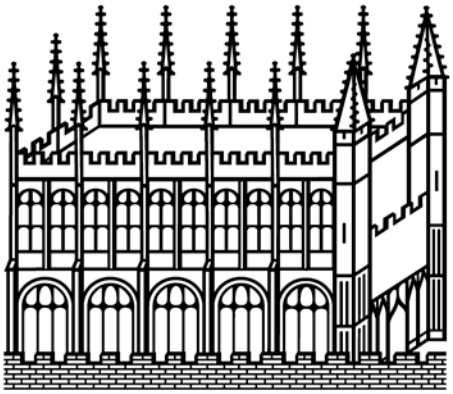


Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

Fry I g.12

FRY COLLECTION

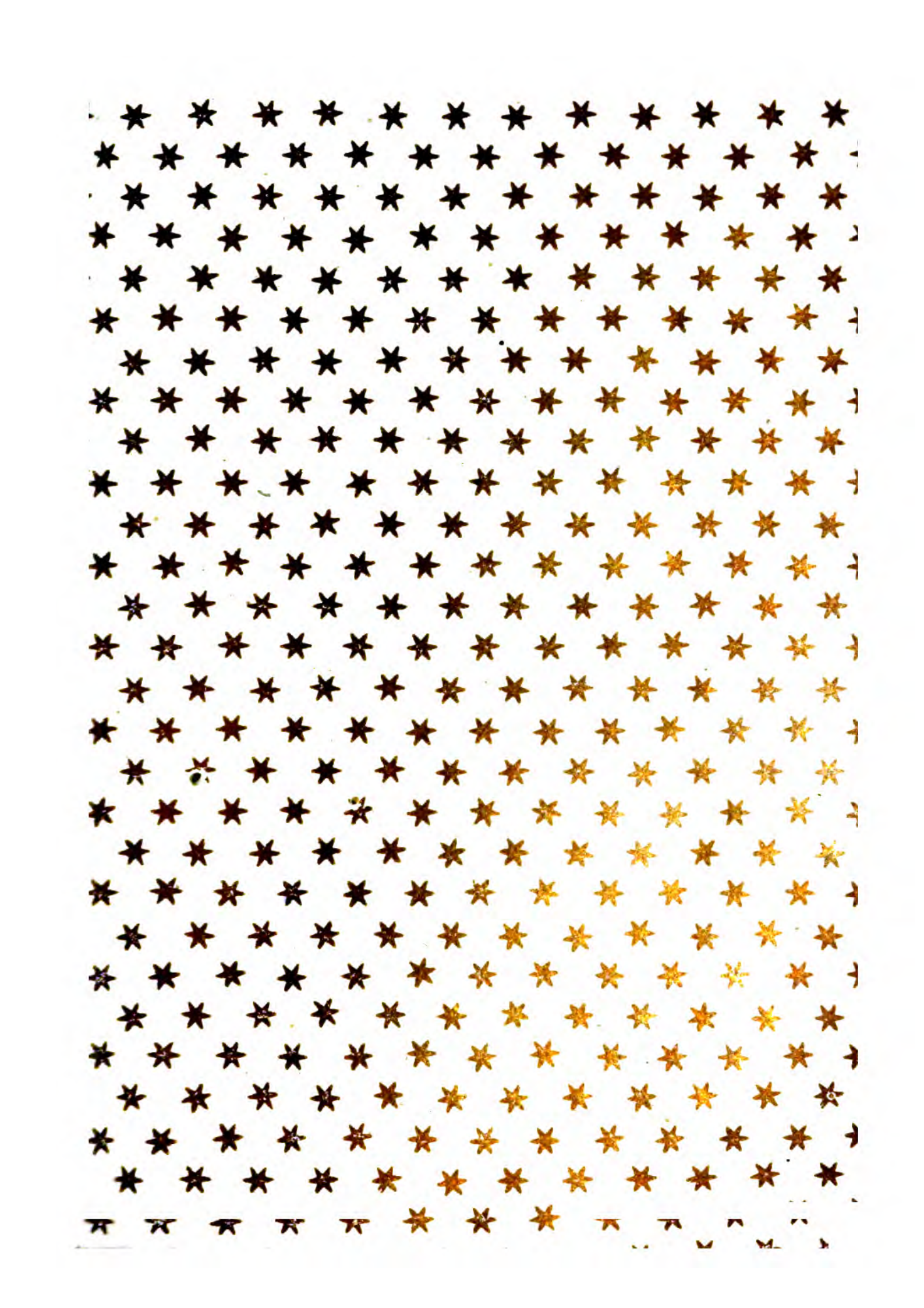
PRESENTED BY

THE MISSES ESTHER CATHARINE,

SUSAN MARY AND JOSEPHINE FRY

FROM THE LIBRARY OF

THE I ST FRY



260

THE

BONDMAID.

BY

FREDERIKA BREMER,

AUTHORESS OF "STRIFE AND PEACE," "THE H—— FAMILY,"
"THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTERS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH,

BY

M. L. PUTNAM.

LONDON:

H. G. CLARKE AND CO., 66, OLD BAILEY.

1844.

TAYLOR INSTITUTION
UNIVERSITY
14 APR 1955
OF OXFORD
LIBRARY

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LETTER.

To Mr. Brockhaus, Leipsic.

HONOURED SIR,

Your letter has awakened in me feelings of gratitude and pleasure, which would gladly find occupation in complying with your wish, that I should communicate to you something of my life and the course of my education. But this has its difficulties, as I can only slightly allude to the events of my inner life, while just *in* these lies the principal part of my history.

Hereafter, when I no more belong to earth, I should love to return to it as a spirit, and impart to men the deepest of that which I have suffered and enjoyed, lived and loved. And no one need fear me; should I come in the midnight hour to a striving and unquiet spirit, it would be only

to make it more quiet, its night-lamp burn more brightly, and myself its friend and sister.

In the mean time, any benevolent eye may cast a glance through the curtain which conceals the outward circumstances of a life by no means important or extraordinary, and see simply that I was born in Anna's Street, and had for my god-fathers a pretty good number of the academicians of Abo; and from this fact, if the beholder have the gift of the second sight, he may trace an effect which I will not here dwell upon. At the age of three years, I was taken from my home in Finland, and have retained of this period only one solitary recollection; this is of a word, a mighty name; in the depths of heathenism, the Finnish people pronounced it in fear and love, and they speak it still with the same feelings, though ennobled by Christianity; and I often think I hear his word in the thunder of Thor, as he strides over the trembling earth, or in the lonely wind that refreshes and consoles it: that word is Tumela.*

If you will kindly go with me from the soil of

* The Finnish word of God.

Finland to that of Sweden, where my father became a landed proprietor, after he had disposed of his estates in Finland, I will not trouble you to accompany me further into my childhood and youth, amidst the superabundance of inner chaotic elements, or the outward circumstances of a family presenting nothing unusual or especially interesting; who travelled every autumn in a covered carriage from their estate in the country to their dwelling in the capital; and every spring from their dwelling in the capital to their estate in the country. This family contained young daughters, who drew in crayons, played sonatas, and sung ballads, educating themselves in every way that can be thought of, looking longingly toward the future to see and to perform miracles. In humility, I must confess I always thought of myself as a warlike heroine.

And you may glance again at that family circle, and find them collected in the large parlour of their country dwelling, listening to readings; and if it please you, remark the impression which some of the literary stars of Germany produce upon one of those daughters. If that one could die from violent emotion, she would have fallen stone dead from the

chair at the reading of Schiller's Don Carlos; or to speak more accurately, had she abandoned herself to her emotion, she had been suddenly dissolved in a flood of tears. But she survived this danger, and lived to learn much of the country which may be justly called the heart of Europe, and from whose rich fountains of culture she yet derives nourishment.

Would you look more deeply into the soul? See then, how a thick earthly reality gradually spread its dark cover of clouds over her splendid youthful dreams; how twilight surprised the wanderer early on her way; how anxiously, yet how in vain she sought to escape from it. The air is darkened as by a thick fall of snow; the darkness increases; it becomes night. And in this deep, endless winter night, she hears complaining voices from the East and from the West; from a dying nature, and from despairing humanity; and she sees life, with all its love and beauty, buried, with its loving, beating heart, beneath cold beds of ice. Heaven is dark and empty; there is no eye there, and no heart. All is dead or dying except sorrow.

Perhaps you have noticed the significant figures

with which all deeper mythologies begin. We see in the beginning a light and warm divine principle losing itself in darkness and fog; and from this empire of light and darkness, fire and tears, a God is conceived. I believe something similar happens to every one who is born to a deeper life; and something similar happened to her who writes these lines.

If you see her a few years later, you will find that a great change has taken place. You will see the eye, so long moistened with tears, beam with unspeakable joy. She has arisen, as from the grave, to a new life. What has caused this change? Have her splendid youthful dreams been realized? Has she become a warlike heroine, victorious in beauty, love, or reputation? No, nothing of all this. Her youthful illusions are vanished, her season of youth is passed. Yet she is now young, again; for in the depths of her soul freedom has arisen; over the dark chaos, a 'Let there be light' has been pronounced, the light has penetrated the darkness, and illuminated her also. Her eyes steadily directed towards that, she has said amidst tears of joy,— 'Death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy

victory!' The grave has opened since then, and torn away many whom she tenderly loved. She has felt, and yet feels, the sting of many a grief; but her heart beats freshly yet. The dark night has disappeared, but not its fruit; for as certain flowers open only at night, so, often in the dark hours of a great sorrow, the human soul first opens to the light of the eternal stars.

Perhaps you wish to hear something of my authorship. This commenced in the eighth year of my age, when I apostrophized the moon, in the French verses:

'O corps celeste de la nature!'

And for a long time I continued to write in the same sublime spirit, the reading of which I will spare my enemies, if such I have. I wrote under the influence of unquiet, youthful feelings, without design, as the waves leave their traces on the shore. I wrote to write. Afterward, I took up the pen from different motives, and wrote what you have read.

Now, as I stand on the verge of the autumn of my life, I see the same objects which surrounded

me in my first spring days, and am happy in possessing still, amid many loved ones, a beloved mother and sister. The meadows about our dwelling, upon which Gustavus Adolphus reviewed his troops before he went as a deliverer to Germany, appear more beautiful now than they did to the eyes of my childhood; indeed, they have gained in interest, for I am now better acquainted with their grasses and flowers.

With respect to the future, I cherish only the solitary wish to complete what I have undertaken. If I succeed in this, I shall consider myself as less unworthy of the great kindness which has been shown me; and the good and honest, whose approbation has inspired me, must thank themselves for the greater part. I thank you, sir, most heartily. Receive this expression of my sentiments toward yourself and your countrymen also, and be assured of the esteem and gratitude of

FREDERIKA BREMER.

PREFACE.

A beloved friend, with whom I wished to share the interest I feel in the mythic legends of our land, once read aloud with me, in the long autumn evenings in the country, a learned work upon the mythology of the ancient Scandinavians. As we read, her expression became more and more clouded with displeasure, and when we came to these words, 'Loke found the half-roasted heart of a witch,' she threw the book from her indignantly, exclaiming, 'No, I can bear it no longer; it is too disagreeable, too odious.'

'And yet,' I answered earnestly, 'there is a deep meaning in these sagas, great and touching interest if one—'

'It may be so,' cried my friend, somewhat impatiently, 'but if this meaning is ever to be comprehended by me, it must be presented under a different form. Write something, in which this hidden meaning shall be unfolded, I will then try to comprehend it, and to be suitably impressed by it.'

Laughing, I undertook the task, but as the shadows of past ages gathered round me, and the doubts and sorrows of those distant years became present to my soul, tears filled my eyes, and the work that was began in mirth was accomplished in sadness. Three days after this conversation, the 'Bondmaid' was written. I sent for my friend, and proposed to read it aloud to her. I began with saying, by way of preface, 'I have endeavoured to place before you in this sketch, as in a visible picture, what our forefathers believed concerning gods and men; concerning life and death, heaven and hell. Though in the morning of the world, as in that of the natural day, we see the shades of night still

resting upon earth, yet is the sky tinged with a faint glow of eternal truth, harbinger of that sun which shall diffuse light and joy throughout the universe.'

My friend heard my preamble in silence, and I began my reading. I have always a hard trial to pass through, whenever I read any of my compositions to my friend; when I begin to read, she begins to yawn unmercifully. I say 'to pass through,' for I have found that as the piece wins her attention, (this is, alas! not always the case,) the yawns suddenly cease, and give place to the warmest and most delightful sympathy. When, therefore, I began the reading of Tralinnan, I took no notice of the undisguised yawns which followed one another in rapid succession, and soon, to my great consolation, saw the mouth closed, and the eyes fixed upon me with the deepest attention. The result of the reading was, however, somewhat less satisfactory to me.

'Ah, my dear,' exclaimed my friend, with a deep

sigh, 'this is really no very pleasant story. This Kumba is too hateful, and then it ends so painfully.—It is altogether terribly depressing.'

I defended my Bondmaid in the best manner I was able, but still my friend's last word was, 'Well, it may be that she is very good, only I would rather avoid thinking about her. I take interest enough in her for that—and then the catastrophe—'

'The Bondmaid' underwent, after this, several alterations, but was still unable to find favour with my friend. I have now resolved to make the public the arbiter of our difference. My friend desires me to believe that no one can wish more sincerely than herself, that the fate of 'the Bondmaid' may be a happy one. I assure my friend that no one can join in her good wishes with warmer sympathy than does

THE AUTHORESS.

THE BONDMAID.

FRID. *A Princess betrothed to king Dag.*

KUMBA. *A Slave.*

FEIMA. *A Slave.*

GRIMGERDA. *A Sorceress.*

A LJUS-ALF. *(Light-Alf, or Spirit of Light.)*

A SVART-ALF. *(Black-Alf.)*

The scene is laid in a woody mountain region. The castle of a Viking rises among the cliffs. On one side is the sea, on the other a flower garden.

THE BONDMAID.

PART FIRST.

SCENE I.

Flower garden. Feima is tying up the flowers to their supports. Kumba waters them.

FRID.

How clear and lovely is this early morning! Amid the grass still gleams the honey-dew, shed from the branches of the sacred tree, (1) over whose spreading boughs the Nornas pour the waters from the holy well of Urda. Gently upon the flowers and leaves of earth descends the heavenly moisture. Bees draw it from the bosom of flowers and offer up to man the precious juice that cheers in health and sickness. How beautiful, how kind are nature's ways! How great the goodness of the gods, who made this earth for man like a full honey-cup!

Glorious goes forth the sun upon his conquering path! I greet thee, thou enlightener of all spirits! thou in whose fires spirits of light and darkness, joined in love, prepare earth's golden harvest! How all glows, how all rejoices in the light of the Great Father's eye! (2) The Eternal One is light, is fire, Love too is fire; a deathless flame, sprung from the All-father's breast. Oh, sun, thou image of his being! thou warm and glorious as love! adoring do I bend to thee, and ask thee to protect a flame as pure, as powerful as thine. A ray of thine own fire beams from the eye of Dag; still clearer glows the bright flame in his beart; he draws his lineage from the gods themselves—Protect him, guide him over the wide, stormy sea. Give his path light, give his arm strength and victory! Lead back my hero to his fatherland, to his true bride, and, kneeling by his side, I will devote to thee a better offering, thou glorious lord of day!

(*Approaches Kumba and Feima.*)

It is well, maidens. The garden is well cared for. The blooming beauty of the plants gladdens the eye and heart. Soon shall king Dag too see it, and reward your care. He sends you here by me, these

marks of favour; he will one day bestow yet richer gifts. Take this chain, Feima; it shall adorn thee on thy bridal day. The same sun that shall bless my union with king Dag, shall shine upon thy marriage with the faithful Hreimer. The cottage I have ordered to be built for you is ready. I will that you shall always stay with us. Thou, my Feima, shall brew the fresh mead for the bridal banquet; and call thou the good Disor to thy aid, that it be clear and sparkling.

FEIMA.

(*Kneels and would kiss the feet of Frid. Frid extends her hand to her.*)

Great is thy favour, princes. We will live and die for thee. How fair thy hand is, how white, how soft! Only king Dag has hands as beautiful as thine.

FRID.

More beautiful, Feima, for they are stronger. Kumba, thou art most dear to me of all my handmaidens. From childhood have we been together. Thou shalt be always near me; take this golden ring.

KUMBA.

King's daughter, it is not for me.

FRID.

I give it to thee.

KUMBA.

My hand is brown and coarse,—what should these fingers do with golden rings? Keep thy gift, lady, I ask but for thy favour.

FRID.

I keep it then,—but for thy bridal day. I know well that Klur loves thee. Thou wilt not always be so harsh to him. It shall be his to place this ring upon thy finger. (*Kumba turns away.*)

But, Kumba, if thou hast a wish, tell me that I may grant it. I would have all happy. Ah, see, here blooms a rosebud. Welcome, thou harbinger of highest joy! 'When the first roses bloom I shall be near thee.' Thus wrote king Dag to me. Perhaps when these soft leaves have fully opened, my life's joy too will bloom. Maidens, guard well the tender bud. You shall not have watched over it in vain. Kumba, in an hour, I shall need thee to attend me to the bath.

KUMBA.

Thou shalt find me ready.

FRID.

Once more guard well my rosebud.

SCENE II.

KUMBA, FEIMA.

How good she is!

KUMBA.

She is happy.

FEIMA.

How stately and beautiful she is! Well is she worthy of a great king's love. Kumba, what dost thou?—thou tearest the bud she bade us cherish!

KUMBA.

She will have so many others!

FEIMA.

Oh, Kumba, that was ill done! Should not her lightest wish be law to thee? Thy mistress, thy benefactress!

KUMBA.

I am her slave.

FEIMA.

And yet is she so kind, so affable to thee.

KUMBA.

Upbraid me not! My heart is sick. How gladly would I die!

FEIMA.

Die? Wherefore?

KUMBA.

I am a slave.

FEIMA.

And had ever daughter of our race a happier lot than thine! Has not the princess freed thee from all painful toil? Hast thou not been with her from childhood, and fared far better than her other handmaidens? Has she not clothed thee better, fed thee better? Hast thou not had free entrance to the palace halls? Hast thou not learned there many things slaves are not used to know?

KUMBA.

What thou callest good, I count as evil fortune. Why was I not left in the squallid hut, with poverty and toil, to teach myself to bear the wretched lot to which our race is born? Why must a slave dwell in a king's palace, and learn to compare herself with the noble? Why must she learn to love the great, the beautiful, when her portion is with deformity and meanness? Why must she gain knowledge which could only teach despair?

FEIMA.

Ah, thy proud heart alone has taught thee this

It is thy haughty spirit that has changed honey into poison.

KUMBA.

Frid too is proud.—Pride is no fault in her.

FEIMA.

No, for her pride becomes her. Pride is not for us. She is of noble blood, but we are serfs.

KUMBA.

And yet, Feima, the sagas say, our race springs from a god, yes, the same god who later was the forefather of the proud race of Jarls. We are the elder born. Why do we creep in the dust, while they have lifted themselves even to the heaven of the gods?

FEIMA.

That I know not. But well I know it would ill become thee to wear Frid's crown upon thy head, her golden girdle round thy waist, and walk with her proud step.

KUMBA.

Alas, I know it well. All that in her is beautiful, were laughable in me. Too truly I am Kumba. But it is even therefore I complain, Why was I thus?

FEIMA.

I know too that there is much of good, and much of gladness for us if we but tame our hearts and wishes. Does not the sun shine for us? Do not the flowers bloom for us, as for kings' daughters? Have we not huts to shelter, food to nourish us? May we not, under a good lord's protection, have husband and child, as good, as dear as those of nobles?

KUMBA.

Slaves!

FEIMA.

Hreimer is a slave; yes, his hand is brown and rough, but faithful and strong to labor. His heart is good, and his look tells me how dear I am to him. By his side shall I live happy and free from care; we love each other, we love our lords, and know that they will never send us forth, or part our children from us. We desire no better lot than to live always in their service.

KUMBA.

Happy thou!

FEIMA.

The same happiness may be thine, if thou wilt; Klur loves thee.

KUMBA.

No, no, speak not of him.

FEIMA.

And, if thou wilt never listen to a lover, what happier lot than thus to serve the queenly Frid, to live in princes' halls, and see around thee proud nobles and their stately dames. Ah, that were happiness indeed!

KUMBA.

Misery!—Feima, far to the north, in those wild wastes, were giants and fierce dragons have their home, there, amid the ice mountains, dwells a race not far above the brutes. Their dress is of the wild beasts' skins, their dwellings, caves and rock-clefts, their speech a brutish sound. And yet, with this wild folk —on these bleak hills, should I be happier than here in a king's daughter's halls.

FEIMA.

Thou wouldst live rather with these wretched outcasts, than here with the good, beautiful Frid? Thou wouldst rather harbor in their caves, and hunt in their dark woods, than braid her golden hair and bathe her white feet in the silver basin?

KUMBA.

I would so.

FEIMA.

Strange!—and wherefore?

KUMBA.

There I shall be free.

FEIMA.

I understand thee not. But why, if so unhappy here, dost thou not ask the princess for thy freedom? She loves thee and would not deny thy prayer, Why dost thou remain where thou art wretched?

KUMBA.

Ask me not.

FEIMA.

Thou art strange. Thou wilt and thou wilt not.

KUMBA.

Alas, thus is it. My feet are bound to the earth that scorches them.

FEIMA.

Poor sister! I pity thee.

KUMBA.

Well mayst thou! But the powers who formed the noble and the slave—who gave the one gold and the other dust—of them will I demand, if it was just thus to divide their gifts.

FEIMA.

Kumba, tempt not the gods!

KUMBA.

These gods who ask man's homage for the useless gift of life—who demand praise and sacrifice for these earth sods, on which we spend our toil, for others—these will I declare unrighteous, selfish beings.

FEIMA.

Cease, oh cease! It is fearful to listen to thee; thy eyes flash; Kumba, thou blasphemest!

KUMBA.

And if, in my despair, I murmur and blaspheme, what then? Soon — soon — shall I be silent in the mould; soon shall the blaspheming spirit vanish like a mist-wreath in space, and be as if it had never been. But Valhalla's songs of joy has it never troubled; thither complaint and murmur never come.—And when, in the Skald's lays, the deeds of the mighty live deathlessly on earth, where then shall be the memorial of the slave? Where the record of his virtues and his griefs? Silently, under the weight of toil, he sinks to earth and is forgotten.

Where is there justice for the slave, in heaven or on earth? In vain were we created!

FEIMA.

That I will not believe. Do not our holy sagas tell us that even for us there is another life?

KUMBA.

See you the pale gray cloud that floats over the wasted heath? See you over the dreary swamp, the mist-wreath borne hither and thither by the wind? There see you the slave's after-life. See you the sun go forth upon his conquering path, warming and gladdening all with the glow of his inward blessedness? See you the stars by night, radiant — calm — like throned kings—like blessed spirits in their halls of light? There see you the deathless life of the hero, of the nobly born. Dark the slave's life on earth; darker the life beyond the grave. The poor come not to Odin; the needy find in his wide halls no room. Only to the king, only to the hero who has borne through far lands his blood-dripping sword, open the sounding gates of Valhalla. For him the couch is decked, the goblet crowned, for him the Valkyrior pour the sparkling wine. Heaven's joys are but for the strong, the fortunate of earth.

FEIMA.

It is said though, that even slaves, who come in

the train of great heroes, may find room in the glorious Asgaard. For this do king's slaves kill themselves upon the bodies of their lords.

KUMBA.

Fools! Yes, that they may toil for them there as here. Rightly do the Skalds call our race Uslingar; miserable is our lot here, miserable in the gloomy halls of Hela. Bondage and toil await us there as here. And for those of us who have followed no lordly master upon earth—these no after life awaits—they have lived here in vain.

FEIMA.

Ah, my heart tells me otherwise; it tells me the gods will not forget the beings they have made.

KUMBA.

See you the worm in the dust, how the ants torture it and drag it on? See how it writhes and struggles! No, save it not; though you free this a thousand still would suffer. Vain are thy struggles, worm. On, thy tormentors urge thee to the heap, the inglorious death-pile whence no flame shall rise. Soon shalt thou be as nothing.—Were not these worms as we by gods created? The gods who mark them not, regard not us. Our destinies are like.

FEIMA.

No, I will not believe it. Truly, shall those who have served here in faithfulness, hereafter dwell in peace and joy. Yet, were it even so—

KUMBA.

And were it even so?

FEIMA.

From dust was I created. The goodness of the gods has given me life. I have seen the sun's beauty, I have enjoyed the earth's fruits, the water's freshness, I have loved. Should the gods one day withdraw from this dust the life they gave it, still will I bless them, and render up what I received from them, if not without regret, at least without a murmur.

KUMBA.

Shall I admire thee or despise thee?

FEIMA.

We are of small account. Then let us in humility acknowledge it. Humility alone gives the soul peace. Lay down thy proud thoughts, Kumba; humble thyself. See, only stooping canst thou pluck this beautiful flower. Leave the courts of kings if there thou art not happy; but go not forth among the wild people. Come to us, my sister; Hreimer and

I will love thee, tend thee, toil for thee. Choose for thyself a home, a mate; clasp a child to thy bosom. My mother has told me that when she had borne me to the world, the world was light for her; she would not have changed me for a king's inheritance. See, even the brutes who are so much less than we, how they love, how they rejoice in their young. Be wife and mother, Kumba; be good and happy.

KUMBA.

Fate stands beside the cradle and the bier, and no man shall deceive his destiny. I will not bring into this wretched world beings fore-doomed to misery.

FEIMA.

Hreimer and I are happy, yet are bondswomen's children.

KUMBA.

My mother was the slave of queen Gunilda. She was most true to her of all her servants. Toilsome and abject was her lot,—yet would she willingly live on. My father was a freeborn man, who deemed it a light matter to forsake the woman who had loved him, the child to whom he had given being. I yet remember well a night—that night has darken-

ed all my after life. A flame rose upward from a funeral pile—rose high even to heaven; it was the funeral pile of queen Gunilda. My mother was with those who watched the fire. With others, who were tending it with her, she was cast living to the dreadful flames. The queen, they said, needed her servants in the other world. I stood among the people, yet a child, and heard my mother's cries, and saw her fiery death. Fatherless, motherless, then went I forth, alone in the world; and wandered through the woods, not knowing whither. Then people met me and took me back with them to Atle's court. They said that I had wished to fly from bondage, and led me to the presence of the king. I answered truly all king Atle's questions, and then he bade them scourge me till I bled, to punish, as he said, my want of duty. Thou, Feima, layst then on thy mother's breast; thou couldst not know the bitter wrongs I suffered.

FEIMA.

But Frid, the beautiful daughter of king Atle's brother, knew them. She asked thee of the king and though scarce older than thyself was as a mother to thee. She sought to make amends to thee for all thy suffering.

KUMBA.

Then went I forth by night and watched the silent stars, the flitting clouds: I asked of them my mother's fate; I called her name and listened: mournfully the night-wind sighed over the heath—the mist chilled me with its damps—this was my only answer.

FEIMA.

And cannot all the blessings granted to thy youth, make thee forget the terrors of thy childish years? And how knowest thou? Perhaps thy mother's soul lives happy in the sunshine that even now wraps thee in its warm embrace. Oh, that light might shine into thy soul—that life and thy own fate might look brighter to thee. It is long since thou hast offered to the gods. Come, sister, let us seek the holy spring? Seest thou this silver penny? King Dag once gave it to me. This will I offer up for thee. Do thou bear thither too some precious gift, that so the gods may favor us and grant our prayer.

KUMBA.

What would you I should ask?

FEIMA.

A pious, a contented spirit.

KUMBA.

Is my heart then so evil?

FEIMA.

Forgive me, sister, the harsh word—indeed thou art not good.

KUMBA.

Thou sayest truly. And yet I could be good—would the gods listen to my prayers, Feima, I could be even pious. I too, like Frid, could wish all happy. Seize, torment a bee, and it shall sting thee, and lay poison in the wound; leave it its wings, its life among the flowers, and it shall draw and give forth only sweets.

FEIMA.

And what then wouldst thou ask the gods to grant thee?

KUMBA.

Beauty, high birth, wealth, and a hero's love; room in the halls of Odin after death, for me and for my race.

FEIMA.

Kumba, thou ravest—thy words are wild. Sister, I pity thee—thy heart is sick. Come—oh, come with me, and bathe thy forehead with the holy water

offer and pray with me in the still morning, before the tumult of the world begins, while yet the faintly whispered prayer can reach the ever listening ear of Heimdall.

KUMBA.

I will not, sister. The prayers my heart sends up, would make thee tremble—would make the gods reject me. Thou art right, my soul is sick. Go therefore, leave me to myself.

FEIMA.

And what shall I tell the princess when she shall ask me for her rosebud?

KUMBA.

Tell her a cold north-wind has blighted it.

FEIMA.

Thou wilt not go with me?

KUMBA.

No! once more, no! leave me alone!

FEIMA.

Then will I go alone—Yet Hreimer gladly will go with me, and pray for our unhappy sister.

(Goes.)

SCENE III.

KUMBA.

Yes, go! Pray—offer to the rapacious, selfish gods! I am not child enough for that. Yet she is good and pious—Oh, were I good like her! Can I be so? No, for I have more knowledge. My eye has pierced deeper into the mysteries of fate. A poison, whose wasting power she cannot know, corrodes my life. 'Why not fly?" she asks me, "Why dost thou not ask thy freedom?" Unhappy power that binds my soul and will! Abhorred, adored torment, that bids me strive for what I cannot win; that urges me to seek what I should shun. Why did I look upon a glory that I could never reach? Why did I gaze upon the splendours of a day whose brightness had not dawned for me Wherefore, grim, terrible fate, didst thou mock me with the light, only to plunge me deeper in my darkness? Now thy evil work is wrought. My eyes are blinded; my heart spell-bound; my soul doomed; my life given to misery. *Here* is my torture and *here* I must remain. So will, the cruel powers. I must—for I must hear his name. If I hear not of

him, it is as if the air of heaven were shut from me. Yes, I must once more see him, must once more hear his voice; his eyes' clear light must shine on me once more. Oh, king Dag! wilt thou remark the bondmaid? Wilt thou bestow one look, one thought on her, who would so gladly die for thee? With thy conquering hand, thou dost not scorn to pat the neck of thy proud charger,—but Kumba's touch would soil thee. For Frid, for the king's daughter is thy hand: for her thy fame, thy love, thy great, proud hero-heart. And it must be my part to tend upon her, to deck her out, that she may be more lovely in thy eyes, more blessed in thy love. Still must I look upon her beauty and her joy, and feel the gnawing fangs of envy in my heart.

(*Pause.*)

In the chill, misty Nifelheim rises the spring Hvergelmer. Forth from thence, rivers of poison glides and in its depths lies the great serpent Nidhögg who gnaws at the root of the world's tree, gnaws, gnaws, unceasingly. When I was very young this saga made me shudder. Now is it portion of my daily life. I am this spring, my world is wrapped in mists, worms gnaw my life's tree. (*Pause.*)

Fearful thoughts rise up in me at times. It has been said that the black Alfs who live at the northern limits of the earth, under the outermost roots of the world's tree, sometimes come forth from their dark dwelling place, and whisper in the ear of man, words that may not be breathed in the light of day. They are sent forth by Hela to do her fearful bidding. It is to me, at times, as if an evil spirit's voice rose up in me, and prompted me—

(*Pause.*)

Could I but die and thus find rest! Might the life after death be bright to me! Might the freed spirit but look down from heaven upon the earth where it has pined and sorrowed! Could I but know that a compassionate God had for his weary, grief-worn child a home, where after life's hard struggle he might rest, and dwell in light and stillness! Then, oh, then, I could indeed submit; oh, then, I could renounce, then—

(*Weeps.*)

But, oh ye gods, ye have forgotten us, and therefore does my soul rebel against you. Your gifts are lavished on your favoured children, but we must look for nothing at your hands. Nothing?—for bitter-

ness—for poison. Ye gods! if from the poison drops that through long years have fallen on my heart, a stream should swell, mighty to blast and kill—the guilt be yours!

SCENE IV.

Frid's Chamber.

FRID. KUMBA.

FRID.

Kumba, braid my hair, and pour on it the perfumed oil king Dag has sent me from the southern land.

KUMBA.

I obey.

FRID.

And, as thou braidest, I would have thee tell me some of the sagas that thou knowest so well. Well is it said that round the home of Saga the gliding waters murmur, to whose voice the ear of Odin listens willingly. Saddening yet spirit-stirring too are song and saga.

KUMBA.

Princess, wilt then hear the old saga concerning Rig?*

FRID.

Gladly.

* This saga is contained in the elder Edda.

KUMBA.

Heimdall, thus runs the tale, once, roaming through green paths, came to the sea shore; he found there a lonely house, and entered in. The door was half open; fire burned on the floor. Within, grown gray with toil, sat Ae and Edda in old work-day clothes. Edda set before him soup in a bowl, and took from the fire thick seed-mixed cakes; but the chief dainty was the sodden calf. Heimdall, who called himself by the name of Rig, tarried here three days and nights, and went forth on his way. And when nine moons had come and gone, Edda bore a son who was dipped in water, and was called Tral. And the boy grew and throve; he was of dark color; his countenance was ill-favored; the skin of his hands was thick and shrivelled; his back was round; his heels were long. And there came to the hut a beggar-girl; her nose was flat; her arms were sun-burnt; her feet were sore with travel. She was called Tralinna; she passed with Tral the heavy days, and bore him sons and daughters. It was their work to draw burdens; to carry wood; to dress the fields; to herd swine; to tend goats; to cut turf. From these are slaves descended.

And Rig journeyed on further and found in another house another pair. The door stood half open, fire burned on the floor. The man was shaping a tree into a weaver's beam. His beard was trimmed; his hair cut from his forehead; he wore a straight shirt confined by a buckle at the throat. The housewife turned a spinning-wheel, drew out thread, and laid it by for cloth. She wore a fillet round her head; a kerchief round her neck; a ribbon over her shoulders. This pair were Afe and Amma. And Rig was received by them, and entertained three days and nights, and then went forth upon his way. And when nine moons had waxed and waned, Amma bore a son, red and blooming, with beaming eyes. He was dipped in water and was called Karl. And the boy grew and throve. He learned to tame oxen; to fashion tools; to build houses; to make wool-cards; to guide the plough. And to him Snor was led home as his bride. She wore a kirtle of goat's hair; keys hung from her belt. And they gave one another rings, and built them a house They had many sons and daughters, and from them are the yeomanry descended.

And Rig journeyed on, and came to a stately hall. The door was shut and decorated with a ring. He

entered. The floor was wide. There sat *Fader* and *Moder*. Their work was pastime. The husband bended bows; twisted bow strings; polished arrows. The wife stiffened and smoothed her sleeves, and placed a coif upon her head. She wore a jewel on her breast; a silken kirtle, and blue-dyed linen. Her face was fair, her neck whiter than purest snow. Moder spread the white cloth on the table; and placed thereon thin, white, wheaten cakes; silver plates filled with various meats; bacon and roasted fowls. Wine was poured from cans and embossed goblets. And they drank and talked till the day was done. Rig tarried here also three days and three nights, and went forth upon his way. And when nine moons had waxed and waned, Moder became the mother of a son, who was dipped in water and was called Jarl. His hair was light; his cheeks fresh colored; his eyes keen as those of the young eagle. And he grew and throve; he twisted bow-strings; bended bows; shaped arrows; threw the spear; shook the lance; rode horses; trained dogs; drew the sword; and used himself to swimming. Then came Rig again to the hall; taught him the Runic letters, and owned him for his son. The young Rig carried

war over the mountains; won victories; and divided goods and lands. He married the daughter of Herse, the delicate, fair, noble Erna. Konr was the youngest of their sons. He strove with his father in Runic lore and vanquished him. Then was it the son's lot to be himself called Rig, and to have learning above all others. From him are kings and nobles derived.

Here ends the saga of Rig.

FRID.

Thanks, Kumba; the saga is beautiful and full of meaning.

KUMBA, (*aside.*)

Beautiful! yes, for her.

FRID.

But even as I listened to the tale my thoughts wandered. A dear yet terrible memory rose up before my soul. This day, just three years since, I first beheld king Dag.

KUMBA.

This day? Ah, tell me how it was!

FRID.

Thou knowest my father's brother, gloomy Atle, had slain the father of king Dag, the great renowned

king Ifvar. Thirsting for vengeance on their father's foe, Dag and his brother Ragnar stormed my uncle's castle. Shut up within one of the inner rooms, with my young brother Arild, I listened to the clash of weapons, the shouts of warriors. Arild clenched his little hand in rage. I prayed the gods to spare the infant's life, for he was dear to me as to a mother Suddenly I heard a cry, followed by a loud shout of triumph—'Atle has fallen! Ragnar has slain Atle!' But soon another cry was heard—'Ragnar is wounded Ragnar dies! Revenge! Revenge! And now, with terrible din, the combatants approached my room. The door fell, shivered by a battle axe. It was not fear that in that hour I felt, but anger and a proud despair. I seized a shield and spear, resolved to die rather than yield myself a prisoner. 'Back!' thundered a commanding voice, as the armed men were rushing forward, and gleamed-round by flashing swords, as by a thousand lightnings, I saw a man before me—a god he seemed to me.

KUMBA.

And that was *he!*

FRID.

Yes, that was he. It was king Dag. 'Yield thy

self prisoner!' cried he; my answer was my lance pointed at his breast. My trembling arm was wounded by his sword, and he disarmed me. Bleeding, I sank down at my brother's side, and cried, 'Mercy for him! Mercy for the young child!' 'Death to the traitor's son!' shouted the champions, and pressed forward. King Dag covered us with his shield, and turned against them. 'Back!' cried he, once more, to the furious throng. 'The victory is won. We war not with the helpless. Down with weapons!' But a mad rage for blood had seized on Ragnar's followers. They shouted wildly, 'Blood for blood!' Thou shouldst have seen king Dag. Noble and strong as Thor, he raised his sword in aid of the defenceless. Like lightnings fell the whirring blows among the raging champions. Heaps of the slain were piled around him.

KUMBA.

The brave, the noble!

FRID.

Astonished by his superhuman strength, the furious throng gave ground. Then cried king Dag. 'To me, my men! each true friend follow me!' He raised my brother Arild from the ground, and bade one of

his followers bear him in his arms. He took me in his own; and guarding me with shield and sword, bore me forth safely from the fray. I saw no more. A faintness overpowered my senses; my eyes closed.

KUMBA.

But *he* watched over thee!

FRID.

When I re-opened them, I found it night; but night illumined by a fearful glow; I saw upon a distant shore, a blazing castle; but soft winds fanned my cheek; and on, still on, the winged sea-dragon bore me over the dancing waves. Under a purple canopy, my brother Arild stood beside me, and clapped his little hands in childish rapture. Before me, with uncovered head, his godlike features lighted by the flames, knelt Dag, and I—I was his prisoner.

KUMBA.

Oh blessed lot!

FRID.

Yes, his prisoner; the brave, the noble one had taken my heart captive; I could not, as I would, turn in proud anger from my conqueror. With his strong arm he had disarmed me; with his love he sought to win my love; and when he prayed, as soft, as mild as

Balder; when, as a suppliant, he besought his captive to share his crown and kingdom, I no more strove to hide my heart from him; he clasped me to his breast, and called me bride.

KUMBA.

Thou happy one!

FRID.

Yes, I was happy. Days and nights passed by; life was as a ray of heaven's light to me. All was so beautiful about me. The sea-dragon flew over the blue sea, under the dark blue heaven; the waves danced cheerily: the winds sang among sails of purple silk, wrought with rich silver vines. Each day king Dag practiced his men in martial sports; himself exciting them to a fierce, glad daring, while I beheld them from the royal tent. When evening came, and sea and wind were still, then king Dag took his harp and played to me; and sang that my heart throbbed with rapture. Then the clear stars looked down; the sea birds skimmed over the waters' foam; these a glowed with a wondrous brightness; and we sailed on as borne on waves of fire. While all adored the hero, the hero worshiped me. Yes, I was happy; happy amid war's perils.—My father's castle had been burned and plun-

dered. Foes overran the country of king Dag. We had no home. My hero bore me to Upsala's temple; there to remain in peace, while he drove forth his foes, He came again, and brought me to this castle; but left me soon; for he had vowed to celebrate no joyful festival, till he had freed his sister, queen Gudruna, from her unhappy bondage. Here shall I live, guarded by faithful men, and wait his coming from the Saxon land.

KUMBA.

And should he not come back?—If he should fall in combat on the foreign shore?

FRID.

No, no, I fear it not. A mighty sorceress, a wise far-seeing Vala, who visited the temple of Upsala, read me his destiny. His course shall be victorious and long. From this adventure he shall come back safe, and rich in spoils and honor.

KUMBA.

Thou hast seen the glorious temple, the court of the great gods! Thou hast lived with Diar and Disor. Were they beautiful? Were they happy?

FRID.

Yes, beautiful aud happy. A noble calm, an in-

finite loftiness, dwells in their mien, and breathes from all their being. Earth's joys and sorrows move them not. High above these they stand, and gaze into the clear heaven of the gods. The high priest's countenance is, as we figure that of Odin, full of all power and mildness. In his majestic presence, all unrest dies; the stormy heart feels its wild beatings stilled—the troubled spirit finds itself at peace.

KUMBA.

(*Aside,*) Peace, Ah! And I—(*aloud*) And the temple —is it magnificent?

FRID.

Far above all description. The walls are all of gold and precious stones, their splendor lights up the surrounding region. The radiant glories of the temple bear witness to the power of the divinity; while, in the lofty hills, the sacred groves, a deep religious silence, never broken but by the Diar's hymns, invites the soul to holy contemplation. Had I not loved king Dag, I would have given myself to the service of the gods, and passed my life with the Assynior.

KUMBA, (*aside.*)

She chooses between the temple and the throne; and

FRID.

When I look back upon those days, emotions strangely sweet and holy agitate me. Ah, it was beautiful in those temple courts, those lofty halls! There, pondering the counsels of the gods, moved, with slow step, the deeply thoughtful Diar.—

KUMBA.

And didst thou learn their heavenly wisdom? the knowledge that gives power to calm the waves, to subdue fire, to lighten heavy sorrow? Didst thou learn the secret of the beginning and end of all things?

