaware,
 And mark the change of day and night—

That we, as twilight dims the air,
 Assemble when the day is done,
 And that the place where stood your chair
 Already many others share,
 And that you seem thus missed by none;

When meanwhile from the gate below
 The narrow strips of moonlight spare
 Into your vault down deeply go
 And with a ghostly pallid glow
 Are stealing o'er your coffin there.

THE CITY*

THE shore is gray, the sea is gray,
 And there the city stands;
 The mists upon the houses weigh
 And through the calm, the ocean gray
 Roars dully on the strands.

There are no rustling woods, there fly
 No birds at all in May,
 The wild goose with its callous cry
 Alone on autumn nights soars by,
 The wind-blown grasses sway.

* Translator: Margarete Münsterberg.

And yet my whole heart clings to thee,
 Gray city by the sea;
 And e'er the spell of youth for me
 Doth smiling rest on thee, on thee
 Gray city by the sea.

THE HEATH*

It is so quiet here. There lies
 The heath in noon's warm sunshine gold.
 A gleam of light, all rosy, flies
 And hovers round the mounds of old.
 The herbs are blooming; fragrance fair
 Now fills the bluish summer air.

The beetles rush through bush and trees,
 In little golden coats of mail;
 And on the heather-bells the bees
 Alight on all its branches frail.
 From out the grass there starts a throng
 Of larks and fills the air with song.

A lonely house, half-crumbled, low:
 The farmer, in the doorway bent,
 Stands watching in the sunlight's glow
 The busy bees in sweet content.
 And on a stone near by his boy
 Is carving pipes from reeds with joy.

Scarce trembling through the peace of noon
 The town-clock strikes — from far, it seems.
 The old man's eye-lids droop right soon,
 And of his honey crops he dreams.—
 The sounds that tell our time of stress
 Have not yet reached this loneliness.

* Translator: Margarete Münsterberg.

CONSOLATION*

LET come to me whatever may,
While you are with me it is day.

Though in the world I wander far,
My home is ever — where you are.

Your face is all in all to me,
The future's frown I do not see.

* Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.

WILHELM RAABE

BY EWALD EISERHARDT, PH.D.

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WILHELM RAABE was born on the eighth of September, 1831, in the little town of Eschershausen in the Duchy of Braunschweig. He received his schooling at the Gymnasiums in Holzminden and Wolfenbüttel; from 1849-53 he was employed in a bookstore in Magdeburg; then, while living with his mother in Wolfenbüttel, he prepared for the university, and later went to Berlin, where he studied chiefly history, philosophy, and literature. After the success of his first book, *Records of Sparrow Lane* (1857), he turned entirely to authorship. In 1862 he married and moved to Stuttgart, where he remained till 1870. From then on until his death in 1910 he lived in Braunschweig. Raabe was an extraordinarily productive writer, yet during the last ten years of his life he entirely gave up all literary activity, and left his last work, *Old Folks in the Old Home*, unfinished.

The underlying theme of Raabe's writings is the inner life of the individual man and his specifically human sphere of family, society, community, nation. With this he combines a strong preference for what is characteristically German, which he loves just as much where it is merely German, in fact, German to the point of being odd and bizarre, as where it merges into the universally human. Raabe believes, however, that both the peculiarly German and the broadly human types are found with greater richness and depth among the Germans of the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century than among those of the last third. The period before the development of modern Germany is that in which he loves best to linger. When

he forsakes it, he does so to go still farther back, into the realm of history proper.

What was it that interested Raabe in history? Not so much the causal connection of events; not so much historical growth, as historical conditions. And, moreover, to him the outward circumstances are merely the necessary premises for what he really wishes to grasp, the spirit of a period, the constitution of the folk-soul. The great historical figures who led up to a period and stand out prominently in it he pushes into the background. It is the forgotten men and women that he seeks, and he pictures how circumstances or events ordered their lives, whether the individual lived apart from his age and contrasted with the mass, or whether the "milieu" wrought in him a particular condition of mind and heart, so that he was drawn into situations and events, into the "Zeitgeist," without actually exercising any decisive influence. In *Else von der Tanne* the German peasants, at the end of the Thirty Years' War, are sunk in "brutish stupor," inwardly and outwardly coarsened and demoralized, filled with boundless suspicion. When Else, "the purest, holiest flower in the horrible devastation of the earth," appears among them, they look upon her as something monstrous, they make a witch of her, and under their stoning the gentle miracle falls stricken at the threshold of the house of God. In *Sankt Thomas* the struggle between Spain and the Netherlands kindles heroism in the heart of a woman who, like a phenomenon, interposes in the fight, in which she perishes after all, without being able to give its course a favorable turn. "That was no longer that Camilla who had swung in the hammock. * * * She now appeared as the beautiful but deadly genius of this island; it was as if the destructive power of the tropical sun had become embodied in her. * * * Camilla Drago, in league with the fire from heaven, defended the castell Pavaosa." In *The Crown of the Realm* the heroine feels the necessity of making her lover go through the campaigns in Bohemia and Hungary from

where he returns afflicted with leprosy. He gives up his happiness for lost, but the girl, from whom he has hidden, finds him, acknowledges her love for him, nurses him until his death and becomes in the end the mother-nurse of the exiled lepers.

We do not really feel this last story to be historical; for the spirit of the age, all the events and even the fate of the hero and heroine are far eclipsed by the triumphant strength of those powers that, standing above all time, are able to determine human life. *The Crown of the Realm* was indeed written after Raabe had tried in *The People of the Forest* and in his trilogy *The Hunger Pastor*, *Abu Telfan*, and *The Dead-Wagon*—works round which all Raabe's writings circle as round a pole—to comprehend the eternally problematical in human life and to take up some attitude toward it.

“Gib Acht auf die Gassen!” (Watch the Streets), and “Blick auf zu den Sternen!” (Look up to the Stars), are the mottos at whose point of intersection lies the life-wisdom of *The People of the Forest*. To wrestle with the factors of every-day life, to have a clear eye for the different values of these factors, and in general to respect the dignity of the common are indispensable to every real human life. But, if one is to attain the goals that lie in the land of promise, one's gaze must not remain fixed on the ground. For the universe and the human soul are, in themselves, dark, and receive their light only from the shining spheres that we call stars. In man's sky these are love, friendship, faith, patience, mercy, courage, humility, honor. Still more wonderful, however, than the existence of these stars is perhaps the fact that originally we did not possess them at all, but have only found them in the course of thousands of years. And how did they become ours? Through life's suffering and distress and infamy. Here, indeed, we arrive at the centre of Raabe's thought and work. All that is high in the world has developed through friction with what is low, all that is high requires

the low. For just as white is seen in all its intensity only in contrast with black, so, too, depth of love, nobility of mind, strength to aspire are best manifested and unfolded in the conflict with selfishness, baseness, indifference, and every kind of distress and pain. That is why Hans Unwirsch has Moses Freudenstein for a companion; that is why the author lays so many and such different obstacles in his way; that is why he allows him to attain only to such a modest happiness at last; for the satisfied do not hunger, and hunger for all that is noble is the meaning of our existence. That is why, too, a book like *The Hunger Pastor* exercises, on the whole, no liberative influence; it does, however, strengthen and edify our souls and warms our hearts with its inner glow.

But how is it? If the antagonism of those elements that increase life and those that weaken it is necessary, must they therefore exist eternally beside each other, and to which side will the final victory incline? "If ye knew what I know, ye would weep much and laugh little:" with these words of Mohammed's *Abu Telfan* closes. Accordingly the ideal, symbolized in *The Hunger Pastor* by the cobbler's luminous ball that accompanies Hans Unwirsch everywhere, here finds only a place of refuge in the secluded "Katzenmühle" (cat's mill). Deep resignation is the predominant mood of this work. And in the *The Dead-Wagon* the place of the shining ball is taken even by the hearse, and the motto of this book is, "The *Canaille* is lord and remains lord." Antonie Häusler falls into the power of her rascally grandfather, and attempts to rescue her fail. Nevertheless chevalier von Gläubigern reports to Jane Warwolf: "I got there in time, she is happy! Believe no one who tries to tell you that she died in misery. * * * Pay no attention to Hennig and those others about us, they know nothing * * *". The chevalier is right. Antonie died, but in the triumph of martyrdom, and this triumph, still and unnoticed as it was, continues to burn in the hearts

of the three old people whom we leave at the end of the novel in the home for the old and sick in Krodebeck.

The circle of our trilogy is closed. Light and darkness war against each other in all three parts. In *The Hunger Pastor* love and work finally win both external and internal victory; in *Abu Telfan* we are left full of worry that light is diminishing more and more; in the *The Dead-Wagon* the deepest shadows prevail, the noble and the life-affirming forces experience external defeat, but they remain unconquerable in themselves.

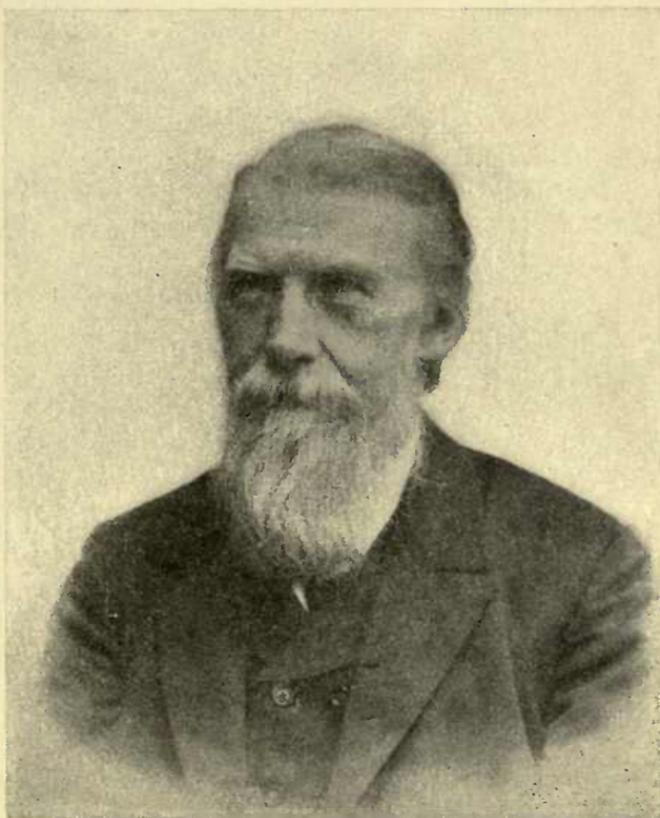
Further than in the *The Dead-Wagon* a wise author who is just to the world may not go in his pessimism, in spite of his study of Schopenhauer, if he would not appear to indulge in mannerism, to be one-sided. Raabe does not fall a victim to his deep penetration into the hardship and infamy of life; it finally becomes to him merely the means to an end. For he thus obtains from his strict conscience the right from now on to develop for its own sake a side of his talent which had already flashed through almost all his works—his humor. In whatever relation good and evil, happiness and suffering may stand to one another, man can not entirely get rid of either of these sides of life. The idealist or pessimist seeks to emphasize one of the two sides, the realist simply takes them as they are and bears them, the humorist tries to reconcile one with the other. This reconciliation must, of course, be subjective in its nature. It takes place in the mind and heart of the man. A humorist like Raabe allows the oppressive a place within him, and is untroubled because he recognizes that it is an integral part of his lot, of humanity's lot. He does not bear it with ridicule or bitterness, indifference or resignation, because he knows he must, but rather he rejoices in the strength of his soul, he rejoices that he can do it. In the consciousness of this ability he has cast away "the fear of the earthly" and looks down smiling on the mysterious play of the forces of life. He smiles at those who allow themselves to be consumed by distress, he smiles at

his own distress which he has to overcome again and again, and is yet affected by grief, is full of the deepest sympathy for all creation, for he knows that he is fighting a common battle with it all. Humor is hearty, humor is brave, humor is full of sunny, smiling wisdom. We have works and characters in German literature that are more pronouncedly and purely humorous than Raabe's. But probably in no other German writer has humor become such a controlling mood of life as in him. With no one else do we feel the faithful humorous personality of the author behind and in his works as we do with Raabe. *Horacker* (1876), *Old Familiar Corners* (1879), *The Hold-All* (1890) may be quoted here.

By virtue of its elevation Raabe's humor has a quiet and certain glance, and is apt to spend its all-embracing sympathy on what is overlooked, what is insignificant, and in all it finds greatness and light hidden and operative. The apparently contradictory attracts him whether it appears to be contradictory in itself or contradictory to what is generally accepted and traditional. He makes friends with originals and oddities; he leads us into the isolation of small German towns, and we feel at home in their sociability and narrowness, in their affection for things and customs of olden times, in their solidity and singularity, in all their local joys and sorrows. Among his many stories we may refer in this connection to: *Der Dräumling* (1872), *Wunnigel* (1878), *The Horn of Wanza* (1880).

Even in Germany Raabe became known only slowly. This was due to his quiet character that disdained all striving after effect, to the intentional mixture of various elements in his art which sometimes makes it difficult to grasp the purpose of a work as a whole, to his persistent pursuit of ends that lay outside the ruling interests of his time. When once his countrymen began to come to themselves again, however, he did not lack homage. And so it will probably continue to be. An age whose interests are centered largely in the external side of life will think

little of him and pass him by, while one whose gaze is directed rather within will take the pains to understand and appreciate him. May his image never be blotted out entirely! For he belongs to those who feel ever rising within them the question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"



WILHELM RAABE

WILHELM RAABE

THE HUNGER PASTOR

TRANSLATED AND ABRIDGED BY MURIEL ALMON

CHAPTER I



It is of hunger that I am going to speak in this good book of mine: what it means, what it desires, what it is able to do. I cannot, to be sure, show how, for the world as a whole, hunger is both Shiva and Vishnu, destroyer and preserver in one; it is for history to show that; but I can describe how it works in the individual as destroyer and preserver, and will continue so to work till the end of the world.

To hunger, to the sacred power of genuine, true hunger, I dedicate these pages, and, indeed, they belong to it by rights, as will, I hope, be perfectly clear by the time we have reached the end. With this latter assurance I am relieved of the necessity of writing a further introduction which, after all, would contribute only in the slightest degree to the reader's comfort, emotion, and excitement; and will begin my story with unlimited good will toward my fellow men, past, present and future, as well as toward myself and all those shadow-figures that will pass before me in the course of this tale—reflexes of the great cycle of birth, being, and passing away, of the infinite growth that is called the evolution of the world—slightly more interesting and richer than this book, it is true, but, unlike this book, not obliged to come to a satisfactory conclusion in three parts.

“Here we have the boy at last! We have him at last—at

last!" cried the father of my hero, and drew a long breath of relief like a man who, after long, vain yearning, hard work, many troubles and cares, had finally reached his happy goal. He looked down with wise, shining eyes at the tiny, pitiable bit of humanity that the midwife had laid in his arms just as the evening bell had sounded. A tear stole over the man's haggard cheek and the sharp, pointed, wise fatherly nose sank ever lower and lower toward the insignificant, scarcely recognizable little nose of the new-born infant, till it suddenly rose up again with a jerk and turned with anxious inquiry toward the kind, capable woman who had contributed so much to his delight.

"Oh, Mrs. Tiebus—good Mrs. Tiebus, is it really a boy? Tell me again that you aren't mistaken—that it is really, really so!"

The midwife, who till now had watched the first tender greeting between father and son with self-assured, smiling nods of the head, now jerked *her* nose into the air, dispelled all the spirits and sprites of good will and contentment which had fluttered about her, with an inimitable gesture of both arms, placed them akimbo, and, with scorn, contempt, and insulted self-respect, began to speak:

"Master Unwirrsch, you are a fool! Have your picture painted on the wall! . . . is it one? Did ever anybody hear the like from such a sensible old man and the head of a house? . . . Is it one? Master Unwirrsch, next, I believe, you'll forget how to tell a boot from a shoe. This just shows what a cross it is when God's gift comes so late. Isn't that a boy that you've got there in your arms? Isn't that really a boy, a fine, proper boy? Lord, if the old creature didn't have the poor little thing in his arms I'd like to give him a good box on the ears for putting such a silly, meddlesome question! Not a boy? Indeed it is a boy, Father Pitch-thread—not one of the heaviest, to be sure; but still a boy, and a proper boy at that! And how shouldn't it be a boy? Isn't Bonnyparty, isn't Napoleum on his way again across the water and won't there be war

and tussling between today and tomorrow, and don't we need boys, and isn't it exactly for that reason that in these strange times of ours more boys than girls come into the world, and aren't there three boys to one girl? and you come to me, to an experienced and sensible person like me, and ask such outrageous questions? Have your picture painted on the wall, Father Unwirrsch, and have written underneath it what I think of you. Here, give the boy to me, you don't deserve to have him bother with you—go along with you to your wife—perhaps you'll ask her too, if it's—a—boy!"

Ungently the infant was snatched from the arms of the despised, crushed father and, after getting his breath, Master Anton Unwirrsch hobbled into the bedroom of his wife, and the evening bells still rang. But we will not disturb either the father and mother or the bells—let them give full utterance to their feelings with no one to interfere.

Poor people and rich people have different ways of life in this world; but when the sun of happiness shines into their huts, houses, or palaces, it gilds with the very same gold the wooden bench and the velvet chair, the white-washed wall and the gilt one, and more than one sly dog of a philosopher says he has noticed that as far as joy and sorrow are concerned the difference between rich and poor people is not nearly as great as both classes often, very often, extremely often think. Be that as it may; it is enough for us that laughter is not a monopoly nor weeping an obligation on this spherical, fire-filled ball with its flattened poles, onto which we find our way without desiring it, and from which, without desiring it, we depart, after the interval between our coming and going has been made bitter enough for us.

The sun now shone into the house of poor people. Happiness, smiling, stooped to enter the low doorway, both her open hands extended in greeting. There was great joy over the birth of the son on the part of the parents, the shoemaker Unwirrsch and his wife, who had waited for

him so long that they were almost on the point of giving up hope altogether.

And now he had come after all, come an hour before work ceased for the day! All Kröppel Street already knew of the event, and the glad tidings had even reached Master Nikolaus Grünebaum, the brother of the woman who had just given birth to the child, though he lived almost at the opposite end of the town. A grinning shoemaker's apprentice, carrying his slippers under his arm so as to be able to run quicker, bore the news there and shouted it breathlessly into Master Grünebaum's less deaf ear with the result that for five minutes the good man looked much stupider than he really was. But now he was already on his way to Kröppel Street, and as he, a citizen, householder and resident master of his trade, could not take his slippers under his arm, the consequence was that one of them deserted him faithlessly at a street corner, to begin life with nothing to depend on but its own hands, or rather its own sole.

When Uncle Grünebaum arrived at his brother-in-law's house he found so many good women of the neighborhood there, giving advice and expressing their opinions, that, in his lamentable capacity of old bachelor and pronounced woman-hater, he could but appear highly superfluous to himself. And he did see himself in this light and would almost have turned back if the thought of his brother-in-law and fellow-craftsman, left miserably alone in the midst of all this "racket" had not enabled him to master his feelings after all. Growling and grunting he pushed his way through the womenfolk and at last did find his brother-in-law in a not very enviable nor brilliant position and attitude.

The poor man had been pushed completely aside. Mrs. Tiebus had taken measures to exclude him from his wife's room; in the living room among the neighbors he was also entirely superfluous; Master Grünebaum finally discovered him sitting in a miserable heap on a stool in the corner

where only the cat that was rubbing against his legs showed any sympathy for him. But his eyes were still shining with that radiance that seemed to come from another world; Master Unwirrsch heard nothing of the women's whispering and chattering, saw nothing of the confusion that reigned among them, nor did he see his brother-in-law till the latter seized him by the shoulder and, not very gently, shook him back to consciousness.

"Give a sign that you're still in the land of the living, Anton!" growled Master Grünebaum. "Be a man, and drive the womenfolk out, all of them except—except Auntie Schlotterbeck there. For although the devil takes them one and all, odd and even, still she is the only one among them that lets a man get in a word at least once an hour. Won't you? Can't you? Don't you dare to? Well, then catch hold of my coat behind till I get you out of this tumult in safety; come upstairs and let things go on as they will down here. So the boy is here? Well, praise be to God, I began to think we'd waited in vain again."

The two fellow-craftsmen pushed their way sideways through the women, got out into the passage with difficulty, and mounted the narrow creaking stairs that led to the upper story of the house. There Auntie Schlotterbeck had rented a small living room, bedroom and kitchen, which left only one room at the disposal of the Unwirrsch family, and that was stuffed so full of all kinds of articles that scarcely enough space remained for the two worthy guild-brothers to squat down and exchange the innermost thoughts of their souls. Boxes and chests, bunches of herbs, ears of corn, bundles of leather, strings of onions, hams, sausages, endless odds and ends had here been hung, or flung, stuffed or stuck below, above, before, beside and among one another with a skill that approached genius, and it was no wonder that Brother-in-law Grünebaum lost his second slipper there.

But through both the low windows the last rays of the sun shone into the room; the comrades were safe from

Mrs. Tiebus and the neighbors. . . . They sat down opposite each other on two boxes and shook hands for five well-counted minutes.

"Congratulations, Anton!" said Nikolaus Grünebaum.

"I thank you, Nikolaus!" said Anton Unwirrsch.

"Hooray, he is here! Hooray, long may he live! And again, hoo—" shouted Master Grünebaum with the full power of his lungs, but broke off when his brother-in-law held his hand over his mouth.

"Not so loud, for mercy's sake, not so loud, Nik'las. The wife is right underneath us here and has trouble enough as it is with all those women."

The new-made uncle let his fist fall on his knee:

"You're right, Brother; the devil take them, one and all, odd and even. But now let her go, old man, and tell us how you feel. Not a bit the way you usually do? Oh ho! And how does the little tadpole look? Everything in the right place? Nose, mouth, arms, legs? Nothing wrong anywhere? Everything in order: straps and legs, upper, vamp, heel and sole? Well pitched, nailed, and neatly polished?"

"Everything as it should be, Brother," cried the happy father, rubbing his hands. "A prize boy! May God bless us in him! Oh, Nik'las, I wanted to say a thousand things to you, but I choke too much in my throat; everything about me goes round——"

"Let it go as it will; when the cat is thrown down from the roof she has to take time to collect herself," said Master Grünebaum. "The wife is doing well, I suppose?"

"Yes, thank God. She behaved like a heroine; an empress couldn't have done better."

"She is a Grünebaum," said Nikolaus with pride, "and in case of necessity the Grünebaums can clench their teeth. What name are you going to have the boy called by, Anton?"

The father of the new-born child passed his lean hand

over his high, furrowed forehead and stared out of the window into space for a few moments. Then he said:

“He shall be christened after three fellow-craftsmen. He shall be called Johannes like the poet in Nuremberg, and Jakob like the highly honored philosopher of Goerlitz, and the two names shall be to him as two wings on which to rise from the earth to the blue sky and take his share of light. But as a third name I will give him Nikolaus so that he may always know that he has a true friend and protector on earth, one to whom he can turn when I am no longer here.”

“I call that a sentence with a head full of sense and reason, and a clumsy, ridiculous tail. Give him the names and it will be an honor for all three of us, but keep away from me with those old foolish notions of death. You’re not fat, to be sure, and you couldn’t exactly knock an ox down with your bare fist either; but you can draw the pitch-thread through the leather for many a long year yet, you ruminating bookworm.”

Master Unwirrsch shook his head and changed the subject, and the two brothers-in-law discussed this and that with each other till it had grown perfectly dark in the storeroom.

Somebody knocked at the door, and Master Grünebaum called:

“Who is there? No womenfolk will be admitted.”

“It’s I,” called a voice outside.

“Who?”

“I!”

“It’s Auntie Schlotterbeck,” said Unwirrsch. “Push the bolt back; we’ve sat up here long enough; perhaps I may see the wife again now.”

His brother-in-law obeyed, growling, and the light from Auntie Schlotterbeck’s lamp shone into the room.

“Here they are, really. Well, come along, you heroes; the women have gone. Creep out. Your wife, Master Unwirrsch? Yes, she is well taken care of; she is sleeping

and you mustn't disturb her; but I've a piece of news that you shall hear and thank God. At the house of the Jew, Freudenstein, across the street, the same thing happened today as in this house; but it wasn't quite the same. The child is alive—a boy, too, but Blümchen Freudenstein is dead, and there is great lamentation over there. Praise the Lord, Master Unwirrsch; and you, Master Grünebaum, go home. Come, come, Unwirrsch, don't stand there so dumb-founded; death enters, or passes by, according to God's command. I feel as if I'd been broken on the wheel, and am going to bed. Good night to you both."

Auntie Schlotterbeck disappeared behind her door, the two masters stole downstairs on tiptoe, and in the public-house which he frequented regularly, Uncle Grünebaum had far less to say that evening about politics, municipal and other affairs than usual. Master Unwirrsch lay all night without closing his eyes; the infant screamed mightily, and it was no wonder that these unaccustomed tones kept the father awake and stirred up a whirling throng of hopes and cares and drove it in a wild chase through his heart and head.

It is not easy to produce a good sermon; but neither is it easy to make a good boot. Skill, much skill is necessary to do either, and bunglers and botchers had better keep their hands off, if they have any regard for their fellow-men's welfare. I, for my part, have an uncommon partiality for shoemakers, in their totality when they march in holiday parades as well as for the individuals. As the people say, they are a "ruminating tribe," and no other trade produces such excellent and odd peculiarities in the members of its guild. The low work-table, the low stool, the glass globe filled with water which catches the light of the little oil lamp and reflects it with greater brilliance, the pungent odor of leather and of pitch must naturally exert a lasting effect on human nature, and that is just what they do, and powerfully too. What curious originals this admirable trade has produced! A whole library could

be written about "remarkable shoemakers" without the materials being in the least exhausted! The light which falls through the hanging glass globe onto the work-table is the realm of fantastic spirits; during the meditative work it fills the imagination with strange figures and pictures and gives to thought a tinge that no other lamp, patented or unpatented, can lend it. It makes one think of all sorts of rhymes, queer legends, marvelous tales and merry and sad events of the world which, when they have once been put on paper by an unpractised hand, amaze the neighbors; at which the shoemaker's wife laughs or is afraid when her husband hums them in a low voice in the dusk. Or, perhaps, we begin to ponder still deeper, we feel the necessity of "unraveling life's beginning." Deeper and deeper we look into the glowing globe, and in the glass we see the universe in all its forms and natures: we pass freely through the portals of all the heavens and know them with all their stars and elements; intuitive perception opens our minds to sublime visions and we write them down while Pastor Richter, head clergyman of the parish, stirs up the mob against us from the pulpit and the constable of Goerlitz, who is to fetch us to prison, stands before the door.

"For this is eternity's right and eternal existence, that it has only *one* will. If it had two one would break the other and there would be strife. It is indeed great in strength and miraculousness; but its life is but love alone, from which light and majesty emanate. All creatures in Heaven have *one* will, and that is directed to God's own heart and lives in God's own spirit, in the centre of multiplicity, in growing and blooming; but God's spirit is life in all things, *Centrum Naturæ* gives being, majesty and power, and the Holy Ghost is the leader."

Whoever has anything against shoemakers and does not know how to appreciate their excellence individually and generally, let him keep away from me. Whoever goes so far as to turn up his nose at them contemptuously because

of their often curious appearance, their crooked legs, their hard, black paws, their crazy noses, their unkempt tufts of hair, is no good to me; if he is lost I shall offer no reward for his return. I treasure and love shoemakers, and above them all I value the worthy Master Anton Unwirrsch, the father of Hans Jakob Nikolaus Unwirrsch. Alas, it was not long after those vesper bells had given greeting to his first and only born that the evening bells of his own day on earth began to ring. Yet there are so many threads of his life that run on into his son's that we cannot omit a description of his personality and being. Physically, as we already know, he stood not very firmly on his feet, but mentally he was straight and strong enough and could cope with many a man who thought himself far superior. All the relics of his hidden life show that he did his utmost to make up for the defects of a neglected education, that he had a thirst for knowledge—a very keen thirst. And even though he never learnt to spell quite correctly he yet possessed a poetic soul, like his celebrated fellow-craftsman from the "Mouse-trap" in Nuremberg, and read as much as he possibly could. Moreover, what he read he usually understood too; and if in some things he did not find the meaning that the author had intended, he got another meaning out of it or read it into it which belonged entirely to him alone and with which the author might very often be well content. Although he loved his trade and did not neglect it in any way it was no gold mine to him, and he remained a poor man. Golden dreams, however, his occupation did bring him, and all occupations that can do that are good and make those who practise them happy. Anton Unwirrsch saw the world from his cobbler's stool almost exactly as Hans Sachs had once seen it, but he did not become so famous. He left a little book in close, fine handwriting which his widow first kept like a sacred relic in the depths of her chest, together with her hymn book, bridal wreath and a little black box of which we shall hear more later on. As she would have a

sacred relic, the mother delivered the little book over to her son and he gave it the place of honor in his library between the Bible and Shakespeare, although in poetry and content it ranks a little below these two.

Auntie Schlotterbeck and Master Grünebaum had a vague suspicion of the existence of this manuscript, but only the poet's wife had definite knowledge of it. To her it was the most marvelous thing that could be imagined. For did it not rhyme "like the hymn book," and had not her husband written it? That was far beyond anything that the neighborhood could bring to light.

To the son these leaves, sewed together, were a dear legacy and a touching sign that even among the lowly there is an eternal striving upward out of the depths and darkness to the heights, to the light, to beauty.

The harmless, formless outpourings of shoemaker Unwirrsch's soul were naturally devoted to the phenomena of nature, to the home, his handicraft, and certain great facts of history, chiefly the deeds and heroes of the War of Liberation which had just thundered by. They testified to thought that, in all these directions, was sometimes charmingly simple-hearted, sometimes lofty. There was a little humor mixed up in it, but it was the pathetic that was most prominent and, indeed, most often brought forth the familiar smile. The worthy Master Anton had experienced so much thunder and lightning, so many hailstorms, fires and floods, had seen so many Frenchmen, Rhenish Confederates, Prussians, Austrians and Russians marching past his house that it was no wonder if now and then he, too, tried his hand a little at lightning and thunder and smiting dead. This did not cause any enmity between him and his neighbors, for he remained what he was, a "good fellow," and when he died he was mourned not alone by his wife, his brother-in-law Grünebaum and Auntie Schlotterbeck; no, all Kröppel Street knew and said that a good man had passed away and that it was a pity.

He had waited long and yearningly for the birth of a

son. He often pictured to himself what he could and would make of him. He transferred all his earnest striving for knowledge to him; the son should and must attain to what his father could not. The thousand insurmountable obstacles which life had thrown in the way of Master Anton should not halt the career of the future Unwirrsch. He should find his course clear, and no door of wisdom or of education should be closed to him by life's labors and hardships.

Thus did Anton dream, and one year after another of his married life passed. A daughter was born, but she died soon after; and then for a long time there came nothing, and then—then at last came Johannes Jakob Nikolaus Unwirrsch, whose entrance into the world has already given us the material for a number of the foregoing pages and whose later sufferings, joys, adventures, and travels—in short, whose destinies will form the greater part of this book.

We saw the brother-in-law and uncle, Grünebaum, lose his slipper, we saw and heard the tumult of the women, made the acquaintance of Mrs. Tiebus and Auntie Schlotterbeck;—we saw, finally, the two brothers-in-law sitting in the storeroom and saw the dusk creeping in after the eventful sunset. Master Anton lived one more year after the birth of his son and then died of pneumonia. Fate treated him as she does many another: she gave him his share of joy in his hopes, and refused him their fulfillment, which, indeed, never can catch up with fleetwinged hope itself.

Johannes screamed lustily in the hour of his father's death, but not for his father. But Mrs. Christine cried much for her husband and for a long time could not be quieted either by Auntie Schlotterbeck's words of consolation or by the philosophic admonitions of the wise Master Nikolaus Grünebaum. The latter promised his dying brother-in-law to do his best for those who were left and to stand by them in all the crises of life according to his

best ability. Once more Anton Unwirrsch struggled for air, but the air for him was too full of flames of fire; he sighed and died. The doctor wrote his death certificate; Mrs. Kiebike, the layer-out, came and washed him, his coffin was ready at the right time, a goodly train of neighbors and friends accompanied him to the churchyard, and in the corner, beside the stove, sat Mrs. Christine, who held her child on her lap and gazed with fixed, red and swollen eyes at the low black work-stool and the low black work-table and who still could not believe that her Anton would never again sit on the one and in front of the other. Auntie Schlotterbeck cleared away the empty cake plates, bottles and glasses which had been placed, full, before the mourners, the pall-bearers and the condoling neighbors to give them strength in their sorrow. Hans Jakob Nikolaus Unwirrsch crowed with childish joy and stretched out his tiny hands longingly toward the shining glass globe above his father's table, on which the sun now fell and which had shed such a remarkable lustre on Anton Unwirrsch's world of thought. The influence of this globe was long to continue. The mother had become so accustomed to its light that she could not dispense with it even after her husband's death; it shone on far into the son's youth, Johannes heard many a tale of his father's worth and excellence by its light, and gradually in the son's mind the image of his father was joined inseparably to the brilliance of this globe.

CHAPTER II

THE ancients thought that it was to be considered a great piece of good fortune if the gods allowed a man to be born in a famous town. But as this good fortune has not fallen to the share of many famous men, such towns as Bethlehem, Eisleben, Stratford, Kamenz, Marbach, not having formerly been particularly brilliant spots in the minds of men, it probably makes little difference to Hans

Unwirrsch that he first saw the light of the world in a little town called Neustadt. There are not a few towns and townlets of the same name, but they have not quarreled with one another for the honor of counting our hero among their citizens. Johannes Jakob Nikolaus Unwirrsch did not make his birthplace more famous in the world.

In the year 1819 the place had ten thousand inhabitants; today it has a hundred and fifty more. It lay and lies in a wide valley, surrounded by hills and mountains from which forests extend down to the town limits. In spite of its name it is no longer new; with difficulty it has maintained its existence through wild centuries, and now enjoys a quiet, sleepy old age. It has gradually given up the hope of ever attaining to bigger things and does not feel less comfortable on that account. However, in the little State to which it belongs it is after all a factor, and the government is considerate of it. The sound of its church-bells made a pleasant impression on the wayfarer, as he came out of the woods on the nearest height; and when the sun just happened to shine in the windows of the two churches and of the houses the same wayfarer seldom thought that all is not gold that glitters and that the sound of bells, fertile fields, green meadows and a pretty little town in the valley are far from being enough to produce an idyl. Amyntas, Palaemon, Daphnis, Doris and Chloe were often able to make life down in the valley very unpleasant for one another. But lads courted and lasses consented and, taken all in all, they went through life quite comfortably, to which the fact that the necessaries of life were not unattainably dear, probably contributed. The devil take dear old Gessner with all his rustic idyls when fruit and must don't turn out well and milk and honey are rare in Arcadia!

But we shall have occasion again here and there to drop a few words about all this, and if not it is of no consequence. For the present we must turn back to the young

Arcadian Hans Unwirrsch and see in what way he makes himself at home in life.

The shoemaker's widow was truly an uneducated woman. She could scarcely read and write, her philosophic education had been entirely neglected, she cried easily and willingly. Born in darkness, she remained in darkness, nursed her child, stood him on his feet, taught him to walk; put him on his feet for life and taught him to walk firmly for the rest of his life. That deserves great credit and the most educated mother cannot do more for her child.

In a low dark room, into which little fresh air and still less sun penetrated, Hans awakened to consciousness, and in one respect this was good; later he was not too much afraid of the caverns in which far the greater part of humanity that participates in the blessings of civilization, must spend its life. Throughout his life he took light and air for what they are, articles of luxury which fortune gives or refuses and which she seems better pleased to refuse than to give.

The living room which looked out on the street and which had also been Master Anton's workshop was kept unchanged in its former condition. With anxious care his widow watched over it to see that none of her blessed husband's tools was moved from its place. Uncle Grünebaum had indeed wanted to buy all the superfluous stock in trade for a very fair price, but Mrs. Christine could not make up her mind to part with any of it. In all her leisure hours she sat in her usual place beside the low cobbler's table and in the evening, as we know, she could knit or sew or spell out the words in her large hymn-book only by the light of the glass-globe.

The poor woman was now obliged to toil miserably in order to provide an honest living for herself and her child; in the little bedroom, the windows of which looked out on the yard, she lay awake many a night, worrying, while Hans Unwirrsch in his father's big bedstead dreamt of the large slices of bread and butter and the rolls enjoyed

by happier neighbors' children. Wise Master Grünebaum did what he could for his relatives; but his trade did not yield to him such blessings as one might expect from copy-book maxims; he was much too fond of making much too long speeches at the "Red Ram" and his customers preferred to trust him with the cure of a pair of sick shoes rather than to order a new pair from him. He had hard work to keep his own head above water;—but he was not backward with advice, which he gave willingly and in large quantities and we regret to have to add that, as is not seldom the case, the quantity usually did not stand at all in the proper relation to the quality. Auntie Schlotterbeck, although far from being as wise as Master Grünebaum, was more practical and it was on her advice that Mrs. Christine became a washerwoman, who rose in the morning between two and three o'clock and in the evening at eight, dead tired and aching all over, came home to satisfy the first, the physical, hunger of her child and to translate his dreams into reality.

Hans Unwirrsch retained dark, vague, curious memories of this period in his life and later told his nearest friends about them. From his earliest childhood he slept lightly and so he was often wakened by the glimmer of the sulphur match with which his mother lit her lamp in the cold dark winter night, in order to get ready for her early walk to work. He lay warm among his pillows and did not move until his mother bent over him to see whether the click-clack of her slippers had not wakened the little sleeper. Then he twined his arms about her neck and laughed, received a kiss and the admonition to go to sleep again quick, as it wouldn't be day for a long time yet. He followed this advice either at once, or not until later. In the latter case he watched the burning lamp, his mother and the shadows on the wall through half-closed eyelids.

Curiously enough nearly all these early memories were of winter time. There was a ring of vapor round the flame of the lamp and the breath was drawn in a cloud toward the

light; the frozen window-panes shimmered, it was bitterly cold, and with the comfort of his warm safe bed there was mixed for the little watcher the dread of the bitter cold from which he had to hide his little nose under the cover.

He could not understand why his mother got up so early while it was so dark and cold and while such mad black shadows passed by on the wall, nodded, straightened themselves up and bent down. His ideas of the places where his mother went were still less clearly defined; according to the mood in which he happened to be he imagined these places to be more or less pleasant and with his imaginings were mixed all sorts of details out of fairy-tales and fragments of conversation that he had heard from grown people and which, in these vague moments between sleeping and waking, took on more and more variegated colors and mixed with one another.

At last his mother had finished dressing and bent once more over the child's bed. Once more he received a kiss, all kinds of good admonitions and tempting promises so that he should lie still, should not cry, should go to sleep again soon. To these were added the assurance that morning and Auntie Schlotterbeck would come soon; the lamp was blown out, the room sank back into the deepest darkness, the door squeaked, his mother's steps grew fainter;—sleep took possession of him again quickly and when he woke the second time Auntie Schlotterbeck was generally sitting by his bed and the fire was crackling in the stove in the next room.

Although she was not older than Mrs. Christine Unwirsch, Auntie Schlotterbeck had always been Auntie Schlotterbeck. No one in Kröppel Street knew her by any other name and she was as well known in Kröppel Street as "Old Fritz," emperor "Napoleum" and old Blücher, although she bore no other resemblance to these three famous heroes than that she took snuff like the great Prussian king, and had an aquiline nose like the "Corsican

ravager." As to any resemblance to Marshal "Forward!" that would indeed have been difficult to find.

