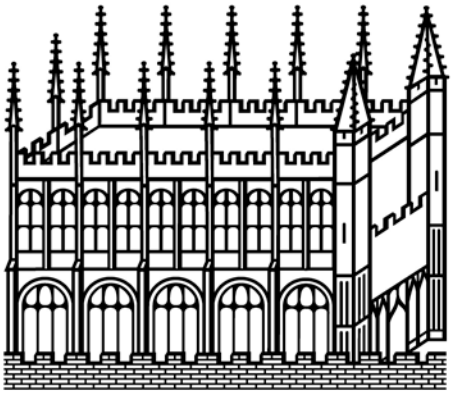

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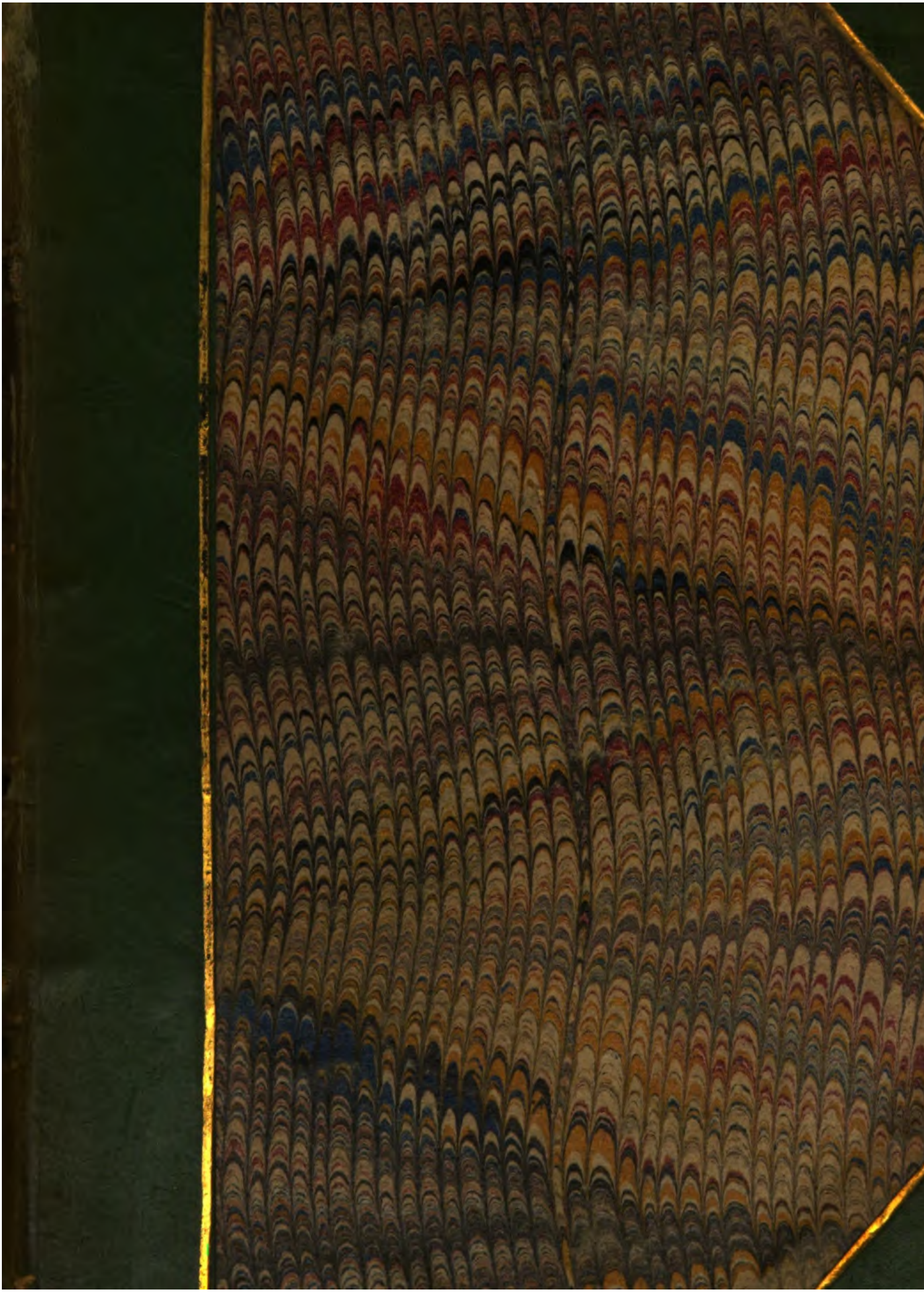

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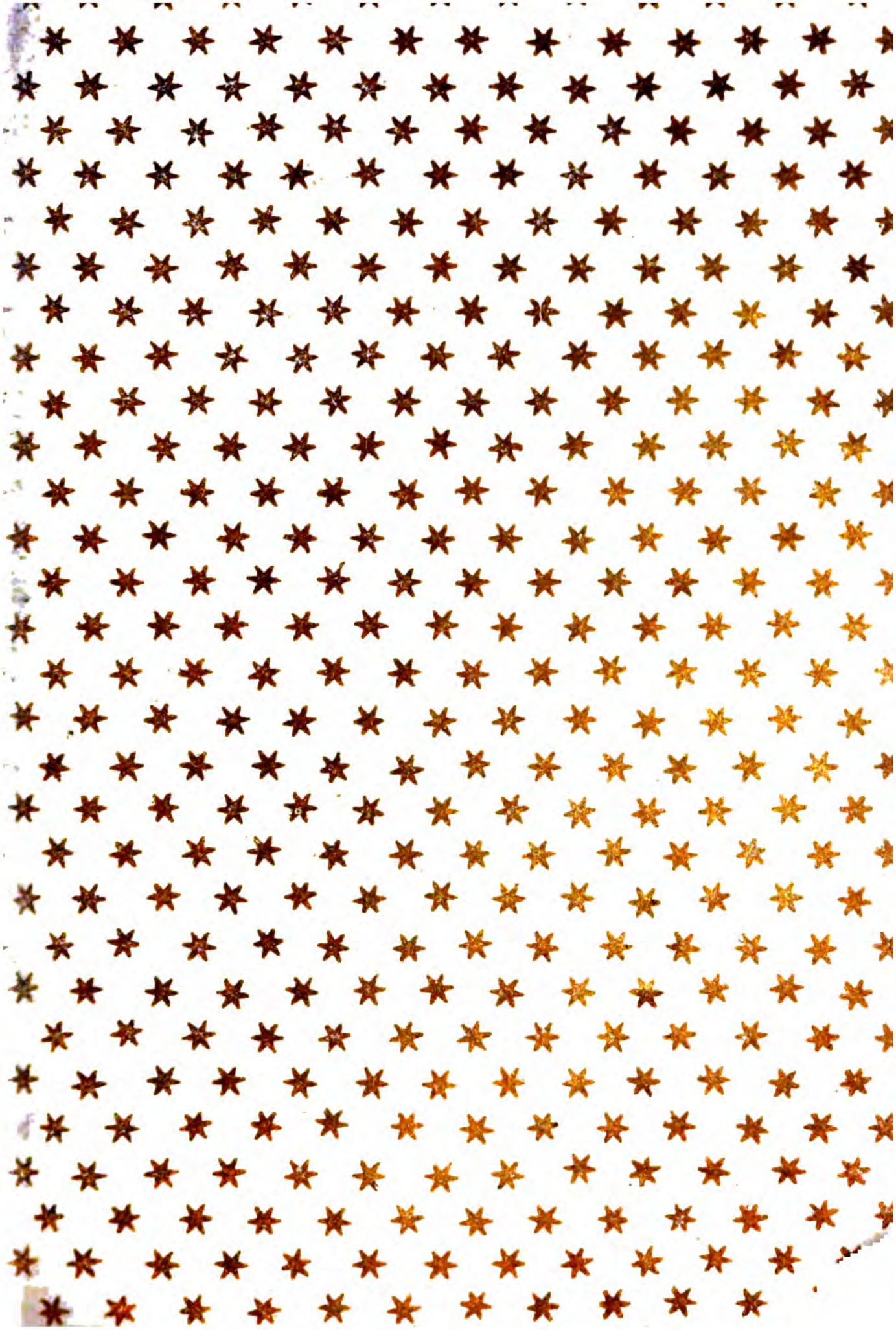

THE

NOVELS

OF

FREDERIKA BREMER.

VOL. XI.

A DIARY.

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

1845.

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A DIARY.

BY

FREDERIKA BREMER,

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

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH.

BY

E. A. FRIEDLÆNDER,

(LATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN).

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

—

1845.

A DIARY.

Stockholm, Nov. 1, 18—

IN THE FORENOON.

"This day—a life!"—THORILD.

"ANOTHER day, another revolution of light and shade! '*Enjoy thy existence!*' sayest thou, holy morning-dawn, vivifying glance of love, emanation of God! Once more thou didst awake me out of my darkness, gavest me *a day*, a new existence, *a little life!* Thou lookest upon me in this life, and sayest: 'Follow the moment! It diffuses in its flight light and blossoms; it conceals itself in clouds but to shine forth again with resplendent lustre. Follow it, and do not suffer thyself to be visited by the twilight ere thou hast commenced to live!"

Such were my trains of thought, when at the dawn of morning I awoke and saw the rays of daylight penetrate into my little chamber. Involuntarily I stretched out my arms towards them; they were neither cheering nor bright; they were the rays of a dull November day, but, notwithstanding, light of that Light which illumines my day of life, and which I hail with love.

May the light of my day of life be as the morning

light—a rising one. Whether its rays shine through clouds or mists, or through a serene, transparent atmosphere—no matter, if the day but increases and life grows brighter.

After an absence of ten years, I am visiting the home of my youth again; as to the time of my stay—whether for a longer or shorter period—circumstances must determine. Independent with regard to my property and circumstances, I can now, after many a long year of captivity, taste liberty, and at the age of thirty years follow my own inclinations.

Yesterday evening I arrived here, a few days earlier than they expected me, and could not, therefore, flatter myself that the dwelling of my stepmother was on *my* account so splendidly illuminated, as I found it on my arrival. Ah, no! On the contrary, I had great difficulty to find any one who would take the least notice of me and my luggage. At length I met with a maid, whose friendly countenance and manner pleased me, and who, on ascertaining who I was, paid the utmost attention to my person and luggage.

"Ah!" exclaimed she, as she conducted me up a faintly-lighted winding staircase leading to my apartment, "how provoking it is; her ladyship is giving a little ball to-day, to celebrate Fräulein Selma's birthday; and now, you see, they have carried up all the cloaks into your room; what a sight to be sure! but they did not expect your ladyship until next week, and therefore, you see, there is nothing in order here yet."

"It's of no consequence," rejoined I, as I surveyed the room with some consternation, which in the letters of my stepmother was commended to me as "excel-

lent," and was now crammed full of ladies' and gentlemen's cloaks, goloshes, and clogs. The tones of a whirling Strauss-waltz resounded from beneath, and made a partly cheering and partly depressing impression upon me. I thought, "If I were to set myself down here among all these empty habiliments, listening to this music, and at the same time think, 'Here I sit like a forlorn stranger in the land, whilst the people below are dancing and amusing themselves,' I should assuredly become melancholy, and resolve upon writing an appendix to King Solomon's book of Ecclesiasticus, 'All is transitory!' But if 'I were to go down and mingle with the gay company, amuse myself with looking at them, and while they float around in the waltz and galopp, myself . . . . my . . . ."

A thought quickly came into my head. I detained Karin, (for that was the name of my obliging maid,) and requested her not to let any one know that I had arrived, but assist me in putting on my black silk dress and a few other things requisite for a quick toilet. I designed to steal into the company unannounced and unknown. Karin entered into my idea, thought it delightful, and assisted me quickly and cleverly, so that after the lapse of half an hour I could make a respectable appearance in the saloon, and hope to form an unobserved member of the "*foule*," which my stepmother, I was well aware from former times, was wont to assemble at her *soirées*. And I candidly confess that I was by no means displeased at the thought of looking about me a little before I was seen, and prepare, as it were, for a fresh acquaintance with my relatives, whom I had not seen for so many years.

"When I entered the dancing saloon they were

dancing a galopp. I moved, as it were, by stealth along the wall, and was so fortunate as to find a place in a corner. The music, the bustle, and the brilliant glare of lights, turned my head almost dizzy. After recovering in some measure from this first impression, I looked curiously around for the faces of the various members of my family; above all, my eyes were directed in search of my youngest sister Selma, though I almost despaired of recognising again in the damsel of twenty the tender, delicate child that I had left ten years ago.

"But the only daughter of the house," thought I, "the heroine of the day, must still be easy to discover among the party! She must take the precedence in the dance, and be pre-eminently honoured and distinguished!"

And I sought among the floating pairs of the galopp. The dance appeared to me enchanting.

"*Ah! les reines du bal!*" now exclaimed an elderly gentleman, sitting quite close to me, with lively, but also somewhat decrepid appearance and sunken features. I looked up and saw a young officer of the Dragoons dancing with two young ladies who attracted my entire attention to them, so beautiful and brilliant were they. I concluded with certainty that one of them must be Selma; but which? They had a strong sisterly likeness, though on a more minute observation it was just that very *resemblance*, which rendered them dissimilar. For the elegant and charming gracefulness which distinguished the one, attired in white gauze and blond, was wanting in the other, who was dressed in rose-pink crape, and of a taller figure; however, she was indisputably the handsomest. Her dancing was marked by that buoyancy of spirit, which — as it is said—

animates Fanny Elssler; while the dancing of the other (arrayed in white) possessed more of the pure, dignified gracefulness which I myself had admired in Marie Taglioni. Either of the two might be Selma. The more I regarded the one in white, the more she captivated me, and the more I wished she might be my sister.

But is it possible then, that the somewhat self-willed "little doll"—as Selma called herself in the days of childhood—could transform herself into this sylph-like being whose countenance beamed with spirit and innocent joy? The other, on the contrary, had more of the proud "self," peculiar to the child Selma. "Perhaps it is my sister Selma? Should I be able to love her?"

While the contest between the white and red rose thus continued in my mind, and determined me intentionally not to ask for an explanation from my neighbour, but to leave it to chance, I heard the gentleman who had used the words, "*les reines du bal,*" congratulated by another, that he was "a rich bachelor!"

"The life of a rich bachelor," said he, with a sigh, which excited in me the presumption that he might have as many wives and children as Rochus Pumpernickel,—"the life of a rich bachelor is after all a continual feast."

"The life of a rich bachelor," rejoined the addressed gentleman, likewise sighing, "is a brilliant *dejeuner*, an insipid *diner*, and a most wretched *souper*."