FRID.

No, I was yet too young; my heart too full of the world's outward splendour and of love. My voice was blended in their songs; I mingled in their nightly dance; but the deep meaning of their mysteries was hidden from me. They thought me, and with reason, unable to receive it.

KUMBA.

And what is all the wisdom of the priest, compared with king Dag's love?

FRID.

Thou art right, Kumba; but had I never known

him, I would have chosen, rather than sit on any earthly throne, to live as priestess in the holy temple. Asgaard, even thus they call it, is a foreshadowing of the heavenly Asgaard, the eternal home of God. And beautiful it is to walk on earth before the gods, with prayer and sacrifice, and thus pass upward to their heavenly dwellings.

KUMBA.

That I can well believe. They sacrifice then in the temple?

FRID.

Yes, often. But there are, in especial, three yearly feasts of sacrifice which Odin has appointed. They have newly celebrated there the victory-sacrifice. This is offered in the spring, when the unbound waters offer a free path to the daring Vikings.

KUMBA.

Are human victims ever offered there?

FRID.

Yes; oftenest slaves and criminals.

KUMBA.

Slaves and criminals?

FRID.

Yes, but sometimes even the noblest life. The victim is led forth arrayed in festive garments. The seat of the gods is sprinkled with his blood; it is even showered down on the assembled people. The smoke that rises from the fire of sacrifice is rich with perfumes, and fills the halls with a sweet-scented vapor. Clear and loud sounds forth the chant—

KUMBA.

But the victim—makes he no complaint? Do not his cries of agony disturb the holy songs?

FRID.

His cries are stifled; or they are lost in the loud songs of praise.

KUMBA.

Are lost in songs of praise?

FRID.

Yes; no discord mars the beauty and majesty of the high festival.—But, Kumba, what was that? I hear the trampling of horses, the winding of horns, the raising of the draw bridge. It is a messenger—and of importance. Good Kumba, hasten, and bring me tidings quickly—

SCENE V.

FRID.

It is a messenger from Dag. My heart assures me of it. Oh, how it beats! Be quiet, restless one!—Yet, thou dear trouble! I would not exchange thee for the unruffled calm of the Assynior. My king! my Dag! to love thee is my life!—But if my heart beats thus with hope of tidings from thee, how shall I look on thee and not die with gladness?

SCENE VI.

FRID. KUMBA.

KUMBA.

A letter—from—king Dag. Below are costly gifts.

FRID.

A letter! give it me. Ah, ye dear characters! He comes!—comes soon! Before the next new moon will he be here. Victorious, rich in honour and in spoils, he comes back to his bride, 'the ever loved.' Oh, my betrothed! My Dag!

KUMBA, (*aside.*)

And I?

FRID.

I will myself speak with the messenger. I would see the man who has so lately seen my loved one. Kumba, go thou and work upon the golden girdle, and be industrious, Kumba, that it may soon be ready. I wish to wear it on the king's return—I shall then see him soon! Oh, happy that I am!

SCENE VII.

KUMBA. (*alone.*)

And I? Oh, wherefore was I born? And must I look upon this happy meeting?—I listen to these vows of endless truth? Must I adorn her? I help to make her lovely in his eyes? Thus she commands. Ye deem not, oh ye great! that slaves have human hearts. Ye trample them beneath your feet, and take no heed of their death-agonies—'The victim's cries are stifled, that they disturb not the *high festival.*'—Men drag them to the altar, murder them, and drown their death cries. From the fire,

that burns their quivering limbs, rises a delicate perfume for the priests chanting their hymns of praise. Human victims! Slaves! Poor wretches! No help, no pity! They are dragged forth in spite of prayers and struggles. They must.—Terrible destiny! Fearful necessity!—Even for me—and why necessity for me? If I will not, who shall compel? Necessity is only for the weak. The strong give themselves law; constrain the gods themselves. My stature is but mean—my will is mighty—Tremble sacrificers!

If I should murder Frid, put on her dress, and in the twilight of the evening meet king Dag?—Loki was cunning and Loki had success. I know that his fire burns in my veins. (*She dresses herself in Frid's garments and places the crown upon her head.*)

In truth a splendid dress! Well may the heart beat proudly under all this pomp. Now am I a princess. (*Surveys herself in a steel mirror.*) Alas, I am not so! My form is low and mean, my eyes are small, my hands are coarse.—Alas, I am a slave! my lot is cast. (*Throws off the dress and stamps on the ground.*) No, I will no longer bear this misery. Snakes rage within me and demand wherewith to still their hunger. This must have an end. Shall I seek the

temple, and look on the high priest's countenance, whose godlike calm can quiet all unrest? No, in his hand I see the bloody knife! The victim falls; the sacrificers sing—and this is godlike calm!

LJUS-ALFS *in the air.*

Come trustingly to Nature,
As to a mother's breast,
And let her gentle soothing
Quiet thy soul's unrest.
Does not her soft air fan thee?
Is not her sun-light thine?
Why, with all gladness round thee.
Does thy sick heart repine?

In all this wealth of beauty
Thou has a daughter's share;
The world holds no unloved one,
There is no orphan there.
As the fair earth is circled
By the clear blue above,
So is all being compassed
By an unchanging love.

Say not, ' In blessed quiet
Dwell the Eternal Powers;
Their lofty calm is troubled
By no lament of ours;'
Though to those homes of stillness,
Come no disturbing care,
Though clouds of earthly sadness
May cast no shadow there,

Yet is there love in heaven
Even for the humblest here;
Not unregarded falleth
The meanest victim's tear.
From those high cloudless regions,
The deathless spirits see
Where for earth's children dawneth
A bright futurity.

Forth from earth's humblest valley
From her proudest mountain height,
Shall burst the song of welcome,
Hail to the dawning light!
Through the dark silent dungeon
Through the damp toilsome mine,

On all the homes of sorrow,
The gladdening rays shall shine.
Hope to the long despairing!
Joy to the long oppressed!
The broken heart finds healing,
The weary heart finds rest.

From the earth's pleasant borders
The Alfs must pass away,
Their music may not welcome
The dawning of that day,
Yet hosts of happy spirits,
Thronging the halls above,
Shall tell of man's redemption
And the All-father's love.

KUMBA. (*Wakes from a deep reverie and says slowly.*)

But perhaps—after these struggles—after this sacrifice—when the last pangs are passed, when the last darkness has closed over him, there shall be light, shall be peace for the victim. Let him but wholly resign himself, be still, adore and die! I hear sweet voices speak to me of peace and reconciliation. These are perhaps illusions of the fancy. I have had such before.

SVART-ALFS *under the earth.*

Art thou a slave in spirit
As thou art slave by birth?
Why dost thou doubt and waver,
Weak daughter of the earth?
Let the gods' favoured children,
Sport in the glad sunshine;
Be light and hope their portion—
Vengeance and night are thine!
Theirs is the bliss of loving;
Be thine the joys of hate;
No prayer—but proud defiance!
The brave command their fate.

KUMBA.

Yes, it was an illusion. Familiar voices rise from out the depths, upbraiding me. Despicable is the still complaining, still hesitating soul—despicable will I not be. I know what I will do. Yonder among the cliffs, upon the desolate shore, which wanderers dread, and which the seaman shuns, there dwells a giant woman, renowned for various knowledge, and skilled in all the mysteries of Seid. (3) To her will I betake myself, will give her all that I possess most

precious, that she may use her magic arts for me, and give my spirit rest. Already does the thought revive my soul. They say that snakes and wolves are her companions—I fear them not. I have known those that rage within.

SCENE VIII.

FRID. (*Alone, stands at a window.*)

What a storm! The night is terrible! In vain have I sought rest upon my couch. The sea-mew's shrieks rise shrill above the rushing of the waves. Ran's (4) fearful daughters, with their white streaming locks, wander from cliff to cliff, seeking some human heart to clasp to their cold bosoms. How they rage and foam! the terrible! Fearfully flash forth the blue lightnings from the rolling clouds! Oh, ye friendly powers who wish man's good, watch over my beloved! Lead him home, conqueror of storms and waves. King Dag is of a god-descended race—so is his bride. Oh, guard us, bless us both! (*Pause.*)

Is it the darkness of the night that casts this gloom upon me, or is it the shadow of some coming evil?

My soul is troubled with a strange disquiet. Dark thoughts rise up in me, like black Alfs from the earth. Frid was not used to be thus weak and fearful. She has not shrunk before the thunders of war; and when the winter nights were dark and threatening, then thought she on king Dag and all was light. Why, therefore, now, when he is no more distant, now when each moment brings him nearer to me, when I so soon shall look in his clear eyes, why now this secret fear, this tremour in my heart?

The scene is dark and fearful. A watch-light burns upon the desolate shore—I know there are unfriendly spirits who seek to injure man; but can a miserable, covetous witch work evil to a son of Balder? (5) Shall such a fear disturb a hero's bride?

(*Pause.*)

What a strange power is this that moves itself in space, so mighty to destroy! And that small star, so mild, so faint, like one imploring meekly, for whom do its pale rays shine through the gloomy night? Why is its light so unlike to the sun's in splendour—in influence on the heart? How it contends for life with the black clouds! Now it is lost in darkness.—Strange world! strange fearful depth!—

I have been very happy. I have walked forth in life as in the glow of a bright sunshine. When for a moment the night threatened me, then dawned a clearer day. May not the night be closing round me now? Perhaps henceforth my way must lie through darkness.

I have thought little upon life. The happy only feel, they do not think. I have enjoyed, and I have blessed the gods. But all are not so fortunate as I. To many—life has few joys; to many—none. How looks the world to these? How deem they of the goodness of the gods?

Thoughts rise in me that I have never known before. Are not the gifts of fortune strangely apportioned here. The deities of fate water the world's tree with life-giving streams, but the drops fall unequally. Ah, but the fresh, green, richly-watered boughs should bend themselves over the dry, neglected branches, and share with them the precious moisture. Such surely must have been the will of the good gods, and it shall be Frid's joy to follow it. And if one day my hour shall come, my hour to suffer—What is this vision?—What horrible form rides on the pale moon-beam? Black and small is it like a son of Hela. Is it one of

the imps, children of Loki and of Angeboda? or is it the creation of my fancy? No, it comes nearer, it is no illusion. Speak frightful one! Whence art thou? What wouldst thou?

SVART-ALF.

From beneath the earth, I come—I come a messenger to thee.

FRID.

To me? Wherefore?

SVART-ALF.

Sorrow awaits thee. Death threatens thee.

FRID.

Death! Ah, no, I will not die!

SVART-ALF.

Death is near thee!

FRID.

No, no, I fear thee not. Forth, dark spirit, forth! I fear thee not, I am of a god-descended race.

SVART-ALF.

Hela summons thee to her gloomy dwelling.

(*Vanishes.*)

FRID.

No, no, I will not! Forth! What frost is in my veins! Kumba!

SCENE IX.

FRID. KUMBA.

KUMBA.

Princess?

FRID.

Kumba, I am sick. No, look not so pale, it will pass off. Is he gone, the frightful one? Seest thou aught, Kumba?—there in the moonlight?

KUMBA.

I see nothing but the shadow of thy head. See it thyself.

FRID.

It was an ill-dream—a fearful dream; it has shaken me deeply. Give me to drink, Kumba.

KUMBA.

Take this draught, princess, it shall give thee strength.

FRID.

Thanks, I have need of it. How thy hand trembles. The draught was good. Thanks, Kumba.

KUMBA, (*after a long pause.*)

Dost thou feel thyself better?

FRID.

Yes, I am better. I am calmer now. Go to thy bed again, good Kumba. I too will sleep, and seek to forget that dream. Good night.

KUMBA.

Good night. (*Goes.*)

FRID.

I will try to sleep. I will no longer think upon that frightful vision. It was but an illusion, a shadow of the night. It will fade before the light of day—I will sleep—I will sleep———

PART SECOND.

SCENE I.

Flower Garden. Evening.

KUMBA. FEIMA.

KUMBA.

Thou weepest, Feima. Wherefore?

FEIMA.

Canst thou ask? Is not the princess sick? sick even to death? Does not her step each day grow weaker, her cheek paler? Do we not see the trace of bitter tears upon the face that used to glow with smiles? Is not her voice too, weak and broken?

KUMBA.

And dost thou weep for this?

FEIMA.

Yes, I weep, I must weep, that the beautiful, the divinely good, must go forth from the earth, that

Hreimer and I will miss our beloved mistress, that the young king shall come and find his fair bride faded. How desolate will the rose-garden be, when we no longer see the princess there, no longer hear her voice, and see her lovely face, queen over all the flowers. Oh, but it was a feast to me only to look on her.

KUMBA.

Thou didst call her divinely good; why didst thou so?

FEIMA.

Is she not so? Would she not make all happy?

KUMBA.

She takes from her rich treasure a few grains of gold dust, and scatters them around her. Who would not so? What did she ever bear, what did she ever suffer for another? Would she, even with a finger, touch the burden under which thou sinkest? Would the proud princess stoop to aid thy toil?

FEIMA.

Kumba, thou talkest idly. Could one descended of the gods do this?

KUMBA.

And wherefore not? Is not goodness, is not mercy godlike?

FEIMA.

Yes, but the high gods and their children may not toil like slaves. It is not meet for them. Each one has his own lot.

KUMBA.

And even, therefore, will I not serve thy gods They are too high to waste their cares on us. The god to whom my spirit shall bow down must be of other sort.

FEIMA.

What god then couldst thou serve?

KUMBA.

He shall be born beneath a lowly roof; he shall share all our sorrows, bear our burdens; his friends shall be among the poor and needy. He shall, like us, endure reproach and shame, like us shall be contemned by the mighty; and, sharing all the fortunes of the slave, guiltless shall meet the shameful death of guilt. But after death he shall return in glory, and thus he shall declare unto his own; I have known all your needs, have borne your burdens, and have become acquainted with your griefs, that ye too might continue to the end, that your hearts faint not in the day of trouble. In the

All-father's heaven are many homes, and there he hath ordained a place for you. There shall the weary rest them from their toil; the heavy laden lay the burden down; there shall be no more death nor pain nor sorrow; but in untroubled peace, in undimmed brightness, ye shall abide throughout eternity.

And he shall utter many words of power, at which the great ones of the earth shall tremble. Behold! the proud brought low, the lowly raised! The poor man stands erect before his lord; the slave demands his birthright as a man. Fear is upon the tyrants!—Glorious! Glorious!

FEIMA.

What spirit speaks from thee? Foam stands on thy white lips. Thy words, how fearfully they move me! Kumba, sister, they thrill me, yet I understand them not.

KUMBA.

That I do believe.

FEIMA.

But this I understand, that she is good who made my heart light with her friendly words, who had a cottage built for me and Hreimer. I know that I would rather bear a double load, than have the

smallest burden laid on her. When she commands me, and I do her bidding, I feel it must be so, that it is best for both.

KUMBA.

In soul as by thy birth a slave! Live on in the dust!

FEIMA.

I will so, Kumba. Yet shall it not disturb my peace, nor hinder me from trusting in the gods. I go now to intreat them for the princess, to pray them that they give her back to life, to the young king, to us. Blessed may he be who shall stay her sickness, who shall turn from her the cold hand of Hela! But curses be on him who works her harm! And if it be a human hand, be it accursed! May Nifelheim's cold poisons drop ever on the traitor's heart! May no more gladness be for him on earth!

KUMBA.

Sister, speak not thus!

FEIMA.

Yes I will speak thus: I will wish evil to the hand that would work evil to the good. But I will not yet despair, I will offer up this chain for her. It was from her I had it; for her then will I offer it, to appease the unfriendly powers.

SCENE II.

KUMBA, *alone.*

Blessing, cursing, all is alike to me and moves my heart no more than the faint evening breeze the ash tree's leaves. Thus has it been with me since I ate of the she-wolf's heart in the old witch's cave. From that hour my heart was stern and cold. The rage, the maddening torment in my bosom ceased. Only the thirst for vengeance was not stilled—I have had strength to give to the proud princess, the poison-draught the giant-woman mingled. Since then my soul has lain as in a trance. I think it sleeps—sleeps deeply—Shall it ever wake? (*Pause.*)

Frid is dying. Now is her bright course closed. Now does she share the fate of other mortals, and learn what suffering is. Now shall she never meet king Dag's embrace. Her stateliness, her pride, her beauty,—all shall wither, moulder. No longer shall she walk in light and gladness, as if to mock my mean and joyless life—I shall have rest—Rest?—thou didst promise it powerful, dark Grimgerda, but

still in my soul's depths a dark disquiet lurks. I thirsted for her tears, I thought that they might cool the fever of my soul. I hungered for her groans, her agonies.—This might perhaps come of the she-wolf's heart.—I was not once so cruel.—And yet,—could it be now undone, could I in Urda's sacred fountain wash myself pure from guilt; could I but innocent go forth and die!—But it is now too late. Away, then, coward thought! It is too late. I cannot now go back; then forward, forward into night! I cannot now be reconciled with heaven. On, then, to the abyss!

Frid comes. Now will I mark her feeble step, wan cheek, and failing glance. Bear thyself proudly now, king's daughter, boast now of love, of glory!—I will conceal myself behind this hedge of roses, and so, unseen, listen to her complaints. They shall be sweeter to me than the song of nightingales.

SCENE III.

FRID.

This is the hour in which all nature weeps the death of Balder. Now every tree, and leaf, and flower is bathed in quiet tears; the stars themselves are dim with sadness. Now is nature weak, her heart is open; now, perhaps, she may have feeling for a mortal's sorrows, may hear my prayer, and give my sufferings ease. (*She leans thoughtfully against a tree.*)

He died, the good, slain by a crafty foe, and in that hour the flame of peace was quenched, and Discord lighted up her blazing torch. Sorrow and tears then found a home on earth. Before it was not so; the gods walked gladly through her blooming vallies; in love did they create the race of man. But then came Jettemör and stirred up strife, and fearful monsters rose from out the depths, unknown on earth before.

I marked it not till now,—the pain that wastes me, opens my eyes to the world's suffering. What is there good, what is there pure in life? Does not the

Midgaard serpent, Jormungandur,(6) enclose the earth within his venomous circle? Are not the roots of the world's tree gnawed by the Serpent-king?—Is not a worm hid in each human breast, in every flower's bosom? It sleeps a while; the flower sends forth its sweets, the mortal smiles. It wakes at length, comes forth to light and stings; the flower withers and the mortal dies.

Even my hour is come; my hour to suffer. Since that night when the Alf came upon his fearful errand, some hidden evil has consumed my life. My days and nights are passed in restless pain. My eyes are dim, my lips are parched, my weak limbs fail, all my life's strength dies out.

Oh, Dag! oh, my beloved! how will it be with thee when thou shalt find thy bride thus wasted to a fading shadow? When—perhaps—but no—that were too terrible! Die, without seeing thee! that were eternal misery!—Oh, no, the fates are not so cruel. Does not the heaven of the great father compass me, so clear and mild? Is not all nature round about me, tearful and full of gentleness? Why should I then despair? May I not hope yet to win back my life? May not this suffering be a trial sent but to make me better and

more thankful? I will bow down before the powers of nature, and ask them for their help; great is my suffering, great is my need of healing.

Oh, ye kind powers, who dwell in the green trees! Powerful the juices that the sun distils into your friendly bosoms. Proudly ye stand against the storm and winter, but in your arms the young birds find a home, and in the shade of your protecting branches the weary traveller hath leave to rest. Hear me now, gentle beings, hear my complaint, my prayer! Suffering consumes my life, pain bows me down untimely to the grave. Answer, oh, answer! Have you the strength that shall renew my strength! Have you the life that shall revive my life?

SPIRITS OF THE TREES.

We have it not.

FRID.

Beings that lurk within the bosom of the flowers, that look so gladly up to meet the light, ye whom I have tended, loved, caressed! tell me kind spirits, can ye succor me?

FLOWER SPIRITS, (*gently and sadly.*)

We cannot.

FRID.

Pale dwarfs who dwell within the cliffs and stones, to you I turn and pray; pray even with tears, for, ah, my pain is great! Even ye weep the death of Balder; some goodness then must dwell within your breasts. Deny me not; give help, give healing!

DWARFS, (*harshly.*)

No!

FRID.

Every where denied! Nature has cast me off, Almighty Father, wilt thou too reject me? Even to thy heaven I dare to lift mine eyes, and pray thee for the life that was thy gift. Dost thou not look with love upon the earth, and on the beings that thy will created? Is not the evening sky bright with the radiance of thy countenance? All-father, hear my prayer! Grant me to live! Let me, at least once more, see my betrothed; oh, if thou hear my prayer grant me a sign; let a star fall, let a breeze stir the grove.

Silent all! The grove is still; the glow of evening fades; gloom gathers round me.—Even here denied! Denied or else unheard. But this alone is certain—I must die! (*Withdraws slowly.*)

KUMBA *comes forth.*

Glorious! she has entreated, has besought like me; like me she is unheard. Now are we equal, princess! Thanks for this hour of triumph, mighty sorceress!

SCENE IV.

FRID *lies upon a couch. It is twilight.*

Long, weary hours, how heavily ye pass! And not one yields a moment of repose or of forgetfulness. Worms gnaw and fret yet deeper my life's tree. Hresvelger, thou devourer of the dead, who sittest at the northern verge of heaven, and wavest thy black wings, I feel their cold wind fanning me. Oh, I am sick, sick even to my soul.—And Dag is from me!

I die; I leave the friendly earth; I leave my chosen one. No more shall I be gladdened by his look, no more shall I be guided by his hand.—How shall it be with me?—They tell of heavenly dwellings, whither the noble and the just shall come, when they have passed through Hela's gloomy portals. What are these dwellings? Shall my home be there? Shall I at any time see Dag again? Shall I still love when death has chilled my heart? Oh, how uncertain, pale, and fearful all in this dim land of shadows! I die.—I feel how my life ebbs.—Shall I go hence into eternal night? And is all here, love,

duty, sorrow, patience, is all in vain? Oh, bitter, bitter thought!

Eternal Father, no, it cannot be! Yet will I hope, will yet have faith in thee. Thou art the author of the sun, of love. Thou must be good even as thou art great. Maker! before thy will I bow my head. Father! I bless thee even in my pain. Though my tears fall, they fall not to upbraid thee. Forgive my weakness, I complain no more. I have loved thee and put my trust in thee: still will I love and trust thee; in my love I shall find strength to meet my destiny.

How peaceful is it now within my breast! I breathe more lightly; mild airs fan my brow. It is as if the breath of life passed over it. How light it is!

(*A radiant Ljus-Alf is seen at the foot of Frid's couch.*)

What is this vision? my eyes are dazzled.

(*She covers her eyes with her hands, after some time uncovers them.*)

Art thou still there? Beautiful, bright vision, thy radiance is as the splendor of the sun, thy aspect mild as that of the spring heaven. Who art thou? Whence?

LJUS-ALF.

My home is in the regions of the air. My office is to minister to man.

FRID.

Oh, then, thou comest hither, the messenger of light and joy to me. Thou hast brought with thee some of Iduna's apples, (7) by whose power the gods renew their youth. Thou comest to give me back to happiness. Why art thou so mild, so radiant? The gods have sent thee here to end this bitter proof, to give me back my Dag.—Why are thy mild eyes sorrowful? Why is thy clear light dimmed? Ah, radiant, gentle being! with thy rays kindle in this failing breast the glow of life once more.

LJUS-ALF (*mournfully.*)

Daughter of man, I cannot!

FRID.

Thou canst not? Art thou not sent, then, by the friendly powers, to gladden and restore?

LJUS-ALF.

To console. To make thy death less bitter.

FRID.

I must die, then.

LJUS-ALF.

The Nornor have decreed it.

FRID.

The deities of fate? The fearful, unrelenting! How have I angered them? Why do they will my death?

LJUS-ALF.

Daughter of earth, I know not. To us is given to know the will of the eternal powers, we share not in their counsels.

FRID.

Wherefore then come to me? Why, by awaking hope anew, awake new sorrow? Leave me! Can I not die without thee? Leave me, thy light is harmful (*The Ljus-Alf withdraws to a distant part of the chamber and remains there with a faint glimmer.*)

FRID.

Is he gone? I was too hasty. Oh, how weak I am! And he came hither to console me. But see I not his friendly light yet gleaming, faintly, yonder? Oh, come again, thou beautiful, kind being! forgive a mortal's weakness. Come back, console me, give my spirit strength! (*The Ljus-Alf returns surrounded by a faint light.*

FRID.

I know that thou art good. I feel that I may let thee look upon my heart. Within short space I have endured much sorrow, and through my own pain, have I learned to know the griefs that mortals suffer. At times it seems to me that there is nothing good upon the earth. I even doubt the goodness of the gods ;— doubt if the life they gave have any worth ; for is not all here transient and uncertain ? Does not all bloom to fade ? Are not all born to die ?

LJUS-ALF.

Doth not the clear blue of the unchanging heaven, circle the changeful earth ? Thus doth the great All-father, within the heaven of his steadfast love, compass the universe.

FRID.

And Discord too has made her home on earth. And ancient sagas tell of deadly strife, by which the earth shall one day be laid waste, when gods and men, sharing a common doom, shall sink in darkness.

LJUS-ALF.

They shall arise in glory. ONE GOD, powerful and wise and good, shall govern all. Evil shall cease from earth ; the gentle Balder shall make his home in her

green vales once more. Daughter of man! the path of life is rough, but it leads through atonement unto peace. The day will come, when heaven and earth shall meet; when gods and men, as in the early time shall walk together in the vales of Ida.(8)

FRID.

But the souls that have gone hence before this final day?—While the powers strive, while the worlds sink and rise, where shall the long departed have their home?

LJUS-ALF.

The Eternal Father hath for his children many a pleasant home. Fairest of all is Gimla. There, in a city brighter than the sun, shall dwell the just, the truthful among men.

FRID.

Is there a home for me? Shall the high Gimla be my dwelling place?

LJUS-ALF.

Daughter of man, I cannot tell thee this. Many are mortal homes; many the heavenly. Frigga perhaps may summon thee to Vingolf, to dwell among the blest Assynior. Thou wilt, perhaps, be of the chosen maidens, who share with Gefion her radiant

palace. But though I know not of thy future home, this, in the name of the great gods, I promise,—life after death!

FRID.

Oh, tell me, tell me,—of all my cares this is the heaviest—shall the grave sever me from Dag? Shall I not, after death, look on the face of my beloved again?

LJUS-ALF.

Is thy soul strong in love?

FRID.

Parted from him, life has no worth for me. To give him deathless life, gladly could I renounce it.

LJUS-ALF.

Rejoice, then, earth-born maiden! Thy love is powerful even over death.—Death has no power to part thee from the loved one.

FRID.

Good and all-powerful gods! — What hast thou said?

LJUS-ALF.

Thou shalt be after death his guardian spirit, (9) and guide him through the chances of this life. It shall be thine to turn each danger from him, to warn him

of the foe that seeks his harm. It shall be thine to visit him in dreams, and whisper him of thy undying truth. When, weary from the fight, he lays him down, thou shalt be near him in a song-bird's shape, and with thy music soothe him to his rest. Or, as a rose, thou shall breathe perfume for him, and in the pleasant odors tell thy love. Or, should some traitor lie in wait for him, thou shalt assume his likeness, and the foe, casting his lance at the, shall pierce the air.—Thou weepest!

FRID.

Tears of joy! How sweet thy words are, spirit of the air! No longer doth the hour seem fearful to me, that shall divide me from this earthly life, since I can follow thee, my Dag! can serve thee, far better then, than in this mortal form. But, Ljus-Alf, tell me farther; how shall it be when his last hour shall come?

LJUS-ALF.

Thou, his Fylgia, shall guide thy hero to a hero's death. Passing from battle and from victory, the land of shades will have no gloom for him, for thou wilt meet him there.

FRID.

Pleasant but fearful are thy words. A strange fear thrills me; dim seems my life in the pale land of shadows.—Yet doth love live there, and in the spirits' world I shall behold my Dag. But after this blest meeting must he leave me? May I not follow him to Odin's halls? May I not sit beside him at the board, and fill his goblet with the sparkling wine?

LJUS-ALF.

Mortal, inquire no more! No further can I answer. Deep are the counsels of the eternal powers, and lesser spirits may not fathom them. Within the breast of the Almighty, lies many a hidden mystery. Many a marvel of beauty, power, and love, yet unconceived, but by the eternal mind, shall one day be revealed.

FRID.

And the life that shall be kindled in the heavenly home—shall this too fail?—shall there be death in heaven?

LJUS-ALF.

This the gods know. We know not.

FRID.

Bright are the visions thou hast brought before me

spirit of light! but shadows compass them.—My soul is sorrowful.

LJUS-ALF.

Grieve not, oh, child of earth, but bow thee to the will of the All-powerful. Seek not to pierce the sacred mysteries, that mortal may not scan. Content thee with the light the gods vouchsafe thee; adoring, trusting, sink on the bosom of Eternal Love.

(*Vanishes.*)

SCENE V.

A wild, rocky region.

KUMBA.

Where am I? I have wandered from the path. About me flit the phantoms of the night, above me thunder the avengers.—It is so dark without me and within,—so stifling! — Air! Light! (*Thunder and lightning. A tree near Kumba falls. She starts aside and supports herself against a rock.*)

What was that? Only a tree that fell before the lightning. Why do I tremble? Why do I shrink back? Is not this wild uprooting known to me? Does not a fiercer night-storm rage within me? (*Pause.*)

Why is all now so calm, so silent? This stillness is a pain to me.—Why do the pale stars gleam thus fearfully?—The sky is clouded;—can they look through the clouds? What rides there upon the back of the dark cliff?—Only a cloud;—only a thunder-cloud.—The stars shine out!—good!—I am tired with wandering. I have been going as in a magic circle.—I must have rest.

(*Kumba leans against a rock and speaks more calmly.*)

This is the hour when the wastes teem with life; when monstrous shapes, born of the midnight, seek the homes of man. The moon, the wizard's sun, lends its pale rays to light them on their path. There, on her winged dragon, rides forth Mara, who stifled Vanland in his quiet sleep: from the black swamps rise Dwalin's dwarfish daughters; and the small imps come tottering from their holes. They come to waken pain, to stir up thoughts of evil in the breasts of those who linger near their haunts. They bring disquiet, and I ask for rest. —I seek the sorceress, her who has deceived me. I will compel her yet to keep her promise. But it is dark;—how shall I find the path? who shall direct me? (*A sudden gust of wind.*) Ha, Whirlwind, her familiar. This tells me the witch is not far off. (*Another gust of wind.*) Again! I come, Grimgerda! (*Thunder and lightning.*)

Why dost thou shudder, tree, that thy roots tremble? Why is there a sound of moaning through the woods? The scared dwarfs seek their lurking places, trembling before the thunder of the mighty ones. Cowardly beings! Though the cold drops stand on

my brow, I shrink not, creep not hence like you.—Send forth thy lightnings, father Thor, thou angry ruler of the clouds! Since, after death, I am to be thy bondslave, it is but meet that thou shouldst serve me now, and light me on my way with thy keen-glancing fires.

SCENE VI.

A mountain cavern. Within glows a red fire. A cauldron stands upon the fire; three adders hang over it, from whose mouths fall drops of poison. Grimgerda stirs the cauldron, muttering low and making mystic signs. Black Alfs, evil Disor and small Trolls move restlessly about the cave. Two wolves guard the entrance.

SMALL TROLL.

Hark! a rustling noise I hear!
Mortal steps are drawing near.
Up, Trolls! a woman comes this way!
Now we will have sport and play;
We will mock her, we will tease her;
As she passes let us seize her.

GRIMGERDA.

Peace, noisy pack! To your posts! What is it to you that I have guests? If you cease not your clamor, you shall be changed to stones, as it has chanced to some of you already. Back to your holes, I say. Here, stupify yourselves with the poison steam, and then, sleep till I call you. Only my chosen spirits may remain with me.

(*The little Trolls shrink back terrified. Four shadowy figures, of frightful aspect, remain with the sorceress. Grimgerda strikes the ground with her wand. The wolves lie down and Kumba remains standing in the entrance.*)

GRIMGERDA.

Stop there, presumptuous mortal; I know thee!

KUMBA.

Dost thou know Kumba, the daughter of the slave? Thou knowest then that thou mayst chain her foot, but not her will or tongue.

GRIMGERDA.

Perhaps, even these if I would. But I would not— Come near. Why art thou here?

KUMBA.

To bid thee, sorceress, to keep thy word.

GRIMGERDA.

What? Thou art discourteous.

KUMBA.

Give me rest! Thou didst promise rest; thou hast deceived me!

GRIMGERDA.

Not so loud! Thou wilt wake my little ones who sleep.

KUMBA.

They sleep! I sleep no more!

GRIMGERDA.

What is wanting to thee?

KUMBA.

Every thing! Oh, Grimgerda, if thou hast human feelings in thy breast, feel for my need and help me. The strength thou gavest has left me; the calm, that for a time I felt, is gone; a grief consumes me, more torturing than that I knew before my crime. I shrink from the sun's light; I tremble at the rustling of the leaves. No sleep visits my eyelids, no tear cools them. And when I look on her whom I have murdered, on her who daily wastes away before me, my heart is pierced as by a poisoned arrow. This arrow is remorse. It is remorse that brings me now

to thee. This deed must be undone. Grimgerda, thou that didst work the ill, must know the cure. I ask of thee the means to stay the poison, the means to give the princess back her life.

GRIMGERDA.

Check the swift arrow in its flight, or bid the stream flow backward to its source! The deed once wrought can never be undone; and the strong soul never disowns its work.

KUMBA.

Thou canst not save her, then?

GRIMGERDA.

Cannot because I will not. Because the daughters of the iron forest (10) know neither fear nor wavering.

KUMBA.

Could gold or jewels buy the princess safety?

GRIMGERDA.

I love gold; yet I will not lie to thee. Gold cannot save her. She must die.

KUMBA.

It is then certain. She must die. And I—I am accursed.

GRIMGERDA.

Poor child!

KUMBA.

Thou canst pity me? Thou hast a heart, then. Grimgerda, show me kindness! Oh, I have suffered much. Hast thou known suffering? Knowest thou the grief that wears away the heart?

GRIMGERDA.

I understand thee and I feel for thee. Here, my poor child, take food and strengthen thee, then will we walk together.

KUMBA.

No, I cannot eat.

GRIMGERDA.

Such meat is seldom offered. It can give wisdom and strength to those who eat of it.

KUMBA.

Give me rest!—Give me the goblet of forgetfulness!

GRIMGERDA.

This draught only the dead may drink.

KUMBA.

Then give me death! Let one of thy snakes sting me.

GRIMGERDA.

Snakes sting not their own kind.

KUMBA.

Thy words are sharper than their stings. But I forgive thee all. Give me but death! death and forgetfulness!

GRIMGERDA.

Those only can forget who have done nothing worthy of remembrance; no great deed, good or evil.

KUMBA.

Alas! forgetfulness is not for me. But there is a sleep, a trance, a state between life and death, in which we know nor day, nor night, nor cloud, nor sunshine; know only that we would not wake. May not this sleep be mine?

GRIMGERDA.

Thou askest what belongs to higher spirits. Thou, a slave's daughter, art not worthy of it.

KUMBA.

This is denied me too. Keep thy word, then, in any way thou canst. I bought thy promise dearly, let it not be for nothing. Rest thou hast promised me. And thou shalt keep thy word, or by Nastrond I swear—

GRIMGERDA.

Silence, base slave! Darest thou threaten me?

Creep, like a worm in the dust, before my feet, or wolves shall rend thee, snakes shall sting thee. Fall down and pray for pardon, or—

KUMBA.

Or what? Think'st thou to frighten me, Grimgerda? The sun's pure light may fright me; the spirits whispering in the grove may make me tremble, but thee I fear not. What tortures hast thou in thy power, keener than those that I have felt already? Bid thy wolves rend me, I will laugh at them. But in my death-hour thou shalt fear me, witch! What should I dread from thee? What can I lose?—Thou hast thy power, thy treasures. Therefore tremble! I feel a strength within my tortured breast greater than thine. Tremble before the curse, that in my last hour, my pale lips shall utter!

GRIMGERDA, (*aside.*)

Ha, strength, great strength! It shall serve greater cunning. (*Aloud*) Kumba, why this childish insolence? Why would you anger her who pities and would serve you? Be calm, be humble; I can help you, and I will.

KUMBA.

Ah, tell me how? Forgive me my impatience. I am alm now and humble. Speak, oh speak!

GRIMGERDA.

All thy soul's torment comes from this, that thou hast stopped half way. Free thyself from thy miserable bondage—fully!

KUMBA.

Speak more plainly.

GRIMGERDA

Enter my service fully and for ever. The first work I shall give thee to accomplish, shall ratify our compact.

KUMBA.

And my reward?

GRIMGERDA.

Thou shalt win great power in this earthly life, and, in the other life, still greater power to work harm to the mighty of the earth. Thou shalt be there one of my chosen ones, even as the powerful Disor thou hast seen about me.

KUMBA.

Have they peace?

GRIMGERDA.

Observe them.

KUMBA.

I see no sorrow in their aspect. At times it is as if a smile moved on their ghastly lips, but there is no joy

in it. Of some the countenance is fixed and rigid, as if about to change itself to stone.

GRIMGERDA.

Thou seest them in their twilight dress; their night cloaks in which they journey to the mortal world. They do not always look thus dull and joyless; when I will, they shine forth in bright festive garments; and at a sign from me splendour surrounds us exceeding that of Upsal's temple. Behold! (*The witch waves her wand, and the cave seems for a moment dazzling with gold. The sorceress and the Disor appear in splendid dresses with crowns upon their heads.*)

GRIMGERDA.

What thinkest thou?

KUMBA.

It is splendid. (*Aside.*) But they are none the more beautiful for this.

GRIMGERDA.

What sayest thou?

KUMBA.

It is splendid.

GRIMGERDA.

Ay, thou mayst well think so. Thou hast seen no-

thing like this among the boasting Jarls. (*Waves her wand, the light vanishes.*)

KUMBA.

Yet it seemed to me, the gold was red like glowing fire; I thought I saw lizards and spiders creeping among the dazzling gems.

GRIMGERDA.

Because thy eyes are unused to such splendour, and therefore does it seem to thee like spider's webs. But gold and jewels are not all we have here. We have our mirth too, and, believe me, this cave has seen right merry sports. Here we know nothing of remorse or care. We eat and drink, sleep when we will, dance and make merry to our heart's content. But thou shalt see. (*Grimgerda blows on her horn. Black Alfs, Dwarfs, and small Trolls swarm forth, and join in a wild dance.*)

KUMBA (*aside.*)

Is this mirth? No, it is madness. (*Aloud to a small Troll who would force her to join the dance.*) Away, monster! Off, odious Troll! I have no mind for your vile mirth. Grimgerda, stop the hateful revelry!

GRIMGERDA.

It is not so easy to stop them, when they are once

warm for the dance. We must have cold water. (*Strikes the rock with her wand; a stream of water gushes out over the dancing Trolls, who run off howling, and creep back to their holes. The witch laughs.*) These sports charm thee not because thou art still unwonted to them. But ask my little ones if they find the dance wearisome. When thou hast been a little time among us, thou wilt be as merry as they. (*Kumba sighs.*) Well, slave's daughter! have you a mind in my service, — to be free?

KUMBA, (*bitterly.*)

As one of these?

GRIMGERDA.

No, even more free. Kumba, I mean well by thee; I have great things in view for thee. I see in thee a greater strength than I have found in most of those about me; I will charge thee with a work no meaner spirit could perform. If thou fulfil it, as I shall direct thee, so shall all trouble leave thy soul for ever; nor only this; but I will hold thee as my daughter; thou shalt share my treasures; thy power to bring destruction on the high, to rule the low, shall equal mine. Thou shalt share my dwelling, and

when thou wilt, thou shalt transform it to a splendid palace, and deck thyself—

KUMBA.

Be brief! what is the price that I must pay for peace?

GRIMGERDA.

Hear, and mark well my words. In the strong castle, on the other side the water, there dwells a Jarl, named Harald Sigurdson.—

KUMBA.

I know him. A brave nobleman. A friend to the king Dag.

GRIMGERDA.

I hate him. And yet more I hate his wife, the haughty Herborg.

KUMBA.

Well!

GRIMRERDA.

They have a child; a boy of three years old; his parents' highest joy.

KUMBA.

Often have I borne the sweet infant in my arms.

GRIMGERDA.

This infant thou must kill.

KUMBA.

I? A little child!

GRIMGERDA.

And when its heart's blood cools—drink it!

KUMBA.

Horrible!

GRIMGERDA.

This alone can cure for ever thy soul's sickness.

KUMBA.

No, I cannot!

GRIMGERDA.

Thus only canst thou win my friendship, and share my treasures and my power. Thus only can the daughter of the slave become a free and happy being.

KUMBA.

The gods defend me!

GRIMGERDA.

Thinkst thou the gods take thought for such as thou? —But I can understand thy horror, Kumba. Nature shrinks back from unaccustomed deeds. But this divides the great souls from the mean, that they have power to conquer nature's weakness.

KUMBA.

I will not! Let it be with me as it may. I will not!

GRIMGERDA.

Thou wilt not? That we will see. Thou goest not hence alive, till thou hast sworn to do it.

KUMBA.

Thy wolves may tear me, but I will not do it. Driven by wild passion I have sought to still my hate; but, a soft, innocent child, that never wronged me!—No, I am not yet so fallen. Thanks, sorceress! thou hast given me back my strength. I can defy thee and despise thy offers.

GRIMGERDA.

What! art thou proud even of thy cowardice? Go, wretch! Thou art not worthy to be near the sorceress. Go, pigmy, and remain a slave!

KUMBA.

Better even so, than to be such as thou art.

GRIMGERDA.

Wretch, and wouldst thou exalt thyself above me! Thou, base, cowardly murderess, who hadst not strength to withstand evil, nor courage to be resolute in crime? Base slave, go hence! My wolves disdain so mean a prey. Go, but take my curse with thee! Still wavering, doubting, trembling, thy life shall wear away in anguish. Thou shalt wither, as

the thistles wither in the narrow rock-clefts. Thou shalt pine as the hunted wolf pines in the dreary waste. In the after-life thy soul shall float in the chill mists that overhang the fens of Lickstrand. Swayed hither and thither, by the sluggish wind, vainly shalt thou strive to rise, vainly shalt thou stretch forth thy shadowy arms, seeking to clasp some being that might love thee. Thy portion shall be abject, lonely wretchedness!