Auntie Schlotterbeck had formerly also been a washer-woman but she had long since been mustered out and managed to make a wretched living by spinning, knitting stockings and similar work. The city magistrates had granted her a scanty sum as poor-relief, and Master Anton, whose very distant relative she was, had, out of kindness, let her have the little room which she occupied in his house, for a very low price. In reality she would deserve to have a whole chapter in this book devoted to her, for she had a gift which not everybody can claim; to her those who had died had not passed away from the earth, she saw them walking through the streets, she met them in the market-places looking like living persons and unexpectedly ran into them at the street corners. There was not the slightest tinge of uncanniness connected with this to her; she spoke of it as of something perfectly natural, usual, and there was absolutely no difference to her between the mayor Eckerlein who had died in the year 1769 and who passed her in front of the "Lion" pharmacy in his wig and red velvet coat, and his grandchild to whom in 1820 this same "Lion" pharmacy belonged and who was just looking out of the window without being able to take any notice of his august grandfather.

At last even Auntie Schlotterbeck's acquaintances ceased to regard her gift with any feeling of "creepiness." The incredulous ones stopped smiling at it and the credulous—of whom there were a good number—no longer blessed themselves and clapped their hands together over their heads. This high distinction had no detrimental influence on the character of the good little woman herself. Auntie Schlotterbeck took no undue pride in her strange gift of sight; she looked upon it as an undeserved favor from God and remained humbler than many other people who did not see nearly as much as the elderly spinster in Kröppel Street.

As regards appearance, Auntie Schlotterbeck was of medium height but she stooped very much when she walked and poked her head forward. Her clothes hung on her like things that were not in their right place, and her nose, as we have already heard, was very sharp and very hooked. This nose would have made a disagreeable impression if it had not been for her eyes. They made up for all the sins her nose committed. They were remarkable eyes and, as we know, saw remarkable things too. They remained clear and bright even when she was very, very old,—young, blue eyes in an old, old dried-up face. Hans Unwirrsch never forgot them although later he looked into eyes much more beautiful still.

In a naïve way Auntie Schlotterbeck was devoted to learning. She had tremendous respect for scholarship and especially for theological learning; little Hans owed her his first introduction to all those branches of learning which he later mastered more or less. She could have told fairy-tales to the Grimm brothers and when the wicked queen drove the golden needle into her hated stepdaughter's head Hans Unwirrsch felt the point way down to his diaphragm.

Hans and Auntie Schlotterbeck were inseparable companions during the first years of the boy's life. From early in the morning till late in the evening the seer of spirits had to fill his mother's place; nothing that concerned him was done without her advice and assistance; she satisfied his hunger for many things, but it was through her that he learnt to know hunger for many other things. Uncle Grünebaum growled often enough when he came to visit them; nothing good could come of such companionship with women, he said, the devil take them, one and all, odd and even; crochets, whimsies and spirit-imaginings were of no use to any man and only made him an addlepate and a muddlehead. "It's nonsense! That's what I say and I'll stick to it."

In answer to such attacks Auntie Schlotterbeck merely

shrugged her shoulders and Hans crept closer to her side. Growling, as he had come, Uncle Grünebaum departed;—he considered himself exceedingly practical and clear-headed and snorted contempt through his nose without stopping to think that even the best pipe stem may become clogged.

Hans Unwirrsch was a precocious child and learnt to speak almost before he learnt to walk; reading came as easily to him as playing. Auntie Schlotterbeck understood the difficult art well and only stumbled over words that were all too long or all too foreign. She liked to read aloud and with a whining pathos which made the greatest impression on the child. Her library was composed mainly of the Bible, hymn book and a long series of popular almanacs which followed one another without a break from the year 1790 and each of which contained a touching, a comic or a thrilling story besides a treasury of home and secret remedies and a fine selection of humorous anecdotes. For the lively imagination of a child an infinitely rich world was hidden in these old numbers, and spirits of all sorts rose out of them, smiled and laughed, grinned, threatened and led the young soul alternately through thrills of awe and ecstasies. When the rain pelted against the panes, when the sun shone into the room, when thunderstorms reached across the roofs with black arms of cloud and hurled their red flashes above the town, when the thunder rolled and the hail pattered and bounded on the street pavement, in some way all these things came to be connected with the figures and scenes in the almanacs and the heroes and heroines of the stories strode through good and bad weather, perfectly clear, plain and distinct, past dreamy little Hans who had laid his head in the old spirit-seer's lap. The story of "good little Jasper and pretty little Annie" struck a chord in his heart which continued to ring through Hans' whole life; but the "book of books," the Bible, made a still greater impression on the boy. The simple grandeur of the first chapters of Genesis cannot but overwhelm children as well as grown people,

the poor in spirit as well as the millionaires of intellect. Infinitely credible are these stories of the beginnings of things and credible they remain even though every day it is more clearly proven that the world was not created in seven days. At Auntie Schlotterbeck's feet Hans lost himself with shuddering delight in the dark abyss of chaos: and the earth was without form and void;—till God divided the light from the darkness and the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. When sun, moon and stars began their dance and God let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, then he breathed freely again; and when the earth brought forth grass and herb and the tree yielding fruit, when the water, the air and the earth brought forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life and every winged fowl after his kind, then he clapped his little hands and felt that he stood on firm ground once more. The manner in which God breathed the breath of life into Adam was perfectly clear to him and of incontrovertible truth, whereas the first critical doubt arose in the child's mind when the woman was created out of the man's rib, for "that must hurt."

But following the simple stories of Paradise, of Cain and Abel, of the flood, came the numbering of the tribes with the long difficult names. These names were real bushes of thorns for reader and listener; they were pitfalls into which they pitched heels over head, they were stones over which they stumbled and fell on their noses. Ever again they untangled themselves, rose to their feet and toiled on with reverential solemnity: but the sons of Gomer are these: Ashkenez, Riphath and Togarmah; and the sons of Javan are: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim and Dodanim.

But the days did not pass entirely in reading and telling stories. Just as soon as Hans Unwirrsch ceased throwing his hands about in half involuntary movements or stuffing them into his mouth, his mother and Auntie Schlotterbeck introduced him to the great principle of work. Auntie

Schlotterbeck was an ingenious woman who earned a little extra money by dressing dolls for a large toy factory, an occupation which lay near enough to a child's sphere of interest and in which, before long, Hans gladly assisted. Ladies and gentlemen, peasant lads and lasses, shepherds and shepherdesses and many other merry little men and women of all classes and ages took form under the hands of Auntie Schlotterbeck, who worked bravely with glue and needle, pieces of bright-colored fabrics, gold and silver tinsel, and gave to each his share of these according to the price. It was a philosophic occupation and the worker might indulge in many thoughts while engaged in it; Hans Unwirrsch took to it kindly even though his childish joy in these toys naturally soon disappeared. He who grows up in a shop full of jumping-jacks cares little for the individual jumping-jack however motley may be his garb and however funnily he may jerk his arms and legs.

After Martinmas, which famous day could unfortunately not be celebrated by the consumption of a roast goose, manufacturing began as an independent undertaking. Auntie Schlotterbeck was now able to make the greatest profit out of her talent for plastic art; she built little men of raisins for the Christmas trade and others of prunes for more easily satisfied souls. The first prune-man that Hans completed without assistance gave him just as much pleasure as the disciple of art takes in the piece of work that wins for him a stipend with which to go to Italy. The opening of the Christmas-fair was a great event for the little modeler. Epic poets describe many feelings by explaining why they cannot describe them; Hans' feelings on this occasion were of that kind, and with rapture he carried the lantern ahead while, on a little cart, Auntie Schlotterbeck dragged her bench, her basket, her fire-pan and a little table to the fair.

The opening of the business, in an angle of the buildings that was sheltered from the keenest wind, was in itself a marvelous event. To crouch down under the big old um-

brella, to fan the glowing coals in the fire-pan by blowing on them, to arrange the articles of trade on the table, the first quiet and yet expectant glance at the bustle of the fair—all these things had a heart-thrilling charm. The first prune-man that was bargained about, sold and bought, raised a genuine storm of ecstasy in the breast of Schlotterbeck & Company. Dinner, which a good-natured child from Kröppel Street brought in an earthenware pot, tasted entirely different out on the open market-place from what it did at home in the dark room; but best of all was the evening with its fog, its gleaming lights and lamps, and its redoubled crowding and pushing and shouting and bustling.

The child could not always sit quietly on the bench beside the old woman. Spellbound, in spite of cold, in spite of rain and snow, he went on expeditions over the whole market-place and, as a partner in the firm of Schlotterbeck & Company, he pushed his chin onto the table of every other firm, with self-assurance and critical attitude.

At eight o'clock his mother came and took the younger partner of the firm of Schlotterbeck home; but this was not done without opposition, crying and struggling, and only the assurance that "there would be another day tomorrow," could, at last, persuade the tiny merchant prince to leave the business to the care of Auntie till the hour of closing at eleven o'clock.

One thing that belongs to this period of our hero's life must be reported. With the money gained by the sale of a raisin-man that he had made himself, he bought—another raisin-man from a commercial house which had established itself at the opposite end of the market. This bore witness to a quality which was of great importance in the boy's future development. Hans Unwirrsch, who made these black fellows for others, wanted to know where the pleasure lay in buying such a fellow oneself. He wanted to get to the bottom of this pleasure and naturally found no joy in this much too early analysing. When the pennies had been swept into the drawer by the seller and the purchaser held

the creature in his hand, the full measure of regret took possession of him. Crying loudly he stood in the middle of the street and finally threw his purchase far away from him and ran off as fast as he could, swallowing the bitterest tears as he went. Neither Auntie nor his mother ever found out where the groshen, for which one could have bought up the whole fair, had gone.

Winter brings many joys, but with it come also the greatest hardships. We have to do with very poor people and poor people usually don't begin to live again till spring and the maybeetles come. Hundreds of thousands, millions of people might well envy those happy creatures that sleep through the cold days in comfortable unconsciousness.

After Christmas Eve, which was kept as well as it could be, came New Year's Day and after that the Three Wise Men of the East approached. The shades of many of those who were dead passed Auntie Schlotterbeck in the streets at this time, or entered the church with her and walked round the altar. After Candlemas some people said that the days were growing longer but it wasn't very noticeable yet. By the time the Annunciation came, however, the fact could no longer be denied; the snowdrops had dared to come out, the snow could no longer keep the world buried, the buds swelled and burst open, Auntie Schlotterbeck's nose lost much of its redness; when Hans' mother got up early in the morning now the lamp no longer shone through a frosty circle of vapor. Hans Unwirrsch no longer yelled blue murder in front of the wash basin, and his feet did not now have to be forced into his shoes. The means of keeping warm was no longer carted into town by loutish wood-cutters and sold at a "wicked price." The days now arrived when the sun shone for nothing and did not even ask a word of thanks. Palm Sunday came before anyone realized it and Easter started the weaving of the wreath which the festival of joy, the verdant, blooming, jubilant Whitsuntide pressed on the young year's brow. Auntie

Schlotterbeck now did her knitting on the bench in front of the door, and earnestly and shyly Hans Unwirrsch watched Freudenstein, the junk-dealer across the street, as he pushed his little Moses, a delicate, thin, miserable little piece of humanity, well packed up in cushions and covers, out into the sun on a wheelchair.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS III, IV AND V

[THE boy, Hans Unwirrsch, was much admired and spoiled by his mother and Auntie Schlotterbeck and it was a good thing for him when he grew to be of school age. He was sent to the charity school. It stood in a dark, blind alley and was a damp, one-story building in which the teacher, Karl Silberlöffel, had to fight equally against gout and tuberculosis and against the rude boys and girls he taught. Hans was no better than his school-fellows. Just as at home he gradually sought to free himself from the absolute dominion of the women and began to criticize fairy tales and almanac stories, so too at school he joined his comrades with word and deed in all their mischievous enterprises against the helpless old master.

Here, however, Uncle Grünebaum's beneficial influence stepped in. Hans often visited his uncle in the latter's untidy workshop where he only did enough work to earn a scanty living for himself and his birds and to pay for the *Post Courier* which provided him with political reading. It was particularly interesting just at that time because the Greek struggle for independence against the Turks was raging and our cobbler, like Auntie Schlotterbeck, was an enthusiastic Philhellenist. He called Hans to account and tried to make it clear to him that he and his school-fellows would drive their consumptive master into his grave by their behavior and that it was no laughing matter to have a murder on one's conscience. He advised Hans to be careful that the devil did not take him, together with the other rogues, because of his conduct.

Such conversation had its effect. Hans did not take part in the next conspiracy, and did not regret the pummeling he received from the other boys on that account, for the next morning the teacher did not appear at school in consequence of a hemorrhage. Not long after he died. Uncle Grünebaum and Auntie Schlotterbeck were kind to him during his last illness, and Hans with Auntie Schlotterbeck stood beside the bed of the dying man. The exhausted man spoke of the bitterness of his life, but Auntie Schlotterbeck understood little and Hans nothing of what he said. He talked of how he had been hungry for love and thirsty for knowledge and of how everything else had been as nothing; of how he had lived in the shade and yet had been born for the light; of how shining, golden fruit had fallen all around him, while his hands were bound. Nothing had fallen to his share but his yearning, and that too was coming to an end. He would be satisfied—in death.

Much as Hans had felt the solemn shudder of death, on the day after the funeral, which had been attended by the whole charity school, he was already playing again merrily in the street. Snow had fallen in the night and a mighty snow-man was built in Kröppel Street. When he was finished and the boys were playing together, Moses Freudenstein, the junk-dealer's son, happened to get into the crowd. They formed a ring about him and made him hold out his hand to each in turn and every young Christian spit into it with a shout of scorn. Up to that hour Hans had howled with the wolves in such things too, but now it flashed through him in an instant that something very low and cowardly was being done. He did not spit into Moses' hand, but struck it away and, turning protector, started to do battle for the Jewish boy. A fearful fight ensued, the end of which was that Hans and Moses, dizzy, bruised, with bleeding mouths and swollen eyes, rolled down into the shop of the junk-dealer, Samuel Freudenstein. This hour had an incalculable influence on Hans Unwirrsch's life, for he rolled out of the street battle

into relations which were to be infinitely important for him.

Samuel Freudenstein had seen more of the world than all the other Neustädians together. After extensive commercial journeys, especially in Southeastern Europe, he had settled in Neustadt and begun to trade in second-hand goods and junk, as heavy losses in a speculation prevented his embarking on a greater enterprise. He got on, and married, but his wife died at the birth of their son in 1819, on the very day when Hans Unwirrsch, too, was born. Samuel Freudenstein brought up his son in his own way, which in many respects differed widely from the curriculum of the charity school.

Samuel thanked Hans for the protection he had given Moses, and Hans' mother and Uncle Grünebaum allowed him to continue his visits to the Jew's house. Hans now discovered so many wonders in the gloom of the junkshop that for the first time his life seemed to be filled with real substance. At the same time he mounted a rung higher on the ladder of knowledge by entering the lowest class of the grammar school. On this occasion Uncle Grünebaum did not fail to make one of his finest and longest speeches and to present Hans with his first pair of high boots.

Now, too, for the first time Hans entered into a more intimate relation with the other sex. He found his first love, Sophie, the daughter of an apple-woman. With her cat, Sophie sat in her mother's booth opposite the school, sold her fruit with seriousness and had difficulty, on her way home, in defending herself and her cat from the rough schoolboys. Hans lent her his protection and he and Moses kept up a friendly intercourse with her through the spring and summer. But in the course of the winter one of the diseases of childhood carried her off, and her companion, the cat, did not long outlive her. The death of little Sophie and the cat made a deep impression on Hans. He did not become friends with any other girl at present; but from

now on the second-hand shop gained an ever greater influence over him.

In this enchanted cave Hans saw the father, Samuel, going about, like a magician, with brush and glue-pot, stuffing birds and quadrupeds, collecting curious goblets and tankards, buying up odd portraits of other people's ancestors. He listened attentively when father and son talked of the history of their race, he lost himself completely in old Dutch descriptions of travel, with their copperplates, one day he even saw a real ostrich-egg. Moses was far ahead of Hans in all branches of knowledge. Samuel Freudenstein had taught his son that knowledge and money were the two most effective means of power and now they were both indefatigable, the son in acquiring the former, the father in accumulating the latter. Things were well classified in Moses' head, he could find what he wanted there, any minute;—he had never been a child, a real, true, natural child.

Hans Unwirrsch, on the other hand, remained a real child. His imagination still retained its dominion over his reason; the circle in which he stood, like any other human child, now expanded and became filled with ever gayer, brighter, more enticing figures, scenes and dreams.

One evening Hans came meditatively out of the darkness of the junk-shop, hurried across to his mother's house and there, in answer to Auntie Schlotterbeck's questions, blurted out that Moses was going to learn Latin and go to the "Gymnasium" while he should have to be a cobbler and stay a cobbler all his life. Unfortunately for Hans these words were overheard by Uncle Grünebaum, who happened to be present and whom Hans had not noticed. There followed a dangerous scene. First Auntie Schlotterbeck had to protect Hans so that his indignant relative, as uncle, godfather, guardian, and master of the laudable trade of shoe-making, did not half kill him but merely squeezed him between his knees and talked urgently to him till Hans, yielding to the double pressure, declared himself to be in

thorough agreement with his uncle's views. Then Auntie Schlotterbeck changed from defence to attack. She read Uncle Grünebaum a lecture on his own conduct, reminding him that he was not looked up to anywhere but on the bench behind his mug of beer in the "Red Ram," that he neglected his house and trade and was indeed no shining example of what the trade of shoemaking turned out. When she finally threatened to call Frau Christine to her aid the doughty cobbler speedily took a flight.

In the evening, however, he appeared as a hero in the "Red Ram," where he conducted himself like a great politician, for which rôle the news, which had just come, of the outbreak of a revolution in Paris, offered him a splendid opportunity. He finally went to bed rather tipsy and fully convinced of his greatness, and slept the sleep of the just, which Hans Unwirrsch did not do, nor his mother, nor Auntie Schlotterbeck either.]

CHAPTER VI

A LOVELY, fine night had followed the day; the moon shone above all Europe and its peoples. All the clouds had been driven away and now lay loweringly on the Atlantic Ocean: all who could sleep, slept; but not everyone could sleep.

Bridal night and night of death in one! Through the woods the brooks flashed their silver sparks; the great streams flowed on, calm and shining. The woods, meadows and fields, the lakes, rivers and brooks—they were all in full harmony with the moon, but the odd pygmy-folk, men, in their cities and villages, far from being in harmony with themselves, left much to be desired in that respect. If she had not been the "gentle" moon, if she had not had a good reputation to maintain, she would not have lighted mankind, in spite of all the poets and lovers. She was gentle, and shone;—moreover, perhaps, she was touched by

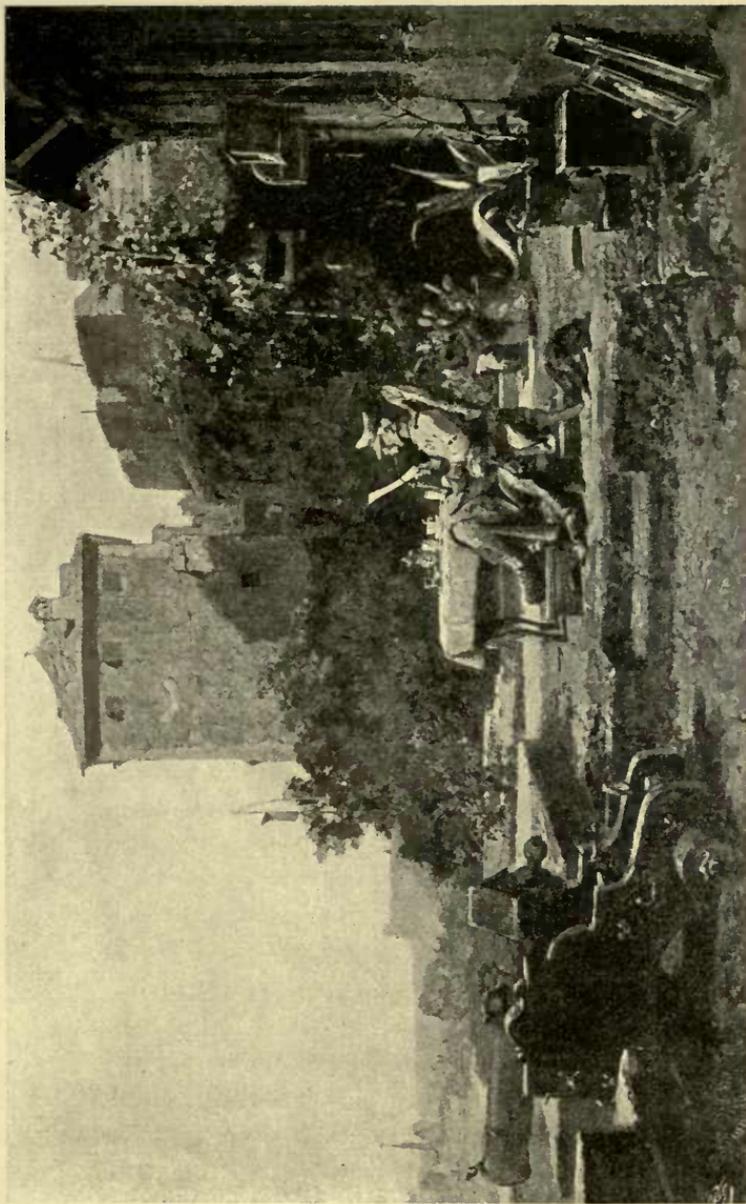
the confidence of the municipal authorities, who depended on her, and on her account did not light the street lamps.

She shone with the same brilliance and calm on all Europe—on the poor, tumultuous city of Paris where so many dead still lay unburied and so many wounded wrestled with death, and on the tiny town of Neustadt in its wide, peaceful valley. She glanced softly into the over-crowded hospitals and morgues;—she glanced softly into the traveling-coach of Charles X. and not less softly into the low chamber in which lay Christine Unwirrsch with her boy.

The child slept, but the mother lay awake and could not sleep for thinking of what she had heard when she came home so tired after her hard work.

It had taken her a long time to understand the confused report that Hans and Auntie Schlotterbeck had given; she was a simple woman who needed time before she could grasp anything that lay beyond her daily work and her poor household. To be sure, when once she did understand a thing she could analyze it properly and intelligently and consider and weigh the pros and cons of every detail; but she could scarcely understand in its broadest outlines this, her child's, aspiration out of the darkness toward the light.

She only knew that in this child the same hunger had now made itself apparent, from which her Anton had suffered, that hunger which she did not understand and for which she nevertheless had such respect, that hunger which had so tormented her beloved, sainted husband, the hunger for books and for the marvelous things which lay hidden in them. The years which had passed since her husband had been carried to the grave had not blurred a single remembrance. In the heart and mind of the quiet woman the good man still lived with all his peculiarities, even the smallest and most insignificant of which death had transfigured and transformed into a good quality. How he paused in his work to gaze for minutes into the glass globe in front of his lamp in self-forgetfulness, how on his walks, on a beautiful holiday, he would suddenly stand still and



Permission Franz Hanfstaengl

THE COMMANDER OF THE FORTRESS

KARL SPITZWEG

look at the ground and at the blue dome above, how at night he woke and sat awake for hours in bed, murmuring unconnected words—all that was not, and never could be, forgotten. How the good man had toiled on at his trade between sighs and flushes of joy, cheerful and depressed moods,—how in his rare leisure hours he had studied so hard and, above all, what hopes he had set on his son and with what wonderful aspirations he had dreamt of this son's future—all lay clear before Christine Unwirrsch's soul.

The mother raised herself on her pillow and looked over at her child's bed. The moonlight played on the counterpane and the pillows and transfigured the face of the sleeping boy who had cried himself to sleep after telling his sorrowful tale, and on whose cheeks the traces of tears were still to be seen, although he now smiled again in his slumber and knew no more of the day's trouble. Round about the town of Neustadt the birds of night stirred in the bushes and along the edges of the streams and ponds; the night-watchman's hoarse voice sounded now near, now far; the clocks of the two churches quarreled about the right time and were of very different opinions; all the bats and owls of Neustadt were very lively, knowing their hours exactly and never making a mistake of a minute; mice squeaked in the wall of the bedroom and one mouse rustled under Mrs. Christine's bed; a bluebottle that could not sleep either flew about buzzing, now here, now there, now banging his head against the window, now against the wall and seeking in vain for some way out; in the next room the grandfather's chair behind the stove cracked and there was such a weird and ghostly pattering and creeping about in the attic that it was hard to adhere to the soothing belief in "cats." Mrs. Christine Unwirrsch, who, being gifted with a foreboding mind, usually had a keen and fearful ear for all the noises and sounds of the night and who did not in the least doubt the penetration of the spirit-world into her bedroom, had no time in this night to listen to these

things and get goose-flesh in consequence. Her heart was too full of other matters and the ghosts that roam between earth and heaven and play at will on the nerves of men had no power over her. The mother felt her responsibility for the destiny of her child weigh heavy upon her and although she was a poor, ignorant woman she was not therefore less concerned; indeed, her concern was perhaps greater because her idea of her child's desire was incomplete and inadequate.

She looked long at sleeping Hans till the moon glided on in the firmament and the rays slipped from the bed and slowly retired toward the window. When at last complete darkness filled the room she sighed deeply and whispered: "His father wished it, and no one shall set himself against his father's will. God will surely help me, poor, stupid woman that I am, to make it come out right. His father wished it and the child shall have his way according to his father's will."

She rose quietly from her couch and crept out of the room with bare feet, so as not to wake the sleeping boy. In the living room she lit the lamp. She sat down for a few moments on her husband's work-chair and wiped the tears from her eyes; and then she carried the light to that chest in the corner of which we have already told, knelt down and opened the ancient lock which offered obstinate resistance to the key as long as possible.

When the lid was laid back the room was filled with the scent of clean linen and dried herbs, rosemary and lavender. This chest contained everything precious and valuable that Mrs. Christine possessed and carefully she controlled herself so that no tear should fall into it. Carefully she laid back the white and colored linen, smoothing each fold as she did so; carefully she laid aside the little boxes with old, trivial knickknacks, broken, cheap jewelry, loose amber beads, bracelets of colored glass beads and similar treasures of the poor and of children, until, nearly at the bottom of the chest, she came to what she was seek-

ing in the stillness of the night. With timid hand she first pulled out a little case with a glass cover; her head sank lower as she opened it. It contained Master Anton's book of songs and on the book lay a dried myrtle wreath. It was as if distant bells, the tones of an organ trembled through the night and through the soul of the kneeling woman; Auntie Schlotterbeck did not see the dead alive more clearly and distinctly than Christine Unwirrsch saw them at that moment. She folded her hands above the open case and her lips moved softly. No other prayer came to her mind but "Our Father" and that sufficed.

A second case stood beside the first, an old box made of oak, trimmed with iron, with a strong lock, an ingenious piece of work belonging to the seventeenth century, which had been in the possession of the Unwirrsches for generations. Mrs. Christine carried this box to the table and before she opened it she put everything back in its place in the chest; she loved order in all things and did nothing in haste even now.

It was a bright light that the little lamp and the hanging glass globe gave, but the box on the table, black with age as it was, outshone them both, its contents spoke louder of the preciousness of parents' love than if its price had been announced by a thousand trumpets in all the market-places of the world. The lock turned, the lid sprang open: money was in the box!—much, much money—silver coins of all kinds and even one gold piece wrapped in tissue paper. Rich people might well have smiled at the treasure but if they had had to pay the true value of every thaler and florin all their riches might not have sufficed to buy the contents of the black box. Hunger and sweat had been paid for every coin and a thousand noble thoughts and beautiful dreams clung to each. A thousand hopes lay in the dark box, Master Anton had hidden his purest self in it, and Christine Unwirrsch had added all her love and her faithfulness.

Who, just looking at the scanty heap of well-fingered pieces of money, could have imagined all this?

A little book, consisting of a few sheets of gray paper stitched together, lay beside the money; the father's hand had filled the first pages with letters and figures but then death had closed worthy Master Anton's account and for many years now the mother had done the bookkeeping, by faith, without letters and figures, and the account still balanced.

How often had Christine Unwirrsch gone hungry to bed, how often had she suffered all possible hardships without yielding to the temptation to reach out her hand for the black box! In every form distress had approached her in her miserable widowhood, but she had resisted with heroism. Even without letters and figures, she could render her account at any moment;—it was not her fault if the happy, honorable future which the dead man had dreamt of for his son did not rise out of the black box.

Mrs. Christine sat in front of the table for more than an hour that night, counting on her fingers and calculating, while across the street in a little back room of the junk-dealer's house a man also sat figuring and counting. Samuel Freudenstein, too, was sitting up for his sleeping boy's sake. More than a few rolls of gold pieces, more than a few rolls of silver pieces lay before him; he had more to throw into his child's scales of fortune than the poor widow.

"I will arm him with everything that is a weapon," he murmured. "They shall find him prepared in every way, and he shall laugh at them. He shall become a great man; he shall have everything that he wants. I was a slave, he shall be a master among a strange people, and I will live in his life. He has a good head, a sharp eye; he will make his way. He shall think of his father when he has reached the height; I will live in his life."

The widow divided her scanty day's wages into two parts. The greater part fell into the oak box and was

added to the other savings of long years of toil, and the small coins gave a clear ring. Samuel Freudenstein added more than a hundred shining thalers to his son's fortune; no one in Kröppel Street as much as suspected what a rich man the junk-dealer had again gradually grown to be.

The moonlight had entirely disappeared from the widow's bedroom when she crept shiveringly back from the living room. Hans Unwirrsch still slept soundly and not even the kiss that his mother pressed on his forehead waked him. The lamp too went out and Mrs. Christine soon slept as peacefully as her child. About the bed of King Solomon stood sixty strong men with swords in their hands, skilled in battle, "for the sake of the fear in the night"; but at the head of the widow and her child there stood a spirit that kept better watch than all the armed men in Israel.

Throughout nearly the whole summer the battle with Uncle Grünebaum went on. It was long since the world had seen such an obstinate cobbler. Tears, pleadings, and remonstrances did not soften, touch or convince him. A man who could hold his own with the Seven Wise Masters, in every respect, could not be moved from his standpoint so easily by two silly women and a stupid boy. He had resolved in his shaggy, manly breast that Hans Unwirrsch, like all the other Unwirrsches and Grünebaums, should become a shoemaker and with a mocking whistle he repulsed every attack on his understanding, his reason and his heart. Scarcely a day passed on which he did not with his piping rouse Auntie Schlotterbeck from her calm. The more irritated the women grew, the hotter in their arguments, the sharper in their words, the more melodious did Uncle Grünebaum become. He generally accompanied the beginning of every new discussion with a valiant, warlike tune and brought the conversation to a vain conclusion with the most melting, yearning melodies.

"Master Grünebaum, Master Grünebaum," cried Auntie, "if the child is unhappy later it will be your fault—your

fault alone! I have never seen a man like you in all my born days."

Whether Prince Eugene's song was sung as an answer to these words was open to doubt: Master Grünebaum whistled it like "himself a Turk."

"Oh, Niklas," cried his sister, "what kind of a man are you? He is such a good child and his teachers are so satisfied with him and his father wanted him to learn everything that there is to learn. Think of Anton, Niklas, and do give in, please do, I beg you to."

Uncle Grünebaum did not give in for a long time yet. He expressed the thought that cobbling was also a fine, meditative, learned business and that "trade is the mother of money," very strikingly by means of the melody: "The linen-weavers have a fine old guild," but refused to say more.

"That's right, go on whistling!" screamed Auntie Schlotterbeck with her arms angrily akimbo. "Go on whistling, you fool! But I tell you, you may stand on your head, the child shall go to the great schools and the universities nevertheless. Sit there like a blind bullfinch and go on whistling. Cousin Christine, don't cry, don't show him you care, it only gives him a wicked pleasure. Such a tyrant! Such a barbarian! And after all, it's your child, not his! But the Lord will set things right, I know, so do take your apron from your eyes. Keep on whistling now, Master Grünebaum, but remember, you'll answer for it by and by; think what you will say to Master Anton up above when the time comes!"

It seemed as if when the time came Uncle Grünebaum intended to justify himself to his sainted brother-in-law by the beautiful song: "A squirrel sat on the thorny hedge"—at least he whistled it with pensive emotion, and twiddled his thumbs in accompaniment.

"Oh, Niklas, what a hard-hearted man you are!" sobbed his sister. "Auntie is right, you will never be able to jus-

tify yourself for what you are doing to your brother-in-law's child——”

“And it's better to be a rag-picker than such a shiftless cobbler who wastes the time God has given him at the beer table in the Red Ram. And a creature like that wants to balk and kick out behind if a poor child wants to get ahead! If he'd only wash his hands and comb his hair, the fellow! I'd like to see anybody that would want to take him for an example and a model. There isn't anybody else like him and a man like that wants to keep others from washing themselves and being an honor to their parents. But I build on God, Master Grünebaum. He'll show you what you really are. It's really absurd that a man wants to play the guardian who can't even guard himself.”

The melody “Kindly moon, thou glidest softly” must have a very soothing effect indeed on human feelings; Uncle Grünebaum whistled it meltingly as long as Auntie Schlotterbeck continued to speak, and however great may have been the anger that boiled in his breast, the world saw nothing of it. When Hans Unwirrsch came home from school with his bag of books he found the two women in a very excited state with scarlet faces, and his uncle quite composed, even-tempered and calm;—he did indeed guess what they had been talking about again but he seldom learnt any of the details of the discussion.

Usually Uncle Grünebaum took his departure while whistling a hymn or some other solemn air and at the same time pinching poor Hans' ear with a grin; Mephistopheles might have envied him his smile and after he had gone the women generally dropped on the nearest chairs, exhausted and broken in spirit, and for several hours were incapable of believing in human and divine justice.

In the cornfields the scythes flashed and swished; Uncle Grünebaum had still not given in. Without the aid of any wind all kinds of fruit detached themselves from the branches and fell to the ground; Uncle Grünebaum held more obstinately to his opinion than ever. Silver threads

spread over the earth and wavered through the air: Uncle Grünebaum did not waver with them but laughed scornfully from his low three-legged stool. The foliage in the woods changed daily to an ever gayer hue, but Uncle Grünebaum's view of the world and life did not change. Moses Freudenstein boasted more and more proudly in his triumph, and Hans Unwirrsch's expression grew more and more miserable and depressed. The song-birds chirped their last melodies and prepared for their flight to the South: Uncle Grünebaum joined in the chirping, but he put his trust in the psalmist's promise "so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed," for he was too thoroughly convinced that he was indispensable in Neustadt, in the "Red Ram" and in his family. No *Deus ex machina* descended to bring aid to poor Hans and so he finally had no alternative but to help himself. He carried out a plan which had required a long time to mature in his mind, thus throwing Auntie Schlotterbeck and his mother into giddy amazement and putting his stiff-necked Uncle Grünebaum entirely beside himself.

One Sunday morning at the beginning of September Professor Blasius Fackler, doctor of philosophy and one of the lights of the local "Gymnasium," ruled alone in his house and felt safe and comfortable, as he seldom did, in his study.

His wife with her two daughters was at church, in all probability praying to God to forgive her for the agitated hours which she occasionally caused the "good man," that is, her lord and master. The maid had absented herself on private business; the house was still, it was indeed a gray day that looked into the study filled with clouds of tobacco smoke, but the joyful soul of the professor roamed over a blue welkin with the song-book of Quintus Valerius Catullus and drank in the ecstatic moments of freedom,—

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,
rumoresque senum severiorum
omnes unius aestimemus assis.

He strolled in the shade of the pomegranates and pines by the lake of Benakus on the blessed peninsula of Sirmio and the sparkling rhythmic waves of the Roman poet washed into nothingness all thoughts of the present and of that Lesbia who at that moment was singing sharply and shrilly in the church. He failed to hear the sound of the doorbell, did not catch the timidly soft tread that mounted the stairs; he was not roused till something scratched and tapped gently at his door. Quickly the Latin rogue Catullus hid himself under a heap of more serious scholarly equipment, and with dignity the professor and doctor of philosophy called:

“Come in!”

No one accepted the invitation and it was repeated more loudly, but this time too without success. Bewildered, the scholar rose from his chair, drew his long dressing-gown tight about him, and now with still greater amazement admitted a tiny laddie of about eleven years into his study, a laddie who trembled in every joint and over whose cheeks the tears ran down. No one was present at the interview that this visitor had with Professor Fackler and we cannot give the details of the conversation. Only this we can say, that when Lesbia returned from church with her two daughters, the charming pledges of the “thousands and thousands of kisses,” she found her husband in a very pleased mood. He did not give her the attention which she expected from him but continued to straddle up and down the room and to murmur:

“I declare! A plucky little fellow! *Puer tenax propositi!* He shall have his way! By all the gods of Olympus he shall attain what he desires and may it be of benefit to him!”

“What shall be of benefit? Of benefit to whom, Blasius?” asked Lesbia, laying down her hymn-book.

“Someone shall be taken by the heel and dipped into the Styx, dearest, so that he may be proof against the afflictions of life and emerge victorious from the battle of men.”

“This is one of your silly, incomprehensible days, Blasius,” cried Mrs. Fackler, with vexation and looked as if she would have liked to give her husband a good shaking. Fortunately, however, at that moment Eugenia and Cornelia came running in and hung on their father’s arms with all kinds of childish questions and requests. The latter pointed to their mother and quoted with hollow voice:

“Jove tonante, fulgurante, comitia populi habere nefas,”

drew on his coat, put on his hat, took his stick, went out and—paid a visit to Uncle Grünebaum. Uncle Nikolaus Grünebaum, however, to his own “highest perplexity” made a long, beautiful speech that afternoon in Kröppel Street to the accompaniment of some most excellent coffee which Auntie Schlotterbeck had brewed, and expressed himself more or less in the following expectoration:

“Inasmuch as a cobbler is a noble and honorable calling yet nevertheless all the children of men cannot be cobblers, but there must also be other people, tailors, bakers, carpenters, masons and such like, so that every feeling and sentiment may be provided for and no sense be left without its necessary protection. But also because there are other wants in the world and man needs much before and prior to the time when he needs nothing more, there are also advocates and doctors more than too many and in addition professors and pastors more than enough. But God lets things go on as they will and the devil takes one and all, odd and even, which is to say that a boy who wants to choose his occupation must look far ahead and consider carefully in which direction his bent lies, for it has happened more than once that an ass has thought that he could play the lute. But it isn’t everyone who can make a boot either, it isn’t as easy as it looks. Now there are present here Christine Unwirrsch, widow of the late Anton Unwirrsch, secondly the unmarried spinster Schlotterbeck, also a very good specimen of sound common sense and

natural ability. Moreover, there is present, Master Nik'las Grünebaum, who am not up in the air, either, but without wanting to boast, stand squarely on my feet. Before these three there stands the individual whom the matter concerns, Hans Jakob Nik'las Unwirrsch, who at least has demonstrated himself to be a youth of courage and who has sought to trip up his dearest relatives behind their backs. Such a little bantam!"

Both women raised their hands to beseech the blessing of heaven on the youthful genius, Hans Unwirrsch; but his uncle continued.

"When the professor stood in front of me all of a sudden, I said to myself, 'Steady, Grünebaum, hold on to your chair!' Such a boy! But the professor is an estimable, reasonable, pleasant gentleman and so the long and short of the matter is this, that from half past eleven this morning on, I will have nothing more to do with it and will wash my hands."

"In which you do very well, Master Grünebaum," said Auntie Schlotterbeck.

"And so things may go as they like, the devil takes both odd and even!" concluded Uncle Grünebaum.