Whilst listening to the conversation of these two gentlemen, and contemplating "*les reines du bal,*" I observed that a gentleman of about forty, in naval uniform, with an open and energetic exterior, and a

pair of keen, honest-looking eyes, gazed at me. This gave me pleasure—I know not why. I also remarked that Neptune's son was gradually steering his course nearer and nearer to me, and suddenly he sat by my side. I do not to this very hour rightly know how we fell into conversation, and still less, how I came to communicate to him my conjectures respecting the two most brilliant stars of the ball; but least of all, how I could show myself so communicative and familiar towards a person who was an entire stranger to me. He smiled at my confidence, and asked me if I was not also desirous of being informed about himself. I answered, that I had gone out this evening on a voyage of discovery, taken chance for my pilot, and wished to resign to him the steering of the course. My new acquaintance warned me against the danger of leaving myself to the direction of such a steersman, and inquired in a delicate manner into the motive of my enterprise. I replied evasively; the conversation became playful; and I fancied as if a great man-of-war was amusing itself by chasing a little brig which knew how to elude it by rapid unexpected evolutions. Thus we came quite unawares into a very deep channel, namely, into a discussion on the soul and on life, and were soon engaged in a contest respecting that which constitutes our highest weal or woe. Our views on this subject were very opposite; for while I sought the haven of happiness in peace of mind and contentment, Neptune's son maintained that it might be found in mere existence and in the power of feeling. I contended that with this he would never reach the haven, but ever remain in the open tempest-tossed sea. He made no objection to this. It was on that very open

tempestuous sea that he had found happiness. I expressed my sentiments against the tumultuous life of a seaman, and he against a life of quiet retirement and comfort. I spoke against the perils of shipwreck under the command of feeling, and reminded him of Oden's words in "Havamal:" "Mutable is what man possesses in the breast of another." The seaman supported his argument by reference to Christianity, and maintained with its apostle, that without *charity* every thing in the world is but as *sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.* I bowed in homage to *love of mankind.* This was just my theme. But in reference to particular circumstances, I found it highly expedient ever to be able to sing:

"I care for nobody, no, not I,
And nobody cares for me."

The seaman laughed, but shook his head and rejoined: "You would not be able, nor would you *wish* to sing thus, if you had the happiness—to possess a child."

"Perhaps so," retorted I, in a tone of indifference, inwardly delighted to discover in my new acquaintance what I had already surmised—a married man, and the father of a family. We were here interrupted by the ending of the galopp; the ladies were seeking resting-places, and my neighbour rose. The dancing-room now became unobstructed, and permitted a view into the saloon through the open doors, in which turban-crowned graces occupied the divan, allowing several gentlemen with stars and orders to stand around them.

"Ah, that is she!" thought I, with hasty emotions when a lady of noble figure and carriage made her

appearance, while conversing with an elderly gentleman she slowly approached the dancing-room. Yes, it was she, still the same as ever in appearance and gracefulness, and in beautiful and tasteful dress. I recognised the string of real pearls and the locket set with brilliants around her neck, and the beautiful arms, which in my childhood I loved to kiss; I recognised the beautiful countenance, the imposing and yet so charming portance. She was still the same as ever, who ten years ago stood before my eyes a demi-goddess in the splendid Presidence saloon, when, as the lady of the Governor of the province, she held her *court* with the exterior of a queen; yes, she was still the same as I then saw; and any thing more distinguished I have never seen since (though I have seen much in the world) and shall probably see still more, although .... *It was my stepmother!*

My heart beat not a little when I saw her slowly advancing towards the side on which I sat, and anticipated the moment of recognition. It arrived. The eyes of my stepmother rested on me; she started, looked at me again, and with riveted attention I rose; she hastened up to me, and soon—we embraced each other; not without mutual embarrassment, which was concealed, however, by the surprise and mutual apologies on my part on account of my premature arrival, and on hers, on account of the condition of my room. My stepmother now called "Selma! Selma!" and the white sylph floated towards me, and I clasped my youthful sister in my arms, rejoiced that she was "the white rose," delighted also that so cordial a joy beamed from her bright blue eyes, while, blushing, she bade me a hearty welcome. My glance now involuntarily met that

of my former neighbour, who at some distance contemplated us attentively with a gentle, half-melancholy smile. My stepmother then called, "Flora!" and beckoned; but Flora, engaged in a lively conversation with some gentlemen, did not hear immediately. Selma hastened to her, took hold of her arm, and brought her to me. I saw "the red rose," the second queen of the ball before me. Selma whispered—"Sophia! your and my cousin Flora!"

My cousin, Flora Delphin, whom I saw for the first time, saluted me politely, and after a short and indifferent conversation, returned to the gentlemen.

"No further introductions this evening, my sweet Selma," I entreated. "I know that I must have many relations here yet, with whom I am unacquainted, but I wish to defer a closer acquaintanceship with them for the present."

"So much the better," replied she, "I can then have your company quite to myself. I shall not engage in this dance—I must talk to you."

And when they were about commencing a *française* and Selma's cavalier approached, she begged to be excused, and presented him to a young lady sitting near, whom he led to the dance; then, seating herself next to me, inquired with warm interest about matters concerning myself, and reminded me, with a voice full of tender recollection, "how kind I had been to her in her childhood, related stories to her, played with her, and got up all sorts of little amusements and so forth for her enjoyment."

"Now, Selma," said I, interrupting her, "you must tell *me* some stories; but only such as are founded on facts, of course. For I am quite unacquainted with the

circle around me, and should like to be introduced into it, or, still better, let it come to me, without any trouble."

"Ah, then you have just applied to the right person," said Selma, with comic dignity; "and now in order to commence as mistress of the ceremonies,—whom shall I have the honour of presenting to you first in this assembly?"

"The stately lady there with the waving bird of paradise in that turban of silver gauze and black velvet robe, who is now talking to your mother and laughing —a beautiful lady—she might represent the queen of the night."

"So she is, indeed," rejoined Selma, laughing. "Signora Luna, as we sometimes designate her, or 'our bright-eyed lady,' is lady of honour with her Majesty the queen, where the night, as is well known, is turned into day. You will be pleased with her; she is one of our very best acquaintances; and this evening Signora Luna is in her new moon. Shall I now immediately . . . ."

"No, no, not this evening. Signora Luna is at this hour too dazzling for me. Who is that tall gentleman, who is now addressing her? Also a stately personage, but a little ostentatious."

"Respect, I beg, for—Alexander the Great, or the Great Alexander—he has translated Aristotle's Logic and Rhetoric; a very learned man, and is the husband of fair lady Luna."

"Most obedient servant! But, my dearest, here seems to be the most extraordinary society in the world—Signora Luna, Alexander the Great. I am curious to know what superhuman greatness I shall

now have the honour to form the acquaintance of; that military man, for instance, I should like to know by name; he is now discoursing with a gentleman, wearing a star on his breast; but he appears to me, at least, a creation of earth."

"Not altogether, for he is more connected with the sea. We call him the 'Viking;' besides he is Commodore Brenner—a very nice and distinguished character. Do you know to whom he is speaking?"

"No, but I should like to know. His name most assuredly must be Aristides, or Axel Oxenstjerna. I fancy I have seen him before."

"That is Baron Thorsten Lennartson; you will frequently see him here; he has been Felix Delphin's guardian, and is at this present time Flora's guardian."

"He is the same whom I thought I recognised again. You have not given him any name of character, Selma. But I will give him one."

"And what will that be?"

"I will christen him *the* lordly Baron in contradistinction from a number of other barons; for he looks to me as if he could be lord over himself. What think you?"

"Excellent! One would fancy you had known him a long time already."

"I saw him once a long time ago, and .... But there stands a person, which methinks I have also seen before, a regular, but marble-cold expression, somewhat sallow, with the features of a Voltaire."

"Another relation of yours. Your and my brother-in-law, *L'Envoyé*, St. Orme, who arrived here a few months ago from Paris."

"Virginia's husband. Ah, I recognise him again. But it is more than ten years since I saw him at Virginia's wedding. How beautiful *she* was! and to leave this world so soon—a year after her marriage."

"Yes, on the anniversary of her wedding-day," said Selma, with a voice betokening painful recollections. I therefore inquired further:

"And who is that young officer with whom you were dancing just now—an uncommonly handsome young man?"

"Again another relative, Felix Delphin, Flora's brother. Is not Flora very beautiful?"

"Yes, very beautiful."

"And how full of spirit and richly endowed. She is possessed of at least a dozen talents."

"That's almost too much," rejoined I, laughing. "And now, thanks, sweet Selma, for having entertained me so agreeably. I now perceive a gentleman approaching you with dancing intentions, and you must not drive the dancers any longer into despair on my account. Do not make yourself uneasy about me; I shall be highly delighted with looking at the dance, and noticing the new and interesting acquaintances I have made—Signora Luna, Alexander the Great, the Baron . . . ."

"Deign to glance also at the Philosopher," said Selma, archly, pointing at one of the servants in the family livery, who with a tray full of ices came up to us, and had a very serious face, with the features of a parrot."

"Take care, Jacob," continued she, turning herself jestingly, to the footman, "and mind that we don't waltz over you."

"Ah, heaven forbid, *Fräulein*," answered the philosopher, with suppressed voice, while a sudden radiance passed over his countenance, which, however, immediately again assumed its former gloom, when with his waiter he stepped before me.

The *Fräulein* soon floated along in the waltz as light as a bird.

Immediately after came my stepmother with the "rich bachelor" to me, and presented him with the words: "Your uncle, Court-Chamberlain X——"

My uncle seated himself beside me, and with much complacency commenced a conversation, which from a few compliments paid to me, passed from one criticism to another, tolerably witty in tone, but not savouring of a good digestion in a mental sense. Whether I was tired with my journey and the din of the ball, or affected by the conversation I had just had I know not; but certain it is that a dull veil came over my eyes and the splendid and animated scene. Notwithstanding, I was pleased to hear him speak in high terms of my stepmother.

"A most excellent lady," said my uncle: "I do not know any person in whom I could repose so much confidence, nobody on whom I could so implicitly rely. If at any time I wish to do a little good privately, so that it may not come to light, I always apply to her."

The Viking had left the company, and before quitting the room cast a half-farewell glance at me, which like a little point of light remained alive in my recollection. "Signora Luna's" splendid appearance vanished from our horizon, to make her entrance into the palace, where she at present had her post of duty.

Selma I only saw, when during the intervening pauses of the dance she came skipping to me with some pleasant word or question; in the same manner I saw her approach her mother and some other senior member of the company, ever cheerful and attentive, as if anxious to please every body.

After supper something occurred that made a lasting impression on me. In the saloon an active movement took place, and I beheld my sister lifted up in her arm-chair under the chandelier, whose brilliant light reflected its radiance around her: to this resounded an enthusiastic "*Vivat*" from the surrounding gentlemen.

The "Baron" was one of the party who assisted in elevating the young heroine of the festival. Beautiful and like a princess she sat there in the bright lustre of the lights, beaming with youthful charm and modest joy. A shout of admiration and homage passed through the whole of the assembly. Casting down my eyes from the almost dazzling sight, they fixed themselves upon another countenance, whose expression pierced my very heart: it was Flora's. Vexation, envy, and indignation appeared in the almost convulsive movement which passed over and distorted her beautiful features, but only for a moment; for when her eye met mine her expression changed, and immediately after she laughed and jested with St. Orme, who seldom moved from her side, and whose cold observing look had something about it that annoyed me.

On attempting to steal away from the scene of festivity, my stepmother made a strong demonstration to me, expressive of her intention to accompany me to my room, but suffered herself to be persuaded by my warm

resistance to remain behind undisturbed, and not to let Selma, who was just commencing another dance, know any thing about my withdrawal.

"On coming into my room I found it perfectly changed: the habiliments before hanging about had disappeared, and order, taste, and benevolent care, had stamped their impress on every arrangement in the spacious and beautiful apartment.

"The *Fräulein* herself has been up stairs, and superintended every arrangement," said Karin, who supplied the towering flame in the stove with fresh fuel.

"Thanks, my young sister!" said I in my heart.

I was fatigued and soon fell asleep; but I was disturbed by restless dreams. All the persons on whom, during the course of the evening, I had directed my attention, I fancied I now saw before me in a quadrille, casting at each other threatening looks, and awaiting only the moment of attack. I was in the midst of it, and on the point of holding a tournament with my stepmother, when suddenly a sylph-like being with shining wings, smiling lips, enchanting and floating with zephyr-light movements, came dancing along between us, and embraced us closely with invisible but gentle hands; and this sylphide, this second Taglioni, was Selma. At her appearance the constraint slackened, the feeling of acrimony ceased, the foes made "*chaine*," and I sank into a sweet refreshing sleep, which made me forget all the world, till the early morn awaked me.

"And while all in the house is yet still and appear to rest after the dance, I will take a somewhat nearer view of my past and present relative position.

"With my stepmother I have spent two very unequal periods—the first I call the period

OF MY IDOLATROUS WORSHIP.

At the age of eleven years I saw my stepmother for the first time, and felt myself captivated by her to adoration. This state of feeling continued till my fifteenth year, when I was separated from her. Bitter, however, were my days during this period of my idolatrous worship; for never perhaps has a golden idol been more deaf and dumb to the prayers of its worshippers than my stepmother was to my affection. Besides I was a child of a very warm temperament; and my general character was the opposite to the Beautiful and Charming, such as my stepmother so highly estimated and perpetually adverted to in quotations from the romances of Madame de Genlis. With the enchantresses therein mentioned I was compared and brought into disparaging contrast. In a word, my stepmother could not endure me, nor could I Madame de Genlis and her Graces, who occasioned me such bitter mortification. Ah, the wild sun-burnt damsel, who had grown up in the waste regions of Finland, who passed her life in the wood and on the heath, among hills, and amidst dreams as wild and marvellous as that nature with which she was familiar—she was in truth no creature for the saloon, or companion for French graces. Transplanted from the inartificial life in which her childhood had been passed, into the splendid residence where large mirrors reflected on all sides every movement, and seemed sneeringly to check every natural expression that did not bear the stamp of grace; she became *timid*, afraid both of herself and of others; but especially of the goddess of the palace. The governess and domestics called me the "Gipsy-girl," and the "Gipsy-boy."

My stepmother was never harsh in word or action,

but she annihilated me by her depreciating compassionate manner and cold disregard, so that I was soon unable to approach her without glowing cheeks, and a heart so full, so swelling with sighs of anguish (if I may so express myself), that my tongue sought for words in vain. As to any fault in my stepmother, that was what I never once suspected; but ah! I was at a loss to know how to act in order to be otherwise, and to gain her favour. I knew that at that time I more than once implored heaven on my knees to deny me a lover rather than the love of my mother; but I was obliged to learn to forego it. *She* felt herself relieved when I was separated from her, and I was removed into another sphere of life, which was also full of sorrows, but of another kind.

Five years later I returned home, and stayed there some time. This epoch, with regard to my former ideal, may be called

THE OPPOSITE.

For it was indeed the opposite to the former. By dint of hard struggles with myself and with life, I cultivated and formed myself into a character, rigid and truth-loving, that would have the kernel of reality in every shell, and despised every thing that had but the semblance of gilding as valueless. French, worldly prudence, education, and grace, were an abomination to me, and I now regarded them with the same contempt as my stepmother had formerly shown for my artless deportment. The glittering veil through which I had hitherto seen her was now removed, and I not only discovered *faults* in her, but saw them through a magnifying glass. I still continued to like her, but I loved her no more.