KUMBA.

Thou tellest me but what I know already. Hast thou no heavier curses, witch?

GRIMGERDA.

Yes; and though it cost me dear, yet will I utter them. Know, then, Kumba, that there is ONE who could have rescued thee; who could have given thee peace even on this earth; who would have borne thy spirit, after death, into eternal light. But him thou didst reject; thou didst thrust from thee thy deliverer, and through all time his image shall pursue thee, reproaching and avenging! See and tremble! (*Grimgerda waves her wand and speaks with effort and with averted head.*)

Thou whom I saw in the pale realm of Hela! Thou

on whose face I look not willingly! God, sinless, spotless, the Creator's chosen! Baider the good! I conjure thee to earth! Hither by might of the Dark Powers I summon thee! Here, in the name of everlasting Justice, I charge thee to appear and work thy vengeance!

(A bright light appears in the depths of the cave. In the midst is seen the form of a beautiful youth, of mild and majestic aspect. He fixes upon Kumba a look stern and sorrowful. Kumba utters a cry of inexpressible anguish, and sinks to the ground with outstretched arms. The light vanishes, and the shrill, scornful laugh of the witch resounds through the cavern.)

SCENE VII.

Frid rests, half reclining, upon a magnificent couch. Kumba stands at her feet and observes her. The sun is going down.

FRID.

Soon, soon will all be past. Soon will the light of a new world surround me. For the last time I bow my head before thee, thou glorious earthly sun! Thanks that thy rays yet once would warm my bosom! thanks for thy last caress! My life's sun too goes down; but the sweet calm of evening fills my heart; I feel that it is beautiful to die.

Ah, even in death my dim eye seeks the sea, and watches for his sail, and calls him home. But he shall come and find his bride no more.—She has gone forth, but only, oh, beloved! that she may follow thee, may serve thee better.

CUMBA. (*Aside*)

The pangs that rend me pass the pangs of death.

FRID.

My soul is reconciled to death. Past is all murmur, all complaint. Mine eye is dim, but all is bright

within me.—Death cannot part the loving.—Love is deathless. See! The bright arches of the heavenly bridge! (11) The waves of the celestial waters play about it. Welcome, thou radiant vision! Thou pointest out the path that I shall tread. Soon shall I come! All-father! I am ready. I am at peace with heaven, at peace with earth.

KUMBA, (*aside.*)

How her light shines forth! How my night deepens! I no longer hate her. My hatred aims its shaft at my own breast.

FRID.

Kumba, my faithful Kumba! Thanks for the love that thou hast ever borne me! Wear thou this gem in memory of me. Be thou free, Kumba, be thou rich and happy.

KUMBA.

Princess, but one thing do I ask of thee.

FRID.

And what?

KUMBA.

Thy hate!—Thou diest by my hand; by poison that thy slave prepared for thee. Know that she hated thee; that like a snake she stung thee to the heart, and from thy pains drew pleasure.

FRID.

All-righteous gods!—Thou, Kumba! Thou didst hate me! Wherefore?

KUMBA.

For thy good fortune;—for thy beauty's sake;—because of thy betrothal with king Dag, whom I too dared to love; because the gods' injustice gave thee all, and gave me nothing; because of the soul-sickness that envy and despair had wrought in me. For these I hated thee; hated, and am avenged.

FRID.

Oh, Kumba, thou couldst feel thus to me, when I so loved thee and so trusted thee!

KUMBA.

I have betrayed thee. I have murdered thee. Hate me, then, loathe me!

FRID.

Thy hand has given me death. A higher hand has granted deathless life. For my own fate I grieve not; but for thee, unhappy one! my soul is sorrowful. Ere I go hence, take my forgiveness, Kumba!

KUMBA.

Canst thou forgive me?

FRID.

Oh, Kumba, hate no more, so shall thy soul have peace. Thou hast not wrought me so much evil, Kumba. Thy soul was sick—I understand it now. Forgive me that I was so happy near thee, and did not mark thy suffering! Look not so wildly on me. Give me thy hand. Thou wast unhappy, Kumba; this was thy crime.

KUMBA. (*Aside.*)

Can such goodness be? such boundless love? My heart will break!

FRID.

Thy lips move strangely, but I hear no sound.—Dost thou remember yet our childish years? Dost thou remember when thou camst to me a suffering, ill-used child? These hands did heal thy wounds, these eyes wept over thee. I loved thee from that hour. And now my soul cannot go hence in peace, if thou do hate me. Some evil spell has bound thy heart, my child; thou couldst not thus have hardened it against me. Come nearer, Kumba, yet once would I weep over thee!

KUMBA.

Thou hast prevailed!—Behold me at thy feet!—Hear my last prayer!

FRID.

My Kumba, speak!

KUMBA.

Let thy slave die with thee!—Let the same fire from which thy soul shall rise, release my guilty spirit. I would yet serve thee in the land of shades.

FRID.

Follow me then in death. The God of gods will then appoint thy lot. It may be, in the after-life, princess and slave shall be but empty names.—Come, join thy soul with mine. Never hast thou been nearer to me.—Together will we die;—both shall watch over him whom both have loved.

KUMBA.

These tears! O rapture! Let me bathe thy hand with them.

FRID.

Yes, bathe my hand with them! They warm my heart. The sea! the sea! Look to the sea!

KUMBA.

Oh, gods! he comes!

FRID.

He comes! I thought it was the gleam of his white banner;—but my sight fails.—He comes!

KUMBA.

Thou wilt not see him. Thou diest. O, thou must hate me!

FRID.

No, I pardon thee. Do thou forgive thyself!

KUMBA.

Never! thou diest!

FRID. (*Her arms oustretched towards the sea.*)

I go, I go, but to a brighter world; there, oh, my Dag! to meet thee once again! (*Dies.*)

KUMBA.

Dead? Yes, all is past. Now will I also die! Avenging deities, I wait my doom! She has forgiven, but can ye forgive? To you I render up my guilty spirit: Oh, mighty Thor, accept the sacrifice! Though thy wild winds shall urge my tortured spirit, unresting round the confines of the earth, in silence shall it bear; the doom is just. But, god of storms! thine empire hath an end. The day will come, when to a mightier King, thou shalt resign thy power.—Will He have pity?—Shall not the humble, the repentant soul, at length find rest upon some quiet shore?

(*Sinks at the feet of Frid.*)

CHORUS OF LJUS-ALFS *in the distance.*

Those on the hill-tops watching,
  Shout that the dawn is nigh!
The vallies answer, hailing
  The day-spring from on high.
Forth from the gloomy hovel!
  Forth from the dungeon's night!
All ye that sit in darkness,
  Welcome the blessed light!

No more the dim eye faileth,
  Seeking to pierce the shade,
No more the sick heart pineth,
  Weary with hope delayed.
To all earth's dreary places,
  Tidings of joy are borne;
Deliverance to the captive!
  Comfort to them that mourn!

We fade in the blue ether;
  Our music dies away;
But other, holier voices,
  Shall hail the sacred day.

Once more by heavenly minstrels,
Shall the green earth be trod,
Hymning a world redeemed,
A reconciled God!

THE END.

NOTES.

(1) *Page* 19. 'The principal and most sacred tree of the gods is the Ash-tree Yggdrasill, which is the best and greatest of all trees. Its branches extend over the whole universe, reaching beyond the heavens; its stem bears up the earth; its three roots stretch themselves wide around; one is amongst the gods, another with the Frost-Giants, the third covers Niffelheim. Under this root is the fountain Hvergelmer, from which flow the infernal rivers, and in which lies the serpent king Nedhögg, who is continually gnawing at the root. Under that root which is situated in the land of giants, there is a well in which all wisdom and prudence are hidden, and which belongs to Mimer. Under the root of the Aser is the well of Urda, and it is here that the gods sit in judgment.

'Near Urda's well stands a fair building, from whence issue the three maidens, Urda, (the past,) Varanda

(the present,) and Skulda (the future.) These maidens appoint the time that all men have to live, and are called Nornas. They take water each day from the well and pour it upon the Ash, lest its branches should perish. The dew which falls from Yggdrasill's branches is called honey-dew, and on this bees love to feed."

No account is given of the origin of the Scandinavian Parcae; their existence would seem to be coeval with that of the tree whose life they guarded. Urda had charge of the sacred mead, which conferred the gifts of wisdom and poetry upon those who drank of it. To know the destinies of the universe was given to the Nornas alone; the gods themselves had only dim forebodings of their own fortune, and took frequent counsel of the deities of fate.

(2) *Page* 20. The ancient Scandinavians believed in one eternal and omnipotent Being, to whom they gave the name of the All-fader. This Being was never mentioned but with fearful reverence. They ascribed to him no origin, and concerning his nature and attributes they presumed not to conjecture.

(3) *Page* 62. The Scandinavians believed in two kinds of sorcery, one of which was called Galldur, and was to be effected chiefly by means of runes and sons

engraved upon the bark of trees. The second kind was called Seid. This consisted in the preparation of certain soups and ointments, of which the ingredients varied according to the effects to be produced. They consisted chiefly of the heart and blood of serpents and wolves, of dew, of various herbs, &c.; runes were likewise thrown into the cauldron. It was generally believed that persons eating of the heart of certain animals, became possessed of the qualities peculiar to those animals. Thus, the heart of the snake was thought to bestow cunning, that of the wolf ferocity, and so forth. Loke himself is said to have lost his original nature, and to have become treacherous and cruel after eating the heart of a witch.

(4) *Page* 63. Ran was the wife of Gymer, or Aegir, the god of the sea. She was the cause of all shipwrecks. The souls of those who were lost at sea were supposed to become subject to her. The billows were her daughters. A similar superstition still prevails in some parts of Sweden, where the malice of Ran and the power which she acquired over those who perished in her dominions, are yet ascribed to the mermaid.

(5) *Page* 64. Balder was the second son of Odin and Frigga. He was the noblest and gentlest of the

Scandinavian divinities; the beloved of gods and men. He exceeded all beings in wisdom and eloquence; his gracefulness and beauty were such that ight was said to beam forth from him as he moved. His palace was Breidablik,—the wide-shining,—and here nothing mean or unholy could enter. His death is the principal event in the mythological poems of the Scandinavians, and was regarded as the prognostic of the destruction of the universe, and the downfall of the gods themselves.

The seventh month of the Scandinavian year, including the period from the twenty-first of May to the summer solstice, was consecrated to Balder. After this time the days become shorter, the nights are lengthened, and this ascendancy of darkness over light is typified in the death of Balder by the agency of the blind god Hodur.

(6) *Page* 77. Jormungandur was the offspring of Loke and Angerbode, (messenger of evil.) Odin, having been warned that this monster would one day be the cause of much evil, cast Jormungandur into the ocean, where he grew to such a size, that he wound himself about the whole earth. There he was to remain, waiting his revenge at the great day

of the destruction of the universe.

(7) *Page* 83. Iduna was the wife of Bragi, the god of eloquence and poetry. She had in her charge the apples of immortality, of which the gods used to eat when they found their strength decaying, and were immediately restored to youth and vigor.

(8) *Page* 86. 'A new earth, fairer and more verdant than the other, will arise out of the sea; from which the grain will shoot forth of itself. Vidar and Vall will survive the general destruction, and dwell upon the plain Ida, where Asgaard lay before. Thither also will repair Magne and Mode, taking Miolner with them. Balder and Hodur will return from Hela, and these gods will sit together and talk over the events of past times.'—*Edda.*

(9) *Page* 87. The Scandinavians believed in the existence of tutelar divinities whom they called Fylgior, (following spirits.) They had the power of taking different shapes at pleasure.

(10) *Page* 96. (Iron forest.) Jernvidi was an enchanted forest in Utgard. It was the dwelling-place of giant witches, who had power to raise storms, and used to entice mortals into their power in order to destroy them. The trees of this forest were of iron; it was

subject to the rule of an old giant, who sat immovably fixed in a bending position. From these witches the sorcerers, male and female, were descended.

(11) *Page* 110. The rainbow, (Bifrost,) was the bridge over which the gods passed on their way from heaven to earth. The red color which is seen in it is a flaming fire, which serves as a defence against the giants. Heimdall, the warden of the gods, had his station upon this bridge, and thence observed all that was passing in the universe.

H. G. Clarke and Co., Printers, 66, Old Bailey.

STRIFE AND PEACE,

OR

SCENES IN NORWAY.

BY

FREDERIKA BREMER,

AUTHORESS OF "THE NEIGHBORS," "THE H—— FAMILY,"
"THE PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTERS," ETC., ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH.

LONDON:
H. G. CLARKE AND CO., 66, OLD BAILEY.

—

1844.

STRIFE AND PEACE.

OLD NORWAY.

Nature has known no change, felt no decay,
For untold ages in this ancient land;
Her dark woods wave, her rivers hold their way!
Majestic as when fresh from Nature's hand.
Down the dread depths, as in the dawn of time,
The raging cataracts their waters urge,
And proudly now, as in their youthful prime,
The grey cliffs offer battle to the surge.

Before a song of joy or sorrow had been sent forth from the hills of Norway, before a wreath of smoke had risen from her quiet valleys, before a tree in her dark forests had fallen by the hand of man, before king Nor had given his name to the land he traversed in pursuit of his captive sister—yes, before a Norwegian existed—the lofty Dovre raised its snow-capped summits before the face of the Creator.

This gigantic chain of mountains stretches itself to the west as far as Romsdahlshorn, whose foot is bathed by the western sea. To the south it forms that immense mountain region, which, under various names,

occupies a space of one hundred and fifty square miles, and contains within itself all that is most grand, most terrible, or most beautiful in nature. Here still, as on the world's first day, stands the Fjall-stuga, the mountain-house, built by an invisible hand, whose walls and towers of ice only that hand can overthrow. Here still, as in the dawn of time, the morning and the evening twilight meet, in a fleeting embrace, at midsummer, on the snow-covered summits. Now, as then, rage the mountain torrents, as they dash headlong into the fearful depths. The ice mirrors still give back the same images, now enchanting, now terrible. Still unattempted by the foot of man, lie wide Alpine tracts, rivers, and woods, on which only the eagle and the summer sun look down.

Here is the old but ever young Norway. Here the gaze of the beholder is overpowered, but his heart expands; he forgets his own sorrows, his own joys; he forgets all that is mean and trifling, while a holy awe steals over him, and he feels that the shadow of God rests upon nature.

This region lies in the heart of Norway. Is thy soul weary of the bustle of the world, the frivolities of daily life? is it oppressed by the confined air of rooms, the dust of books? or is it worn by deep, consuming passions? fly, fly, then, to the heart of Norway: alone with these grand, silent, yet so eloquent scenes, listen to the beatings of the mighty heart of nature, and win for thyself new strength, a new life.

Wilt thou look upon the great, the majestic? See Gausta raise itself upon its giant knees, and look down

six thousand feet to the plain below. Behold the Titan forms of the Hurrunge, the Fannarauke, the Magnafjeld; see the wild streams, the Rjukan, the Vohring, the Vedal, foaming and thundering over the mountain, plunge into the abyss below. Wilt thou soothe thy soul with the delightful, the tender? These, too, environed by these fearful scenes, dwell here in peaceful solitude. The heardsman's hut stands in the narrow valley; herds of cattle feed in the green meadows; the peasant maid, with her fresh bloom, blue eyes, and braids of yellow hair, tends them, and sings the while the simple, tenderly mournful melody of the land; and in the midst of the valley, like a mirror for the charming picture, lies a small lake, deep, calm, and of that clear blue which belongs to the waters of the glacier regions. All here tells of pastoral tranquillity.

But on other portions of this wide region, the doom of an eternal death seems to have been impressed, even in the morning hour of creation. The vast shadows of the dark mountains fall over the valleys where only moss grows—over seas whose still waters are bound by eternal ice. The stillness of death reigns in these valleys, broken only by the crackling of the glacier, and the thunder of the avalanche. No bird moves its wings, or raises its song, in this mournful region—only the melodious sighs of the cuckoo are faintly borne hither by the midsummer wind.

But wouldst thou see Nature in her pomp and stateliest magnificence? then see the embrace of summer and winter in old Norway. Descend to the plain

of Swalem, look upon the valleys of Clamaadt and Sillefjord, or the beautiful Westfjordale, through which the Maan glides quietly, embracing in its course little green islands overgrown with blue-bells and wood-lilies. See how the silver rivers, leaving the mountains, wind among clumps of trees and fertile fields. See how, behind the nearest mountain, with its leafy woods, the snow-capped summits rear their ancient heads, and look down like reverend patriarchs upon the youthful of their race. Mark from these valleys the still shifting tints of the morning and evening hours, upon the heights—in the depths. See the fearful magnificence of the storm; the calm beauty of the rainbow, which arches itself over the waterfall. Oppressed and care-worn man, behold this—receive it into thy soul, and breathe again.

From these beautiful scenes we turn now to more unknown regions; to the wide valley where the Waldhorn raises itself even to the clouds; where, between steep rocks, the clear Urunda flows, and the cataracts of the Djupadahl rush down not the less proudly, that the wondering eye of the traveller but seldom rests upon them.

We descend now into a region, whose name and place on the map we will not ask the reader to search for, and which we shall call Heimdale.

HEIMDALE.

Knowest thou the hidden vale!—
The still, the nameless—o'er whose silent meads
Wander no grazing herds; on whose green turf
The restless foot of man has worn no path.

We shall give the name of Heimdale to a branch of the great valley of Hallingdale; we shall place it in the parish of Aals, and leave it to the learned to be astonished at our boldness. Heimdale, like its mother valley, possesses no historical associations. Of the ancient kings of the Hallingdale, but few memorials remain to us. A few stones, remnants of buildings which have long since disappeared; some mounds of earth, graves of the ancient race, give dim intimations of the mighty who have passed away. It is true, that from early time, this valley has been inhabited by a people remarkable for their wild warlike spirit, simplicity of manners, and contentment under hardships and privation; but rest and strife have succeeded one another; the peaceful and the warlike have fought, and built, and gone silently to their rest; the fame of their deeds has never passed beyond these lofty mountains, never penetrated these pathless woods.

A river—Iokulen—flows through Heimdale. Bursting wildly through a narrow mountain pass, it finds in the valley a free course, and flows clear and calm, between green banks, till its waters are once more imprisoned by the granite hills; then again raging fiercely, it rushes forth in a wild torrent till it loses

itself in the great Hallingdale river. Just there, where the river spreads itself out in the widest part of the valley, lies a large estate. A well built but somewhat dilapidated house stretches out its arms to the depths of the valley. It commands a beautiful prospect, extending far into the blue distance. Lower down the river rise hills, covered with wood; and little huts, surrounded by low hedges and beautiful grass paths, lie scattered here and there, at the foot of the mountains. On the other side of the river, a quarter of a mile from the manor, a little chapel lifts its peaceful spires. Behind this chapel the valley gradually contracts itself.

On a cool September evening guests arrived at the long deserted house. These were an elderly lady, in deep mourning of noble but sorrowful aspect, and a young blooming girl. They were received by a young man who bore the title of steward.

The door closed upon the mourning lady, and for months long she was nowhere seen in the valley. She was distinguished there by the title of "the Oefwerstinna." * It was said that the fate of Fru Astrid Hjelm had been a sad and strange one, and many and various were the tales related of the events of her past life.

She had not visited the estate of Semb, her paternal inheritance, since she left it as a bride. Now—a widow—she had returned to the home of her childhood. It was understood that her companion was a Swede,

* Colonel's wife.

who had accompanied her from a Swedish watering-place, in order to superintend her household; and it was reported that Susanna Bjork bore unlimited sway, in the domestic economy; directing, in the interior department, the movements of Larina, the parlor-maid, Karina, the house-maid, and Petra, the cook; and ruling, not less absolutely, the guardians of the farm-yard, Matthea and Budeja, Goran the herdsman, and all the inferior tribe, both bipeds and quadrupeds.

THE FEATHERED RACE—THE TROUBLED WATERS.

First Contention.

"For Norway."

"For Sweden."

The morning was clear and fresh. The September sun shone brightly in the valley; smoke rose from the cottages. The lady-mantles, in whose channelled cups clear pearls trembled, the silverweed, with its yellow flowers and silver-bright leaves, grew along a little foot-path which wound round the base of a moss-grown hill. It conducted to a spring of clearest water, which, after forming a little pond, led its silver stream dancing and murmuring to the river. On this beautiful morning, Susannah Bjork approached the spring in her train came "cock, and hen, and chicken small." Before her waddled a troop of geese, gabbling, noisily; all white but one—a grey one. The grey goose

walked, with a timid, hesitating air, a little behind the others, compelled to retain this position by a tyrant in the white flock, who drove him back, with outstretched neck and loud cry, whenever he attempted to approach the rest. The poor grey always retreated before his white oppressor, but bare spots upon his head and neck proved that he had not fallen into this abject condition before he had convinced himself, by the severest proofs, of the inefficacy of all remonstrance. None of the other geese concerned themselves about their ill-used brother, on which account Susanna took him under her especial protection, and endeavoured, by dainty morsels and kind words, to console him for the injustice of his kind. After the geese, came the demure but clumsy ducks, the petulant turkey-cock, with his awkward dames—one black, and one white—last, came the turbulent race of chickens, with their stately, pugnacious cocks. The prettiest of all the party were a flock of pigeons, who timidly, yet confidently at the same time, now alighted on Susanna's shoulder and outstretched hand, now rose in the air and flew in shining circles round her head; then dropping to the earth, tripped on their little fringed feet, to drink at the spring; while the geese, with loud noise, plunged splashing into the river, and threw the water over the grass in a pearly shower. Here, too, to Susanna's great vexation, was the grey goose compelled to bathe at a distance from the others.

Susanna gazed upon the beautiful picture before her, upon the little creatures who played and enjoyed themselves about her, and a visible delight beamed from her

eyes, while, with elevated feeling, her hands clasped together, she softly murmured, "My God, how beautiful!" But she started suddenly, for, at this moment, close to her, a loud, clear voice sang,

"How glorious is my father-land,
The sea-girt, brave old Norway!"

And the steward, Harold Bergman, laughingly greeted Susanna, who exclaimed, angrily, "You scream so, that you frighten the pigeons, with your old Norway."

"Yes," continued Harold, in the same tone of enthusiasm,

"Yes, glorious is my father-land,
The ancient sea-girt clime,
Whose granite cliffs like bulwarks stand,
And brave the hand of time!
Hail to old Norway!"

"Old Norway," said Susanna, as before, "I think it is a real scandal to hear you talk about your old Norway, as if it were older, and more eternal, than God himself."

"And where, in the whole world," cried Harold, "will you find such a noble, highminded people; such glorious streams, and such high, high mountains?"

"We have men and mountains in Sweden, too," said Susanna, "Oh, if you could but see them! They are of quite another sort!"

"Another sort! what sort, then? I will wager there is not a goose in Sweden to be compared to our excellent Norwegian geese."

"No, not one, but a thousand, and all larger and fatter than these. But in Sweden every thing is larger and better than in Norway."

"Larger? the men are certainly much smaller and weaker."

"Weaker? smaller? You should see the people in Uddewalla, my native town!"

"How can any body be born in Uddewalla? Does any one really live in that place? It is a shame to live in such a place. It is a shame only to pass through it. Why, it is so miserably small, that when the wheels of your carriage are at one end of the town, the horse is putting his head out of the other. Don't talk about Uddewalla."

"No, it is not worth while to talk to you about it. For you have never seen any thing in your life, but your Norwegian villages, and cannot form an idea of a real Swedish city."

"I have no desire to see any such cities, God preserve me from it. And then your Swedish lakes, what miserable puddles they are, compared to our great Norwegian sea."

"Puddles? our seas! Large enough to drown all Norway in them."

"Ha, ha, ha! and all Sweden is no larger than my cap, compared to our Norwegian sea; and this sea would rush down irresistably upon Sweden if our Norway did not nobly defend it with her granite breast."

"Sweden defends herself, and needs no other help; Sweden is a noble land."

"Not half so noble as Norway. Norway reaches to

heaven with its mountains. Norway stands nearest to God."

"Norway may be presumptuous, but God loves Sweden best."

"Norway, I say."

"Sweden, I say."

"Norway! Norway, for ever! We will see! The one that throws the highest, wins for his country. For Norway, first and highest!" And Harold threw a stone high into the air.

"Sweden, first and last!" cried Susanna, while she threw a stone with all her strength. Fate decreed the victory to neither party; the stones met in the air, and then fell, with a loud noise, into the spring, about which the animals were assembled. The geese screamed; hens and ducks fluttered, terrified, about; the turkey-hens ran into the wood; the turkey-cock, forgetting his dignity, followed them; the pigeons vanished in an instant, and with flushed cheeks, warmly contending which stone went the highest, Harold and Susanna stood beside the troubled waters. This moment perhaps is not the most favorable one we could choose, we will, however, avail ourselves of it, to give a slight sketch of the contending parties.

Harold Bergman has marked and rather sharp features. His usual expression is that of deep seriousness, but this could give place, in a moment, to one of the most roguish playfulness. His dark hair fell in waves over a brow which might well be the abode of high, clear intellect. His figure was of fair propor-

tions, and all his motions were unconstrained and graceful.

He was brought up in a highly respectable family, had received a careful education, and was considered by his friends as a young man of uncommon promise. He had just left the S. seminary, and was preparing to travel into foreign countries, in order to extend his knowledge of agriculture, when accident introduced him to the Oefwerstinna Hjelm, at the time when she returned, a widow, to her native land. In consequence of this he changed his plans. In a letter to his sister, he writes thus;

"I cannot well express to you, Alette, the impression she made upon me. I might describe to you her high stature, her noble bearing, her countenance which, in spite of many wrinkles, and a pale complexion, still retains the traces of great beauty; her high forehead, round which locks of mingled black and grey escape from beneath her simple cap; I might tell you of her deep earnest eyes; of her voice, whose tones are so sweet and yet so solemn, and still you could form no idea of what it is that makes her so unlike every one else. I have heard that her life has been as remarkable for its virtues, as for its sorrows. Virtue and sorrow have imparted to her a quiet nobleness; a nobleness never attained by the favorite of fortune, and which is stamped upon her whole being. She seemed to me as if all the littlenesses of the world passed by her unmarked. I felt for her an involuntary respect, such as I have never felt for any other human being, and with it a strong desire to come nearer to her, to be

useful to her, to deserve and win her esteem—it seemed to me that I should, by this means, myself become nobler, or at least better. And when I learned that she wished for a skilful and experienced steward, to take charge of her long neglected estate, I offered myself, in all modesty, as such an one; and when I was accepted, I felt an almost childish delight, and departed immediately for her estate, in order to make myself at home there, and prepare every thing for her reception."

Thus much of Harold, now for Susanna.

Barbara Susanna Bjork was not handsome; she could not even be called pretty—she was too tall and stout for that—yet was her appearance not unpleasing. Her blue eyes looked out into the world so honestly and frankly; her face, round and full, told of health, a good heart, and high spirits; and when Susanna was gay, when her fresh mouth opened in a merry laugh, it was enough to make any one gay only to look upon her. But true it is, that she was often in an ill-humour, and then she was not quite so charming. She was a tall, well-formed girl, with feelings too strong to be altogether amiable, and her manners betrayed a certain want of refinement.

Poor child! how was she to have acquired this, in the abode of disorder, idleness, and poverty in which she had passed the greater part of her life? Her mother died while Susanna was yet very young—then came an aunt into the house. She busied herself with house-keeping and gossiping, let her brother seek his pleasure at the club, and left the child to take care

of herself. The education of Susanna consisted in this—she learned to read tolerably, and when she was naughty they said to her, "What, has Barbara come again? Fie, for shame, Barbara! Away with Barbara!" And when she was good again, "See, here is Sanna, again! Welcome good little Sanna," a method which certainly had some advantages, if it had only been more judiciously employed. But often was the little girl addressed as Barbara when it was not at all necessary, and this had always the effect of calling in the said lady immediately. In this manner, the child was accustomed to go out as Barbara, and to return as Sanna, and thus early formed an idea of the double nature which existed in her as it exists in every human being. This idea was afterwards fully and clearly developed by Susanna's religious instruction, the only education which the poor Sanna was destined to receive. Yet, how infinitely precious is this instruction to an ingenuous mind, if it be instilled by a kind and judicious teacher. Susanna was fortunate enough to meet with such an one, and she now learned to know in Barbara the earthly demon who is to be subdued, and in Sanna, the child of heaven, who is to be freed and glorified. From this time began an open war between Barbara and Sanna, which was carried on daily, and in which, the latter had always the upper hand, when Susanna was not betrayed by her naturally proud and impetuous temper.

When Susanna had attained her twelfth year, her father married for the second time, but became again a widower, after his wife had presented him with a

daughter. Two months later he too died. Near relations received the orphan children. In this new house Susanna learned—to endure hardships. For, as she was tall and stout, and at the same time obliging and kind-hearted, she was soon made the servant of the whole household. The daughters of the house said she was fit for nothing else, for she could learn nothing—and then her manners were so unformed—and, had she not been taken out of charity? All this, and in the most ungentle manner, was she taught to feel, and many were the tears which poor Susanna shed over her bitter lot. But there were lips that never spoke to her but in the tenderest accents of love—the lips of her little sister, the gold-haired Hulda. In Susanna's arms she had found her cradle. Susanna's cares for her have been those of the tenderest mother; for even from its birth Susanna had taken the little deserted one to herself, and never did young mother feel for her first-born child a deeper, tenderer love, than that with which Susanna cherished the little Hulda, who grew up under her care into a most beautiful and lovely child. And wo to him who should offer wrong to the little Hulda. He must learn the full force of Susanna's strong-armed anger. For her sake, Susanna endured here many sorrowful years of service; but as she could look forward to no end of these—could hardly dress herself and her little sister tolerably, and found, besides, that she was prevented, by her numerous occupations, from bestowing upon her sister the care that she required, she resolved, in her twentieth year, to quit a situation so full of hardship and suffering.

From the windows of the confined dwelling where Susanna had passed so many weary days, she could see a tree which stood behind a fence, and whose branches extended over the street. Many a spring and summer evening, when the other inmates of the house were absent on some excursion of pleasure, Susanna sat by the little sleeping Hulda, in the small room which had been allowed to her, and looked from her window, with quiet sadness, upon the green tree, whose leaves and twigs waved and beckoned to her so invitingly. Gradually, the green leaves called forth in her thoughts and plans, which at last formed themselves into a distinct image, whose realization became to her, from this time, the darling object of her soul. This was the vision of a little farm which Susanna was to hire, cultivate, aud make profitable by her industry and prudence. She planted potatoes, she milked cows and made butter, she sowed, she reaped, and toil was a pleasure to her; for there, under the green, waving trees, sat the little Hulda, and played with flowers ; her blue eyes beamed with delight, and neither care nor want came near her.

All Susanna's thoughts and endeavours were directed to the realization of this dream. The first step was to obtain a good service, in which she might, by husbanding her wages, obtain a sufficient sum of money to carry her schemes into execution. Susanna flattered herself that two years would accomplish this object, and therefore looked about for a suitable situation.

Among the guests who this year visited the baths of Gustafsberg, near Uddewalla, was a Norwegian officer and his wife. He had been struck by paralysis, and

had lost his speech and the use of his hands. He was a tall, large man, of wild, stern aspect, and though he continually demanded the attentions of his wife, and, indeed, would endure no one else near him, yet was this preference evidently, not the effect of love—and though the lady devoted herself untiringly to his service, yet was this devotion, too plainly, no effect of love, but the working of some other deep, inward power. Her own health was visibly shaken, violent spasms often seized upon her chest; but, night or day, whenever he wished to raise himself up, it was upon her bent-down, patient neck that his arm rested, She stood by his side and supported him in the cold shower-bath, which was to revive his enfeebled powers, while it destroyed hers. She was ever by him, always calm and efficient, seldom speaking, never complaining. Only by the lines of sorrow in her face, and by a habit she had of pressing her hand upon her heart, could it be known that she suffered. Susanna had an opportunity of observing all this, and her heart was filled with admiration and compassion. She soon found an occasion to be useful to the noble lady, offering her strong youthful arm for her support, and watching by the invalid when the eyes of his patient wife closed with weariness. Happily the sick man suffered her attendance. Susanna was present at the last fearful scene by the death-bed of the Oefwerste, He seemed to be struggling to speak—but could not. Then he made signs that he would write, but his fingers could no longer hold the pen. The deepest distress was painted on his convulsed features. His wife bent over

him, clasped his hand with an expression of intense anxiety, and whispered, "Give me only a sign as an answer: say—say—does he yet live?" The sick man fixed upon her a glassy gaze, and bowed his head. Was this an answer to her entreaty, or was it the hand of Death, which forbade an answer?—The head was never raised again. This was the last motion.

For many days succeeding this, the lady lay in convulsions, which rapidly succeeded one another, and appeared even to threaten her life. Susanna remained untiringly beside her, and felt herself happy in being able to watch over and serve her. She felt for her an almost passionate devotion, such as young girls often feel for elder women of superior rank, to whom they look up as to their ideal of womanhood. And when the lady returned to Norway, Susanna kissed her little Hulda, weeping, yet happy in the prospect of following such a mistress, and of serving her in the seclusion to which she devoted herself.

FRU ASTRID.

Oh, ye high, cold, unsympathizing stars!
Could you look down from your far, tranquil heaven,
With such a clear bright gaze, on this sad earth,
If you had any feeling of the woes
Your calm eyes rest on?

When Harold and Susanna turned away from the troubled waters, Susanna was in a very angry and excited mood, but as soon as she approached that part of

the house which was occupied by Fru Astrid, she became calm. She looked up to her window, and discerned her noble but mournful features. Her head was bent down as if in gloomy thought. At this sight Susanna forgot all her ill humor. "Oh!" sighed she, "if I could but make her happier!"

This was the daily subject of Susanna's meditations, but it became to her every day a darker riddle. Fru Astrid appeared indifferent to every thing about her. She never gave an order about any thing in the house, but left Susanna to govern all things as she would. Susanna supplied the table of her mistress with every delicacy which it was in her power to obtain. But to her despair the Oefwerstinna ate almost nothing, and never appeared to remark whether what was placed before her was good or bad.

Before Susanna entered the house, she gathered some of the most beautiful flowers that the autumn frosts had spared; made them into a bouquet, and, with them in her hand, softly entered Fru Astrid's apartment. "Bowed down with sorrow," is the only expression which can give an idea of the Lady Astrid. The livid paleness of her complexion—her drooping eyelids—the heavy languor of her motions—the gloomy indifference which seemed to shroud her soul, as the dark mourning garments wrapped her outward form, while she sat for long hours—often without any occupation—her head sunk upon her breast; all this indicated a soul long chained to heavy suffering.

Suffering in the north has its peculiar characteristics.

In the south it burns and consumes. In the north, it chills, benumbs; it kills slowly. From the earliest times has this difference been recognized.

When our ancestors sought to embody all that they had known most terrible in life, then was shadowed forth the dark vision of the subterranean dwelling of Hela (1); the terrors of the shore of corpses (2); in a word, the hell of the north, with its endless, pathless wastes; its cold, darkness, mists; its turbid rivers, and chill, trickling poisons.

There is life and wild power in the fury dance of the Grecian Tartarus; there is an intoxication in its delirium, which disturbs the feeling of intense misery. The soul shrinks not back before these glowing images of terror, as before the chill, dank, dripping horrors which the cold north engenders (3).

When Susanna entered the chamber of the Oefwerstinna, she sat as usual, sunk in deep melancholy. Before her, upon the table, lay pens and paper, and a book in which she appeared to have been reading. It was the Bible; it was open at the book of Job, and the following passages were underlined.

"My soul is weary of my life, for my days are vanity."

"Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward."

Fru Astrid's look was fixed upon the last passage, as Susanna softly approached her, and with an affectionate, "Will you be so kind?" offered her the bouquet of flowers. Fru Astrid looked up at the flowers, and an expression of pain passed over her face, as she turned her head away, and said, "They are beautiful;

but keep them, Susanna: they are painful to my eyes."

She resumed her former position, and the disappointed Susanna drew back; but after a short silence she again ventured to raise her voice, and said, "We have caught a splendid salmon-trout to-day. Will you have it for dinner, my Lady?—with egg sauce? And perhaps I might roast a duck or a chicken?" "Do as you will, Susanna," said the lady, in a tone of indifference. But there was in this indifference something so mournful, that Susanna could not restrain herself from sinking down and clasping her knees, while she exclaimed, "Ah! if I could only do something to please you!"

But Susanna's warm, beaming look met a gaze so stern that she started back involuntarily. "Susanna." said Fru Astrid, with mournful seriousness, while she laid her hand on her shoulder, and pushed her gently away, "Please me, then, by not attaching yourself to me. It will lead to no good. I have no affection to bestow—my heart is dead."

"Go, my child," she continued, more kindly, "and trouble not yourself about me. My wish—the only good left to me—is to be alone."

Susanna went, her heart full of sorrowful feelings. "Not trouble myself about her!" said she to herself, while she wiped away her tears; not trouble myself about her—as if that were so easy!"

When Susanna had left her, Fru Astrid cast a melancholy look upon the paper which lay before her. She took up the pen and laid it down again. She seemed

to shudder at the thought of using it, but at last controlled herself and wrote the following letter,

"You wish that I should write to you. I write—but what—what shall I say to you? Thanks for your letter, my friend, my father, teacher of my youth Thanks, that you would raise and elevate my soul. But I am old, bowed down; wearied; soured. I have no more strength; the living Word dwells no more in my heart; my friend, it is too late—too late!

"You would raise my look to heaven; but what is the splendor of the sun to the eye that no longer sees? What is the power of melody to the ear that hears no more? What is all that is beautiful, all that is good upon the earth, to the heart that is dead—that is turned to stone by long, hard imprisonment? Oh, my friend, I am unworthy of your consolation, of your reviving words. My soul rebels against them, and throws them from her, as, 'words, words, words,' which have sounded great and beautiful for a thousand years, while thousands of souls have been dumb in unconsoled misery.

"Hope? I have hoped so long—I have so long said to myself a better day will come. The path of duty leads to the heaven of peace and light, let the way be ever so thorny. Go only steadfastly on, weary pilgrim, go, go, and thou shalt reach the promised land. And I have gone on—have passed through the long weary days of more than thirty years. But the way lengthens itself out, farther and farther—one after another my hopes have withered—died away. I see now no goal before me, none—but the grave

"Love, love? Oh! if you knew what an inexpressibley bitter feeling this word awakens in me! Have I not loved, deeply loved? And what fruit has my love borne? It has broken my heart, and brought misery to those whom I loved. It is in vain you would contend with a belief which has taken deep root in my mind—I believe that there are those who are born predestined to misfortune; whatever approaches them must share their misery; and that I believe I am one of these. Let me, then, fly from mankind, fly from every feeling that could bind me to them. Why should I cause more sorrow than I have already done.

"Why did you ask me to write? I would not pour my bitter feelings into another's heart, I would not give pain to another, and—what have I now done?

"There is a silent strife which, through all the world, is raging in the secret hearts of men—at times how fearfully! It is the strife with bad and bitter thoughts—thoughts that sometimes demand an expression, and write themselves in characters of blood and fire. Then are they read and judged before the tribunal. But in many human breasts they rage silently through long years—then sink before them, health, temper, love, faith—faith in life and in a good God—with this sinks all.

"Could I believe that my constant, true devotion to the husband whom I once loved so entirely, for whose sake I endured, in the fortress which he commanded, a life compared to which that of the condemned criminal is happiness—whom I still followed when I loved him no longer because he had need of me, because without

me he would have been alone—abandoned to evil spirits—whom I followed because duty demanded it, because I had vowed it before God. Oh, could I believe this faithful well-doing had availed any thing, that my labors had borne some fruit, I would not then ask, as now—why was I born? Why have I lived? But nothing—nothing!

"Could I hope that on the other side of the grave I should meet the kind, loving look of my only sister, then should I see the approach of death with joy. But how shall I answer her when she asks me for her child? How will she look upon the faithless guardian?

"Oh, my friend! my sorrow has nothing in common with that of romance; it is not the deep shadow which serves to heighten the brilliant light. It is the long sombre twilight which never deepens into night—never brightens into dawn. And am I alone condemned to this dreary lot? Open the pages of history, look round you in the present time, and you will see a thousand instances of suffering, unmerited suffering, which after long years of endurance become despair. But another, better life! Only consolation, only hope, sole ray of light that pierces the gloom of this earthly life!—No, no, I will not renounce thee! I will believe in thee, and with this belief still the rising murmur against the Creator of the world.

"I am ill, and believe I shall hardly live through the winter; I breathe with difficulty; this is perhaps owing to the inexpressible heaviness that weighs upon me. When in the long nights I sit sleepless upon my bed nd look into the night within and about me, dark,

terrible phantoms throng around me, and often the dread comes over me, that a disordered imagination is overclouding my reason and bewildering my senses.

"How can I wish to live? When it is evening, I wish that it were morning, and when it is morning I wish that the day were over and that it were evening. Every hour is a burthen and a torture to me. Pray God for me then, my friend, that I may soon die! Farewell! Perhaps I shall write no more—but my last conscious thought will be of you. Forgive, forgive the impatience, the bitterness, of this letter. Pray for me, my friend and teacher, pray for me that I may become calm—may yet pray before I die."

NEW DISPUTES.

With earnest word and ready hand,
Contending for the Father-land.

While we leave the Lady Astrid alone with her dark thoughts, we are led by certain discordant sounds to look about us in the

BREWHOUSE.

Harold had gone there to taste the new beer which Susanna had made; but, after taking a deep draught, he said, with a terrible grimace, It is good for nothing—absolutely good for nothing!"

Susanna answered somewhat angrily, "Do you mean to say, then, that Baroness Rosenhielm's receipt for brewing is good for nothing?"

"I say so, decidedly. Is not she a gossiping old lady? A gossipping dame is always a bad housekeeper, and as the Baroness Rosenhielm is a gossip, so . . . "

"I must tell you," exclaimed Susanna, interrupting him, indignantly, "that it is very indecorous and profane in you to speak in this way of so excellant a lady and such an exalted person.