"Nik'las!" cried Mrs. Christine, irritated, "I hope that my son will never have to do with the devil either in an odd or even way, and as for letting things go as they like, I hope he won't do that either."

"Come, come, don't be sacrilegious and touchy," growled her brother. "Well then, what I and Professor Fackler wanted to say, as an over-learned individual is still a man after all, you shall have your way, my boy, as far as we are concerned. Enough, I have said it! And I don't suppose the highly laudable profession of cobbling will lose any miracle in you, scamp."

The mother's feelings found relief in a stream of tears, Auntie Schlotterbeck nearly melted away with joyful emotion; Hans Unwirrsch was never able afterwards to give an account of his feelings in that hour, either to himself or

to others. But the person who remained entirely unmoved and calm, or seemed to, was Uncle Grünebaum. He complacently pressed the tobacco down in his short pipe with his cobbler's thumb, closed the lid carefully like a man who has done a good work and who at most will allow the credit that rightly belongs to him to be entered in the great ledger of heaven.

But however he might appear, he had lost his power over his nephew and could never regain it. From the moment when Hans Unwirrsch gave the rudder of his life such an effective jerk with his own small hand, he confronted the worthy master with a fully enfranchised will of his own and the latter's amazement and bewilderment were only the more boundless, the greater the equanimity that he displayed.

Destinies had to be fulfilled and Hans Unwirrsch started on the road that Anton Unwirrsch had not been allowed to travel. The following noon Auntie Schlotterbeck met the deceased master; he was bent and hung his head in his usual manner, but he smiled contentedly.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VII

[HANS and Moses now worked on from class to class through the "Gymnasium." But the way that led through the vocabulary, declinations and conjugations to the open and sunny clearness of classical antiquity was considerably more difficult for Hans than for Moses, for the former wanted to realize the beauty of the classic age in his imagination, while the latter contented himself with the effort to understand it and to master the languages in which it has come down to us. But in every act of mental work Moses' highest aim was to forge weapons with which to meet the world. He despised or smiled at everyone who did not, like himself, sacrifice all other qualities in order to forge and whet the keen-edged sword of reason, and

excepted neither his "half-childish" father nor his good-natured friend. Hans Unwirrsch, on the contrary, did not forget what he owed to his parents' self-denial and heroism, and all the sacrifices that poverty demanded of him became for him precious duties, as is ever the case with noble natures. Professor Fackler remained his paternal friend and also put him in the way of making his first earnings by recommending him as a tutor for the two sons of the director of a government office named Trüffler. At the same time this afforded Hans the opportunity to see something of so-called "higher social life." Although it was only with the deepest humility that he raised his eyes to the goddesses of this other world, the director's daughters, yet there were times when he was in danger of despising Uncle Grünebaum and underestimating Auntie Schlotterbeck. Against his will, however, the sardonic Moses rendered him valuable service in this respect. The latter analyzed Hans' feelings to him and explained that he was tormented by envy. Once having recognized this condition the value of his mother's home became clear to him again and he was irresistibly drawn back into its simple, heart-refreshing atmosphere.]

CHAPTER VIII

UNCLE GRÜNEBAUM in holiday raiment was a dignified, substantial, self-assured and firm figure. Whoever took a fleeting glance at him at first was usually so pleasantly surprised that he followed the glance with steady observation lasting some minutes, observation which Uncle Grünebaum either permitted with admirable composure or put an end to by an inimitable: "Well?" according to the person who made it.

In his Sunday raiment Uncle Nik'las Grünebaum stood at the corner opposite the "Gymnasium" and resembled an angel in so far as he wore a long blue coat which, to be sure,

as far as the cut was concerned, had little in common with the garments in saints' pictures. The waist of this coat had been placed by the manufacturer as near as possible to the back of the neck and two *non plus ultra* buttons marked its beginning. The pockets showed themselves plainly in the lower region of the coat-tails and a short pipe with gracefully dangling tassels looked curiously out of one of them. Uncle Grünebaum wore a yellow and brown striped waist-coat and trousers of a greenish blue color, somewhat too short but of agreeable construction, too tight above, too wide below. The watch charms which swung beneath the stomach of the worthy man would really deserve several pages of description, and we will say nothing of his hat, for fear that we should then be carried irresistibly beyond the limits of the space at our disposal.

Wherefore did Uncle Grünebaum, dressed in his Sunday clothes on an ordinary week-day, stand at the corner opposite the "Gymnasium"? Tell us, Oh Muse, the reason of this! You have observed Master Nik'las long enough, eloquent calliope, turn your divine eye toward the school-house and tell us, like a good girl who hasn't it in her heart to let anyone dangle long, what is going on in there!

Truly, there was reason enough for more than one of the persons who have been mentioned in these pages to be excited, for on this Wednesday before Maundy Thursday Hans Unwirrsch and Moses Freudenstein were taking their final examination and, if they should pass, would thus conclude their school life.

That was why Uncle Grünebaum had taken an unusual holiday and stood at the corner in festive attire, that was why he held his position in the market-day crowd with an obstinacy that deserved recognition, that was why he plucked so convulsively at the coat buttons of those acquaintances who incautiously inquired into the reason of his unusually elaborate get-up. It was most unwillingly that Master Grünebaum let go of any of the buttons that he took hold of that day. His soul was full of the impor-

tant event. It might be regarded from almost too many points of view! If what was going on over there in the school-house should turn out as was expected and desired, whom would the world have to thank for it? None other than the honorable Master Grünebaum! When the confused neighbor or acquaintance had finally torn himself out of Master Grünebaum's grasp, he was far from being clear for some minutes as to who it was that was being examined by Professor Fackler, Uncle Grünebaum or Uncle Grünebaum's nephew, Hans Unwirrsch.

At twelve o'clock the examination was to be over and from moment to moment Uncle Grünebaum's nervous system vibrated more and more violently. He took off his hat and wiped his forehead with his handkerchief; he clapped it on again, pushed it back, pushed it forward, to the right and to the left. He took his long coat-tails under his arms and dropped them again; he blew his nose so that the report could be heard three streets off. He began to talk aloud to himself and gesticulated much at the same time, to the high edification of all the male and female gapers in the shop doors and behind the windows nearby. The market-women whose path he had blocked all the morning, often set down their baskets of eggs and vegetables and their cans of milk in order to make him budge, at least morally, but he was deaf to their pointed suggestions. On that day he would have let even a dog treat him contemptuously.

At a quarter to twelve he drank his sixth glass of bitters in the nearest grocer's shop and it was high time that he did so, for he felt so weak on his feet that he was nearly ready to fall. From now on he held his watch, an heirloom for which a collector of curiosities would have paid much money, convulsively in his trembling hand and when the clock of the town church struck twelve he nearly went home and to bed, "finished and done for."

He drank another glass of bitters; it was the seventh, and together with the others it had its effect, and its con-

sequences were more noticeable than those of the previous ones.

Uncle Grünebaum now leant firmly against the wall; he smiled through tears. From time to time he made gestures of warding something off as if he would drive uninvited feelings back within bounds; it was fortunate for him that at this hour the younger portion of the population was abandoning itself to the pleasures of the dinner table—this spared him many affronts and ironical remarks. He began to attract the attention of the police and they, maternally concerned about him, gave him the advice not to wait any longer but to go home, the result of which was only that he leant still more firmly against the wall and with displeased grunts, snorts and hiccoughs gave utterance to his intention to wait at that corner for “the lad” till doomsday. Since as yet he did not seriously disturb the public peace, the police retired a little but kept a sharp eye upon him ready at any moment to spring forward and seize him.

Fortunately not only the laudable protectors of public safety watched over Master Nik’las but also his guardian angel, or rather, the latter just returned from attending to some private business, to resume his watch. He saw with horror how matters stood and it was most probably due to his mediation that over in the school-house a violent shock ran suddenly through the learned soul of Professor Fackler as he remembered his Lesbia waiting for him to come home to dinner. He glanced hastily at his watch and jumped from his seat; the other gentlemen rustled after him, *secundum ordinem*. The candidates, before whose eyes everything had gradually begun to swim, rose also, dizzy, sweating and exhausted. Uncle Grünebaum now had to keep his balance for only a short quarter of an hour more;—at a quarter to one he sank, he fell, he toppled into the arms of his pale, excited nephew—Victory! Hans Unwirsch had triumphed, Master Grünebaum had triumphed; the one over the questions of seven examining in-

structors, the other over the seven glasses of bitters—Victory!

Professor Fackler wanted to go up to Hans' uncle to congratulate him but refrained in shocked surprise when he recognized the excellent man's upset condition; Moses Freudenstein, *primus inter pares*, laughed not a little at the helpless and piteous glances that Hans Unwirrsch threw in all directions; the happiness of the hour however had made his heart softer than usual, he offered to aid his friend, and between the two youths the jolly old boy Nik'las Grünebaum made for Kröppel Street, smiling and babbling, staggering and sobbing.

What did it matter that as soon as he got into the low, dark room Uncle Grünebaum dropped onto the nearest chair, laid his arms on the table and his head on his arms? What did Mother Christine and Auntie Schlotterbeck care about Uncle Grünebaum in this hour? They left him entirely to himself and to his seven glasses of bitters! The two women were almost as bewildered and confused as the master; they sobbed and smiled at the same time, as he had sobbed and smiled and Hans was not behind them in emotion and jubilation.

The day was won by the two boys from Kröppel Street; Moses Freudenstein of course had passed first among all the candidates; but Hans Unwirrsch had achieved the second place.

Everything in the room looked different from usual; a magic light had spread over everything. It was no wonder that the glass globe shone; it was too intimate with the sun not to sparkle on such a day as if it were a little sun itself. Anyone who looked at it carefully saw that more was reflected in it than he would have suspected: laughing and weeping faces, bits of the walls, a part of Kröppel Street with a piece of blue sky, the royal Westphalian body-servant and the junk-dealer Samuel Freudenstein who pulled the said servant from his hook with strange haste and shut the shutters and door of his house.

Auntie Schlotterbeck saw this occurrence, which was reflected in the hanging globe, through the window and was just about to give vent to her wonder at it when Uncle Grünebaum raised his tired head from the table and began to survey his surroundings with more than astonished glances. He rubbed his eyes, ran his fingers through his hair and took his place once more in the family circle with the remark that any excess of joy and jubilation was very dangerous and might bring on attacks of something like apoplexy, as his "own bodily example" had just shown. With his senses he had regained in rich measure the gift of dulcet speech and as usual immediately made liberal use of it.

"So this young man here, our nephew and descendant, has been an honor to his beloved relatives and now it's certain that cobbling isn't the thing for him. He has now successfully put his head through the hole according to his desire, and thus with time and experience will probably be able to squeeze body and legs through also, and we may certainly be of good hope that he will not forget us on this side of the wall when he has drawn his feet after his head. There are indeed instances of examples to show that a genius will get his head wrenched in pushing himself through and that he consequently loses all memory of what is behind the wall and who is there and has helped to push with all his strength. But this Hans here present will remember his uncle, also his mother and, of course, don't let us forget, Auntie Schlotterbeck. He will ever recall what they have done for him and how he can never thank them enough for it. There he stands now, Christine Unwirsch, *née* Grünebaum; there he stands, Auntie Schlotterbeck, and his head is full of good things and the tears run over his cheeks, so that it is a joyful spectacle and a painful pleasure. We will not deny that he has learnt more than what's right and reasonable, and if Auntie questions him in Greek he will answer in Hebrew. So let us be thankful for the good gift and not trouble ourselves about the

devil's taking one and all, odd and even. Come here, my boy, and even if you did once infamously despise the most honorable trade, and are at present nearer to a pastor than to the pitch-cobbler Grünebaum, yet come here and embrace me; from the bottom of his heart your uncle says 'here's to you' on this your day of honor!"

There was sense in the nonsense that Uncle Grünebaum delivered with such pathos; but even if it had been nothing but drivel Hans would have thrown himself into the worthy man's wide open arms notwithstanding. After hugging and squeezing his uncle for some minutes he kissed his mother over again, then once more went through the same process with Auntie Schlotterbeck, striving all the time to express his overflowing feelings in words.

"Oh, how shall I thank you all for what you have done for me!" he cried. "Oh Mother, if only my father were still alive!"

At this exclamation of her son's his mother naturally broke into loud sobs; but Auntie Schlotterbeck merely folded her hands in her lap, nodded her head and smiled without giving utterance to her thoughts. All at once however she rose quickly from her chair, seized Mrs. Christine by the skirt and pointed mysteriously to the window.

They all looked in the direction she indicated, but no one else saw anything. Kröppel Street lay bathed in the noon-day sunshine but none of its inhabitants was to be seen; the junk-dealer's house looked as if its inmates had deserted it half a century ago; only a cat made use of the quiet moment to cross the street cautiously.

"She is enough to give one the shivers in broad daylight," murmured Uncle Grünebaum with a timid sidelong glance at Auntie Schlotterbeck; the mother clasped her son's hand tighter and drew him nearer to her; whatever may have been Hans' opinion of Auntie Schlotterbeck's mysterious gifts he was not able at that moment to defend himself against the feeling that her behavior aroused in him.

What a waking was that on the morning after this difficult and happy day! A victor who has triumphantly pitched his tent on a conquered battlefield, a young girl who has become engaged the evening before at a ball, may perhaps wake with the same feelings as Hans Unwirrsch after his examination. The nerves have not yet grown calm but one is permeated by the blissful feeling that they have time to become calm. After-tremors of the great excitement still twitch through the soul but in spite of that, nay, just on that account, one has a sense of security approaching ecstasy. What remains of human happiness if we subtract from it the hope that goes before the struggle, before the attainment of the desire and these first confused, indistinct moments that follow it?

Summa cum laude! smiled the sun that played about the bed in which Hans Unwirrsch lay with half-closed eyelids. *Summa cum laude!* twittered the early sparrows and swallows in front of his window. *Summa cum laude!* cried the bells that rang in Maundy Thursday. *Summa cum laude!* said Hans Unwirrsch as he stood in the middle of his room and made a low bow—to himself.

He had not quite finished dressing when his mother slipped into the room. She had left her shoes below, near the stairs, so as not to wake Auntie Schlotterbeck, whose bedroom was next that of Hans. She sat down on her son's bed and regarded him with simple pride and her glance did him good to the inmost recesses of his soul.

Downstairs the holiday coffee was waiting and Auntie Schlotterbeck sat at the table. She had left her shoes upstairs by her bedroom door so as not to wake the student and Mrs. Christine, and their consideration of one another gave rise to much laughter. There was a piece of jubilee cake too and although Maundy Thursday is only a half holiday, as every toiler knows, it was settled that it was to be kept as a whole one.

First, of course, they went to church after Hans had knocked again vainly at the junk-dealer's door. Since old

Samuel had taken the body-servant of King Jerome from his hook and thus removed him forever from what to him in truth had been the swirl and swing of life, the door had not been opened again. What was going on behind it was a riddle to Kröppel Street, but a still greater riddle to Hans who had not seen his friend since they had walked home together after the examination and who had returned unsuccessful from every attempt to penetrate into the house opposite. Murx, the retired town constable, who still kept watch on Kröppel Street, from his armchair, in helpless fury and goutier than ever, had already drawn the attention of his successor in office to the "confoundedly suspicious case;" indeed, the burgomaster had already shaken his head over it. The silent house began to disturb the peace of the town more than the most drunken brawler could have done.

But the bells called people to church, and along came Uncle Grünebaum, in his blue coat, sea-green breeches and striped waistcoat, armed with the mightiest of all hymn-books as a shield against all bitter and sweet temptations, an ornament to every street through which he marched, an adornment to every gathering of Christians, politicians and civilized men that he honored with his presence.

Hans and his mother walked hand in hand and at Auntie Schlotterbeck's side strode Uncle Grünebaum, who lost a little of his self-conscious respectability only when he turned the corner where the day before he had—where his feelings had overwhelmed him the day before. He drew out a very red handkerchief, blew his nose violently and thus passed successfully by the disastrous spot and landed his dignity without damage in the family pew. It is a pity that we cannot devote a chapter to his singing; no cobbler ever caroled with greater reverence and power through his nose.

Hans did not understand much of the sermon on that day and although it was rather long it seemed to him very short. Even the stone skeleton on the old monument be-

side the Unwirrsches' place in church, that monster which Hans, long after he had ceased to be a child, could never dissociate from the idea of church, grinned "*Summa cum laude!*" "*Summa cum laude!*" sang all the pipes of the organ and it was to this accompaniment that the family left the house of God. Above all there was "*Summa cum laude!*" in Professor Fackler's smile, who had also been at church with Cornelia and Eugenia, and who did not think it beneath his dignity to walk part of the way with his favorite's relatives, thus being enabled to offer Uncle Grünebaum the congratulations he had had ready the day before.

"*Summa cum laude!*" seemed to shine in the faces of everyone they met; it was really very curious.

Professor Fackler had taken his leave with good wishes and hand-shakings and Eugenia and Cornelia had returned dainty little courtesies to the shy and blushing student's awkward bow;—there was Kröppel Street again and its inhabitants had already taken off their Sunday raiment and put on their workday clothes.

They were not working however; there was great excitement in Kröppel Street; old and young ran hither and thither shouting and gesticulating.

"Hullo, what's the matter now?" exclaimed Uncle Grünebaum. "What's happened? What's the matter, Master Schwenckkettel?"

"He's got it! It's got him!" was the answer.

"The devil! Who's got it? What's got him?"

"The Jew! Freudenstein! He's lying on his back and gasping ——"

The women clasped their hands. Hans Unwirrsch stood rigid, and turned pale, but Uncle Grünebaum said, phlegmatically:

"The devil takes one and all, odd and even! Don't hurry, Hans,—well, I declare, he's off already!"

Hans ran at full speed toward the junk-dealer's shop which, with its door wide open, was besieged by a dense

throng of people. They looked over one another's shoulders and although no one saw anything extraordinary in the dark space yet no one would have moved from the spot where he stood; Kröppel Street was too fond of excitements like this that cost nothing.

It was only with difficulty that Hans, in his bewilderment, was able to make a path for himself. At last he stood in the dusk of the shop, feeling as if he were shut out forever from the fresh, open air of spring. The faces of the people on the steps of the entrance stared down at him as through a mist; just as he was about to lay his trembling hand on the handle of the door that led to the back room it was opened.

The doctor came out and straightened his spectacles.

"Ah, it's you, Unwirrsch," he said. "He's in a bad way in there. *Apoplexia spasmodica*. Gastric, convulsive apoplexy. Everything possible has been done for the moment. I'll look in again in an hour. A pleasant day to you, sir!"

Hans Unwirrsch did not return the doctor's last greeting, which seemed a little out of keeping with the present circumstances. He summoned all his energy and stepped into the back room which was now transformed into a death chamber. A penetrating odor of spirits of ammonia met him, the sick man on his bed in the corner already had the rattle in his throat; the Rabbi had come, sat at the head of the bed and murmured Hebrew prayers in which, from time to time, the voice of old Esther on the other side of the bed, joined.

At the foot stood Moses, motionless. He was leaning on the bed-posts, looking at the patient. Not a muscle of his face twitched, his eyes showed no sign of tears, his lips were firmly closed.

He turned as Hans stepped up to him and laid his cold right hand in that of his friend; then he turned his face away again at once and gazed once more at his sick father. He seemed to have grown a head taller since his examina-

tion, the expression in his eyes was indescribable,—to use a dreadful simile, it was as if the angel of death were waiting for the last grain of sand to fall;—Moses Freudenstein had gradually grown to be a handsome youth.

“Oh, God, Moses, speak! How did it happen? How did it happen so all of a sudden?” whispered Hans.

“Who can tell!” said Moses, just as softly. “Two hours ago we were sitting here quietly together and—and—he showed me all sorts of papers that we were putting in order,—we have had various things to put in order since yesterday—suddenly he groaned and fell off his chair and now—there he lies. The doctor says he will never get up again.”

“Oh, how dreadful! I knocked at your door so often yesterday; why didn’t you want to let anyone in?”

“He didn’t want to; he always was peculiar. He had made up his mind that on the day when I should have passed my examination successfully he would close his shop for ever. He did not want to have any witness, anyone to disturb us when he showed me his secret chests and drawers. He was a peculiar man and now his life will close with the shop,—who would have thought it, who, indeed?”

The voice in which these words were spoken was dull and mournful; but in Moses’ eyes glittered something quite different from sorrow or mourning. A secret gratification lay in them, a concealed triumph, the certainty of a happiness which had suddenly revealed itself, which in such plenitude he had not even dared to hope for and which for the moment had still to be hidden under the dark cloak of decorous grief.

Let us see how the father and son had spent the time since the day before and we shall be able to explain this glance which Moses Freudenstein cast on his dying father.

In as great a state of excitement as the relatives of Hans Unwirrsch, Master Samuel had awaited his son’s return. He wandered restlessly about the house and began to bur-

row among his effects, to open and shut chests, to rummage through the most forgotten corners, as if he wanted to hold a final review of his possessions and his thousand different articles of trade. At the same time he talked to himself unceasingly and although not a drop of spirituous liquor ever crossed his lips, yet at the time when Uncle Grünebaum was leaning firmly against the wall opposite the school-house, Samuel Freudenstein seemed to be more intoxicated than he. The great resolve which he had carried in his heart for so long and which was now about to be put into execution affected him like strong drink. Toward eleven o'clock he drove the housekeeper Esther out of the back room and bolted even that door. He now brought to light mysterious keys, opened mysterious drawers in his writing-table, creakingly unlocked a mysterious door in a mysterious closet. There was a jingling as of gold and silver, a rustling as of government bonds and other negotiable paper, and among the jingling and the rustling Father Samuel's voice murmured:

“He was born in a dark corner, he will long for the light; he has sat in a gloomy house, he will dwell in a palace. They have mocked him and beaten him, he will repay them according to the law; an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth! He is a good son and he has learnt what a man needs in order to rise. He has not been impatient, he has sat quietly over his books here at this table. He has done his work and I have done mine. He shall find me here at this table where he has sat quietly throughout his young life. Now he will go out into life, and I will stay here; but my eyes will follow him on his way and he will give me great joy. I have always followed him with my eyes, he is a good son. Now he has grown to be a man and his father will have nothing more in secret from him. Six hundred—seven hundred—two thousand—a good son—may the God of our fathers bless him and his children and his children's children.”

The screaming, blessings and beseechings of Esther

outside and a knocking at the door drove the old man from his calculations and thoughts onto his feet.

“God of Abraham, he is here!”

With a trembling hand he pushed back the bolt and clasped his son, who was just entering, in his arms.

“Here he is! Here he is! My son, the son of my wife! Well, Moses, speak, how did it go?”

Moses' face showed not a sign of change, he appeared cold, as always, and calmly he held out his certificate to his father.

“I knew that they would have to write what they have written. They probably made faces over it but they had to give me the first place. Come now! Don't be ridiculous, Father; don't go mad, Esther. Oh say, how they would like to have put that sentimental Hans over there ahead of me, but they couldn't manage it; I knew it. By all the silly gods, Father, what have you been doing this morning? Gold? Gold and no end of it? What's that? What does that mean? Great God, where ——”

He broke off and bent over the table. *That* was a sight that entirely destroyed his accustomed self-control, at least for a time.

“Yours! Yours! It is all yours!” cried his father. “I told you that I would do my part if you did yours at the table there. That is not all! Here! Here!”

The old man had rushed to the closet again and threw a few more jingling bags on the black floor and a few more bundles of securities on the table. His eyes glowed as with fever.

“You are equipped and armed, now raise your head. Eat when you are hungry and reach out for everything that you desire. They will bring it to you if you are wise; you will become a great man among the strangers! Be wise on your way! Don't stand still, don't stand still, don't stand still!”

The hanging globe in the house opposite reflected Samuel Freudenstein as he hurried out, tore the Westphalian body-

servant from his hook and buried him in the depths of the shop; thus he closed his business for ever,—the lackey had served as a sign for many things which had really nothing to do with junk-dealing; it was not to be regretted that he disappeared from Kröppel Street.

If only the glass globe of Master Anton Unwirrsch could have reflected the figure of Moses Freudenstein as, during his father's short absence he stood with folded arms in front of the richly burdened table! He was pale and his lips twitched, he passed his finger tips over several of the rows of gold-pieces and at their touch a slight tremor ran through his body. A thousand thoughts chased one another through his brain with the rapidity of lightning, but not one of them rose from his heart; he did not think of the toil, the care, the—love that clung to this piled-up wealth. He thought only of what his own attitude must be to these riches which were suddenly thrust before him, of the changed existence that would begin from this moment—for him. His cold heart beat so violently that it almost caused him physical pain. It was an evil moment in which Samuel Freudenstein announced to his son that he was rich and that the latter would one day be so. From that moment a thousand dark threads stretched out into the future; whatever was dark in Moses' soul became still darker from this moment; nothing became lighter; egoism raised its head menacingly and stretched out hungry arms, like those of an octopus, to grasp the world.

In this headlong, wildly increasing tumult of thoughts his father's existence no longer counted for anything, it was rubbed out as if it had never been. Moses Freudenstein thought only of himself and when his father's step sounded again behind him he started and clenched his teeth.

Samuel Freudenstein had bolted the door; he had closed the shop and thus also locked out the wide, lovely spring world, the blue sky, the beautiful sun—woe to him!

He had nothing to do with the joyful sounds, the shining

colors of life, they would only have been in his way; he wanted to celebrate a triumph in which he did not need them—woe to him! The gray dusk which fell through the dirty panes of the back room sufficed perfectly for him to lay his secret account book before his son and show him in what way the wealth that he had spread out before him had been acquired.

The sun went down, but before taking his farewell, he flooded the world with unequalled beauty; he smiled a parting greeting through every window that he could reach; but he could not say farewell to poor Samuel Freudenstein—woe to him!

Night came on and Esther carried the lighted lamp into the little back room. The children were put to bed, the night watchman came; the older people too disappeared from the benches before their front doors. Everyone carried his cares to bed; but Samuel and Moses Freudenstein counted and figured on, and it was not until the gray dawn that the latter sank into a restless, feverish slumber only to start up again almost as soon as he had closed his eyes. He did not wake like Hans Unwirrsch; he woke with a cry of fear, stretched his hands out and crooked his fingers as if something infinitely precious were being torn from him, as if he were striving in deadly fear to hold it tight. He sat upright in bed and stared about him, pressed his hands to his forehead and then jumped up. Hastily he drew on his clothes and went down into the back room where his father still lay asleep restlessly murmuring disconnected sentences. The son stood before his father's bed and his gaze wandered from his father's face to the empty table which had lately been so richly burdened.

Oh, the hunger, the terrible hunger, by which Moses Freudenstein was tormented, was consumed! Between the feast and the sufferer there stood a superfluous something, the life of an old man. The son of this old man gnashed his teeth—woe to you too, Moses Freudenstein!

How did the hour-glass from the pulpit of the Christian

church come to be in the shop? It was there and it stood beside the bed of the old man on a shelf against the wall. In former years it had often served Moses and Hans as a plaything and they had watched the sand run through with delight; it was long now since any hand had touched it, the spider's had spun their webs about it; it was a useless thing. What notion could suddenly have shot into the mind of the junk-dealer's son to make him turn the hour-glass over now? A frightened spider scuttled up the wall; the sand began to trickle down again and Samuel Freudenstein woke with a start. He drew the bed-clothes close about him and felt under his pillow for his bunch of keys; then he asked almost in a screech:

“What do you want, Moses? Is it you? What do you want? It's still night!”

“It's bright daylight. Have you forgotten, Father, that we did not finish yesterday? It is bright daylight; and you still have so much to say to me.”

The father glanced at the son, and then looked at him again. Then his eye fell on the hour-glass.

“Why did you turn the glass over? Why do you wake me before it is day?”

“Oh come! You know, Father, that time is precious and runs away like sand. Will you get up?”

The old man turned uneasily in his bed several times, and glanced ever anew at his son, now searchingly, now fearfully, now angrily.

Moses had turned away and went to the writing table near the window; the old man sat upright and drew up his knees. The sand in the glass trickled down—down, and the old man's eyes became more and more fixed. Had he had a dream during his short sleep and was now considering whether this dream might not be truth; who could say? Had it become clear to him all of a sudden that in giving his child the treasure that he had concealed so long and so well he was giving him only darkness and ruin?

What a life he had led in order to be able to celebrate that hour of triumph yesterday! Woe to him!

The son threw shifty glances over his shoulder at his father.

“What is the matter, Father? Are you not well?”

“Quite well, Moses, quite well. Be quiet, I will get up. Do not be angry. Be quiet—that your days may be long upon earth.”

He rose and dressed. Esther came with breakfast but she almost let the tray fall when she looked into her old master’s face.

“God of Israel! What is the matter, Freudenstein?”

“Nothing, nothing! Be quiet, Esther; it will pass.”

He sat in his chair all morning without moving. His mouth alone moved, but only once did an audible word cross his lips; he wanted them to open the door and the shutters again.

“Why should Esther unlock the house?” asked Moses. “We want to finish our business of yesterday first, and don’t need people gaping and listening.”

“Be quiet, you are right, my son. It is well, Esther. Take the keys from under my pillow, Moses.”

The sand in the hour-glass had run through again; Moses Freudenstein himself had unlocked the closet once more and was looking through the papers. The old man did not move, but he followed his son’s every movement with his eyes and now and then started and shivered. Esther had put an old cover about his shoulders; he was like a child that must let everything be done for it.

Moses took out another bag of money; it slipped from his hands and fell ringing on the floor, scattering part of its contents over the room. With the ringing and jingling of the money a scream mingled that froze one’s blood.

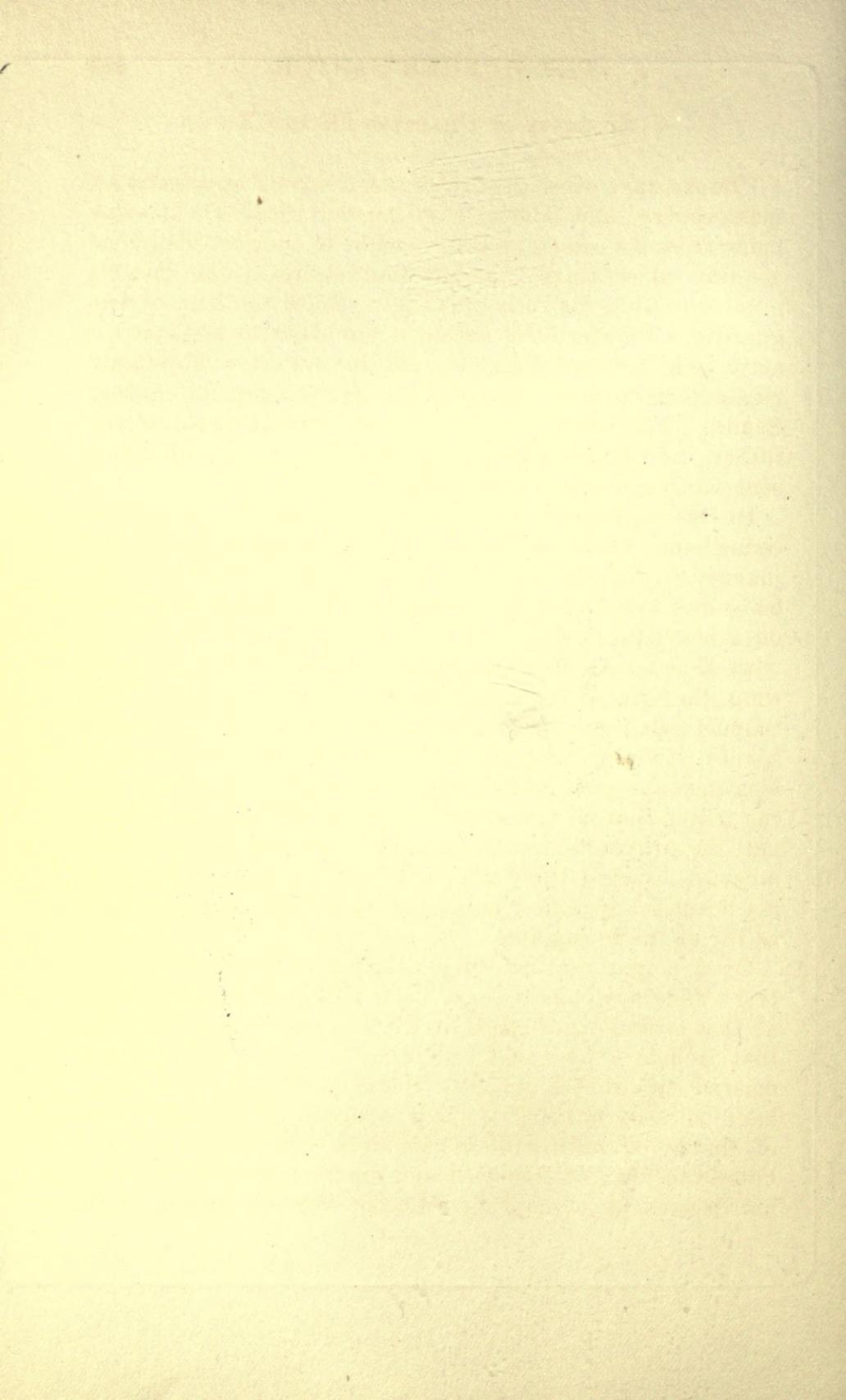
“*Apoplexia spasmodica!*” said the doctor fifteen minutes later. “Hm, hm—an unusual case in a man of his constitution!”



Permission Franz Hanfstaengl

KARL SPITZWEG

THE LETTER CARRIER



SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS IX AND X

[THREE days after the first shock a second apoplectic attack occurred and Samuel Freudenstein died. On the way home from the cemetery Hans sought to comfort his friend—quite unnecessarily, as all that occupied the latter's mind was what his father had left. With the help of two guardians he was able, within a few days to find out exactly what this amounted to, and finally, after thoroughly rummaging through the shop, he sold it again to another Semite. He sought to banish all remembrance of his father; the hour-glass slipped from his hand and a kick sent the fragments into a corner.

In the meantime his mother, "Auntie," and Uncle Grünebaum had done their best to prepare Hans for his journey to the university. Hans bade farewell to everybody and everything in Neustadt that he loved and then, on a beautiful spring morning, started on his pilgrimage with Moses. As they passed the door of the second-hand shop, they found three old Jewish women there to whom Samuel had been charitable now and then, and the house-keeper, Esther. They were waiting to give Moses their blessings and good wishes, but he scorned them. They left the thaler that he threw to them lying on the ground and half the prayer that they sent after him was changed into a curse. Uncle Grünebaum, with his dignified person and his beautiful speeches, accompanied the two young people as far as the town gates.

On a height that afforded a last view of Neustadt the two wanderers paused for a short time. Hans thought of all that he had experienced up till then and of all the people that he had known, not excepting the dead, such as his master, Silberlöffel, and little Sophie. Moses, on the other hand, refused to think of those who had died and thought of the living only with his superior, cynical smile. He hated the town of Neustadt and finally roused Hans from his dreams by a mocking remark. Similar scenes often

recurred on their way, the last one when, on the morning of the third day, they came in sight of the university town lying at their feet. Hans would like to have taken off his shoes on the holy ground while Moses gave characteristic expression to his opinion by remarking that there must be many a bad egg or a blown one down there in the little town.

Hans rented a little room from a shoemaker in the most remote and cheapest corner of the town of the muses, while Moses established himself in a house that looked on a beautiful public square opposite the Gothic cathedral. His rooms were elegantly furnished and he showed no disinclination for any of the exquisite enjoyments of life; the humble cocoon from Neustadt brought forth a gay-colored, bright, Epicurean butterfly that spread its wings with assurance and skill.

Hans entered himself as a student of theology while Moses joined the philosophers. Hans entertained a humble veneration for the apostles of wisdom and on every occasion Moses diabolically sought to trip up this touching belief in authority. He acknowledged one professor's good points only so as to be able to throw a stronger light on his weaknesses; in the case of another he was pleased to find that at least his moral reputation was not above reproach. But although Moses was able to destroy much he was also able to give as much else. He got himself books on all branches of learning and constructed for himself a rather original system of objective logic; he diligently attended lectures on law and for recreation he gave Hans instruction in Hebrew. With subtle arguments he discussed with him God and the world, physics and metaphysics, and proved to him that the Jews were still the chosen people, for the successes that the other nations won they won for the Jews too, whereas the latter were not concerned in other people's defeats. Whenever the Jews did enter the struggle they did so of their own free will, with no anxiety

for the weal or woe of a nation, but only to fight for spiritual values, for ideas.

Hans could meet such sophistry only with the greatest difficulty; his talent did not lie in that direction. Even his first semester showed him that he was better fitted for practical than theoretical theology; in fact, the professor of homiletics was not satisfied with his achievements even in that subject. His pupil's oratory contained too much "poesie," too much enthusiasm for nature, even an odor of pantheism. Hence Hans liked best to preach his sermons in the open air, under a tall oak, on a narrow meadow in the woods where the birds listened to him with more tolerance than did his professor.

Hans always went home in the holidays and each time he entered with a clearer head and a larger heart into the small circle of his dear ones. Moses, however, remained in the university town and each time, when lectures began again, he came out of his rooms more sarcastic and sceptical than before. Finally the last semester drew near. Hans was to take his examination at home as a candidate in theological science. Moses wrote a capital doctor's dissertation on "Matter as an Element of the Divine," and defended his views by gradually turning the thesis round and making of the Divine an element of matter. Quite carelessly one evening after he had taken his degree Moses told Hans that he was going to Paris the day after tomorrow, as he wanted to learn to swim there. He went on to say that Germany was nothing but a beach from which the tide had receded but he had not yet lost his feeling for the open sea and wanted to find more extensive waters in which to try his fins. To Hans' great astonishment and regret Moses really did go to Paris and left the friend of his youth alone behind him. A great void was made in Hans' life, but before the end of the semester he received a letter which showed him that even greater voids might appear in his life. This letter came from Uncle Grünebaum and announced that his mother was very ill.

As soon as he had recovered from his first stupefaction Hans packed his certificates and few belongings and left the university to go to Neustadt, to the deathbed of his mother.]

CHAPTER XI

It was a melancholy way through the autumn weather. Throughout the journey the wind was the poor wanderer's companion, the cold, dreary, whining, groaning October wind. Mockingly it tore from the woods a good part of the adornment with which it had often dallied so winningly in spring and summer. It whipped up dense clouds of dust on the road and rushed across the stubble fields with a shrieking hiss which could not have been pleasant to any living creature except the crows. Only the thrashing of the flails in the neighboring and distant villages could be taken as a comforting sign that everything was not yet lost to the earth and that the triumph that the wind was celebrating on the empty fields was only a deceptive one.

But this comfort was lost on the lonely wanderer in the clouds of dust on the country road; he could pay little attention to it and, deeply depressed and forlorn, he dragged one foot after the other. He had traveled this way so often already that no object that sprang into view on either side of the road was unfamiliar to him. Trees and boulders, houses and huts, sign-posts, church steeples, old boundary stones which no longer marked anything but the transitoriness of even the widest possessions—all had already made various impressions on him in his various moods. He remembered how he had sat thinking on this spot, had slept through an afternoon under the bushes on that one. He thought most of those days when he had passed this way for the first time with his great hunger for knowledge, in the companionship of that comrade of his youth who was now gone. Now he was going back along this way for the last time;—he had learnt much, endured many things and

enjoyed many pleasures! What was now the state of his soul?

He was depressed, he was sad and would have been so even without Uncle Grünebaum's letter of ill tidings. With all his strength he had striven to learn all that could be learnt of the high branch of knowledge to which he had devoted himself, and he was obliged to confess that this was little enough. He felt deeply the inadequacy of what the men on the lecture platform had taught him, but he felt something else besides and that was what Professor Vogel-sang and most of the other members of the highly laudable, honorable faculty did not want to recognize because they could not teach it.