I had become an admirer of Thorild's spirit, and his love of truth and candour, but I imbibed, also, something of his frequently unpleasant way of expressing it. And now Madame de Genlis and Thorild were brought by my stepmother and me into contrast in any thing but an agreeable manner; for every quotation from Madame de Genlis, I had one in readiness from Thorild, perpetually in warlike opposition to the former, and my stepmother replied in the same spirit. Notwithstanding, the French Marchioness was gradually obliged to yield to the Swedish philosopher, *i. e.* she quitted the field on which such a rough brandisher cut about him. It is a strange half melancholy recollection that my stepmother, about that period, really became timid in my presence, and avoided me, evidently daunted by my relentless severity. Yet she made several attempts to recover her dominion over me, and to resume the sceptre, but in vain—it lay broken in her hand, and, sensible of that, she retreated in silence and dejection. When I remember the feelings which sometimes possessed me as I observed this change in our mutual position, I cannot suppress a secret shudder, and would remind all parents who are too severe, of the admonitory words of the apostle: "Parents, provoke not your children to wrath!"

"The fault at that time was, for the most part, on my side; but I was embittered by the recollection of what I had suffered; and, moreover, in spite of Thorild, I had but obscure views of life, and was very unhappy. This might be an excuse for me. My stepmother, a cheerful, agreeable, and much courted woman of the world, was accustomed only to the sunny side of life,

and would see no other: I was more used to look to the dark side, and thus we became more and more alienated.

Yet there was still one bond of union between us at that time, in little Selma;—a weakly, but charming child, who—I knew not by what—inconceivable sympathy seemed attached to me, while I, according to my Thorild's sentiments, did not at all agree in the idolatry paid to her in the family. But still I could not refrain from inclining towards her. She was her father's darling and principal care. He was a friend and pupil of the great Ehrensvärd, a man possessed of rigid nerves and a pure sense of beauty, and he wished to make his daughter as perfect and as beautiful as the ideal in his own mind; not one of eleven thousand heroines of modern drama and romance, but the antique *Antigone*—beautiful as woman, because noble as man—this was the prototype to which from her infancy he directed his daughter's eyes and heart. Thus he created in her a modern Antigone, and enjoyed through her a life which, owing to his very feeble health, would otherwise have been without enjoyment.

My stepmother was at that period particularly captivated with her daughter Virginia, whose beauty and character might well indeed flatter the pride of a mother. Admiration for her and tenderness for Selma sometimes brought us together.

We were again separated, and meeting again as we now do after a separation of ten years, I am not without anxiety on account of this fresh attempt to live together. Will it bring about a closer union or a greater separation? One of the two is certain; for my stepmother will have no more remained stationary than myself during this *Decenium*. We have both passed through

seasons of trial and grief. My stepmother has lost her husband and her eldest and beloved daughter, and I, I have . . . . But—no matter; that is now passed over, and I am free. That I am now more improved than I was at the period of our last meeting, I venture to hope: philosophy, which then rendered me so proud and contentious, had afterwards made me pacifically disposed; *Thought* had quietly laid its hand on my brow, my views of life have become clearer, and my heart more peaceful. Books are my most favourite society, and reflection a friend that accompanies me through life, and teaches me to derive honey from all situations —even from the most bitter. Thorild still continues to me a star of the first magnitude, but I no longer follow him blindfolded, and have eyes also for the constellation of Madame de Genlis. But in one thing I will ever follow him faithfully—in his precept to study continually, and in all things search after the good.

On the strand, near which I was born, on the banks of the Kautua wreathed with alder-trees, I frequently walked out, when a child, to seek for pearls when the heat of the summer sun diminished the water. Methinks I still feel the clear, cool waves splash about my feet; I fancy as if I saw the pearl-shells before me which accident had here and there thrown up on the little green island; whole heaps of these shells I carried up to the shore, and if I found pearls in them—oh, what joy! Frequently they were imperfect, only halves, or damaged, but sometimes I found very pretty ones. At present I will walk out again to seek pearls, but in the stream of life.

November 2d.

Yesterday morning I was interruped by a messenger calling me to breakfast; it was my young sister, whose silver-toned voice inquired at my door: "May one be allowed to come in?"—"Yes, to be sure, it is allowed! Besides, Sylphides are not so easily shut out." And gladly one opens door and heart when a being like Selma desires admittance, and with benevolent disposition and joy beaming from brilliant eyes, comes floating in amid marks of friendship and affection. She was so charming, my young sister, in her bloom of youth and life, in her simple, but particularly tasteful dress, and above all with her fascinating manner, that I thought I saw in her a living incarnation of Franzen's Muse, whose name she bears. "Heaven preserve you, you charming creature!" thought I to myself, as I contemplated her, and an almost painful foreboding drew tears into my eyes.

Not without heart-beating I followed her down stairs, while preparing myself for the sight of my stepmother, and my home by daylight.

But the depression of my mind vanished when I entered the inner apartment, and my stepmother met me with gestures and words expressive of the most cordial affability. As for the rest, every thing in the room wore an aspect of comfort—the air, furniture, down to the inviting coffee-table, which glittered with silver and real porcelain.

"That's very well!" thought I.

But nothing afforded me greater pleasure than the light of a collection of excellent oil-paintings which adorned the walls of two apartments, Just as I was about expressing my opinion of them, Flora entered

I scarcely recognised again the ball-queen of the preceding evening day. Her fair skin appeared sallow in the day-light, her eyes were languid, her dress careless, and her beautiful countenance ruffled by ill-humour. Selma, on the contrary, gains by daylight; her complexion is pure and fair, and her eyes have the most beautiful lustre, and the brightest look I ever beheld in human eyes.

We sat down to breakfast; we talked of yesterday's ball. My stepmother delivered in consequence of this a little royal speech, with which I was very well acquainted from olden times, but which always annoyed me a little. I was silent, but a secret opposition stirred within my heart, which methinks my stepmother heard. I do not know, at least, why, if that were not the case, she should so frequently direct her challenging looks at me. Selma's cheerful remarks interrupted, however, the speech, and set us all a laughing. Flora became good-humoured, witty, and satirical. I put in my word also, and our ladyship and mother appeared to be highly amused. We reviewed many acquaintances of yesterday's ball, and criticised their different toilets. In the mean time Selma leered archly at my collar, and would have it that it was a little *rococo*. My stepmother inspected my dress, and likewise maintained that it was a little *rococo;* I then gave them to understand that my entire person was a little *rococo;* but this was denied with as much decison as courtesy. My stepmother asserted I was just in finest—" modern age "—for a pretty woman, "*la femme de trente ans, la femme de Balzac,*" and added many more, but half-expressed, yet intelligible remarks respecting my excellent state of preservation, my complexion, my eyes, and my hands,

which I—poor daughter of Eve—listened to with great satisfaction. Selma was determined by all means to take an interesting part in my toilet, that this also might become modern. I promised to submit myself to her tyranny.

After breakfast my stepmother and I continued the conversation *tête-à-tête*, and I observed at the same time that her countenance had grown considerably older, and that there were some feelings of disquietude and constraint in her looks that I had not before discovered. Her features had, however, not lost their noble beauty. While we were talking together, Selma fresh watered her flowers, singing at the same time, half-audibly, in the most agreeable manner. My stepmother's eyes frequently turned to her, as to their light. Flora was of a very fickle humour. Now she would open a book, which immediately after she threw aside again; next she would sit down to the piano, play something with great facility, and leave off again in the middle of the piece; then she would arrange her locks and inspect herself in the glass; at length she sat down at the window and made her observations on the passers-by. I inwardly styled her *Fräulein* Caprice.

Such was the state of things in our room, when at a pause in the conversation we heard a low-toned hissing whistling, and soft steps advancing towards the room wherein we were.

My stepmother cast an uneasy look towards the door, Selma's song grew mute, Flora turned her eyes hastily from the window, and—towards St. Orme, who was just entering the room. He and I were now formally introduced to each other. The repulsive feeling

with which his demeanour inspired me was not lessened by the way he pressed my hand. The way and manner with which people seize each other's hands makes a singular impression upon me, and I cannot refrain from drawing conclusions from them, but more from instinct than reason; for my reason refuses to be guided by exterior circumstances, which may be purely accidental. But I cannot help it; a full, warm shake of the hand engages my heart, while a short, luke-warm, stiff one repels me. There are persons who so tightly squeeze the hand, as to make it smart a good while after; there are others also who lay hold of it with two fingers;—from such, Heaven keep us . . . .

But to return to the *Envoyé*, whose manner of shaking hands, short and sharp, though given with a soft hand, did not please me. He went from me to Flora, whose hand he kissed, and would then have laid his arm familiarly round Selma's waist, but she avoided him, and called me to come to her and form acquaintance with some bulbous flowers which she introduced to me under the name of "King Hezekiah," "Lord Wellington," "*Grand Vainqueur*," "*L'ami du Cœur*," "Diana," "Galatea," and many other flower genii concealed in the bulbs which were to develope themselves in the genial rays of the winter-sun. We were interrupted on this occasion by Flora's brother, Felix Delphin, who presented Selma with a half-blown monthly rose. She took it blushing. "Aha, my dear young sister! But I don't know whether I should like to give you to the young Delphin. His very handsome and good natured countenance has a sort of uncomfortable look, which bespeaks a dissipated life."

The *Envoyé* said something to my stepmother in

an under toned voice, at which she changed colour, rose with a disquiet look, and quitted the room with him.

I left the cheerful young trio occupied with deciding respecting the proposed pleasures of the day and the week, and went up to my room. This presented a splendid prospect, and afforded me an occasion of contemplating in an open and widely-extended sky, the sport of light and shade, of clouds and of azure tints, which imparts so much life and variety to the vault over our heads.

We reside in the Blasieholm, in the very precinct of the place, studded with trees, where for centuries the Delargardie Palace reared its towering head, and which was burnt down in *one* night. From my window I see and hear the rushing of the wide stream, which divides the city from the Norrmalm. I have a view of the harbour, the *ponton*, the royal palace, with the Lion-hill, the Norr-bridge, the Holy-Ghost-holm, the blue waves of the Mälar, and the southern mountains. Amid the masses of houses on the different Holms, the spiral pinnacles of the church towers boldly raise their lofty heads. To the left I have St. Catherine's church, and to the right St. James's; straight before me the royal Palace, with its rich avenues; and, indeed, I should not be able to finish were I to describe all that I can see from my window: and in my room I have my pencils, my books, and—myself.

November 5th.

I have looked about me in the family, at least as far as regards the outward character of people; for to become "properly acquainted with the spirits,' and to

press through phenomena to the real essence requires a longer acquaintance. My secret inquiry to each is, 'What do you wish—what do you seek for in life?' According to this rule I botanize in the minds of men, and classify them.

"You must see Flora's drawings! You must hear Flora sing! You must hear and see Flora's theatrical performance! Flora must show you her poetical and prose sketches! they are so ingenious, humorous, and entertaining!" Such are the expressions I have frequently heard Selma make during the last few days; and never will she let me have any peace till I have seen and admired all these; and I have done so with unsparing comments on the display of excellent taste; for Flora's talents for art are in many respects extraordinary. But greater still, I fear, is—her self-love; or of what else testify expressions such as,—"I am not like the ordinary class." "Were I like others, then."—"But I really am very peculiar and singular." "I cannot condescend to the level of these every-day figures," and so forth.

Thus with Flora the chief person seems to be an *I*, as with Selma a *Thou*. But I will not judge Flora rashly.

Selma afforded me yesterday a very agreeable forenoon, in familiarising me with many masterpieces in her beautiful collection of paintings. They were presents from her father, who had himself collected them during his stay in Italy. In the minute knowledge of the spirit of the various schools, and in the pure sense of beauty therein expressed, one recognises the pupil of Ehrensvärd. On this occasion the conversation turned also on Selma's own stay in Rome. After Virginia's

death she accompanied her parents thither, who sought in those travels to divert their grief, and an opportunity of improving the education of their only surviving daughter. Here Selma was awakened to a feeling of the beauty, but also to the pains of life, for here she lost her adored father. Lennartson was at that time in Rome, had shared with her the days of joy, and had been her solace and her stay during the season of affliction. With filial and paternal care he interested himself in behalf of the two ladies; and, as a faithful escort, re-conducted them to their father-land. Selma spoke with deep-felt emotion of all that he had done for them.

In the evening came St. Orme and the young Delphin. St. Orme presented Flora with a handsome armlet; at which she expressed great delight, and allowed St. Orme himself to fasten it on. He then raised the arm, kissed it,—and Flora permitted it! Selma cast an uneasy glance at her, and blushed.

That evening we were divided into three parties. Selma and Felix were throwing *volant*, and performing a comedy in the adjoining room: their mirthful play and silver-toned laughter sounded pleasantly. Flora made witty sallies; St. Orme enlivened all by his satire, while he evidently ruled the company and led the entertainment. This delighted me, though I frequently did not understand his secret allusions and the vexation they occasionally excited in Flora. My stepmother furnished her part towards the general amusement, and instructed me respecting the various positions and relative circumstances of the state. I allowed myself to be edified, lent my two ears to all three parties, and made now and then a wise observation on the views of my stepmother, while with sybiline gravity

I laid out my cards to read in the book of fate. For I should not be a worthy daughter of the father-land of magic arts (Finland), if I were not familiar with the art of playing cards and soothsaying. Though I have never been a pupil quite worthy of the celebrated fortune-teller Liboria, who taught me her art, and I have never laid my cards with her devotion and her spirit, but, to be short, it amuses me to see the sport of fate in the cards; I have frequently amused myself and others by it, and so also I did now.

When the evening was past, the company had retired, and Flora and I were on our way to our bedrooms through the little corridor which separated them, Flora suddenly stood still, and, hastily turning to me, said:

"I dare say you think that I am in love with St. Orme?"

"Hum," rejoined I; "I certainly thought it appeared like it."

(Flora had in reality played the coquette before St. Orme that evening.)

"And do you not know, you wise Sybil, that appearances are frequently deceitful? And this is the case here. One must often appear what one is not, in order to gain what one wishes. Subtilty and cunning are given to women to govern those who wish to rule over them. They are their lawful weapons."

"So people frequently say, but I have not found it so. I have found that the power of truth and of earnestness, if applied with prudence and love, is the only true power with men, as well as with women.'

"Truth and earnestness!" exclaimed Flora, sneeringly. "Show me where they are to be found! We

all dissemble towards one another every day of our lives, however holy we may feign to be. How, for instance, is it with us two? Have we not several days associated together, and have played the part of nice cousins towards each other, while I really believe that in the bottom of our hearts we think very little of each other. Or what think you?"

"I am of the same persuasion with you," replied I, strengthened by this candour."

"Very well," continued Flora, "would it then be well if we attacked our parties openly, and hated one another?

"Why not?" said I, as before. "That may perhaps become quite a new way to love."

"I love novelty!" rejoined Flora, "and also laughing. Therefore from this day forth we are open enemies, and will mutually cherish our like hatred! What say you Fräulein Philosophy?"