"Exalted? about how high is she, then?"

"Much higher than you are, or ever will be; that I can assure you."

"Higher than I? then she must go upon stilts. Well, I must say, that is the last degree of refinement and super-elegance! One might forgive a woman for having coffee-parties and dressing extravagantly, but to walk on stilts in order to be higher than the rest of the world, and to see over other people's heads, that is a little too fine! How could such an exalted person condescend to brew good beer. But no Swedish woman ever brewed good beer yet, for . . . "

"No Swedish woman will ever brew a drop for you horrid Norwegians, for you have neither sense, nor judgment, nor taste, nor, . . . "

Out of the brew-house flew Susanna in highest wrath; throwing down as she went, a glass of beer, which, during the contention, Harold had poured out for himself, and which he would have received in a different manner from that he had intended, if he had not saved himself by a sudden spring.

Towards evening, on the same day, the contending parties met in

THE GARRET.

"Are you still angry?" asked Harold, laughingly, as he put his head in at the door of the garret, where Susanna, with all the importance and dignity of a true empress of the store-room, sat upon a meal-chest, as upon a throne, bearing in her hand a sceptre of thyme, marjoram, and basilika, which she was dividing into small bundles, while her eyes were, at the same time, taking account of the riches of her well ordered kingdom.

The chests of bread were more than full, for she had just been baking. Sausages and hams hung from the wall, in company with great bundles of dried fish. Bags of various kinds of pulse stood in their proper places.

Harold, too, looked about with the air of a connoisseur, and said, although he had received no answer to his question,

"Certainly, I never saw a better ordered store room."

Susanna would allow no gleam of the pleasure which this commendation gave her to appear. "But continued Harold, "you must allow that it requires no great skill to keep store-room and cellar well provided in a couutry so rich in all the goods of life as our Norway,

> "Beloved land! with thy sky-reaching hills,
> Thy fertile vales and fish-abounding shores?"

"We have fish in Sweden, too, thank God," answered Susanna.

"Oh, but not to be compared to ours. Or will you seriously think of putting your perch and carp in comparison with our mackerel, herrings, haddocks, flounders, and all the innumerable host of our fishes?"

"I would give all your Norwegian fishes for one good Swedish pike."

"Pike? Are there really nothing but pike in Sweden!"

"In Sweden there are all kinds of fish that there are in Norway, and much larger and fatter."

"Well, then, they are caught on your coasts. We take what we want of them, and let the rest swim down to Sweden, so that they may have some there too. But I forgot that I am going out myself to fish, and will catch large fishes, and small fishes, and all sorts of fishes. Adieu, Miss Susanna, I will soon come back with fish."

"You had better stay with your Norwegian fishes," called Susanna after him. But Harold did not stay with the fishes, for the next morning we find him accompanying Susanna into the

DAIRY.

"I see we are to have onion-milk for dinner to-day, one of our choicest national dishes."

"Uh! It is enough to make one stupid and sleepy only to think of your national dishes. And still more horrible than your onion-milk is that shocking dish, barley soup, with little herrings."

"Barley soup with little herrings! What! the very best dish upon earth! a dish I might call a truly Christian dish!"

"And I should call it a heathenish dish, that no true Christian could eat."

"It has been eaten, from time immemorial, by the free Norwegians, in the beautiful valleys of Norway."

"That proves that your free Norwegians are still heathens."

"I can prove to you that the Norwegians were a Christian people before the Swedes.

'You may prove it as much as you will, but I shall not believe it."

"But I will show it to you in print."

"Then I am certain it must be a misprint."

Harold laughed, and said something about the impossibility of arguing with a Swedish woman.

Should any one wish to know how it happens that Harold is so continually found in Susanna's company, in the brew-house, in the garret, in the milk-room, we can only say, that he must be a great lover of beer, flour and milk, or of a certain seasoning, in the every-day soup of life, called teasing.

Fru Astrid breakfasted always in her own room, but dined with Susanna and Harold, and saw them also for a short time in the evening. At dinner the strife between Norway and Sweden often broke out, for the smal es occasion was sufficient to make the Burgo-

master's daughter throw herself blindly into the contest for her father-land; and, strangely enough, it seemed at times to give Fru Astrid herself pleasure to animate the strife by such questions as,

"I should like to know whether the cauliflower is the best in Norway or in Sweden," or "I should like to know whether wheat grows best in Norway or in Sweden?"

"Certainly in Norway," would Harold say.

"Most decidedly in Sweden," would Susanna exclaim; and vegetables and fish, and coins and weights and measures, were in this manner talked of and disputed about.

Of the wheat in Norway, Susanna said, "I have not seen upon the whole estate a single sheaf to compare with those I have seen in Sweden?"

"That is because," said Harold, "you never saw good wheat before you came here."

Of the Norwegian weights Susanna said, "I never know what I am about, with your puzzling, troublesome Norwegian weights."

"They are heavier than the Swedish," said Harold.

When Susanna was most zealous and most angry—then—shocking to relate—Harold would laugh right heartily, and even the pale countenance of the Lady Astrid was lighted for a moment by a faint smile, but it was like a beam of sunshine in a dark November sky, which breaks forth only to hide itself again behind the clouds.

It never once occurred to Susanna, on these occasions, to curb the Barbara-spirit. She considered it a

holy duty thus to defend her father-land. But not always did the spirit of discord rule over Harold and Susanna. At times that of peace alighted near them, but always as a timid dove, ever ready to take flight. When Susanna spoke of that which lay nearest to her heart, of her love for her little sister, of her recollections of their former companionship, of the longing she felt to see her again, and to devote herself to her, as a mother to her child; then would Harold listen quietly and attentively. No mocking word or look disturbed these pure images in Susanna's soul. And how glowingly would Susanna discribe the beauty of the little Hulda—the sweet, white delicate child—her soft blue eyes, her little white teeth, the clear sunshine which, when she laughed, beamed over her whole face, and the golden locks which curled so beautifully round her forehead and neck; the little delicate hands; and then her disposition, her heart, so gay, so good, so loving. Oh, she was, in truth, an angel of God! She described to Harold the little room in which she had dwelt with her Hulda, and which she had transformed from an old lumber-room into a pretty chamber. She described to him the carpet—the work of her own hands—the bed of the little Hulda, hung with blue muslin curtains; and how, in the morning, a ray of sunshine would steal into the room, rest upon the pillow, and kiss her little curly head. How roguish was the little one, when Susanna came in, late in the evening, and her first look fell on the bed of her darling! She saw her not—for Hulda drew her little head under the covering, to conceal herself from her sister. Susanna would pre-

tend to look for her, but she had only to say, in an anxious voice, "Where, oh where, is my little Hulda," to lure out the head of the little one, to see her outstretched arms, and hear her call, "Here I am, Sanna, here is your little Hulda!" In thinking of these hours, Susanna's tears would often flow, and hindered her from seeing the moistened eyes with which Harold often listened to her relations. Harold, too, had his stories; truly not of so tender a nature, but still interesting enough to command Susanna's whole attention, and to merit that we should devote to them a new chapter.

EVENING HOURS.

And on the height still stands the ancient stone,
Where Saga hovered like a songful lark,
The light of morning on her sable down.

VELHAVEN.

Harold related willingly, and related well; a happy gift, which is met with among all classes in Norway, women as well as men; and which they appear to have inherited from their forefathers the Scalds;—he was besides well versed in the wonders and legends of the mountain regions. And it is from these mountain regions that the fairest flowers of poetry in Norway have sprung, as if from her heart. The times of the Sagas and of heathenism have left here their giant traces.—River and mountain have their traditions of ghosts and

transformations. The 'great chauldrons' * rise over the graves of champions who have here met in combat and have fallen. From Hallingdale went forth the national dance, the Hallinger, and only the Hardanger-Fela (Hardanger violin) can rightly give out its wild strange rhythm. Most beautiful are the flowers that have come down to us as mementos of the early Christian times; and the eternal snow, on the summit of the loftiest mountain, is not more imperishable than these tender roses at its foot. So long as Gausta stands, and the Riukan sends forth its thunder-song, will the memory of Mari-Stien live, and its tales of joy and sorrow be related. So long as the ice sea guards its dark secrets, so long will the little island be green, whose turf has been watered by the tears of faithful love.

When the work of the day was over, and Fru Astrid had retired to her chamber, it was a great pleasure to Harold to read or relate stories to Snsanna, while she sat knitting, or her spinning-wheel hummed in gay rivalry with those of Larina and Karina; while the flame of the fire danced on the hearth, and threw its warm, cheerful gleams over the group. It delighted Harold to have Susanna for a listener, to hear her exclamations of childish terror and astonishment, or her hearty laugh or to see her tears as she listened to his now merry, now sorrowful recitals.

* The name given in many parts of Norway and Sweden to large stones, hollowed out, as some believe, by the hand of man, and used by the ancient Scandinavians in their sacrifices. Geologists, however, are of opinion, that they have been shaped by the action of the waters, which must once have covered the greater part of Scandinavia.

Susanna's feelings were deeply moved by the story of Mari-Stien, this path over the mountain on the brink of the precipice of the Riukan, which even at this day the traveller treads with fear, and which was discovered by a young maiden, strong in the courage of love. It was by this path that the beautiful Mary of Westfiordale went with light, fearless step to meet the friend of her childhood, Ejstein Halfoordsen. But the avarice of her father separated them, and Mary's tears and prayers prevailed upon her lover to fly, to escape the plot formed by a treacherous rival against his life. Years passed, and Mary was firm in her constancy. Her father died; Ejstein had by his valour and nobleness made his former enemy his friend; and after their long separation the lovers were to meet again, never more to be parted. Ejstein hastened by the shortest way, over by the Mari-Stien to meet his beloved. Long had she watched for him. She saw him coming, and his name burst from her with a joyful cry. He saw her—stretched his arms eagerly towards her, as his soul rushed to meet her, and forgot that he had not wings—he fell—and the Riukan whirled him into its foaming depths.

For many years after this, a pale form, in whose beautiful eyes a quiet madness spoke, wandered daily on the Mari-Stien, and seemed to talk with some one in the abyss below. She ever returned from her wanderings with a mournful pleasure in her eyes, and said "I have spoken with him, and he begged me to come every day and tell him that I live. It were wrong to deny him this, he is so good, and loves me so truly."

Thus she went till silver hair floated round her wrin-

kled cheeks; thus she went till a merciful voice summoned her to joy and rest in the arms of her beloved.

Less mournful, but not less charming to Susannna, was the old Saga of Halgrim.

Stormannadauen (the Black Death) had raged through Norway, and swept away more than two-thirds of its inhabitants, desolating wide tracts of country, and populous districts. In the valley of Ulwig, in Hardanger, a young peasant, named Halgrim, alone remained alive. He rose from the sick bed on which he lay, surrounded by the dead, and went forth to seek for living men.

It was spring—the larks sang loudly in the clear, blue air—the birch trees had clothed themselves in fresh green; the river, with its melting snow-reefs, wandered singing down the mountain—no plough furrowed the now loosened soil. No horn, calling the cattle home, was to be heard from the heights. All was still and dead in the dwellings of men. Halgrim went from valley to valley, from hut to hut. Death met him every where; every where he recognized the bodies of his former friends. Then he began to believe that he was alone upon earth; despair seized his soul, and he resolved that he too would die. But as he was in the act of throwing himself from a rock, his faithful dog sprang up the cliff to his side, caressed him and expressed his anguish by the most plaintive moans. Halgrim drew back from the brink of the precipice; he embraced his dog, his tears flowed, and despair dwelt no longer in his heart. He began his wanderings anew. The memory of love led him to the parish of Gravers,where he had first seen Hildegunda and won her love. It was

evening, and the sun was going down, when Halgrim descended into the valley, where all was still, and dead as in those through which he had already passed. Dark stood the pine trees in the black shadow of the wall of rock, and silently the river glided by its deserted banks. On the other side of the river a little wooded point of land ran out into the blue waves, and the last rays of the sun rested on the green tops of the birch trees. Suddenly it seemed to Halgrim that a faint wreath of smoke rose over the thicket. But he dared not trust his eyes. He stood fixed and breathless—it was only for a moment—a blue pillar of smoke rose slowly in the calm evening air. With a cry of joy Halgrim rushed forward, waded through the stream, and soon stood on the opposite bank. Barking and whining, the dog ran before him to the hut from which the smoke was rising. On the hearth burned a clear fire, and at the door stood a young maiden—one cry of inexpressible joy, and Halgrim and Hildegunda were in each other's arms. Hildegunda too was the only one alive in her valley after the fearful visit of the Black Death.

On the following day they went to the church to be united, but there was no priest to marry them, no one to witness the plightings of their faith; they stood together before the altar of God, and gave one another their hands, while Halgrim said, in a solemn voice, "In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!"

And God blessed the union entered upon in his name. From this fortunate pair sprang a race who repeopled the desolate region, and to this day, the names of Hal-

grim and Hildegunda are in use among the inhabitants of these valleys.

By Harold was Susanna also made acquainted with the ancient kings of Norway; with the deeds of Olof Haraldsen(4), the Blood-baptizer, with those of the heroic Olof Tryggvason(5), and heard with admiration of king Sverre(6), with the little body, and the great, kingly soul.

It gratified also her womanly pride to see women acting so distinguished a part in the ancient history of Norway. She heard with delight of the proud Gida, whose ambition sent forth to conquest the fair-haired Harold(7), the first monarch who held all Norway under his sway. And though the deeds of Gunilda(8), 'the king's mother,' excited her horror, yet it gave her pleasure too, to see a woman, by the supremacy of her mind, governing seven kings, and influencing the destinies of a nation. The civil wars offered still darker pictures, when blood-storm after blood-storm hurried through the land, and, at length, bore down her freedom in their frantic rage.

Now the wild strawberry blooms among the wrecks of the former cities, and over the blood-drenched fields wave golden harvests. A milder race now treads the soil of Eric the Bloody(9), looking forward to a bright and hopeful future, yet still listening delighted in its peaceful valleys to the strange, wild traditions of the olden time.

A constant subject of discussion and dispute between Harold and Susanna was their lady, the pale Fru Astrid. Whenever the conversation was of her, Harold's face assumed a very serious expression, and to Susanna's urgent entreaties, that he would tell what he knew of her, he would only reply, "She must have known many misfortunes." But when Susanna overwhelmed him with questions in regard to these misfortunes, in what they consisted, whether there were any way in which one could help her—to do this, Susanna would have traversed the whole earth—then Harold began to relate a story.

Tales of women, who have been distinguished and powerful in their valleys, are not uncommon in Norway. We read of a lady of Hallingdale, who was so magnificent, that she was drawn by elks. We hear, too, of the rich Lady Belju, also of Hallingdale, who built the church of Naes, and had the rock of Beja split by means of fire and butter, so that a road might be made over it. This road is called, to this day, that of the Butter Rock. We hear of the ladies of Skolberg and Skoendale—of their dispute concerning a pig—and of the false oath which one of them took in the lawsuit that followed. Of all these dames the Saga asserts, that the preacher did not venture to ring the church bells until the powerful lady had arrived.

We read, too, the story of Eldhjerna, who, in grief for the crimes of her seven sons, renounced the world, and retired to a lonely valley, where she endeavoured, by alms and fasting, to expiate the crimes of her children.

But for the story that Harold related to Susanna concerning the Lady Astrid, its like had never been heard in the valleys of Norway. It contained so many strange and terrible events, that the credulous Susanna, becoming every moment paler and paler, was chilled with horror; but just at the most terrible part of the catastrophe a sudden suspicion would cross her mind, that her terrors were wasted upon a mere fiction. And when she expressed her suspicion, and Harold's face and hearty laugh confirmed it, she would start up, and leave him, with the assurance that she would never ask him another question, would never believe another word he said.

This lasted—till—the next time. Then, if Harold promised to tell the truth—the exact pure truth, then would Susanna allow herself to be again deceived, would again listen, turn pale and weep, till the increasing wonders of the story once more awakened her distrust, which she would again express, and again Barbara would start up, scold, threaten, shut the door violently behind her, and Harold again—would laugh. On one point, however, Harold and Susanna were entirely united—both served their lady with the warmest zeal—and this, without their being themselves conscious of it, made them daily esteem each other the more; but this increased esteem had no effect in allaying the fierceness of the war which they waged in behalf of their respective countries.

Thus with continual changes from strife to peace passed away, unmarked, the months of autumn, with their darkening days and their increasing cold; and the time arrived when important cares occupy the time of

the women in the highest as well as the humblest dwellings. The time of light, of pies, of dance, sports, and children's pleasure—in one word,

CHRISTMAS.

The sun will warm and illumine the whole earth, therefore does the earth rejoice in his coming.

God be praised for the sun! So many friends, so many pleasures desert us in our wanderings through this earthly life—but the sun remains ever true to us, and lightens and warms us from the cradle to the grave. It is the sun that unites Christians and heathens in a common worship, while it lifts the hearts of both to Him by whom the sun was created. The highest festivals, both of Christianity and of northern heathenism, take place at that time of the year when the sun is newly born for the earth, and nature revives under his power. This festival time is celebrated with great zeal and many interesting observances in the Scandinavian countries. Not in the houses of the rich alone does the fire glow and the mirth of children resound; from the meanest hut issues sounds of joy, light visits even the prisons, and the poorest taste of plenty. In the country the doors stand open; the hearth and the table are free to every wanderer. In many parts of Norway, no traveller is allowed to pay for food or lodging at the inns. At this season, earth seems to feel the truth of the heavenly words, 'It is more blessed to give than to

receive.' Not to man alone, but to animals also does Christmas bring pleasure. All the inhabitants of the farm yard, all the house animals, share in its festivities; and the birds of heaven rejoice too, for on every shed are raised high poles, on the top of which, rich sheafs of oats invite them to the feast. Even the poorest day laborer, who has himself no corn, asks and receives a bundle of grain from the farmers, and raises it on high that the birds may hold festival over his empty shed.

Susanna had a great deal to do in Christmas week, and was often kept up very late at night, partly by her household occupations, and partly by some Christmas gifts which she was preparing, in the hope of occasioning some pleasant little surprises. And this was perhaps the reason, that the morning of the day before Christmas she overslept herself. She was awakened by the loud singing of a bird under her window, and her conscience reproached her, that, in the cares of the preceding day, she had forgotten the birds, for whom she used to throw grains of corn and crumbs of bread upon the snow; and now they had come to remind her of it. Ah, were all such admonitions like the song of birds! With sincere regret for her forgetfulness, Susanna hastened to dress, and to draw aside the window-curtain. But see, before her window stood a tall slender fir tree, on whose green top, cut into the form of a wreath, stood a large bunch of golden oat sheaves, and round it fluttered, pecking and chirping, a host of sparrows and bulfinches. Susanna blushed, and thought, "Harold." The servants of the house laughingly answered to Susanna's questions about the fir tree, that it

was indeed the steward who had planted it. But the steward himself pretended to know nothing of the matter; was very much surprised by the sight of the tree with the oaten tuft, and could not imagine how it came there. "It must," said he, "have sprung up of itself in the night, and this can only proceed from the strength of the excellent Norwegian soil—every bit of it is pulverised primary rock. Only such a soil could bring forth such wonders." In the forenoon Harold went with Susanna to the farm-yard, where, with her own hands, she distributed oats to the cows, bread to the sheep, and to the poultry corn, in fullest measure. In the community of the chickens a great variety of character might be observed. Some seized greedily upon the corn, while they drove the rest forcibly back; others remained at a modest distance, and picked up contentedly the grains that fortune sent them. Some of them seemed more anxious to provide for others than for themselves, Of this noble nature was a young cock, with a high crest and brilliant plumage, and of a peculiarly proud and lofty bearing; he yielded his share to the hens. hardly reserving to himself a single grain of corn, but looking down with an air of majesty upon the crowd that pecked and cackled at his feet. On account of this noble behaviour, Susanna had called him the knight, and this name he always retained. Among the geese she saw with vexation, that the poor grey was still more oppressed than ever by his white tyrant. Harold proposed to have the grey goose killed, but Susanna insisted, warmly, that if either of the rivals were to be sacrificed, it should be the white one.

In a house where there are no children, where neither family nor friends assemble, where the mistress of the mansion sits in darkness with her sorrow, can Christmas eve bring but little joy. But Susanna had made her preparations to diffuse happiness. She had rejoiced in this thought the whole week through, in the midst of her many occupations; and the more, that her life would have been gloomy, indeed, if the hope of giving pleasure to some one had not always glimmered, like a little star, over her path. Larina, Karina, and Petro were this day to taste the fruits of Susanna's night-watching; and when the evening came, and Susanna had spread the Christmas table, and had seen it set out with lutfisk,* roast meats, chickens, plates of butter, tarts, and apples, and lighted with many candles; when the people of the farm assembled round the table, with eyes that glistened with delight and appetite, when the oldest of the company began a song of thanksgiving, and all the others joined in it with folded hands and solemn voice, then did Susanna feel that she was no longer in a strange land. She joined in their song, and seated herself at the table, a cheerful hospitable hostess; animating the strong to the performance of prodigies, and placed the most delicate dishes before the weak and timid.

Fru Astrid had told Susanna she wished this evening to remain alone in her room, and would take only a glass of milk. But Susanna was resolved to surprise

* Codfish, which has been soaked in lye for several weeks. This is a common Christmas dish in Norway and Sweden.

her into pleasure, and to this end had laid a little plot against her peace. At the time when the glass of milk was to be carried to her, a beautiful boy dressed to represent Susanna's idea of an angel, and with a crown of light upon his head, was to enter her door softly and beckon her forth. The lady could not surely resist so beautiful a messenger, and he was to conduct her to the principal room, where, in a grove of fir trees, a table was to be spread with the choicest productions of Susanna's skill; and behind the fir trees the people of the house were to be assembled, and sing to the well known melody of the country, a song in praise of their lady, and full of good wishes for her future happiness.

Harold, to whom Susanna had communicated her plan, shook his head doubtfully at first, but afterwards agreed to it, and even lent his aid in its execution, by procuring the fir trees and assisting at the toilet of the angel.

Susanna was delighted with her beautiful little messenger, and followed him softly, as, with some anxiety for his head and his brilliant crown, he tripped lightly towards Fru Astrid's apartment. Harold opened the door softly for the boy. Within, they saw the lady seated in an arm-chair, her head bent down upon her hands. The lamp upon the table threw a dull light upon her mourning dress. Roused by the opening of the door, she looked up and gazed with a wild look upon the apparition. Then she rose, hastily, pressed her hands upon her breast, uttered a faint cry of terror, and sank lifeless to the ground. Susanna pushed her angel hastily aside, and rushed to her lady, raised her

in her arms, with a feeling of indiscribable anguish, and bore her to the bed. Harold on his part occupied himself with the poor angel, whose crown having lost its balance, the hot tallow was streaming over his forehead and his cheeks, while he uttered the most piteous cries.

Susanna soon succeeded in bringing her lady back to life; but for some time her senses seemed bewildered, and she uttered confused and disconnected sentences, among which Susanna could only ditinguish the words "apparition—unhappy child—dead." Susanna inferred that her pretended angel had terrified her, and cried out in a voice broken by sobs, "Ah; it was only John Guttormsen's little son, whom I had dressed up as an angel to give you pleasure." Susanna saw now but too well how unfortunate this idea had been, but Fru Astrid listened with eager interest to Susanna's explanation of the appearance which had thus shaken her. At last her convulsive state yielded to a flood of tears. Susanna, beside herself with grief, that, instead of joy, she had been the cause of sorrow to her lady, kissed, weeping, her dress, her hands, her feet, with earnest entreaties for forgiveness.

Fru Astrid answered in a gentle but reproving tone, "you meant it well, Susanna; you could not know what sorrow you would cause me. But never think again—never attempt again to give me pleasure—I can never more be cheerful—never more be happy—a stone lies upon my breast that can never be lifted from it, till the stone is placed over my grave. But go now, Susanna, I must be alone—I shall soon be well again." Susanna begged that she might bring her a glass of milk, and

Lady Astrid consented; but when she had brought it, she must again depart—her heart full of sorrow. When she rejoined Harold, she poured out to him all her grief for the unfortunate issue of her project, and described to him the violent agitation, and repeated the gloomy, despairing words of the Oefwerstinna. Harold became pale and thoughtful, and, seeing this, Susanna was still more depressed. She had yet another little mine of pleasure still unsprung, and from its explosion she had promised herself great delight—but now this too failed of its effect. It is true, Harold laughed, when he drew the waistcoat from the loaf of wheaten bread—it is true, he thanked Susanna, and pressed her hand, but he had plainly so little pleasure in his Chrismas gift, his thoughts were so evidently occupied with something else, that every gleam of Christmas joy now vanished for Susanna. As she sat alone at her window, and saw lights streaming from every cottage in the valley; when she thought of the happy family groups within, old people, children, brothers, and sisters, friends, all assembled round the Christmas hearth, then she felt painfully that she was alone in a strange land; and when she remembered how happy she used to make her Hulda on this evening—how well all her little plots to give pleasure had then succeeded, she drew forth a handkerchief, which had once covered the neck of that dear sister, and covered it with hot tears and kisses. She passed a great portion of the night on the threshold of her lady's door, while she listened anxiously to the unceasing footsteps within. But though she heard many deep-drawn sighs, Susanna heard no expression of

pain which could justify her intruding upon the solitude of her lady.

We will now turn to a more cheerful picture.

There exists in Norway a pleasant custom, called "tura-jul;" Christmas rounds. That is, in Christmas week, visits are exchanged, and in the hospitable houses there is music, dancing, and feasting. This custom has reached even the remote and secluded Heimdale. The clergyman of the parish, the kind and hospitable pastor of Middleberg, had invited his friends and acquaintances in the neighbourhood, to an entertainment on the second day of Christmas week; in this invitation the inmates of Semb were included.

Fru Astrid excused herself, but desired Harold and Susanna to go. It had snowed within a few days, so that the sleighing was excellent; and Harold whose cheerfulness was now restored, seemed to take great delight in the prospect of driving Susanna, in a little sleigh with jingling bells, to the parsonage. The Oefwerstinna, too, had recovered her usual appearance and manner; so that Susanna was consoled for the misfortunes of Christmas eve, and could give herself up, with unclouded spirits, to the delights of her winter ride and these were many and great to the fresh, open heart of Susanna, whose life had known so few pleasures o any kind. The air was so clear, the snow was so dazzling, the woods and mountains so magnificent, the horse so spirited, and Harold drove so wonderfully well—Susanna was continually exclaiming, "Oh, how beautiful! how splendid."

Harold, too, was remarkably pleasant and entertain-

ing; very careful that Susanna should sit comfortably, and that her feet should be warm. He pointed out to her all the wonders and beauties of the region through which they passed; he related to her many interesting facts regarding the roads, the mountains, and the different kinds of stone; he talked of primary rocks, of transition strata, of what had existed before the flood, and what had been formed since the flood, till Susanna was lost in astonishment at the extent of his knowledge, and felt herself impressed with a feeling of reverence for the possessor of so much learning. It is true, she forgot this, a little time after, when a dispute arose between them in regard to the sun, which, according to Harold, shone much brighter in Norway than in Sweden, an assertion which Susanna warmly opposed, and affirmed exactly the contrary. But on the whole, the ride passed off very harmoniously, and very creditably for Harold.

When they were within a mile of the parsonage, they saw little sleighs coming forth on all sides from the passes, and hastening in the same direction with themselves over the field of snow. Smoke came from the nostrils of the panting horses, and merrily jingled the bells in the clear air. Susanna was enraptured. Nor was she less delighted with the kindness with which she was received by her hosts at the parsonage. She, the stranger serving-maiden, and they, such rich, distinguished people! Susanna was besides very curious to know how things looked and went on in a respectable parsonage house in Norway, and she was therefore well pleased when the kind Madam Middleberg invited her

to go over the house, and Thea Middleberg, the eldest daughter, carried her every where, from the cellar to the garret. Susanna formed a very high opinion of the arrangements of the parsonage house; she found many things to learn, but many too that she thought might have been done better in her Swedish method. When Susanna returned to the company, she found much to observe and reflect upon. She was in a state of delighted excitement. It seemed to her as if the picture of happiness and social intercourse, of which she had sometimes dreamed, were now suddenly realized. She thought that among such kindly natures, such simple manners, life must be beautiful indeed. The intercourse between parents and children, between masters and servants, was so affectionate, so patriarchal. She heard the servants of the house call the pastor and his wife, father and mother; she saw the eldest daughter assist them in waiting on the guests, and so readily and gaily, that it was plain her heart was in the service; she saw frank good-will in all faces; simplicity, and freedom from restraint in the manners of all, and her heart felt light and happy, while pleasant tears sprang to her eyes. "Do you love flowers?" asked the kind Thea Middleberg, and when Susanna said "yes," she broke off the prettiest rose that was blooming in the window, and gave it to her. But Susanna found the greatest pleasure in the two youngest children; she thought the sweet "mora mi" (my mamma) the most melodious sound she had ever heard; and Susanna was right, for never were lovlier words heard upon the earth than these, "mora mi," spoken by the caressing voice of

childhood. The little Mina, a child about Hulda's age, was especially dear to Susanna, who only wished that the wild little creature would sit longer upon her lap. Susanna herself won unexpectedly the favor of her hosts, by rising from the table at a critical juncture, and arresting, with quick firm hand, a threatened downfall. She afterwards continued to lend her efficient aid whereever it could be useful. This pleased greatly, and the young Swede was regarded with ever-increasing kindness. She was sensible of this, and found still greater pleasure in a company so kindly disposed towards her.

Towards the end of the plentiful repast, healths were drunk, and songs sung. Susanna must touch glasses right and left, before and beside her, and inspired by the universal spirit, joined in the popular song of "the sea-girt, brave old Norway," and seemed to have forgotten all her spirit of hostility against Norway and the Norwegians. And how heartily did she join in the last toast, which the host proposed with beaming and tearful eyes, "to all that is dear to us." Susanna thought of her little Hulda.

But we pass now to the circumstance which made this day a memorable one for Susanna. After dinner and coffee were over, the company divided, as is usual in Norway. The women seated themselves on the sofas, and in the arm-chairs, and talked of the events that had happened lately in the neighbourhood, of their domestic affairs, of their Christmas preparations, now happily concluded, or whatever else might happen to interest them. The young girls formed groups at

the windows, and laughed and chatted gaily.

In the next room the men were assembled, with pipes and politics.

Susanna sat near the open door of the room which was occupied by the men, and taking little interest in the conversation of those near her, she could not avoid listening to what was passing in the next room, where she heard a loud and coarse voice abusing Sweden and the Swedes in the most injurious manner. Susanna's blood boiled, and her hand was clenched involuntarily. "Ah, my God," thought she, "why am I not a man!" The patriotic burgomaster's daughter longed to rush upon him who had dared thus to defame her country. As she could not hear all this coolly, and almost dreaded her own anger, she was in the act of rising to find another seat, when she was arrested by a clear manly voice, which was raised in defence of the calumniated land, and truly delightful was it to Susanna, to hear her country thus defended, with as much intelligence as zeal.

She heard the accusations of the rough voice repelled by the less noisy, but more powerful voice of his adversary; and her delight was at its height when she heard this clear sweet voice, now master of the field, recite these verses, addressed to the country of Gustavus Adolphus, on the occasion of his death.

Bowed are the honours of thy stately head,
Dimmed is thy light; withered thy garlands lie;
Yet weep not hopelessly o'er thy brave dead,
Thou mourning mother! glory cannot die,

Thy hero passed to no ignoble grave,
He fell not ere a deathless fame was won;
And earth shall count among her true and brave
The warrior king, Gustavus, Sweden's son!

Yes, this was indeed a happy moment for Susanna; but this voice that spoke so well—the voice that defended Sweden—it was this voice that affected her more than all the rest, for it was Harold's. Susanna could hardly trust her ears, she must have the evidence of her eyes too, and when she could no longer doubt that the noble defender of her father-land was Harold, she was so surprised and so happy, that, in the overflowing of her feelings, she might have committed some folly, if, just at this moment, one of the elder ladies of the party had not led her to a more quiet part of the room, in order to question the Swedish stranger at her ease, about every thing that she wanted to know.

This lady belonged to that class known in every part of the world, which bears a resemblance to the parasitical plants, that draw their nourishment from the trees round which they twine themselves. As this lady wore a brown dress, and brown ribbands on her cap, we will give her the name of Madam Brown. Susanna must now render account to Madam Brown of her family, her home, why she came to Norway, how she liked living there, &c. &c. To all this Susanna answered very openly; but when the conversation turned upon her present situation, and her lady, she became rather more reserved. But on this subject, Madam Brown was more desirous of giving than receiving information. "I knew the Oefwerstinna," said she, "when she was

young; she was a beautiful young lady, but always rather proud; I did not mind this myself, we were always very good friends; I have been told I ought to pay her a visit at Semb, but I don't know, I have not seen her since she has become so strange. How can you live with her my dear child? She must be so dreadfully gloomy!"

Susanna answered with warm praise of her lady, and said that she was very sad, and she feared had been very unfortunate, but that this only bound her to her the more strongly.

"Unfortunate," began Madam Brown, again, "yes, if that were all,—but!"

Susanna, astonished, asked what she meant.

Madam Brown answered, "I do not say or believe any harm of her, and always defend her, but there is something very strange about her, at any rate—would you believe that there are people malicious enough to talk of—to suspect—a murder?"

Susanna could neither speak nor think; she stared at the speaker.

"Yes, yes," continued Madam Brown, "so they say; it is true, that the Oefwerste, who was a violent man was most guilty in the affair; but then she must have known of it—so they say. You must know she had a boy with her—the son of her sister. The mother died after she had given the boy to the care of her sister and brother-in-law. What happens, then? One day the boy disappears, and is never heard of again; nc one knows what became of him; but his cloak was found upon a rock near the sea, and some drops of blood upon

the stones. The boy had disappeared; and his property was very convenient to his relations, for the Oefwerste Hjelm had spent every thing that he and his wife possessed. But God, in his justice, punished the Oefwerste; for he remained five years lame and dumb, and his wife has not known a happy hour from that time."

Susanna turned pale, and as zealously as she had before defended the honor of her country, did she now maintain the innocence of her lady. But she was interrupted by the friendly host, who invited her to join the rest of the young people in playing and dancing. Susanna was so much agitated by what she had heard, and longed so anxiously to return home to her lady, whom she loved more than ever, now that she had heard her so cruelly calumniated, that she begged to be excused from taking part in the Christmas games, and announced her intention of returning home. She would not, however, take Harold away; and determined, fearlessly, to return home alone. "She could drive, and she could easily find the way." But no sooner did Harold perceive her intention, than he prepared to accompany her; and it was of no use for Snsanna to say any thing against it. Host and hostess, in their hospitality, opposed their departure warmly, and threatened them with the "Aasgaardsreja," which would meet them on the way, and carry them off, if they persisted in their unwise resolution. But they did so; and were accompanied by their hostess even to their sleigh. Susanna thanked her warmly for her kindness, promised the amiable Thea that they would often see

one another, and kissed tenderly the little Mina who hung upon her neck.

No sooner was Susanna in the sleigh, among the hills and woods, than she relieved her heart by repeating to Harold the story that she had just heard; and equal to the horror she had felt, was Harold's anger at these shameful calumnies, and the baseness of her, who propagated these vile creations of her own black heart. He fell into such a passion with old Madam Brown, and made so many threatening demonstrations, and the horse therewith made so many springs and plunges, that Susanna was glad to turn the conversation upon some other subject. She asked him, therefore, what the Aasgaardsreja was, and why their hostess had thought to frighten them with it?

Harold now resumed his usual manner, and declared this was no matter of jesting. The Aasgaardsreja, said he, "consists of those spirits that are not good enough to deserve heaven, and yet not bad enough to be sent to hell. In this troop ride those addicted to intemperance, to polite falsehood, or to any of the milder forms of sin. In expiation of their offences, they must wander about till the end of the world. At the head of the troop rides Reisa-Rova, who is to be known by her long train. She is followed by a numerous band of both sexes. The horses are coal-black, and their eyes shine in the dark like fire; they are guided by bridles of red hot iron; and as they rush over land and water, the wild halloo of the riders, the snorting of the horses, the rattling of the iron bits, is heard to a great distance.—Where they throw a saddle upon the roof, there must

a man die; and where they know there will be violence or murder, there they enter, seat themselves on the door-posts, and laugh, and knock, and rattle upon the doors. When one hears the Aasgaardsreja coming, he must immediately throw himself on the ground, and pretend to be asleep; otherwise he will be borne along by the troop, and thrown down at some place at a distance from that where he was taken up. Those who are thus carried off, remain sick and melancholy for the rest of their lives. But he who, on the approach of the train, throws himself down in this way, will suffer no injury, unless some of the company should spit upon him, as they pass; in this case he has only to spit again, after the troop has gone by, and then no harm will come of it.

Harold added, that this troop was usually out on Christmas night, and that nothing was more possible than that they might meet it themselves that night. In this case,. Susanna had nothing to do but to spring quickly from the sleigh, throw herself upon the ground, and hide her face in the snow till the wild band had gone by.

Susanna declared she did not believe in the story; but Harold said so seriously, that she would one day be convinced of its truth, and Susanna was naturally so well inclined to believe in the marvellous, that she often particularly in the narrow passes, cast a look upwards, half fearing, half hoping that the black horses, with their fiery eyes and glowing bridles might show themselves. But only the bright stars looked down upon her, now and then dimmed by the northern lights, that

waved their shining, fleeting veils over the vault of heaven. Arrived at Semb, they saw the usual faint gleam of light from the lady's window. Susanna's heart was moved, and with a deep sigh she said, "Ah, what a wicked world this is! To add to the heavy burden, and make misfortune a crime! What, what can we do for her, to defend her from the attacks of malice?"

"Madam Brown, at least, shall not spread her lies any further," said Harold, "I will go to her to-morrow morning, and compel her to swallow her own words, and frighten her from ever letting them pass her lips again."

"Ah, that is good!" cried Susanna, enraptured.

"If an accident happens to a child," cried Harold, passionately, "immediately to suppose a wilful murder! could any thing be baser or more absurd? No, these snakes shall not hiss about the unhappy lady! it shall be my care to crush them!" And Harold pressed Susanna's hand in parting, and left her.

"And it shall be my care," thought Susanna, with tearful eyes, "to love her, and to serve her truly. Perhaps when order and comfort are spread about her, and one little pleasure after another is added to her life, who can say?—perhaps she may become even reconciled to life."

QUIET WEEKS.

When o'er the sullen face of heaven
Dark clouds are by the north wind driven,
When woods put on their mourning weeds,
And the bright stream no longer leads
Its dimpled waters through the plain,
And earth submits to winter's chain ;
Then brighter for the cold without,
The cheerful fires within shine out ;
More closely bind the gentle ties
Of love and kindly sympathies—
And though stern winter rules the earth,
Spring dawns beside the social hearth.

VELHAVEN.

Hast thou heard, in deep caverns, the falling of the water-drop, as with its heavy, unceasing, wasting fall, it wears away the ground? Hast thou heard the murmuring of the brook, that flows gayly between green banks, while nodding flowers and the bright lights of heaven are mirrored in its waves? Then hast thou seen the images of the two kinds of quiet life, which are as different from one another as heaven from hell. Both are lived upon this earth, and both were lived at Semb in Heimdale during the following month, the first by Fru Astrid, the second by Susanna; but at times the wearing drops were blown aside by a transient breeze, and at times the waters of the dancing brook were somewhat turbid.

January passed away with its increasing sunshine, and its wintry magnificence. The brinks of the waterfalls were planted with flowers, palms, vines, and fruit-

trees, of ice. The finches with their scarlet breasts shone like dancing flames upon the white snow. Woods and plains were brilliant with dazzling crystals—the freshness of the air, the song of the thrush, the blinding splendor of the snow-fields—all announced the reign of winter. There was felling of wood in the forest, whence songs from Tegner's Frithiof resounded—there was riding in sledges in the valley, there was walking on snow shoes on the mountains Every where was the fresh, stirring life of winter.

The strife at Semb, between Sweden and Norway, had lost much of its vigor since Christmas. It is true, Harold made several attacks upon Swedish ice and Swedish woods, but Susanna did not seem to think them made in earnest, and would not allow herself to be drawn into a contest, and the last attempt upon the Swedish wind failed so entirely, that Harold resolved to give the matter up, and looked about for some other subject of contention to keep himself warm through the winter.

February and March came on. This is the severest part of a northern winter In January he was still young; but now he is grown old, and grey, and burdensome, particularly in the huts of the improvident. The stores in the cottage and the cow-yard are nearly spent. It is hard for hungry children to draw home wood from the forest, when it is to cook for them only miserable water-gruel, and perhaps not always even that.

April came, this is called a month of spring; and the larks sing among the clouds. But often in the deep

valleys, the greatest want and suffering prevails. Then the poor peasant often scatters ashes and sand upon the snow that covers his acres, that it may melt the sooner, and that he may plough up his ground between the snow-walls that fence it in. Susanna was during this month well known in the cottages of the valley, and found abundant employment for her sympathy and ready kindness.

Harold, not to lose so good an opportunity of inspiring Susanna with horror of himself, and his character, appeared quite unmoved by the accounts she gave of the suffering which she had witnessed, and rejected, with a decided "No!" all her projects for its relief. He talked much of severity, of wholesome lectures, etc. and Susanna was not slow in calling him "The most cruel, unchristian man—a perfect misanthrope—wolves and bears had more heart!" Never would she ask him for any thing again. She might as well talk to stocks and stones! And Susanna would go away and weep bitter tears. But when she found that want was quietly relieved by the hand of the misanthrope, when she found that in many cases her own plans were followed, then would she weep indeed, but her tears were tears of pleasure; and all her resolutions of unfriendly reserve were forgotten in a moment. By degrees Harold forgot his harshness. The interest of the subject was too great to allow him to maintain it. And before they were aware of it, both were heartily engaged in promoting the same objects but with some difference in the manner. Susanna had begun by giving away every thing she possessed. As she had now nothing more to

give, she began to listen to Harold's views of the subject. He thought that, in general, for the poor about them, alms were less necessary than prudent counsel and friendly sympathy, that should give life to the desponding heart, and strength to the weary hands that were ready to sink, and to encourage to hope and to labour again.