He was on his way to see one die whom he loved more than any other human being; he stepped out toward darkness and it was darkness that he left behind him. At one time he had preached to the trees and the birds because the world would hear nothing of his feelings, and he had never complained of that. Now, his hunger for knowledge seemed to be dead, but his feelings were still alive, rose insistently and crowded about his heart; they grew to be the bitterest pain that a man can endure. At that moment nothing was distinct in the surging tumult; sorrow about his mother, disappointment, worry and fear were mingled; and, curiously enough, mixed with all these there sounded sharply and cuttingly long forgotten words which Moses Freudenstein had once uttered. During this journey Hans Jakob Unwirrsch was in a similar mood to that of another John James who, long years before, had gone from Annecy to Vevay and had written of that road:

“Combien de fois, m'arrêtant pour pleurer à mon aise, assis sur une grosse pierre, je me suis amusé à voir tomber mes larmes dans l'eau!”

It blew incessantly! All day long the wind drove dark clouds across the gray sky, yet not a drop of rain fell. It burrowed into the hedges about the neglected, untidy gardens where the withered sunflowers and hollyhocks hung

their heads plaintively. It rattled the windows of the village inn where Hans ate his dinner, blustered about the house and waited grimly for the wanderer who had escaped it for a short moment. It played its game about the coach that stopped at the toll-gate and flapped the cape of the driver's coat so violently round his ears that he could scarcely get out the toll. Hans threw an indifferent glance at this carriage through the window; but the next moment he regarded it more keenly. The leather flap at the side of the carriage had been drawn back, a young girl looked out and peered down the dreary country road. The wind raised the black veil on her black mourning hat and had no more pity on the pale, sad, girlish face beneath it than on anything else that came in its way. But for that reason the little face only made the greater impression on Hans. Trouble greeted trouble, and the sorrow that went on foot along the country road bowed to the sorrow in the carriage that rolled through the clouds of dust. That childish, care-worn face just fitted into the mood that possessed Hans; he would have liked to know more of its owner's life and fate.

But the girl's head drew back and in its place there appeared a gray moustache and an old military cap. A glass of brandy was handed into the carriage, full, and very quickly appeared again, empty; the driver too had found it possible, in spite of his violent struggle with his cape, to refresh himself with a drink that did not come directly from the spring. Get up! Forward! The horses started and, with a cloud of dust the old vehicle rattled off, the wind rushing after it like a bloodhound on the trail and it was more than remarkable that when Hans came out of the Golden Stag Inn it received him too with triumphant animosity and blew him after the carriage.

The people in the Golden Stag had not been able to say who the military old gentleman and the young lady in mourning were; they only knew the driver, the two lean nags and the tumble-down old vehicle, and said that this

quartet was often hired by travelers as it was frequently the only means of transport in the neighborhood.

In addition to all his other thoughts Hans now carried with him on his way through the dark afternoon the image of the lovely little face he had seen. Ever anew it presented itself to his mental vision; he could not help it. Thus he went on and did not stop till the dusk had grown denser and he had reached the little town in which he was to spend the night.

To be sure, it had been dusk all day and the evening could make little change in the illumination of the world. But now night fell and made common cause with the wind and if the devil had joined the alliance he could not have made matters much worse.

It was not the wind's fault that the crooked old houses of the little country town which Hans now entered were still standing the next morning. The lights in the rooms, behind the windows, seemed to flicker and the few people who were still in the streets fought their way laboriously against the storm, bending forward or leaning back. Front doors slammed with thundering crashes, window shutters flew open with a rattle and the only glazier in the place listened with singular joy to every shrill clinking and clatter in the distance.

If, however, the wind was obliged to leave the little town as a whole still standing it could do even less to the keeper of the Post-horn Inn. To have blown him from his feet and thrown him to the earth would indeed have been a feat which Aeolus might well have set his subjects and rewarded with a prize. On his short, well-rounded legs the innkeeper stood firm and unmoved in front of his doorway under his creaking sign and gave orders regarding a carriage which was just being drawn under shelter by two servants. The lean theologian, Hans Unwirrsch, landed, in the most literal sense of the word, on the colossal mountain of flesh, the keeper of the Post-horn Inn; half smothered and half blinded Hans was blown into the doorway

and hurled violently against the innkeeper's stomach, but even this collision did not disturb the balance of his huge bulk.

The keeper of the Post-horn Inn was fortunately a man who knew how to appreciate the compelling power of circumstances; the attack did not make him as rude as might have been expected. He did not invite the guest thus hurled against him to go to the devil, he even wheeled halfway round to afford him an entrance into his house and followed him merely snorting a few mild remarks.

"A confounded way to steer! Always go slow over the bridge! Don't turn too sharp a corner! Thunder, right on my full stomach!"

But when, in the dimly lit room, he recognized the stranger that the ill wind had blown into his house, the last shade of bad humor disappeared from his round face and with perfect cheerfulness he held out his broad paw to shake hands.

"Ah, it's you, my young student friend! Back once more in the holidays? I'm glad of that! As they say, it's an ill wind that blows nobody good."

Hans apologized as well as he could for his tumultuous greeting at the door; but now the innkeeper only looked at him smilingly and pityingly and blew across his hand as if he would say: "A feather! A feather! Nothing but a feather!"—But what he did say was: "That's all right, Mr. Unwirrsch, I'm well able to stand my ground. Take off your knapsack;—I suppose you've carried it on your back all day long as usual? It's a shame!"

There was the landlady, just as corpulent as the master of the house! There was "my hostess' daughter fair" but not "in a coffin black and bare" this time, thank God! nay, very much alive and also of pleasant amplitude. And they greeted poor, sad Hans whose good heart and tiny purse they had learnt to know in former vacations and treated with the respect due them. They questioned him about everything before he could get his breath and knew

the sorrowful circumstance that now called him home before he had laid down his knapsack and heavy stick. And as they considered a good meal and a good draught the best panacea for all ills he, the landlord, went down into the cellar and the landlady with her daughter went into the kitchen and Hans was now able to take a first glance at the other guests.

There were only two there. There was a table laid for supper in the corner by the stove and they were sitting at it; an old gentleman with a moustache, in a long military coat buttoned up under his chin, and a pale, delicate looking young girl in mourning. The girl was looking down and continued to do so but the old gentleman stared at the theologian so steadily and openly that the latter felt quite uncomfortable and was very glad when the fat landlord reappeared in the room and interposed his solid form between the keen-eyed, moustached countenance and the table at which Hans had seated himself.

The landlord had a robust voice and did not put his questions as softly as Hans would have wished; the landlord was somewhat deaf and required Hans to answer as loudly as possible. And when "my hostess" came with dishes and plates and "my hostess's daughter fair" with knives and forks, they too had questions to ask. The old soldier did not need to play eavesdropper to hear everything worth knowing about the black-coat.

If a man who has had much trouble to bear has not heard any friendly, sympathetic voices about him for a long time, he becomes communicative when finally such voices do reach his ears and his heart with questions and expressions of pity, however reticent he may be as a rule. And, as we know, Hans Unwirrsch was not reticent; he did not keep his joys and sorrows out of sight and, as he had nothing to conceal, he unreservedly gave the good-natured family a full account of how he and the world had got along with one another.

The military looking old gentleman soon knew every-

thing that might be of interest in such a hungry-looking, black-gowned, young theological student. He knew his name, he knew that he came from the famous town of Neustadt, he had heard that a certain Uncle Grünebaum was still in good health and that a no less certain Auntie Schlotterbeck still saw the dead wandering about in the streets. That the theologian had an old mother in Neustadt and that this mother was ill with a serious, painful disease and would perhaps have to die—all this the old gentleman with the gray moustache heard, and the young girl heard it too, moreover with sympathy, as it seemed, for she had raised her head and turned it towards where the young man was sitting. Her face was kind, but not beautiful; it was her eyes that were beautiful, with which, however, she could not see the theologian but only the broad back of the landlord of the Post-horn Inn. The landlord blocked her view as well as that of the young man whom he was questioning so eagerly.

How angry the wind was outside, and how unmistakably it showed its fury! It blustered round the house as if mad and shook every window at which its ally, the night, the dreary autumn night, the enemy of man, the enemy of light, looked in. Oh, how angry the wind and the night were with the travelers who were now so safe from them; how angry with the fat landlord of the Post-horn Inn and with the landlady and the landlady's rosy daughter! No pursuer whose victims had escaped into some inviolable sanctuary could be more angry.

But who was it who at this moment emphatically snapped out the words: "That impudent Jew!" . . .

Was it the wind or was it the night?

No, it was the elderly military gentleman with the moustache and if there had been any doubt that by this kindly designation he meant our friend Moses Freudenstein, whose name Hans Unwirrsch had just mentioned, he dissipated such doubt immediately by adding:

"A conceited, impudent Jewish brat, if it's the rogue to

whom, lately, in Paris, I had to give a piece of my mind! Wasn't it so, Fränzchen? Moses Freudenstein, yes, that was the name. Won't you move nearer, sir; come over here to this table; it's an evening for people to gather close together and I shall be glad to make your nearer acquaintance and to hear something further about this Moses."

The landlord and his family, wondering much at this sudden interruption, had turned to the speaker, and Hans, much excited by this unsuspected attack on his friend, had risen.

With no trace of timidity he began Moses Freudenstein's defense from where he sat; but the old gentleman waved his hand soothingly.

"Come, come; always keep step! Right, left! Right—now the wind has the floor again. Just listen to its blustering outside! This is the sort of weather that takes away even a pastor's appetite for a dispute. Come over here, candidate, and have a glass of punch; and don't take it amiss if I've done it again and said something unsuitable;—I suppose I have, for here's my niece pulling my coat-tail."

Perhaps at that moment it would have been quite agreeable to the young lady if the landlord had still stood between her and the theological student; but the view was now perfectly open and nothing prevented our Hans from thanking with a glance the blushing child who had pulled the coat of the owner of the gray military moustache.

"Forward, candidate, forward! Carry arms,—march—halt! Move up, Franziska;—you're surely not afraid of a young black-coat. Landlord, what would you think of calling out a second levy of this pleasant and wholesome beverage?"

The landlord thought that the beverage was just suited to the weather and the hour and lost no time in filling the order. Before Hans Unwirrsch really knew how it had

happened he was sitting beside the old soldier, opposite the pale young lady and in front of a steaming glass.

“That’s right, young man,” said the owner of the moustache. “I knew that you wouldn’t fall out with a pensioned old soldier on account of just a word or two. Your health, sir; and now as I have by this time learnt your name, circumstances and so on, you shall not feel your way in the dark as regards us, either. I am a retired lieutenant, Rudolf Götz, and this child is my niece, Franziska Götz, whose father has lately died in Paris and whom I have fetched from there, to turn her over to my third brother who is a juristic big-wig—poor little thing!”

The lieutenant growled the last words very softly and immediately added, very loudly.

“And now then, as we each know who the other is, I hope that the evening will pass without any row in the quarters. Here’s to you, sir, you’ve made a good march today and a good drink ought to follow it.”

Hans drank to the lieutenant in return and soon found that the voice and the moustache bore no relation to the eyes, the good-natured nose and the joyous mouth. He found that there was no reason to fear that theology had here fallen into the power and under the tyranny of a bragging swashbuckler. And, indeed, he thought, that it would require great inward perversity to be outwardly rough in the presence of the girl Franziska.

It was a pleasant picture to see the old soldier sitting between the two sorrowful young people. He was certainly very much inclined to be quite jolly; but as that was hardly the thing he did his best to play the part of the comforter.

“So it goes in the world,” he said over the edge of his glass, “people drive or trot past each other on the road and never think of each other and then, a few hours later, all at once they are sitting comfortably together and stretching out their legs under the same table. And so it goes with us too; you’re just standing in a solid square and have your men on either side, your best friends and

can depend on them. You watch calmly how the two twelve-pounders over there are planted and the game begins. Phwt, phwt—the balls make bad paths through the battalion; but they don't touch you, nor the men beside you either. Over there, they're thinking, now their time has come—there is the cavalry—trot—gallop—you see them coming on with a stamping and roaring, like a thunder storm,—Fire! There is a cracking about your ears and your mind is so confused that you couldn't even say "Bless you" if the devil should sneeze. But you stand fast, however black it may grow before your eyes—now the real jamming sets in, and you stumble over all sorts of things that squirm or lie still. There's squealing and howling and groaning between your feet; but it's all one, you stand as fast as possible, even if you can't help it. The dogs must be driven back, and they are. Through the smoke you see nothing but the tails of the horses and everyone trying to get back where he came from and the wind blows the smoke after them—but, the devil, where are the men beside you? There are strange faces all round and it's a strange hand that holds out the bottle to you; there, comrade, drink after that piece of work! The battalion goes forward three paces to get the dead and wounded out of the ranks. All around the fellows are steaming with sweat and here and there one of them has blood trickling out of his nose or somewhere. The ground is slippery and ploughed-up enough and there's a most infernal smell in the air; but your good friends are gone and you mustn't even turn round to look after them for the scoundrels over there at the edge of the woods aren't done yet by a long shot; they'll come again often enough before the sun sets so as to earn their supper and stamp the name of Waterloo on the history of the world. And now here is my niece Franziska; she too has lost the man next her from her sight, and here is the pastor with a face like the black tom-cat that fell into the pot of vinegar, and here am I—also a poor orphan. I can tell you, young people, when a man

has had it rain a few times into his camp kettle, he learns to put on the lid and when a man has lost more than one good comrade from his side he learns to say good-by. The softest hearts have learnt just to swallow dry three times in their misery and still they have remained the best and most faithful souls. Hold up your head, Fränzel; do it for your old uncle's sake; hold up your head, Hans Unwirrsch! If such young people as you rub their noses in the dust what are we old fellows to do?"

Franziska pressed the hard, hairy hand that the soldier held out to her tenderly to her breast; she looked at him and although tears glittered in her eyes she smiled and said:

"Oh, my dear, good Uncle; I will do everything that you want me to. I know that it is wrong of me to show such sadness in return for your love; you must be indulgent with me,—you have spoilt me very much with your love."

The old man took up the weak little hand which he held in his broad paw and looked at it attentively.

"Poor child, poor child," he murmured. "As forsaken and blown about as a little bird that has fallen out of the nest:—and Theodor and his wife—and Kleophea—Oh, it's a shame! Poor little bird, poor little bird,—and I, old vagabond that I am, haven't even the most wretched corner to give it shelter."

He shook his head for a long time, growling and sighing; then he brought his hand down on the table:

"Let's be merry, Pastor. So you know that Moses Freudenstein who now, with eight hundred thousand other loafers, infests the Paris streets? That's a fine acquaintance and really suits you about as well as a howitzer suits dried peas."

"I should be very sorry if Moses, if it is really he, should really deserve your displeasure so much, Mr. Götz," answered Hans. "We grew up together, we were friends at school and at the university; and moreover he can scarcely

have been six months in Paris. I hope it is a mistake; I hope so with all my heart!"

The lieutenant now asked Hans to describe the personality of poor, good Moses exactly, and at every detail that Hans mentioned he was unfortunately obliged to nod and look interrogatively at his niece.

"It's he. It's as sure as a gun. That's the rascal, isn't it, Fränzchen? I'll tell you the tale in a few words, to put an end to the matter. As my brother's death took place very suddenly my niece was left all alone for some time in that nest of Satan and I know what that means because I was there on a visit in 1814 and '15, but there were a good many others with me. Poor child, poor child! I know what it means to be left all alone in that turmoil—She's pulling my coat again, Pastor! Now please leave me alone, Fränzel; let me tell him."

"I'd rather you didn't, Uncle," whispered the young girl, "and you looked at the matter in a worse light than it was; that gentleman ——"

"Was a scoundrel who had to be ground into a pulp;—no, don't pull me, Fränzel."

Franziska threw a beseeching glance at Hans Unwirrsch and he had seldom felt so uncomfortable on any seat, besides he did not now learn after all in what relation his friend had stood to the young lady and the old soldier. Although the uncertainty troubled him much and the doubt of his friend that had been aroused in him pierced his heart, he would not have increased the pale girl's grief by eager, prying questions, for anything in the world. Only one thing was clear to him: chance must have led the winsome Moses into the house in which Franziska had lived after her father's death, helpless, lonely and unprotected, and that his behavior could not have been of the most chivalrous kind. On one of the boulevards a violent scene had then taken place between Mr. Götz and Mr. Freudenstein, and the former had certainly brought home with him to the

German fatherland a deeply rooted antipathy to poor Moses.

Before the windows of the "Post-horn" another horn now sounded discordantly. The night-watchman called the tenth hour and the little party separated. The lieutenant took leave of the theologian in cordial fashion and admonished him once more to keep his head above water and to break his neck, if it must be, only in the best of health. Franziska Götz too, at his command, had to shake hands with the young man in parting and did so quite naturally and without embarrassment. The lieutenant and his niece had to leave early the next morning to reach the railway which now ran to the capital in the north. Hans Unwirrsch was able to sleep longer; no line of railway went as yet to Neustadt and, indeed, the town felt no need at all of being made accessible to the rest of the world in such a way. Hence if Hans resolved to bid the two travelers Godspeed once more at the carriage door in the morning, it certainly showed his good intentions and if he overslept, that was the fault of fate, which prevented his good intentions from being carried out.

He really did oversleep after having tossed about sleeplessly half the night. His long tramp and the wind, which rushed over the roof and whistled round the corners, Uncle Grünebaum's letter and Lieutenant Rudolf Götz's strong punch, Mr. Moses Freudenstein in Paris and pale, sad Franziska would not let him sleep. He got up and lit the light, only to blow it out again; he could not get his ideas into any sort of order and if usually his imagination came to his aid when he was in a depressed mood to comfort him with all kinds of bright and lovely pictures of the past or to hold up before him the magic mirror of the future with smiles and teasing beckonings, it now only drove ghostly shadows round his head and concealed in the most threatening manner both what lay near and what lay distant.

In all his life Hans Unwirrsch had never felt so lacking in courage as in that night;—until then he had been too happy.

Now, for the first time dark, merciless hands reached into his life from all directions; the narrow, secure circle which a kind fate had drawn about his youth had now been broken through; he was being dragged out into the great struggle of the world, of which the young girl who was spending the night at the Post-horn under the same roof as he, knew so much more than he did.

Vae victis!

CHAPTER XII

THEY were gone; but he knew neither who they were nor what they were to become to him. There, near the stove, stood the table at which they had sat, and the landlady put the coffee on it and pushed up a chair for Hans Unwirrsch. The landlord came back from his morning tour through the yard and garden and brought him a last greeting from the two travelers. They were gone.

Before Hans drank his coffee he looked once more through the window out upon the street. No sign of them there any more.

“That was a gallant old gentleman,” said the landlord, and the landlady said: “Poor young lady! I should really like to know what is the matter with her; my Mary, who slept in the room next hers, heard her crying all night long. She must have known much sorrow in her young life.”

Hans came back from the window, sat down on the chair on which he had sat the evening before and looked at the two empty chairs. He began to go over in his mind every word that had been spoken the day before.

“And he doesn’t write to me—I don’t know his address—I can’t ask him what he did to hurt the young lady. It’s like a dream. Oh Moses, Moses!”

They were gone, and the wind too had subsided. The sky was almost grayer than the day before but there was not a breath of air stirring now.

“It was a strange meeting after all! If I had only seen the lieutenant once more And the burden on my shoulders is so heavy without this! Oh, what wouldn't I give if I only knew Moses' address!”

The innkeeper, feeling obliged to cheer his guest up, told him all the remarkable, funny and sad occurrences of the little place, but Hans could only listen with half an ear;—they were gone, and finally he too could no longer endure the heavy atmosphere of the inn parlor. He felt that he must also get away, must breathe some fresh air. So he paid his bill and went, accompanied by the best wishes and blessings of the Post-horn. He strode through the sleepy place without looking to the right or to the left; not until he was out on the country road again did he look up and about him and almost wished for the wind of yesterday. Then there had at least been life, even though it had been weird; but today every bare furrow cried: the great Pan is dead!—and full of mourning the clouds hung low over the lifeless earth. It was fortunate for the wanderer that the way behind the next village led into an extensive forest of fir-trees. Even though it was still darker there than between the open fields, yet the fresh smell of the balsam strengthened him in mind and soul. In this wood Hans Unwirrsch at least left behind him his disquieting thoughts of the friend of his youth, for when he once more stepped forward out of the dusk of the forest the hills behind which his native town lay rose against the horizon and from now on everything had to recede before the vision of his sick mother, even the image of the lovely young lady who had sat opposite him the evening before.

Hans Unwirrsch wandered on without stopping; he would not allow himself another rest. An irresistible power within him drove him forward; by two o'clock in the afternoon he stood at the edge of the wood from which one can see Neustadt lying at one's feet.

“Oh Mother, Mother!” sighed Hans stretching out his hands toward the town. “I am coming, I am coming. I

went forth with great hope and I am coming home in great pain and with many doubts. Oh dear, dear Mother, will you too forsake your child? You couldn't do that. Oh, why did I not stay down there, why did I let myself be lured away over this mountain and forest by a mistaken, false yearning! What am I bringing home that for you and me could take the place of that lost peace and happiness in which my father passed his days?"

And now the terrible thought came to him that his mother might be dying while he delayed there and he ran down the hill till he was out of breath and, while walking at a more moderate pace, he collected himself again.

Now he walked through the old gate and now through the streets of the town. From more than one window people looked after him, more than one acquaintance met and greeted him; but he could pay no attention to anyone. He was in Kröppel Street; he stood before the paternal house; he knelt beside his mother's bed and did not know whether a moment, a minute or a century had passed since that second when he stood at the edge of the woods. Nor could he give any account of what was said in the first few moments of his homecoming. Perhaps nothing was said at all.

Now he read his mother's frightful sufferings in her face and worn features, and wept bitterly. Then he whispered to her that he was there, that he would never go away again, and that she must not leave him either. And then, in a faint voice, the sick woman tried to soothe him and he felt a hand on his shoulder and finally raised himself up.

Auntie Schlotterbeck stood behind him; she had not changed at all and gently she reminded him that he must control himself and must not excite his mother too much.

There was Uncle Grünebaum too, very gentle and reticent; Uncle Grünebaum who knew that there is a time for everything and that everything must be regarded and treated and discussed in the proper manner.

Hans now shook hands with Auntie Schlotterbeck and

Uncle Grünebaum and they both talked to him comfortingly and soothingly. He looked round him again in the low, dark, shabby room and in spite of all his grief and all his pain he felt a calm, an assurance which, during his torturing journey, he thought he had lost forever.

And now Uncle Grünebaum prepared to express his feelings in a well considered speech; but Auntie Schlotterbeck interfered after his preliminary clearing of the throat and half persuasively, half forcibly led him out of the door so that all he could do was to call back over his shoulder:

“Don’t excite her, Hans. Be humane with her; behave like a filial son and composed mind, the doctor has given us strict orders.”

As soon as the mother and son were alone the mother said:

“You must forgive me, Hans, that I had you called away from your work; but I had such a great yearning for you I could not help it. You have always been my comfort; you must be it now too. I longed for you so much.”

“Oh Mother, dear Mother,” cried Hans Unwirrsch, “don’t talk as if my happiness and welfare were more important than yours. Oh, if you only knew how gladly I would give everything that I have gained by my work while away if I could only spare you the smallest part of your pain! But you will grow better, you will soon be well again. Oh Mother, you don’t know how much I need you; no wisdom that can be taught on earth can give what a mother’s word and look gives us.”

“Just hear the boy,” cried Frau Christine. “Does he want to make fun of the old washerwoman. Such a learned gentleman! But never mind, Hans. Hans, do you know that you are growing more and more like your sainted father? He behaved just like that if the sun went behind the clouds for a little while. He was a scholar too, even if he hadn’t been to the university and I often had to wonder at the man. One day he would be as high in the air as a lark and the next day he would creep along the earth like a

snail. You will mount up into the blue sky again, Hans, don't worry about me; I have nothing to reproach God with, he has meant well with me; he has given me a happy life and he cannot help the burden that he now lays upon me; that is everyone's lot and no one can escape it."

Hans felt much humiliated at the bedside of this poor, simple woman who had to endure such tortures and yet could speak and comfort so heroically. Even though his grief at the loss which threatened him grew more violent, his weak despondency of the last few days disappeared. He felt sure on his feet again, his true, real sorrow gave him back his inner self-control; in his profession he separated the real, the content from the non-essential, and for the first time really applied it to life. These difficult days had a deeper effect upon him than all the days he had spent in lecture rooms or in only half fruitful study. He now stepped out of the unwholesome spell of flattering, enervating imaginings, and dull, heavy broodings into real life; he did not lose his hunger for the ideal, the transcendental, but to it was now added hunger for the real, and the fusing of both, which took place in such solemn hours, could not but produce a good cast.

He arranged a table for his work at his dying mother's bedside. There he sat and wrote and, at the same time, watched the sick woman's slumber. The consistory had given him his examination themes; he began to work at them with an eagerness which he had believed was quite dead in him. It was a strange, sadly happy time.

What a light Master Anton's glass globe cast across the table and through the room in the evening and at night! Never before and never afterwards did it shed such a lustre.

Frau Christine saw her whole life in its glow as in a magic mirror. She saw herself as a child, as a young girl, and felt as one. Her parents and her parents' parents came and went; she saw them as clearly and as vividly as Auntie Schlotterbeck herself might have seen them. She thought of the games she played as a child and of all her

girl friends, and the light of the globe was like moonlight, sunrise and sunset, or like high noon. The sick woman had forgotten so much and now suddenly it all came back to her and no part of it was lost,—it was really amazing. She often had to close her eyes because the figures and varied scenes of that distant time passed before her in too great abundance;—now for the first time she realized how much, how infinitely much she had experienced in her life after all. Her Anton had often complained that he had to sit so quiet and so surrounded by dusk and that he couldn't bear to think of all the people who journeyed over hill and dale and across the wide ocean and of those who discovered strange countries and of all the tumult and bustle that there was in the world;—Frau Christine thought of these complaints as she lay on her bed of pain, nodded and shook her head and smiled. Foolish Anton, had he not had enough turmoil and excitement in his life? Had there not been plenty of happenings in it? There was their wedding day, for instance, when Christine had danced for the last time as a girl and Anton had looked so stately in his wedding clothes. Had that not been a bright bit of life and a greater thing than to sail across the seas to outlandish places? And what had they not lived through in the time of the French wars, when Anna, to whom Brother Nik'las had nearly become engaged, had gone off with the Hussars? That had been in 1806 and it really seemed queer to think of how troubled Anton had been about the hard times and of how nobody thought of the French now any more than Brother Nik'las thought of Anna. There was Auntie Schlotterbeck who had lived through all these things and who could see the dead; but still she could not command all the memories that Frau Christine could, for she had never borne a child and had no son to grow up and sit at the table, a learned man, and send glances to her across his books. Oh, how much, how much one could think of by the light of the magic globe; it made it really easy, even

when the pain was at its worst, to lie quiet and to wait patiently for the last hour!

We described at the beginning how Hans, as a little child, lay in his bed in the winter night and watched his mother get ready for her early work. We spoke of the strange, mysterious pictures his fancy drew of the places to which she went, of how he saw the shadows dancing on the walls and watched carefully to see what became of them when the lamp was blown out. Now, as a grown man, he was compelled to give way to very similar and yet quite different feelings. He had had some experiences and had learnt much; it would have been no wonder if he had entered into these hours with more mature moods; but just as his mother was surprised at the return of the memories of her youth, so too he had reason to wonder at the return of these feelings.

While he turned over the pages of his books by the light of the glass globe and from time to time looked over at the sick woman's bed he thought of how his mother was now again preparing to go away and leave him alone in the dark. Just as then he had often begged her with tears to stay, so he would have liked to beg her now. Often the great fear came over him which he had felt such long years before when the lamp had been blown out, his mother's step had died away and sleep did not immediately close his eyes. He heard the snow trickling down the window as he had heard it then; the night watchman called the hours, the moonlight glimmered through the frozen panes, the old furniture cracked and creaked as it used to, the nocturnal world stirred in ghostly fashion as then.

If his mother was sleeping in such moments he could escape from the fearful throng of feelings only by working on as hard as possible at the most difficult parts of his task and even this did not always bring relief. But if his mother was awake he only needed to lay down his pen and to take her faithful hand in his: then the comfort he received was the best there could be for him. If there was anything that

later influenced his acts, his plans, his views and his whole life it was the soft words that were whispered to him in such hours.

“See, dear child,” said the old woman, “in my poor mind it has always seemed to me that the world would not amount to much if there were no hunger in it. But it must not be only the hunger for food and drink and a comfortable life, no, I mean a very different thing from that. There was your father, he had the kind of hunger that I mean and it is from him that you have inherited it. Your father too was not always satisfied with himself and with the world; not that he was envious because others lived in more beautiful houses, or drove in carriages, or anything like that; no, he was only troubled because there were so many things which he did not understand and which he would have liked so much to learn about. That is a man’s hunger, and if a man has it and at the same time does not entirely forget those whom he ought to love, then he is a real man, whether he gets on well or not—that makes no difference. But woman’s hunger lies in another direction. First of all it is for love. A man’s heart must bleed for light, but a woman’s heart must bleed for love. It is in this that she must find her joy. Oh child, I have been much better off than your father, for I have been able to give much love, and much, much love has fallen to my share. He was so good to me as long as he lived, and then, I have had you, and now when I am going to follow my Anton you sit beside me and what he wanted to have you have got and I have helped you to get it; isn’t that enough to make me very happy? You must not grieve so about your foolish mother or you will make my heart heavy and I know you don’t want to do that, you never have done it.”

The son buried his face in the sick woman’s pillows; he could not speak, he could only repeat the word, Mother! sobbingly, but all the emotion that moved him was expressed in it.

During his stay in Neustadt at that time Hans Unwirrsch

seldom left the house. He greeted all the neighbors in Auntie Schlotterbeck's room, but he himself paid few visits. Wherever he did appear, however, he was gladly received and Professor Fackler held him so fast that he had finally to tear himself away with force.

Oddly enough the Professor was now greatly interested in Dr. Moses Freudenstein and questioned poor, disturbed Hans most closely about him.

“So the Talmudistic hair-splitter has gone to Paris? I can tell you, Unwirrsch, that boy gave me more embarrassment while he was at school than I cared to show. We can talk about it now: his objections and conclusions, the way he played with questions and answers often drove the sweat of fear out on my forehead. Truly one could not say: *Credat Judæus Apella*,—that promising youth was not so credulous! With his appetite for all the good things of this world he'll make his way, there is no doubt about that, Unwirrsch. I can tell you, the greatest thing is the right kind of hunger; in monks' Latin—the gods of Latium protect us—we might say: *Fames—famositas*, Ha! Ha! Well, God bless you, Johannes, and give you strength to bear your sorrow at home. We have the greatest sympathy for you and if we can be useful to you in any way just come to me or to my wife. Eheu, after all, in spite of all good things, life is a vale of tears!”

To what this last sigh referred is not quite clear to us although it was so to Hans Unwirrsch, who firmly believed that it was occasioned by his mother's illness, and so, deeply touched, he took leave, for the time being, of the good professor.

During this time Uncle Grünebaum of course often found the opportunity to show himself in all his greatness. He came and went constantly and the house in Kröppel Street was not safe from him for a minute. Now he appeared in the door so suddenly that the sick woman started in her bed, now his dignified head darkened the window beside Hans' writing table so suddenly that the young man

jumped up startled from his seat to gaze at the apparition. If it had not been for Auntie Schlotterbeck Uncle Grünebaum would have become a nuisance, but the thoughtful soul finally organized a regular watch service and more than one child in Kröppel Street received orders to give a warning sign when Master Grünebaum turned the corner. When the alarm sounded Auntie Schlotterbeck always went and stood at the door to intercept the uncle and send him home again by means of cunning, or sometimes to lead him into her own little room. And thither Hans was then ordered to receive his uncle's words of consolation and advice.

“So she is still no better? So sorry, it's too bad! But that's the way it goes in the world and if one man has to complain of his tobacco, the other has trouble with his pipe. We all have to come to this thing; but it has a curious way about it. Now, there sits Auntie Schlotterbeck, a worn-out, miserable person, nothing but bones in a leather sack and, if you won't take it amiss, my saying so, Mistress Schlotterbeck, for the last twenty years I have thought from day to day that you would go out like a tallow candle. But now, there lies my sister, who was a remarkably robust woman, near to death, and you, Auntie, you keep on glimmering as if it were a matter of course and after all, perhaps you'll outlive even me and see me running round in the streets as a spirit in a white shirt and with three pairs of old boots under each arm. I'm ready to believe anything of you now. Oh dear, dear, Hans, what is man? What does he not have to endure in his life? Such great hunger ——”

“And such very great thirst,” threw in Auntie Schlotterbeck.

“That too, Miss Schlotterbeck,” continued Uncle Grünebaum with dignity, though not without showing some annoyance. “Such great hunger and—thirst, that no angel who has not tried it would believe. What does a man do when he has come to his years of discretion?”

"Sometimes he takes to drinking," grunted Auntie Schlotterbeck.

"He hungers and desires everything that hangs too high for him," snarled Uncle Grünebaum furiously. "Whoever asks too much deserves to get nothing; but whoever asks little certainly will get nothing at all. There was your father, boy; he had the most ludicrous kind of hunger and he asked too much as well; he wanted to be a cobbler and a scholar at the same time. What came of it? Nothing! Now, here is your dear Uncle Nik'las, who was gifted with too great modesty and asked nothing but his daily bread ——"

"And the Red Ram and the political newspaper!" interposed Auntie Schlotterbeck again. "And as he liked to sit in the Red Ram better than on his work stool and as he liked better to whistle to his birds than to work and as he read the *Post Courier* in preference to the hymn-book, he comes here now and asks, what came of it and then actually wonders if the answer is again: nothing."

"Miss Schlotterbeck," replied Uncle Grünebaum, "you may impress some poor donkey that comes along, but can't impress me. I have enough of you for this time and I wish you good evening. It's enough to make me foreswear all Kröppel Street! Go to your mother, Hans, give her my love and my excuses that I could not see her this time, on account of excitement and inadequate self-control. I thank you, Auntie Schlotterbeck, for your pleasant entertainment and wish you, if it is possible, a clear conscience and a good night's rest!"

During this sad time Auntie Schlotterbeck surrounded Hans with even more love and solicitous attention than usual, if that were possible. The supernatural element that was mixed with her consolation could not disturb him. These apparitions of the dead of which she spoke as of something real, had nothing fearful about them, nothing confusing;—Hans Unwirrsch could sit for hours and listen to Auntie Schlotterbeck telling his sick mother about her

visions and see his mother nod at the mention of some detail and remember something long past and forgotten.

Auntie Schlotterbeck saw good Master Anton very frequently at that time, and the sick woman's worst pains were alleviated when Auntie Schlotterbeck told her about him.

It was a very severe winter. Neither Auntie Schlotterbeck nor Frau Christine, both of whom had lived through so many winters, remembered one like it. When Hans, half against his will, went out for a walk to get a breath of fresh air, he felt as though everything that lay round him would remain forever so cold and dead, so bleak and bare, as if it were impossible that in a few weeks the trees would grow green again. More than once he mechanically broke off a twig, carefully to unroll the brown leaves of the bud and to assure himself that spring was really only asleep and not dead.

But the snow melted in good time and the waters triumphantly broke their fetters. Hans Unwirrsch completed his work and one evening laid down his pen, stepped softly to his mother's bed and, bending down to kiss her, whispered:

“Dear Mother, I hope that I have succeeded.”

At that his mother drew her son's head down to her with both her sick hands and kissed him too. Then she pushed him gently away and folded her hands. She moved her lips but Hans could not understand everything that she said. He heard only the last words.

“We have managed to do it, Anton! Now I can come to you!”

At the beginning of the new spring the Sunday came on which Hans was to preach his examination sermon. It was a day on which the sun shone again.

A glass of snowdrops stood beside the sick woman's bed and the church bells had never sounded more solemn than on that day. The son, in his black gown, bent over his mother and she laid her hand on his young head and looked at him with smiling, shining eyes. Johannes Unwirrsch

looked deep, deep into those eyes which said more than a hundred thousand words would have said; then he went and Auntie Schlotterbeck and his Uncle followed him. His mother wished it to be so, she wanted to be alone.

There she lay still, and had no more pain. In thought she followed her child through the streets, across the market-place, across the old church-yard to the low door of the sacristy. She heard the organ and closed her eyes. Once more only did she open them wonderingly and look at the glass globe over the table; it seemed to her as if it had suddenly given forth a clear tone and as if she had been awakened by the sound. She smiled and closed her eyes again, and then—

And then? No one can say what followed then; but when Hans Unwirrsch came home from the church his mother was dead and all who saw her said that she must have had a happy death.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS XIII, XIV, XV AND XVI

[As she had desired, Frau Christine was buried beside her husband. Those of her belongings that Hans wanted to keep Auntie Schlotterbeck took into her care; some of the rest were given to Uncle Grünebaum and some were sold. Hans rented the little house to a mason on the condition that in every respect Auntie Schlotterbeck should be recognized as its keeper and his agent.

After having thus arranged his affairs Hans bade farewell to Neustadt for the second time and prepared to enter on the career of a tutor as he had failed to find an unoccupied parish. He accepted a position on the estate of a certain Mr. von Holoch, whose two children, a son and a daughter, he was to bring up and instruct. These children gave him no particular difficulty; he easily won, too, the

regard of the jovial master of the house whose interests were limited to hunting and agriculture, and the plump, good-humored and industrious housewife took care that his outward person increased in size. He was also good friends with the vicar and the manager as well as with all the other inhabitants of the estate and the village. He was temporarily embarrassed only when the housekeeper fell violently in love with him and finally behaved in such a way that she was obliged to leave the estate. Against his will and for no fault of his own Hans too, found that he must go. A rich aunt from whom a legacy might some day be expected appeared on the scene and Hans displeased her as much as he had pleased the housekeeper. She declared the tutor to be an unpolished boor who had never been properly brought up himself, and promised to have her nephew, Erich, educated to become a man of real culture, in the little capital where she was one of the bigger fish in the social sea. Mr. von Holoch and his wife were very sorry to see Hans go and, in their own way, gave him a touching farewell.