"Agreed, Fräulein Caprice."

We shook each other's hands laughing, and parted better friends than ever we had been.

Notwithstanding Flora's expression, I formed according to my humble opinion two matches that evening, and united Flora with St. Orme, and Selma with Felix. It now only remains for me to make some provision for my stepmother and myself. Very well; we will mutually comfort each other in old age, and govern the state together. Thorild and Madame de Genlis will help us.

November 6th.

My humble opinion has been annihilated, and by whom? The Baron.

At breakfast Flora and I explained in a humorous manner our agreement of the previous evening. My stepmother took up the matter in the playful spirit with which it was delivered, and laughed at our "hate-contract." Selma, on the other hand, did not take it in that light, but looked at us with a serious, almost sorrowful countenance. I endeavoured to pacify her, while showing her in *our hate* a new way to friendship. She became cheerful again, and sang—

"A little squabble, by the bye,
Is not much to signify," &c.

She left us in order to attend to the domestic affairs of the day. Shortly afterwards came Baron Lennartson. After a brief general conversation he took Flora aside, and conversed with her a long time in an under toned voice. He appeared to solicit something very earnestly, and seized her hand at the same time more than once; and Flora did not appear to have any objection to it. I looked at my stepmother, and she at me.

"That seems to be a very friendly way of going on, indeed, between guardian and ward," said I.

"Yes," rejoined my stepmother, "but they are more to each other, indeed, than guardian and ward."

"What? Are they betrothed?"

"Yes, but it is not yet publicly declared, nor is it yet generally talked about."

"Flora," continued I, "will, I suppose, be of age in spring, and can then dispose of a considerable fortune?"

"Only of the interest of it. Of the capital, according to the will of her uncle, to whom Flora and her brother owe their whole fortune, none can dispose except her future husband only. He was a peevish

old man, and had no confidence in female management of business affairs. He also prescribed that Flora should not be allowed to marry before her twenty-fifth year, which she will attain in spring, on the peril of forfeiting a considerable portion of her inheritance."

Selma entered; Lennartson finished his discourse with Flora, and went away after he had kissed her hand, and softly, but emphatically, whispered to her the words: "Remember!"

"Well, that was a very serious conversation, indeed," said my stepmother, somewhat inquisitively to Flora. The latter, after a survey in the glass, came up to her with sparkling eyes.

"Yes," said Flora, "he is so kind—so excellent! One cannot help doing all that he wishes."

I sighed audibly.

"What's the matter? Why does Sophia sigh so?" inquired Flora.

"Because I presume that you will soon be very happy through Lennartson, and accept his hand; and I am obliged, you know, to cherish my hatred."

"Ah!" retorted Flora, laughing, "do not grieve about that yet. The question at issue is at present less about me than Felix," added she, half sadly. "My respected guardian wishes that I should become a pattern, an example, a companion to him; but I cannot exactly boast of any influence on my brother; and I know very well who could operate on him better than I, and change my dear Felix into a real Phœnix, if *she* would,—what think you, Selma?"

Selma turned away, and in a low tone replied: "We will not talk on that subject!"

"Well, then we'll talk of my dress for the masque-

rade!" exclaimed Flora, with playful alacrity. "Come and help me in the selection of colours; you have such good taste."

She took Selma's arm, and the two cousins skipped, out of the room singing.

On my afterwards going, with a message to Selma, into Flora's room, I found the two engaged in a warm conversation, surrounded with silver and gold gauze.

"But, Flora, that's too dear," said Selma.

"But it will look heavenly beautiful," replied Flora.

"It may be made pretty also in other ways—and the difference in the cost is indeed considerable. Why you have just promised Lennartson to be an example to Felix."

"Yes, yes, generally speaking, but not in all trifles. In such matters I will follow my own mind. Dear Selma, do not now assume your wise look, it does not become you; be a little more cheerful. We will now advert to the turban.—Ah, aunt! That is delightful! Aunt shall tell me . . . ."

And Flora turned to my stepmother who just entered, and without any consideration coincided with Flora in her plans respecting the costly attire which was to transform her into a Circassian lady.

Then, embracing Selma, she said to me: "How do you like this child here, Sophy, who wishes to remain at home with her old mother rather than drive to the masquerade at W * * * ?"

"I like that," rejoined I.

"How was it possible for *Fräulein* Philosophy to judge otherwise of such wise conduct?" observed Flora, somewhat piqued.

"But if I," continued my stepmother, winking at

me with satisfaction, "if I were to take the expense of the entire equipment on myself . . . ."

"Mamma will not do that," exclaimed Selma, "if she loves me. It is really a fact; I have no desire to go to this ball, and still less to ruin myself for it. Besides, my mother would only go there on my account, and—considering one thing with another—I am sure I shall spend this evening more agreeably at home."

"Now you wish to win Lennartson's heart," said Flora, with acrimony.

"Flora!" exclaimed Selma, with a look of astonishment and offended innocence, while her eyes filled with tears.

"Pardon!" prayed Flora, kissing her glowing cheeks. "My intention was not such as I expressed it. But what I really mean is, that you are more deserving of him than I."

Materials and dresses now engrossed all our attention.

November 9th.

Selma had transformed my wardrobe and compelled me to become modern. And I have suffered myself to be compelled, seeing that it afforded so much pleasure to her and my stepmother. And my stepmother! She has quite embarrassed me by her handsome presents. But as the giving of them was so evidently gratifying to her, I could not do otherwise than gratefully accept them.

To-day, in child-like joy at my dinner-toilet, Selma exclaimed;

"Ah, I only wish *Balzac* might see you; he would soon make you the subject of a romance, and represent you inspired at least with three passions till death."

"That would be," rejoined I, "a strong proof in favour of the power of his poetic fancy, for in reality I have no longer any power to inspire a passion."

"Hem—hem—hem!" interrupted my stepmother, with a courteous diplomatic air.

"And still less do I wish it," continued I—

> "Now are the times of folly past,
> And wisdom's day is come at last."

"A wisdom," said Flora, "which probably savours a little of the fox's *vis-à-vis* with the grapes. I, for my part, never can believe, that a woman does not wish to please, to win hearts, and have incense and sacrifice offered at her shrine as long as she lives; let her name be Cleopatra, or Ninon, or *Santa Philosophia.*"

"*Santa Philosophia* might one day teach you another lesson," replied I, seriously; and my stepmother, who sometimes appears to be a little afraid that the 'hated contract' between me and Flora might become one in earnest, hastened to give a turn to the conversation by dinner, on which occasion Selma's playful jests set us all into a good humour. Flora and I made various remarks about our 'hate contract,' and took up many clauses and paragraphs in the same. My stepmother interlarded them with jokes and laughter. As matters now stand, I think that we are here together an awakened little people, and know how to cheer each other.

November 12th.

Our every-day life begins more and more to assume form. There is a great prevalence of diversion in it, and I am glad to be able to retire from it into my solitary

chamber. The young ladies trifle away their time, but in a very different manner: Flora is perpetually in a changeable, and very frequently in a bad humour; the slightest circumstance stirs up a storm. Selma, on the contrary, has a golden temper, her entire being is harmony; and this is observable in her light, graceful gait, and perceptible in her cheerful singing, which announces her arrival or presence here and there in the house, while superintending the domestic affairs; now she is a sort of dancing attendant on her mother, then she shares all Flora's cares, next makes provisionary arrangements for the daily visitors of the family: the domestics cheerfully obey her commands, for she ever speaks kindly to them, and her directions bespeak goodness and discretion; even a philosopher would grow cheerful at the sight of her. In a word, she is the life and harmony of the family. The only trait in her that somewhat troubles me, is the frequent bursts of satirical humour in which she occasionally indulges,—shall I call it *spitefulness?* The term is a severe, but, I believe, a true one. But with lively spirits, such as Selma's and with Flora's daily intercourse, it is no easy matter herein also to observe proper time and harmony. And the disposition of my stepmother for every excitement and stimulant of life, and her affection for the young maidens does not allow her to observe how frequently their seasoning is of Cayenne, instead of innoxious salt.

Between my stepmother and myself prevails much "courtesy" but no confidence. I fancy that we are mutually a little afraid of each other. We have generally a *tête-à-tête* an hour every day, when we discuss the affairs of the state, and make our "*reflexions*

chretiennes et morales" on the course of time and events. On these occasions, and with all possible courtesy between us, I observe that we are both secretly intent on enlightening, converting, and surprising each other by our profound remarks and views. And then indeed, it happens, that while endeavouring to put together the political machine, our mutual relation almost breaks asunder. For although we both aim at the most correct "*juste millieu*" of heavenly justice, my stepmother, nevertheless, strongly leans to the aristocratic side of society, I to the democratic. My stepmother, who in her former position as consort to the Governor-General, exercised not an unimportant influence on the affairs of the province, fancies she possesses all the knowledge, experience, and ability of a regent. I, on the other hand, fancy that, from my philosophical point of view, I see and comprehend every thing a little better; and all this occasionally excites a little difference between us, which does not, however, grow violent; for when my stepmother raises her voice with an exclamation: "Believe me, my friend," then I am silent, and content myself with an incredulous look. And however I may oppose, I always let my stepmother have the last word or the last tone, namely, the diplomatic "Hem, hem, hem!"

In the evening the family is frequently at home (they say there is to be a change at New Year,) and Felix, Delphin, St. Orme, and Lennartson, often join the family circle. I see clearly that the Baron inquisitively directs his eyes to Flora and St. Orme. Frequently it appears to me as if his eye turned from the brilliant, effect-seeking Flora to Selma, and rests on her with a sort of tender attention; and she—why

are her eyes in his presence ever shaded by her long, dark lashes? Why do we not then hear any thing of those lively sallies, those shrewd and sarcastic remarks that are generally peculiar to her? But Flora no doubt could not brook them. I have remarked a piercing, jealous glance, which ever and anon flashed from Flora's eyes upon her. But I also have my share of this sort of look, when Lennartson devotes a considerable part of his attention to me, which, I am glad to say, is a case of no unfrequent occurrence.

The Free Lord, or Baron——no! no description of him. Bulwer, who has cast many a profound look into the nobler mind of woman, justly observes: "What a matter of indifference it is to such an one, the beauty or ill-favoured appearance of a man." It is the expression of character in manners, gestures, and words, which either attracts or repels. Not a word, then, of the Baron's stature, figure, hair, teeth, &c. Nor should I be able to say much on the subj ect; but this I know that the expression of his person is such as one never can or wishes to forget. It produces a sort of exhilarating, elevating effect; and the glance of his eye, why, of that I must say one word.

There are eyes, in which we fancy, as it were, a radiated world; such must be *Schelling's*, and therefore I should for once like to be able to look into them—there is also a glance, which, by way of pre-eminence, I will designate the *Statesman's*. Some one has said: "Philosophers see more light than forms;" and to this I say: "The majority of other people see more forms than light;" but the true statesman sees at once all the forms of life and beholds them in their true light too. His vision is clear, and at the same time defined

Such is Lennartson's eye, and one soon sees that it is capable of expressing both sunshine and lightning.

I am glad to have seen and made acquaintance with this man.

St. Orme forms a decided antithesis to him, although he also is a man of an extraordinary exterior, and possessed of an abundant store of knowledge, and spirit and experience of the world. But there is a something wanting in his general character — something which ennobles the whole. He has nothing whatever that can inspire confidence or esteem. Besides, he has a sort of restless activity in his arms and fingers, which reminds one of a spinning wheel. and renders him disagreeable—at least to me.

What am I to make of Flora's conduct towards these two men? It appears certain to me that she loves Lennartson; but why then coquette with St. Orme? Why accept presents from him!

A visitor who also begins frequently to make his appearance here, is "the rich bachelor," my uncle. He is tolerably agreeable and entertaining; and if I were not afraid of appearing conceited, I should be inclined to think his visits were chiefly intended—for me. He probably regards me as a "*passable souper.*" My stepmother begins now and then to give me a significant hint about it, which I feign not to comprehend.

Among the guests frequently seen here are also the sisters Von P * *, a married and an unmarried lady, generally called "The ladies of the Counsellor of Commerce," who carry on considerable business with all the commodities of "they say," "they think," "they know," in the town. We play some roguish jokes upon them, but we are no scrupulous despisers of the gossip

we scorn. For the two sisters know a whole host of things, and the *Fräulein* is a witty personage, whose large, piercing eyes look very keen and correct. She has upwards of ninety cousins, almost all of the female sex she told me yesterday.

November 14th.

Yesterday evening I made acquaintance with one of "our neighbours," as Selma calls the circle of the more intimate acquaintances of the family, in contradistinction to "our distants." On coming down, as I usually do at eight o'clock, into my stepmother's room, Signora *Luna* was sitting at one end of the sofa, evidently on the *wane*, as Selma indeed whispered to me on introducing me to her. The fair Countess saluted me with tolerable indifference, though I like the shake of her warm, silk-soft hand.

The rest of the company consisted of the Baron Alexander; a young lieutenant, Ake Sparrsköld; a sister of Flora's, Baroness Bella P * *, a widow, and ten years older than Flora, whom we title the "beauty," whose features are first, and expression second-rate; a nice old dame Rittersvärd, with her daughter Hellfrid, together with St. Orme and Lennartson.

The general topic of conversation was a French novel highly popular in the present day, which St. Orme had lent Flora. St. Orme commended the spirited delineation of the characters, and the boldness and splendour of the colouring. Young Sparrsköld considered the latter meretricious, and thought the former extravagant. "Every human passion rises at once to phrensy, and loses both compass and aim; even virtue cannot appear exalted without being put on stilts and

rendered unnatural. And the ultimate object of the action? Ever merely partial, circumscribed motives ever merely selfishness — private, isolated happiness! Never a striving, an exertion that embraces the greater interests of mankind!" All these deficiencies he thought existed in the entire compass of modern French literature.

Lennartson coincided warmly.

"And this tendency of literature," said he, "is not only false in itself; it is untrue according to the standard of the times, and contrary to the noblest, and—we may well say—the best spirit, that spirit which places individual exertions and private welfare in the most intimate connection with the weal of the community at large. In reference to this *universal, comprehensive* spirit, young France in the present age might go to school with old Rousseau. With all their faults, his romances are still models for this kind of portraiture of society. We see how the various characters represent the chief tendencies in social life; and how, if they combine in love, this spirit does not issue in selfishness but expands to embrace the most sacred institutions of society,—the spirit of humanity and of nature in its divine essence; and the home of the individual is—as, indeed, it ought to be—the point from which felicity and blessing flow for the common home—the world."

St. Orme shrugged his shoulders.

"Poor Rousseau! with all his ideal romances he was after all but a visionary," said he, and went to join Baron Alexander in the large room adjoining.

"I feel that you are right," said I to Lennartson; "but yet I should so very much like to see a genuine result, a step forwards on the path of advancement of

the education and best interests of mankind; and this French literature—it cannot be denied—knows how to represent characters and situations in a manifoldness and depth as they have never been seen before. It penetrates into all the recesses of our existence, and there lays hold of the moments of all suffering, darkness, and dissonances. True, it is only a 'descent into hell,' but must not an 'ascent to heaven' be at hand—a transformation by which the deepest night of life becomes brightened into its most glorious morning? Is it possible, indeed, that the highest aim of this literature should consist in a retrogression to Rousseau?"