Among the class of people who work for their daily bread, are some who can help themselves, others whom no one can help; but by far the greatest number are those who by wise counsel and assistance may be taught to help themselves, and attain to comfort and independence.

Harold thought it very important to turn the attention of the people more exclusively to the raising of cattle, for he was convinced this was the only means by which these regions could become prosperous. And as soon as the snow melted, and the ground was free from ice, he went out with the servants and laborers, and occupied himself busily in clearing the fields of the stones with which these regions are thickly sown. He laid out new pastures, in order to provide better food for the cattle, and Susanna's heart beat with pleasure when she saw his perseverance, and how he put his own hand to the work, and animated all by his example and cheerful spirits. Harold had now often his favorite dishes for dinner, and even Susanna herself began to find some of them very palatable, and among these may be mentioned barley-soup and little herrings.*

* This dish, with which in Norway every dinner begins, is thus served--every guest has a plate of soup and a little dish of herrings placed before him, and takes in turn a bit of herring and a spoonful of broth.

Harold was so busy, in the spring, with his works and his workmen, that he had very little time to pass with Susanna, either in peace or discord. But as it occurred to him that he might possibly in time have weak lungs, he visited the dairy every morning to receive a glass of new milk from her hand. He would present her in return with a fresh spring flower, or sometimes, by way of variety with a thistle, (which was always thrown indignantly into a corner,) and then observed attentively the arrangements of the dairy, and Susanna's motions as she strained the milk from the pails into the milk-pans, and then placed them on the shelf. During this contemplation, he lost himself in the following soliloquy:

"Well, that is what one might call handiness! How well she looks when she is at work, and with such a cheerful, pleasant air; every thing she touches looks pretty; every thing thrives under her care; if she were only not quite so passionate and violent in her temper! But it does not come from her heart, for there never was a better heart. Men and animals love her, and feel themselves happy near her. Ah, fortunate will be the man—who—."

Shall we not take a look into Susanna's heart too? There, matters stand thus. Harold had, partly by his teazing and mischief, partly by his kindness, his stories, and the real worth which Susanna could not but acknowledge, so wound himself into all her thoughts and feelings, that she could not possibly banish him from them. In anger or in gratitude, in blame or in approval, he must be always thinking of him. Many an evening

she laid down wishing that she might never see him again, but rose in the morning longing to meet him. Her feelings were like April weather.

A MAY DAY.

Fairer the first faint blushes of the dawn,
Than the full splendor of the noonday light;
Dearer the first pale flowers in early spring-time born,
Than all that summer boasts of fair and bright.

It was in the beginning of the month of May; a heavy shower of rain had just ceased. The wind came from the south, was fresh and mild, and drove white fleecy clouds before it over the bright blue sky. In the yard, at Semb, which had been deserted during the shower, all was now life and motion. The ducks were plashing in the puddles, bathing, and washing their soiled plumage.

"The knight" scratched in the earth, and then began to call aloud, to make it known that he had something good to give away, and when two small speckled hens obeyed the summons, he let one grain of corn after another fall from his beak, which the hens accepted, without further ceremony or compliment.

The turkey-cock was in a great embarrassment. His white dames, supposing the invitation of the cock to be general, ran upon their long legs as fast as they could, and thrust their heads in between the two hens, intending to take their share in the entertainment. The knightly cock drew back in some surprise, and rather

haughtily, but was too much of a gentleman to affront the forward dames; but the two speckled hens turned their backs upon them. The deserted turkey-cock gabbled desperately, and swelling with rage approached his black helpmate, who was silent, and looked up piteously to heaven.

Under the kitchen windows, a black cat and her family were diverting themselves, with a thousand gambols; while over them the mice peeped down curiously from the gutter, drank the rain-water, snuffed the fresh air, and then crept quietly back under the tiles.

The flies stretched their legs and began to promenade in the sunshine.

In the yard stood a high ash-tree, from whose top swung a magpie's nest. A crowd of magpies, competitors for the air-palace, assembled about it, fluttering and screaming, each endeavoring to take possession and to drive the rest away. At last two remained conquerors in the nest. There they laughed and caressed each other, rocked by the south wind. The expelled magpies consoled themselves by flying down to the feeding-trough of the house dog, and eating from it, while the proud Alfiero, sitting in front of his kennel, observed them with haughty composure.

The melodious whistle of the starlings was heard from the roof where they had grouped themselves. The grasses shook the rain-drops from them in the wind, and the star-flower, so dear to the singing-birds, raised again its little head to the sun, and was greeted by the song of the lark.

The geese waddled cackling over the grass-plot, bit-

ing off the young green shoots. It appeared that a change had taken place in their society; the tyrant, the white gander, had, by accident, become lame, and had lost his power and his consequence. Now had the grey an opportunity to show his noble character, his generous spirit; but no; the grey goose showed nothing of all this. Whatever the white one had formerly inflicted upon him, the grey now retaliated in full; he stretched out his neck, and screamed at him, and kept him at a distance with cries and violence; and the lady geese still gave themselves no trouble about the matter; and the white gander must submit to see his rival rule in the assembly, while he himself must limp behind, helpless and despised. Susanna, who saw this, lost all her preference for the grey gander, while at the same time, she felt no great sympathy with the white one. She found that one was no better than the other.

Susanna had just returned from a visit that she had made to a cottage, where she had before assisted the housewife in setting up a web, and now helped her to take it down. Her face glowed with pleasure, at the recollection of the scene which she had just witnessed at the cottage. The cow had that morning calved, and the milk flowed free and plentifully, to the inexpressible delight of four pale boys. Their pleasure was divided between their delight in the milk, and their astonishment at the little active, black and white calf; this astonishment was, in the youngest, mingled with some fear. The weaving, too, had succeeded beyond expectation. Susanna helped the mother to cut out the clothes in the best manner, and her cheerful words

and hearty sympathy were the cream of the milk breakfast. Thinking on this pleasant scene, Susanna entered the yard at Semb, and was greeted by Alfiero, and all the poultry, with sounds of jubilee. Just then, cries and notes of distress were heard among the birds, and she hastened to the garden. Here she saw a pair of starlings, who with loud cries fluttered round the lowest branches of an oak. Something moved in the grass with a faint hopping, and Susanna saw that it was a young starling, who had ventured too soon from the nest, and had fallen. It uttered a faint cry to its parents, who seemed to wish, by their fluttering, to keep off a grey cat who glared at them from under a cherry tree, with greedy eyes. Susanna drove away the cat, took up the little bird, and warmed it in her bosom. But the parent birds were by no means well pleased; on the contrary, their disquiet appeared to increase. Susanna would gladly have satisfied them, but when she looked up and saw the starling nest high up in the trunk of the tree, many yards above her head, she felt quite helpless. Then the dinner-bell rang, Alfiero howled dismally, and Harold, at the head of his work people, returned from the field. Susanna hastened to acquaint him with her dilemma, and showed him the bird. "Give it to me," said Harold, "I will wring its neck, and we shall have a nice little roast for dinner."

"No! can you be so cruel?" cried Susanna. Harold laughed, without answering; looked up into the oak to see where the starling's nest was, and then swung himself up into the tree, with great agility, and standing upon one of the lower branches, bent down to Susanna,

and said, "Give it to me; I will take care of it," and Susanna gave him the bird without further remark. Harold sprang lightly from branch to branch, holding the bird in his left hand, and accompanied by the parent starlings, who made a terrible racket about his head. It was, certainly, a surprise to them, to see the young one replaced, unhurt, in the nest, but it was no longer one to Susanna, and when Harold sprang lightly from the tree, he was received with kindest looks and warmest thanks.

At this moment, some travelling merchant entere the yard, with their wagon loaded with wares. Harold said he had some purchases to make, and wanted Susanna's advice.

Susanna was a woman; and women are very ready to give advice; always good, of course. For some time, Harold had been making various purchases, and always consulted Susanna, by which she felt extremely flattered, but could not avoid sometimes thinking, "But he must be very selfish. He thinks only of himself, and buys only for himself, and never for his sister, whom he talks so much about, and seems to love so well. But these Norwegian men; they care more for themselves than for any body else."

This idea was fully confirmed on the present occasion. It was really dreadful to see how much Harold thought about himself, and how every thing was wanted for this dear self. This damask he would have for his table, this muslin for his curtains, &c., &c.

Susanna could not forbear trying him, by exclaiming at sight of a beautiful stuff for dresses; "How pretty

this is! how well it would suit your sister!"

"What? my sister!" exclaimed Harold, angrily. "No, she must buy her own clothes. I want this very stuff, for my sofa. Charity begins at home, one must take a little care of one's self."

"Take care of yourself, then, I have no time for it." cried Susanna, and turning her back upon him and his wares, she left him abruptly.

SPRING INFLUENCES.

Heaven sends upon the wings of spring,
Fresh thoughts into the hearts of flowers;
And oft a gentle whispering
Is audible at twilight hours,
Mid the young leaves in quiet sylvan bowers.

VELHAVEN.

May was passing away and June approached. From their nests in the airy, leaf-covered grottoes that nature had formed for them, the starlings sent forth their low pleasant whistle, and their lovely warbling. The woods of Norway were filled with song and fragrance. The peasant maiden leads her herds to the Saeter valleys, singing gaily as she goes.

The labors of the spring were now ended. The harvest was trusted to the care of heaven. Harold had now more leisure, and devoted much of it to Susanna. He taught her the names and properties of the plants in the valley, and was as much delighted by the way in which she mangled the latin names, as by the quick-

ness with which she learned and applied their useful and medicinal qualities.

The valley and its beauties became every day more familiar and dearer to her. She now went again, in the early mornings, to the spring where the lady mantles and the silver weed grew so luxuriantly, and let her feathered flock bathe and enjoy themselves. On Sunday she sometimes wandered into a thicket of young oaks and wild rose-bushes, which grew at the foot of a mountain called the Crystal hill, which shone with wonderful brilliancy in the light of the setting sun. Sometimes she was accompanied by Harold, who would relate many wonderful tales of Huldran, who lived in the mountain—of the dwarf, who cut the brilliant crystals, on which account they are called dwarf jewels; of the wonders of the subterranean world, such as the rich fancy of the old time created it, and as it still dimly lives in the faith of the northern people. Susanna's lively fancy was captivated by these wild tales. She dreamed herself into the crystal halls of the mountain, fancied the song of the water-spirit in the flowing of the river, and trees and flowers became more beautiful and more living to her, when she thought she heard elves and cobolds speaking from out them. Out of the dull prose of her life and labors, sprang a flower of poetry, half reality, half fable, which spread a beauty and grace over her soul.

Susanna was not the only one at Semb, to whom this spring brought improvement. The pale Fru Astrid seemed to rise from her gloomy depression, and to breathe in new life with the fresh spring air. She went

out sometimes, when the sun shone warmly, and she might be seen sitting for hours together, upon a moss-covered stone at the foot of the crystal mountain. When Susanna observed that she seemed to love this place, she brought from the woods clods of earth, with blooming linnea and sweet-scented Pyrola, and planted them so that the south wind should carry their fragrance to the spot where Fru Astrid sat; she felt a sorrowful pleasure in the thought that this balmy air would bear witness to her lady of the devotion which she dared not express in any other manner.

Susanna would have been richly rewarded if she could have looked into her lady's heart, or if she could have read a letter which she wrote about this time, from which we make the following extract.

TO BISHOP S.

"Love is never weary!" Thus did I exclaim to-day, when your letter reached me, and I was filled with the sense of your goodness, your heavenly patience. No, you are not troublesome to her, who has almost become troublesome to herself. And still the same spring of hope, the same firm, beautiful faith! Ah! why do I not better deserve your friendship? But I have to-day a pleasant word to say to you, and I will not withhold it from you.

"You would know how it is with me. Better. For some time I have breathed more freely. Quiet days have passed over me; mild stars have looked down upon me; the stream has lulled me with its cradle song; the Spring has shed its beneficent influence over me.

Every thing about me is so glorious—so rich in life and beauty—I sometimes forget myself in admiration. It is more than thirty years since I have lived in this country!

"At times, feelings arise in me like the fresh breezes of spring. Then I feel a certain confidence in the thought, that through my long sorrows, I have ever striven to do right—to endure patiently unto the end. At times, something that is like a mild ray of hope, descends to me from the blue, spring heavens. Yet perhaps these hopes are but spring flowers, that are to pass away with the spring.

"I sometimes go out into the open air. I sit in a beautiful little oak wood in the valley, and there most, soothing feelings come over me. The wind bears to me odors inexpressibly sweet. These reveal to me the world of healing, strengthening powers that are at work about me, yet so quietly, so unobtrusively, disclosing themselves only by their perfume and their calm beauty. I sat there this evening at the foot of the mountain. The sun was going down, but it was still warm in the little wood. Near me some sheep were feeding with their tender lambs. They regarded me with surprised but fearless looks; a little bell rang clear and low, as they wandered here and there on the green turf. It was so still and calm that I heard the little insects, that hummed in the grass at my feet; and I know not what of pleasure, of delight, came over me. At this moment I felt a pleasure in existence, like the lambs, the insects. I can then still enjoy—kind, bountiful nature! On thy heart might mine perhaps———But that pale,

bleeding boy stands before me—the murderer stands there, stands ever between me and the peace of my soul! Could I sometimes hear your voice, could I see your clear hope-inspirfng look, then might I perhaps again learn—to look up. But I ask you not to come to me. Ah, I wish no one to approach me! But be no longer so anxious for me, my friend. I am better, I have good people about me who provide for the comfort of my outward life. Let your loving thoughts rest upon me as hitherto—perhaps, one day, light may beam into my heart."

MAN AND WIFE.

A NEW CONTENTION.

"I will show you what sort of fellow I am."

SIFUL SIBADDA.

We have seen that Harold had as little liking for a life that flowed smooth as oil, as Griseldas's husband, of blessed memory. Perhaps he thought his intercourse with Susanna began to partake a little too much of this placidity, and, since he could no longer excite her horror as a misanthrope, he resolved to appear before her in the character of a tyrant to women.

"I expect my sister here in a few days," said he to Susanna, one evening in an indifferent tone. "I want her here, for she will sew for me, and put my things in order. Alette is a good-natured, handy girl, and I

think of keeping her with me till I am married and have a wife to wait on me."

"Have a wife to wait upon you!" cried Susanna, one may imagine in what tone.

"Certainly. Woman is made to be subject to man, and I have no idea of teaching my wife any thing else; I will be master in my own house."

"The Norwegian men must be despots, tyrants, real heathens, Turks."

"Every morning at six o'clock exactly my wife shall get up and make my coffee."

"But suppose she will not?

"Will not? I shall teach her to will. And if she does not do it willingly, she shall do it unwillingly. I shall suffer no disobedience, and shall let her understand that, in good earnest. And, if she does not want to be taught it, I advise her to get up at six o'clock, and make my coffee and bring it to my bed-side."

"Well, I never heard any thing like that! You are the most——God be merciful to women in this dreadful country."

"And she shall get me a good dinner every day, otherwise—I shall not take it very well. She shall not give me a dinner of odds and ends more than once a month, on Saturday; and then the cooking must be very rich."

"If you want rich cooking, you must provide richly."

"I shall not trouble myself about that, that will be my wife's business. She must provide the stores for the housekeeping as she can."

"I hope you will never have a wife, or that she will be a perfect Xantippe."

"I shall know how to provide against that. And for this purpose she shall, from the first, pull off my boots every evening. All depends upon a man's taking his stand in time, for women are by nature terribly fond of power."

"Because men are such tyrants."

"And so trifling too."

"Because men have taken possession of all important things."

"And full of whims."

"Because men are stuffed full of obstinacy."

"And changeable."

"Because men are not worthy of constancy."

"And wilful and passionate."

"Because men are so unreasonable."

"But I," continued Harold, "will have no wilful, passionate, and imperious wife. It is the men that spoil women, they are too patient, too yielding, too good. But in my house it will be quite another thing. I shall not spoil my wife. On the contrary, she must show herself patient, yielding, and attentive to me. It is on this account that I have sent for my sister; she will not expect me to give her my seat, she will not—"

At this moment a carriage was heard to enter the court-yard and stop before the door. Harold looked from the window, uttered an exclamation of surprise and pleasure, and went like an arrow from the room. Susanna looked eagerly from the window, and watched

Harold, as he lifted a young lady from the carriage, pressed her long and closely in his arms, and only left her to load himself with the bundles and bandboxes which she had brought with her.

"This is his tyranny then, is it?" thought Susanna—and satisfied that it was Harold's sister whom he had thus received, she went into the kitchen to make preparations for the evening meal. When she returned to the sitting-room, she found the brother and sister there. With beaming eyes, Harold presented his sister to Susanna, and then began to dance with her, laughing and singing. Susanna had never seen him so gay.

At supper, Harold had eyes only for his sister, whom he waited upon attentively. It is true, that now and then he would play her some trick, for which she would scold him, but this seemed only to heighten his spirits. Fru Astrid did not, this evening, leave her room, and Harold could devote his attention entirely to Alette. After supper he seated himself near her upon a sofa, and while he held her hand in his, reminded her of their childish days, and how they used to quarrel with each other.

"You were intolerably provoking," said Alette.

"And you intolerably discreet and wise. Do you remember how we used to quarrel at breakfast-time, that is, how I quarrelled, for you said wonderfully little, and carried yourself disdainfully and sagely, because you were a little taller than I."

"I remember, too, how you would sometimes quit the field and leave your breakfast, that you might complain to our mother that you could not endure my consequential airs."

"Yes, and how little I used to get by it! I was only obliged to hear, "Alette is much wiser than you—Alette knows much more than you do." This tasted rather sour, so I had to eat up your sweetmeats———"

"Yes, naughty boy, that you did, and wanted to persuade me that a mouse had done it."

"Yes, I was a naughty boy; mischievous, saucy, unbearable."

"And I an insufferably conceited, moralizing girl. For every trick you played upon me, I gave you a dish of morality."

"No, not one, sister, but seven or more," cried Harold, laughing, and kissing Alette's hand. "But," he continued, "they were well deserved. But I, wretch, how glad I was when I left you to go to the University."

"And I was not very much grieved at it, for I could then have my sewing, and my little affairs in peace. But when you came home three years after, then we turned over a new leaf; then, indeed, was I proud of my brother."

"And I of my sister. Do you know, Alette, you must break with Lexow, I really cannot lose you. Stay with me instead of going to that inhospitable, cold Nordland, which, I am sure, you cannot bear."

"We must ask Lexow about that, brother."

Thus did the conversation long continue, but became by degrees more serious and more quiet. The brother and sister seemed to be speaking of their future, and this is always a serious subject. But now and then a hearty laugh disturbed the quiet of their consultations. Susanna had withdrawn to the next room in order to

leave the brother and sister more at liberty. Her heart was agitated by unaccustomed, mournful feelings. She leaned her forehead against the cool glass of the windows, looked out into the beautiful summer evening, and listened to the low, confiding voices within. The twilight spread its thin veil over the valley, and wood and field, mountain and valley, heaven and earth, seemed to be united in a gentle sympathy. In the grass the flowers nodded to each other as they slept, and from the leaves that moved softly from side to side, Susanna thought she heard softly whispered "brother! sister!" With a nameless longing she opened her arms, as if she would embrace some one, and when they closed empty upon her breast, sorrowful tears flowed down her cheeks, while she whispered, "little Hulda!"

Little Hulda! All honor to thy loveliness, to thy golden curls! But I believe Susanna's tears flowed not for thee alone!

ALETTE.

Mirrored in the gay beauty of thine eyes,
I see the flickering rays the tapers fling;
But oft a soft, clear radiance in them lies,
Like light reflected from an angel's wing.

VELHAVEN.

When Susanna went the next morning to Alette, to enquire how she had slept, she found Harold already with his sister, and round her were spread out all the

stuffs, handkerchiefs, table-covers, etc., which Harold had told Susanna he was buying for himself; they had been, in truth, designed as presents to his sister on the occasion of her approaching marriage. She had no sooner entered the room, than, to her great surprise, the brother and sister both begged her to accept the pretty dress which Harold had by her advice, bought for his sister. Susanna blushed and declined it, but could not resist Harold's earnestness, and took the gift with thanks; but it did not give her pleasure. Tears filled her eyes; and she felt herself poor in more than one regard.

When Harold had gone out Alette poured forth a warm eulogium upon him, concluding with these words: "Yes, one may be angry with him ten times a day before one knows him well; but this is certain, that where he wishes to be loved no one can help loving him." Susanna listened silently to Alette's words, and her heart beat with emotions sweet and painful at the same time. Breakfast was announced, and the conversation was interrupted. Alette was about twenty years old, and had the fine form, the clear complexion, the delicate features with which nature seems to have especially endowed her Norwegian daughters. There was something delicate and transparent in her whole appearance, and her body seemed only a light veil to the living soul. Her manners and conversation were very fascinating, and discovered fine natural powers and much cultivation. She was betrothed to a rich merchant in the North, to whom she was to be married in the autumn, and had now come to pass a little time

with her brother, and some other near relations, in Hallingdale.

Susanna felt somewhat embarrassed in Alette's company. Besides this delicate, almost etherial being, she felt for the first time an unpleasant misgiving, that she was stout and—clumsy.

A change had taken place at Semb from the hour of Alette's arrival. Her pleasant manners, and her talents for society, had made her the central point to which all were attracted. Even Fru Astrid felt her influence, and took part in the conversations which Alette knew how to make interesting to her. The Oefwerstinna herself did not contribute less to the pleasure of the society, whenever, in the interest of the conversation, she forgot her sorrows; and then her words disclosed a deeply feeling heart, and thoughtful mind. Susanna regarded her, at these times, with delight and admiration. But often some painful thought would recall the lady from this happy forgetfulness, some dark remembrance would glide in like a ghost between her and pleasure—the words would die upon her pale lips—her hand was carried to her heart—and she no longer heard or remarked what was passing about her, till the interest of the conversation could again chain her attention.

They often read aloud. Alette had in this a peculiar talent, and it was a pleasure to hear from her lips the poems of Velhaven and Vergeland, two young men, who, though personally unfriendly, have united in sincere love for their country, and in rich offerings to her literature.

Susanna, in the meanwhile, found herself every day less happy. Harold now no longer sought her society; he seemed when near Alette almost to have forgotten her. In the conversations to which she now often listened there was much that moved her feelings, much that awakened in her inquiry and conjecture. But when she wished to give expression to her thoughts and emotions, when she wished to take her share in the conversation, and show that she too could think and speak, her words were so ill chosen, her thoughts were so indistinct, that she drew back, mortified and abashed; and the more, that she saw Harold's eyes cast down, and Alette's turned upon her in some astonishment. Then she would inwardly resolve never again to open her lips upon subjects that she did not understand.

But all this grieved her deeply; and in her dejection she bitterly lamented that she had not received a more careful education. "Ah," she would sigh from the depths of her heart, "if I only knew a little more! If I possessed but one single talent!"

AN EVENING IN THE EVERY-DAY ROOM.

When the faint morning dawns, the day must follow,
For light must ever triumph.

It was a beautiful summer evening. The soft air came in at the open window, bearing with it the fragrance of the new-mown hay. At one table, Susanna

was makiug the steaming tea, of which the Norwegians are almost as fond as the English: at the other sat Fru Astrid, with Harold and Alette, occupied with a beautiful work which had just appeared, "Snorro Sturlason's Stories of Norwegian Kings, translated from the Icelandic, by I. Aal." He had just been reading aloud Aal's interesting introduction to the Saga of Erik Rode, and Erik Karlefsne, and now continued to read both these histories, which contain the account of the first discovery of America, and of which we here make a short abstract.

"At the end of the tenth century, when Northern Vikings were conducting their piratical expeditions against the South, and christianity with the gospel of peace was advancing to the North, there lived in Iceland a man of note, named Herjulf. His son was called Bjarne, and was a bold young man, who showed an early love of adventure and foreign travel. He soon possessed a ship of his own, and gladly left the land. As he, one summer, returned to his native island, he found that his father had gone to Greenland. and established himself there. Then Bjarne put to sea again; he would, he said, make winter cheer with his father, according to the old custom, and so steered for Greenland.

"After he had sailed three days, a strong north-east wind arose, together with a thick fog, so that Bjarne and his crew no longer knew where they were. This lasted many days. At last the sun appeared again, and they could discover the 'corners of heaven.' Then they saw before them a country overgrown with wood

and covered with little hills. Bjarne wished not to land here, because this could not be Greenland, where he knew the mountains were high and covered with snow. So they sailed on with a south-west wind, till they came to another country, which was mountainous and had high snow-covered hills. But Bjarne thought this also was not Greenland, and sailed further till he came to the land which he sought, and found the habitation of his father.

" During a visit to the Eric Tarl, in Norway, Bjarne spoke of his voyage, and of the strange lands he had seen. Leif, son of Eric the red, was filled with longing to visit these unknown regions, bought a ship, which he manned with fifty-three men, and put to sea to seek for the new land. At first, he came to a country full of snow and mountains, which appeared to him ' not at all beautiful.' Then they perceived a wooded land, whose shore was covered with white sand. They sailed still further west, and came to a noble country, where they found grape-vines, and Indian corn, and the beautiful tree ' Masur.'

" They called this land Vinland, built houses, and passed the winter there, which was so mild that the grass hardly withered. The length of the days and nights was more equal than in Iceland and Greenland. And Leif was a strong man, of noble, manly aspect, and wise and prudent in all things. After this expedition, he grew in wealth and in importance, and was every where called the fortunate.

" Of the voyage in the new land which followed that of Leif that of Karlefsnes is the most remarkable, but

whether because heavy maladies visited the young colony, or whether it was that a longing for home drew the Northmen from the country of vines back to their snow-covered land, certain it is that they made no abiding settlement in the new world."

Many Icelandic historians prove that in every age from the discovery of Leif, down to the time of Columbus, America was visited by the Northmen.

We have proofs and memorials of these voyages not merely in these relations, but also in that remarkable stone now called "Dighton writing rock," on the bank of the Taunton river, in Massachusetts, whose hieroglyphics, recently copied by American antiquaries, confirm the truth of these narrations.

Harold now commented upon these figures with great zeal, observing that similar inscriptions were still to be found in Norway engraved upon old walls, gravestones, &c. "Do you see, Alette," cried he, "this represents a woman with a little child, probably Karlefsne's wife, who bore a son during her residence in Vinland. And this must be an ox; mention is made in the Saga of Karlefsne, of an ox, who terrified the natives by his bellowing. These figures on the right represent the natives of the country. This is a shield, and these Runic letters—

"A very good imagination is needful for all this;" laughingly interrupted Alette, who was not quite so patriotic as her brother, "but grant that this is sufficient proof of the discovery of America by our forefathers, what then? Of what advantage has it been to the world? Is it not sad to know that such im-

portant discoveries have been made only to be lost? Had not Columbus, many centuries later, braved, at the same time, the bigotry of man, and the terrors of the unknown seas, we might at this day have known nothing of America, or of this stone, the vestige of our forefathers in the new world."

"But, my dear Alette," cried Harold, is it not clear as sunlight, that, but for these voyages of the Northmen, Columbus would never have conceived the idea of seeking a land beyond the great sea? At the time in which Columbus lived, the little ships of the Northmen visited all the coasts of Europe. They made voyages to Spain, and the fame of their Vinland discoveries went with them. Besides, and this is worthy of note, Columbus himself, a few years before he undertook his great voyage of discovery, visited Iceland rather, as Robertson says, to extend his knowledge of naval affairs, than to increase his wealth."

"But," said Alette, "Washington Irving, in his life of Columbus, speaks, it is true, of this visit to Iceland, but denies that he received there the first idea of his great discovery."

"That is incredible, after what we see and hear; hear now what Aal says of the time when Columbus stayed in Iceland."

"The ancient chronicles were held in great honor in Iceland at this time; different copies of the various Sagas passed from hand to hand, and served to beguile the long winter evenings. These ancient tales certainly threw a light over his dim conjectures, and how great must have been their effect upon him, now tread-

ing the very ground from which the expedition had been sent forth, and hearing the history of these bold adventurers, from the lips of their descendants." "Is not this perfectly natural and probable? Can you any longer doubt, Alette? Be converted, I beg of you; leave Irving for Aal."

"I am inclined to be on Harold's side," said Fru Astrid, with earnestness of look and voice. "Great and important discoveries are seldom made without long preparation; they have often lain smouldering through quiet ages, till the breath of mind, or perhaps of chance has fanned the glimmering fire into a flame that has given light to the universe. When we look upon a flower, we can go back to the stem, the root, buried in the ground, and to the seed, which contained the future plant in its dark bosom. And shall not all things in the earth tend to a like unfolding? In the obscure voyages of the Northmen, I see the seed borne by the wind, which afterwards sent out its roots from the soil of Vinland, till a powerful genius was led by them to complete the work, and discover the new world to the old."

Harold was delighted with these thoughts, which were as a fresh breeze to his sails, and expressed all the admiration with which his bosom glowed for the ancient heroes of the North. "It was for these men," he said, "these men of few words and mighty deeds, to whom danger was sport, and the rushing of the storm, music; it was for them only, to discover new worlds, and regard it as no mighty achievement. Great deeds were to them matters of every day occurrence."

Alette shook her pretty head at this enthusiasm for the old time. She would not deny that this time had a certain greatness, but yet to her it was not truly great. She spoke of the revenge, the oppression, the base cruelty with which the annals of these times were stained.

"But," replied Harold, "the contempt of suffering and death, this noble contempt, so universal among the men of that time, took off the edge of cruelty. Our weak race has hardly an idea of the power which men of that time displayed in the endurance of suffering; they excited their brave spirits to the highest pitch of heroism, feeling in such moments, that they were more than mortal. Thus, the heroes sing in the pangs of death; thus, the Swede Hjelmar dies in the arms of his friend, the Norwegian Odd, while he greets the eagles who are hovering over him, eager to drink his blood; thus dies Regnar Lodbrog (10), in the cave of serpents; while the hissing snakes drive their fangs into his heart, he recounts his victories, and closes with the words,

> Finished are now the hours of life,
> Then laughing let me die.

How noble and admirable is this strength in torture, in death! Who could die thus?"

"The wildest savages of North America," said Alette, "know and practice this kind of heroism. My idea of nobleness, both in life and death, is far different from this. The strong spirit of the ancient time, which

you, my brother, prize so much, could not support old age, sickness, or the still sorrows that form so large a part of the lot of man. I prize that spirit which can exalt all conditions of humanity, which inspires the dying hero to praise God—not himself—while he expires; which gives to the simple man, whose obscure life conducts him to an unnoticed grave, a strength which enables him to triumph over all the powers of darkness. Ah, I who feel deeply that I am one of the weak of the earth; I who have no drop of hero blood in my veins, I rejoice that without this stern courage, one may yet live and die nobly. Do you remember, my brother, "the old poet" of Rein? This poem expresses fully the frame of mind in which I would meet my last hour."

Harold had only an indistinct recollection of "the old poet," and the Oefwerstinna joined him in begging Alette to make them better acquainted with him. Alette could not remember the whole poem, but repeated the passages which had best pleased her, introducing them with the necessary explanations.

"It is Spring; the aged poet wanders through wood and meadow, in the regions where he had formerly sung; where he had once been happy, among those whom he had made happy. Now his voice is broken, his strength, his fire—gone. The shadow of what he has been, he wanders through the young world fresh with new life. The birds of the Spring gather about him, bid him welcome, and entreat him to take his harp, and sing the new-born year, the laughing Spring; he answers,

" Oh, ye loved birds, no longer as of yore,
The minstrel's harp shall answer to your strain;
Unstrung the harp—its silver chords no more
Send forth their melodies to wood and plain,
Yet not in gloom and silence will I part;
Heaven's music lingers round the minstrel's heart."

" He wanders on through wood and meadow. The brook, murmuring between green banks, whispers to him its delight in its liberty, and hails the Bard as the messenger of Spring and of freedom. He wanders on—dryads flit about him in the dance; the flowers offer him garlands, and beg him to celebrate their feast; the zephyrs who were used to play among the chords of his harp seek it among the bushes, ask if he have forgotten it, seek again, but in vain—They are then departing, but he entreats:

" Leave me not yet, dear friends; in brighter hours,
Together we have hailed the dawning Spring;
Bloom yet along my pathway, gentle flowers,
Though the voice fail, that would your praises sing.
Play round me, zephyrs, as in days gone by,
Though the old bard no more may share your mirth,
Powerless is now his hand and dim his eye;
His spring renews itself no more on earth.
Yet not in darkness shall his spirit part,
Heaven's sunshine rests upon the poet's heart."

" He wanders further and seeks out every beloved spot. The youth of the land assemble round the old minstrel, " the friend of joy and of youth." They beg him to enliven their feasts with his songs; the old man answers,

" My lays no more will aid the sparkling wine,
Youth and its wild delights for me are o'er,
No more shall festive wreaths my brows entwine,
A paler garland will become them more.
Yet, smiling, let me from the world depart,
The peace of heaven fills the old man's heart."

" And now he calls upon the birds of the wood, the flowers, youth; all that is beautiful in nature to join with him in rejoicing over life, and in praising the Creator; then, thankful and happy, adoring and singing praises, he sinks quietly into the lap of nature."

Alette was silent. As she pronounced these words, a gentle emotion trembled in her voice, and beamed from her sweet countenance. Fru Astrid's tears flowed, her hands were clasped convulsively, while she exclaimed, " Oh, to look forward to death thus! To feel thus in dying!" She drew Alette to her with a kind of passion, kissed her and wept quietly, leaning upon her shoulder. Harold too, was moved, but seemed to restrain his feelings, and regarded the group before him with earnest, tearful eyes.

Quietly and unobserved Susanna left the room; she felt a stab in her heart; a snake was wreathing in her bosom: driven by a nameless, tormenting disquiet, she hurried into the open air, and, almost unconsciously went up the little foot-path to the hill, from which she had so often, in calmer hours, admired the beauty of the landscape.

During the conversation she had just heard, great and beautiful scenes had risen before her—she felt herself so insignificant, so poor beside them. Ah, she

could never *speak* of the great and beautiful; she felt so warmly, yet her enthusiasm could never warm another heart. The fortunate Alette won without trouble, perhaps without prizing it, a preference, a praise which Susanna would have died to gain. The Barbara spirit awoke in her; and she said, casting a reproachful look towards heaven, "Am I never, in my whole life, to be any thing but a poor despised servant?" Mild but mournfully the heavens looked down upon the young girl; light rain-drops fell upon her forehead; all nature was silent around her, as if in grief.

This mournful quiet was to Susanna like the tenderly reproachful look of a kind mother. She looked into her heart and found there pride and envy—she felt horror at herself—she looked down into the river, which was rushing below, and thought with longing, "Oh, might I plunge deep, deep into these cool cleansing waters, and come back, my soul refreshed and purified!"

But the wish alone had been as the flowing of pure waters over Susanna's soul, and she felt light, cheerful thoughts rising in her heart. A poor servant! she repeated, and why should that be so despised a lot. Has not the Most High served upon the earth—served all—the meanest—yes, even me? "Oh," and her spirit became ever calmer and more exalted, "let me, then, be a true servant! let me desire no other praise! Beauty and the gifts of genius are not mine,—but I may still love and serve; and this will I do with my whole heart, and with all my strength; and though

man may despise me, God will never abandon the humble, faithful servant! "

As Susanna turned her tearful eyes to the ground, they fell upon a little moss plant, one of those neglected children of nature, which quietly and unnoticed pass through the changes of their peaceful life. The little plant was of a vivid green, it was hung with raindrops that glistened in the sun which had just burst from behind a cloud.

Susanna looked at the moss, and as she gazed it seemed to say to her, See, though I appear so insignificant, yet do the dews of heaven and the sunshine descend upon me, as upon the roses and lilies of the garden. Susanna understood the language of the little flower, and, grateful and calm, she repeated many times to herself with a quiet delight, " A humble faithful servant! "

When Susanna returned to the house, she found the Oefwerstinna ill. She had been much agitated, and there was reason to fear a recurrence of her spasms.

Susanna earnestly begged, and at last obtained permission to watch this night by her bed, at least until she should be asleep; Fru Astrid had it is true, another servant with her, but she was old and dull, and Susanna placed no great confidence in her.

The Oefwerstinna went to bed—Susanna seated herself on a low stool near the window, busied with her thoughts and her knitting. The window had been open during the day, and many gnats had come into the room. The Oefwerstinna was annoyed by them, and complained that they prevented her from sleeping. Susanna quietly bared her white shoulders, her arms, her neck, and as

the gnats lighted upon her in swarms, and left her lady undisturbed, Susanna sat still and let the gnats enjoy themselves, finding herself a higher pleasure than one can well imagine.

HOPES AND FEARS.

True delicacy discovers itself most plainly in little things; though, indeed, what we commonly call trifles are not always so insignificant.—J. E. Lons.

It is with our faults as with the Charlock; where it has once taken root, it is almost impossible to extirpate it; and nothing is more discouraging to the farmer, than, while he sees the weeds that he has torn up, yet lying about him, to find new shoots springing from the roots that are still concealed in the ground. Well may he wax impatient with the weedy soil; and when this soil is the dear *I*, the only pleasure we can know is in travelling as fast and as far as possible from ourselves.

Susanna often experienced this feeling, while she daily labored to repress the emotions which were excited in her at this time. But the thoughts and resolutions that awoke in her heart on that evening in the mountains, had taken too strong a hold easily to give way; and bearing the motto, "a humble, a faithful servant," she struggled on through the dangers and snares of the day. Her manners became calmer; she quietly abstained from taking part in conversation which was above her powers; she endeavoured to renounce the desire of receiving attention and regard from others, and strove only to provide for the comfort and pleasure

of all; to fulfil their wishes, if possible to anticipate them. And this active goodness has more effect than one might think, upon the happiness of every-day life. A loving heart can give life and soul to dead and senseless things. But hard to those who serve in this life of labor and care for others, when no kind acknowledgment, no sunbeam of love cheers the long, laborious day.

In the beginning of August, Harold left them, to return in about a fortnight with Alf Lexow, the lover of Alette. During his absence Alette was to make a visit to her uncle in Hallingdale; but in compliance with Fru Astrid's wishes she remained another week at Semb. During these days Alette and Susanna were more together; for Alette was involuntarily touched by the kind offices which Susanna performed so unweariedly, and so unostentatiously. She found in her, too, such an open heart, such warm sympathy, that she could not deny herself the pleasure of sharing with her the many feelings that throng the heart of a happy bride. Happy, yes, Alette was so, indeed; for she had loved Alf Lexow long and well, and she was in a short time to be united to him for ever. And yet a shade of sadness would pass over her beautiful features, when she spoke of this marriage, and of her journey to Nordland. Susanna had several times asked her the cause, but she had laughingly parried her questions; but, one evening, when they had been conversing more confidentially than usual, Alette said, it is a strange feeling, to be preparing every thing for one's marriage, with the feeling that one is not long to survive it. This re-

moval to the north will cause my death, I am sure of it. No, do not look so shocked! It is nothing so fearful. I have long felt that I was destined to an early death; I ought, therefore, to be reconciled to the thought."

"Ah!" exclaimed Susanna, "the happy—those who love and are loved—should never die! But whence this strange foreboding?"

"I do not myself know," replied Alette, "but it has followed me from my earliest youth. My mother was born under the beautiful sky of Provence, and passed the greater part of her youth in that sunny land. Her love for my father made her regard our Norway as another father-land, and here she passed the rest of her life, but could never endure the cold climate; she longed in secret for her own warm land, and in this longing, died. I have inherited these feelings; and though I have never seen the orange groves, the warm blue sky of which she spoke to me so often, yet have I loved them from my childhood. I have inherited, too, the sensitiveness to cold, from which my mother suffered. My lungs are not strong, and the long, dark, northern winter, a residence on the sea-shore, in a climate far colder than that to which I have been accustomed, the sea-fogs, and the storms, ah! I cannot withstand them long. But, Susanna, you must promise me never to utter before Harold, or Lexow, a word of what I have confided to you."

"But if they knew it," said Susanna, "you would surely have no need to go there; your husband would, for your sake, seek a milder climate."

"And feel himself an alien there, and die of longing for his beloved Nordland! No, no, Susanna, I know his love for his home, and I know that this wintry climate, which I so much dread, is life and health to him. Alf is heart and soul a Nordlander. He has identified himself with the region where his fathers have dwelt, and the chief aim of his exertions, the darling project of his heart, is, to elevate the character ot the people, to increase their prosperity. No, no, he shall not, for my sake, be torn from his home, from the field of his noble labors. Rather will I, if it must be so, find in his Nordland an early grave."

At Susanna's request, Alette now related to her many particulars with regard to this land, which she thought so terrible, and we will now, with them, cast

A GLANCE UPON NORDLAND.

All here is cold and hard.
BLOMB.

Yet the spirit of God rests upon the Northland.

For many months of the year the inhabitants of Nordland are deprived of the light of the sun, and the difficulties and dangers of the roads shut them out from all intercourse with the more southern world. The spirit of the north pole rules sternly over this region, and if, in the still nights of August, he sends his breath over more southern Norway, then the grim face of hunger glares upon crowds of wretched men, whose industry cannot shield them from his terrors. The sea

breaks, on these coasts, against palisades of rocks, round which the polar birds swarm with loud cries and hootings. Storms alternate with thick fogs. The cliffs along this shore assume strange forms. Now they rise into towers, now are they like animals, and now they represent the profiles of gigantic men. It is no marvel that the superstition of the people should see in them monsters and giants transformed into stone, or that our ancestors should have placed their Jotunheim(11) in this desolate wilderness.

And even to this day some dark remnants of the ancient superstition linger round these regions. It is frozen into the minds of men; it is petrified in the fearful forms, from which it first received its life. In vain has the light of the gospel sought to scatter the shadows of a thousand years. Ancient night still holds her empire. In vain does the holy cross rise from every cliff. A belief in sorcery and witchcraft is universal among the people. The old witch sits, full of malice, in her cave, and raises the storm that is to overwhelm the mariner; and the ghost Stallo, a tall figure clothed in black, with a staff in his hand, wanders in through the wilds, and challenges the lonely traveller to combat for life or death.