By means of a newspaper advertisement Hans found a new position in the house of a well-to-do manufacturer who made some kind of evil-smelling stuff in Kohlenau near Magdeburg. When Hans arrived he found the region flat, the house, which stood near the factory, bleak and in-artistic, its inhabitants industrious and matter-of-fact. The three boys who were entrusted to his care were destined to become good business men. Under these conditions life weighed heavily on the young man of God and, as once before in the government official's house, he longed for a freer, broader, more beautiful world which he believed he might be able to find in the metropolis. But his contract with his employer bound him for three long years and Hans would probably not have got away before the time was up if, in the autumn, an epidemic, resembling hunger-typhus, had not broken out among the workmen, and with it a strike. Hans expressed opinions in regard to this matter



THE NIGHTLY ROUND

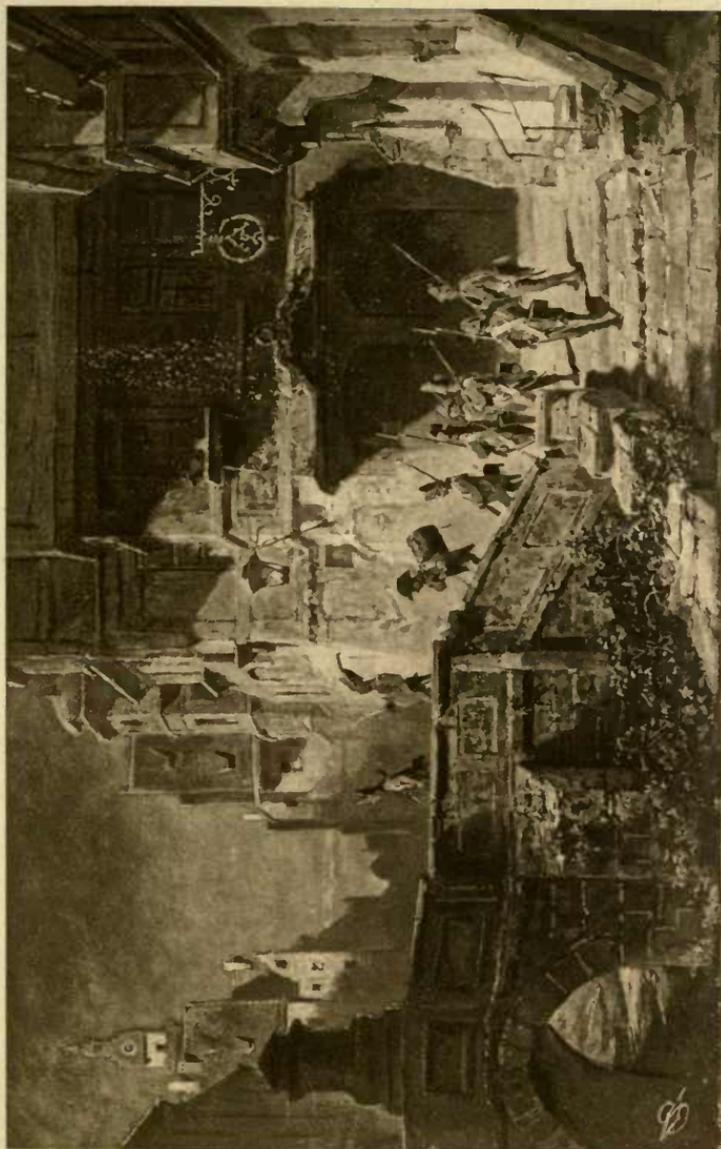
From the *Paintings of Karl Gussone*

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regard of the jovial master of the house whose interests were limited to hunting and agriculture, and the plump, good-humored and industrious housewife took care that his outward person increased in size. He was also good friends with the vicar and the manager as well as with all the other inhabitants of the estate and the village. He was temporarily embarrassed only when the housekeeper fell violently in love with him and finally behaved in such a way that she was obliged to leave the estate. Against his will and for no fault of his own Hans too, found that he must go. A rich aunt from whom a legacy might some day be expected appeared on the scene and Hans displeased her as much as he had pleased the housekeeper. She declared the tutor to be an unpolished boor who had never been properly brought up himself, and promised to have her nephew, Erich, educated to become a man of real culture, in the little capital. **THE NIGHTLY ROUND** was one of the bigger fish in the social sea. Mr. von Holloch and his wife were very sorry to see Hans go and, in their own way, gave him a touching farewell.

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From the Painting by Karl Spitzweg



PERMISSION FRANE MAYER & CO., N.Y.

which his employer considered preposterous and disgraceful; in fact, he even openly took the part of the workmen and, in consequence, received notice to leave at Easter. Meanwhile his position in the house became more and more unbearable, his efforts to find a new situation were unsuccessful and one February afternoon our hero, sad and depressed, sat on a stone beside the road that led through a little clump of evergreens near the factory. He had no idea how near the turn in his fate was, which, at that very moment, was approaching at a trot in the shape of an elderly, somewhat red-nosed rider with a military moustache.

It was Lieutenant Götz, who greeted Hans characteristically and sought to explain his unexpected appearance by taking out of his pocket the newspaper in which Hans had advertised for a position. Then he asked Hans to tell him about his life since their meeting in the "Post-horn" in Windheim, and finally declared that he was delighted to find things going so abominably with the candidate. This made it possible for him to prove himself a rescuer in case of need. His brother, Privy Councillor Götz, was looking for a tutor and the lieutenant, after seeing Hans' advertisement while reading the paper in a restaurant, had immediately made his way to Kohlenau with the aid of the railway, his feet, and a horse. He now gave Hans his brother's address and asked him to write to the latter that he, the lieutenant, recommended Hans. He advised him moreover to write "official business" on the envelope so that it should not fall into the hands of his brother's wife. Then the old soldier bade him a short goodby.

Hans went home busy with his thoughts, wondering at the way the past had joined itself to the present and at the prospects that opened in the future. The same evening he wrote till two o'clock composing a letter to the Privy Councillor which the postman carried away the next morning. Two weeks of torturing waiting now passed. But on the twenty-eighth of February the postman handed him

the longed-for registered letter as he was on his way home in the pouring rain from the church which lay an hour's walk away. The tutor was requested to present himself personally and punctually to the Privy Councillor at fifteen minutes to twelve on the eighth of March.

At the prospect of Hans' departure the attitude of the manufacturer and his family became more conciliatory and the parting did not take place without emotion. Hans left his trunk behind him, as the bookkeeper had promised to send it to him wherever he might be, and, armed only with a light traveling bag, he set forth to meet his new fate. Once more to his astonishment he found the lieutenant sitting on the same stone in the clump of evergreens on which he himself had been sitting when the lieutenant surprised him before, and together they continued their way on foot. Behind the wood, in the village of Plankenhausen, they stopped for breakfast, after which the lieutenant thought it advisable to take a carriage which brought them to the town of ———. From there they took the train for some distance but got out again at the last station before they reached the great metropolis, for the lieutenant maintained that it was better for Hans to enter his new life on foot because his mind would thus have the opportunity to calm itself and because he, the lieutenant, had another story which he could tell best on the march.

This story was the family history of the Götzes. Their father had been an officer of justice in the service of a count in the Harz Mountains—a conscientious, delicate man, and inhumanly learned. He would have liked to make of his sons just such gloomy reservoirs of knowledge but succeeded only in the case of his second son, Theodor. He studied law and with untiring industry and ever ready submission to the government finally became Privy Councillor after having married his pious wife, Aurelie, *née* von Lichtenhahn. There were two children of the marriage; a daughter Kleophea, a girl who would fit into any description of the temptation of St. Anthony, and a son

Aimé, born seven years later. The eldest of the three Götz brothers was Lieutenant Rudolf, who was then over sixty. His father had sent him to a school of forestry and he had finally received an appointment in that branch in the count's service. In the unhappy year 1806 he had entered the Prussian army and later took part in the campaigns in Russia and France. The youngest of the three had been Felix who had died five years before, but who in his youth had been a hot-headed, splendid fellow unable to stand any discipline. When the volunteer corps against Napoleon was formed he fled in the night and joined the cavalry. During the war the two brothers met in 1813 on the Elbe, in 1814 in Paris; after the war Rudolf Götz continued to serve in a small garrison but Felix filled and killed his time with sins. Then he tried his luck in America. For years nothing was heard of him, but in 1830 when things began to grow lively in Europe again he turned up once more as a Peruvian or Colombian captain and sought out Rudolf. He had seen much and had come back from America with a wife and a daughter. He had left them in Paris while he himself was on his way to Poland, where he meant to take part in the revolution. He remained till the defeat of the Poles at Ostrolenka. Ill, tattered and bleeding, in 1832, he knocked again at Rudolf's door, thus compromising the Prussian officer—and that was the reason that Rudolf had retired himself so that he might not be retired. Felix went back to his wife and child in Paris, Rudolf made his way through the world as well as he could as a half-beggar and whole vagabond. In 1836 he too went to Paris, arriving just in time for his sister-in-law's funeral. The younger brother had gone even more to the dogs than the elder and the two now combined and gave fencing lessons. Rudolf left Paris as soon as he thought that he had again set his brother on his feet, but soon after his departure the same old story began again. Felix died in misery and Rudolf fetched his niece and brought her to his brother Theodor's house.

During this tale night had come on and, from a hill, the travelers suddenly saw the great city lying at their feet. Hans could not take it in in a moment. It seemed to him as if he were standing at the edge of the sea into which he was to plunge and learn to swim; an irresistible power impelled him and yet he was afraid. The lieutenant encouraged him and steered him, inexperienced, awkward, and often surprised as he was, through the bustle and crowd of the big city, without any mishap, to the "Green Tree" Inn. The landlord, Lämmert, reported in military fashion that the "slayers of nine" were all assembled and at the lieutenant's command Hans had room 13, beside that of the old soldier, assigned to him.

After they had washed, the lieutenant introduced Hans to the company of the "slayers of nine." It was made up of men who had all at one time been connected with the military service and Colonel von Bullau, owner of the estate of Grunzenow and formerly the commander of Rudolf Götz's regiment, presided over it. Its purpose was first of all the promotion of sociability and good-fellowship and it took its name from the rule that, in his real or imaginary tales of war, no member might, in one evening, boast of more than nine victims of his valor. In the society of these good-humored, bluff, thoroughly seasoned old warriors Hans spent his first evening in the metropolis. The next day the lieutenant showed Hans somewhat more of it, that is, he dragged him not only through taverns and pastry cook's shops but also through collections of weapons and art museums. In the evening, after they had again supped in the "Green Tree," they went to the opera and heard "Don Giovanni." The theatre alone with its richly colored life intoxicated the theologian, who at certain moments was all but overcome by the painful feeling of having missed untold experience. But when the real play on the stage went forward he was so spellbound that he himself became the "stone guest" of that evening.

After the performance the two went to a popular wine tavern frequented especially by actors, singers and writers. Among them there also appeared a certain Dr. Stein, who was making a considerable stir just then. In him Hans recognized—the lieutenant was just greeting an acquaintance in the next room—Moses Freudenstein and, much affected, went to his table to greet him. The dapper, bearded gentleman, however, seemed most embarrassed, explained to Hans that he was now Dr. Théophile Stein and begged him not to attract attention to them. He promised to explain everything to him the next day. Hans complied with his boyhood friend's request and later did not respond to the lieutenant's remark that this literary fellow and journalist, Dr. Stein, did not please him particularly and that it seemed to him as if he had already seen his face somewhere. Moses took no further notice of the two men till they were about to leave when he succeeded, after the lieutenant was already outside, in slipping his visiting card, with his address, into Hans' hand. In his room in the "Green Tree" his friend gazed at this card long and thoughtfully before he could make up his mind to go to bed.]

CHAPTER XVII

ALMOST all night long Hans Unwirrsch had to listen to all the tower clocks the strokes of which reached his pillow. He heard voices of all kinds as he lay awake. The big city sounded every passing quarter of an hour in his ear with a twelve-fold stroke. The tones came from near-by and from far away;—first came the dull bell from quite close by, then the light, clear tone that rang in the distance and sounded much like the bell in a railway station. This fine, distant little voice was followed by the sonorous rumbling

of the clock on St. Nicholas' tower; and so it went on and on, one clock and bell following close on another's heels.

It was a curious thing to lie thus in a strange house, in a strange town, in a strange world, counting the hours of night and recalling his past life in an effort in some way to connect it with the mad events of the present.

What was the relation of Dr. Théophile Stein to the Moses of Kröppel Street, the Moses of the *Gymnasium* and of the university? Hans Unwirrsch gave up bothering his head about that. Inexplicable as this figure might be that had suddenly risen out of the ground, its outlines were yet too distinct and sharp to admit of any doubt as to its reality.

It is possible to think of many people while counting the hours in the night. We can think of living people and of dead, particularly of the latter, for the night is the time for spirits.

Hans thought of his dead,—of his mother, of her old black box where she kept her savings, of her kind, faithful eyes and of the morning on which he, returning from his sermon, had found those eyes closed. Hans thought of his father, of the shining glass globe, of his beautiful book of songs. Now, gradually all his narrow, hemmed-in childhood rose before him in the dark, and once the restless dreamer raised himself in bed believing that he heard the voices of Auntie Schlotterbeck and Uncle Grünebaum on the stairs outside. It was a closely circumscribed world, to be sure, that surrounded the candidate that night, but when morning dawned it had made him able to meet with assurance the wider world which now opened before him. Lieutenant Götz did not need to haul "his preceptor" out of bed that morning. He found him fully clothed and ready—as the lieutenant expressed it—"to offer a broad back for everything that might be laid upon it."

Thrice Lieutenant Götz walked round Unwirrsch, candidate for the ministry, and regarded him with favor.

"You look just as they do on the stage," he said as he

finished his third circle. "What is theology without black trousers? What is a preceptor without a dress coat? My word!—You're capital! A little out of fashion, but very decent! My friend, if those two beautiful black coat-tails don't please my brother Theodor, it can only be the fault of the blue handkerchief which peeps out from between them perhaps a little too impertinently to suit my fastidious sister-in-law."

Hastily Hans stuffed the handkerchief as far down into the depths of the pocket as he could, but the lieutenant cried:

"Let it hang, let it hang out boldly! That's not why I remarked upon it, upon my word. What do you care for Theodor and Kleophea; if only ——"

The old man broke off; Hans did not learn at that time what was to have followed the words "if only." At a quarter past eleven he was on his way with the lieutenant to the house of the Privy Councillor Götz.

Hans had firmly declined the old soldier's advice to strengthen himself for the expedition with a glass of cognac and the lieutenant had said:

"On the whole perhaps you are right; my brother has a pretty keen nose and it might engender unjustified suspicions. Forward!"

Hans had buttoned his clerical coat awry above his beating heart. With joking irony Colonel von Bullau had waved a white handkerchief from the window of the "Green Tree;" the sun looked down from the sky at the preceptor, smiling, but not ironically. The weather left less to be desired that day than the lieutenant's humor. He talked or growled to himself the whole way; he had pulled his cap well down over his forehead and seemed to have clenched his fists in his overcoat pockets. His shortness of temper was far from being delightful and the preceptor gave a positive start when his ill-humored guide suddenly exclaimed: "Confound it, here we are already!"

First they had left the busy, noisy business quarter of the

town behind them, had wandered through a quieter, better quarter and now, by passing through a part of the park, they had reached the last row of houses in a still more elegant section which lay along the side of the park and was separated from it by driveways and riding paths. The houses in that street were approached through small gardens, well-kept even at that early season, and the lieutenant stopped before a fine iron garden gate and pointed grimly to the fine building beyond the round lawn and the empty fountain.

Grimly he pulled the bell of the garden gate, Sesame opened, and the two men walked round the lawn and the fountain. Three steps—an elaborately carved door which also seemed to open of itself—a dim, elegant hall—colored panes of glass—the sound of a grand piano—a screeching parrot somewhere in a room—a servant in green and gold on whose foot Hans Unwirrsch stepped in his confusion and who scorned to take any notice of the stammered apology—an opened door—a young lady in violet—a melodious ejaculation of pleased surprise and the young lady's clear laugh—a quarter to twelve!

“It's Uncle! Terrible Uncle! Uncle Petz! Oh what a joy! Uncle Grimbeard, above all things a kiss, *mon vieux!*”

The young lady in violet fell on the bearish old man's neck so suddenly that he had to endure the kiss and returned it, as it appeared, in a somewhat better humor. Then, however, he freed himself quickly from the beautiful arms, pushed the young lady in violet back and turned to his black-gowned Hans.

“This is my niece Kleophea; my niece with the pious name and the wicked heart. Beware of her, Candidate.”

The candidate did not step on the beautiful young lady's foot; he bowed to her at a respectful distance and she returned his greeting not at all coldly. The changing, charming light in her eyes made a great impression on Hans in spite of his faithful Eckart's warning.

“Won't you also introduce the gentleman to me, Uncle

Rudolf?" asked Kleophea, smiling. "You have given due publicity to my name and character; you know that you occupy the lightest and most comfortable corner in my wicked heart. Now be fair and ——"

"Mr. Johannes Unwirrsch of Neustadt, candidate in theology—a young man well fitted to make spoilt young scamps of both sexes see reason,—a youth who possesses my entire approval."

"That bodes ill for you, Sir," said the young lady. "What my uncle approves of—Jean, please, for goodness sake, don't stare at us with such extraordinary intelligence, go; perhaps after all there may be some useful occupation for you somewhere or other!—is in this house often, exceedingly often, not recognized at its true worth. But you please me and I will take you under my most frivolous protection, Mr. Umquirl."

"Unwirrsch! Theological candidate Unwirrsch!" snapped the lieutenant.

"I beg your pardon. And so you are the patient gentleman whom we have so long sought in vain for our lovely, angelic Aimé? How very interesting, Mr. Rumwisch!"

"Unwirrsch!! Confound it!" shouted the lieutenant. "Is your father at home, girl?"

Kleophea nodded. "March!" commanded the old man; as Kleophea, Hans and the lieutenant ascended the stairs, Jean's wide-open rabbit-like eyes and imposing whiskers appeared again in the hall where their indignant possessor was waiting impatiently for the carriage containing his mistress who would certainly be also much interested in the news that the tutor, accompanied by Lieutenant Götz, had arrived.

Kleophea mounted the stairs at Hans' side; her uncle followed them growling.

Twelve steps! At the thirteenth the stairs turned to the right and when, in the corridor above, Hans looked round for the lieutenant the latter had disappeared. The candi-

date stood alone with Kleophea and she was much amused at the confused tutor.

“Why, where is he? Where can he be?” she said laughing. “Don’t you know that side of him yet? He has delivered you here and has disappeared like an old bearded magician. The magic coach has turned into an empty nutshell, the horses are mice now and have run to their holes; you might as well give up looking about you, Mr. Unwirsch. It is highly probable that my uncle has gone to find my cousin Franziska. So now you are left entirely to yourself and to me;—here is my Papa’s room; I shall take much pleasure in introducing you. Without flattery, I am very well pleased with you and I hope that we shall not embitter each other’s lives in this house.”

As she looked at him while she spoke the last words Hans was quite unable to beware of her as the lieutenant had so emphatically advised him. Her brown eyes possessed a magic power of the first rank and if Circe’s glance was at all like this it was no wonder that Gryllus would rather be a pig in her service than be a cook in the service of Odysseus.

But the door opened. Kleophea led the tutor through a sumptuous drawing room into another room full of books and cabinets for documents. Hans bowed three times toward an extensive table covered with green cloth on which lay still more books and documents. A gentleman sat behind the table and on being greeted rose from his chair, grew taller, taller, ever taller—thin, black, shadowy—and finally stood there behind his papers, long, thin and black, buttoned up to his white tie like a sign-post bearing the warning: no laughter here.

But Kleophea laughed nevertheless.

“Candidate Unwirsch, Papa,” said she; Hans bowed again and the Privy Councillor Götz cleared his throat, seemed to regret very much that he had risen, yet remained standing, now that he had once got up, and put his right arm rapidly behind his back, an action which in every-

one except Hans would have aroused the suspicion that he was pressing a spring, or turning a screw, or pulling a string.

Whatever he was trying to do with the two buttons on the back of his coat, the result was a poor imitation of one of the six theological bows.

"Candidate Unwirrsch," said Kleophea repeating her introduction, while her father seemed to deliberate in privy council how he should receive the tutor. At last he made up his mind and said:

"I see the gentleman, have expected him indeed for the last ten minutes and now extend my welcome to him. Is my wife, your mother, at home, dear Kleophea?"

"No, Papa."

"Most regrettable! Mr. Unwirrsch, I hope that a longer and nearer acquaintance will bring us closer together. Kleophea, when will my wife, your mother, return?"

"I can't say, Papa. You know that it is seldom possible to say definitely as to that."

There was a sound of whirring in the Privy Councillor and he cleared his throat ponderously. Hans Unwirrsch thought the time appropriate to announce his firm desire to make himself as useful as possible and to perform his difficult, but at the same time grateful, duties to the best of his ability. He thanked the Councillor for the confidence which he placed in a stranger and voluntarily promised in no way to prove unworthy of it.

While he was speaking the Privy Councillor had again reached behind him, set his mechanism in motion and had sunk slowly down into his chair behind his heap of papers. It is doubtful whether he was meditating deeply on the new tutor's words or whether he had not heard them at all; but truly magical was the way in which he jumped up again when the golden green lackey suddenly appeared in the room and announced that his mistress had just returned and wished to see and speak to the new tutor at once.

"Go, Jean, and tell my wife that I will bring Mr. Un-

wirrsch to her immediately. My dear Kleophea, will you not precede us?"

Jean bowed and went; Kleophea shrugged her shoulders, smiled as she did so and also went. When they had both gone a miracle took place—the Privy Councillor took hold of the tutor by a coat button, drew him close to him and whispered:

"It is my wish that you should remain in this house; as far as I can judge after this preliminary acquaintance with your person and status, you please me very well. I wish that you might also please my wife. Do your part to that end, and now come."

The Privy Councillor now led the tutor across the drawing room through which he had entered to the room on the opposite side, at the door of which another noticeable change came over the man. The springs inside him seemed suddenly to lose their elasticity, the wheels and wires refused to work, his whole figure seemed to grow smaller,—the Privy Councillor knocked at his wife's door and seemed to feel a desire to peep through the keyhole first, or at least to listen at it. A moment later Hans Unwirrsch stood before the—Mistress of the House.

He saw a stately lady in black with an aquiline nose and a double chin—as solemn as a starless night; she sat on a dark divan behind a table covered with dark drapery! The whole apartment made a solemn impression—every chair and seat an altar of dignity. Serious, chaste, solemn and dignified were walls, ceiling and rugs, pictures and curtains—everything in stately order and regularity except the seven-year-old, coffee-colored, puffy little brat who at sight of the tutor raised a horrible, detestable, furious howl and attacked Hans Unwirrsch's legs with a toy whip.

"Oh, Aimé, what a way to behave!" said the lady in black. "Come to me, my darling, don't excite yourself so. Kleophea, won't you take the little whip away from the child?"

Again Kleophea shrugged her shoulders.

“No thank you, Mama. Aimé and I ——”

“Be silent, now;” the Councillor’s wife cried with a gesture. “I know very well what you want to say. Look here, my little lamb, see what I will give you for your whip.”

The charming child could not resist the box of sweets; he put his instrument of torture into his mother’s hands and she thus received the last touch that completed her imposing appearance.

With the whip in her hand the lady of the house now devoted herself entirely to the new tutor. She subjected him to a severe examination and asked for the most detailed information about the “conduct” of his life. The morals and dogmas of the young man to whom such a precious jewel was to be entrusted were very important to her and not all her questions could be answered without causing her to wrinkle her brow. On the whole, however, the examination ended favorably for the candidate and the conclusion was even very satisfactory.

“I am glad to be able to hope that your work in this house will be blessed. You will find that the Lord has led you under a strictly Christian roof. You will find that the seeds of faith have already been sown in the heart of this sensitive little angel. Under my special, maternal supervision you will be able to aid all the beautiful blossoms in this young heart to unfold and the Lord will bless your work. With a humble and simple heart you will work among us here and will not allow yourself to be led astray by any worldly laughter and mockery (at this point a glance and an imaginary blow with the whip struck her beautiful daughter Kleophea). Aimé, my little rosebud, you may give your hand to Mr. Unwirrsch now and say ‘how do you do?’ ”

The little rosebud must have misunderstood this permission. Instead of giving his tutor his hand he showed him something else and began again to howl and scream in the terrible manner we have described. When Hans dared to approach him he kicked him on the shins, so that with

painful feelings he withdrew and at a safe distance expressed the hope that he and Aimé might soon become more intimate with each other.

"I hope so too," said Mrs. Götz. "I hope that you will try your best to gain my boy's love and affection. It is easy to win a child's love by a simple and humble manner. Oh, what a treasure I am laying in your hands, Mr. Unwirrsch! Oh, my sensitive little lamb, my Aimé!"

The Privy Councillor had not spoken a word throughout the proceedings. He stood there and apparently approved, at least externally, of everything. No sign betrayed what he may have felt within; in the presence of his wife the good man had learnt silently to possess his soul in patience.

Kleophea had disappeared altogether. What she was doing behind the window curtain where she had hidden herself remained as great a secret as her father's feelings. The tutor's feelings were not of the pleasantest. He looked into the future with apprehension and confessed to himself sighingly that even Kohlenau had had its charms. He felt himself surrounded by an atmosphere which furthered perspiration and at the same time checked it. With no immoderate sense of gratitude he thought of Lieutenant Rudolf Götz, who had procured for him the honor and pleasure of entering this house as an educator. The puzzling disappearance of the man at the most important moment and on the stairs also admitted of no favorable interpretation; Hans Unwirrsch began to think of him as a crafty character; the faithful Eckart was transformed into a deceptive will-o'-the-wisp which suddenly went out in the middle of the swamp. Beneath the gaze of the mistress of the house, Aurelia Götz, *née* von Lichtenhahn, Hans Unwirrsch sank slowly but surely into the depths and neither from behind the window curtain nor from behind the Privy Councillor's back did a helping hand appear.

It was from another direction that a hand brought aid.

"Where is Franziska?" asked Mrs. Götz. Kleophea be-

hind the curtain did not know; the Privy Councillor did not know either.

“Please, Mr. Unwirrsch, will you be kind enough to ring the bell?” asked Mrs. Götz and Hans’ eyes sought it. But just at the moment when he had found it the door opened which led from the drawing room into Mrs. Götz’s apartment and a small, insignificant figure in a gray, insignificant gown stepped into the room with downcast eyes;—Hans Unwirrsch did not ring. During the last half hour he had not thought of Franziska Götz.

“Oh, here you are, Franziska,” cried Mrs. Götz. “My niece, Miss Götz, Mr. Unwirrsch!” she added briefly, at the same time looking, if possible, more stately and more like a glacier than before. “Have Mr. Unwirrsch shown to his room, my child; we have received him into our household.”

Franziska Götz bowed in silence and, as she passed Hans inaudibly, she raised her eyes to him only to drop them again instantly.

“Won’t you follow my niece, Mr. Unwirrsch,” said Mrs. Götz laying down the whip. Hans made another bow of which this time no notice was taken; he also bowed to the Privy Councillor, whose mechanism moved at least a little bit and, as the window curtain now moved slightly, Hans bowed to it as well; then he followed Lieutenant Rudolf’s Fränzchen and, once in the corridor, allowed himself to draw a deep, yet cautious, breath of relief.

There stood the majestic servant again, whose whiskers seemed to swell the longer you looked at him. He looked over his liveried shoulder at the “new tutor” with legitimate contempt and manifested only a doubtful inclination to show the ungentle starveling his way.

But Fräulein Franziska Götz too looked doubtfully at the man in green and gold, then turned to Hans and said softly:

“If you will be good enough to go with me I will show you your room.”

Her voice was soft, gentle and low, “an excellent thing

in woman" as old King Lear said, and at its sound Jean turned on his heels and walked away with unbent knees, quite superior and quite convinced that he knew how to maintain the dignity of his position.

"Oh, Miss Götz, how strangely fate has brought us together again and how thankful I am for that!" cried Hans; but the girl laid her finger on her lips and whispered:

"I have seen my Uncle Rudolf—have talked to him—he has told me about you. Oh, my poor, faithful, dear Uncle Rudolf!"

She stopped speaking but Hans Unwirrsch saw a tear on her lashes; he did not dare to address her again but followed her silently up to the second floor of the house. At the bottom of his soul he said: "God be praised!" He must have had some reason to say so.

"Here is your room," said Franziska, unlocking a door. "May you pass glad and happy hours in it. That is my sincere wish and my Uncle Rudolf's too, who seems to be very fond of you."

"How much I thank you, and how much I thank your uncle. All this that he has done for me is so undeserved. It is like a dream the way he has taken my fortunes into his hand and led me into this house."

"He has often spoken of you since the evening when we met at that inn. I was so troubled at that time, so unhappy. Oh, good Uncle Rudolf, he has guided my poor life too. Oh, if you only knew him through and through, Mr. Unwirrsch!"

"I hope to learn to know him and appreciate his full worth!" cried Hans. "If I stay long enough in this house ——"

Franziska again laid her fingers on her lips as if frightened.

"You must not talk so much about Uncle Rudolf in this house," she said. "My Aunt does not like him. It is very sad."

"Oh!" sighed Hans Unwirrsch and a moment later the

Lieutenant's Fränzchen had left him alone in his new quarters. He could look at them more closely and gaze out the window after he had examined the four walls and the furniture. There was nothing extraordinary about the blue-papered walls, the four chairs, the table, the hat-tree, the little sofa and the little round cast-iron stove; but the view from the window was not so easily forgotten.

In the middle of the lawn the fountain was now playing merrily with a shining brass ball. There was the ornamental iron fence which separated the Privy Councillor's property from the public street of the big city. There was something wonderful to Hans Unwirrsch in the view of this promenade with its throng of carriages, riders and pedestrians and he waited in vain for the variegated stream to come to an end. And there, beyond the driveway, riding and foot paths, was the wood-like park with its long straight avenues into which one looked as into a peep-show. And how beautiful that must all be when the trees were green! Truly, the hope of this green to come was in itself some consolation for the grayness of the present.

The porter from the "Green Tree" now came with a greeting from Lieutenant Götz and brought the tutor his traveling bag, thus tearing him away from his observations at the window. He would have to write to the manager in Kohlenau for the things he had left behind there. As Hans laid a Greek pocket edition of the New Testament on the table a card fell out of it on which could be read in fine steel engraving:

Dr. Théophile Stein,
25 Hedwig Street.

Hans Unwirrsch had no more time to dream; he had to think and deliberate as well as he could with his mind baffled by an entanglement of persons and mutual relationships. Moses Freudenstein and Franziska Götz, Franziska and

the mistress of the house, the mistress of the house and Kleophea, the Privy Councillor, Jean in green and gold;— *bellum omnium contra omnes*, and Hans Unwirrsch, *Candidatus theologiæ* and tutor in the midst of them all! That was a state of affairs in which a man was certainly justified in putting his hand to his forehead like some one who has been turned round many times in a circle blindfolded and after the bandage has been removed feels by no means steady on his feet and knows still less what to think of his surroundings.

Hans Unwirrsch, too, felt irresistibly the need of winding up some of the springs in his being and tightening some of the screws. He read a chapter in the New Testament and followed that with a page in a pocket edition of Epictetus. He was then able to meet the stately Jean's eyes with greater composure when the latter came to call him to dinner and let fall the remark that it was customary to wear white gloves to that function.

For the first time Hans partook of bread and salt with his new associates in life. Again he had to answer many questions in regard to his preëxistence and it appeared that in that preëxistence many of the things that came onto the table were unknown. Mrs. Götz still remained a born von Lichtenhahn, the Privy Councillor remained what he was; Kleophea smiled and shrugged her shoulders, Aimé was very unamiable, and Fränzchen sat at the lower end of the table next to the candidate Hans Unwirrsch.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS XVIII-XXI

[HANS soon learned how things went on in the Privy Councillor's house. The sovereign power lay in the hands of the mistress of the house. Aurelia Götz, *née* von Lichtenhahn, swayed the sceptre with a strong hand. She ruled

arbitrarily up to the boundaries of Kleophea's realm. To the tutor Kleophea herself appeared to be a wonder. Unusually beautiful and talented she drew and painted, played the piano, sang and read several languages, with preference French and whatever she should not have read. At five o'clock teas she loved to speak to pious ladies of Boccaccio and the *Decameron*, to the vexation of her Mamma. Kleophea hated her Mamma because of the name she had received from the latter at her baptism and against which she had always protested. Much in the development of her character was due to this name and her opposition to it. She declared her brother to be a "horrid toad" and he scarcely dared show himself in her presence. This did not improve her relations with her mother. She had hoped to find an ally in her cousin but soon pronounced her to be a "lamb." Still, she could not make an absolute slave of her. She treated her now as a confidant, now as the opposite, caressed her one day and pushed her brusquely aside the next. Franziska was not well treated by her aunt. The latter had not been friends either with "the despised, godless freebooter and Jacobite" Felix, or with "the careless beggar and ill-mannered vagabond" Rudolf. She had been glad, however, to take the orphan into her house; the town talked of it, and she, too, was able to make it the subject of conversation. The tutor was allowed to instruct the "sweet Aimé" only under the eyes of his mother and this caused the teacher to sweat more than the pupil.

One day, when Aimé was ill from overstudy, that is, from over-eating, Hans sought out Dr. Théophile Stein. In answer to his knock a pretty, laughing young lady with very black hair and a rather uptilted nose opened the door. Behind this merry girl Théophile appeared, somewhat annoyed and embarrassed, though he smiled when he recognized Hans and said: "Oh, it's you, come in." The lady put on her dainty, rosy little hat in front of the glass, threw the candidate a kiss and the words: "*Bon jour, monsieur le*

curé” and slipped out as gracefully as a bird. Dr. Stein followed her into the passage and for some time after Hans heard her joyful laughter. Then her clear voice cried: “*Traître, va!*” and Moses came back into the room. He explained that this little full-blooded Parisian was a poor orphan, a little maker of trimmings to whom he had shown many kindnesses in Paris and who had now come to town to try her luck in working for the ladies there. He questioned Hans about his life and listened attentively when he heard that he was tutor in the house of Privy Councillor Götz. He called Hans an enviable fellow to be able to live under the same roof as the beautiful Kleophea Götz and asked if he might come to see him there. He told of how he had had fencing lessons from Franziska Götz’s father, a drunkard and rather a *canaille*, and that he had often protected the girl from hunger and perhaps other misfortune. After the old freebooter had died of delirium tremens he had taken care of the unhappy girl until the arrival of her uncle from Germany. Of course he was a Jew and received the usual reward. The young lady thought that he had exceeded his bounds. When he had tried to defend himself he had been insulted and scorned. It was the old story of the gratitude of the world. Thus in Hans’ eyes he cleared himself of the lieutenant’s accusations. He objected strongly to being called Moses, said that his name was now Théophile Stein, that he had forsworn the faith of his fathers and had become a Christian, a Roman Catholic, and that he might soon become a lecturer on the Semitic languages at the university. All these revelations gave Hans plenty to think about on his way home.

For some time after that everything remained as it was. The tutor did his duty as well as he could; Mrs. Götz became more and more convinced that unfortunately he too possessed a most obstinate and deceitful character. Kleophea discovered a new name for Franziska, called her *l’eau dormante* and drew caricatures of Hans. Franziska’s

step remained as inaudible as before and her kindly care-filled face seldom brightened into a smile; nothing whatever was heard of the lieutenant; he had disappeared and gave no sign of life. The person least spoken of in the Privy Councillor's house was the Privy Councillor.

During this time the soul of the theological candidate, Johannes Unwirrsch of Kröppel Street, was in an extraordinary state. He stood in the centre of the life for which he had longed so much; he had stepped down and the great roar had dissolved into single voices and tones and the voices that he heard around him were more harsh and evil than loving. He felt less satisfied than ever and was obliged to confess to himself that he had not as yet acquired an understanding of this world. Once for all he belonged to those happily unhappy natures who have to solve every contradiction that meets them. It was simply that he had that hunger for the symmetry and harmony of all things which so few people understand, which is so hard to satisfy and is never completely satisfied except in death.

In addition to all his other troubles Hans had much ado to defend himself against the charm that Kleophea exercised over him.

Franziska was quieter than ever. In the meantime the signs of returning spring multiplied. Dr. Théophile Stein paid his first visit to the Privy Councillor's tutor and was very winning and very amiable. He listened to every noise in the house, asked all sorts of questions about the tutor's life there, asked about the architecture of the house; the position and furnishings of the rooms on the first floor, about the pictures on the walls and the service in the kitchen. He was not uninterested in the sympathies of the Privy Councillor's wife and still less so in her antipathies. He asked for detailed information about Aimé as well as about the master of the house. At last he had finished, in-

wardly shut up his note-book and succeeded by a clever winding-up in convincing poor Hans that he had only asked all these questions out of interest in the fate and present life of the companion of his youth.

Mrs. Götz had of course heard of the visit and, at the dinner table, asked about this Dr. Stein, who was much talked of in town at the moment, and who was said to be very gifted and much traveled. At that Hans began to speak out of the fullness of his heart and told everything about Moses Freudenstein that he could tell. He praised his kind heart, clever head and scholarliness and unfortunately did not notice what a start the lieutenant's Fränzchen gave when she learnt who had that day been in the house in which she had sought protection.

Hans said nothing of the merry French orphan as, when he was on the point of leaving, Dr. Stein had modestly and laughingly begged him not to mention her. The following day Franziska did not appear at the table; she was not well. She was obliged to keep her bed for a whole week and, for the first time Hans had the opportunity of noticing what a gap her absence made. Suddenly the idea came into his mind that his speech at the table about Moses Freudenstein might be the cause of the poor child's illness and this thought sent all the blood rushing to his heart so violently that he was scarcely able to breathe. The same morning the mistress of the house sent for him to come to her room where he found his friend Théophile Stein, *alias* Moses Freudenstein, sitting beside Mrs. Götz, opposite Kleophea, with little Aimé on his knee. Another older man was sitting there too.

"Oh, here he is—the hunger pastor!" exclaimed Dr. Stein, thus giving our Hans his title officially. "Wake up, Johannes, it is I in the flesh."

Dr. Stein spoke easily and with polish and Dr. Blüthmüller, lecturer on esthetics, made very fine, but quite academic speeches, about the art of living beautifully.

After he had emptied his horn of plenty the lady of the house opened hers. With sighing pathos she gave her views on the way to find Christian, esthetic peace in God. She raved about the way of the saints of God, and about old Italian pictures of virgins looking up to heaven, of martyrs and donors.

Full of perfidy Dr. Stein asked the friend of his youth whether he had seen the pictures of which Mrs. Götz spoke. Hans had seen them, but unfortunately he said what he thought about them, thereby incurring the displeasure of the lady of the house. Dr. Stein then entertained the little circle with an excellent discussion of the Pre-raphaelites and showed his erudition, experience in art, and knowledge of the world to the most brilliant advantage. He illumined all sides of life with clever remarks; and in the great art of polishing up the mediocre, or even silly remarks of those from whom he wanted to obtain something and then giving them back their property with a bow, he was past-master. He knew how all kinds of fish were caught and began by catching Mrs. Privy Councillor Götz, *née* von Lichtenhahn, but while he was pulling his catch ashore he did not lose sight of the golden scales and purple fins that still flashed about free in the water.

As Dr. Théophile Stein had expected, Hans knocked at his door several times, to call him to account, but received no answer or else was told that Dr. Stein was not at home.

When the lieutenant's Fränzchen came out of her little room again she had become even quieter than before and although her behavior to the rest of the household was as usual it made Hans feel the more deeply and painfully that she was not the same to him as she had been. He knew the reason well and yet was unable to ask whether what Moses Freudenstein had said about her father was true. He watched her with strained anxiety and never failed to hear her softest footstep nor a single tone of her sweet voice.

To the same degree that the brilliant Kleophea lost her influence over him Franziska won hers.

Dr. Théophile Stein repeated his visit without Professor Blüthemüller, and Hans was not invited again to be present in the drawing room. Dr. Stein did not blush when Franziska came into the room and, at the sight of him, suddenly started and turned pale. He retained his composure when he was introduced to her and merely spoke coolly of already having had the pleasure of meeting Fräulein Götz in Paris. This declaration caused Mrs. Götz and her husband much surprise and astonishment.

After Franziska had left the room Mrs. Götz asked for an explanation of this curious circumstance and Dr. Stein expatiated on how sorry he was to have recalled to Fräulein Götz such painful memories. He went on to tell his tale, and he was a good story-teller; and his sonorous voice was well-fitted tenderly to emphasize all tragic nuances. It was the same tale that Hans had heard but adapted to another audience. This time he took a most sympathetic interest in this family misfortune and was able thoroughly to understand what Mrs. Götz must have suffered on account of her brother-in-law's wretched life and death.