"Yes," replied Lennartson, smiling at my warmth; "yes, but only, as I just observed, as far as the universal, comprehensive spirit is concerned. I see, as you do, in this literature a decidedly new classical development; and it is not the first time that the nation, producing the same, has paved new ways to the world. But it is as yet fragmentary—it contains but the *studies* for a good composition; and there is no fear that some day or other a master will step forth, who will combine these chaotic elements into a new world. But perhaps the model must first arise in real life."

"How so?" inquired I, with fixed attention.

"Allow me," continued Lennartson, "to direct your attention to a leading feature in the polite literature of our time—to the tendency of representing woman as the point in life from which animating and quickening powers proceed. And I confess that I am one of those who hold this view. In this epoch of the world I raise high expectations from—WOMAN."

That the female part of his auditory, before whom the Baron made these remarks, looked up to him with

profound respect and gratitude, was only natural. A humble joy sparkled in Selma's beautiful eyes, while in Flora's fiery look there shone forth a something that I should call *grand.*

My stepmother now proposed that we should go into the saloon and engage in musical performances.

Flora called Lennartson to the pianoforte, and played and sang so as to enchant him, while now and then she turned round to speak to him in an under tone.

I kept to Hellfrid Rittersvärd and Lieutenant Sparrsköld, who with his honest countenance and frank way of expressing and deporting himself pleased me particularly. We were joined by "the Beauty," who seemed to have resolved to make an undying impression on Ake Sparrsköld; but the latter, like me, appeared then to be more interested in Fräulein Rittersvärd.

When I see a young maiden so plain as Hellfrid Rittersvärd, and at the same time with a mind so calm, and demeanour so gay and cheerful, I generally form a high opinion of her. I feel that a consciousness of moral dignity raises her above all the foibles of life; she possesses full confidence in the spirit of nobility within her own breast and in her fellow-men, and thereby also calls forth their respect and that vigorous feeling which breaks down every merely external barrier to the maintenance of inward peace. I found Hellfrid's conversation quite a treat, and such I believe was it to Sparrsköld, though "the Beauty" doubtless had her peculiar power of attraction for him.

My stepmother played at *piquette* with her good friend Madame Rittersvärd. The amiable old lady was suffering from a nervous affection in the head, and had come to Stockholm for the purpose of consulting the physicians here. Her daughter, by dint of labour in trans-

lating works from foreign languages, provided her with the means for it, and at the same time assisted her in providing for two younger brothers. Well does she deserve to be called "Honourable Miss," a name which Flora gave her partly in derision.

Selma was now here, now there, and took a friendly part in every thing that was going forward.

St. Orme played at cards with Baron Alexander and Felix Delphin, but while thus engaged he did not fail frequently to dart a sharp look at Flora and Lennartson, who, still sitting at the piano, had exchanged music for a low-toned but interesting conversation, which St. Orme, however, suddenly interrupted, by exclaiming:

"Flora, my dearest Flora! Pray let me share but one-fourth of your thoughts. I have played quite unfortunately this evening; come and aid me with your good counsel. Tell me what colour shall I play, black or red?"

"Black!"

"Black!" repeated St. Orme. "Why do you not rather advise red? Red, you know, is your favourite colour, purple—is it not? Or am I wrong?"

"I do not remember," said Flora, with apparent indifference, while she rose, and a dark purple flush mounted to her cheeks.

"But I do," continued St. Orme. "Purple is your colour, and therefore . . . . Gentlemen! Six points in *coeur! This* game I hope to win!" added he, nodding to Flora, who walked out hastily. Soon after she returned, but her cheerful humour was gone, and her gaiety for the rest of the evening only forced.

When St. Orme was going away, I heard him say to Flora, in a half sneering tone:

"Thanks for your advice, dear cousin! I won my game by it, and with your colour on my heart I hope to win in future."

"Do not calculate so securely upon it," replied Flora, peevishly.

"Defy me not," said St. Orme, in a low tone, partly in warning earnestness. And he seized her resisting hand, kissed it, and bowed to her with a smile. What, I wonder, does all this denote?

November 16th.

To-day I took a long and solitary walk, occupied with my own thoughts; on coming home I found visitors, among whom was the Court Chamberlain. I saw certain telegraphic signals between my stepmother and him. Flora is solely occupied with her costume and the thought of the ball to be given at the house of the State's Minister * * * What an ado for one evening!

A number of projects for balls and other entertainments. I, for my part, say "no" to all. My general apology is, "I am too old to dance."

"Hem—hem—hem!" was the courteous chanting opposition of my stepmother. I do, however, intend to be present on the occasion of the new year's assembly, when I shall be able to get a near view of the royal family.

Novemher 17th.

Flowers have so-called *nectaries*—honey-cups—in which the most precious juices of the plants are preserved. But in order to get at them—if we have not the genius of a drone or a bee, but only unskilful human fingers—we are sometimes obliged to *damage* the flowers. Human minds also have their nectaries, which we often treat as the flowers.

The occasion of this remark is as follows:

I found Selma, Flora, and my stepmother occupied with a review of the acquaintances and friends of the family. The scrutiny was a sharp one, and most of them were treated without mercy or forbearance. Flora was the most severe, but Selma followed her beaten track, and my stepmother laughed heartily at the mimicry and caricaturings of the young damsels. I, too, began to join in the mirth, for the satire was striking. But when they came to level their darts in the same unsparing manner at two excellent and estimable persons, who, moreover, were cordially attached to them, I felt hurt and grieved at the poison which these young human flowers thus exhaled.

I embraced the seasonable occasion, when my stepmother had just left the room, to tell them—in the spirit of affection, however—what I felt.

Both blushed, and Flora said: "I could very easily conclude, from your silence, that you intended to give us a lecture on the subject; but, my dearest philosopher, if you *will* preach, do so in the Finnish church and not in the saloons of Stockholm: in the latter you will never make a convert. There, as in all high circles of the great world, the saying is: "*tous les genres sont bons, hors le genre ennuyeux.*" Besides, while we are

young, we ought to laugh and enjoy ourselves. There is time enough to be serious and still before the years of discretion come; and when we maidens once get old we shall perhaps be as moral and virtuous as you."

I was silent; for is it in fact worth while to answer such things? and when my stepmother came in again I walked out quietly and went up to my room. I was inwardly grieved.

Selma is not what I believed her to be!" thought I, as I gazed on the twinkling stars which began to step forth in the evening twilight from out the deep azure sky. I thought of those I had seen beam forth in her eyes, and sorrowed in my heart on account of their observation.

But I had not been long alone when I heard tiptoe steps ascending the stairs. My door was opened and —Selma threw herself in my arms and said:

"Are you very angry with me?"

"Now no longer so, my good Selma!" said I, touched by her cordiality.

"But you have been angry with me, you have been displeased with me, and certainly more than once. Is it not so?"

I assented; I told her of my fears that Flora was misleading her to an ignoble spirit of censoriousness and acrimony, and of the pain I felt at seeing her soul thus darkly spotted. I spoke warmly of the condemnable railleries in little matters, which render us blind to what is great, and of that tendency of mind which makes us lower others in order thereby to raise ourselves; I then became more severe than I intended, and condemned this bias of mind as self-sufficiency and *Pharisaism*.

Selma listened to me quietly and seemed to grow more and more serious and pale.

"You are right!" said she at length, "you are certainly very right. Ah! I have hitherto reflected so little on myself—do devote a little of your vigilant care to me—all have been so kind to me and have spoiled me. But do you tell me of my faults, Sophy! They shall serve me as warnings for the future—I will amend!"

"But you must not weep, Selma!"

"And what matters it if I do weep? Tears must indeed wash out the unsightly spots from my soul. Be not uneasy about me, and spare me not, Sophia. Ever tell me the truth, as long as you think me worthy to hear it!"

I embraced the good girl heartily and told her how happy she made me.

We then calmly spoke of the difficulty of moderation in the field of social criticism. I admitted how difficult it was to practise it, and that I, although rigidly watchful over myself, have still frequently to reproach myself with sins committed by that evil little member —the tongue.

"An affectionate temper of mind directed more on what is essential than what is casual in man, might be the safest guide in this. And, besides, the more we grow in knowledge and experience, the easier do we find a worthier object for scrutiny than the defects and imperfections of our fellow-creatures."

"You have now touched upon something," Selma here remarked, "that I have long since felt indistinctly. Since the death of my father and preceptor, I have, I fear, greatly retrograded. I do not know how it is

at present with me; but I seem to spend my days about nothing. I often feel them to be so barren—I fear that I am fallen . . . . Ah, thanks, Sophia, for having roused me. But assist me now also in retracing my steps to the good way. Point out to me now such employments as shall make me wiser and better. You are, you know, my elder sister; be now also my friend!"

How gladly did I enter into her wishes. We projected together a new way of life; we laid down our plans for the future, and prosecuted this conversation for a considerable time, which afforded me an opportunity of looking into a soul capable of the highest perfection.

What we had so seriously begun, we, however, ended pleasantly. I, for my part, promising Selma, by way of recompense for her lessons in singing and Italian, to teach her *Finnish*, while she on the other hand vowed to put my patience strongly to the test, as she intended *never* to learn that language.

When Selma was called down from me to her mother, I felt that I loved her, and indeed for ever. Never shall I forget how she stood before me when she said:

"What matters it if I do weep! Ever tell me the truth! I will act in accordance to it! I will amend!"

And the silent tears on that noble-spirited countenance!—would that Lennartson had seen and heard her. Oh, there are indeed some charming things here on earth!

November 19th.

Selma was right in her prediction. The evening of the masquerade-ball passed with us home-stayers far more agreeably than if we had figured in the first parts

of it. While Selma was about finishing Flora's toilet, I went down to my stepmother and found Felix, the Viking, and the Baron with her. The last-mentioned of the gentlemen was very sparing of words, and frequently turned his eyes towards the door.

When Flora, attended by Selma, entered, in her superb costume, he appeared struck by her beauty; and I also to such a degree, that I could not suppress an exclamation of surprise and delight. We were all in some measure captivated, and Selma's beaming eyes went about collecting subscriptions of praise and sacrifice for the fair Circassian, who stood there in the proud consciousness of her youth, splendour, and beauty. Lennartson's admiration, however, soon cooled, his looks became serious, and when St. Orme came in, arrayed in Turkish costume — he and Flora were to dance together in the quadrille — he suddenly disappeared without taking leave of any body.

On Flora's countenance there was an evident expression of uneasiness; but it soon vanished, and she smiled pleasantly when the *Envoyé*, amid exquisite oriental compliments, conducted her to the carriage in which her sister was waiting for her. The Viking stayed with us; Felix likewise remained, although he also had intended to be one of the party at the ball.

We talked about Baron Lennartson, and I expressed my joy at his deep sense of woman's worth, which a few evenings ago he had given us to understand. The Viking rejoined:

"There is no one who thinks more highly of woman, and no one who is at the same time more rigorous in his demands upon her. The admiration and affection with which his mother has inspired him seems to have laid the foundation for it."

My questions elicited many a little narrative and anecdote of the Baron's days of childhood and youth, which I have collected together for the following picture:

Lennartson's father, the General, was a man of violent temper and dissolute habits of life. All the care of the children and their education devolved in consequence on their mother, a noble-minded and highly educated but constitutionally delicate lady.

The eldest son, our Lennartson, was in his childhood of feeble health and irritable temper. His mother devoted the greatest care to him, not that blind spoiling, but that tenderly fostering care which soliditates by affection. The gentle mother would frequently sit by the bedside of her boy and read to him about men, who by strength of mind or will had overcome their physical infirmities and become the glory and the benefactors of their country. She would more especially dwell on the great men of her father-land, those *energetic* and *pious* characters who, in the combination of those qualities, expressed, if faithful to itself, the principal features of the Swedish national character.

The boy would listen with eager attention, his mind opened to strains of great thoughts, which, nourished in this way on the marrow of heroism, soon invigorated his feeble body. To this also due attention was paid by exercises of a nature and kind calculated to brace up and collect his physical energies. At the age of fifteen years, Lennartson excelled most of his playmates in agility and strength. Soon the mother saw the vital powers of her son's mind break forth in all their fullness, but no less so in all their attendant dangers. Young Lennartson inherited his father's impetuous and inflexible temper. The harshness of his father

towards his mother excited him to the highest degree, and this gave occasion to a scene between father and son which almost broke up the feeble frame of his mother, but, strange enough, also the strength of the hard-hearted husband. He almost feared his son, at least in every thing that concerned his mother, and no longer ventured to transgress against her. This dove-like nature had given birth to an eagle, and the young bird now extended his protecting wings over her. Happy in the affection of her son, but alarmed at the almost fearful character she saw breaking forth from him, she wished to teach this powerful youth self-government, and therefore sought to fortify his mind in that which alone is capable of imparting to all power truth, moderation, and proper balance, namely, true piety.

From an early period she had presented to the view of her son humanity in its highest character; she now endeavoured to convey to his inquiring mind a clear conception of that life and doctrine which had already inspired the filial heart with involuntary affection. In this she adopted a course very different from the generality of parents and teachers. Instead of avoiding those books which are usually regarded as dangerous to piety, she sought them, and read with her youthful son the writings of the most popular atheists and deists from the earliest to the present time, and allowed his reason to exercise itself in comparisons between their doctrines and *those*, which in AN INCARNATE GOD gives the solution to the problem of life, and in this revelation of His nature and His will, grant the only sure and perfectly adequate warrant, for the fulfilment of the best desires, and most sacred hopes of men on earth.

She allowed him to contend with the rising difficulties, and, as it were, pave his own way into the very heart of life. *She* it was who raised objections to him against the doctrine of the rationalists; and *he* it was who confuted them. But the joy which, after the successfully solved difficulties beamed out of the eyes of his mother, no doubt secretly shed light over the youth's mind in his future investigations. And while thus she raised him to an independent and established point of view, she taught him to entertain respect for his opponents, to pay due deference to every honest inquiry, to honour every sincere belief, and to trace the seed of truth even in immature doctrines.

Lennartson frequently made mention of this period of his life as the happiest and richest portion of it. The affectionate looks and approving words of his mother he deemed as his dearest reward. Extremely rare were the instances of her lavishing caresses on him, although he frequently would lay on his knees before her in enthusiastic veneration, and kiss her hand and garments. Sometimes only, during such hours, when she felt that his young heart was too powerfully consumed by longing desires for a return to his affection, did she permit him to lean his burning temples on her bosom, that heaved only for him, but which already a long time past bore within it the seed of death in a cruel and almost incurable disease.

Carefully she concealed from her son the pains by which she had been consumed for many years past. Not until an operation became necessary, did Lennartson ascertain his mother's sufferings and danger. She wished to have him removed during the hour of trial, and endeavoured by an innocent stratagem to delude

him with regard to the fixed time. But he was not to be deceived nor removed. It was his arms that held her in that trying hour; her eyes at the same time rested on his, and for his sake she endured all the agonies without a murmur.