Along the coast, among the rocks, and upon the hundred islands which lie along the shore, live a race of fishermen, who skim over the sea, rivalling the sea-gulls. Day and night, summer and winter, their boats swarm upon the waves; through the raging storm, over the foaming breakers, they glide fearlessly with their light sails, to win from the sea its treasure of silver

herrings. Many of these adventurous seamen are every year engulfed in the waves; yet, still the greater number contend with the elements, and conquer. In this constant struggle, great power is developed, many heroic deeds are performed. The people are hardened against all fear of danger, or death; but they are hardened too, to all the softer charms of existence.

Upon the borders of Nordland and Finland lies the city of Tromsoe, the "pride of the north." It was here that Alette was in future to live; it was here that love was preparing for her a warm, peaceful dwelling; and as Alette had before described to Susanna all that made her shrink from a residence in the north, she now confided to her all that drew her thither with such gentle, but powerful attraction; and Susanna understood this well, when Alette had read to her the following letter.

TROMSOE, *May 28th,*

"If you were but here, my Alette; I miss you every moment while I am preparing my dwelling to receive you. I am continually wishing to ask you, "How will you have this, Alette? Ah, my own beloved, that you were here at this moment! You would be enraptured with this land of "ice and bears," at the thought of which I know you inwardly shudder. The country is not here wild and gloomy, as in Heligoland. The rocky shores of our island are crowned with woods, and the waves of the sea play round them in quiet gulfs and havens. Our well-built town lies pleasantly on the southern side of the island, only separated from the continent by a small arm of the sea. My house stands upon the bay road which runs along the large, con-

venient harbor. At this moment twenty boats lie here at anchor, and the flags of many nations are fluttering in the wind. Here are Englishmen, Dutchmen, and, above all, Russians, who come to our coasts to exchange their wheat and furs for our fish and eider-down. Besides these, the natives of more southern lands bring hither many articles of luxury and fashion, which are eagerly purchased by the inhabitants of Kola, and the countries bordering on the white sea. Long live commerce! My soul expands at the thought of its living power! What has not commerce done, from the beginning of the world, for the embellishment of life—for the friendly intercourse between different lands, and people—for the amelioration of manners? It has always heartily pleased me, that the wisest and mildest lawgiver of antiquity, Solon, was a merchant. "His soul was formed," says one of his biographers, "by commerce, by wisdom, and by music." Long live commerce! What does not live through her? What, indeed, is all that is most dear and beautiful in life, but commerce—exchange, gift for gift? In love, in friendship, in the great life of the people, in the narrow circle of the family: wherever I see prosperity and happiness, there I see commerce.

"You must not believe, Alette, that in our devotion to business we neglect the nobler and gentler pursuits. From among the thousands who compose the population of this town, we may choose an agreeable circle for friendly intercourse. We have a theatre, and many of the pleasures of civilized life. I was yesterday at a ball where they danced the whole night—by daylight.

The good music, the tasteful dress, and good dancing of the women, above all, the hearty, but well-bred gaiety, astonished several foreigners who were present, and compelled them to ask if they were really under the seventieth degree of latitude.

"'But the winter!' I hear you say, 'the summer may pass well enough, but the long, dark winter!' Well, the winter too, my Alette, passes happily away, with people who love each other, when it is warm at home. Do you remember, last summer, how we read together at Christiansand, in the morning paper, this extract from the Tromsoe Gazette? 'We have had snow-storms for several days together, and at this moment the snow-plough is at work, opening a path to the churches. The death-like stillness of night and winter extends over meadow and valley; only a few cows wander about, like ghosts, over the snowy tracts, to pluck a scanty meal from the twigs of the trees that are not yet buried in the snow.' The little winter sketch pleased me, but you shuddered involuntarily at that expression, 'the death-like stillness of night and winter,' and bowed your sweet, dear face, with closed eyes, upon my breast. Oh, my Alette, thus will it be when, in future, the terror of the cold and darkness seizes thee, and upon my breast, listening to the beatings of my heart, the words of my love, wilt thou forget these dark images of storm and gloom. * *

* * Close thine eyes, slumber, beloved one, while I watch over thee. Thou shalt one day look upon night and winter, and own that their power is not so fearful. Love, that geyser of the soul, can melt the ice

and snow of the most frozen regions; wherever its warm springs well up, there glows a southern climate.

"While I write, I am listening to music which makes upon me an impression at the same time mournful and pleasing. Some Russians are singing their national songs as they pass down Tromsoe Sound, in the stillness of the evening. They sing together in the most perfect harmony. The music is in the minor key, yet is not mournful. They row within the shadow of the shore, and at every stroke the water glows, and drops of fire rain from the oars.

"My heart, too, glows! I look upon the brilliant sea, I listen to the melody of the song, full of pleasure and of sadness, and stretch out my arms to thee, Alette, my Alette,"

"Oh," cried Susanna, "how this man loves you, and you must love him! Oh, you must surely live long, to be happy together!"

"And if not long," said Alette, "at least a short time; yes I hope I may live a short time, to make him happy, to thank him for all his love, and then—"

Alette stooped, and plucked a beautiful water-lily, which grew in the river on whose bank she stood; she shewed it to Susanna, as she continued with a thoughtful smile,

"The flowers of love and hope we gather here,
Shall yet bloom for us in the home of God;
They shed not their last fragrance o'er our bier,
They lie not, withered, on the cold grave-sod."

THE RETURN.

To meet, to part—to greet and say farewell
Such is the lot of life.

BJERREGARD.

Alette left them to fulfil her promise to her uncle in Hallingdale, but returned a few weeks after with Harold and Alf Lexow. She was now, however, to make them only a short visit, and then to depart, with her uncle's family and her future husband, for Trondhjem, where her marriage was to be celebrated at the house of a rich aunt. Harold was to accompany them.

Alf Lexow was a man of middle age, of open and agreeable manners. His face was small, and marked with the small-pox, but otherwise handsome and full of spirit and kind-heartedness. He was one of those men whom we like, and place confidence in, at first sight. It was a great pleasure to Susanna to see the loving and confiding intercourse of the lovers. She was herself happier, for Harold now left Alette to her lover, and sought Susanna's society as before.

Alette was sensible, agreeable, and highly educated, but she liked best to hear herself talk. So did Harold, in truth, and it was impossible to have a better listener than Susanna. Their contentions were now at an end, but there was something in Susanna now, that attracted Harold to her still more than the love of dispute had formerly done. He found a great change in her man-

ners; they were more quiet, and at the same time much softer than they formerly had been. Beside, she was always so kind, so attentive, so thoughtful of every thing that could give pleasure to others. He saw too, with what quiet solicitude her thoughts followed Fru Astrid, who now, on the approach of autumn, seemed to sink back into the gloom and silence from which she had of late been awakened; except at dinner time she now seldom left her room.

Harold wished that his sister and brother-in-law, should, before their departure from the valley, be present at one of the parties for games and dancing, then customary in the valley; and had prepared a rural feast to which he invited them, together with Susanna, and thither we will now accompany them.

THE HALLINGER.

This peculiar, wild, moving music is our national poetry.(12)

WERGELAND.

On a beautiful evening in September, two young peasant maidens, in festive attire, passed through the little wood of Heimdale, and approached a green open spot, surrounded by trees, where a crowd of people, all in peasant dresses, were assembled. This was the dancing-ground; and as the young maidens approached it, one of them said "Really, Susanna, this dress be-

comes you wonderfully. Your beautiful light hair, with the red ribands braided in, looks brighter than ever. I do not believe the dress is half so becoming to me."

"Because you look like a disguised princess, and I like a true peasant maiden."

"Susanna, I perceive you are a flatterer. Let us see whether Harold and Alf will recognize us, in our Tellemarkan disguise."(13)

They were not left long in doubt, for they had no sooner entered the dancing-ground, than two peasants, in the Hallingdale dress came dancing up to them, singing in concert with all the others, the peasant song,

I'm the son of Gulleig Boe,
An honest young fellow and gay,
And I will choose you for my love,
If you do not say me nay.

Susanna recognized Harold in the young man, who, thus singing, took her by the hand and led her to the gay springing dance. Alette danced with Alf, who sustained the part of a Hallingdale peasant admirably. Susanna had never looked so well or so happy; indeed, she had never, in her life, enjoyed such pleasure. The beautiful evening, the sound of the music, the animation of the dance; Harold's looks, which expressed such kindness; the cheerful, happy faces, which she saw around her,—yes, never before had she known such enjoyment. All present seemed inspired with the same feelings of delight, as they whirled round in the exciting dance,—shilling after shilling fell upon the little

gaily-painted violin, which was played by an old man, of an expressive countenance, with the most spirit-stirring energy.

After the first dance, they rested for a short time. They ate apples, and drank Hardanger beer from silver cans. Then arose a universal call, which summoned Harold and another young man, who was also remarkable for his agility and strength, to dance the Hallinger. They did not suffer themselves to be urged long, and stepped into the midst of the circle.

The musician tuned his instrument, and with his head sunk upon his breast, began to play with a life and expression, which might be called inspired, one of the most genial compositions of the wild Maliserknud. Was it composed in the army, in the nightly bivouac, under the free blue sky, or in bondage,—among evil-doers?

The dancing of the young men received universal applause, but the greatest admiration was bestowed upon Harold, whose performance had even excited astonishment.

There is perhaps no dance that expresses, better than the Hallinger, the spirit of the people who invented it. It begins creeping along the ground with short sliding steps, and with motions of the legs and arms, in which great strength is indolently displayed. There is something bearish, awkward, slothful, half-dreaming, in its movements. But it awakes, it becomes animated. Then the dancers stand erect, and make displays of strength, in which power and agility seemed to contend with in-

dolence and awkwardness, and to conquer. He, who but now seemed bound to the earth, springs on high, and moves through the air as if on wings. Then, after many neck-breaking movements, and evolutions which make the head of the unaccustomed spectator swim, the dance retakes its former quiet, careless, heavy character, and the performers end as they began, stooping listlessly towards the earth.

At the end of the dance loud applause resounded from all sides, which was principally bestowed upon Harold. And now, all united in the Halling-Polska. Harold refreshed himself with a glass of beer, and then hastened to Susanna, and asked her to join the Halling-Polska. Susanna had danced it sometimes at home, and gladly accepted Harold's invitation. This dance, too, is highly characteristic. It expresses the highest joy of the Northlander; it is the Bersaerker(14)-delight in dance. Resting on the arm of the woman, the man throws himself high into the air, then he seizes her in his arms, and whirls about with her in wild circles, then they separate, then unite again, and whirl about as in an excess of life and joy. The measure is exact, bold, and full of life. It is a dance-intoxication; in which every care, every sorrow, every burden of existence is thrown aside.

Thus did Harold and Susanna feel at this moment. Young, strong, active, they swung round securely and lightly, and their eyes being fixed steadily upon each other, they felt no giddiness from the continued whirl. They moved round, as in a magic circle, to the wild,

exciting music. The understrings* sounded out strong and wild. The enchantment that lies in the clear depths of the waters, in the mystic recesses of the hills, in the dim grottos of the woods, which poets have celebrated as mermaids, mountain-kings, and wood-nymphs, and which draw down the soul so powerfully into strange, unknown depths,—this dark song of nature is heard in the lower strings, in the sportive, and at the same time mournful, tones of the Hallinger. They sank deep into Susanna's soul, and Harold seemed to feel their magic; quitting the wild movements of the dance, they moved round slowly, arm in arm. "Oh, thus through life," whispered Harold's lips, almost involuntarily, as he gazed into Susanna's beaming, tearful eyes; and, "Oh, thus through life," answered Susanna's heart. At this moment she was seized with a violent trembling, which obliged her to quit the dance. She sat down; the earth seemed turning round about her. When she had taken a glass of water, which Harold brought her, she could answer his kind, anxious inquiries after her health. Susanna attributed her illness to the violence of the dance, and said that she felt now quite well again. At this moment Susanna's eyes met those of Alette. She was seated at a little distance, and was observing Harold and Susanna, with a serious, and, as Susanna thought displeased expression. Susanna felt wounded, and

* The understrings of the Hardanger-Fela are four metal strings, tuned to accord with the upper catgut strings. It is by means of these, and the peculiar form of the instrument itself, that this violin gives out these peculiar, deep, melancholy tones.

when Alette came to her and asked her rather coldly, how she was, Susanna answered coldly and briefly.

The sun was now going down, and the evening began to be cool. The dancers were therefore invited, by Harold, into a large hut, which had been decorated with branches of trees and flowers. At Harold's request, a young girl played upon the Langoleik,* and sang, with a clear, pleasant voice, the Hallingdale song. "The Shepherd's life," which so prettily describe the days of the shepherd maiden, with her flock, which she pastures and tends during the summer, happy and free from care, though almost separated from the rest of the world, *almost*, for Havor, the goatherd, is heard blowing his horn in the mountain, and soon sits beside her on the rocks.

> And the youth his mouth-harp strikes,
> And he plays on his flute so clear.

Thus the evening comes on, and "all my dear creatures" are now called by their names,

> Come Laikeros, Gullstjerne, fine,
> Come Dokkerose, darling mine,
> Come Bjolka, Quitteline.

And cows and sheep follow the well-known voice, and assemble at the little hut, joyfully bleating and lowing. Now the milking begins, and the herd's maiden sings,

> When once I have milk in my pails,
> Then I lay me down and sleep on,
> Till the day dawns over the mountains.

* Langoliek, a four-stringed instrument, on which the peasant maidens of these regions play; often with considerable skill.

After the song, the dance recommenced with new spirit. An iron hook was driven into the roof of the hut, and the dancer who should succeed, during the whirls of the Halling-Polska, in bending this hook by a blow with the heel of his shoe, was to be considered as victor in the dance. Susanna seated herself upon a bench to observe the violent springs of the competitors. A large branch of a tree, which stood between the bench and a window, prevented her from seeing two persons who stood there in earnest conversation. But she sat as if spell-bound, when she heard Alette's voice say,

"Susanna is certainly a good girl, and I am much attached to her; but still, Harold, it would grieve me very much if you were to become seriously interested in her."

"And why?" asked Harold.

"Because I think she is not a suitable wife for you. She has a violent, unreasonable temper, and—"

"But that will change, Alette. It is already much changed. I have no fear of her temper. That I will soon remedy."

"Greater magicians than you, my brother, have found themselves mistaken in such a belief. Besides she is too uninformed, too ignorant, to be your companion through life; she could not enter the society in which you must one day move. Dear Harold, listen to me, do not be hasty. You have long thought of travelling into other countries, to extend your knowledge of agriculture; execute this plan now; travel, and look about you in the world, before you bind yourself for life."

"I believe you are right Alette, and I will follow your advice, but—"

"Besides, there is still time enough to think about your marrying. You are young, you have time to look about you, and to choose. You may easily, if you will, make a match suitable in every respect. Susanna is poor, and you are not rich enough entirely to overlook——"

Susanna would hear no more, indeed she had learned quite enough. Grief and wounded pride drove the blood to her head and chest so violently that she felt as if she should suffocate. She rose hastily, asked an acquaintance to tell Harold and Alette that a violent headache had obliged her to leave the dance, and hastened by the little footpath back to Semb. The evening was beautiful, but Susanna was blind to its splendors; she saw not the twinkling of the bright stars, nor how they were reflected in the cups of the lady-mantles, now full of clear, crystal water. She heard not the flowing of the river, or the song of the thrush. Never had Sanna and Barbara waged fiercer war in her breast. "They despise me!" cried Barbara, "they throw me from them, they trample me under their feet! They think me unworthy to be near them, the proud, heartless people! But have they a right to hold themselves so much above me, because I am not so elegant as they are, because I do not know so much as they do—because I am poor? No, that they have not, for I can earn my bread, I can take care of myself through the world, as well as any body. If they will be proud, I will be prouder, I need not humble myself before them! One person is as good as nother!"

"Ah," now began Sanna, and tears forced them-

selves to her eyes, "one person is not as good as another. Education and refinement make a great difference between people. It is not pleasant for a man to feel ashamed of his wife's ignorance, and it is not to be expected that any one should undertake to teach a person of my age,—he cannot look into my heart and see how gladly I would learn. And—and Harold, who I thought felt so kindly to me, whom I loved so much, whom I would serve with my whole heart and life—how coldly he speaks of me; he who lately—so warmly—Harold, why would you delude my heart? Do you care so little what it feels and what it suffers. But," and here Barbara began again, "you think only of yourself. You are selfish, like your whole sex.—And he seems to feel so sure of me. He does not ask whether I will,—no, only whether he shall be graciously pleased to—Let him try, and he shall find he has deceived himself! Let him try! he shall find that a poor girl without friends, without relations, alone in the wide world, can yet reject the man who thinks he condescends to her. Be at ease, Miss Alette, the poor despised Susanna is too proud to force herself into your proud family; for, in truth, she thinks herself too good for it."

But Susanna was very angry and very unhappy, as she uttered these words. She had now reached Semb. A gleam of light shone from the window of the Oefwerstinna's sleeping-room. Susanna looked up at the window, and stood stupified with astonishment, for in the window stood Fru Astrid, but no longer the gloomy sorrowful lady whom she had hitherto known. Her hands folded on her breast she looked up to the bright

stars with a face glowing with gratitude. But there was something wild and overstrained in her expression, which determined Susanna to go to her immemediately.

On Susanna's entrance the Oefwerstinna turned quickly towards her; she held a letter in her hand, and said eagerly, and with a sort of restless delight,

"To Bergen, to Bergen, Susanna, to-morrow I go to Bergen. Prepare every thing for my departure, as quickly as you can."

Susanna was confounded. "To Bergen!" stammered she, "And the road there so difficult, so dangerous at this season!"

"And if death were to meet me on the road, yet would I go," said Fru Astrid, with impatient energy. But I wish no one to accompany me. You can remain here."

"Oh, my God!" cried Susanna, "I spoke not for myself. Could I die to save you from one danger, one sorrow, God knows I would do it with pleasure. Let me go with you to Bergen!"

"I have been very unhappy, Susanna," said Fru Astrid, without noticing this burst of enthusiasm. "Life has been a burden to me. I have questioned the justice of Providence, have doubted that our destinies were guided by the hand of a father, but now—now I see—now all is right. But go, Susanna, I must calm myself, and you too appear to need rest. Go, my child."

"Only one request," said Susanna. "You will let me go with you to-morrow? Ah, do not refuse me; I should follow you, at any rate."

"Well, then," said Fru Astrid, "there is no use in saying no."

Susanna seized her hand and kissed it, and would have poured forth all the love, all the grief that filled her heart, but the Oefwerstinna drew away her hand, and again, kindly, but decidedly, bade her go.

When Fru Astrid was again alone, she turned her eyes upon the letter which she held in her hand. Upon the envelope of the letter these words were written by an unsteady hand,

"To my wife after my death."

The letter was as follows.

"I feel that some great change is soon to befall me. I shall either die or lose my mind. Let me first thank my wife for the angelic patience which she has shown me through life; let me tell her, that it is to her I owe it that I have still any faith left in virtue and a just Providence. I will now reward her in the only way left to me. Know, then, my wife, that the boy whom you have so loved and mourned is not dead. Let it lessen your horror of my deed, when I assure you, that solicitude for your welfare was my chief inducement to commit it. I was ruined—I could not bear the thought of seeing you destitute—I sent the boy away, and gave out that he was dead. He has suffered no injury, he has....." here followed some illegible lines, after which was written, more plainly, "I am bewildered, and cannot say what I would.—Speak with Serjeant Ronn, now at the custom-house in Bergen; he will—"

Here the letter broke off. It was without date, the paper old and yellow. But Fru Astrid kissed it, shed-

ding tears of joy and gratitude, while she whispered, "Oh, what reward! what light! Oh, wonderful, merciful, good Providence!"

AASGAARDSREJA.

The spectre-ships come sailing through the storm;
Above their decks the keen-eyed vultures hover;
Huge shadowy forms o'ertop the giant masts,
From their broad blades flash back the vivid lightnings—
Sound out, wild horn, sound from the rocky haven—
The shades of heroes seek the shores of Norway!

Susanna retired to her quiet room, but her mind was not yet composed. A severe struggle was still going on within her. She must not throw from her all her dearest hopes and wishes; for, almost unconsciously, the images of her lady and of Harold had blended themselves with every thought and feeling of her heart. She had hoped through her own love to win theirs; by her services to make herself indispensable to them; and now she saw how wholly unimportant she was to them. She blushed at her self-delusion, and blamed herself that she had been unfaithful to little Hulda, that she had attached herself to strangers, and that her darling plan had faded before new impressions and new hopes. She reproached herself bitterly, called herself weak and foolish, and resolved to fly from Harold, and the place of his abode.

"When I have accompanied Fru Astrid over the dangerous mountains," thought Susanna, "when I see

her happy and in safety then will I leave her—her—and him—and this country—for ever. I came here poor, I shall depart poorer, for I shall leave a part of my life in the strange land. But I will carry a pure conscience back to my home. They cannot love me, but perhaps, when I am gone, they will remember Susanna with esteem, perhaps with kindness."

The quiet stars were mirrored in Susanna's tears which flowed freely, and the stars, and the tears, soothed her spirit, and she found herself strengthened by the resolution she had formed.

She now directed her attention exclusively to preparing what was necessary for her journey, and passed the night, partly in these preparations, partly in putting every thing in order, that she might leave the house with a good conscience.

The journey, however, was not undertaken as soon as was at first intended. It was necessary to procure a competent guide, and good safe horses, for the passage of the mountains; and this occupied the greater part o the next day. It was impossible to set out before the morning of the following day. Harold, who was very much astonished at this sudden resolution, endeavored to prevent the journey, by representations of the difficulties and dangers of the road at this season of the year; for, from the beginning of September, falls of snow, and violent storms are to be expected in the mountain regions. But the Oefwerstinna, without explaining herself farther, persisted in her resolution, and Harold promised to prepare every thing for the journey, that it might be performed as safely and expeditiously

as possible. There are four roads, equally difficult which lead from this part of Hallingdale to the diocese of Bergen. Fru Astrid decided for the shortest, which lay through Hardanger. It could not, however, be traversed in less than two days and a half. Harold, who knew the way well, and said that in case of necessity, he could himself serve as a guide, made preparations to accompany the Oefwerstinna in her perilous journey.

Harold had wished to ask Susanna the cause of this strange journey, but Susanna was not to be spoken with, she had so much to attend to, both within and without the house, and she was, besides, always surrounded by Larina, and Karina, and Petro. And glad was Susanna that her household affairs gave her so good an excuse for absenting herself from the parlor, and for avoiding all conversation with Harold. She still harbored a certain feeling of resentment against him and Alette.

Among the many noble capacities of man, is that of being able to judge and condemn himself. And if we are justly displeased with any one, if we have been injured or offended by word or deed, we should rely upon this capacity, and let our reliance exert a soothing influence over our feelings. For while we are resenting the offence, perhaps he who has offended us is grieving in silence; perhaps he wakes through the quiet hours of darkness, to accuse himself before the stern tribunal of his conscience, and the nobler he is, so much the greater will be his remorse, for those offences of which the tribunals of the world take no account. He cannot pardon himself, except in resolving to make atonement for his fault, and, in this painful hour, this hope is his only consolation.

Thus would every bitter feeling have vanished from Susanna's heart, could she have known how dissatisfied Harold was with himself, how severely he blamed himself for the words which, without any serious intention, had escaped his lips during the dance; how much he regretted the promise he had given Alette, and the resolution which he had formed in consequence of her advice.

This regret was increased when he saw, by Susanna's swollen eyelids, that she had been weeping, and observed a restlesssess and depression in her manner, quite unlike her usually animated and cheerful deport ment. Disturbed and anxious, he asked himself the cause, while he followed her with observant eyes.

Fru Astrid did not appear at dinner; the others sat silent and uneasy, except Lexow, who, in vain, endeavored to inspire the rest with his good humor.

In the afternoon while they were taking coffee, Susanna was leaving the room, quietly, in order to carry some medicines to a sick peasant-woman, together with some childrens' clothes, which she had been making for her. Harold, who had been for some time observing the barometer, and who appeared to divine her intention, turned hastily, and said to her, as she approached the door,

"You are surely not going out? It is not prudent. In a few moments we shall have a violent storm."

"I am not afraid of it," said Susanna, and was going on.

"But you do not know *our* storms," cried Harold: Lexow, come here! see here!" And Harold pointed to the barometer, as he said, half aloud, "The quick-

silver has fallen two degrees in half an hour—it is still falling—we shall have a whirlwind!"

Lexow shook his head, thoughtfully, and said, "That looks ill for our journey, to-morrow, but I fancy your storms are only child's play, compared to those we have in some of the northern regions." And Alf went to his Alette, who looked at him, inquiringly, and anxiously.

Harold hastened after Susanna, and found her at the door, in the act of setting off, with a bundle under her arm. He placed himself in her path, saying, earnestly,

"You cannot go, I assure you there is danger."

"What danger?" asked Susanna, moodily, and with a determined resolution to act contrary to Harold's wishes.

"Aasgaardsreja!" answered Harold, laughing, "and it is no jesting matter; it will soon come, sweeping along, and carry you off, if you do not remain at home. No, you must not go now."

And he took her by the hand, to lead her back into the house.

Susanna, who thought he was jesting in his usual manner, and who was now in no humor for jesting, withdrew her hand, and said, reddening, and proudly, "I shall go, sir, I shall go, because I wish to, and you have no right to hinder me.'

Harold looked at her, surprised, and then said, in a tone very like Susanna's,

"If I have no right to hinder you from going, you have no right to hinder me from following you."

"I prefer to go alone," said Susanna, disdainfully, and went on.

"So do I," said Harold, in the same tone, and followed her, though at a distance of fifteen or twenty paces. When he came to the kitchen door, he went in and said to the people there.

"Take care of the fire, and put it out as soon as the wind rises; we shall have a hurricane." At this moment Alfiero came out, howling, leaped upon Susanna, and put his paws upon her shoulders, as if he would prevent her from proceeding but finding his remonstrances ineffectual, he turned away, sorrowfully, and with his head down, went into his kennel, as if seeking refuge from some impending danger.

The weather was still beautiful; the wind still, the sky clear, nothing announced the approaching storm, except the smoke, which as it arose from the huts in the valley, was immediately depressed, and, whirling rouud the cottages, sank to the earth.

Susanna went quickly on her way. She still heard Harold's steps a little behind her, but did not venture to look round. As she, by chance, raised her eyes to the sky, she perceived a little white cloud which took the form of a dragon, and came hurrying, swift as an arrow, over the valley. Soon after a loud, whistling noise was heard, which made Susanna look towards the mountains, where she saw something that resembled a pillar of smoke rise whirling in the air. At this moment, Harold was by her side, and said, quickly and earnestly: "Down upon the ground, throw yourself on the ground quickly!"

Susanna would have protested, but she was at the same moment seized by Harold, lifted up and the next

moment she found herself lying on the ground with her face towards the earth. She felt a violent gust of wind, then heard near her an explosion, like the report of a pistol, and afterwards a great crashing and rattling; then followed a noise like a loud rolling peal of thunder; and all was again still.

Quite bewildered with what had taken place, Susanna raised her head, and looked round, then rose slowly. A perfect calm now prevailed every where, not even a blade of grass was stirred. But, quite near her, two trees had been torn up, and large stones had been loosened from the mountain, and had rolled down into the valley. Susanna looked round anxiously for Harold, but he was no where to be seen. She thought of the Aasgaardsreja; in her terror she called on his name, and, to her great delight, his voice answered her.

She perceived him, at a little distance from her, slowly rising from the ground, near a high wall of rock. He was pale, and appeared to suffer pain. In his care for Susanna's aafety, Harold had delayed too long to place himself in the humble posture in which he had thrown her; he had been seized by the whirlwind, and dashed against the corner of a rock, and had thus received a severe blow upon the collar-bone and left shoulder. He however, assured the anxious Susanna, that it was nothing of any consequence; that it would soon be well again, and added, laughing,

"But was I not right when I said that the Aasgaardsreja was not a thing to be jested about? And we have not yet escaped from them, in a few moments we shall have them upon us again. As soon as we near the

whistling in the mountain, we must prostrate ourselves. Otherwise it would fare but ill with us."

Hardly had Harold pronounced these words, when the signal was heard from the mountain, and the hurricane came with the same violence as at first, and passed away as quickly. In a few moments all was again still.

"Now we may breathe for a few minutes," said Harold, as he rose and looked about him. "But we must look for some shelter, where we may be protected from this rain of stones. Let us take refuge under that projecting rock, before the hurricane is upon us again. If I am not mistaken some other wanderers are there before us."

Two persons had indeed sought shelter under the projection of the rock, and Harold soon recognized the elder of the two men as the guide for whom he had sent to conduct them over the mountain road. He was a fine looking old man, in the Hallingdale dress. The younger was his grandson, a boy of sixteen, who was to accompany them on their journey. On their way to Semb they had been overtaken by the storm.

It was perhaps welcome, both to Harold and Susanna, that the presence of these persons prevented them from being alone together.

From their place of refuge they had a wide view of the valley, and their attention was directed to what was passing there. They saw that the smoke had ceased to rise from the huts, a sign that the fires had been every where extinguished; they saw many horses standing immovable with their heads turned to the quarter from

which the hurricane came. In this manner they divided the shock of the wind, and could withstand its force. A little further off a singular scene was passing in the air. Thick clouds were seen to rush from opposite sides of the heaven, and, meeting, fight a pitched battle in the air. It lasted long; but at length, the columns, which were led on by the weaker wind, gave way; the conquerors rushed storming on, and spread themselves over the whole vault of heaven.

But now the storm began to abate, and after the lapse of about three hours, it had so far subsided, as to allow them to leave the shelter of the roof of rock and set forth on their way home. Susanna longed impatiently to be at home, as well on her lady's account as on Harold's, who evidently suffered much pain from the bruise he had received, though he had endeavored to conceal his suffering by a gay, laughing manner.

Not without danger, but without further injury, they arrived at Semb, where the greatest uneasiness had been felt on their account. Towards evening, the wind subsided entirely. Warm fomentations were applied to Harold's shoulder, and he soon declared, that all pain had left him, and though they all endeavored to dissuade him, he persisted in his resolution of accompanying the Oefwerstinna over the mountains.

Poor Susanna felt so much regret for her obstinacy, which had been the cause of Harold's accident, she was so grateful for his care of her, that all resentment against him and Alette vanished from her heart. She now felt only a deep, almost painful desire to show her devotion to them. To do them a pleasure she would willingly have sacrificed her right hand.

THE MOUNTAIN JOURNEY.

Forward, still forward! fly swift as the wind!
How the sky lowers over Fanaranktin.

The party which, early the next morning, set forth from Heimdale did not present a very cheerful aspect; they moved along enveloped in a thick mist, which overhung the valley, shrouded the heights, and shut out the prospect above and around them. In front rode the guide, the old trusty Hallingdale peasant, whose tall, powerful figure gave a feeling of security to those who had intrusted themselves to his guidance. Then came the Oefwerstinna, then Susanna, then Harold, who carried his arm in a sling. The procession was closed by the young boy, and a peasant, who led two horses, loaded with the baggage of the travellers.

As they ascended higher and higher, by degrees the air became more clear, the travellers rose above the region of mists; they soon saw the blue sky; the sun greeted them with its rays, and lighted up the wild, strange regions, by which they were now surrounded. Upon the young open soul of Susanna this scene produced a powerful effect. Her mind became calmer, freer; it seemed to her as if she had left all strife, all sorrow behind her, and now looked forward to a bright calm future. Now, her lady was to be happy, and she herself, with a free heart, and no longer bound by selfish feelings, would easily obey the call of duty and the will of providence. Thus she thought, thus she felt. The

road was steep and difficult, but the horses passed safely over it, and after some hours they reached a little Saeter hut, which stood upon the banks of the Ustewasser, one of the inland seas that lie at the foot of the Hallingskarven. This hut lies above the point where the birch trees cease, and its environs were characterized by the peculiar features of the mountain scenery of the North. But its little grass plots, constantly watered from the snow mountains, were of a vivid green, and herds of cattle swarmed upon them. The brooks gleamed like silver threads between the green slopes and the dark rocks. The sun now shone out brightly, and the travellers congratulated each other upon the prospect of a fortunate journey. They rested at this hut, for about an hour, and breakfasted upon the simple viands of the region. Before each guest was placed a dish of little triangular cakes and a loaf of rye bread, of the size of a plate. Upon the table were placed large square pieces of butter, and a dish of the excellent mountain fish.

The can of Hardanger beer was not wanting, and they were waited upon by a fair-haired maiden in a bright yellow jacket, black petticoat, and a red handkerchief about her neck, with a face as pretty and innocent as ever pastoral poet bestowed on a shepherdess. After breakfast they proceeded on their journey. From the heights of Ustafjell, they perceived two ridges of mountains, that lifted themselves high into the regions of eternal snow. These were Hallingskarven and Hallings-Jokulen.

The caravan wound slowly up the Barfjell. By de-

degrees all trees disappeared, the ground was covered only by some low, black bushes; among these lay patches of the snow lichen, which increased in extent the higher they ascended. The prospect about them was indescribably cold and dreary. But upon Susanna the impression produced by these wild, and to her entirely new scenes, was of an enlivening and inspiring character. To this effect, the old peasant contributed; he related, as they passed through these desolate regions, many tales of the subterranean dwellers in the mountains. He described them as little imps, with ugly, pale, lead-colored faces, dressed in grey, with black caps on their heads. "They often enticed," he said, "men into their dwellings, and there murdered them, or if any one escaped alive from their power, he remained melancholy or frantic the rest of his life, and had no more pleasure upon earth. Some men were persecuted by them, to others they brought wealth, and good luck." The peasant was fully convinced of the actual existence of these beings; he had himself once seen a man in these mountain regions, who, on his approach, sank into the earth and disappeared immediately. One of his friends had once seen a farm with houses, men, and cattle; but, as he approached nearer, they all vanished in a moment.

Harold declared, that imagination had here played her tricks very successfully; but the old man confirmed his assertion by this passage from Lauridsen's Book of the Soul.

"The devel has many helpers; such as erlmen and erlwomen, dwarfs, cobolds, nightmares, hobgoblins

with glowing tongs, giants, and ghosts, that appear to people about to die."

And as Harold, laughing, still expressed some doubts, the old man said warmly,

" But is it not written in the Bible, that every knee, those in heaven and those upon and *under* the earth shall bow before the Lord. And what are those under the earth, if not these subterranean goblins? But take care," continued he, with a roguish look at Susanna, " take care of yourself when the twilight comes on, for that is the time when they carry on their pranks; they have a particular regard for young maidens, and like to drag them down into their houses. Take care, for if once they have you in their church, (for they have a church, deep down under the earth,) you will never see the light of day again as long as you live. And you may believe, it is not very pleasant to live among the earth-spirits ! "

Susanna shuddered, involuntarily; she cast a look upon the wild forms about her, which the old man assured her, were all petrified witches, giants, and giantesses. Harold remarked the impression which this made upon Susanna; but he who had so often pleased himself with exciting her imagination, was now all calm clear reason, and for her benefit, let his light shine into the darkness of superstition.

The higher the travellers ascended, the more waste and desolate became the scene. This whole mountain region is strewed with blocks of stone of all sizes, and these have served as guides in a region where, without some such land-marks, the traveller must infallibly

lose his way. For this purpose heaps of stones have been piled upon the larger blocks: and if a stone has fallen, every traveller considers it as a sacred duty to replace it.

In dark or foggy weather, these stones are almost useless, and the journey is extremely dangerous. The traveller easily loses his way, and freezes to death; or he is overwhelmed by the falls of snow. Those who perish in this way are supposed, after death, to haunt the gloomy mountain passes. The guide showed them a place near the road, where the bodies of two merchants had been found, who had been overtaken by a snow-storm on the mountains, and had perished there. He related this with great indifference, for every year men are lost in this way, in the mountain regions, and this kind of death is not thought worse than any other. But dreadful apprehensions began to seize upon Susanna. There was, however, no reason to anticipate any misfortune, for the weather was fine, and their journey, though difficult, had, thus far, encountered neither danger nor obstacle. It was continued uninterruptedly till evening came on. As they could not hope to reach any house before dark, they determined to rest for the night at Monsbuheja, because, in this neighbourhood, they could find grass for their horses. Our travellers succeeded in reaching this place a little before sunset. They found here a cave, formed partly by nature, partly by the hand of man. The walls were covered with moss, and decorated with the horns of rein-deer, fastened into crevices in the rock. Susanna soon prepared a comfortable couch of carpet-bags,

cloaks, and shawls, for her lady, who thanked her with a look, kinder than Susanna had ever received from her before.

Harold, meanwhile, busied himself with the care of the horses, and in looking about for fuel for the nightly fire. About a hundred yards from the grotto, a river flowed between uncovered banks. On the brink of this river, and on the margin of the little snow-brook, they found roots of decayed junipers, and mountain willows, which they collected into a heap, in front of the cave, where they intended to light the nightly watch-fire.

Susanna ascended a little eminence near the grotto, and saw the sun go down behind Halling-Jokulen. It stood like a round ball of fire on the edge of the immeasurable ridge of snow mountains, and cast its many-colored rays of purple, yellow, and blue upon the clouds of heaven, and upon the wide waste of snow. It was in truth a magnificent spectacle!

"Good God! how great, how splendid!" exclaimed Susanna, involuntarily, as, with her hands clasped upon her breast, she bent, as if doing homage to the departing ruler of the day.

"Yes, great and splendid," answered a low echo near her. Susanna looked round, and saw Harold standing near her. There they stood, these two alone, illumined by the setting sun, inspired by the same thoughts and feelings, ardent and adoring, in the dreary, solitary waste! Susanna could not repress the deep and solemn emotions that filled her heart. She extended her hand to Harold, and her tearful look

seemed to say, "Peace, peace." It was as if she would take leave of him, but yet in love. She could at this moment have taken the whole world to her heart. She felt herself raised above all strife, all resentment, all littleness.

Harold, on his part, seemed to have no thoughts of leave-taking; he held Susanna's hand in his, and was about to speak, when Susanna withdrew her hand from him hastily, but kindly, and turned away saying, "It is time to think about supper." The fire blazed up cheerfully before the grotto, and from rose-colored clouds, the moon rose slowly in the eastern sky.

Susanna was soon cheerfully busied near the fire. From the cakes of portable soup and the cooked barley which she had brought with her, she prepared an excellent soup, in which pieces of veal were warmed. While this was boiling, she distributed bread, cheese, and brandy to the men, and in particular took good care of the old guide. Harold let her do all this, without offering to assist her. He stood at a little distance leaning upon his gun, and watched her kind, cheerful face, lighted up by the fire, her easy movements, and the dexterity she showed in every thing that she undertook. He thought of her warm heart, of her frank, open disposition, her industry—he thought of those winter evenings when he had read aloud to her, or related legends, and how eagerly, how feelingly she had listened. At once it seemed to him as if the ideal of a happy life, which had for so many years flitted before his fancy, was now at once become a reality. There it stood, lighted up by the blaze of

the night-fire. Alette's warnings flitted by like the scattered shades of night, without form or reality. He saw himself the possessor of a piece of land, which he cultivated and improved; he saw himself the Oberlin of his valley, surrounded by neighbors and dependents, to whose happiness he contributed; he saw himself in his own house, then, as formerly in the winter evenings, with Susanna—yet not as formerly. For he now sat nearer to her, and she was his wife; and he read to her again as before, and again delighted in her warm, lively sympathy; and now and then his eyes wandered from his book to rest on her, and on the child who lay in the cradle at her feet, and Susanna looked at him as she had looked at him on the mountain, in the evening sunlight. The dancing flames that shone over the snow were the flames of his own hearth, and she, so cheerfully and hospitably busied there, was his wife, who spread comfort and happiness all about her.

"Of what use is a more refined education?" thought he; "can it give a heart, soul, capacity, like Susanna's?" He could not turn his eyes from Susanna; every moment she seemed to him more beautiful. The sweet enchantments of love had cast their spells about him. The preparations for the evening meal were now completed, and Harold was roused from his visions of felicity, by a summons to partake of the good cheer which Susanna's skill had provided. It is not to be wondered at, if, after a fatiguing journey, and the reflections in which he had just been indulging, Susanna's cooking appeared ex-

cellent beyond expression. Susanna's presence alone was wanting; but she was within the cave, on her knees before the Oefwerstinna, with a bowl of soup in her hand, counting with quiet delight every spoonful that her lady carried to her lips. "That is the best soup I ever tasted," said Fru Astrid, when the bowl was empty, "really, Susanna, you are very notable." It was the first time the Oefwerstinna had remarked upon what was placed before her—it was the first word of praise that Susanna had ever received from her lips and no soup, not nectar itself, is so refreshing as the first word of praise from beloved lips.

When Susanna left the cave, she was welcomed by Harold's eyes; they spoke a language irresistibly enchanting to a heart that so thirsted for love as Susanna's, and in her tender and grateful nature she felt she could be content to pass an eternity upon these mountains, serving, and cooking soup for these two beloved beings, whose hearts had first warmed to her in these cold dreary solitudes.