After a time Kleophea came skipping into the room. She brought sunshine with her and youthful spirits; her eyes shone, her red lips laughed, she scarcely touched the floor with her feet. She greeted Dr. Stein with enchanting irony; she was just in the mood to hurt the feelings of her fellow-men with small, perfidious insinuations and expressed a great thirst for knowledge in regard to certain Mosaic customs and laws. Dr. Théophile was more than equal to her. He talked about the Jews with dramatic pathos, he knew how to make the best use of the heroes and martyrs his race had produced. He even succeeded in making of Kleophea a close and attentive listener.

He was able to leave with a humbly proud bow and to be satisfied with the success of his visit. He was now what he

wanted to be—a friend of the family. From now on, without suffering any detriment to his bodily or spiritual welfare, he could receive the visits of Candidate Hans Unwirrsch.

Spring had come in all its beauty, but it did not bring Hans Unwirrsch the consolation he had hoped. The lower he sank in the favor and esteem of the Privy Councillor's wife the less she left him to himself. And Fränzchen, Fränzchen Götz? What had she to do with his great hunger for knowledge, for the world and life? What had she to do with his disappointments? In everything she penetrated into the innermost recesses of his heart. It was impossible to think of Auntie Schlotterbeck, or even of Uncle Grünebaum without Franziska, Lieutenant Rudolf Götz's niece. She sat in the low, dark room in Neustadt and in the magically shining glass globe, she sat in the sunshine in the Neustadt cemetery beside his mother's and father's grave.

The great sea of the world had tried to roll between them but it did not separate them; they greeted each other in silence, in silence they took their places beside each other; the poisonous shade of the son of Samuel Freudenstein, the second-hand dealer of Kröppel Street, lay between them.

Hans again sought out Dr. Théophile and for the second time he met the French orphan who owed so much to Théophile. This time she passed him with lowered head. She no longer skipped and laughed but leant heavily on the banister and her head was sunk very low. She looked very pale and had lost much of her former elegance.

Théophile answered all the questions that Hans put to him and allowed himself to be catechized but the manner in which he justified himself left much for an honest and pious nature to desire. Finally he confessed quite openly that it was his intention to become a councillor in the cab-

inet of his Majesty, the King, and to try to win the affection and later the little hand of Kleophea Götz.

From now on Dr. Stein came to the house of the Privy Councillor's wife daily, and daily she received him with a more cordial smile. He read with the ladies of the house, he drove with them, and there were many people in the city who envied Mrs. Götz this interesting acquaintance, for the doctor was a man whose reputation was growing mightily. It could be heard growing. He gave lectures before a select audience of both sexes on "The Rights and Duties of Human Society" and the exclusive, elegant fraction of humanity for whom these lectures were prepared was much pleased with them. They delighted Mrs. Götz, but the objections that Kleophea raised gave the doctor the desired opportunity to throw a hundred shining nooses about her rebellious self. He talked to her in a very different way from what he did to her mother. He spoke of things which might give him a claim to a "world of sighs." He used his descent and gloomy youth to good advantage and was elegiac. He was wisely silent as to how easy his father had made his way in the world; he had overcome all obstacles through the strength of his own manhood and courage. He wore his shirt collar *à la* Byron and insinuated that he—"lord of himself; that heritage of woe!"—had not always trodden the straight path, that there were depths, dark, unfathomable depths in his bosom into which he could not look without becoming giddy. It was night within him but he had not yet lost his hunger for the light and that was the only reason that he was still able to mix with the living without being crippled by the burden of existence.

Never in all her life had Kleophea been as silent as she became at this time.

No change had taken place in Fränzchen's relations with Hans. Lieutenant Rudolf still did not appear.

In order not to worry the old people at home Hans had always written them that he was well off, very well off.

But he was not well off! He could not get out of the magic circle that fate had drawn around him. He felt that the time was not far distant when he would hate Moses Freudenstein, when he would love Franziska Götz and he was constantly fleeing from his own thoughts. Poor Hans Unwirrsch was far from being well off. Gradually he began to feel physically ill, suffered from dizziness and headache and became more melancholy from day to day. He no longer had any hunger for anything except to open his whole heart to Fränzchen.

One Saturday afternoon Candidate Unwirrsch received a package from Neustadt containing two presents and letters from Auntie Schlotterbeck and Uncle Grünebaum. His uncle complained that things were going miserably with him, that he was growing older every day, that his digestion refused to work, that his eyes had gone back on him and that he had sat down on his spectacles the day before yesterday. The "Red Ram" had changed hands and had lost its attractiveness and even politics were no longer what they used to be.

Auntie Schlotterbeck wrote full of solicitude for Hans' welfare and warned him again and again against Moses Freudenstein, who was a bad man, as old Esther and Professor Fackler too declared. When Hans had done reading these letters he had to hold his head with both hands; it seemed to him to be bursting. He wanted to open the window but could not;—he was ill, so ill that all his painful feelings dissolved into the nothingness of unconsciousness and then passed over into delirium.

Hans Unwirrsch had inflammation of the brain and for several days was near death; but he saw visions during this illness which were not bought too dear by all the pain that he suffered. Dr. Théophile Stein was among them.

It was on the second day after the fever had broken out. Théophile was alone with the sick man and believed himself unobserved. At Mrs. Götz's desire he had come to see "what the young man was doing." Hans' mind was all

confusion but his delirious fantasies were interrupted by strange moments of clearness. Théophile was very curious, as we know, and liked to poke about in other people's things and affairs, nor did he think it indiscreet to look into drawers that stood open and at unsealed letters that lay there. He took Auntie Schlotterbeck's letter during the perusal of which the illness had overtaken Hans and read, first with pleasure and then with his teeth on his lower lip, what she had written about him. "Absurdly original!" he said, "but still the duffer might become an inconvenience; it will be best to get him out of the house. Look out for yourself, my dear Hans!" He went over to the sick man's bed. So utterly out of his mind did he believe poor Hans to be that he thought it quite unnecessary to lay any restraint upon himself. But he was mistaken: Hans saw clearly, quite clearly, horribly clearly. Between life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness, knowledge came to him in a flash. He saw Théophile's eyes shining like those of an evil spirit rejoicing in his misfortune. All the heartlessness of him whom he had once called his friend was revealed in those eyes, in that smile. For the first time in his life Hans felt what hatred is. He wanted to shriek aloud and jump up but he could only reach the other with his eyes. Théophile Stein started; he smiled no more; Hans sank again into the delirium of fever but he took with him the certainty that he had gained an irreconcilable enemy.

When he again came to himself many a day had passed. He saw two other figures beside his bed of pain. At the foot sat Privy Councillor Götz, tired and careworn, and beside him stood Franziska—Fränzchen, sympathetic and gentle and with tears in her eyes. And Fränzchen had no idea how distinctly the sick man saw at that moment. She took no pains whatever to control her features. And she started very much, did Fränzchen, and blushed hotly when she suddenly noticed that Hans was awake and could see. Hans closed his eyes and when he opened them again—he

could not tell just how long after that was—these two figures also were no longer there.

But the sun had risen in Hans Unwirrsch's soul; he knew that he should not die, and knew something much more important than that. There was great rejoicing in his hungry soul and it did not matter a bit that his senses left him once more; everything was now right.

Eventually the day came when the tutor, very lean and somewhat dizzy, went downstairs into the drawing room to thank Mrs. Götz and Kleophea for all their kindness. On the following day the mistress of the house had a second interview with the candidate and expressed the desire that the arrangement between them should come to an end by Christmas Day. She gave it as her opinion that Mr. Unwirrsch's influence on her son could not be regarded as entirely beneficial.

Utterly confused and benumbed Hans staggered back to his room only able to murmur the name "Franziska."]

CHAPTER XXII

MUCH had changed for the worse during the illness of Candidate Unwirrsch. It was only slowly that he came to realize how the conditions in the house of the Privy Councillor Götz had shifted and become more complicated; but at the first glance he saw with a start that autumn had come. The lawn and the paths under the trees of the park were already covered with fallen leaves; the park itself began to look like a ragged rug with many moths in it; it might almost have been regarded as fortunate that Hans had no time to think about this.

Dr. Théophile Stein had won a complete victory over the beautiful and spirited girl, Kleophea. She loved this man with all the passion of which a nature like hers was capable. It required very delicate perception to discern the fire that glowed beneath a soil so gay with flowers, but it was there

and for the moment it made the garden bloom with even greater brilliance;—it was very sad, it was a matter for tears!

Since Hans had been on his feet again the Privy Councillor had become as unapproachable to him as he had formerly been; his wife had spoken and he—submitted to this higher power. Hans realized that this man could not avert the danger that threatened his house and that no warning could help, perhaps might even do harm and make the matter worse. So cleverly had Théophile prepared his way with the Privy Councillor's wife that not the slightest assistance was to be looked for in that direction; and Kleophea, proud, magnificent Kleophea would have repulsed with the deepest scorn any attempt to interfere in these, her most private, intimate affairs. She had laughed too often with Théophile at the "Hunger Pastor" to allow herself to be warned by the latter. Duplicity and impudent egoism, lamentable weakness, obstinate stupidity and pharisaical arrogance, frivolity, conceit, exuberant wantonness, scorn and mockery on all sides;—it was indeed a world to make one hunger, hunger for innocence, for loyalty, for gentleness, for love.

Oh, Fränzchen, Fränzchen Götz, what a sweet, gentle light surrounded your chaste figure in the midst of this grimacing throng! Where else could peace, refuge and rest be found but with you? Oh, Fränzchen, Fränzchen, how could it be that you caused poor Hans such strange pain? How could it be that you had to bear such strange pain on his account? How could you both torment each other so and moreover entirely against the will and the good intentions of Lieutenant Rudolf Götz?

Alas, Lieutenant Rudolf had no place in the council of Providence either, he was often hard pressed enough himself; destiny takes its own course and every time of trial must come to an end in its own way in this hungry turmoil of life.

Since the tutor had recovered, Fränzchen no longer



THE STORK'S NEST

From the Paintings of Karl Höpfer

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PERMISSIO FRAME HANFSTAENGL, N.Y.

avoided him so shyly. The more power Dr. Théophile Stein acquired in the house, the more the poor niece realized that the relation between the doctor and the good Hans could not be altogether as she had at first imagined, and not without justification. On the day on which her aunt gave the candidate notice that his services as preceptor would not be much longer needed, Fränzchen sat in her room and wept tears of joy and murmured her mother's name as such poor, orphaned little things do when they meet with a great unexpected piece of happiness. And then she dried her tears and laughed in the midst of her last sob and into her damp handkerchief.

“Oh, thank you, thank you, my dear Uncle Rudolf! Do you see—no, yes—thank you, thank you!”

Then she came down to take her place at the luncheon table and although the mental atmosphere during this meal was even more oppressive than usual and her aunt made more maliciously pointed remarks than ever, still, Fränzchen's dear little heart had not beat so free and light for a long, long time. And Candidate Unwirrsch seemed to feel that in a moment. He too looked at the people about him with less embarrassment and more cheerfulness; their doings and sayings no longer had their former bad influence on him; Fränzchen Götz no longer avoided his eyes, and he could breathe freely.

It could not be otherwise;—what had dragged on so long in monotonous unpleasantness had at last to show itself in all its nakedness and disconsolateness. The crisis was near at hand, and if, for the present, the evil went on without tangible, outward manifestations, yet the electric shock which was to throw the quiet, elegant household of the Privy Councillor into the greatest possible confusion and to make it the topic of conversation all over the town, could not fail to come. The threatening fist was clenched and struck menacingly at the door to put an end not only to all delusions, but to peaceful sleep as well.

After the long, dreary rain, a few days followed at the

beginning of October, when nature seemed to regret her bad humor and to endeavor to make up for it by being doubly amiable. The sun broke through the clouds, for thirty-six short hours the year showed itself in its matronly beauty and whoever could and would make use of the blessed moment had to hasten; for it is, after all, but seldom that such a change of heart is entirely to be trusted.

The lady of the house commanded her lord to get leave for one or two days and carried him and her precious Aimé off to the not too distant country house of some friends who most probably rejoiced exceedingly over the long announced visit.

Kleophea had refused to be carried off; she thoroughly hated the country, and the agricultural family to whom her parents were going perhaps even more. And if she had little fondness for the beauties of nature she had just as little taste for the marriageable eldest son of that worthy family, who succeeded only in boring the beautiful girl to death with his shining, healthy, but unfortunately somewhat protruding eyes, and his unsuccessful attempts at conversation. Kleophea Götz, who was not accustomed to give any account of her whims and moods, of her comings and goings, stayed at home, saw her parents drive away with a sigh of satisfaction, suffered all the afternoon with a nervous headache, declined to see Dr. Théophile and in the evening, with a family of *her* acquaintance, went to the opera where she could not decline to see Dr. Théophile. She came home with a violent headache and locked herself in her room after having, strangely enough, given her cousin a kiss and called her a "poor, good child." She must really have passed a very restless night, for the next morning she appeared very late and very exhausted and nervous. When Fränzchen sympathetically called her attention to the sunshine she declared that she didn't care about it and called her cousin a "dull little thing who had no will of her own except to suffer." At the same time she began to cry, but a moment later sat down at the piano

to lose herself in a succession of the most piercing arias. Toward noon she became almost recklessly cheerful and at lunch she challenged Hans to confess that at the beginning of their acquaintance he had been terribly in love with her but that his simple uprightness had gradually found a more suitable object of admiration and so had turned to "gentle Fränzchen." Her cheeks were very hot and she laughed very loudly at the confusion into which she threw her companions. She spoke of her mother with very unfilial shrugs of the shoulders, called her father a "poor worm" and her brother a "worm" without any qualifying adjective. She begged her cousin to confess that this house had been a "hell" to her and asked the tutor to say frankly that he knew of more comfortable places in which "to breathe." She was indescribably sharp to the butler and finally drove him out of the room only to confess that she was a very "naughty girl" and that Franziska was a "poor darling." She drank to Hans and Fränzchen and begged them to be indulgent with her. Then her indisposition came on once more and she bolted herself again into her room. Toward five o'clock, when it was already getting dusk, she went out.

All the afternoon Hans sat at his window unable to make up his mind to do anything sensible. He opened a book, laid it down again however, filled his pipe, which he had unearthed from the bottom of his trunk, with secret trembling, but it soon went out again as if it too knew that no smoking was allowed in that house. As usual he looked down on the throng of passing riders, pedestrians and carriages and tried to concentrate his attention on the old organ-grinder with the fierce moustache and the Waterloo medal; but he did not succeed well even in that. Everything drew him back again and again into the house itself and an irresistible power compelled him to listen to the faintest sounds in the corridors and on the stairs.

Her light footstep? . . . No, no, it was only a maid creeping by who, together with the much-belaced Jean, had

received orders to keep a sharp eye on the tutor and on Miss Franziska so that they might later give a report of any incident that occurred.

Her sweet voice? . . . Foolishness; it was an old woman outside in the avenue offering smoked herrings to those who liked them.

Oh, if sighs could improve the world it would have become incapable of further improvement long since. Oh, how often and how deeply did Candidate Unwirrsch sigh on that unblessed afternoon! He gazed at the door of his room and thought of all those pleasant nursery tales in which the fairy, invoked or not invoked, always appears at the right moment. When she did not come and he had told himself a hundred times that he was a fool he went back to the window for the fiftieth time to gaze down again at the merry life below. He laid his forehead against the window pane and stood there long in that position; but suddenly he jumped back and looked out again more sharply. A shadow glided through the gay throng, a black, pale shadow. From underneath the trees a poorly clad, emaciated young woman came out and walked in front of the Privy Councillor's house, where she stopped, looking up at its windows. Hans recognized this woman, although he had only seen her twice and although she had changed very much since then.

It was the little French girl, once so merry, whom he had met in Dr. Stein's rooms and it was as if in sorrowful helplessness her eyes were seeking him, Hans Unwirrsch. A strange feeling of anxiety came over him;—he had taken his hat and was already on the stairs before he could explain these feelings to himself. He went out of the house, passed quickly round the fountain and the lawn and crossed the driveway to the trees of the park; but the black shadow had vanished and Hans looked about for it in vain. Had his imagination led him astray again? He stood a moment in doubt; but the sun was shining, the air was so refreshing, —he did not return to the house but went slowly on under

the trees. Soon, of course, he forsook the broad promenades where most of the people were walking. He sought the lonely, winding paths among the bushes, the paths on which all those are most frequently found who walk with bent heads and have a way of standing still for no particular reason. But on that day scarcely any path was altogether deserted. Everyone was out of doors—everyone. There were the people who had dined and those who had dined too well and those who had not dined at all. There were the people who were able to drive and those who were obliged to go on crutches. There were the would-be-old children who thought it beneath their dignity any longer to jump through a hoop and the childish old men who would gladly have done so but could not and instead of that sent admiring glances after the young girls that passed. It was very difficult to find an unoccupied bench. In the seats which everyone could see sat people who had nothing to conceal, or perhaps even something to show, while the seats in the hidden nooks were occupied by loving couples or people who were ashamed of their shabby clothes; and when finally Hans did find an empty bench a badly spelt notice on the back of it frightened him away. Scribbled in pencil were the words:

“As I can’t stand it no longer on account of Louise I am going to America and if Berger of Coblenz comes here and reads this here notice it would be friendly of him if he would break the news to my folks in Bell Lane so they wont make no fuss about it and keep supper waiting for me.”

Now there was indeed no real reason why Candidate Unwirrsch should take it to heart if the ne’er-do-weel ran off and Berger of Coblenz broke the news in Bell Lane;—but he did so nevertheless. After thinking for some time whether it was not his own duty to ask in Bell Lane whether Berger had been there and whether the old parents were not still waiting supper for their lost son, Hans jumped up to look for another seat. He could not endure it on that bench any longer.

A short path led him to those romantic expanses of water, those greasy green canals which adorn the more remote part of the park and which must fill with delight the hearts of all lovers of the microscope and infusoria; they certainly every spring provide whole Pharoanic armies of frogs with all they need for joyful and melodious existence.

There he found a place where no loving couples would sit down, a bench in front of a deep pool out of which more than one corpse had been dragged before this, a thoroughly hidden bench, in a thoroughly damp and dank place, a bench which was not so easy to find even at this season when so many trees and bushes were already losing their leaves. It suddenly came into view at a turn of the narrow path round a dense, thorny clump of shrubbery, just before it ended at the water's edge; and nothing was lacking to complete the miserable, melancholy impression but a black post with a black arm pointing into the stagnant, swampy pool.

With bent head Hans followed the narrow path and stepped out from behind the shrubbery to stand suddenly still, amazed and startled; close before him on the half-rotten bench sat the figure that he was seeking against his own will, the figure that had drawn him out of Councillor Götz's house,—the shadow of the little French girl who once, in Théophile's room, had laughed so merrily at his embarrassment.

It was she undoubtedly, and yet scarcely anything remained of her former appearance. She seemed to be ill, very ill, she still wore gloves but they were torn, as were her once so dainty little shoes. The shawl which she had wrapped round her shivering body was worn and faded;—alas, she was altogether the poor little cricket of her compatriot Monsieur Jean de la Fontaine!

And she recognized Hans Unwirrsch immediately, for she rose quickly, drew her shawl together and hastily reached for the handkerchief that lay on the bench beside

her. With fearful, somewhat theatrical anger she looked at Candidate Unwirrsch.

“*Ah, ce monsieur!*”

She tried to pass him but he stepped in front of her and calmly met the contemptuous glance of her black eyes.

“*Monsieur*, your friend is a *canaille!*” she cried, clenching her fist. “Let me past—vill you?”

“I beg your pardon,” said Hans Unwirrsch gently and sadly. “Dr. Théophile Stein is not my friend. Now won’t you listen to me?”

“I vill not hear you more! I vill not see you more! I vill not see nozing of ze world more, but *ma figure* in zis water ’ere!”

This was spoken with such vehemence, such wildness, that Hans involuntarily caught her arm to prevent her jumping into the pool; but she tore herself away, laughed bitterly and then covered her face with both hands and began to cry as bitterly.

“Do let me tell you,” exclaimed Hans, “you have spoken hard words to me, you have troubled me very much. I am not conscious of any guilty act toward you and I will help you if I can;—I repeat, I am not Dr. Stein’s friend;—I am no longer his friend!”

Slowly she let her hands fall and looked again into Hans’ eyes.

“You too accuse him whom you have just mentioned? Tell me what part of his guilt I must take upon myself!” said Hans, softly, and she—she looked him over from head to foot and then,—it was so strange—and then a slight smile crossed her sick, sorrowful features.

“You are not ’is friend?” she asked.

“Not any longer, and it is a great sorrow to me.”

Now the French girl took the candidate’s hand and her fingers were like iron.

“*Monsieur le curé*, I am a poor girl and all alone in a strange countree. I am ill, and I am not *honnête*. I ’ave ’ad a leetle child, but it is dead;—I am all left alone in a

strange countree! Oh, *Monsieur*, 'e is a bad, vicked man and if you are not 'is friend forgive me vat I 'ave said—*je n'ai plus rien à dire.*'

Hans could not understand her broken German well, nor her quick French at all, but her gestures and her expression enabled him to comprehend her. He led her back to the bench and she let him keep her hand when he sat down beside her and talked to her gently and soothingly. It was five o'clock, the sun sank behind the trees, a white mist rose from the ponds; it was cold and gray—it was the hour when the beautiful Kleophea Götz left her father's house.

Hans told the French girl as well as he could all that was necessary about his relation to Dr. Stein and then gradually he learnt the sad story of her life and the evil part that Moses Freudenstein of Kröppel Street had played in it.

Henriette Trublet was not made to keep a perfectly straight course through life and in this respect it was probable that Dr. Théophile had altered her fate but little. She carried an adventurous little head on her shoulders and lived only in the present. She had been a dressmaker's apprentice in Paris and there Théophile had met and won her. She had not really loved him but he had pleased her, and his Parisian friends and the way in which he enjoyed life appealed to her. She was the scintillating streamer on a very gay, bright wreath and when, as usually happens, the latter broke and Dr. Théophile had gone back to Germany she soon began to long for him. She had heard all sorts of marvelous tales of poor good *Allemagne*. The people there were so honest and so musical and so blond;—to be sure, they probably were also a little backward in civilization and somewhat simple; but still they were much better than tall silly Englishmen. And they bought all their hats and caps and their artificial flowers and their champagne in Paris—those good Germans; and any pretty, clever child of *Belle France* must be able to make her fortune there among them in spite of the fog, ice and snow, in spite of all the wolves and polar bears, Erl kings, nixies

and other monsters. One morning Henriette arrived at the Strassburg railway station with a leather trunk and a tremendous number of boxes of all shapes and sizes,—and she found pleasant traveling companions to the Rhine too—*allons enfants de la patrie*, onward to Homburg, Baden-Baden and so on—*où le drapeau, là est la France, ubi bene, ibi patria!* And one fine morning Dr. Théophile Stein heard a gentle tapping at his door and a soft giggle outside it; Henriette Trublet had found him again.

So far this was all very well and neither could reproach the other with anything; but from then on under other skies their relation was changed. Poor Henriette, deserted, helpless and not knowing what to do found herself entirely delivered over to Théophile; she became a despised, abused plaything and the light, gay bloom that had covered her frivolous butterfly wings was soon rubbed off and blown away. Dr. Stein had a reputation to sustain now and if he was weak enough not to be able to thrust the poor little Parisian away from him he had sufficient strength to hold her down low enough so that she was obliged to serve and obey him without being in any way able to interfere with his plans and hopes. It was his fault and owing to his intrigues that she was prevented from making use of her skilful hands. Only when she was entirely dependent on him could he exert complete tyranny over her. When he grew tired of her, he believed her much too broken to harm him, and so with no further thought he closed his door to her and left her to her fate. Her child was born in the hospital toward the middle of September and died on the second of October. It was an evil place, this bench beside the stagnant green pool, where, on the fourth of October Candidate Unwirrsch found poor Henriette Trublet sitting.

Traître—va!

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CHAPTER XXIII

HANS UNWIRRSCH grew hot and cold by turns as Henriette Trublet told her story. It was his misfortune that even the most ordinary things excited him so and that it was so difficult for him to look upon any such incidents as ridiculous or insignificant. He sat there stupefied until the French girl suddenly jumped up, stamped her foot passionately and cried:

“Oh, he ’as treated me badly, but I vill revenge myself ven I can. I vill interfere, I vill, if it is ze last hour. And I vill go to her—I vill! I vill tell ze beautiful *Mademoiselle* who he is—*le juif! le misérable!* He shall not ’ave his vill——”

“Kleophea!” cried Hans. “Good God, yes, yes, to be sure! Oh, tell me, do you know about that? My head swims—I, we, you must go to her, she must know this. No, no, and again, no, she shall not fall into his hands; we must save her, even if it is against her own will.”

“I did know zat he vas running after ze beautiful young lady, zere in ze house by ze park; I vas much jealous of her—*pauvre petite*. I ’ave stood before her vindow and laughed, *O mon Dieu*, and my heart ’as bled. It vas very bad, it vas very vicked—*pauvre cœur*, I vill save her from zis man! *Venez, monsieur le curé.*”

The evening was cold and dark, the beautiful weather was all gone and the wind began to move the mists above the ponds and to shake the twigs. It began to groan and sigh as on the day when Hans had gone from the university to his mother’s deathbed. It rustled in the distance and whistled nearby, far away the lights and lanterns among the trees seemed to be thrown back and forth like the boughs. The fiery reflection of the great city on the dark sky was like the breath of the terrible, final abyss.

Now, indeed, the pleasure-seeking throng had long since dispersed; rich and poor had crept out of sight; the shadow-like forms that still slunk about the paths of the park

were not to be trusted; it was well to avoid them if possible. From a distant pleasure resort the wind brought the sound of dance music, in fragments. Henriette Trublet walked close to Hans' side and he gave her his arm as she, exhausted by his hasty step, fell behind. More and more frequently and brighter the gas lanterns shone through the trees—there was the street, and there Privy Councillor Götz's house.

The two wanderers halted a moment.

Only a single window was lighted.

“Zat is not her light! Zat is not her room!” said the French girl.

Hans Unwirrsch shook his head; he could not utter Franziska's name in this company. Oh that lighted window in the wild, restless, dark night! Peace and rest;—God's blessing on Fränzchen! The candidate gazed reverently at the dim glow above them and then gently took hold of the hand of the poor girl who had again stepped away from his side as they came out of the gloom of the trees.

“Come, *pauvre enfant*,—we are going on a good errand!” he said.

They walked through the little garden and Hans rang the doorbell. They had to wait some time before it pleased Jean to open the door. At last he came and was much amazed to see the tutor's companion, and still more so at the emphasis with which Hans put an end to his expressions of amazement.

“Is Miss Götz at home?”

Jean stared, stared and remained silent; but a moment later the candidate had seized him by the shoulder-strap.

“Why don't you answer me? Announce me at once to Miss Götz—Miss Kleophea!”

This unheard-of audacity caused the elegant youth to lose his usual insolent balance for a few moments; and when he regained it at last his indignation knew no bounds. And the housekeeper appeared and the ladies' maid; the

little kitchen maid looked shyly round a corner in the background; poor Henriette drew back as far as possible from the light of the hall lamp into the darkness. Hans, almost ready to die with annoyance and excitement at all these impudent, doubtful glances, repeated his request for Kleophea in a raised voice. At that moment Franziska Götz leaned over the banisters. She carried her small lamp in her hand.

“Miss Kleophea is not at home,” snapped Jean. “Moreover I protest——”

“*Malheur à elle!*” exclaimed the French girl.

“Oh Mr. Unwirrsch, what has happened? What has happened to my cousin?” cried Fränzchen coming down.

“Isn’t she at home? We must speak to her;—Good God, where has she gone?”

“She did not say; she left the house at dusk.”

“Then you must hear, you must tell us what to do. Perhaps it is even better so.”

Franziska too looked wonderingly at the stranger, then she said:

“If I can be of use to you—to my cousin;—Oh, she is going to faint!”

The French girl shook her head.

“No, no, it vill pass quick—*ce n’est rien!*”

“Come up to my room. What has happened? What have you to tell me? Oh, how pale you are,—lean on my arm.”

The French girl shook her head again, she retreated timidly before the quiet, gracious, innocent figure and turned to Hans.

“If ze ozer is not here, what ’ave I to do in zis house? You tell her, *monsieur le curé*. I vill not enter in zis house, I vill go.”

“No, no—stay, Miss Henriette,” cried Hans, but the stranger drew her shawl closer about her and held out her hand to Hans.

“*Adieu, monsieur le curé*, you are honest man.” She

turned toward Fränzchen, bowed her head and whispered slowly and softly, "*Priez pour moi!—Vous!*"

Franziska laid her hand on her shoulder.

"I do not want to let you go away like this. You are unhappy—and ill; and you bring evil tidings to this house. Come, lean on my arm; oh come, Mr. Unwirrsch;—Kleophea will certainly come back soon."

Gently Fränzchen led the poor little French girl upstairs and beckoned to Hans to follow, while the servants put their heads together, sneered and shrugged their shoulders.

For the first time Hans entered the room which Franziska occupied in her uncle's house and his heart trembled much as he crossed the threshold.

It was like a dream. The moaning wind outside the windows, the rustling and creaking of the trees, was not all this just as it had been when, at the Post-horn in Windheim, Fränzchen's sweet face first appeared out of the darkness, and, for the first time, Lieutenant Rudolf Götz called Dr. Moses Freudenstein a scoundrel?

What a long time lay between the present anxious evening and that one!

Who was the pale, haggard stranger in the cheap, shabby dress and shawl? How came she here, in this house? What had she to do with Fränzchen and what house was this?

Where was the friend of his youth? Where was Moses Freudenstein of Kröppel Street?

It was, as if the weird, pitiless, cold wind outside gave an answer to all these questions.

"Woe to you, struggle as you may, ours is the triumph! Ours is the triumph over spring, over youth, over faithfulness and innocence. Transitoriness and egoism are your masters! Struggle as you may, it gives us joy to watch you struggle! The only faithfulness, innocence, eternity is in—us!"

And again darkness looked threateningly in at the window as if it had swallowed up every other light and as if, of all the brightness and brilliance in the world, Fränz-

chen's little lamp alone were left. Hans Unwirrsch stood in the narrow circle of light shed by this lamp with the feeling that here alone there was still refuge in every distress, satisfaction for all hunger, comfort for all pain. He scarcely dared to breathe.

An open book and some sewing lay on the table;—Fränzchen had just risen from that chair and now the strange, abandoned young woman sat there,—it could not be reality, it must be a delusion, one of the feverish delusions that had visited him lately.

No, no, that was Fränzchen's soft, sweet voice and Fränzchen had laid her hand on the shoulder of the poor girl who, with hidden face, was trembling and sobbing. Fränzchen Götz spoke in good, Parisian French to poor Henriette Trublet, but still Hans, who knew the language only from books, knew what she said. And the stranger raised her tearful eyes at the first sound of her mother tongue, listened with all her soul and then kissed Fränzchen's hand.

Speaking in her mother tongue she told her sad story for the second time.

As she went on Franziska looked more and more anxiously at Hans; she gripped the table against which she was leaning with a trembling hand and when the Parisian had finished she cried:

“Oh, Mr. Unwirrsch, and Kleophea? Kleophea! Where is Kleophea? If only she would come—now, now!”

She went to the window and opened it. The wind caught the sash and nearly tore it from her hand, the lamp flared with the wild gust; the gas flames at the edge of the park were blown about in their glass globes, throwing red, uncertain flickering lights on the street, but the street was empty and a carriage the sound of which seemed unbearably long in approaching, drove by without stopping.

“And her father, her mother! What is to be done, oh, what is to be done, Mr. Unwirrsch?”

Hans looked at his watch.

“It is nine,” he said. “Calm yourself, Miss Franziska. She certainly will not stay out much longer; we must be patient and wait, that is all we can do.”

Fränzchen had turned to the stranger; in spite of her anxiety and excitement she still had comfort enough for poor Henriette. She spoke to her softly and Henriette kissed her hand again and again. Hans stood at the window and listened to the soft words of the two women and to the loud voice of the gale. Now and then a figure passed through the flickering light of the gas lanterns, several more carriages drove by, but still Kleophea Götz did not come.

Franziska replenished the fire in the stove. She opened the door and asked the housekeeper, whose eye and ear had been taking turns at the keyhole for some time, to bring some tea and something to eat for the hungry, half fainting stranger. The farther the night advanced the greater did her anxiety become.

Henriette Trublet ate and drank eagerly, looked once more round the room with fixed, glassy eyes and then her head sank forward on her breast—she had fallen asleep.

It was the sleep of complete exhaustion.

“Poor, unfortunate girl!” sighed Franziska. “What a night! What a terrible night!”

She put her arm round the sleeping girl to keep her from falling; her locks touched the sinner’s brow; and if Hans Unwirrsch had lived to be a thousand years old he would never have been able to forget the scene.

She looked across to him.

“Oh, please help me, let us lay her down on the divan! Listen—what is she saying?”

Henriette murmured in her sleep,—perhaps her mother’s name—perhaps that of her patron saint. She did not feel it when Hans picked her up in his arms and carried her to the little sofa where Fränzchen arranged the cushions for her and covered her with a cloak and shawl.

It struck eleven o'clock; Kleophea Götz had not come home yet.

"What a night! What a night!" murmured Fränzchen. "What shall we do? What can we do?"

Suddenly she jumped up and put out both hands as if warding off something.

"What if she should have gone away, never to come home again? What if this evening she left her parents' house forever? Oh no, that is too terrible a thought!"

"She can't have been so bereft of all reason, that is impossible!" cried Hans. "That would be too terrible; it is impossible!"

"Oh, this deadly fear!" murmured Franziska. "Is that rain?"

It was rain. At first only a few scattered drops pattered against the panes; but soon came the familiar sound of a drenching, pelting downpour. The gale drove the rain in gusts across the country, the broad park and the great city.

"In spite of everything, her mother would never have consented to an alliance with this—this Dr. Stein," said Franziska. "It is true that she likes to have him in her drawing room; but she is a proud woman and thinks that she has already arranged quite a different future for Kleophea. Shortly before she went away she spoke in her usual manner of a brilliant match. Oh, it would indeed be the worst misfortune that could happen if my cousin, with her contradictory spirit, had taken such a step. Listen—there's another carriage—thank God, there she is!"

They listened again and a moment later Hans shook his head and Fränzchen sank brokenly onto a chair; Henriette Trublet slept a deep and sound sleep.

"She would be lost for her whole life!" said Hans to himself, but Franziska heard the murmured words; she started, shuddered and nodded.

"She would be lost."

“That man would kill her, soul and body. Alas, that it is so and that I should be the one to have to say it.”

Again Fränzchen rose from her chair; she went up to Hans, she laid her trembling hand on his arm and whispered scarcely audibly:

“Dear Mr. Unwirrsch, I have done you a great wrong. Can you forgive me? Will you forgive me? I have done heavy, heavy penance for it. It has cost me many, many tears and wakeful nights. Oh, forgive me for this distress; forgive me for my uncle’s sake.”

Hans Unwirrsch staggered as he heard these words.

“Oh, Miss—Franziska,” he stammered, “not you, it is not you who have done me a wrong. We both have been caught in the confused whirl of this world. Evil powers have played with us and we could not defend ourselves against them! Is not that the clear and simple truth?”

“It is,” said Fränzchen. “We have not been able to defend ourselves.”

The rain poured down in streams; the wind shook the window like a wild beast, but both wind and rain, and the darkness that added to their terror might do and threaten and say their worst: from then on, even on this night when Kleophea Götz did not return to her home, they scarcely seemed dreadful or uncanny any longer. From then on the wind and the rain and the night were blessings; no longer were they voices from the abyss, proclaiming destruction—death and the reign of egoism.

It was long after midnight and still Kleophea had not come. Hans and Fränzchen sat beside the sleeping stranger and talked to each other in low tones. Ah, they had so much to say!

They did not speak of love,—they did not think of it at all. They simply spoke of how they had lived; and everything that had seemed so confused was now so easily untangled; and often a single word made everything that had been so dark and threatening become light and simple and consoling.

Franziska Götz talked of her father, and what the daughter told Hans of him was very different from what Lieutenant Rudolf Götz had said and even more so from what Dr. Théophile Stein had related. The daughter's eyes shone as she told how proud and brave her father had been and how on more than one battlefield he had shed his blood for freedom. Fränzchen talked of her mother, how lovely and kind she had been, how much anxiety, unrest and distress she had suffered in her eventful life without ever complaining and how at last in the year 1836 she had died a lingering death of consumption. Good little Fränzchen told how deeply her mother's death had bowed her father and how he had really never raised his head again joyfully after the funeral. She told how her good Uncle Rudolf had come to that funeral, an old invalid soldier himself, with a little bundle and a heavy, knobbed stick. She knew much to tell of the curious household of the two brothers in Paris and of how so many old warriors of all nations, Germans, Frenchmen, Poles, Italians, and Americans came and went in the house and were all so kind to Fränzchen. She told of the fencing lessons that the two brothers gave and of how, in a yard outside the barrier, they had taught the young pupils of the polytechnic school and the students of the Latin Quarter how to shoot with pistols. She told of the gruff old retired soldiers of the Old Guard who came to be such good friends with the two Germans whom they had met at Katzbach, Leipzig and Waterloo, and sat with them in their attic room smoking and drinking and telling stories like all the rest.

Then with bent head she told how good Uncle Rudolf had at last grown homesick for Germany; how he had gone away and then how evil times followed; times full of misery and trouble, evil, evil days. In a scarcely audible voice Franziska Götz told how life went worse and worse with her father, how, one after another, the sources from which he had drawn aid failed, and how more and more frequently he had sought comfort in stupefying strong drink and of

how, gradually, many bad, false people had drawn close to him.

Finally Franziska Götz spoke in a low voice of Dr. Théophile, of how he had lived in the same house with them and how he had tried in the most abominable way to take advantage of her unhappy father's weakness. She spoke of her unutterable loneliness, and Hans Unwirrsch bit his lips and in imagination gripped the throat of Moses Freudenstein of Kröppel Street with his two good fists to squeeze his soul out of his body.

Franziska told of her father's death and how in her greatest distress Uncle Rudolf had come again to save her.

Franziska showed Hans a letter from Uncle Theodor and it was really most remarkable how differently Privy Councillor Götz could write from the way he looked and spoke.

Lieutenant Rudolf Götz was very poor and had no home to which he could take his brother's orphan child; and now for the first time Hans learnt how the good old man lived, how he roved about nomadically, actually *omnia sua secum portans* and settled down only in winter with some one of his comrades in war of the same age as himself, preferably with Colonel von Bullau in Grunzenow, far off on the shore of the Baltic.

Lieutenant Rudolf could only fetch the orphan from Paris, he could not offer her a protecting roof. Here now was the letter from Uncle Theodor which the Privy Councillor's wife had not dictated and which had not been written under her eyes but only under cover of one of his documents; and it was this letter which had led the lieutenant to bring his niece to his brother's house.

"And on the way I was fortunate enough to meet you in the Post-horn in Windheim," cried Hans. "I was going to my mother's deathbed and Mr. Götz called Moses a scoundrel, and the gale—and you, oh Miss Franziska . . . Good God, and it is truth and reality that we are sitting here and waiting for Miss Kleophea!"

They both started at the mention of that name and

looked toward the black windows on which the rain still poured down, which the wind still shook. They had given up hoping for the return of the unhappy girl.

Henriette Trublet stirred in her sleep and fearfully called the name of Théophile. Gently and with a merciful hand Franziska replaced the cloak over the forsaken girl's shoulders and then sat down again.