She was permitted to live three years longer for him, and to be happy through him during this extended term of her existence. Her disease then broke out again, and this time fatally. Giving utterance to her bright hopes of immortality, and of her assurance of meeting him again, while at the same time she exhorted her son to "kind forbearance and patience with his father," she expired in his arms.

The effects of this loss on the youth, now attained to his eighteenth year, was dreadful, and tended to hasten his maturity to manhood. His disposition of mind at this period, and his love for those studies in which he had at an early age found pleasure, privately determined him to enter the ministerial office.

At the university he devoted himself, as did once the greatest statesman of Sweden, pre-eminently to divinity. In this career, however, he—as was also the case with Axel Oxenstjerna—was interrupted, being induced by his father to travel through foreign countries. Accordingly he set out to Vienna as Secretary to the Swedish embassy. The fortune which there attended him, and the talents he displayed, proved according to his father's wishes, decisive in favour of his future prospects; and in his diplomatic career he has now for many years past ably acquired respect and confidence.

After my stepmother and the Viking had thus alternately glanced at Lennartson's life, Selma reminded me of an expression I made use of the first evening of

my meeting with him here, namely, that I had already formed his acquaintance some time previously. I now had to relate where and when I had done so, and accordingly stated:

"It is now about fifteen years since, when at a dinner party I happened to meet with General Lennartson and his son. The company, which was large, consisted chiefly of the general's relatives and acquaintances. A corner of the table only separated me from young Lennartson. This distinguished man was kind enough to entertain himself with me, then a timid girl of fourteen, and to amuse me with the details of Schiller's Wallenstein, which so engrossed my attention that I forgot both eating and drinking. The general topic of conversation at table was about disturbances which had recently taken place in the military school, and they mentioned a young man as their leader who had been guilty of several misdemeanours, and was in consequence expelled. Several of the guests gave the young man very harsh names, such as "gallows-bird," &c. Young Lennartson alone undertook his defence, and did so with warmth, showing at the same time how the latter had been provoked in the last disputes in question, and how his very aberrations bore traces of a noble heart. The old General took the side in opposition to his son, and grew more and more violent against the accused party. Young Lennartson, however, now determined to defend him even against his father, with all due respect, of course, but with great firmness. All at once the old General was seized with a sort of frenzy, and he turned against his son personally with a battery of insults and violent accusations. From the very instant that his father

attacked him he was perfectly silent. His cheeks and lips turned pale, it is true, but his look at his father was so stedfast, his entire demeanour so calm, as would have almost led any one to suppose him insensible to this unworthy treatment.

"While, with a degree of fearful suspense, the look of all were passing from father to son, mine eyes were lingering with a sort of admiration on the noble features of the latter. Involuntarily they remained fixed on a little spot of his smooth white forehead, which gradually increased in size, and became more striking in appearance; at length it moved, and a transparent drop of perspiration ran down, as it were, to hide itself in the dark eye-brows. This was the only mark which betrayed his inward conflict. The General, at last, was silent for the want of words and breath, and for a moment a death-like stillness prevailed. Young Lennartson was as still as all the rest; no affectation of indifference or defiance distorted his noble and unaffected deportment. He appeared to me admirable on account of his perfect self-control, and many of those present seemed to share this impression with me. But all manifested their anxious endeavours to relieve this painful suspense by starting a general conversation. Unconstrained, young Lennartson also took part in the same, but he was more serious than he had been before, and—the conclusion of Wallenstein I did not learn."

"Do you remember," inquired the Viking, "the name of the young man whose conduct gave occasion to this scene?"

"No; his name I have either forgotten, or probably never heard. But I have heard several traits of him of which I have some recollection, that represented him as an unsteady and violent character."

"And that was the first thing you heard of *me!*" rejoined the Viking, in a low but emphatic tone.

I looked up to him confounded; his eyes were directed to me with troubled earnestness, and I could read such gloomy recollections in them that I quickly turned my face away, grieved, and almost repenting that I had awakened them.

My stepmother said, designedly: "Lennartson is in truth a rare character, and I could wish that young men would take him for their pattern."

"Yes! who would not be like him?" exclaimed Felix Delphin, who seemed to apply the moral to himself. "Ah, if he were only—what shall I say—a little less superior. But he stands so high that one shrinks from a mere attempt to approach him. He is—too immaculate!"

"Lennartson is not without faults, no more than any other person," said Brenner, "but they are such as are peculiar to great natures. They prevent him, however, from being happy."

"Is he not happy?" exclaimed Selma, and looked up with an expression of sorrow and astonishment.

"He is *not* happy," said Brenner, "because he is so seldom satisfied with himself. He has an insatiable self-consuming thirst."

"After what?" inquired I.

"After perfection!"

A general silence ensued. Brenner's words and tone had greatly excited us. At length Felix said:

"It is that very grandeur of soul in him which lowers and discourages inferior minds. He makes a more imposing than encouraging impression. I for my part confess that I admire, and no less fear him."

"And yet, Felix," rejoined Selma, "you know that he is very kind."

"Yes; when my conduct merits kindness, Selma! and there, you see, lies the root of the matter! I frequently do *not* deserve it, and then .... Ah, how often when I have been with him, when I have heard and seen him act, have I despised myself because I am so unlike him! And then I have always formed the best resolutions. But when I get into the world again I forget myself and him, commit follies like others, and then—I fear his presence and looks, for this corresponds with my conscience and—condemns me!"

Selma extended her hand to her cousin and regarded him with bright tearful eyes. Young Delphin, evidently affected, took hold of Selma's outstretched hand, kissed it several times ardently, and hastened out of the room.

It is impossible tha t Selma can be indifferent to this amiable young man!

Shortly after the Viking also went away in a gloomy state of mind.

When we were alone, my stepmother gave me the following sketch of the Viking's early life:

"William Brenner was distinguished in his youth by his good heart and restless disposition. At the military academy he was a universal favourite, while his conduct and irregularities involved him both in contentions and troubles. He was without any stability, and hence carried away by the impulse of the moment. By various misdemeanours, he incurred some severe impositions which he violently opposed and defied, and was in consequence expelled from Carlsberg. His relatives, provoked at his conduct, treated him with

harshness and neglect, and thereby stirred up Brenner's passionate temper to the highest pitch. He thought himself disgraced before the whole world, saw his future prospects blighted, and in order to drown his despair, he plunged into a vortex of greater dissipation than ever. Having spent all he possessed, and finding himself laden with greater debt than he was able to discharge, he was about laying a violent hand on his own life, when at that moment it was arrested by an interposing hand, and snatched from the brink of destruction; and he who rescued him was — Thorston Lennartson. He caused light to arise in Brenner's darkened mind by showing him the prospects yet before him; by making him feel that his future lot in life was still dependant upon himself, and that it was perfectly in his power to regain the respect of society and his peace of conscience.

"But not merely with words did Lennartson exert his influence in saving Brenner from his fate. It was then about the time when France took the field against the States of Barbary. Lennartson succeeded in obtaining for him the permission of his family to engage in this expedition, and equipped him from his own, then any thing but well-stored, purse.

"Lennartson, in devising this plan, had formed a correct judgment of his friend, and prepared proper means for his deliverance.

"With energetic spirits there is but *one* step from despair to heroism. With a lock of Lennartson's hair *on* his breast, and his image deeply engraven *within* the same, young Brenner rushed forward with impetuosity upon a career where dangers of every kind challenged him. The object to be achieved was to him

more than the conquest of nations and countries, it was the regaining of his honour and the re-acquirement of his personal, his friends', and his country's respect. And with the most joyous temerity he hazarded his life for it. The young Swede shared the toils and laurels of the French. And on the raging billows of the sea, in the battle beneath the walls of Algiers, in the combats with the Arabs and the Kybyles on the soil of Africa the French learned to esteem in him a valour, ever equal (a *greater* is *impossible*) to their own, and to love in him a spirit of humanity exercised towards a vanquished foe that formed an untutored part of their discipline.

"At a subsequent period, Brenner accompanied several learned French adventurers on their perilous voyage into the interior of Africa.

"After an absence of seven years, Brenner returned to his native country, where honour and esteem welcomed him on all sides. He had not long been here before fresh opportunities of distinction as a naval officer presented themselves to him, and he rose rapidly in the service.

"The first use Brenner made of the property he acquired in the war was to discharge all his previously contracted debts. When he returned he owed nobody any thing—no, neither money nor goods. But yet there was *one* debt pressing upon his heart, and this he longed to satisfy.

"On his departure from home, he had left a poor girl, of noble sentiments, and of low, but respectable family, whom he passionately loved, and who returned his attachment in the same affectionate degree. He solemnly vowed to her to return and to make her his wife. But

years passed on. Seldom only flew a dove from burning Africa to misty Europe to rejoice the heart of the solitary one. Poverty, grief, and sickness, deformed the blooming young maiden in a truly dreadful manner. She became aware of it,—self-alarmed, and like the sick bird that seeks a dark spot in the wood wherein to die, she withdrew far away from the world, and resolved to be dead to the dear object of her affection.

"But he sought her and found her. Scarcely would he have recognised her again, were it not for the affection which at the sight of him was expressed in her voice and countenance, and which assured him that she was the same, and her love to him immutable. He clasped her to his breast, he seized her hand to lead her to the altar; but she refused. Ah, of a truth, she was so faded, so poor, so joyless! She would only have been a burden to his existence, and followed him as a mere shadow on his brilliant path. She would rather remain in her obscurity, forasmuch as from its shades she could still rejoice in the glory which surrounded him.

"Such was the sincere expression of her pure heart, and while reading her inmost soul, she became as dear and precious to him as ever. And he spoke to her of following him to lands beneath a fairer clime, of fresh flowers on foreign shores, of the refreshing winds and waves of the sea, of the dangers they would share, of the toils she would sweeten to him, of the omnipotence of love, of a new life. She listened to him; her bosom heaved; her spirits revived; her heart bloomed anew; she believed—and followed him.

"And on the cheeks which poverty and grief had paled, Brenner impressed his kisses, and the sea wafted

its fresh breezes. By these combined means she regained her health. When after many years' residence on the Continent, he returned with his partner, she was in the full bloom of health and happiness.

When Brenner was about being married, there were several voices raised in disapprobation and dissuasion, but there were many also highly in favour of it, and none more warmly than Lennartson's. From that time forward, he and Brenner became inseparable in the closest interests of their lives, and continue to love each other to this day, as brothers seldom do.

"Why have I not seen Brenner's consort here yet?" inquired I of my stepmother, deeply affected by the narration I had just heard.

"Why?" exclaimed my stepmother, smiling and somewhat surprised. "From a very cogent reason. She died three years ago! The birth of her youngest child cost her her life."

I sat there confounded and almost thunderstruck.

My stepmother now spoke of the noble qualities of the deceased, and at the same time gave me to understand that she, my stepmother, had taken her under her patronage and introduced her into society, in which she would otherwise not have gained admission so easily; and on which account Brenner indeed had ever after cherished and evinced "such unspeakable gratitude" towards her, &c.

I inquired whether he had deeply mourned the loss of his partner.

"Almost to phrensy!" replied my stepmother. "For a whole year he could scarcely endure the sight of his children. Now, however, they are his greatest

joy, and sweet amiable children they are—three boys and two girls."

With this narrative, which excited many happy feelings within me, time had advanced to midnight. The Countess G * * had promised to bring Flora home to us, and herself to stay half an hour or so, in order to give us some details of the proceedings at the splendid ball, provided we would wait for her till three o'clock in the morning with a warm cup of coffee.

My stepmother, ever ready to join in any thing of a merry and entertaining nature, had promised to do so; and while Selma and I, continuing the conversation about our two heroes, were making gigantic strides with our Christmas presents, the morning hour imperceptibly advanced. Signora Luna and Flora came also, and now commenced a warm coffee-drinking, with an interlarding discourse on the ball; which was described as magnificent, and Flora as one of its most brilliant stars, but—as has been the case with many other splendid balls—it was *too warm* and *too crowded.* The great quadrille, in which Flora danced, had too little room for proper display; the parties were unable to show themselves off to advantage; they had passed pretty much unnoticed and mixed up with the crowd; in a word they had *not* enjoyed themselves.

"St. Orme was one, among the gentlemen, who made the best figure in his costume," said the Countess G * * but added that he was "rather too much of a Turk," especially towards Flora, whom he arrogated to himself with a degree of Sultan-like despotism. "Perhaps," continued she archly, "*Monsieur l'Envoyé* intended by this to keep all the poor *Attachés* at a respectful distance."

Flora was the first who gave utterance to the wish to retire to rest; and while I went to awake her sleeping Anna she ascended the stairs leading to our bed-chambers. When after a while I likewise came up, I found her standing at a window of the corridor, and thoughtfully looking out on the nocturnal scene, faintly illumined by the moon.

As she did not seem to notice me, I gently touched her arm, and said:

"Where are you at home, fair mask?"

"Where?" replied the fair Circassian, with a strange sounding voice. "In the wilderness, to be sure, where John fed on locusts, and had his raiment of camel's hair. Ah, happy he who is there, far away from this world, far from himself!"

"Flora, you are—a singular being," I was just going to add; but Flora interrupted me and said:

"Yes, *what am I?*" I would be thankful to the being that would tell me what I am. What I *was*—that I know well enough."

"And what *were* you?"

"A being endowed with the finest, richest talents, from which—but what avails it to talk of what I might have proved?—What I *shall* be, I now begin to see pretty clearly."

"Assuredly you may yet prove what you really wish to be," replied I.

Without apparent attention to my remark, Flora continued bitterly and pensively.

"Have you read accounts of people, who by an evil magic power became transformed into *lycanthropists*, and assume the malignant nature of those who enchanted them?"

"Yes," answered I; "but I have also read, that the Christian name of the so bewitched, when called out by the voice of love, has power to dissolve the spell, and to set the unhappy captives free."

"Who calls me thus? Who loves me thus? Nobody,—not a soul!" exclaimed Flora, "nor do I deserve it. I am—not good! I am,—but no matter what I am. Nobody, after all, can rightly enter into it. Hate me as much as you can, Sophia. That's the wisest thing you can do. Nay, do not look so tragic. I laugh in spite of all at myself—at you, and all the world."

Flora laughed, but not from her heart.

Anna was now come up.

"Will you not for this once," said I, "let Anna go to rest again, and accept my services as your lady's maid? I do not think I am altogether unskilled in—"

"No, my dearest Philosophia," exclaimed Flora, laughing, "that I certainly will not venture upon, though I most profoundly bow, and am much obliged for the high honour of your offer. I would rather, I must say, see my pins in Anna's hands than in yours, for she now looks like one of 'the five foolish virgins.' Anna, pray do not fall upon the light. I declare, you are the most sleepy-headed wench in all Stockholm. Can't you keep your eyes open half a night? Look at me, I have been awake the whole night, and am as brisk as ever."

"Yes, I dare say," answered Anna, peevishly. "Mam'selle has been kept awake with amusements and dancing, but—"

"If that be all, you shall dance before me in the room to rouse you."