They now made preparations for the night, which promised to be clear, but cold. The peasants laid themselves down, round the fire. Fru Astrid, anxious on account of Harold's shoulder, desired him to come into the cave, where he would be protected from the sharp air; but Harold wished to keep watch without, and seated himself near the fire, wrapped in his cloak. Susanna laid herself down softly at her lady's feet, which she hoped, by this means, to keep warm. Strange shapes flitted before her inward eyes, while her eyelids remained closed. Forms of ice and snow

approached her, and would have surrounded her, but suddenly retreated, and were melted, as by warm rays of love: and the sun shone forth in splendor, and sweet happy feelings filled her soul. She slept. Then a new scene rose before her. She was again in Heimdale; she stood on the bank of the river, and looked anxiously to the opposite shore, for there, among the dark pines, something white gleamed faintly, becoming every moment more distinct; and when it came to the margin of the river, Susanna saw that it was a child, and recognized her own little Hulda. But she was pale as death, and tears fell over her snow-white cheeks, as she stretched out her arms to Susanna, and called upon her name. Susanna wished to plunge into the waters that separated them, but she could not; she felt herself chained by an invisible power. As she turned, in inexpressible anguish to free herself, she saw that it was Harold who thus held her; he looked so cold, so stern: Susanna loved and hated him at the same time. Again the voice of the child called plaintively, and now Susanna saw her little sister sink down upon the stones, on the shore, and the white waves dash over her. With a feeling of wild despair, Susanna awaked, and started np. She looked around her, bewildered. The cave arched itself gloomily over her, and the fire which blazed before it, threw its red, flickering rays upon the fantastically decked walls. Susanna left the cave softly. She must see the sky, the stars; she must breathe the fresh, pure air, to free herself from the haunting terrors of her dream. But no stars shone

down upon her, for a thick grey canopy of clouds was drawn over the sky; and the pale moonshine, which struggled through it, cast a mournful light upon the waste region and its dark, fearful forms. The fire burned low, but now and then flared up, as if sleepily, in red flames. The peasants slept profoundly, lying round the fire; Harold did not perceive Susanna, and at this moment, she was glad that he did not. That she might the sooner dissipate the painful impression, which her dream had made upon her, she took a water pitcher, and went with it to the river, to bring water for the next day's breakfast. On the way she saw Harold, who, with his gun on his shoulder, was pacing up and down, before the grotto. She succeeded, however, in reaching the river, unobserved by him, and filled her pitcher with the water mixed with snow. This little bodily exertion did her good; but the lonely wandering was not fitted to enliven her spirits. The scene was indiscribably dreary. It was midnight; no sound broke the profound and gloomy stillness, but the monotonous murmur of the brook, and the fitful sweeping of the gusts of wind, that now and then breathed mournfully over the waste, like giant sighs.

The rocks about her were covered with the mourning lichen, and the white snow lichens grew in the crevices of the rocks; Here and there stood forth from the black sod a little pale sulphur-colored flower, used by the Laplanders in their incantations, and which here looked like a ghastly smile upon the face of death.

Susanna could not free herself from the recollection of her dream; wherever she turned her eyes, she

thought she saw the figure of her little dying sister. This dream was perhaps a warning—it might be prophetic—perhaps she was never to leave this wilderness—was to die here, and then—what was to become of her little Hulda? Would not the poor neglected child sink down upon the hard, cold stones of life, and the waves of misery close over her? While Susanna was lost in these gloomy thoughts, she was surprised by Harold; he saw that she had been weeping, and asked, in a voice so tender that it went to her heart.

"Why thus depressed? Has any thing troubled or displeased you? Ah, tell it to me openly as to your friend. I cannot bear to see you thus."

"I have had a bad dream," said Susanna, as she dried her tears and stood up. "Every thing is so wild, so fearful here, it makes me think of all that is gloomy and sad in the world. But there is no use in thinking about it," said she, more cheerfully, "it will all look bright when the day dawns. This is the hour of darkness, the hour when the earth-spirits have power." And Susanna tried to smile.

"But what is that?" cried she, and the smile was suddenly changed to an expression of alarm, as she involuntarily drew nearer to Harold; A low rushing noise was heard in the air, and, at the same moment, a dark moving mass, which looked like a grey cloud, swept over the fields of snow, and approached the place where they were standing. In the dim moonlight, Susanna thought she saw frightful shapes, with horns and claws, moving in the cloud, and the words the 'earth spirits' had nearly escaped her lips.

"It is a herd of rein-deer," said Harold, who seemed to divine her thoughts, and went forward a few steps, seizing his gun mechanically. But at the same moment the herd took a different direction, and fled with wild speed toward the east. The wind rose, and swept with a mournful wail over the ice desert.

"This is really fearful," said Susanna, shuddering.

"But to-morrow evening," said Harold, "we shall reach Storlie-Saeter, which lies below the snow region; there we shall meet the green birch woods again, and there we shall find kind people, and a comfortable resting place for the night. On the day after, we shall again have a fatiguing journey, but we shall pass through so many magnificent scenes, that you will think the trouble nothing, compared to the pleasure, for the landscape will be more beautiful than terrible. There, between the Storlie-Saeter and Tverlie, you will see the wild Leira dash raging down the Hogfjell, and with the speed of lightning, and the noise of thunder, hurrying now round, now over masses of rock, sometimes bare, sometimes wooded, to meet its rival, the impetuous Bæjœrja. This place surpasses in wild magnificence all that the imagination can conceive."

Thus did Harold endeavour to dissipate the cloud upon Susanna's spirits: but she listened to him half dreaming, and said, as if to herself,

"Let me only see her at home again, safe and happy, and then—"

"And then?" Harold took up the unfinished sentence, "and what then?"

"Then back to my little Hulda!" said Susanna, sighing.

"What, Susanna, will you then leave us? Do you really hate Norway?"

No, no, not in the least. But one cannot serve two masters; Hulda calls me. I have no peace till I am again with her, and never will I leave her again. I have dreamed of her to-night. She was so pale; so pale—ah!—But you are pale too, dreadfully pale!" continued she, as she looked at Harold with surprise. "You are surely ill!"

"It is this soft air and this lovely moonlight that paint me of this ashy color," said Harold, jestingly, for he wished to conceal the true cause of his paleness, which in truth arose from the severe pain which he had suffered from his shoulder during the night.

Meanwhile, they had reached the cave. Harold rekindled the smouldering fire, and Susanna softly entered and took her former position at the feet of her lady.

It was late when she awoke from an unquiet sleep. She was roused by a loud noise about her. A pale light shone into the cave, and she heard Harold calling from without, "It is time we were up, that we may reach our night quarters as early as possible. We have a toilsome day before us."

Susanna looked about for her lady. She was already dressed, and was standing by her, regarding her attentively.

Shocked at her own tardiness, Susanna sprang up, and set about her preparations for breakfast with alacrity. The soup was again in requisition, and the peasants were supplied with salmon, bacon, oaten

bread, and curds soaked in snow-water.

A violent wind had risen since midnight, which seemed to promise our travellers any thing but a pleasant day's journey. It subsided however, somewhat, in the course of the morning, but Harold cast now and then an anxious look up to the grey roof of clouds above them, which became every moment darker. Susanna saw him once cast an enquiring glance at the guide, who only shook his grey head. At the same time all the men seemed cheerful, and Harold seemed to wish, by an appearance of high spirits, to remove the anxiety which his unusual paleness might occasion.

They continued during the whole forenoon, to ascend into the wintry regions, and the snow-fields stretched themselves out wider and wider. No living thing showed itself in this wilderness, but the tracks of reindeer were sometimes to be seen, and here and there flies lay upon the snow in a deep wintry sleep. Fortunately, the wind continued to go down, and at last its icy breath was felt only in short gusts. But now and then, a rattling and roaring noise was heard, like that of thunder. This was caused by the Fjellskred, or fall of great rocks and stones, which are loosened from the mountains, and fall in vast masses. These slides are very common during and after storms. The guide related many stories of houses and men which had been buried under these falling rocks.

The way became continually more difficult. They were often obliged to ford rapid rivers, and to pass over snow bridges, under which the river had forced itself

a way. Harold, who was as brave as he was prudent and resolute, often averted danger from Fru Astrid and Susanna by encountering danger himself. He was now no longer pale. The exertion, and a fever, which yet no one suspected, flushed his cheeks with a brilliant glow.

At noon they reached the highest point of the mountain. Here two large heaps of stones were piled up, near a lake which was covered with ice in the hottest summer. Here the brooks began to run towards the west, and their way now led downwards. The giant forms of the Basfjern and the Ishaugen, and many other higher mountains, were seen in the distance.

The wind had now died away, but the snow began to fall fast, and the dark, lead-colored sky seemed sinking down upon the travellers.

"We must hasten," said the old peasant, as he cast a look full of foreboding upon the party who followed him, "otherwise we shall be buried in the snow upon the mountains, as had nearly happened to the late queen Margaret, when—"

He broke off abruptly, for his horse suddenly tripped over a sharp projecting rock, and fell to the ground. The head of the old man struck violently against a stone, and he lay senseless. It was some time before they succeeded in restoring him; the blow proved very severe, and the old man's head was so much confused by his fall, that he could no longer serve as a guide. He was placed upon the same horse which his grandson rode, and the young man took charge of him with the utmost tenderness. Harold now rode at the head

of the party as guide, but the difficulties of his office increased every moment, for the snow fell frightfully fast, and the thickness of the atmosphere prevented him from distinguishing the friendly heaps of stones, the traveller's sole reliance. He was obliged to make frequent windings and turnings, and often to retrace his steps in order to come upon the right path. At last they succeeded in reaching Bjærœja-Saeter, an unoccupied Saeter-hut on the bank of the broad and rapid Bjærœja.

Here they halted to take counsel. The Bjærœja was so swollen, and ran with such violence, that they saw clearly the impossibility of passing it at this place. The old peasant advised that they should make a circuit which would bring them to a place where the river might be passed with safety. This was close by the Storlie-Saeter, and near the waterfall of that name, the noise of which might be heard at the distance of half a mile. It was true they must make a circuit of more than a mile. But what was to be done? It was dangerous to continue their journey in this storm, but still more dangerous to remain in this wilderness, where the snow often falls several yards deep. The old peasant, however chose the last, for he found himself in no condition to sit upon a horse, and he begged them to leave him in the hut, with provisions for a few days, for in that time he thought the snow would cease and a thaw begin. He did not wish his grandson to remain with him, but the boy was firmly resolved not to leave his old grandfather. They were therefore provided hastily with every thing that was needful in their wintry solitude. Their horses, too, were led into the

hut and supplied with provender.

Susanna bound up the old man's head with the tenderness of a daughter. It was dreadful to her to leave the old man behind. "And if there should be no thaw," said she, "if the snow should continue, and you should be frozen to death here!" "That has happened to many a better fellow," said the old man, calmly. "A man can die but once, and God is as near in the wilderness as by the fire-side. I am an old man; let it be with me as heaven pleases—my best days are over—but the boy—if you reach the dwellings of men in safety, think of him!"

Susanna was touched. She pressed a kiss upon the old man's forehead, and a warm tear fell from her cheek upon his. The old man looked up at her with a grateful, affectionate look—"God's angel go with you," cried he as she left the hut to join the rest of the party.

The little train was once more in motion, passing slowly over fields of snow, bare rocks, and half-thawed morasses. They struggled through the snow, which was now very deep. The darkness increased every moment; no one uttered a word. They went on thus for more than an hour, Susanna had for some time remarked, with great uneasiness, that Harold seemed to reel in his saddle, but she endeavoured to persuade herself that it was a delusion caused by the irregular motions of his horse, or by the thick cloud of snow through which she saw him. Indeed, every thing about her had a bewildering aspect, and seemed wavering and shadowy. A sudden cry from Fru Astrid broke the gloomy silence, and—was this, too, delusion?—

Harold's horse stood without a rider. Alas, it was but too certain. Harold had been seized with giddiness and had fallen from his horse He had long borne, in silence, the increasing pain in his shoulder and breast, and had endeavored to conceal from himself, as from others, the feverish giddiness which threatened to overpower him. And even now he would not believe that it was any thing serious. He made several attempts, with the assistance of the servant, to re-mount his horse, but in vain. He could no longer lift up his fevered head. Sinking on his knees in the snow, in silent despair, he leaned his burning forehead against a rock. "Here then, here we are to die!" said Fru Astrid, in a mournful tone, half aloud, "and these young people are to be sacrificed for me! My destiny is true to itself."

A moment of fearful suspense followed. Men and horses stood immovable, as if turned to stone; the snow fell over them, and threatened to entomb them there.

But now a clear, cheerful voice broke the stillness.

"I see yonder a projecting rock, which will afford shelter from the snow; we must carry him there." And Susanna raised Harold up and supported him, while the servant went on before her, and made a path through the snow.

About forty paces from the place where they stood was a projection of rock, which formed a high arch, and offered a protection from the snow, which was raised in high walls about the open space.

"Lean upon me—do not fear—I am strong," said

she, as she supported Harold with her gentle, but strong arm. He suffered her to lead him like a child; and, though almost unconscious, felt a sort of pleasure in giving himself up to the guidance of the young girl, who spoke to him so kindly and soothingly.

Harold was placed under the sheltering rock, and Susanna took off the shawl which she wore under her fur cloak, and made a pillow for his head. "Ah, that is good," said he, faintly, and pressed Susanna's hand, as his aching head found relief upon the soft cushion.

Susanna now returned to her lady.

Fru Astrid said, "Susanna, I should like to go there too. It seems to me one might find a safe resting-place there; but I am so stiff I can scarcely move."

Susanna lifted her lady from her horse, and supported her to the sheltering arch of rock. Here, the air was almost warm, compared to that in the open plain, for the wall of rock and the banks of snow, shut out the piercing wind. Here Susanna gently placed her lady, who was almost exhausted with cold and fatigue.

Susanna, too, was chilled and weary; but what a summer of life and warmth can love, and a strong will call up in the human heart. It was this inward power which now quickened the pulse of the young girl, and made the blood flow warmly from the chambers of her heart, sending strength and energy through her whole frame. She rubbed the stiffened limbs of her lady, she warmed her with kisses and tears, she warmed her on her own beating heart. She prevailed on her to take some wine, and prepared a refreshing draught for Harold's parched and thirsty lips. She wet her handker-

chief with snow-water, and laid it upon his burning forehead. Round both she spread cloaks, to protect them from the cold.

Then she stood silent for a moment, with an anxious and doubtful look. She was thinking what more was to be done to save them.

Harold had raised himself up, and looked about him with all the sorrow that a manly nature feels, when compelled to renounce its noblest privilege—that of affording support and protection to the weak.

A tear, the first Susanna had ever seen him shed, fell over his cheek.

Fru Astrid gazed with a mournful look upon the tomb-like arch above.

But Susanna's eyes brightened. "Listen, listen!" cried she.

Fru Astrid and Harold turned inquiring looks upon her.

"I hear a noise," said Susanna; "a noise like that of a great water-fall."

"It is the rushing of the Storlie water-fall," exclaimed Harold, for a moment animated by hope. "But how will that help us," he continued, sinking back again, despondingly, "we are still half a mile from it—we can never reach it."

"Yes, we can, we shall," said Susanna, with firm resolution. "Courage, courage, my dear lady, courage! Herre Bergman, we shall reach it—we shall be saved!"

"And how?" asked Harold; "this peasant is a stupid fellow; he would never find his way there."

"But I will find my way there, be assured of it; and

will return here with assistance. Only tell me the signs by which I may know the right way. These, and the noise of the waterfall will guide me."

"It is impossible; alone, in the cold and the snow-storm, you would, inevitably, perish."

"I shall not perish. I am strong. No one shall hinder me—and if you will not tell me the way, I will find it out myself."

Her cheerful and resolute tone inspired Harold with a sort of confidence; and, as he saw that her resolution was fixed, he endeavored to describe to her the objects by which she was to direct her course; there were mountains and rocks which the snow and the darkness of the night might prevent her from distinguishing.

Susanna listened with fixed attention, and then said cheerfully, "Now I have it! I shall find the way! God protect you! I shall soon come back with assistance."

When she came out into the open air, she found the servant seeking consolation in the flask of brandy, and the horses standing spiritless and benumbed. She begged him to take good care of them, and charged him, enforcing her charge with threats and promises of reward, to think of Fru Astrid and Harold, and to watch over their safety.

She herself gave her horse grain and water, patted him on the neck, and spoke to him in kind, encouraging tones. She then mounted him to begin her lonely, perilous ride. But it was only with the greatest difficulty that she could induce him to separate himself from his companions, and when he had advanced about twenty

steps, he stood still and insisted upon going back. This manœuvre was repeated several times. At last neither blows nor words had any effect; he would not obey. Susanna alighted, and let the horse go. Tears forced themselves into her eyes, as she saw herself abandoned by him; and she raised her hands in prayer to Him who alone saw the lonely, unprotected maiden.

She now set forth upon her way on foot. Could any one have seen Susanna, now toiling through the deep snow, now climbing over rocks, now wandering over morasses in which she feared to sink at every step, he would indeed have been amazed at her courage and her strength. But the angel of God, whom the old man had wished her as a guide, seemed to be with her on the way; for now the snow ceased to fall, and now and then a ray of moonlight struggled forth, and showed her some of the objects which Harold had described to her. The increasing noise of the waterfall sounded in her ears like the trumpet of the resurrection. A firm resolution to persevere to the end, a secret pleasure in the thought of proving her love even by the sacrifice of her own life, winged her steps, and did not suffer her courage to fail for an instant.

Thus passed two hours. Susanna now heard the water roaring at her feet. She thought she must be standing on the brink of the precipice. Darkness and snow were all around her. She stood still. It was a moment of terrible uncertainty. Just then the clouds separated, and the half moon shone out in full splendor, just as it was about to sink behind the mountains. Susanna now saw the precipice on whose brink she stood. She saw

the broad waters of the Storlie-fall shining in the moonlight, and below she saw the Saeter-hut.

Under the arch of stone where Fru Astrid and Harold were left, a deep, mournful silence reigned for some time after the departure of Susanna. It was broken by the Oefwerstinna, who said, in a solemn voice, "Harold, I have a request to make of you."

"Command me!" answered he, "may I live to fulfil your wish!"

"We seem both," continued Fru Astrid, "to be standing near the grave; but you are younger and stronger than I. You, I hope, will be saved. Harold, I must entrust to you an important charge; and I rely upon your honor, on the integrity I have observed in you, that it will be faithfully executed, if I should never myself be able to fulfil it, and you, as I hope you will, should survive me."

The Oefwerstinna spoke these words with a firm voice; but during the following recital, she was often shaken by varying emotions. She spoke rapidly, and in short, broken sentences.

"I had a sister, I cannot say how I loved her. She was as gentle and mild as I was ardent and impetuous. When I married, she came to my house.—There was no happiness there.—The property which my sister possessed, enabled her to consult the wishes of her heart, and she married an amiable young man, but without property, a lieutenant Wolf, and for some months enjoyed the highest earthly felicity. But this happiness was short. Wolf perished upon an expedition

at sea, and his unhappy wife sank under her grief. She died a few hours after the birth of a son, whom she had placed in my arms, solemnly exhorting me to be as a mother to him."

"And I was a mother to this child. An own son could not have been dearer to me. I was proud of the bright, beautiful boy. I saw in him a happier future. He would realize the ideal of my youth—he would—oh, in my poor and barren life I was still rich in the possession of this child! But my husband saw with displeasure the fondness that I lavished on the boy. He conceived a violent hatred for the child, and my life became more bitter than ever.

"I was obliged to leave home to visit a sick relation. I wished to take the child with me, for I had never yet been separated from him. But my husband wished to keep him with himself, and, to persuade me to consent, called words of tenderness to his aid. These I could not withstand, and in spite of the entreaties of the child, and my own anxiety, which seemed like a foreboding, I left the poor boy behind. I thought myself strong in doing this, but I was only weak. I had promised the mother of the child, that I would protect him. I knew that I was leaving him in harsh, unfriendly hands—and yet——. When I returned, after a week's absence, the boy had disappeared. He had, they said, gone out one day, and had never returned. He had been sought every where, and, at last, his little hat was found, lying on a rock, near the sea-shore. It was thought that he must have fallen from the cliff. I found my husband busied in taking possession of my sister's inheritance,

which, by her will, was to come to us in case of the boy's death. From this time, my soul was clouded by a terrible suspicion. God be praised that it was false! God pardon me that I harbored it! Twenty long years has it gnawed at my heart; twenty long years has it hung, like a leaden weight, upon the fulfilment of all my duties.

"All my enquiries were in vain. No one could be accused—no one seemed to have had any hand in the matter—it was the work of a fatal destiny. All I learned was this—the boy had received permission to go out and play; he had left the house alone, and had never been seen again.

"Twenty years, twenty dark years had passed since that time, and hope had gradually died away in my heart, the faint hope which had sometimes glimmered there, that I should yet find my beloved child again. My husband died after he had been for many years deprived of all strength of mind and body, by a stroke of paralysis. I was free; but what had I to live for? I had lost my faith in all that makes life dear, and I stood alone, on the verge of old age, surrounded by dark and bitter recollections.

"In this condition, I found myself a few days ago, when I received a letter from the present commander of K. Enclosed was an unsealed letter, which he had, as he said, found in a drawer in which my husband used to put letters and papers of little value. And this letter, oh, how it has changed my heart, my whole future! The letter was from my husband, written, apparently, after the first shock of paralysis. These lines, traced by

an unsteady hand, assured me that the lost child still lived, and directed me to obtain further information from a certain Sergeant Ronn, at Bergen. Here the letter broke off abruptly, as if interrupted by sudden illness.

"I had been accidentally from home on the day that my husband was taken ill; when I returned, I found him deprived of speech, and nearly lifeless. By great exertions, life was restored, but his mind was clouded, and half his body benumbed. He lived thus, many years. I believe that in a moment of consciousness, he wished to tell me of the boy's fate, or perhaps of the existence of this letter, but the hand of death prevented. How this letter came to be among the old papers, I cannot understand. Perhaps it was placed there by my husband himself, in the moment of disturbed intellect in which he concluded it. But, enough—the hand of Providence preserved it, and brought it safely to its destination.

"You know now the cause of my sudden journey. And if, for me, it is to end here, if I am never to fulfil the highest wish, the last hope, of my heart; if it be not permitted to me again to see the son of my sister, and to restore to him what has been unjustly taken from him —then hear my entreaty, my solemn, dying charge. Seek out in Bergen the person whom I have named; you will find his address upon this paper; tell him, that in my last hour, I commissioned you to act in my place; spare no money; promise—threaten—but find my sister's son—go to him, carry him my last, loving greeting—give him this—it is my will—it will put him

in possession of all my property; it is in truth, his mother's inheritance, for my own is almost entirely gone. Tell him that mourning for him has consumed my life. Tell him that if my memory be dear to him—my God! what mean you, Harold? Why do you thus clasp my hand?—you weep!"

"Tell me," said Harold, in a voice almost choked with emotion, "did not this child wear on a riband round his neck a little iron cross—with the head of a cherub engraved on it?"

"I took this cross from his mother's neck, and hung it upon his."

"And here—here it is, still," cried Harold, as he guided Fru Astrid's hand to the little cross, which hung from his neck. "What recollections are waking in me! Yes, it must be so—I cannot doubt. You are the first protectress of my childhood—the sister of my mother! ———"

Harold was interrupted by a cry of indescribable emotion.

"Good God!—you are——"

"The son of your sister, the child whom you have mourned. At this moment, I recollect myself and you."

"And I—your voice, Harold, has often sounded strangely familiar to me. I now recognize the tones of your father's voice. Ah, speak, speak, explain, give me certainty, you will give me more than life."

"What shall I say?" continued Harold, in great agitation, "Much is dark and unintelligible, even to me. But your relation has revived recollections and impressions which make me feel sure that I am not

deceiving you and myself. I remember now distinctly going down the hill in front of the fortress, upon a little sled, and that I was met by Sergeant Ronn, (whose name I had forgotten till this moment,) who asked me to take a ride with him in his sleigh. I liked nothing better, and sprang in. I remember now, well, that my hat was blown from my head; that I wished to recover it, but was prevented by the Serjeant, who threw his cloak over me, and went on at a fast gallop. The ride was long—but from this moment my recollections are confused, and I look back to this time, as into a dark night which is now and then brightened by a transient ray of light. Perhaps I was then seized by the severe illness which, for a long time, checked my growth. It hovers before me like a dream, that I sometimes begged to be carried home to my parents, that my entreaties were at first answered by soothing words, and then silenced by threats. I have a faint recollection of living for some time in a miserable house, where I was treated with harshness, by coarse men, and where I longed for death. Then comes, like sunshine, the vision of another house; a bright sky, pure air, green meadows, and kind friendly people, who treated the poor sick child with infinite kindness. This house was Alette's, and her excellent parents adopted me after they had brought me back to life, My new relations became very dear to me, I was happy; my sickness and long continuing debility had almost entirely effaced the impressions of earlier days; I forgot the names of people and places, but never did I forget the first guardian of my childish years. Like a beautiful and holy vision, she has fol-

lowed me through life, though, in the long course of years, she has been as if shrouded in a thick veil.

"When I grew older, I asked and received from my adopted father an account of my arrival at his house. I learned then that he one day visited Herre K., in Christiansand, upon business, and saw, at his house, a wretchedly pale, sick child, who sat on the floor in the sunshine. The child began to cry, but became silent and terrified when K. led him away, threatening him with the dark room. Indignant at this treatment, my benefactor asked to whom the boy belonged, and received for answer, that it was a poor child, without relations, whom K. had taken under his care out of compassion. Alette's father immediately resolved to make every effort to take the child from this house, and offered to carry the boy home with him, to try the effect of the country air upon his health. In this manner, I entered the family, which from that time I was to call my own. Knowledge of my parents, or of the real nature of my connexion with Herre K., I could never obtain. K. died a few weeks after I left his house, and his wife was or pretended to be, entirely ignorant of every thing that concerned me.

"But my excellent foster-parents never let me feel the want of other relations; they made no difference between me and their own child, and Alette was the tenderest and best of sisters. Death deprived us of these beloved protectors. Alette's father died two years ago. Alette went to remain with some near relations till she could give her hand to the man whom she had long loved, and I wished, by travel and mingling in new

scenes, to dissipate the gloom which hung over me. It was then that accident, or rather Providence, conducted me to you. Admiration, and an attraction, whose power I cannot describe, drew me to you; perhaps too, unknown to myself, the dim, fond recollections of childhood influenced me. At this moment they all rise up, clear and fresh, within me. I am carried back to my boyish years, to the time when I called you mother, and loved you to idolatry, and now,——" And with passionate tenderness, Harold clasped Fru Astrid's hand: "and now, what does your heart say to me? Can you put faith in these dim recollections? Will you believe this tale without proof? May I again call you my mother? Can you, will you, receive me as your son?"

"Can you ask? See these tears of joy—I have not shed many such—I cannot doubt—I believe—I am happy—you are my sister's son—my child—you are mine again! But ah, have I found you only to see you perish? To see you perish here for my sake? This moment is indeed bitter!"

"And yet sweet," cried Harold, warmly. "We have found one another; we are united!"

"In death."

"We may yet be saved."

"Only by a miracle."

"Providence can work miracles. Have we not just had proof of it?"

"You are right, Harold; but I have been so unhappy. It is hard for me to believe in happiness. But in any case, let us bless God for this moment, and may His will be done!"

"His will be done," repeated Harold, in a low tone, but with manly composure. And both were silent. All about them was thick darkness, for the moon had gone down, aud the snow was again falling fast. They were as if buried alive.

But the saving miracle was at hand. Lights glimmered, and voices sounded over the waste of snow.

"Susanna!" cried Fru Astrid and Harold, with one voice, "Susanna, our preserving angel!"

Yes, it was Susanna, who, with a torch in her hand, rushed into the gloomy vault. At once there was a radiance as of a thousand diamonds.

"God be praised! You are safe!" cried Susanna. Here are good, strong people, who will help us. But we must hasten—the snow is falling thick."

Several peasants now appeared with torches and two hand-barrows. Upon these Fru Astrid and Harold were placed, and covered with warm sheep-skins.

"Susanna," cried Fru Astrid, "come and rest near me."

"No," said Susanna, and took up her torch, "I will go before and carry the light. Do not fear for me, I am strong."

But a strange feeling suddenly seized her; her heart seemed sinking within her, and her knees failed. She stood for a moment erect, took one step forward, then sank upon her knees in the snow; the torch fell from her hand. "Hulda!" was whispered in her heart, "my little darling, farewell!"

"Susanna! Great God!" cried two voices at the same time; and made strong by their fears, Fru Astrid

and Harold sprang up and clasped Susanna. She seized the hands of her lady and Harold, and said with great difficulty, in an imploring tone,

"My little Hulda—the fatherless—the motherless—think of her."

"Susanna, my good, dear child!" cried Fru Astrid, "you will not, you shall not die!" And for the first time a ray of anxious love fell from her dark eyes upon the young, devoted girl.

It was the first time Susanna had ever received such a look, and it was as if heaven had opened itself to her.

"Oh, Harold!" said Susanna, looking up with inexpressible tenderness, "I could not make you happy in life, I know it—but I thank God that I can die for you. Now—now, do not despise my love! And taking his hand and Fru Astrid's she pressed them to her heart, and said, with an expiring voice, "forgive my faults, for the sake of my love!" A slight shudder passed over; her head sank upon her breast. She was placed, apparently lifeless, beside her lady, who took her in her arms, and bathed the pale young face with her tears.

RETURN TO LIFE.

I waked, and life had triumphed over death;
I waked, and love sat watching by my couch.

Months passed away, and life was for Susanna only a wild troubled dream. In the delirium of fever she lived over again the events of the mountain journey,

but they were clothed in yet darker terrors. She saw the earth-demons who came round her on the snow-wastes, and tried to bury her under heaps of snow and ice which they hurled upon her. With desperate energy, Susanna struggled against them, for, she knew with her must die all hope of safety for those she loved, and every piece of ice which the demons threw upon her, she threw back upon them. At last the earth-demons promised her, if she would go with them quietly, they would leave her friends in peace, and would even bestow happiness and riches upon them. Then Susanna strove with them no longer, but grieving for the beautiful sky, and the earth with its green valleys, and the loved ones whom she was never to see again, she allowed herself to be led by the demons to their subterranean dwellings. Yet she was content, for she suffered for those she loved; and from the cold, dark depths, where she was now condemned to dwell, she sent the tenderest and the most touching words of farewell to Hulda, to her lady, to Harold and Alette, and thus betrayed unconsciously all the struggles, all the griefs, of her heart.

One day it seemed to her as if she had lived a hundred years in the lower world, and she was now in their church, for the time was come when she must die; and in death she knew she should escape from the power of the earth-demons. But she could feel no pleasure in the thought; her heart was so faint, her breast so cold. She lay stretched out upon a stone floor, a roof of ice arched itself over her. This was her tomb, here she was to die. And gradually all thought and feeling was

benumbed ; her sorrows faded away, a sweet calm sleep came over her, and Susanna, who still retained her consciousness, thought death a refreshing rest from which she feared to wake. Then it seemed to her as if the door of the tomb were opened, and she saw a light like that of sunshine. Some one approached and touched her lips with a flame, a flame like that of life. Then her heart beat quicker. She looked up, and saw, standing near her pillow, a form which bent over her, with a look full of love and pity. The look, the beautiful, life-giving look, she thought she had somewhere seen before, and the longer she gazed at the face, the more it seemed to her that she recognized the features,—the noble and beloved features of her lady. But she looked younger and more beautiful than formerly. Susanna saw roses at the foot of her bed, and the sun was shining upon them. Every thing seemed to her so strange, so beautiful, she involuntary whispered, "Are we now in heaven?"

"Yet upon the earth," answered a voice full of tenderness. "You will still live here for those who love you."

"Ah, who loves me?" said Susanna, faintly and dejectedly.

"I," answered the voice, "and not I alone. But be calm and still ; a mother watches over you."

And Susanna was calm and still ; and resigned herself with grateful acquiescence, to the cares of her tender nurse. Fru Astrid's presence, the mere sound of her light footstep, the mere sight of her passing shadow, did Susanna good. Every thing that she took from her

hand seemed to her pleasant and salutary. There sprang up between them a relationship, full of loveliness.

Fru Astrid, who had seen the young girl as if born again under her cherishing, conceived for her an affection which surprised herself, and, at the same time, made her happy. The strong, healthful Susanna was too far removed from her sympathy. But the sick, weak girl, who, in her weakness, was so childlike and loving, stole into her heart, and called up in it a new summer of life and love.

This is the effect of all true affection, of all pure love —and at every season of life; for love is the sunshine of life, and of the heart.

As soon as distinct consciousness returned to Susanna, she inquired the fate of those who had been with her on the mountain journey. She learned with surprise and delight, that Fru Astrid had discovered in Harold her sister's son, and that the darkest shadows of her life had thus been dispelled.

The information received from Serjeant Ronn, and that obtained by further investigations, to which this information led, soon established, beyond a question, Harold's identity with the lost child. They learned, that Herre K. was a confidant of the Oefwerste, and had enough to be an accomplice in any crime, by which he could hope to gain money; he had willingly undertaken the charge of gradually effacing from the mind of the child all his early associations. Sickness came to the aid of cruel usage; and after he had been a few months in the house of Herre K., the poor boy was so

dull and listless, that K. accepted the offer of Herre Bergman, without any fear that it would lead to the discovery of his secret, and gladly gave up the child whose presence was a daily reproach to him.

Harold's health had been soon re-established after the mountain journey, by skilful medical treatment in Bergen. After he had been present at Alette's wedding, he had travelled into foreign countries; but intended to return to Semb in the course of the summer, to establish himself there, and to devote himself to his newly found and beloved relation.

The guide—the honest old Hallingdale peasant—found his death on the mountains. His grandson was found weeping over his body, himself almost dead with cold and hunger, by the people who were sent to their assistance by Fru Astrid and Harold, and who had succeeded in making their way through the masses of snow to Bjærœja-Saeter, and in saving the life of the poor boy.

Susanna gave some tears to the old man's memory, but regretted in secret that she had not died like him. She looked forward to the future with disquietude.

When she could once more go out into the open air, when Fru Astrid drove out with her, and she felt the spring air, and saw the sea, and the clear sky beyond the mountains, and the beautiful gardens at their foot, then a sense of the beauty of the earth and of life awoke in her again. She looked with admiration and delight upon the new objects that surrounded her; the grandeur of nature, and the acting life and gay shifting scenes of the city, for she was in the magnificently situated Ber-

gen, the largest commercial city of Norway, the birth-place of Holberg, of Dahl, and of Ole Bull.

But she was soon to leave all these, and what was yet harder, she was to be separated from her beloved lady; for Susanna had firmly resolved never to see Harold again. Shame dyed her cheeks whenever she thought of the words she had spoken upon the mountain, when she thought herself dying; and she felt that she could never see him after this, much less live in the same house with him, without painful embarrassment on both sides. She was resolved therefore never to return to Semb; but as soon as her strength permitted, to go by water from Bergen to Sweden, to return to her native place, there to seek health for her own heart upon the breast of her little darling, and recover strength to live and labor.

But it was not easy for poor Susanna to communicate this resolution to her lady. She trembled violently when she did so, and could not restrain her tears.

It was at the same time soothing and agitating to her feelings, when Fru Astrid, after she had listened to Susanna in silence, answered with great composure,

"You are at liberty, Susanna, to do as you think best; but in three or four months—my affairs will detain me here for that time—in a few months, I shall return to Semb, and I cannot well do without you on the journey."

"Then I will go there with you," said Susanna, pleased to find herself of importance.

"A few months more, then!" thought Susanna with sad pleasure. And these months were inexpressibly

delightful and improving to her. Fru Astrid was devoted to her, and endeavored in many things to supply the deficiencies of her neglected education. And Susanna was an apt pupil, and loved her lady more and more every day. And Fru Astrid herself learned the truth of the proverb, " the breath of youth is healthful." In the beginning of the month of July, Fru Astrid passed with Susanna over the mountains which had once threatened them with death; but at this season the journey was not dangerous, though still very fatiguing. The Oefwerstinna was, during the whole journey, in excellent spirits, and her gaiety seemed every day to increase. Susanna, on the contrary, became every day more sad. Fru Astrid's cheerfulness only increased her dejection; she felt herself unutterably desolate.

It was in a beautiful July evening, that they enterd Heimdale. Susanna's heart swelled with grief when she saw the scenes and the objects which had been so dear to her, and which she was so soon to quit for ever. They had never appeared to her so charming. She saw the rays of the sun fall on the crystal mountain, and remembered Harold's sagas. She saw the oak grove where Fru Astrid had sat and enjoyed the perfumes, which Susanna's hand had prepared for her in silence. And the spring where the silver weed and the lady mantles grew, the clear spring by whose side she had passed so many happy hours. Susanna almost thirsted for it. The windows at Semb glistened in the rays of the setting sun, the house seemed to be illuminated—there had she worked and ordered; there had she loved; there had the winter fire blazed up so cheer-

fully as she listened to Harold's stories; the smoke rose from the huts in the valley, which was to her like a home; where she knew every child and every cow; where she knew every joy and every care of those who dwelt there. There had she first learned to know Harold—still Harold—still she found his image at the heart of all these recollections.

But now—soon she was to leave all this, leave all beauty, all love.

They arrived at Semb, and were greeted by Alfiero, with a joyful bark. Susanna, with tears in her eyes, called about her and greeted all her old acquaintances, men and animals.

The windows in Fru Astrid's room were open, and from them might be seen a most charming view of the valley, with its blue river, its little hills and green slopes, and its peaceful church-spire in the back-ground. The Oefwerstinna remained standing, as if overpowered by the beauty of the scene, and her eyes brightened as she said:

"See, Susanna, is not our valley beautiful? And will it not be beautiful to live here bestowing happiness on others and finding it ourselves?"

Susanna answered "yes," hastily, and left the room, She felt as if suffocated, and yet once more, Barbara arose in her and said:

"Beautiful! yes, for her! She does not think of me. She does not trouble herself in the least about me—nor does Harold. The poor servant whom they needed on the mountain journey is useless in the valley She may go; they are happy; they have enough in them-

selves. It is indifferent to them whether I live or die, or what I suffer. Well, I will no longer be a burden to them. I will go—I will go far, far from here. I will no longer trouble myself about them. I will forget them as they have forgotten me."

But tears fell involuntarily over Susanna's cheeks, and, as they flowed, the Barbara spirit vanished, and Sanna began,

"Yes, I will go, but I will bless them wherever I go. May they find another as true, as devoted as I. May they never miss Susanna. And you, my little Hulda, you, my darling, my only joy, soon shall I be with you. I will take you in my arms, and carry you to some quiet corner, where I can work for you undisturbed. A bit of bread, and a quiet shelter I can surely earn for us both. And when my heart aches, I will press you, you dear, soft child, to my bosom, and thank God that I have yet some one on the earth whom I can love and who will love me."

She reached the door of her own room. She opened it, went in, and remained standing in silent astonishment. Were her senses still bewildered, or was she just waking from a dream of years? She found herself once more in the chamber, where she had passed so many years of her youth; in the little room which she had herself arranged, painted, and decorated; the little room which she had so often described to Harold; and there by the window, stood little Hulda's bed, with the worked counterpane, and the blue muslin curtains. This sight made the blood rush to Susanna's heart, and, almost wildly, she cried out, "Hulda, my little Hulda!"

"Here I am, Sanna; here is your little Hulda;" answered a clear, sweet childish voice; the covering of the bed moved; a little cherub face peeped out, and two white arms were stretched out towards Susanna. With a cry of wild delight, Susanna rushed forward and clasped her little sister in her arms.

Susanna wept and laughed by turns, and for some time was quite unconscious of what was passing about her. When she became more composed, she found herself sitting on Hulda's bed, the child clasped in her arms, and over the little golden head was bent a manly face, with an expression of deep earnestness and gentle emotion.

"Little Hulda," said Harold, "ask Susanna to love me a little too, and not to say no to what you have promised me—ask her to let me call the little Hulda my daughter, and your Susanna my Susanna."

"Oh yes, Sanna, you must!" cried little Hulda, as with childish warmth she threw her arms about Susanna's neck, and then went on eagerly,

"Oh, love him, Sanna, he loves you so much; he has told me so, so many times, and he himself brought me to you, to make you happy. And see, he gave me this beautiful neck-riband, and he has promised me next winter to tell me beautiful stories. He knows so many. Have you ever heard the one about Rypan in Justedalen, Sanna? He has told it to me. And the one about the good lady, who, after the Black Death, went about in the valleys, and took the little fatherless children, and became a mother to them? Oh, Sanna, love him, and let him be my father!" Susanna let the lit-

tle prattler run on without being able to say a word. She hid her face in Hulda's bosom, and tried to collect her bewildered thoughts.

"Susanna," said Harold, entreatingly, "Will you not look at me? will you not say one kind word to me?"

Susanna lifted her glowing face, all bathed in tears, and said, "Oh, how can I ever thank you?"

"How?" said Harold, "by making me happy; by —becoming my wife."

Susanna stood up, and said, with as much ingenuousness as tenderness, "God knows how happy I should feel myself, if I could believe that you said this for your own sake, and not merely for mine. But, ah, I cannot —I know that it is your generosity, your kindness,"—

"Generosity? It is to myself then that I am generous. I assure you, that at this moment, I am more than ever thinking of my own good, and I am now as thoroughly selfish as you could possibly desire."

"And your sister Alette," continued Susanna, with downcast eyes, "I know she does not wish to have me for a sister, and"—

"If Alette was once so foolish," said a kind voice, "she is here now to make amends for it." And Alette embraced the astonished Susanna, as she continued, Oh, Susanna, but for you I should no longer have a brother! I know you now, and I have read in the depths of his heart, and I know that it is by you alone he can be made happy. Therefore, I beg you, Susanna, beg you earnestly, to make him happy. Be his wife, Susanna, and my sister."

"And you, Alette, you too would delude me with

your sweet words. Ah, if you could make me forget that my weakness—that I myself by my confession—but I cannot forget it, and therefore I cannot believe you, dear, generous friends! and therefore I beg you, I supplicate you"—

"What fine speeches are going on here?" exclaimed a serious voice, and the Oefwerstinna stood in the midst of the contending group, and said with affected sternness, "Is it possible that my young relatives and my daughter Susanna, have taken it upon them to discuss and decide matters of importance without taking me into their counsels? Yes, I see by your guilty faces, that it is so, and I shall punish you all. Now, not another word upon the subject, till eight days are past Then, as sovereign lady and mistress of this house, I desire and command that the matter in dispute shall be laid before me, and that I shall have a voice in the adjustment of it.

"Susanna, in the mean time, shall be in safe custody; I will myself undertake the charge of her safe-keeping. Did you really believe, Susanna," and here Fru Astrid's voice took the tenderest tone, "did you really believe that you could escape from me so easily? No, no, my child. You were mistaken. From the time you saved our lives, you became ours for life, you and your little Hulda. But the tea-table is set under the linden trees in the garden; come, my children, let us fortify ourselves for the coming strife."

THE END OF STRIFE.

O'er the vexed earth the storm-wind holds his way:
See, how he urges on the hurrying clouds;
Then, stooping, sweeps across the dark pine wood;
The tall trees tremble in their ancient home!
Discord and terror reign;—but high o'er all,
The deathless stars look down, and tell of peace.