They went on talking of the evening when they had first met and Fränzchen told how much the candidate had pleased her Uncle Rudolf and of how often he had spoken of him during their journey. Hans told about his mother's death, of his Uncle Grünebaum and Auntie Schlotterbeck and took the latter's last letter out of his pocket-book to show it to Fränzchen. He told of how Dr. Théophile had read that letter while he, Hans Unwirrsch, lay ill with fever; he told how a dreadful glance and flash had shown him Dr. Théophile in all his malice and duplicity.

Fränzchen now unlocked a little box and showed the tutor a whole series of letters from Uncle Rudolf—all of them nearly as illegible as Uncle Grünebaum's epistles and the last few all written from Grunzenow on the Baltic. Since summer the lieutenant had been lying, in great pain with gout, in Colonel von Bullau's house in Grunzenow and Fränzchen confessed with tears in her eyes that she had written her poor uncle only joyful, cheerful and contented letters and that she could not have written differently for anything in the world. At that Hans would have liked to kiss her brave, soothing little hand again and again; but he did not dare to, and it was better so. Angry at himself, however, he deeply repented the doubtful blessings that at times he had called down on the absent lieutenant's head. He regretted them deeply, especially when he read the lieutenant's letters in which the old warrior confessed plaintively that he would rather run away with the devil's grandmother than ever again introduce and smuggle into his "gracious sister-in-law's" house a tutor after his, though not after the devil's, own heart.

“You won his whole heart that evening,” said Fränzchen. “He talked of you so much on our journey, and I—I did not forget you altogether either in the years that followed. Oh, I had much time and great need to think of all those who had treated me with friendliness. Oh, Mr. Unwirrsch, we have neither of us been able to live happily in this house, but still my lot was the harder to bear. I have often been terribly, terribly hungry for a friendly face, a friendly word. I would gladly have gone away to earn my own bread, but my aunt would not hear of that. But you know all about it, Mr. Unwirrsch,—why should we say any more about it? It is wrong too, to think only of ourselves at this moment.”

“It is not wrong,” cried Hans with unaccustomed vehemence. “Oh, Miss Franziska, we may certainly talk of ourselves in this hour; the hard, cold world has thrust us back to the very core of our lives,—we may talk of ourselves, in order to save ourselves. This night will pass, a new day will come. What will it bring *us*? In all probability it will plunge us into an entirely new state of things. How will it be tomorrow in this house? I shall have to go; but you—you, Miss Franziska, what will you have to do and suffer? How gloomy, how drearily bleak and dead this house will be tomorrow! Any other existence would be blissful compared with life in this house! Oh, Franziska—Miss Fränzchen, write tomorrow to your uncle, to the lieutenant; or—or let me write to him! Don’t stay here; don’t stay in this house; its atmosphere is deadly—Oh, Fränzchen, Fränzchen, let me write to Lieutenant Götz!”

Franziska shook her head gently and said:

“I must stay. If I could not go before there is all the more reason why I may not go now. I have not been happy in this house but still it has given me shelter, and Uncle Theodor—Oh no, how could I leave poor Uncle Theodor now? My head swims now, to be sure; but I must stay—I am not mistaken, that is the right thing for me to do and I will not do anything wrong. Dear friend, I must

not write to Uncle Rudolf to take me away from here, and you must not do so either. I know that that is right."

Hans Unwirrsch dared to do it—he kissed the gentle, loyal little hand that was stretched out to him so shyly and yet with such unconquerable power. Hot tears ran down his cheeks.

Yes, she was right. She was always right. Blessings on her! On this stormy night, this night of misery and ruin, she sat like a beautiful, lovely miracle beside the foreign girl and laid her pure, innocent hand on the latter's hot, feverish brow; yes, indeed, she was merciful and of great kindness and she would have to remain in this desolate house; that was certainly right!

It was long past two o'clock.

"Let us part now, dear friend," said Fränzchen. "She has not come home,—she has taken her destiny into her own hands; may God have mercy on her and protect her on her way. Let us part now, dear friend; I will watch over this poor girl here and tomorrow morning we will talk over the rest."

"Tomorrow morning," said Hans. "It seems to me as if this night would never come to an end. I am afraid of the morning for, in spite of all my doubts, I know that it will come. Oh, Miss Fränzchen, it has been a long and yet a short, short night. It has been terrible and yet full of sweetness. God bless you, Franziska. Oh, what shall I say to you,—how shall we be when the new day has come?"

Franziska lowered her head and gave Hans Unwirrsch her hand in silence. They parted from each other troubled and blissful. They could not yet quite grasp the blessing which this dark, weird night had brought them both. They parted, and their hearts beat loudly.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS XXIV TO XXXIII

[THE morning came shrouded in gray mist. Hans and Fränzchen stepped to the windows shivering. They had not

slept; they drew long breaths and greeted the gray light thankfully. They were no longer alone;—Hans and Fränzchen had gained a great, great deal in the night in which Kleophea Götz had left her home.

At seven o'clock the French girl waked from her death-like slumber and began to cry violently. Fränzchen spoke to her soothingly and then began to talk earnestly and urgently of the future. Sobbingly Henriette replied that she wanted to go home to her own country and to be good and work hard and make her own living according to God's will. And Fränzchen Götz put all her worldly treasures into the girl's hands and then—*monsieur le curé* knocked at the door and added his father's venerable and curious watch to what Franziska had given, as well as a purse containing five hard thalers and a few small coins.

At eight o'clock Henriette Trublet stepped out again from the Privy Councillor's house accompanied by Hans and Franziska as far as the garden gate. At parting she raised her lowered head and said: "The good God will reward you for vat you have done for me. I vill zink of you always and always. I vill go and I vill not tire; I vill seek zem and find. *Malheur à lui!*"

Then she disappeared in the thick fog. The postman came up hurriedly and handed Hans a letter from Kleophea addressed to her father.

Hans quietly beckoned to the man-servant: "We have a message to go immediately to your master. How long will you need to take a letter there?" Jean thought that with good horses he could get there by one o'clock. At nine he drove away with a package containing Kleophea's letter and another from Franziska;—by four o'clock the parents could be home. They came between three and four.

Hans Unwirrsch stood at the window and saw the Privy Councillor's mud-bespattered carriage driving up. In the house, doors were opened and slammed; the carriage stopped, and servants rushed out, Jean jumped down to

open the door. Privy Councillor Götz stepped out first followed by his wife, deeply veiled; she led her boy by the hand and went into the house with a quick, noisy tread without paying any attention to her niece who had hurried up. As he stood in front of the door the Councillor swayed for a moment as if overcome by sudden dizziness; he pushed Jean's arm away and gripped Franziska's hand. Leaning on her he went slowly and unsteadily up the steps. Thus he met Hans, past whom his wife had also swept like a tempest. He gave the tutor his hand, which trembled as with fever. And as at that moment his wife's bell rang sharply through the house, he grasped Fränzchen's arm more tightly and whispered: "My poor child, poor Kleophea! It could not have ended differently—poor Kleophea!"

With tears in his eyes Hans Unwirrsch stood at the foot of the stairs and watched Fränzchen as she supported and led the broken man.

It was nine o'clock on the morning of the sixth of October and it was raining so hard that all the dogs let their ears droop and put their tails between their legs. At the corner of Grinse Street appeared the unhappy individual who was hunting for lodgings in such weather, Mr. Johannes Unwirrsch, candidate for the ministry, from Kröppel Street in Neustadt. It was by no means pleasant to be turned out of doors in such weather but in Grinse Street he found what he was seeking—an attic room at a remarkably low price and he moved in on the spot without making use of his right to remain in the house of Mrs. Privy Councillor Götz till the end of the year. He fetched his belongings and settled himself in his new quarters. If the feeling of being his own master was not altogether without a tinge of melancholy it was still most refreshing. When Hans sank down on a chair in front of his table a feeling of comfort came over him such as he had not known since his student days.

The bell that rang so shrilly through the house as Kleo-

pha's father staggered to his room gave the household very definite information as to the mother's mood. Paroxysms and faints had been the first consequence of Kleophea's letter; during the drive to town Mrs. Götz had sat in the corner of the carriage in a state of brooding apathy; on her arrival at home her passion had broken out into a wild fury. Mrs. Privy Councillor Götz raged; and it was dangerous to go near her. It was not her daughter's fate, but the *éclat* which the dreadful event would make, doubtless was already making, that almost drove the mother mad. She shrieked at the tutor that it was his fault that the disgraceful traitor, Dr. Stein, the Jew, had ever come into the house. She gave him all the blame for the horrible scandal. Hans defended himself to the best of his ability but it was impossible to maintain any position of right where this woman was concerned. Utterly exhausted he went up to his room to pack his trunk: he was to leave the house the very next morning.

At eight o'clock the next day the Privy Councillor sent for him. Kleophea's father had become a weak, sick man. With surprising, heartfelt emotion he took the candidate's hand, expressed regret that he had to leave, thanked him for the faithful service that he had wanted to do his son, and for not having left before, as well as for the manner in which he had represented the house. He informed Hans that Kleophea had gone to Paris and that he had written to give her his blessing on her marriage. He had not been able to do otherwise. As soon as Dr. Stein should have explained his puzzling intentions more clearly he would have to treat with his wife, as all their property was hers.

Fränzchen slipped into the room, embraced her afflicted uncle with tears and promised to stay with him and to hold fast to him. She smiled through her tears and her uncle kissed the little hand that lay between his dry, cold fingers.

Then they talked of the candidate's plans, the Privy Councillor paid him the vast sum owing him for the last

term and Hans was glad that Fränzchen was thus able to see that, in spite of his dismissal, he would not yet be exposed to a miserable death from starvation. He declared that he intended to spend the winter in the city as a free man and—to write a book.

Hans left the house gladly, but he parted from these two people with a very heavy heart.

After Hans had taken possession of his room and his trunk had received its place in the corner, he bolted the door and counted out on the table the fabulous sum of one hundred and twenty-five thalers. Every piece of silver turned into one of the stones with which he built his castle in the air and the notes did beautifully for the roof. It was an indescribable pleasure to go out in the rain and purchase a bottle of ink, half a ream of writing paper and the pens necessary for the literary work.

He soon recognized, however, that he could not sit down at once to begin the manuscript of the "Book of Hunger." Now that he was physically at rest the tumult in his soul began and the ghosts, once roused, made a mockery of all attempts to lay them. For three days Hans remained locked in his room, thought over the gain and the loss of the past year and arrived at the result that the gain exceeded the loss. On the evening of the third day the weather improved and he went out to get some fresh air. Naturally his way led him to Park Street past the house of the Privy Councillor. It looked unutterably dead and lifeless to Hans. Shivering, he hurried home and tried to begin his manuscript, but after a good hour he laid the first page of his "book" aside with no mark on it but three crosses that he had drawn. The next morning he wrote one page, but tore it up again in the evening. On the twentieth of October he tore up the first sheet of the manuscript and found himself in a mood which did not justify "high hopes for the future." He also counted his supply of money and gradually the conviction dawned in his mind that one of,

the main wings of his castle in the air was near collapse and that the foundation of the building was insecure.

On the twenty-first of October the postman brought him a letter which upset him completely and made the completion of the manuscript altogether questionable. For the second time Uncle Nik'las Grünebaum called him to a deathbed, this time to that of faithful Auntie Schlotterbeck. At five the next morning Hans was on his way to Neustadt, that is to say, at this early hour, some time before the departure of his train, he stood shivering in front of the iron garden gate in Park Street, taking dumb leave of the Privy Councillor's house. Fränzchen still slept and dreamt. In her dream she heard a noise like that of the sea and some one whom she did not recognize in her dream, said it was the sea.

The following morning Hans arrived in Neustadt. He had made the last part of the way on foot. Now he stood in front of the door of his house and stared into the hall and saw four candles burning round a coffin. Auntie Schlotterbeck was dead and had left greetings and many messages for him with Uncle Grünebaum. The coffin had been closed that morning and the funeral was to be at four in the afternoon. Everything had gone on as it should and still Hans could not comprehend that it must be so.

There was Uncle Grünebaum. At first he did not recognize his nephew; he had become a decrepit, half childish old man, sat in the corner and whined and asked for Auntie. It was only gradually that he came to a clearer consciousness of the events of the last few days.

Auntie Schlotterbeck had passed away gently and without pain after impressing on Uncle Grünebaum to tell Hans that she had loved him very, very much, that he had always been in her thoughts, that he could never leave her thoughts and that in her eternal life she would pray for him that it might go well with him in his life on earth. Moreover, she had said to tell him that the thing about

which he was now worrying would end well though she could not say in what way.

A remarkable number of people accompanied Auntie Schlotterbeck to the grave and Hans led Uncle Grünebaum directly behind the hearse. After the funeral many came to shake hands with the mourners.

When Johannes and his uncle were once more at home Uncle Grünebaum sat down in Auntie Schlotterbeck's arm-chair and went to sleep with grief and fatigue.

For the first time Hans was left to himself and sat looking about in the room. His father's glass globe was in its place and the rays of the evening sun fell upon it. In the dusk Uncle Grünebaum suddenly rose up out of his chair, called all shoemakers together in a strangely uncanny voice, took farewell of Hans, greeted Auntie Schlotterbeck and collapsed as he spoke the words: "Amen, the boot is finished." He had followed Auntie Schlotterbeck.

And again Hans stood on God's acre, but this time he was quite alone. The few who had followed the hearse had dispersed. Beneath the mounds lay the guardians of his youth and he would have liked to go down after them into the depths.

But out of the gloom and the depression that surrounded him there came a gentle figure. This figure held him back and for her sake he said that his time was not yet come.

A schoolfellow who had studied law settled the matter of Hans' property for him. The house in Kröppel Street was put up at auction, the movables were sold; he kept nothing but the glass globe. The day came when Hans Unwirsch had nothing more to do in his native town. The attorney accompanied him to the post-house, saw him drive away and a quarter of an hour later thought of him no more.

Hans arrived in Grinse Street in the middle of the night and the next morning the landlady gave him Colonel von Bullau's card which he had left there for the candidate

with a message asking him to go to the "Green Tree" where he would learn more.

Hans appeared at the "Green Tree" before breakfast, only to hear that Colonel von Bullau was no longer there, that the landlord knew nothing, and that he had better come again in the evening when the other gentlemen would be there. He did so and was greeted with a "Hullo!" by half a dozen "slayers of nine." From the captain he learned that he was ordered to Grunzenow, to Comrade Götz, that the colonel had wanted to take him with him at once and had been not a little put out at not finding him in his burrow. They were to send him on. He might do a good deed for Comrade Götz, who seemed to be tied to his chair and to be in great distress on account of the little girl, his niece, whom he had brought from Paris a few years before.

To Grunzenow, to Grunzenow! All Hans' exhaustion had disappeared. Yes, that was the right thing, to go to Grunzenow, to Lieutenant Rudolf. There advice and help were to be had; that was the starting point from which to untangle all these knots. The "Hunger Pastor" had not been so light-hearted for a long time as in this hour.

The same evening he told his landlady of his intended journey. He also made a vain attempt to see the Privy Councillor. Jean answered him insolently, his master was not at home. The card which he left did not reach its destination either.

This time the candidate's way was northeasterly and however fast the wheels of the cars went round they did not take hungry Hans forward quickly enough. He longed with too great a longing for Grunzenow and the gouty old "beggar lieutenant." Toward the end of the second day he reached a small town in a bleak, unfruitful, heather-covered region. Why it should have been called Freudenstadt was more than anyone had been able to discover. This was as far as the "Post" went with which Hans had traveled since the morning. Hans was able to get a carriage from the landlord of the "Polish Buck" where Colonel von Bul-

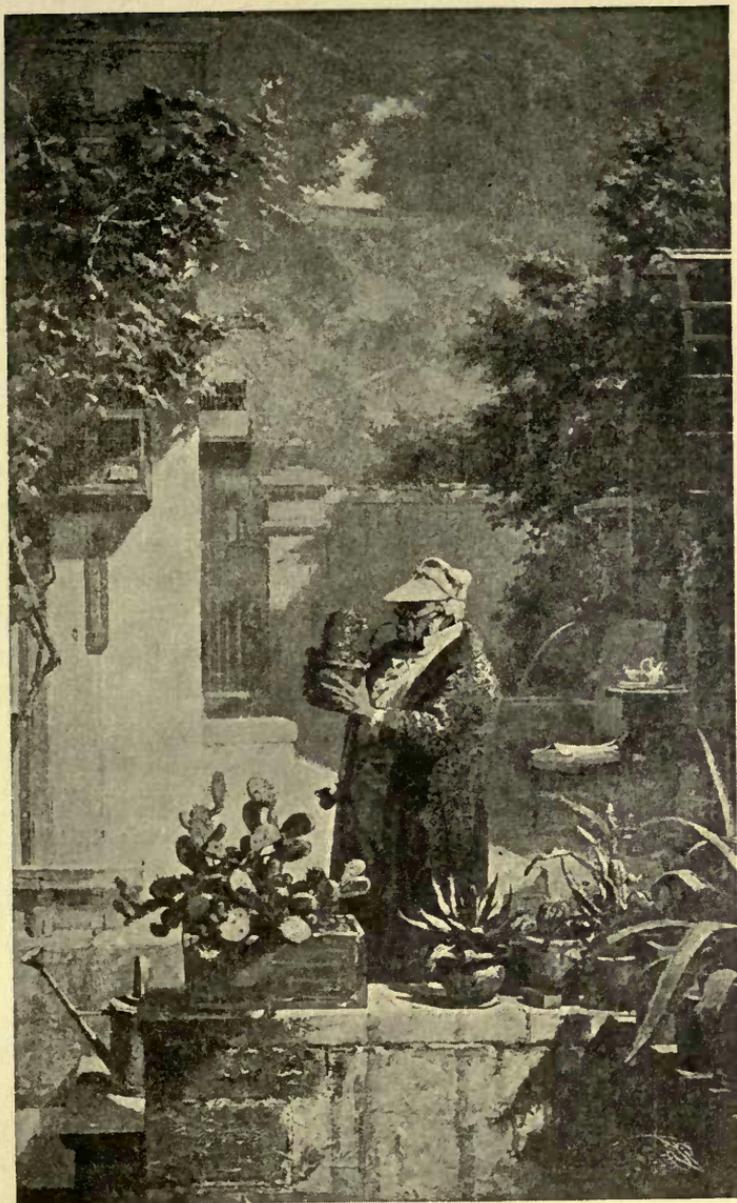
lau sometimes came, but he walked the last part of the way, toward the sea. Louder and louder sounded the voice of the sea. He climbed one more hill and it lay before him spread out in the pale evening light and the fog swallowed up the horizon and rolled across the water to the bleak shore on which, farther down below to the right, the lights in the cottage windows of Grunzenow gleamed red.

Hans had not imagined the sea thus. In his dreams it had appeared to him in broad daylight, immeasurable, shining with the greatest brilliance known on earth;—and now this too was different, but still he was so overpowered that he had to press his hand to his heart and his breath choked him.

Hans was met at the big gate of the castle of Grunzenow, in which it looked barbarous enough, by Colonel von Bullau, who took him across a rather extensive court, up a broad stairway and with one push of his hand landed him in the middle of the apartment where Lieutenant Götz and an aged, clerical gentleman were sitting at a table covered with glasses and cards.

The lieutenant had changed very much, he had grown much older in the short time. His legs were packed up in cushions and covers and his left foot rested heavily on a low footstool. Impatiently he asked for news of his child, his Fränzchen. The colonel introduced the candidate to the vicar, Pastor Josias Tillenius. Old Josias' step was firm; his eyes were still keen and clear, his face was rather reddish to be sure, but his hair was the whiter on that account. He was a real seamen's pastor and well able to stand a good gale; he was in thorough keeping with the seasoned colonel and Lieutenant Rudolf. They were a curious trio and the housekeeping too was odd and mad enough.

The lieutenant reproached Hans bitterly for not having taken care of Fränzchen, for having let the wolf into the house and then, after the Jew had made off with Kleophea, for not having made a stand but allowing himself to be driven away, and for having shaken the dust off his feet.



Permission Franz Hanfstaengl

KARL SPITZWEG

THE LOVER OF CACTI

Hans defended himself like a man, declared that the lieutenant had thrown him into all the confusion and trouble, had expected him to play a part without telling him what it was, had never explained why he had spoken so harshly of Hans' boyhood companion. He went on to say that the lieutenant was wholly to blame and that his niece must have thought him, the tutor, as deceitful and hypocritical as Moses Freudenstein. The lieutenant had made Hans wretched and unhappy beyond measure and was not entitled to ask the latter for more justification than he himself was ready to give. In this speech Hans Unwirrsch of Kröppel Street showed that he had not spent his years of apprenticeship in vain. The three had laid aside their clay pipes and stared at the speaker as if they were looking at something perfectly new.

The lieutenant gave a deep-drawn sigh, took Hans' hand and said that he would gladly ask his forgiveness if he had unknowingly done him wrong. He asked him to tell him the next day exactly how life had gone with him in his brother's house. Deeply touched Hans clasped the trembling hand. He had still so much to say to the old man. He had to tell him that he must thank him on his knees for all the trouble, care, all the discord, grief and pain that he had laid upon his soul. He had to tell him that he, the hungry Hans Unwirrsch, had to thank him, the faithful old Eckart, Rudolf Götz, for his finest, noblest hunger, his finest, noblest longing. He had so much to tell him about himself and Fränzchen, but it could not be done then; the right moment had not yet come.

Weeks now passed in which Candidate Unwirrsch became better acquainted with the sea, the village of Grunzenow, Colonel von Bullau and Pastor Josias Tillenius, and in which he had to answer hundreds and hundreds of questions put to him by Lieutenant Rudolf Götz. Colonel von Bullau showed him the scenery of the wild region; Pastor Tillenius taught him to know the people who inhabited this arid, unfruitful soil, who lived solely on what they could

wrest from the grasp of the sea, and whom the constant, hard, dangerous struggle with the grim and changeable moods of that element had made so serious, silent, harsh and enduring. It almost seemed like a dream to the candidate that he had wanted to write a "Book of Hunger" surrounded by the atmosphere and brilliance of green meadows and hopeful cornfields. Now he stood in an entirely different world, where to be a pastor would indeed be to "preach in the wilderness" and the hard ground beneath his feet gave forth an entirely different tone from that of the sacred soil of Neustadt or the hardwood floors and the pavements of the great city.

Hans came to be a daily visitor in the pastor's house. He found old Josias closely veiled in tobacco smoke, well wrapped up in his dressing gown, eagerly looking through ancient folios for ancient theology so as to keep up with the current. The old man had seen and lived through much in his youth as he had gone out as an army chaplain against the French in 1793. Bullau and Tillenius had lain together in front of many a camp fire; later they sat with each other at an indoor fireside. The owner of the castle felt just as comfortable sitting by the stove in the pastor's house as the pastor felt at the castle fireside, and the nomadic Lieutenant Götz completed the trio and the comfort, and he was very much missed when his restless blood drove him abroad. In the course of the pastor's long life and ministry he had gradually built up, without suspecting it, his own theology, his own system as regarded views of the world and of God and there were things in it which caused the candidate to look up, often with emotion, often with astonishment, very often with amazement. It was as if he were looking into a mirror when Hans Unwirrsch looked into the life of this aged man whose colleagues farther back in the rich fertile country called him the "Hunger Pastor," thus giving him in earnest the same name that Dr. Théophile Stein, in Mrs. Götz's drawing room, had once bestowed in fun on the friend of his youth.

On the nineteenth of December Lieutenant Götz read in the paper that Privy Councillor Götz had died of a shock on the tenth. His excitement and agitation on Fränzchen's account were great. At Colonel von Bullau's urgent suggestion Hans was sent to bring the child to Grunzenow after he had confessed that he loved Fränzchen and would cling to her as to nothing else in the world.

At first Lieutenant Rudolf had not known whether to laugh or to cry, to bless or to curse. But the pastor had laid his hand on his shoulder and said: "I should simply let him go and fetch his Fränzchen; he shall be my assistant in the 'Hunger parish'; their children shall keep our graves green." At parting the old man drew Hans' attention to the peculiar conditions under which one had to labor in the parish of Grunzenow; he pointed out to him that he must be patient and stout of heart who on this dreary shore, where even one's sermons had to echo the voices of the sea, would be a true shepherd for the lonely fisherfolk, and that only the holiest hunger for love could make a man strong enough for that place on earth. And Hans, who had given his heart to Fränzchen Götz, now gave his soul to the hungry shores of Grunzenow.

On the evening of the second day of his journey Hans reached the city. He went first to the house in Park Street but not a single window was lighted. Full of agitation he sought the "slayers of nine" in the "Green Tree" and from them he learnt that Franziska Götz was no longer in her aunt's house; she had left it or had had to leave it on the day of her uncle's funeral. The widow with her little boy had retired to the house of a very old and very pious relative and there was a rumor that she was much dissatisfied with the world and not in the best of humor. We cannot describe how the candidate spent the rest of this night.

Nevertheless he rang the bell in Park Street early the next morning, but the house remained dumb and dead. Only the postman came with a letter from Kleophea which

he dropped back into his leather bag with a shrug of the shoulders. It was addressed to Kleophea's father and bore the postmark, Paris.

At police headquarters Hans learnt that Franziska Götz now lived at 34 Annen Street, fourth floor, with a widow named Brandauer, a laundress.

A quarter of an hour later he was sitting in silence beside Fränzchen, with both of her hands in his and the most important thing had been said: he had even kissed the girl. They had so much to say to each other that could not be told in a day or a week or a month. Fränzchen related that on the third day after Kleophea's flight her mother had come out of her apartments again, had forbidden anyone to mention her daughter's name in her hearing and in full sight of the household had torn up the letter Kleophea had written just after she left. She had done with her child forever.

Kleophea had written to Fränzchen and parts of her letter sounded forced and embarrassed; she begged her to kiss Papa and to tell him that she thought of him "so much, so much." She did not speak of her mother once and there was no mention of Dr. Stein till just at the end.

Franziska too had written with a bleeding heart to Kleophea about her father and mother and asked her cousin never to forget in case of need that Fränzchen was still there to feel with her, to suffer with her, to comfort and if possible to help.

Then they talked of Uncle Theodor's death. On the ninth of December at eight o'clock in the morning Jean had found his master fully dressed in his black frock coat, with his white tie, sitting at his writing table, dead. On the table under his cold hand which in its cold grasp still held the pen lay a sheet of paper on which were the words: "I forgive ——" Death had overtaken him before he could write whom and what he forgave.

It was a miracle of miracles to sit thus hand in hand high up in Annen Street at Mrs. Brandauer's, while it be-

gan to snow again. In spite of the fresh graves, in spite of poor Kleophea, Hans and Fränzchen became more and more permeated with the secure calm of happiness. Frau Brandauer asked Hans to stay to dinner and it turned out that there was nothing to prevent Fränzchen from following Hans to Grunzenow the next day on the noon train. And at that hour next day they were really sitting side by side in the train.

It was the twenty-fourth of December. That was the right day on which to be hurrying toward home. The post-coach and the way to Freudenstadt were, in truth, enchanted. There at the door of the old post-house stood Colonel von Bullau and welcomed with a hurrah the child of Lieutenant Rudolf's heart, his darling, his pet, Fränzchen Götz. An opulent lunch was waiting in the "Polish Buck" and then with a joyful hurrah off they went over the smooth course to Grunzenow. In the castle they had "let in the womenfolk" who had ruled for three days with torrents of water and broomsticks. Now everything was ready. A gigantic snowman stood in the court and kept watch in front of a portal of honor made of evergreens and bearing a transparency that bade Fränzchen and Candidate Unwirrsch welcome. The little room in the vicarage which the future assistant Hans Unwirrsch was to occupy had also been swept and scrubbed and arranged for him. Then came the hour when all the Christmas trees in Germany blazed with light—the right hour in which to move into a new life with joy-filled, grateful hearts. The gate of the castle of Grunzenow stood wide open. Grimly the lanterns burned in the eyes and mouth of the snowman—welcome! shouted the triumphal arch in fiery letters—welcome! roared the rough voices of the servants. The cannon crashed, the dogs barked—Lieutenant Rudolf Götz held his child in his arms and nearly crushed and smothered her.

There was the grand old hall of the house of Grunzenow! The tile stoves radiated heat,—an enormous Christmas tree shone in the light of a hundred wax candles—Christ-

mas, Christmas! The house of Grunzenow had not seen such a Christmas for a hundred years.

Fränzchen Götz sat under the Christmas tree surrounded by the three old men, and it was a pretty scene; Hans Unwirsch smiled, but he smiled through tears. If next morning he should not wake in Grinse Street the circle of his happiness would be complete.]

CHAPTER XXXIV

IT was the sea and not the great city that roared beneath Hans Unwirsch's windows next morning; but at first he would not believe it. Long before he awoke the sound of the sea penetrated his slumber and he dreamt curious things. All night long he had had to defend himself against the strange seething and roaring that rose in the distance and, swelling as it approached, threatened to suffocate him. All night long he fought against this mysterious something, this tumult of thousands and thousands of voices in which his own voice died away as feebly as the voice of a child crying for help in the midst of a wild tornado. It was like being set free when he finally awoke and could no longer doubt that he heard the sea and not the noise of the world through which the course of his life had led him.

After he fully realized that he was under the roof of the vicarage in Grunzenow and not in Grinse Street, or, indeed, in the house in Park Street, he lay for some time with half-closed eyes and gave himself up to the rapturous feeling of certain happiness and the sweetly melancholy thoughts and memories that are always so inseparably bound up with that feeling. The moment that shows a man what he has gained also teaches him to realize what he has lost most clearly. How many faithful hearts and warm hands we always miss in our happiest hours!

It was still quite dark when Hans awoke, only the snow brightened the night a little. Hans did not need to offer the

shades of the dead a draught of blood to give them voices; he did not need to call them, they came voluntarily;—and he gave an account of himself to them on this Christmas morning.

A bent, lean man with a mild, earnestly cheerful face stood before his mental vision—Master Anton Unwirrsch, who had had such intense hunger for the light and who wanted to complete in his son his life, his wishes and hopes. “Oh Father,” said Johannes, “I have traveled the path that you showed me and have labored hard to grasp the truth. I have erred much and despondency and faint-heartedness have often taken hold of me—I have not been able to advance with steady steps. The world has been to me too great a wonder for me to be able to catch boldly and carelessly at its veils and coverings as others do;—it seemed to me too serious and solemn for me to be able to meet it with smiles as others do. Oh Father, any man that comes out of such a lowly house as ours cannot be blamed if he traverses the first part of his way with shyness and hesitation, if he is dazzled by trifles, if deceptive mirages confuse him, if a will o’ the wisp leads him astray. Father, whoever comes out from under such a low roof as ours must have a strong heart in good and in evil so that, after the first few steps upward, he does not turn back and continue his dark life in the depths. Even the first knowledge and experience that he gains serve only to destroy the harmony of his being; they do not make him happy. In addition to all other doubts they awaken in him doubt of himself. Oh Father, Father, it is hard to be a true man and to give to everything its proper measure; but whoever is born in the depths with this yearning is more likely to attain it than those who awake to life halfway up the slope and to whom both height and depth remain equally unknown and indifferent. The liberators of mankind rise from the depths; and just as springs come from deep down in the earth to make the land fruitful so too the soil of humanity is eternally refreshed from the depths. Oh,

Father, man has nothing better than this painful aspiration for the heights! Without it he remains forever of the earth, earthy; in this aspiration and by means of it he raises himself above all serfdom to the dust; in it he extends his hand to all heavenly powers, however little he may attain; in it he stands though it be on the tiniest spot of earth, in the narrowest circle, as the ruler of the most unlimited region, as the ruler of himself. Doubt too is gain in his life and pain is ennobling—often more ennobling than happiness, than joy. Father, I have gone my way in unrest; but I have found the truth, I have learnt to distinguish the sham from the genuine, the semblance from the reality. I no longer fear the things of the world; for love stands at my side;—Father, bless your son on his future way and ask for him that the hunger which has guided him till now may never leave him as long as he lives.’

Hans talked to all his dead on that dark Christmas morning before the dawn came. They passed him in a long procession and he thanked each for whatever he had received from him on his life’s way. It was no wonder that his mother, little Sophie, the charity school teacher Karl Silberlöffel, Auntie Schlotterbeck and Uncle Nikolaus Grünebaum should pass by and nod to him smiling; but it was almost a wonder how many other people came forth out of the darkness to claim their part in his growth and development. It was a wonder how many places had contributed to the forming of his mind, how far back lay the point of departure of every emotion of his soul. In those moments Hans realized for the first time how rich his life had been, what wealth he was taking with him out of the sunken world of his youth, out of the sunken world of Neustadt which Auntie Schlotterbeck and Uncle Grünebaum had taken with them into their graves, out of the sunken world of his “years of wandering” into his new life in Grunzenow on the Baltic. Ever new, ever changing scenes and figures rose up and passed by until at last the church bell of Grunzenow began to ring.

The bell of Grunzenow, his new home! The bell for the Christmas service! Hans Unwirrsch sat upright in bed and listened;—his heart beat loud and all his pulses throbbed! All his blood rushed to his heart and brain—Oh Fränzchen, Fränzchen!

All the feelings of his childhood had wakened in the man's breast. Before he went downstairs he knelt and hid his face in his hands for some minutes; he did not hear the door open behind him.

In his long, black clerical gown old Josias entered the room and softly set down the light he carried beside the candidate's lamp. He stood motionless as long as the little bell rang, as long as Johannes Unwirrsch knelt beside his bed. When the bell ceased and his young companion raised his head again he laid his hand on his shoulder and said with feeling as he bent down to him:

“It is a happy sign to be awakened by such ringing to new work, new cares, new life. My dear, dear son, be welcome in this poor and yet so rich, so narrow and yet so limitless field of endeavor. God give you strength and His blessing on this shore, among these cabins, under this roof. God keep you in your happiness and bless you in your sorrow!”

The bell was ringing a second time as Hans, at the aged pastor's side, mounted the steps which behind the pastor's house led up to the churchyard of the village. The way to the church lay directly through this churchyard and the two clergymen stopped among the white graves and black crosses, which all wore caps of snow, to look back on the village. The sea sounded in the darkness but in the village nearly every window was lighted and many people were moving on the road leading to the church. The fisherfolk came out of their cottages, up to their church—the aged, men, women, and children. They came with lanterns and lights and if the grown people, the elders, in passing by greeted their pastor with cordial veneration, almost every child came up to give him its hand; and he knew them all

by name, knew the short little stories of their lives and had a special word of endearment for nearly every one. From time to time one of the grown people loitered on the way or turned sidewise to set down his lantern and bend over one of the snow-covered graves; then the pastor of Grunzenow stood at the mourners' side and spoke softly to them, and the stars smiled in the black winter sky and it seemed as if the sea softened its roaring.

The sexton of Grunzenow was pulling the bellrope for the third time when again a larger group of people entered the churchyard gate and it was Grips who carried the lantern ahead of them. Colonel von Bullau led Fränzchen at the head of his following in knightly fashion and, when Hans Unwirrsch stood before him and Grips raised his lantern to light the meeting, he said:

“This is the way a man looks who cannot say how happy he is. Here, my young friend, here you have your maiden; I wish you joyful holidays and much pleasure.”

Hand in hand Hans and Fränzchen along with the other people of Grunzenow, went into the little church, where the sexton was already sitting in front of the organ. As they walked the short distance Franziska could not tell her betrothed nor Hans his future bride how they felt; but each knew it, nevertheless. Yet Fränzchen brought him a heartfelt greeting from Uncle Rudolf who sat at home under the Christmas tree with his pipe and had his Christmas thoughts as well as everyone else.

There were certainly a hundred lights illuminating the little church; no one had put out his little lamp on entering and the gathering of this community on the shore of the sea was wonderfully solemn.

Candidate Unwirrsch with his betrothed and Colonel von Bullau sat down on one of the front benches close to the altar and pulpit and, joining in the gruff chorus of fishermen's voices, sang the old Christmas hymn through to the end; until, as the last tones of the organ and the singing died away, the Reverend Josias Tillenius went up

into his pulpit to preach his Christmas sermon; until all the sunburnt, weather-beaten and wind-seared faces of the men, all the women's earnest faces and the children's eyes were raised to their faithful and venerable adviser and comforter. And not one of the famous and popular speakers whom Hans had heard in the great city, not one of the celebrated professors who had given him such good precepts at the university could have spoken more fittingly than did the aged vicar of the hunger parish of Grunzenow, to whom the library of his predecessors had remained a perplexing maze, and the modern science of theology a book with seven seals.

His greeting to his congregation was that of the angels than which there is no more beautiful one in the world: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Then he wished them all happiness on that holy festival, the young and the old, the aged and the children; and he was right when he once said to Hans Unwirsch that it was a strange thing for a pastor if his sermons had to echo the voices of the sea. He spoke of the good and the evil that had come to pass since that day had been celebrated a year before; he spoke of what might come before the bells rang for another Christmas. He had a word for those who were mourning and for those to whom joy had been given. Unlike his brother pastors farther inland who, like him, were now standing in their pulpits, he could not draw his similes from the work of the tiller of the soil; he could not speak of sowing and blossoming, reaping and fading;—it was the sea that sounded in his words.

He spoke of those members of his parish who were now in foreign parts, of whom it was not known whether they were alive or dead: the earth, from the north pole to the south pole, had to find a place in his sermon. He spoke of those from whom nothing had been heard for a long time, whose places by the fireside had been vacant for years, called two weeping mothers by name and comforted them with the promise that no one, no one, could be lost, however

wide the world, as it was written that God held the sea in the hollow of his hand. He spoke of the great Christmas tree of eternity under which all the people on earth would be gathered in days to come.

Hans Unwirrsch thought of the sermons of hunger which he had tried to write in Grinse Street, by the publication of which he had hoped to make a name for himself and to touch and uplift thousands. Now he bowed his head before this old man's discourse which was certainly not ready for publication and yet penetrated to the inmost hearts of his auditors. Fränzchen, at his side, wept, from time to time; Colonel von Bullau cleared his throat very noticeably and mumbled something in his gray beard; the fisher folk sighed and sobbed;—Candidate Unwirrsch had no more time to go on thinking about his manuscript and Grinse Street.

Reverend Josias Tillenius had drawn near to the Christmas tree of every cottage in his village; now he suddenly stood in the shade of the tree of universal history through the branches of which the star of the annunciation shone down on the manger in Bethlehem. In a simple, impressive manner he told his congregation what things on earth were like when the angels brought down their greeting from heaven. He told about the city of Rome and the Roman Emperor Augustus, about the proud temples, the proud sages, warriors and poets. He spoke of how at that time the sun, moon and stars went on their way as blessedly as on the day when he was speaking, how the earth bore its fruits and the sea gave up its treasures. He told how human affairs were then ordered very much as now: how tribute was asked and given, how the lakes, rivers and sea were covered with the ships, how the country roads were full of wanderers and the market-places were full of merchants. He spoke of how then, even as in their own day, the wealth of the nations was carried back and forth, and then—then he spoke of the great hunger of the world.

The beautiful figures of the gods in the magnificent

temples were false images that had no life. The priests who served them laughed at them and at the people who knelt before them, but the sages and the wise were ashamed of both gods and priests. The world had become a chaos without strength and stay. Man could not find peace either in his heart or in his house or out in the market-place. In the Roman Empire humanity had become lost in itself, it lay in chains beneath the purple mantle that covered its bruised and bleeding limbs; the sky was dark above it and the radiance of its golden diadem was but the livid light of the night of death. In spite of life's magnificence and commotion, the earth had come to be without form and void as before the creation. Pastor Josias Tillenius said this in words which his people understood. No one dared stir; only the quicker breathing of the listeners was heard and when Margarethe Jörenson, a great-grandmother of nearly a hundred years, the only person who slept in that assembly and who, according to a former order of the pastor's must not be awakened under any circumstances, let her big hymn-book slip from her lap and fall to the floor, a sudden shock passed through every heart and the hardened men of the sea started.