During this altercation both lady and maid vanished into Flora's room, and I retired to mine; but for a long time I could not close my eyes. Lennartson and his mother, the Viking and his wife, stood vividly before my mind, and then Flora with her strange fantastic confession. In my very dreams my imagination was still occupied with the subject, and the beautiful Circassian, and lycanthropists and locusts, formed the most singular confusion in my dream.

November 21st.

A new revolution with Flora; fresh light on Selma, and uncertain lights on certain shades. *Signs of the time:* a conversation between my stepmother and me.

Felix Delphin's comrades and friends, *Messieurs* Rutschenfelt and Skutenhjelm, or collectively called 'the Rutschenfelts,' escorted by St. Orme and Felix, paid us rather an unexpected visit to-day. The purport of their call was to invite us all to a grand sledge party, which they had arranged to take place next Sunday. Felix wished to drive Selma; St. Orme offered Flora part of his large sledge, which he intended to be trimmed with tiger skins, and drawn by a pair of spirited dappled greys, that Flora had already seen and admired. This sledge was to head the train, passing through the principal streets of the city to the Zoological Gardens in the suburbs, where they proposed to partake of dinner, and dance afterwards, &c.

Flora accepted the invitation with evident delight, and clapping her hands, she exclaimed:

"Ah! I know of nothing more bewitching than tiger skins and fiery steeds! That will be a glorious ride!"

But Selma quickly whispered to her:

"Do not consent, I entreat you. Think of Lennartson!"

"Well, and what then?" replied Flora, impatiently.

"He would not like it. Defer, at least, a definite reply for the present."

"Ah! there it is—always some ado and obstacles whenever I wish to engage in any thing," said Flora, stamping with her foot a little, while her cheek coloured with indignation.

In the mean time Rutschenfelt had turned to my stepmother, and Skutenhjelm to me, proferring their services to us. I looked at my stepmother, and my stepmother at me, and this time in mutual concert, for we both answered evasively, and begged for time to consider about a decided answer.

While we all thus stood irresolute and almost inclined to reply in the negative, the spirit of defiance entered into Flora, and she said with determination:

"Others may do as they please, but I shall go, and St. Orme has my promise."

"That is admirable!" said he; "and I hope the rest of the ladies will follow so good an example. This evening I shall do myself the pleasure of waiting upon you again to receive your final decision."

Scarcely had St. Orme left, and the Rutschenfelts with Felix glided down the stairs, when Lennartson entered. From my stepmother he soon ascertained what had been the topic of our conversation.

"And what reply did Flora make?" inquired he, briefly and in haste, turning to her.

"I have promised to join St. Orme," replied Flora

although not with a good conscience: "I am not aware why I should forego such an innocent amusement."

"I am sorry for that, Flora," said Lennartson, in a gentle but serious tone of voice; "but I must request you to desist from it."

"I am sorry, Lennartson," retorted Flora, defyingly, "that I cannot comply with your request. I have already given my promise to St. Orme; and my respected guardian will surely not compel me to break my pledge?"

"In this case I must demand a retraction of your promise. I have my reasons for it, which I am not disposed to state at present. In a word, Flora shall not go with St. Orme."

"*Shall* not!" exclaimed Flora, with flaming looks. "And who has the power to prohibit me?"

"I!" said Lennartson, calmly, but with determination.

There was a time when I thought I never could hear a man's word of authority against a woman, without my heart turning in my bosom with bitterness and hatred. But now, at that moment, I heard such a sentence and was tranquil. I felt the full force of a *noble* authority.

Flora felt it no less so. She said nothing, but went aside to a window. Lennartson then maintained a long conversation with my stepmother and myself, as if nothing had occurred.

When I again looked at Flora, she was quietly sitting there sewing. She was pale, serious, and, as it were, transformed. After a while, Lennartson went to the window at which she was sitting, and seated

himself opposite to her. He took her half-resisting hand, and his eyes sought to meet hers. But she looked down more closely to her work. Suddenly tears dropped upon it. Lennartson then whispered:

"Flora!"

She raised her head, and gazed on him with eyes beaming with affection.

Lennartson looked at her seriously, though with visible emotion.

"Flora," said he again, "how am I to understand you?"

"Can you not rely upon me, not have faith in me, although you do not understand me?" rejoined she.

He said nothing, but kissed her hand repeatedly. They then again exchanged a few words, which I did not hear. When Lennartson rose, tears stood in his eyes. He silently bowed to us and withdrew.

For a long while Flora sat still with her countenance concealed in her pocket-handkerchief. I thought she was deeply affected, but suddenly she lifted up her head, and exclaimed:

"Ah, I only regret the tiger skins and the fiery steeds! I should have been drawn as if in triumph. I should have put on my fox-skin cloak and bonnet with white feathers—I am sure it would have looked bewitchingly charming!"

Selma cast her eyes on her with a half-astonished and half-sorrowful expression, as if to say: "How can you be thinking of such things now?"

Flora, who seemed to surmise it, exclaimed:

"Come, come, little Selma, do not you ape Sophia, and look like a Litany at my little flights. As for my being pleased with fine things and a little show, that

I cannot help. And a little enjoyment in this life I am determined to have too, if I am to keep alive. Ah, sunny, gay life is a glorious thing! Take two cups: pour into the one the bitter draught of renunciation, and in the other youth, vigour, health, pleasure, enjoyment,—and I defy you, wise Philosophia, not to snap at the latter, and I will drink out of the latter—ay, to the very dregs.

"And find in it," added I, "the bitterest essence of the two. I, for my part, will have a more solid joy than—transient gaiety; a more refreshing draught in life than—vain pleasures!"

"Give me," exclaimed Flora, "pleasure, enjoyment! Let me be gay, merry! And then—let me die! Such is the language of an honest mortal."

"But not of a rational one!" said I, smiling.

"And who tells you that I am a rational being?" exclaimed Flora, wantonly, waltzing several times round the room. "Perhaps I do not even belong to the human species. Probably I am one of those beings of which the Oriental legends inform us, that hover between heaven and hell without appertaining to either, and hence dance about on earth as shining *ignus fatuus?* And—perhaps it is better thus to dance, than brood as the rest of you, over things about which nobody after all attains to any certainty. Come, dear Selma, let us waltz. Sophia, play us one of Strauss's: the wilder the better."

I played, and the two young damsels waltzed, which was just as well as then to talk rationally to Flora; and perhaps dancing is a readier means to calm the mind than may be effected by reasoning.

At the root of all Flora's extravagances lay an inward

disquietude. Throughout the whole of the day she was in an excessively unsettled humour, and appeared purposely intent to avoid coming to self-reflection and regaining tranquillity of mind.

In the afternoon came St. Orme, and Flora started up at the sight of him.

"Well, and what about our sledge-party?" was his first question.

With assumed composure Flora begged to be excused for being obliged to retract her promise to form one of the party. A previous plighted word, another engagement, which she had forgotten this morning, was the preventing cause.

St. Orme listened to her apology with a dark countenance, and artful smile upon his thin lips. He then advanced towards her and said with a low voice:

"May one be allowed to ask *what* promise it is that prevents you fulfilling mine? But perhaps you have forgotten that likewise just now."

"Very likely!" rejoined Flora, heedlessly and haughty.

"*I* do not so easily forget," said St. Orme, in a low voice, but full of expression. "I have a good memory, which I can also prove by what I ever wear on my breast."

Saying this, he threw his waistcoat back a little, and I saw something gleam forth beneath it, which from a hasty glance appeared to me to be a purple-coloured riband. But more beautiful still was the purple which now suddenly rose into Flora's cheeks. Convulsively she clenched her hand, and, turning from St. Orme to me, she exclaimed in a bitter tone of voice:

"How happy are men! With sword in hand they

can demand satisfaction or revenge. Oh, would that I were a man!"

"Would you then fight with me, my fair cousin?" inquired St. Orme, smiling. "Would you throw the glove at me?"

"Yes," exclaimed Flora, vehemently, for life or death!"

"Fortunate for me, then," continued St. Orme, in a tone of derision, "that you are only a woman; and therefore I advise you to employ no other weapon against me than your bewitching eyes. To them I am ready to surrender myself. Adieu, Flora; adieu, Sophia! I wish you much pleasure this evening!"

It was a patronage night at the opera, and Selma and Flora intended to go with Madame Rittersvärd and her daughter to the private box of my stepmother, she herself feeling somewhat fatigued and indisposed to drive out. I promised Selma (as it was my full intention to remain at home) to bear her company and *entertain* her.

"And mark you, sweet angel!" whispered Selma archly, as she was about entering the carriage, "do not be over charitable in your Christian principles of justice, when you come to talk of Gyllenlöfs and Silfverlings. Such spasmodic acquaintances can bear sour Spanish bitter!"

I promised her to be severe, and asked for an explanation of the expression "spasmodic acquaintances;" but she answered: "How is it possible to mistake the meaning? Oh, golden innocence!"

Smiling at my ignorance, she left me.

When alone with my stepmother I observed that we

were mutually charged with matter for conversation and desired nothing more eagerly than to exchange it.

"It is remarkable," we both began at once, after having seated ourselves at the evening lamp. (N.B.—We generally began our political discussions with an introductory phrase, such as, "It is remarkable," or "It is singular," or "It is quite inconceivable," or with some such expression as paves the way for the consideration of some topics of the day. And as my stepmother and I, in consequence of our opposite political views, take in papers and periodicals of opposite tendency, we make it a matter of deep concern to ourselves if in them we at any time meet with a very striking remark or phrase with which we may attack each other, and if possible beat each other out of the field—all in the greatest friendship, of course. This is spinning out into a dreadful long parenthesis!—Well, I happened that day in reading my daily papers, to notice many remarkable accounts of the progress of industry, and taken *ad notam* a powerful phrase on this gigantic subject. It was therefore the introduction to this phrase which I commenced with—"It is remarkable." Now at length I have arrived at the close of the parenthesis.) Hearing my stepmother begin with the same words, I, with due respect, gave precedence to her "remarkability," which, as then appeared, was not the "Industrialism of the day," but some "individual" want of spirit and refinement, of which my stepmother had that very day had a remarkable instance.

I fancied in my mind I saw the Count Gyllenlöf's family coming, and they did come in reality, and in fact in company with the Silfverlings. We pitied the former greatly for their want of fashion, their vanity

and pride, and made sport of the latter on account of their ridiculousness and grand pretensions. "They are poor people that know no better," said we. "It is lamentable but also ridiculous," we observed.

From them we passed over to other friends and acquaintances, and dispensed good and ill luck to people. We relieved Madame Ritersvärd's nervous affection a little, rendering her more liable to attacks of apoplexy, detracted from "the Beauty" a little of her gracefulness, and were at pains to determine Ake Sparrsköld's choice between beauty and virtue; *i. e.*, between Flora's sister and Hellfrid Rittersvärd.

My stepmother was very desirous for her good friend Madame Rittersvärd's sake that the latter might marry well; and Lieutenant Sparrsköld is a young man of uncommon abilities and good prospects. My stepmother notwithstanding believed more in the victory of beauty, while I hoped in the triumph of virtue, and entered into a wager on the subject.

Amidst all these disposals of friends and relatives, I endeavoured imperceptibly to approach our own family, in order to hear my stepmother's views of the signs and movements then passing within the bosom of the same. To this end I brought forth several of my remarks on St Orme, Flora, and Lennartson, and the singular connection between them.

My stepmother listened with fixed attention, and launched out a few hasty questions; but instead of communicating to me her thoughts, she suddenly retreated into the fortress of secrecy, and with an air worthy of Prince Metternich, she said:

"You may be assured, my best Sophia, that I see and hear all that is going on around too well, although

I am not disposed either to express myself on the course and procedure of things or interfere in it before . . . ."

Here began the diplomatic conclusion which I swallowed, seasoned with a little chagrin.

Unexpectedly my stepmother then turned towards me with reflections concerning my person, my position in life, and with certain captious inquiries, if I had not some intention of altering it in case of a *good match* offering to me—that is to say, a steady person of middle age, good character, appearance, fortune, and connection, who could install me into a bright sphere, &c. &c.

A little provoked at my stepmother's omniscience and reserve, thought I: "If my stepmother wishes first to represent Prince Metternich, I will now play the part of Prince Talleyrand;" and instead of answering her questions, I burst forth into a strain of eulogy on the liberty and emancipation of woman. My stepmother grew very warm on the subject, and without understanding the *why* and *wherefore*, she set herself in hostile array against every species of emancipation. I wished to explain myself more clearly, but she—as in point of fact no less I—was desirous of hearing herself only; and thus we over-schemed each other for a time.

The return of the opera visitors suddenly interrupted us. They came escorted by Lennartson, young Sparrsköld, and Felix. Signora Luna and her "*Cara Sposa*" augmented likewise our evening party, who, after the conclusion of their opera report, were initiated into the particulars of the dispute at issue between my stepmother and myself. It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously carried, to finish the battle during supper

and warm was the contest on both sides; in which all engaged, Selma only excepted. On my side were Ake Sparrsköld and Signora Luna, and on my stepmother's Rittersvärd and the Great Alexander. The latter felt very much straitened and affected about the eyes, on mentioning *Thorild*, and referring to certain passages which may be read in the Fourth Part of his Collected Works, page 84, and would afford certain ladies and gentlemen profitable matter for private reflection.

Lennartson for some time merely took a playful part in the debate, and amused himself with overthrowing the arguments of both parties, especially mine, by stratagems of ingenuity or wit, but being at length seriously challenged by me "to mark well what I have to say," he seriously expatiated at considerable length on our subject: some of his remarks being full of important matter, and sweeter to listen to than the most charming music. I shall do myself the pleasure of treasuring them up for the next session of the diet.

Herewith ended the discussion. Baron Alexander G * * , however, methinks was not altogether satisfied with the issue of the truce established on Lennartson's sage declaration: which conclusion I am inclined to draw from the answer he made to his wife, when the latter proposed inviting the Baron to a dinner-party one day in the week. The only reply he made to her solicitation was a severe rebuff, and when she remonstrated with him in accents of entreaty, he peremptorily said: "But, my dear friend, it is not *my* wish. It is *your* place to propose, and *mine* to decide. I have now decided and disposed of this matter, and I will not hear another word more about it. There it ends!"

The Countess G * * was silent, but a tempest cloud spread over her countenance.

I should not be very much surprised if she turned a radical on the emancipation question.

After our separation this evening Selma followed me, as she was often wont to do, with a light into my room. Here I facetiously scolded her for her remissness in not supporting my motion this evening, and impugned her with being entirely devoid of all "*esprit de corps.*"

She repelled the charge with a volley of laughter, and said, that as far as her own person was concerned, she had never felt the need of an emancipation. "I have always been able to look up," she observed, "to those who have had any command over me. You know how kind my mother is towards me; that her sole desire and study is my happiness. And my father! Ah, how happy I was in loving and obeying him, and aiming to please him in all things. And after his death——."

She faltered and blushed.

I resumed: "Well, and after his death?"

"I then became acquainted with, and looked up to another man."