There is sorrow and care upon the earth; there is sin and sickness, despair, and long, silent, wasting misery. But, God be praised! these are not all. The earth holds, too, the good, the beautiful,—hearts that have not ached, hopes that have not been blighted. Life has its moments of rapture, its years of blessed peace, gay marriage feasts, and peaceful, holy death-beds.

Three months after the little strife we have just related, one of these gay marriage feasts was celebrated at Semb, in Heimdale. The sun of nature and of the human heart shone down npon it together, and called up a paradise upon earth—a paradise which may be always found there; though too often concealed from the eyes of men, and its entrance barred against them by the power of unholy spirits.

Still in the façes of the fallen, gleam
The noble traces of their heavenly lineage;—
The heart of Daphne throbs beneath the rind.*

Tegner.

It was an autumn day, but one of those autumn days, on which earth shows herself to the blue eye of heaven, with her brightest sunshine, and her purest breezes, as if she would deck herself yet once in all her richest ornaments, before she resigned them for the snowy veil.

The little wooded heights in the valley were gorgeous in their autumnal hues; the dark fir tree, the bright green pine, the golden birch, the hazel, with its pale leaves, the mountain-ash, with its scarlet clusters, were grouped upon them; the Heimdale river, swollen with the autumn rains, flowed on, deeper and more rapid than ever. Herds of cattle, who had come down from the Saeter valleys, wandered along its green banks. The chapel bell rang out cheerfully in the clear air, while the church-goers passed along the little winding foot-paths, that led from their cottages to the house of God.

From the bank of the river nearest Semb, a little fleet of gaily decorated boats was pushing off. In the principal boat sat the lady of Semb; but no longer the bent, drooping form, that seemed sinking to the grave. A new youth bloomed on her cheeks and breathed from her lips. Her eyes turned, with quiet enjoyment, now on the beautiful scenes of nature, now on the still more beautful objects that were nearer to her—two happy human beings. Beside her, more like a little angel than a child, sat the little Hulda; a garland of gay flowers twined among her golden locks. But the looks of all, as was fitting, were turned upon the bride and bride-groom, and they were indeed beautiful to look upon, so inwardly happy did they seem. In a boat, which followed, a little strife was seen, between a young wo-

man and her husband; he was endeavoring to wrap a cloak about her, which she, however, stoutly rejected. One could not but take the part of the husband, in his tender care for the young wife, who was soon to become a mother. The issue of the strife was—that Alf gained the victory over Alette. Other boats contained other wedding guests. The men who rowed, had all garlands on their yellow straw hats, and thus, to the sound of gay music, the little party passed over the river, to the chapel.

The chapel was a simple building, with no other ornament than a beautiful altar picture, and the flowers and branches of trees, with which the walls and floor were decorated in honor of the occasion.

The sermon was simple and earnest—the singing good. In a word, no discordant tone disturbed the devotion which the service of God, in Norway, is so well calculated to excite and to sustain.

Here Susanna and Harold called upon heaven to bless the promise which they had made to love each other upon earth, through joy and sorrow.

Many people had come to the church on this day, and when the wedding party returned home, many other boats joined them, and accompanied them, with songs and shouts, to the opposite shore.

But Susanna did not feel herself entirely happy, till, in Fru Astrid's quiet room, she could rest her forehead upon Fru Astrid's knees, and feel her kind hands laid upon her head in maternal benediction.

"I, too, have a mother," cried she, as she embraced Fru Astrid's knees, and looked up to her with warm,

childlike love. "Ah, I am too happy, quite too happy; God has given me, the poor lonely one, a home and a mother."

"And a husband too, do not forget him, I beg," said Harold, as he gently embraced Susanna, and knelt beside her before his adopted mother.

Fru Astrid clasped them both in her arms, and said, in a low, tender voice, as she led them to a window, from which the beautiful valley might be seen, in its whole extent, "To-day, we begin together a new life, and together we will endeavor to make it a happy one. At this moment, as I stand before you, my children, looking forward, as into a bright future, I think I see clearly how it may become so. We have not here the riches of art, or the changing scenes of life in the great world, to cheer and enliven us. But our life need not, on that account, be dull and monotonous. We have heaven—and nature. We will call down heaven into our hearts and homes; we will question nature of her secret wonders, and elevate our souls by their contemplation. From our quiet fireside we will sometimes observe the actors in the great drama of the world, that we may turn back the more cheerfully to our own little scene, and think how each may best play his part in it.

"And I promise you, beforehand," continued she, in a sportive tone, "that it will not be mine, often to make such long speeches as this."

But Harold and Susanna united in assuring her that she could not possibly say too much.

"Well then, if you will sometimes listen to my preaching, I, on the other hand, will often be a child with you,

and will learn from you. I am now become inquisitive about Nature, and long to make myself better acqainted with her. The thought breathes like the air of spring over my autumn."

"In truth," said Harold, "intercourse with Nature keeps the hearts of men young and healthful. I always think, with pleasure, of Gœthe's words, when in his eighty-sixth year, he returned sun-burnt and happy, from a visit to the country, 'I have been talking with the vines,' said he, 'and you cannot think what beautiful things they have said to me.' May we not see here the dawn of a new golden age, in which the voice of Nature is once more audible to men, who, from her teachings, gain the highest wisdom, and the most perfect peace?"

"Our wisdom," said Fru Astrid, looking about her, laughing, "has not been able to detain Susanna, now wiser than we, from the wedding guests, whom we had forgotten. But we will now follow her."

After the wedding feast, which was enlivened with drinking of healths, and songs, and hearty gaiety, was over, the Oefwerstinna returned to her room, leaving Alette to fill the office of hostess.

Seating herself at her writing-table, Fru Astrid wrote, with a rapid pen, the following lines:

"Now come! come my friend, my father, and see your wishes, your prophecies fulfilled; come, and see

the happiness, the inexpressible gratitude that dwells in the heart that so long closed itself against all hope. Come, and hear my repentance for my want of faith, for my murmurs against Providence. Come, and help me to think. I long to tell you how much is changed in me; how many germs of life and joy, which I believed dead, are now unfolding in my heart. I daily wonder at my own feelings, I hardly know myself. Oh, my friend, how truly did you tell me, it is never *too late.*

"Oh, that I could speak to all bowed down, despairing souls, I would cry to them,—Lift up your heads, believe still in the future, and think still, *it is not too late.* See, I too was bowed down with sorrow; old age had overtaken me, and I thought my strength was gone, that my life, my sufferings had been in vain. And behold! My head is lifted up, my heart is whole, my soul strong, and now, in my fiftieth year, I enter upon a new future, surrounded by all that life has most beautiful and lovely.

"The change in my soul has taught me to understand life and sufferings better, and I know now that there is no fruitless suffering, that no virtuous endurance is vain. Providence has lifted the veil from my eyes while I am yet upon the earth; for many, it will be raised only when the eyes close upon the earthly day. All will then see and know what I now with joy and gratitude acknowledge.

"Clear and bright lies now my way before me. Assisted by my beloved children, by the friend and teacher of my youth, who will, I hope, pass under my roof, the evening of his days, will I convert this region into

a valley of peace. And when I shall leave it, and my loved ones, may my memory be pleasant to them. And, now, thou advancing age, whose cool breath I already feel upon my brow, thou winter-twilight of life, whose shades are already gathering about me, come and be welcome! I fear you no longer——

"And in bodily weakness and suffering, too, I will still acknowledge the worth of life, and with a heart open to all that is beautiful and good upon earth, I will say to my beloved ones,

'The peace of heaven dwells within my heart.'

As Fru Astrid laid aside her pen, and raised her tearful and beaming eyes, she perceived Harold and Susanna, who were walking in the valley, arm in arm. They walked gayly along, and yet seemed to be contending. A point of the highest importance was, in truth, under discussion, namely, which of them should in future have *the last word.*

Harold insisted, that it was the indisputable right of the husband and master of the house. Susanna declared she did not care about his rights; when she knew herself to be in the right, she should maintain it to the utmost, should contend for the right till the last moment.

They now approached the spring—the troubled waters—which had witnessed their earliest strife. And now, as then, the pigeons with their shining wings were circling about it. And here Harold took Susanna's hand, and said, solemnly,

"My wife, I have hitherto jested, but now I will be serious. Our forefathers swore by the clear waters of Leipter, and I swear to you now, by the waters of this clear spring, that, whenever in future, you shall contradict me more than my temper can bear, I will silence you thus——"

"Ah, here we have them!" cried a merry voice, just behind the embracing lovers, "but I must tell you it is not so very pretty, to run away from your guests in this way, to——"

"Come, Susanna!" interrupted Alette, laughing, as she took the arm of the blushing Susanna, "come, and let us leave these selfish men, who are always wanting to be waited upon, to themselves a little while. It will do them a vast deal of good. In the mean while, we will walk off together, and confide to one another our real opinion of them."

"Dear Alette," said Susanna, very thankful to escape from brother Lexow's jests, "how happy it makes me to see you so cheerful and so well, in spite of your journey to the North, that you dreaded so much."

"Ah," said Alette, low and tenderly, "such a husband as my Lexow could make summer bloom all over the world; yet—" and here a shade of melancholy passed over Alette's face, but vanished instantly, and she went on gayly, "but we have not come here to praise these good gentlemen, who, I see, have nothing better to do than to listen to us; and so, as soon as we have abused my husband sufficiently, we will give yours his well-merited share. Has he not shocking faults?

Is he not, between ourselves, dreadfully selfish and tyrannical?"

"That I deny," cried Harold, springing in front of Susanna, "that I deny, and you, my wife, contradict me, if you dare!"

"Dare!" cried Alette, "she must dare, for you only confirm my words. Is he not a tyrant, Susanna?"

"Am I a tyrant, Susanna? I say a thousand times, No! What do you say?"

"I say—nothing," answered Susanna, as she moved a little to one side, and drew closer to Alette, "but I shall think what I please."

"It is well," cried Harold, "that I have found a way always to have the last word."

"Have you found that out, brother," said Lexow, laughing. "Well, that is a far greater discovery than ever Columbus made. Let me have the benefit of it, too, I beg of you."

"It would be of no use to you, Alf," said Alette, turning to him with a mingling of sadness and playfulness in her expression, "for *my* last word is something very different from yours."

"How so?"

"My last word, as my last thought, will be—Alf!"

"Alette, dear Alette, why these tears?"

"Susanna," said Harold, "I will prepare you for it before hand; my last word will be—Sanna!"

"And mine—Harold!"

It is painful, after presenting these cheerful scenes to our readers, to be forced to turn to others of a tragic nature. But thus destiny commands; and we are forced to relate, that a few days before Susanna's wedding, the white and the grey goose laid down their contentious lives, and were united in a magnificent *a la daube*, which was served up and consumed upon that festival day, which was, to Harold and Susanna, the last day of strife, and the first of eternal union.

Often, in after years, did Susanna stand by the clear spring, surrounded by her feathered flock, while, with the gaiety of a happy heart, she sang to two bold, brown eyed boys, and a fair blooming girl, the little song,

Whene'er my wayward heart
Rebels within my breast,
Then love with gentle art,
Still charms it back to rest:
Within its cage, the bird
May beat its restless wings,
But love, with a kind word,
Can soothe it, and it sings.

Kind reader! Now that you have happily arrived at the end of these contentions, you do not perhaps dream that you have still a strife before you—strife—between you and me. Yet thus must it inevitably be, if you, as sometimes happens, should persist in calling

"a romance" what I call merely sketches—sketches that are, indeed, linked together, but which yet make no pretension to the unity of a romance. But if you will regard them as blades of grass, or as flowers in a meadow, which wave in the wind upon their several stalks, and yet have their roots in the same soil, and are unfolded in the light of the same sun, then are we at peace;—let me hope only, that they may have whispered to your heart of that light which is reflected from all the waters of being; of that spring which shall one day dawn for every faithful heart.

And here let me thank those Norwegian authors, who have been my guides upon the mountain journey, and the companions of my wanderings through the legends of their land. And from the depths of my heart let me thank the dear kind friends I have known in that beautiful country; in whose woods I have breathed the air of freedom; in whose hospitable bosom I once found a peaceful home.

NOTES

OF THE TRANSLATOR.

(1). *Page* 20.—"Hela presided over Nifelheim, the hell appointed for those who die ingloriously of sickness, or old age. Her gloomy mansion was strongly built, and defended by massive portals. Her hall was anguish; her table, famine; her knife, hunger; her bed, leanness; the threshold of her door, precipice; her attendants were expectation and delay.' Hela was the daughter of Loke, (evil,) and Angebode, (messenger of death.)

(2.) *Page* 20.—Likstronde, the shore of corpses, received the souls of assassins and murderers.

(3.) *Page* 20.—"There is an abode that the sun never visits; its gates open towards the North. Poisons rain in through a thousand crevices. It is formed of the bodies of snakes and scorpions, their heads turned inward. From this dismal abyss, the black smoke ever rises. There the souls of the wicked float on rivers of poison, black as pitch, colder than ice."—*Edda.*

(4.) *Page* 37. "Blood-baptizer."—Olof II. was the son of Harold Graenske, who, during the reign of Jarl Hakon, had governed the southern part of Norway, with the title of king.

Olof, who was a lineal descendant of Harold Harfager, was not unworthy of his heroic descent. Even in boyhood, he had acquired the fame of a daring and successful viking. He made many descents upon England, France, and Spain, and the rich spoils which he gathered in those countries, enabled him afterward to undertake his successful expedition against the usurpers of the crown of Norway.

After the battle of Swœlderoe, in which Olof Tryggvason had perished, the allied princes divided the kingdom of Norway. The king of Denmark took possession of the southern part; the king of Sweden of all those provinces which bordered on his kingdom; the remainder was allotted to the two sons of Jarl Hakon, Eric, and Svend, who also governed the other states of Norway, but as vassals of the kings of Sweden and Denmark. These princes ruled with great wisdom and humanity; though professing the Christian faith, they abstained from any attempt to force their religion upon their subjects.

But the attachment of the Norwegians to the family of Harold Harfager, made them still regard the sons of Hakon as usurpers, and the Christian party, now become powerful in the state, saw, with displeasure, the toleration which was extended to the ancient religion. The young Olof, informed of the disposition of the people, lost no time in availing himself of it. He landed in Norway, (1014,) where he was received, with enthusiasm. Eric, the eldest son of Jarl Hakon, was at this time absent in England, whither he had been compelled, as a vassal of the crown of Denmark, to follow

the banner of Canute the Great. Olof possessed himself, by a stratagem, of the person of the young son of Eric, but restored him to liberty, after obtaining from him a solemn renunciation of all his claims upon the crown. Svend, the brother of Eric, was defeated in a naval battle, by Olof, and fled, leaving him in undisputed possession of the kingdom. Olof established his court at Drontheim, which from this time became the residence of the Norwegian kings. He made many new laws for his subjects, and revised and improved the ancient code.

Olof was a zealous champion of the Christian religion, and, eager to propagate it among his subjects, he thought no means unjustifiable which tended to the accomplishment of this object. He renewed the persecutions which had stained the reign of Olof Tryggvason, and even surpassed that prince in zeal and cruelty.

This unwise severity weakened the affections of his subjects. Several of the petty princes, who had assisted in placing him upon the throne, now conspired to deprive him of it, but Olof discovered their plot; he punished some of the conspirators with death, others with loss of sight, and banished the rest from the kingdom.

The exiled princes took refuge at the court of Canute, and persuaded this monarch that it would be easy to restore Norway to its former dependence upon Denmark. Canute sent an ambassador to Olof, requiring him to consider himself in future as his vassal. Olof indignantly rejected the claim of Canute, and formed an alliance with Anund, king of Sweden, whose

daughter he had married; but finding himself unsupported by his own subjects, he was forced to quit his kingdom, which was subjected without difficulty by Canute. Olof passed into Russia, and was preparing to perform a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, there to assume the monastic habit, when he received, in a dream, a command from heaven to return to Norway. Anund supplied him with troops, and he was joined by many of his own subjects. His little army soon amounted to three thousand men, though he rejected the services of all who refused to adopt the Christian faith. A cross was painted upon the helmets and shields of his soldiers, and their war-cry was, "On? soldiers of the cross and the king." Relying upon the justice of his cause, he would not wait for any further reinforcement, but went forward to attack his enemies, though their number was more than double that of his own army. Before the battle he summoned his three Skalds into his presence, and charged them to transmit to posterity the memory of the battle of that day.

But the courage and skill of Olof could not prevail over a force so superior to his own. This little army was cut to pieces; he himself perished in the combat; two of his poets fell by his side; the third, mortally wounded, chanted a poem in honor of his king, before he withdrew the arrow with which he was pierced.

After the death of Olof, his memory became dear to the Norwegian people. The remainder of his heroic adventures, his wise laws, above all his tragic fate, effaced from their minds the recollections of his bigotry and his relentless cruelty. The Christian clergy,

grateful for his services to the church, exalted him to the rank of a saint. Churches were dedicated to him not only in Norway but in Denmark, Sweden, Russia, and England. Even in Constantinople a shrine was consecrated to his momory, and his tomb was the resort of pilgrims from all the countries of Europe.

The battle of Stikklestadt, in which Olof II. was killed, was fought in 1030.

(5.) *Page* 37.—Olof Tryggvason, one of the most celebrated of the ancient Norwegian kings, was the son of Tryggve, who, as grandson of Harold Harfager, had excited the jealousy of Gunilda, and had fallen a victim to her cruelty. The youth of Olof was subjected to many vicissitudes of fortune. His mother, Astrida, fled with her infant son, from the fury of Gunilda, and attempted to join her brother, Sigurd, in Russia. The fugitives were captured by Esthonian pirates, who retained Olof among them for many years. He was at length discovered, and ransomed by his uncle Sigurd, who carried him to the court of Vladamir, at Novgorod, where he was distinguished for his strength and beauty, and his skill in all manly exercises. At the age of nineteen, he took the command of a small fleet of Russian pirates, and set forth in quest of adventures. While cruising in the Baltic, he was driven by a storm upon the coast of Pomerania, the country of the Vandals; here he married the daughter of Burislief, king of that country, and with his father-in-law, joined the emperor Otho, in his expedition against Denmark. On his return from Denmark, he lived in Pomerania until the death of his wife, when he resumed his former

roving habits. The little fleet of Olof was known upon all the coasts of Europe; he made frequent descents upon Scotland and England, and even the more southern countries were not free from his depredations.

Olof had been instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, in Saxony; he had afterward studied its doctrines more carefully, in Greece, yet still hesitated to embrace them; but being thrown upon the Scilly islands, while engaged in one of his piratical expeditions, he was there met by an aged monk, who predicted that he should one day reign over Norway, and that this country was, by his means, to be converted to Christianity. This prediction made a deep impression upon the mind of Olof, although he did not immediately endeavoure to secure its fulfilment. After receiving the rite of baptism from the holy father, he passed to the Orkney islands, where he preached the Christian religion, sword in hand.

Norway was, at this time, governed by Jarl Hakon, who had possessed himself of the crown, after the death of Harold Grafeld, and the flight of Gunilda. This crafty prince, hearing that a hero of the race of Harold Harfager, yet lived, who might one day contest with him the crown of Norway, resolved to decoy Olof into his power. For this purpose, he despatched an emissary, who was, by false representations, to induce Olof to land in Norway. The artful messenger pretended to have fled from the tyranny of Hakon, whom he described as the most cruel and treacherous of princes. He represents to Olof, the discontent that prevailed in Norway, and the enthusiasm with which

a descendant of Harold Harfager would be welcomed by the people. Olof, mindful of the monk's prediction, listened eagerly to these representations, and set sail for Norway, accompanied by his treacherous adviser. On their arrival, they found the people actually in rebellion against Hakon, whose cruelty had indeed rendered him odious to his subjects. Olof placed himself at the head of the rebels, and soon compelled Hakon to seek safety in flight. He lay for some time concealed in a cave, where he was assassinated by a slave, to whom he had confided the place of his retreat. The faithless servant carried the news of his master's fate to Olof, by whose order his treachery was punished with instant death.

The conversion of his subjects to Christianity was the first care of Olof, after he had established himself on the throne. He secured the co-operation of some of the most powerful nobles, by giving them his sisters in marriage; he confirmed the fidelity of others, by bestowing upon them the confiscated estates of the refractory.

The inhabitants of the southern provinces received the new faith with little reluctance; but in the north it was met by more vigorous opposition. The dwellers in the mountain regions, strongly attached to their ancient religion, refused to renounce it at the command of their sovereign. Torture and death, or the adoption of the new faith, was the alternative offered them by the zealous Olof; but the hardy Northlanders were true to the religion of their fathers; they withdrew to their mountain fastnesses, where they could defy the power of

their king, and worship in security the ancient gods of Scandinavia.

Outward tranquility, however, was now established in the kingdom of Olof. The nobles, finding that the new religion subjected them to no new restraints, readily adopted the faith of their king; and the people, if they still worshipped the gods of their fathers, worshipped in secret.

Olof stood now at the height of power and prosperity. He was the bravest warrior, the most fortunate prince, of his day; he had joined the glory of an apostle to the renown of a warrior; but even now the vengeance of a woman was preparing his downfall.

Olof had asked the hand of the fair Sigrid, of Sweden. This haughty princess, who had rejected many a royal suitor, consented to become the wife of the renowned Olof. She repaired to Norway, but in her first interview with her royal lover, he required her to embrace the Christian religion. The haughty Sigrid indignantly refused, and Olof enraged at her disobedience, struck her with his gauntlet, at the same time loading her with reproaches. That she might at least receive the rite of baptism, he ordered her to be plunged into the sea, before she was sent back to Sweden. Sigrid vowed vengeance, and kept her word. She became the wife of Svend, king of Denmark, whose sister Thira, had been married to Burislief, father of the first wife of Olof. Thira had fled from her husband, but dreading the anger of her brother, did not return to her own country, but took refuge in Norway, where she was kindly received by Olof, who soon made her his wife

When the news of this marriage reached Svend, who was already irritated against Olof, by the vindictive Sigrid, his indignation knew no bounds. He was easily prevailed upon by Sigrid, to form an alliance with Olof Skotkonung, king of Denmark, (her son by a former marriage,) with the view of humbling the power of Olof Tryggvason. To this confederacy, Eric, the son of Jarl Hakon joined himself, and the allies only wanted an opportunity, which might enable them to attack him with some chance of success. The occasion soon presented itself; Olof had undertaken an expedition to the country of the Vandals, to recover the possessions of his wife, in the island of Rugen. His enemies, with a considerable fleet, lay in wait for him, on his return. Olof had expected no attack; his ships were widely scattered, and unprepared for action. He was first made aware of his danger, when he found himself with a few of his ships nearly surrounded by the enemy. Olof disdained to fly. He sustained the unequal contest, until he had seen all his faithful Bersærkers fall around him, and the "Long Serpent," the pride of his navy, boarded by his rival, Eric; then, overpowered by numbers, and fearing to be taken prisoner, he threw himself into the sea, where he probably perished, though some of the ancient chronicles assert, that he saved himself by swimming, and, after performing a journey to the Holy land, ended his life in a monastery. Olof reigned 995—1000.

(6.) *Page* 37.—Sverre was one of the most remarkable men whom Norway has produced. He was educated as the son of a private man, and was destined

to the ecclesiastical profession; but learning from his mother that he was the son of Sigurd the Second, he left the church, and turned his attention to the affairs of Norway, which was now governed by the young king Magnus, under the guidance of his father, the brave and sagacious Erling. The reign of this prince had already been disturbed by the claims of various pretenders to the crown. Eistein Mela, grandson of Harold Gille, asserted his right, as a decendant of Magnus Barfoed; he assembled a considerable body of partisans, who received the name of Birkebeinians, because, being forced to retire into the forests, they had, for want of leather shoes, covered their feet with the bark of birch trees. This wild band maintained the war against Magnus for several years, with unequal success; but, in 1177, they sustained a signal defeat; Eistein, their general, was made prisoner, and soon after put to death.

After the death of their leader, the "Birkebeinar" sent a deputation to Sverre, inviting him to become their chief. Sverre, after some hesitation, accepted their proposal, received the oath of allegiance, and was proclaimed king by this band of ill-armed and undisciplined outlaws, whose number, at this time, scarcely exceeded seventy. His force was rapidly augmented; but Sverre met with no success in the commencement of his enterprise. He was forced to fly into Sweden; but soon returning, collected the remnants of his little band, and made an attempt upon Drontheim, in which, however, he failed of success. Sverre now wandered long among the mountains and forests of Norway; he

occupied himself in establishing order and discipline in his little army, which received daily accessions to its number. At length, being reinforced by a band of archers from Tellemark, he again approached Drontheim, and offered battle to the adherents of Magnus. Fortune was now on the side of Sverre. He gained a complete victory, and entered Drontheim, bearing in triumph the sacred banner of St. Olof. He convoked the assembly of deputies, and caused himself to be proclaimed king of Norway.

The war, however, was not yet concluded. The mildness and equity of Erling's administration secured to his son the adherence of a numerous party. The clergy, too, declared themselves on the side of Magnus, and promised eternal salvation to all who should fall in battle against the "Birkebeinar." At the end of two years the fate of the war was decided, by the death of Erling, who was surprised by a sudden attack from Sverre, and left mortally wounded on the field. Magnus was forced to leave the side of his dying father, and seek safety in flight. The remains of Erling were interred with great magnificence by Sverre. Magnus Erlingson, after sustaining another defeat, took refuge in Denmark, where he was well received, and supplied with succors by Valdemar I. He was, however, again defeated by Sverre, in a naval engagement, which took place near Hugastrand, in which nearly two thousand of his followers perished. Magnus was drowned in the attempt to make his escape by swimming; but his body was recovered from the waters, and interred with all the splendor due to the obsequies of a king,

by Sverre, who himself pronounced his funeral oration.

The hostility of the clergy towards Sverre, did not cease with the life of their patron, Magnas. Eric, who had been elevated to the see of Drontheim, in opposition to the wishes of the king, denounced the Birkibeinians from his pulpit, and refused to perform the ceremonies of the coronation. Sverre, on his part, endeavored to restrain the power of the clergy, which had become excessive during the reign of his predecessor. He retained a part of the revenues of the see of Drontheim, and even limited the number of followers that the archbishop was allowed to retain in his service. He convened, in 1193, a new diet, in which the people confirmed the edicts of the king. The indignant prelate retired to Denmark, and obtained from the pope a bull, threatening Sverre with excommunication. This, however, produced but little effect, for the priests, finding the people on the side of their king, dared not publish the bull in his dominions.

While engaged in this controversy with his clergy, Sverre was called upon to defend his kingdom against a new competitor for the crown. This was Sigurd, son of Magnus Erlingson. He had collected a numerous band of adventurers in the Orkney and Shetland isles, and with these made a successful descent upon Pomerania. He then guided his fleet to the shores of Norway, where he at first met with some success, but was at length defeated by Sverre in a naval engagement, which took place near Bergen. His vessels were all sunk, or taken, and he himself perished in the

sea. After this victory, Sverre resolved no longer to delay the ceremony of his coronation. He requested the pope's legate, who had just arrived in Norway for the purpose of selling indulgences, to perform the ceremony of consecration. On his refusal, Sverre ordered him to quit the kingdom, and was crowned, (1194,) by his former confessor, whom he had appointed to the bishopric of Bergen.

The close of Sverre's reign was disturbed by the attempts of a new pretender to the crown. This was a young Dane, who took the name of Inge, one of the sons of Magnus Erlingson. This adventurer was defeated by Sverre in a naval engagement, and the greater part of his fleet taken; but his party being afterwards strongly reinforced, he seized upon Drontheim, ravaged many provinces of the kingdom, and obtained the victory in two important naval engagements, in which the fleet of Sverre was almost utterly destroyed. But Sverre lost no time in constructing a new fleet, with which he attacked and defeated the invaders, and forced their chief to return to Denmark. The troubles, however, were not entirely appeased. The partisans of Inge maintained their ground in Norway till the close of the year 1201, when their last fortress surrendered to Sverre.

Sverre did not long survive this success. He died March 9, 1202, aged 51. When he found himself dying, he ordered his attendants to place him upon his throne, that he might prove to his subjects the falsehood of the predictions of Bishop Nicholas, who had foretold that he should be devoured by wild dogs.

He advised his son Hakon ro reconcile himself with the clergy, and bequeathed his pardon to all his enemies.

Sverre may be regarded as one of the greatest men, and most accomplished princes, of his day. He possessed, in a high degree, the gift of eloquence, and joined the learning of the scholar, and the wisdom of the statesman, to the kingly virtues of courage and military skill.

(7.) *Page* 37.—The different states of Norway had never been united under one sovereign before the time of Harold Harfager. His father, Halfdan Svart, (the black) had indeed (under the direction, it is said, of his mother Asa,) subdued the little kingdom of Norway so far as Sokn, (north of Bergen) and would have extended his conquests still further, if he had not been prevented by an early death. He lost his life in con sequence of the sudden breaking of the ice, on a lake which he was crossing in the winter. The newly conquered provinces revolted after the death of Halfdan Svart; but Guttorm, who had been appointed guardian of the young Harold, then a boy of ten years old, soon reduced them to submission.

Harold early formed the design of completing the conquest of Norway, and his ambition was excited yet more by the proud princess Gida, who refused to bestow her hand upon him until he should have made himself sovereign of all Norway. Harold made a vow not to cut his hair until he had completed the conquest of his kingdom. The victory of Hafursfiord, which he gained over the independent princes in 875, compelled

them to submit to become his vassals. Harold was thus released from his vow, but always retained the surname of Harfager, or the fair-haired.

The close of Harold's reign was disturbed by domestic dissensions. His numerous sons, children of different mothers, were continually at variance with one another. He endeavoured to compose their differences, by assigning each the government of a separate province, with the rank and title of king. He declared Eric, his eldest son, his successor as sovereign of Norway. Harold survived this partition of his kingdom about three years.

Iceland, which was discovered in 868, was settled in this reign. Many powerful princes, who could not submit to live under the government of Harold, sought safety and freedom in this island, which then bore the name of Snoland. They carried with them the Scandinavian language, and with it the poems or sagas, which were better preserved in the remote region than in the countries where they originated.

(8.) *Page* 37.—Gunilda, the wife of Eric first, son of Harold Harfager was equally distinguished for her beauty, her commanding intellect, and her merciless cruelty; it was by this fierce woman that Eric was excited to the bloody deed which gained him the surname of Blodæxe.

The crown of Norway had been bestowed by Harold Harfager upon Eric, his eldest son, but he had given his younger sons the government of the several provinces of the kingdom, and had allowed them to assume the title of king. Gunilda, who had nothing of the

woman in her nature but the strong instincts of maternal affection, regarded with jealousy the power of these princes, which seemed to threaten the dismemberment of the future inheritance of her son. She excited the jealous apprehensions of her husband, and the impetuous Eric became the murderer of his brothers.

After the expulsion of Eric from his kingdom, by his younger brother Hakon, Gunilda and her sons sought refuge in Denmark, and, having obtained assistance from Harold, king of that country, made a descent upon Norway. They were at first unsuccessful, but a detachment of their army surprised Hakon, when attended only by a small band of his followers; he fell wounded by an arrow, and dying, declared the sons of Eric his heirs, naming the eldest, Harold Grafell, his successor as sovereign of Norway.

The sons of Eric found their power much circumscribed by the powerful vassals, who had taken advantage of the dissensions in the royal family to render themselves nearly independent of the crown. Of these powerful chiefs Earl Sigurd, governor of Drontheim, was the most formidable, and Gunilda and her sons used eyery effort to possess themselves of his person and his lands. The artful Gunilda at length succeeded in persuading him to visit her court. The old earl was no sooner in her power, than he was murdered, with circumstances of peculiar barbarity.

But vengeance soon overtook the wretched Gunilda. She was destined to see the overthrow of all her ambitious projects.—Eric, of the bloody axe, closed his life

in exile.—Harold Grafell, the son, for whose sake she had stained her soul with so many crimes, fell, on the coast of Denmark, the victim of treachery equal to her own. The unhappy "mother of kings" fled with her two youngest sons to the Orkney Islands, where her restless life was closed by a violent death.

(9) *Page* 37. Eric was the eldest son of Harold Harfager. He inherited the courage and love of enterprise which distinguished his father, and in his youth was the darling of the nation. The cruel murder of two of his brothers, to which he was instigated by his wife Gunilda, alienated from him the affections of his people, who branded him with the surname of Blodæxe (bloody axe).

News of the discontents which prevailed in Norway reached Hakon, the youngest of the sons of Harold Harfager. This prince had been educated at the court of Athelstane, and having received no share in the government of the states of Norway, continued to live in England after the death of his father. He now resolved to revenge the murder of his brothers, and to gratify his ambition at the same time, by expelling Eric frow Norway, and possessing himself of his crown. Athelstane supplied him with men and ships for his expedition; but the little fleet was dipersed by a storm, and Hakon was thrown alone and unarmed upon the coast of Norway. The news of his arrival, however, spread rapidly through the country, the people every where declared themselves in his favor, Earl Sigurd, governor of Drontheim, presented him to the Norwegians as their king, and crowds flocked daily to his

standard. Eric, abandoned by his subjects, dared not even to attempt resistance. He fled to the Orkney islands, and thence to England, where he was received by king Athelstane, who bestowed upon him the kingdom of Northumbria, on condition that he should embrace the Christian religion, and abstain from any attempt to recover the crown of Norway.

Eric proved a turbulent vassal to the English kings; after the death of Athelstane he was continually at war with the successors of that prince. He was expelled from Northumbria, but having collected an army, composed of his early piratical associates, he invaded England with the intention of recovering his former possessions. He was defeated in a pitched battle by Edred, and slain, together with five other Vikings, A. D. 952.

(10.) *Page* 86.—Ragnar Lodbrog was the son of Sigurd Ring, king of Sweden and Denmark. He was one of the most celebrated of the ancient Scandinavian heroes. He received the surname of Lodbrog, (Lod, hairy,—Brog, garments,) from the dress which he wore in his contest with the venomous serpent, who guarded the Princess Thora. He made for himself garments of the skins of wild beasts, with the hair outward, and then plunged into the sea, in mid-winter; the water formed thick scales of ice upon the hairy vestments, and in this impenetrable armour, he attacked and subdued the serpent. After many warlike expeditions, in most of which he was successful, Ragnar was taken prisoner by Hella, king of Northumbria, and was cast into a dungeon full of serpents. He expired under their fangs,

exulting in the thought of the vengeance which his sons would take upon the murderer of their father, and recounting the heroic achievments of his past life. The song which Ragnar is supposed to have sung in the cave of serpents is still extant.

"Ragnar etoit le plus fort et le plus beau de tous les hommes. C'est sur lui que la tradition a accumule tous les hauts faits des peuples du Nord pendant le huitieme et le neuvieme siecle; ce n'est plus un personnage mythique, mais, comme Charlemagne dans les poesies epiques du moyen age, il est le type des exploits de la nation entiere.—*Le Bas.*

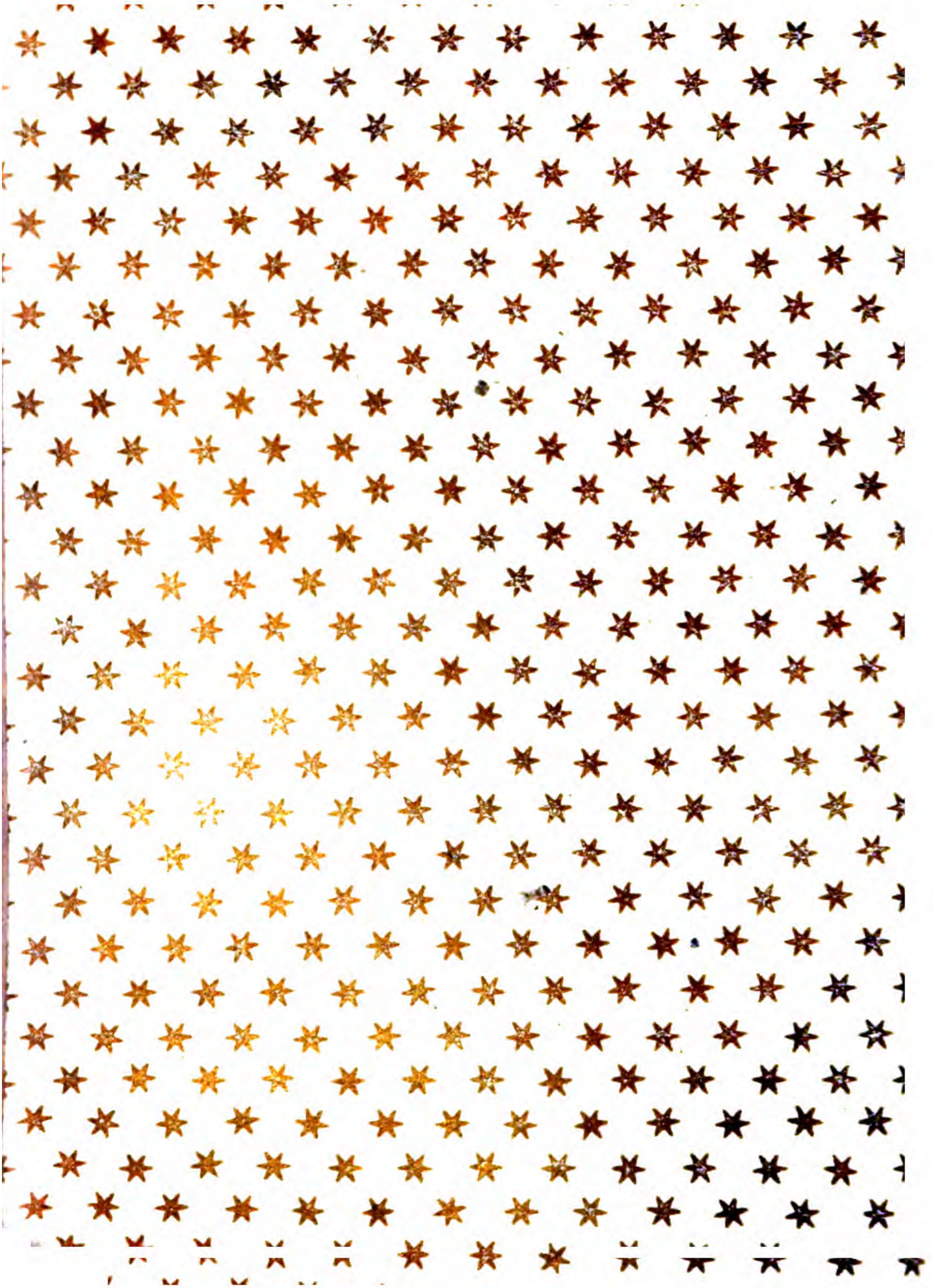
(11.) *Page* 96—Jotunheim—the land of the giants, "On the extreme shore was Utgard, also called Jotunheim, where dwelt Nor, and the giants, against whom a wall or strong fortress was built, to separate them from Asgard, the habitation of the gods. There, under the root of the tree of the world, lived the dwarfs and elves; and there is the home of Sleep, who rises every night to seal the eyelids of mankind."

(12.) *Page* 102—"Wild, moving music." "La musique qui accompagne la plupart des ballades populaires est tonjours sur des airs empreints d' une singuliere tristesse. Au pied du Dovrefield, nous rencontrames sur notre route le monument d' une victorie remportee par les Norwegiens sur un corps ecossais commande par un capitaine, St. Clair, au service de la Suede. * * * * Il existe sur cet evenement une ballade devenue populaire. Nous nous la f'imes chanter par un paysan pour en connaitre l'air. On ne se serait pas doute qu'it eut ete fait pour un chant de triomphe, tant il etoit

languissant et triste. Il en est de meme do tous les chants populaires du Nord; bien que souvent les paroles expriment la gaiete ou un sentiment vif, la melodie en est toujours traimante et plaintive. C'est que le caractere de la musique nationale, ne traduit pas telle ou telle disposition passagere, mais le fond meme de l'ame d'un peuple: or la tristesse est le veritable caractere du Nord. On l'y retrouve partout, dans le silence et la grandeur de la nature, dans le morne regard de l'homme, dans sa demarche lente et son chant plaintif, dans les brumes de la mer, dans les longues nuits et les longs crepuscules."—*Ampere.*

(13.) *Page* 103.—"The Tellemarken women wear a red jacket; a black skirt, trimmed at the bottom with yellow; and a short vest, fastened by a ceinture where the jacket ends, and hanging in loose plaits, for some inches, below. A colored handkerchief, tied round the head, floats on the air behind. The sides of the stockings are prettily worked; and the shoes are ornamented with large buckles, or star-shaped pieces of leather. The costume of the men is something like that in which Charles the Twelfth is drawn, or that of the combatants in Spanish bull-fights. A short jacket of some decided color; a waistcoat, striped, and very gaudy; dark breeches with a streak of red running down both sides, and across the front; worsted stockings, well worked; broad, embroidered gaiters; large knee-buckles, and shoes, embroidered like the women's. Both sexes wear a profusion of silver lace, and trinkets, on their persons."—*Elliott's Travels in North Europe.*

(14.) *Page* 105. Bersærker.—"The Bersæerkrs, or champions, devoted themselves to the fortunes of the kings, and great chiefs, and depended upon their favor, for preferment. These warriors, who served in the capacity of body-guards by sea and land, were sometimes seized with a sort of frenzy, or military mania, produced by the songs of the Skalds, in praise of warlike exploits, or by their excited imaginations, dwelling on the thought of war and glory. When this madness was upon them, they committed the wildest extravagancies; attacked, indiscriminately, friends and foes; and even waged war against rocks and trees, and other objects of inanimate nature. For the want of better employment, they occasionally turned their arms against themselves, and defied each other to mortal combat, in some lone and desert isle. In the Eyrbiggia Saga, is related the singular story of Halli and Leikner, two Bersærker whom Hakon Jarl presented to Verimund, an Icelandic chief, and whose tempers became so fierce and turbulent, that it was found necessary to suffocate them, privately, in a bath, filled with boiling water.—*Crichton's Scandinavia.*

H. G. Clarke and Co., Printers, 66, Old Bailey.

550610