"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men!" It was as if these words broke the spell that lay upon the people of Grunzenow as they had once broken the fetters of all mankind.

The star of redemption stood above the stable in Bethlehem; the Saviour had been born into the world of hunger; the man of sorrows, the son of man, the son of God who was to take the sin of man upon him, had appeared, and the poor shepherds came running from the field, not to be followed till later by the kings and the wise men, to greet the child in the manger, this child which came just in time to be included in the census of the population of the Roman Empire which the Emperor Augustus had ordered. Now the time was fulfilled and the kingdom of God had come. Hungry mankind stretched out its hands for the "bread

that comes from heaven and gives life to the world." The heaven above which had been so dark and drear opened above the children of the earth: all the nations saw the great light,—humanity tore the crown from its humiliated head and threw the purple mantle from its shoulders. It was no longer ashamed of its bleeding wounds, its bruised and fettered limbs,—it knelt and listened. "Truth!" was the jubilant cry from the rising of the sun, and from the going down thereof the joyful answer was "Freedom!" "Love!" sang the angels about the hut in which Mary, she of the house of David, and Joseph, the carpenter of Nazareth, showed the shepherds the child that had been born in the night. And now Pastor Josias Tillenius showed it to the children of the village; for the festival of Christmas is the true festival for the young to whom the sublime Easter Day can bear no message until the first great grief has touched their souls. And as the old preacher was thus speaking of Christmas to the children the new day dawned. Its first pale light was seen through the windows of the little church and the lanterns and wax candles grew dim before the rosy glow that suffused the winter sky. Again the organ pealed, the congregation of Grunzenow sang the final verse of the Christmas hymn, the service was over.

Hans and Fränzchen stood in the churchyard beside the preacher and the old Colonel and all the people of Grunzenow who passed them on the way down again into the village nodded to them or came up to shake hands and welcome them to their midst. The sky grew redder and redder, the lights of the village disappeared in the dawn as had the lights in the church. The organ ceased, the sexton too came, smiling shyly, to congratulate Candidate Unwirrsch. The day came but the voice of the sea did not die away.

The last inhabitants of the village had gone; Pastor Josias Tillenius looked at the betrothed couple and then said:

"Come, Colonel, you will have to lend me your arm as

usual. The young people will be able to find their way alone, I am sure.”

Colonel von Bullau looked at Hans and Fränzchen and drew his old friend's hand through his arm.

And now the pastor and Colonel von Bullau had left the churchyard like the rest of the people. Hans and his betrothed stood alone among the snow-covered graves. They stood and held each other in a close embrace. The same thought occurred to them both at the same moment, that the time would come when they, too, should lie there in the little churchyard and sleep; but they smiled and did not wish themselves away.

Labor and love! this was the thought that thrilled their hearts and they knew that they had been given both. The day came up clear from the east; the fog parted above the sea,—the sea sang of freedom, the sun sang of truth; and the world did not belong to Dr. Théophile Stein, who had once been Moses Freudenstein: Johannes and Franziska stood over the graves of the poor little village of Grunzenow and in their love they feared neither life nor death.

CHAPTER XXXV

Autumn!

To the loftiest heights
I wished to soar,
Each nethermost depth
I hoped to explore.
Things near and far
I craved to behold,
Each mystic secret
I fain would unfold.
A boundless roaming,
A hope unwaning
An endless seeking,
A never-attaining—
Such was my life.

But now, oh wonder!
It has been done,
A blissful dream
I now have won.
From a narrow circle,
Why should I depart?
I hold life's fullness
Confined in my heart.
Soft veils of azure
Sank down from above.
A magic circle
Of heavenly love
Now is my life.

These rhymes, together with disconnected sentences in prose, fragments of thought of all kinds, bits of Greek and

Hebrew script and other scribbled notes, were all on one and the same page. And this page lay on the writing table of Assistant Pastor Unwirrsch, and Assistant Pastor Unwirrsch sat in front of it, rested his forehead in his hand and looked through the open window at the sea which glistened beneath the veiled sunlight and on which little white dots—the sails of the fishing boats of Grunzenow—glided back and forth.

Autumn!

On Christmas morning of the year before Hans and Fränzchen had gone down from the mist-covered churchyard into a quiet, happy time of labor and love. Under the loving touch of the young girl life had changed very much for the better in the Grunzenow mansion and soon the uncouth people of the village would have gone through fire and water for their young lady. The old gentlemen in the picture frames did not turn their darkened visages to the wall; a little more and Grips would now have declared that they were laughing just as if their ladies were not hanging beside them. Grips had fallen under Fränzchen's spell as had every inhabitant of the village and castle; the spell was cast upon him, as he said, and to his praise we must say that he endured this sorcery with grim cheerfulness and that he never lost more of his martial gravity than when he heard the young lady's voice in pleading or thanks, or when her little hand beckoned.

If the servants had thus succumbed to the magic influence it can easily be imagined how easy "the child" made the existence of the Colonel and her uncle. Once more Colonel von Bullau had "not thought it would be like that;" he was happy and only a little jealous of the lieutenant who was more than happy. It was touching to see and to feel how tenderly the two old soldiers treated the girl, how one tried to surpass the other in consideration and attention and how the "pet" had to protest to prevent them from carrying the whole Grunzenow mansion to another place on her account. The Colonel's head hummed and buzzed with

the most wonderful plans and suggestions for making the neglected place into a Paradise; every night something occurred to him and every morning he came out with something which was not always as highly practical, pleasant and easily carried out as he imagined. Grips, the ingenious man and factotum, had never stood as high in his master's esteem as now. Every few minutes demands were made upon his talent for painting, cabinet making, gardening and the art of decoration; Colonel von Bullau himself developed a sense of color and painted the most impossible things with the gayest colors possible. Never before had his castle been so much his home; it made him forget not only the Polish Buck in Freudenstadt, but even the "slayers of nine" in their corner.

Lieutenant Rudolf's fur boots were carried up to the smoke house so that they might be protected from moths, the wheel chair was trundled into the storeroom, the gout took its departure and went to stay with people who were more worthy of its visit. The lieutenant marched about as briskly as a youth and enjoyed his Fränzchen and enjoyed his life; the cheerful present made it easy for him to forget all the trouble of the past. He had mourned for his brother and at the same time rejoiced in his release; of Kleophea he seldom spoke but when he did so it was never with hatred but with pity and gentle excuses. Only when the names of his sister-in-law and Théophile were mentioned did he fly into a rage and snort with wrath, anger and contempt; but the widow of the Privy Councillor Götz, *née* von Lichtenhahn, and Dr. Stein were not often spoken of in Grunzenow. The old gentleman's feelings and utterances in respect to his niece's fiancé were very changeable at first and it was not until the season of long days came that they became confirmed in equable good humor. If he was a little jealous of the Colonel he was very jealous indeed of poor Hans. The smiling god who had so splendidly followed suit when the sly old man had so subtly put his card into the game, certainly smiled once more at the

psychic process through which Lieutenant Rudolf now passed. His unlimited amazement was followed by long-winded doubting astonishment at himself and the world; his wise recognition that what is done cannot be undone was followed by the usual philosophic attempts to see the matter in the right and best light possible. It was not until about the time of the vernal equinox that Uncle Rudolf reached the same point in his argumentations as Uncle Grünebaum in similar cases, namely that he did not hesitate boldly to maintain to himself and the world that he had brought Candidate Hans Unwirrsch from Kohlenau and introduced him into his brother's house for the very purpose that he might fall in love with Fränzchen and Fränzchen with him. While climbing in this way the ladder of victory over himself, his cheerfulness and contentment grew so much with the growing days of the young year that when the longest day came it would have been as impossible for them to increase further as it was for the days themselves.

Autumn!—In the verses which stand at the head of this chapter Hans has really said everything that he could say about his *vita nuova* on the shores of the Baltic; but even if he now no longer “departed from a narrow circle,” still, it was not a narrow life. He had longed so much for real, thorough work; now he had his full share of it and did his duty as a true man should. After the most reverend chief consistory and the government had approved his appointment as assistant pastor, the aged Tillenius smilingly loaded a good part of his official burden upon Hans' back and the latter had never taken any load upon himself more readily. Although he came from inland the seafaring folk were satisfied with his sermons and grew to love him. He baptized the first child, laid the first body in the earth and married the first couple and it was very seldom that Pastor Josias Tillenius had to tell him that neither he, himself, nor the people of Grunzenow had understood him, their Assistant Pastor.

He had never experienced such a spring and such a summer as in this first blessed year of his life in Grunzenow. All the glories of a dream did not equal the reality of those golden days of love and hope on the shore of the Baltic. He looked into life clearly and courageously; whatever indecision and instability nature and fate had laid in his character he sought to thrust away from him with a manly will. All he had to thank fortune for he sought to deserve and more than deserve by faithful endeavor and earnest striving. The indefinite hunger of his youth had now become the quiet, deliberate, steady endeavor that, active in millions, keeps mankind in its course and leads it on. Johannes Unwirrsch had learnt to know life, both its good and its evil side. Now all the circles through which he had wandered with all their figures, charming and terrible, had sunk into the past; he stood in the middle of a sphere which his activity was to fill. It was not indifferent to him that no tie bound him to his home town any longer, that he could bring nothing with him from Kröppel Street into his new life but sweet, melancholy remembrance and the shining glass globe which had formerly hung above his father's table. This glass globe now threw its brilliance on the life which Master Anton Unwirrsch had built up in his dreams of the true life on earth; but no generation extends far enough into the coming generations to see fulfilled its ideals which by that time are seldom the only ones.

Autumn!

The days of spring and of summer were past; but the autumn sun shone as lovely as ever and land and sea rejoiced in it. Nevertheless the Assistant Pastor at the open window had the right to disregard it in spite of all its glory; it was the seventh of September and on the next day, the eighth, a Sunday, his wedding was to take place. He had not made those rhymes in the moment in which he scribbled them down among the other fragments of thought.

Pastor Tillenius had chosen and fixed the wedding day; with art and diplomacy Pastor Tillenius had cajoled Uncle

Rudolf and Colonel von Bullau into giving their consent and had held them to their promise when the two old gentlemen had wanted to take it back and not give up "their girl." Pastor Tillenius, backed by the apostolic principle: a bishop must be the husband of one wife—had held the field against the two obstinate, stubborn old soldiers. It was settled that Fränzchen was to leave the Grunzenow mansion and move to the vicarage;—Fränzchen herself had also given her consent and after all that was the most important thing.

Autumn! What was all the rapture of spring and summer compared with the bliss that autumn promised to give? It seemed as if all the birds of passage must stay to join in the celebration of the wedding and the honeymoon.

After the Grunzenow household had once resigned itself to the inevitable, it took infinite pleasure in the necessity and threw itself into the preparations for the festive day with an eagerness that surpassed everything. The Colonel was in a mild fever day and night, the lieutenant in a similar condition; but great indeed was Grips, the man for everything.

Who can find praise enough for the man's dexterous hand? Now it boxed the ears of a too stupid stableboy; now, with deliberation, it drove in a nail on which to hang a self-twined garland. Grips had learnt something during his campaigns.

The village was stirring too. Old and young wanted to do their part toward making the eighth of September a day to be remembered in the annals of Grunzenow. For weeks beforehand the women and girls were busy, for weeks the sexton, who was teaching the children the wedding cantata, slept badly with inward excitement and too vivid dreams of success and glory, of failure, disgrace and shame.

Pastor Josias Tillenius composed his wedding address and as he gave to it the most beautiful although the saddest memories of his own life, and all of his good, full, old heart,

it turned out admirably without being written down or learnt by heart.

On the seventh of September all the preparations were ended: meat and drink were not lacking in the Grunzenow house; the columns and pillars were festooned, the doors stood open to let the wedding joy in and the bride out.

“Soft veils of azure
Sank down from above.
A magic circle
Of heavenly love
Now is my life,”

these were the words that the bridegroom had written on the bescribbled page in his study in the vicarage. Everything was ready and Fränzchen softly laid her hand on Hans' shoulder, glanced smilingly at the paper in front of him and led him out of the house to her favorite spot on the seashore.

It was a height where, between stones and the shifting sands of the dunes, low bushes and a few taller trees, curiously torn by the wind, struggled with laborious persistency to wring their existence from the hard soil, to defend it against the drifting sand and the storms. It was a lonely spot where one could hold communion with land and sea, with the clouds and gulls, with one's own thoughts. There Grips had built Fränzchen a simple seat and there, on the eve of the wedding, sat Hans Unwirrsch and Franziska Götz and spoke of their own fate and of Kleophea and watched the sun go down.

They spoke much of Kleophea while they looked at the sea above which the fog had closed in after the beautiful brilliant day. Poor Kleophea had entirely disappeared; no answer had come to any of the letters that Fränzchen had written in the course of the year. They knew nothing of her—it was so strange that just on this evening her image should keep ever rising before them anew, that their thoughts would not remain centred on their own happiness. Hans and Franziska did not know that the ship that bore

Kleophea Stein was gliding along behind the gray fog that was rising on the waves. They did not know that Kleophea was at sea when, on the following day Pastor Josias Tillenius joined their hands for time and eternity!

On the eighth of September the sun would not come out from behind the clouds all day. On the evening before it had gone down, as the sea-folk say, "in a bag" and that meant dull weather for the next few days. It was a sultry day on which not a breath of air stirred, on which the same sad gray covered heaven and earth, on which one might have wished for a heavy shower if it had not been a wedding day.

It did not rain on Fränzchen's bridal wreath, it did not rain on Pastor Tillenius's excellent words, it did not rain on the grim emotion of Uncle Rudolf and Colonel von Bullau, it did not rain on the jubilation of the mansion and the village of Grunzenow. Johannes Unwirrsch and Franziska Götz gave each other their hands as they had already given each other their hearts; after the pastor's address Lieutenant Götz made a speech at the table and, following the peal of the organ and the sexton's cantata, came the musicians from Freudenstadt whom Colonel von Bullau had had fetched in a farm wagon to play merry dance music. The Colonel entertained the whole village in his castle and as *Major domus* and *arbiter elegantiarum* Grips did not show himself as he was but as what he could be: amiable, obliging, tender toward the fair, courteous toward the strong sex.

They danced in the great hall and there was endless applause when the Colonel opened the ball with the young bride. It was a pleasure to look into the Lieutenant's radiant eyes; it was a pleasure to watch Pastor Josias Tillenius talking to Mother Jörenson; and it was a particular pleasure to see how the Assistant Pastor and bridegroom Hans Unwirrsch fell a victim to the dizzy goddess Terpsichore and to use an expression of the experienced seamen who were present, "lurched and pitched" through the room.

The oldest people, even the great-grandmother Margarethe Jörenson could not remember another such day; the enjoyment rose from moment to moment and carried old and young with it; half confused the bridal couple that with difficulty had found refuge in a quiet corner, looked at the tumult.

“Fire at sea!” Who shouted that? Where had that cry come from?

“Fire at sea! Fire at sea!”—the words went through the festive throng like an electric shock. The music broke off, the dancers stopped as if spellbound; those who were at the refreshment tables sprang from their chairs and the Malayan song that the old one-armed first boatswain Stephen Groote was singing to a small appreciative circle, was smothered in his throat.

Hans and Fränzchen too had jumped up although at first they did not grasp the reason of the panic-like fear. The Colonel pushed his way through the room towards the door followed by the majority of his male guests. Those who remained behind ran about excitedly or to the windows that looked out on the sea. Franziska seized Pastor Tillenius’s arm.

“Oh, for God’s sake, what is it? What has happened?”

“There, there! Truly! Oh God have mercy on them!” cried the old man who had thrown open the window and was pointing to the water. “A ship on fire—there, there!”

The young couple’s eyes followed the trembling hand; their hearts stood still with terrible fear—

“There! There!”

It had grown to be half dusk and the transition from the gray light of the day had been so unnoticeable that not one of the joyful wedding guests had thought of it. There was still no breeze to stir the haze that hung above land and sea and completely veiled the horizon; only those who lived on the shore could know what the red glow out there meant; the hearts of the two children of the inland only beat the harder because of the unknown terror.

A burning ship! Hundreds of people in the most horrible danger of death! Their senses swam at the thought, at the hundred fearful scenes that passed through their minds.

The Grunzenow mansion was emptied of its guests; even the women rushed through the corridors and hurried down to the shore. When Pastor Josias Tillenius, Hans and Fränzchen arrived at the boat landing they found the fishermen as well as Colonel von Bullau, the Lieutenant and the farm hands hard at work getting ready to start, while the women ran hither and thither in feverish excitement pointing and gesticulating toward the glow in the north-west and screaming. Hans Unwirrsch took his place among the men and pulled and pushed with the others; the old pastor sought to bring the women to reason or at least to calm them, and his assistant's bride helped him to the best of her ability. In a happy moment the wind from the south, a true angel of God, unfolded its wings and filled the sails of the boats of Grunzenow; only the oldest men, the women and the children remained behind on the shore while the younger men sailed out to bring help. In the first boat to leave the shore were the Colonel and the Assistant Pastor; Lieutenant Rudolf Götz had sunk down completely exhausted and his niece knelt beside him and held his white head in her lap;—but the fearful brilliance in the distance grew more and more distinct.

“It's a steamer, or they couldn't make such headway against the wind,” cried one of the old seamen who had had to stay behind.

“They are trying to run her ashore!” said another.

All sorts of guesses as to the course of the vessel were made. Some thought she was from Stettin on her way to Stockholm but there were many who were sure that was not so. Others thought it was the St. Petersburg packet on her trip from Lübeck to Kronstadt. This view was shared by the majority, among them Pastor Tillenius.

The boats of Grunzenow had long disappeared in the increasing darkness. Fuel was gathered on the shore and a

tremendous fire kindled and on the shore itself as well as in the cottages preparations were made in case the people from the burning ship should be brought home by the men of Grunzenow.

"God bless you, my child, courageous little heart," said Pastor Josias pressing Fränzchen's hand. "Your wedding day is having a bad end but you are just made for the wife of a pastor of fishermen. You are fulfilling your first duties with honor; God bless you and give you a long, helpful, brave life!"

Lieutenant Götz was sitting on a boat that was turned upside down; his old enemy was at him again, he held his foot in both hands and clenched his teeth with pain.

"Yes, yes, old chap," he cried. "Here we cripples sit in the sand and gape. Take me in your cloak, Fränzchen, carry me home and give me some bread and sop! Sapperment, and Bullau is two years older than I!"

A scream from the crowd interrupted the Lieutenant's lamentations. The reflection of the fire on the sea lost its brilliance rather rapidly and suddenly went out altogether. A deep silence followed the cry of fright; all remarks that were made now were spoken in the lowest whisper. It was as if no one dared to breathe aloud any more.

"They are saved or—lost!" said the old pastor at length, took off his cap and folded his hands. He repeated the prayer for the shipwrecked, and men, women and children prayed fervently with him; and yet the fathers of these old men who were now praying had claimed the right of salvage in all its abominableness and had practised it.

An hour of deathly anxiety passed, then lights appeared again in the darkness on the sea. They were the torches of the returning boats and now everyone who still had any voice left cried out again. After half an hour of the most painful expectation the first boat, filled to overflowing, slid up to the landing.

"Saved! Saved! Sauv ! Sauv !" rang the shout in German and French. In half-mad ecstasy the first of those

saved sank down and laughing and crying convulsively, they kissed the earth, embraced and kissed the people of Grunzenow who came up to them busily offering them all possible refreshment and help.

Colonel von Bullau and the Assistant Pastor were not in this first boat; but it was now learnt that the burnt vessel was the "Adelaide" from Havre de Grâce bound for St. Petersburg with a cargo of French wines and a few passengers. The excitement was still too great, however, for details of the fire to be asked and given.

The men of Grunzenow had brought sixty-four unfortunate people ashore, some of them injured; only the last fishing boat was still to come with the Colonel and Hans Unwirrsch.

"They are bringing the captain and the women" was the answer Fränzchen received to her anxious questions. "They must be here soon now, nothing has happened to them."

Franziska Unwirrsch pressed her hand to her heart and turned back to her duties. She had to act as interpreter for the French crew and the village of Grunzenow. She moved about in the confused, wild tumult like an angel bringing help and comfort; Uncle Rudolf, who had also not quite forgotten his French, had lost his head to a much greater extent than had his niece.

She was just kneeling beside a bearded, half-naked Provençal sailor who had broken both legs when renewed shouting announced the arrival of the last boat. In his pain the Provençal held her hands so tightly that she could not have freed herself even if she had tried. She could not even turn round to look at her husband; but between the words of comfort that she was speaking to the poor injured man all her thoughts turned to the landing where it had suddenly grown perfectly quiet.

She was listening with all her soul when a stir went through the people. The high voice of a woman cried with a foreign accent:

“Where is she? *O ciel*, where is she?”

The Provençal let go of the gentle, merciful hand that he had held so tightly till now; a woman threw herself on her knees beside Fränzchen, seized her wildly with her arms, kissed her gown, her hand, sobbed and screamed. The burning pile of wood and the torches threw their flickering light on the excited stranger; Hans, too, bent down to his wife,—it was a dream, only a dream! How did Henriette Trublet come to be on the shore of Grunzenow?

“It’s she! It’s she! Oh, all Saints! Oh, Mademoiselle! Oh, Madame! *ma mignonne*, blessings on your sweet face! Praise God! Oh, what a miracle! It is she!”

“Henriette! Henriette Trublet!” murmured Fränzchen, looking at the French girl with fixed, doubting eyes.

“Yes, yes, *la pauvre* Henriette! And the other! The other!”

Hans Unwirrsch held his wife in his arms and drew her head to his breast.

“Oh, love, love, whom do you think we have brought ashore out of the fire and the raging sea?”

He led her gently down to the shore; she trembled violently; speechless, she swayed between her husband and the French girl as she walked through the crowd of natives and foreigners who respectfully made way for her.

The captain of the “Adelaide” was sitting on a stone with his head in his hands. Beside him stood Colonel von Bullau as if he were again on one of his battlefields. Lieutenant Rudolf Götz was on his knees in the sand and in his lap he held the head of an unconscious woman—

“Kleophea! Kleophea!” cried Franziska, sinking down with folded hands beside the unconscious form.

“Yes, Kleophea!” said the Lieutenant, and gnashing his teeth he added: “And she is alone! Praise God!”

CHAPTER XXXVI

THUS destiny had been fulfilled and, incomprehensibly strange as it all seemed at first, it had yet been quite simple and natural. We do not understand, either, the fate of the little bird that suddenly drops out of the air dead at our feet until we have held the little body in our hand for a while;—and then we do understand it.

They carried poor Kleophea to the vicarage and first prepared a bed for her in a room that looked out on the sea; but she could not bear the sound of the water and, shudderingly, in the delirium of fever, demanded to be taken from that place and they had to put her in another room where the beat of the waves could not be heard so clearly.

There she lay for more than a week, stupefied and unconscious, without suspecting that the friends whom she called in her fever were so near to her. It was only very gradually that she came back to consciousness and for days Franziska, Lieutenant Rudolf and Hans Unwirrsch were only phantoms of her dream in whose reality she could not believe.

Franziska Unwirrsch did not leave the sick woman's bedside and she, she alone, succeeded in keeping alive for a time, though only a short one, the dying flame of life in the Kleophea who had once been so full of life, so beautiful and vivacious. The time of delusion had passed, the sand had run through, in her naked helplessness the once so proud being lay there, trembling and bleeding and, in expectation of the last dark hour, Kleophea Stein freed her heart as far as possible from all that was earthly. She had nothing more to conceal. All the gay-colored veils that she had formerly drawn over her graceful head, her laughing life, all the veils from under which she had formerly peeped out so teasingly, so light-heartedly, were torn and tattered; the merciless storm of life had whirled them about and away. Kleophea told of the year that had passed since she left her parents' house so dispiritedly, hopelessly,

wearily, that it was terrible to hear. But her head lay on Fränzchen's breast while she spoke and she had given her hand to the Assistant Pastor;—it was only to Hans and his wife that she told *everything*.

“Oh, it was only the maddest longing that drove me out of my parents' house; I have no excuse whatever. My heart was so cold, so empty; it makes me shudder to remember in what a bad, wicked mood I followed that—that man. Oh, what have I been, and how shall I die! You are good, and you know what I was in my mother's house. Did I know anything of love? I did not go away for love's sake! You see, I was suited all too well to Dr. Théophile Stein—I can reproach him with nothing, nothing. It had to be so, I wanted it so. In his dismal hunger the demon that was in me sought for one like himself and when he found what he sought the two beasts seized each other with their teeth. *Ah, poverina*, it was I who got the worst of it after all!”

Hans and Franziska shuddered at this dreadful lament; but at the same moment it seemed as if some of her former vivacious grace came back to the poor sick girl. She raised herself smiling, took tighter hold of the Assistant's hand and said:

“How I did torment you! How I did laugh at you! Oh, Fränzchen, Fränzchen, it was only yesterday that we were sitting in Park Street together—*l'eau dormante*—the hunger pastor—poor little Aimé. How I tormented you, how I sinned against you,—it was so funny, and everybody made such faces, it would have made a tombstone laugh.”

Kleophea's smile faded, she hid her face in the pillows and sobbed softly. When Franziska bent over her with gentle, soothing words, she pushed her away and cried:

“Leave me alone, go away! Let me die alone, I have deserved love from no one, no one, and I have killed my father! Don't you know that I have killed my father? Why don't you leave me alone with my thoughts? They're enough to torment me to my dying hour ——”

The next day Hans and Fränzchen learnt more about the unhappy woman's life in Paris. The more clearly Dr. Théophile Stein realized that he had erred in his calculations, the more miserably did he treat his wife. The certainty that Kleophea's mother would never forgive the step her daughter had taken relieved a character like Dr. Stein's from any obligation to keep up his smiling disguise. He had wanted money, much money and had received not it but only a burden that would make every step that he took through life, the way he looked upon life, infinitely more difficult. The ground that he had so cleverly won in the big German city, on which he might have built so firmly and well, he had lost entirely by this false move. He gnashed his teeth when he thought how his game had turned out. And yet he had considered all the probabilities so carefully, he knew how to *calculer les chances* so thoroughly. Nothing, nothing! There he sat in Paris and his wife had brought him nothing but a letter from her father telling her of his forgiveness. It was absurd, but it was also enough to drive one mad.

"He tore the letter up and threw the pieces at my feet," related Kleophea in the vicarage in Grunzenow, "and I—I had thought I was his master, I had the strength, I had the will, I had the brains! Because at home I went out unpunished, because no one at home had the power to control me, I thought the world was like my mother's house, to be moved by a laugh, a pout, a shrug of the shoulders. I had to try to move it by tears, and I tried my best, you may believe; but even that did not succeed and I often told myself that such a miserable, stupid, foolish little thing as I was had never yet sat five flights high in the *quartier du Marais* and looked at her misery in the glass. I learnt much, much, Mrs. Fränzchen Unwirrsch, but when I was in my mother's house I should never have believed that I should forget how to yawn. I was not bored in Paris, I had to make my black mourning dress for my dead father and to defend it against—against my husband. Oh,



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he had a large circle of acquaintance; many people came to the house and they all hated black. Oh, it was a mad life and if it had not been for my stupid, confused, aching head I think I might have played a very charming part. I think that we weren't any too particular about our honor, we needed money altogether too much to bother about ridiculous prejudices. We entered into correspondence with all sorts of curious persons of high position in Germany and wrote letters for which we were very well paid. I think that, at the request of different governments, we paid attention to the health of some of our countrymen who were not trusted at home. We made ourselves very useful for we were very hungry;—I had to be ashamed for two. We entertained too and played for high stakes and people liked to come to our house very much,—the disgrace threatened to drown us and it was a pity that I did not know how to swim as well as *monsieur mon époux*.—Leave me alone, Oh, leave me alone!"

The crew of the burnt "Adelaide" had gradually left the village of Grunzenow and gone by land to the nearest port. The injured had recovered and the last to leave was the Provençal who had broken his legs, and who parted from Colonel von Bullau with a thousand blessings. Grips drove him to Freudenstadt where he put him into the stage coach with a well-filled purse. Only the vicarage still kept its guests—for a short time and during that time Henriette Trublet had also a great deal to tell. She had kept her word, she had sought Dr. Théophile Stein and Kleophea and she had found them.

"*Voyez,*" she said, "I would 'ave go after zem to ze end of ze world; but zey vere only go to Paree. Oh, *monsieur le curé*, Oh, *mademoi—madame*, ze good God who bring me to you in zat night, he 'as also bring me in my distress to ze *pauvre enfant* and ze bad man, zat I might do my part for 'er and keep *ma parole—voyez vous?* And if I should be a tousand year old I would not forget ze night in vchich you cover me viz your mantle and give me your 'and,

and your 'art speak to mine. Viz your money I came to *ma patrie* and to *Paree* and zought I 'ave dreamt a dream of zat bad *Allemagne*,—*vraiment un très mauvais songe!* Zere were my friends *et le Palais royal et les Tuileries et Minette, et Loulou, et les Champs, et Arthur, Albert et les autres* and I like a fish in ze water. But I have zought of ze *cigale* and ze *fourmi* and of ze *Allemagne*, of *monsieur le curé* and *mademoiselle l'ange* and I 'ave sit still like a mouse and 'ave made ze *modes* and looked only for ze *villian monsieur Théophile* and ze poor lady. Zat vas not difficult, to find zem. Zere vere *Albert and Celestin, Armand, le Vicomte de la Dératerie, zen mon petit agent de change*, I can ask zem in ze street and soon I know vat I vish. *O, mon Dieu, voilà la petite* in ze black robe and so pale, so pale, and such eyes. My heart bleed; but I 'ave said, courage, and 'ave asked ze *concierge* and his vife and zen I know vat I must do. *Me voilà en robe bleue* viz *Armand*. *Mon cher*, I say, 'ere I am back from ze *vilaine Allemagne*. *Vive Paris, mon petit cœur*, 'ow are you? Vat shall ve do? *Comment vont les plaisirs?* *Théophile* is back also, and viz a vife. You know how ve 'ave stood to each ozer, he and I, *je m'en vengerai*; I am one of you just like before, take me to him! *Armand* laughs like a *enragé* and ve shake 'ands. On ze following evening I come like ze *Commandeur* in ze *Festin de Pierre* and *Armand* does not know certainly how my poor 'eart beat on ze stairs. *Monsieur Armand! Mademoiselle Henriette Trublet!*—*Voilà les autres* and ze little pale lady *en deuil* and—*Théophile!* *Ah, monsieur le curé, j'ai fait une scène à cet homme!* I 'ave put zis man vell in ze scene."

Fränzchen and Hans looked at *Kleophea* frightened; but she only nodded, smiled faintly and said:

"It was well done. God bless her for her kind heart. She came at the right time,—but it was really a very funny scene and the people laughed at us very much. I cannot deny, to be sure, that at the beginning I lost my head a little and doubted very much whether I should keep my

reason over night; but when I woke from my stupefaction and found myself in Henriette's arms and she called to me that Fränzchen had sent her;—when she called me her poor dear lamb and flew at my husband with her finger nails, I soon knew where I was. Oh, it was merry, so merry. Wasn't it, Henriette?"

Henriette was crying too much to be able to answer the question. She only shook her head and, passionately excited, threw herself down on her knees beside the sick woman's couch to kiss her lips and hands again and again.

Now, Kleophea told in her fashion how from that evening on Théophile had made her life more of a hell than ever, how she had spent her days in idle, unoccupied torment, how, trembling, she had counted the minutes in the night and listened for the step that she feared on the stairs. She told of her secret, timid meetings with Henriette, of senseless plans to free herself from that unendurable, terrible existence, of thoughts of death and hopes of death and finally how the idea of flight had occurred to her, had stuck in her mind and become a resolution. It so happened that at that time a very badly composed and spelt letter came from Mademoiselle Euphrosine Lechargeon, a girl friend of Henriette's, then in St. Petersburg. This friend wrote of the good fortune that the Parisian demoiselles who understood the art of finery had among the "Mongolians" and reported that she, Euphrosine Lechargeon, was the mistress of a magnificent establishment and *enfant gâtée* of all sorts of ladies and gentlemen ending in -off, -ow, -sky, -eff, -iev, etc., and that Eulalie, Veronique, Valerie and Georgette were also getting on well and that Philippine had made a brilliant match and had married Colonel Timotheus Trichinowitsch Resonovsky.

"*Partons pour la Tartarie!*" Henriette had cried. "Madame Kleophea has 'er jewels, I 'ave saved zirty-five francs. *Allons au bout du monde!* Let us save ourselves from zis traitor, *filou* and vicked *juif*. It is better to beg among *messieurs les Esquimaux* zan to breaze ze same

air viz zis 'orror. Ve vill go as two sisters, ve vill open a business *en compagnie*, ve will trow ze polar bears into amazement, ve vill build a *château d'Espagne en Russie*. *Allons, allons vive l'aventure!*"

Kleophea had carried the idea of flight about with her for long, miserable weeks; she had sought in vain to fight against it, it returned again and again and the chains that bound the unhappy woman to that man became more and more unendurable. The day came on which Dr. Théophile of Kröppel Street raised his hand against his wife and struck her; the following night Kleophea fled and hid herself in Henriette's attic room till the preparations for the distant journey were completed.

"They probably did not look for me anywhere except in the morgue," said Moses Freudenstein's wife in the vicarage in Grunzenow.

From Paris to Havre de Grâce, then the sea, the ship, the journey! Everything was indefinite, blurred, intangible and incomprehensible!

"Les côtes de l'Allemagne!"

The shout pierced Kleophea to the marrow. Poor, homeless, wandering soul! Oh, to lie still in the grave, there, where the dark, hazy strip, the German coast, lies on the horizon. It is as if she had once heard a song of firm, green ground, green trees, of a quiet, peaceful churchyard among the green, and could not remember it exactly and yet was obliged to keep on trying to find it again. The ship went its way, groaning and panting; again the evening came and the coast of her native country disappeared in the dusk;—she has not yet found the sad old song and the ship groaned and panted all night long and on into the next day, the gray, hazy day.

Kleophea leant immovable against the rail of the ship and looked into the haze above the water and sought to remember the old song. She had been told that the German coast was quite near again and that without the fog they would long since have seen it.

Henriette Trublet told how a quarter of an hour before the fire broke out she had found Kleophea leaning against the side of the ship, unconscious, and that during all the horrors that followed she remained in the same condition. She was not awake until she had reached the vicarage in Grunzenow and lay in Fränzchen's arms! . . .

How the waves roll up toward the vicarage that looks out from its hill on the expanse of the Baltic! The waves of the sea do not reach the poor little building; neither can they do it any harm however fierce they may at times appear. They may swallow up islands, villages, towns, light-houses, churches and churchyards. They may wash out the mouldering coffins of long-buried generations and throw them before the feet of the shuddering present, wound about with sea-weed, covered with slime. The waves of the great sea can be wrathful, very wrathful; but the little house on the hill where stands the church of the poor village of Grunzenow is secure, it stands on safe ground and whoever takes refuge beneath its low roof is well protected. But best protected of all was Kleophea's poor, erring heart; it, above all, might rest.

Until the middle of the winter Moses Freudenstein's wife lay still and peaceful and was no longer afraid. The cruel scenes of the near past faded, God gave poor, beautiful Kleophea a happy death.

When you have become accustomed to the voice of the sea it lulls you very gently to sleep. It seems to you as if to eternity had been given a tongue with which to sing the children of earth to sleep.

It was touching to see how old Uncle Rudolf would not leave his niece's bedside, how he held her head on his breast, how he talked to her—how he cried outside her door. They all wept about poor, beautiful Kleophea: Pastor Tilenius, his assistant Hans Unwirrsch, Fränzchen Unwirrsch, Henriette Trublet, Colonel von Bullau—all of them.

Once more Kleophea wrote to her mother but this letter

too was returned unopened; that was the last hurt that her poor, harassed heart received. Hans Unwirrsch had written to Dr. Théophile Stein and even though his letter was not returned no answer came to it. Nothing more was heard in Grunzenow of Dr. Théophile Stein who in Kröppel Street had been Moses Freudenstein, until in the year 1852 when he, despised by those who had made use of him, despised by those against whom he had been used, received the title of "Privy Councillor." To all decent men he was an outcast, a pariah.

In the little churchyard in Grunzenow there was a half-sunken mound beneath which there slept an unknown woman whose body had been washed ashore there by the waves many, many years before. Beside that mound Kleophea was buried, who had been cast ashore by a still wilder sea than the Baltic. Fränzchen had picked out the spot for the poor, shipwrecked girl and a more suitable one could hardly have been found in the whole world. Johannes Unwirrsch preached the funeral sermon; but much as he had to say, just as little could he put it in words; still those who stood nearest to the coffin and to the open grave all understood him.

Franziska Unwirrsch was a good guardian and gardener for Kleophea's grave and many a flower that usually would not live on that bleak shore, of the existence of which the village of Grunzenow had known nothing until then, thrived under the care of her blessed hand behind the churchyard wall that protected the mound from the sea wind.

Franziska's hand was blessed, indeed, everything thrived under its care—the vicarage, the castle, the village.

Lieutenant Rudolf Götz recovered but slowly from the heavy shock which the death of his niece gave him. For a long time he was again tied to his armchair and Fränzchen could not kiss away from his lips every curse that he sent after Dr. Théophile Stein. The Colonel became more and more gallant, his castle more and more homelike, more and more he came to realize that "without the womenfolk the

world was not worth a round of powder." For him as well as for Uncle Rudolf fate had still many a good year in store.

Henriette Trublet could bring herself to remain in Grunzenow only until the following spring. When the first swallows came her Parisian blood stirred. She would have drooped miserably if they had not given her the means of gratifying her longing for "the world." She wept bitterly at parting and thought she should never get over it; fluttered merrily away however, arrived safely, by land, at Mademoiselle Euphrosine's in St. Petersburg and the following year married a very rich German baker there, whom she made as happy as she could.

In the spring of the following year old Josias Tillenius passed away quietly without any illness after a long, beautiful and blessed life, and if the hard, weather-seasoned, sea-faring people shall, when the time comes, cry over Pastor Unwirrsch's coffin as they did over the coffin of this aged man, he will have well fulfilled his office on the shore of the sea.

Above the Hunger Pastor's writing table hangs the glass globe through which such a wonderful light fell on Master Anton Unwirrsch's work table, and by whose light the poor craftsman in Kröppel Street, like his fellow craftsman Jakob Böhme, thought out the beginning and the end of life. Johannes has laid down the pen with which he has described his life and his hunger not for publication and for the world but for his son; he is listening deep in thought to the lullaby which his wife is singing to her baby boy. The radiance of the shining globe falls also upon the child's head; he looks up at it with great wondering eyes; he is wondering about the *light!*

Outside in the night the sea roars angrily and fiercely and from time to time father and mother listen anxiously. There are evil spirits about out there in the dark, spirits that have no place within the shining globe's circle of light. Father and mother think of the time when their child too

must go out into the battle with the demons. Soon the voice of the sea will drown the mother's song,—then the beginning of the struggle will have come.

How the child's eyes are fascinated by the shining ball! Is the hunger that destroys the world and builds it up again stirring already?

One generation of men passes away after another, one generation passes on its weapons of life to the next; not until the cry "Come again, children of men," has sounded for the last time will there be born for the last time that hunger that led the two boys from Kröppel Street through the world.

Pass on *your* weapons, Hans Unwirrsch!

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