"Aha!" thought I, and a light sprang up before me.

"May I be allowed to pronounce the name of the gentleman?" inquired I, not without a roguish expression of countenance; "may I be allowed to call him Lennartson?"

With extreme seriousness, but secret tremour of voice, Selma proceeded:

"It will ever be a source of gratification to me in having in him made acquaintance with the noblest and best of men on earth. May, O may Flora make him

happy! For my part, all that I could wish would be to be his sister, his friend—to have the privilege of being near him, to serve him, and in anywise contribute to his happiness. May he be happy, happy with Flora."

"And you, my Selma, am I not to see you happy with——"

"Not with any man—any man!" said she, interrupting me hastily. "But I have my mother, and you, Sophia! I will live for you, and all who are near and dear to me. It is so delightful to love! But my mother, perchance, may think me spell-bound here; so good night, dear, good, wise, darling sister."

She kissed me tenderly, and with a happy heart I heard her trilling Clärchen's song from Goëthe's "Egmont" as she skipped down stairs—

"Happy, and happy only is the soul that loves!"

November 23d.

Poor Felix! he loves Selma most sincerely, and fears she does not reciprocate his affection. He is unhappy—dissatisfied with himself and all the world. He entreats me to be his friend—his sister. How gladly would I respond to his wishes! Her warm heart and his confidence have tenderly inclined my sympathy towards him; but, but—

November, 24th.

Daily I perceive more clearly that I here stand on volcanic ground, on a soil which fermenting passions render interesting but dangerous at the same time; for who can say of what nature the eruption may be—whether it may merely produce a grand atmospheric phenomenon, or the devastation of blooming coun-

tries. Were my heart on my young sister's account not already too much at stake, I should with calmness and pleasure also contemplate these scenes of human life, and the development of these, in part, problematic connections.

Ah! it is good after all when the period of youth is passed, and the more tranquil years are coming. It is good when the wild conflict of feelings is hushing, but good likewise that it has *taken place*, for it has produced a world; and over it there moves a new spirit full of new life—the quiet spirit of *reflection*, that lays his cooling hand on our heated brow—divides darkness from light, saying to the eye: 'Let there be light;' and to life: "Be calm!"

In the Evening.

What is this? The disposition for love and romance in our family circle will surely not infect all the world? And is it with certain symptoms of the mind as with the nocturnal circles of the Scottish witches, that they draw those who approach them into their circle, and compel them to dance with them? But no. In the name of free will, it shall not be so; and therefore I will forthwith make my confession to myself.

Full of those quieting and cheerful thoughts I had noted down this morning, I went to take a walk. I take great pleasure in roving about Stockholm, and there—looking around me. Truly what a vast variety of forms of life does a city scene present; how great and manifold are the tendencies and gifts of men that have here assumed bodily shapes, and peering forth in peculiar characteristic physiognomies. I like to con-

template these little worlds, to reflect on them, to speak to them, and to let them answer me.

Primitive words is the term applied by the Finnish national poem, *Kalavala*, to such by which the spirits govern each other and the dominion of nature; and these words seem to be the *first principle* of things themselves—the mystery of their most essential existence. When addressed or adjured by such words they must obey.

This contains a peculiar profound glorious truth.

But *primitive words* (either in the Kalavala poem or in reality) do not spring up optionally at any moment. We must be in a suitable frame of mind.

This day was particularly favourable for life and meditation, for its alternate play of light and shade presented a diversified lively aspect of the different parts of the city. More than ever I was affected by the individual beauty of Stockholm; historical reminiscences rose forth like crowned spirits over the Seben islands. I fancied I heard the song of the legend in the wind, in the roaring of the waves about those shores, which, from good and evil deeds, great exploits and lamentable adventures were replete with poetical interest.

Once I saw a capital without any towers or buildings that surpassed others in beauty and magnitude, all were nearly alike, and it was said to be the emblem of true civil society.

But no, such was not its appearance. When a nation attains to the consciousness of its entire existence, its cities and edifices must also bear testimony to it; then temples must rear their radiant spires to the clouds, magnificent palaces (not private houses) must give expression to this consciousness of greatness in a noble

public spirit; monuments in remembrance of great men must stand erected there; and there beauty in manifold form must show forth the public spirit of the commonwealth.

But whither is my wandering pen leading me? My feet led me this time southward, high up among the mountains and thence down to the strand and into a boat, in order to steer my course northward again.

I had just seen a man coming out of one of the huts near the shore, followed to the door by a pale, elderly woman, giving him her blessing, and then hastily going down the steps leading to the strand, where his boat lay. On my coming down he turned round and with a joyous exclamation of surprise and outstretched hands he nimbly assisted me into the boat, taking his place at the helm. It was the *Viking*. I felt pleased in meeting him, especially when I observed that his dark blue eyes rested on me with the same expression as on the evening of our first acquaintance. I was heated from walking; the wind had played somewhat wildly with my locks; I knew that I looked engaging, and that the Viking thought so too. A sort of happy, comfortable sensation of mind and body, the gentle plashing of the waves, the mild air, the rich spectacle round about, Brenner's presence—all inspired me with a feeling of exhilaration, which involuntarily made me give free vent to the thoughts and impression that had and still animated my breast. Brenner listened to me with visible interest and pleasure; but when I expressed the wish that men might more and more embrace life in the light of reason and *live* in clear thought, he shook his head and said:

"Knowledge and philosophy cannot improve men,

and contribute but little to their real happiness. The feelings of the heart alone give fullness and worth to life. The pure atmosphere of thought I compare in my mind to Mont Blanc;—we can see all the stars through it and the clouds beneath our feet, but we cannot breathe, and life soon becomes extinct for want of vital air."

I replied: "The life of thought does not exclude that of feeling, but it governs it and prevents it gaining the ascendency. Reason saves man from much suffering.

"Reason!" exclaimed the Viking; "I do not wish to know any thing of a reason fatal to the best interests of the soul, which prevents man from suffering. Life without *suffering* is but of little worth!"

I felt struck with these thoughts, and especially the expression of countenance and tone of voice with which he pronounced them; but yet I replied:

"There is so much unreasonable, useless suffering, so many painful feelings without sense or understanding."

"Ah!" rejoined Brenner, "much that appears unreasonable is in reality still good, were it only to destroy that selfishness which renders us so anxious respecting our own persons, so calculating, so coldly prudent, that we grow detestable. Feelings without sense or reason—such exactly please me. Who, for instance, talks of sensible love? And yet love is life's noblest feeling—its loveliest flower. I, for my part, am not one of the calm, calculating, prudent sophists, never have been, and I hope never shall."

Smiling, and with alacrity, I contested his assertion, and would hear of no other than a *sensible* love. The

Viking grew warm on the subject, but, at the same time, manifested his zeal in an agreeable, interesting manner.

On landing, Brenner offered me his hand to assist me out of the boat, and said:

"Pray do not be angry with me for my want of sense, Mam'selle Adele; I will try if I can mend."

"Perhaps we shall better understand each other in future," said I, cheerfully, and with an air of friendliness.

"Thanks for these words. Yes, may they be verified," rejoined the Viking, pressing my hand.

What does all this mean? And how comes it that I should take pleasure in pleasing this man, of whom I know so little? No, cousin Flora, this is not coquetry, at least no censurable complacency; and, *if* for a moment it had been so, I would take care that it is not repeated. For the desire of appearing agreeable to those whom we find so, is neither sin nor infirmity, but a pleasing and agreeable disposition—the basis of all that renders social intercourse happy and comfortable. But love to mankind must not degenerate into . . . .

November 25th.

Worse and worse! Yesterday, on landing, I expressed my admiration of a bouquet of daffodils and jonquils, which I noticed some person carrying as we were passing by. To-day they are shedding their fragrance in my room. They were accompanied by a note from the Viking.

Well! flowers indeed are symbols of good-will and friendship. As such will I regard these flowers.

November 29th.

The Baroness Bella B * *—"The Beauty"—and Hellfrid Rittersvärd were our first visitors; afterwards Ake Sparrsköld, Felix, and others. "The Beauty" expressed herself (very *mal à propos*, as I thought) on the misfortune and unpleasant circumstance attending a person of ill-favoured appearance. She heartily pities all plain-looking people, but "they ought at least to *know* that they are so, and not show themselves in the society of the world, where the very sight of them creates disagreeable feelings."

I was vexed at this speech, evidently intended personally for Hellfrid Rittersvärd, whose calm classic deportment I could not but admire at that moment. She merely cast a quiet look at the cruel Beauty, and placidly said:

"Since it is not the personal fault of the plain that they are so, it is pardonable in them to mix with the society of their fellow-creatures in the confidence that because of this they will be kind and indulgent towards them—if the matter must be viewed in so grave a light."

This was uttered with an uncommonly noble expression, and I purposed answering with equal warmth of feeling, when young Sparrsköld prevented me, by exclaiming:

"I cannot conceive wherein lies the importance which some persons attach to external beauty or plainness. I am of opinion that true education, that at least which is based on religion, must cause its possessor to feel a noble serenity, a wholesome unconcern, an indifference—or whatever else people may please to call it—to such mere outward gifts or imperfections.

And who has not experienced what a matter of indifference they are in reality in reference to the weal and woe of life? Who has not experienced how, on a closer acquaintance, plainness becomes beautified and beauty loses its charm according to the nature or state of the inward man? Hence, also, I believe that the want of external beauty should never disturb a noble nature, or be considered a misfortune. The absence of this can never prevent people from being amiable and beloved in the highest degree. And of this we have proofs daily!"

I could have embraced the young man at these words, which made "The Beauty" appear extremely plain by giving her countenance an expression of chagrin, while a gentle joy diffused the lustre of beauty over Hellfrid's features. Ake Sparrsköld had never appeared handsomer to me than at that moment. Later in the evening he engaged in a vocal performance. He has a very pleasant voice. I expressed this opinion to Mam'selle Rittersvärd, who agreed with me, but was so brief that I might have fancied her cold, had I not perceived by her glance that her feelings were but *too* warm.

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December 1st.

Visit and entertainment. Rutschenfelts and Co., together with a conversation which turned upon Gyldenlöfs' *soirées*, splendid apartments, furniture, &c., and the delicious dinners of the newly-married couple —the O * * skölds. "What wine! what dainties!" St. Orme pitched the key, and Felix and his friends took up the strain. Among these a young Captain

Rummel (Ake Sparrsköld's superior), whom the rest of the young gentlemen seemed to regard with a degree of admiration, but with no less of envy, particularly distinguished himself. His domestic arrangements were described as a pattern of "comfort and elegance," and commended as a household model for bachelors. They adverted especially to his bed-room, his costly toilet, and to his own portrait which was suspended over his bed. (To me this appeared like a little idolatrous temple, where *self* is the deified object of worship, and I felt a sort of contempt rise within me.) The next thing for which he was extolled, was his connoisseurship in the delicacies of the table. But in this matter he courteously resigned the palm to the Chamberlain, who accepted it modestly while he remarked, that although in Sweden people were generally more "*gourmand*" than "*gourmet*," *he* nevertheless belonged to the latter class. Felix coincided with him in the declared sentiment, that in roast veal there were only *three mouthfuls* that were "really eatable." At last they began to set up a sort of "*tableau*" of what in the present day are the requisites for a comfortable life. (From what I know of certain connections of Captain Rummel, I am, however, inclined to suspect that certain conditions to this happy life were passed over in silence on account of the ladies then present.) Felix sighed deeply at the computation of the sums of money which were found to be necessary to satisfy all these wants.

In the mean time Lennartson, who was sitting at some distance, had occupied himself with glancing over several newspapers; but I was convinced in my own mind that he had heard every thing that had been

talked of in the room. All at once he exclaimed, rising and smiling as he approached the company:

"See, here is a picture too of the wants of a man—which is tolerably original. Will the gentlemen please to hear it?"

And from a newspaper he held in his hand he read the following article from Hernösand:

"The learned mathematician, Lector Aurén, died here last month,* at the age of eighty-one. He was author of many learned works, which he published at his own expense. Notwithstanding he saved from his scanty salary as a schoolmaster, on which he lived, and during the latter part of his life shared with an assistant the sum of 8000 Riks-daler.† This, of course, he could not have realised unless by a total self-denial of all earthly comfort and enjoyments. To what extent he carried those sacrifices is proved by the fact, that his needy dwelling was never heated or lighted even in the severest season. As soon as it grew dark he would lay himself on his bed and computed, or when the firmament was unclouded, contemplated his favourites—the stars—which were sufficient society for him. That he was not actuated hereto by any sordid selfish motives, is evidenced by the relief which during his life-time he secretly afforded to many who were in distress, as well as the noble-minded manner in which he disposed of his bequests. He bestowed four thousand eight hundred Riks-daler on two endowments. A settlement in the city he has presented to an old man, whose wife had tenderly and carefully nursed him during the closing

* February, 1842.

† Four four-ninths Riks-daler Specie are equal to one pound sterling English.

years of his life. The rest of his property falls to poor relatives." *

When Lennartson concluded, a brief silence ensued in the room. Selma's bright eyes were directed on the reader, while his eyes rested on Felix.

A low murmur then arose. "Well, yes; an anchorite—a hermit; but in this way nobody can live, that lives in the world, and wishes to pass his days in society."

"That I admit," replied Lennartson. "But the question is, whether the system of Lector Aurén is not better calculated for obtaining peace and happiness during a long life, than that just before recommended in this room."

"I would rather die to-morrow," exclaimed Felix, "than pass a long life thus devoid of all human joys."

"And I," cried Skutenjhelm, "would rather blow my brains out to-morrow, than doom myself to cold and darkness for ten long years. If a man is to be buried it is better for him to be dead first."

"You forget," said Lennartson, smiling, "that Auren saw the star-bespangled firmament above him, and doubtless found more pleasure in the contemplation of the same than we in the wax tapers in our saloon. And as to human joys," continued he, looking at Felix, "I am sorry that a young man has no desire to comprehend *that* joy that Aurén experienced—the joy of useful activity—the joy of doing good."

There was a something so serious in Lennartson's countenance and voice while uttering these last words, that Felix evidently felt himself struck by them. Tears

* The Swedish Bee, 1842.

started into his eyes; he went aside, took up a book, and sat down at a table. Selma's looks followed him with visible inmost sympathy. Lennartson regarded her attentively.

Shortly afterwards, while St. Orme was pursuing the interrupted discourse with the junior gentlemen, and communicating to them some thing about Parisian life and its attractions, Lennartson went up to Selma, seated himself beside her, and in a whispering tone asked:

"Was I too severe, Fräulein Selma?"

"Oh, no!" answered she, vivaciously. "You were right in what you said, but . . . ."

"But what? what 'but'?"

"I think that your words really did wrong to his heart, and—he thinks so highly of you!"

Lennartson said nothing; but after a while I saw him go up to Felix and lay his hand on his shoulder. Felix blushed deeply, when looking up he met that look of full-beaming kindness which Lennartson fixed on him with an expression of cordial love.

"I have not seen you at my house for such a length of time, Felix," said Lennartson, in a friendly manner. "Will you come and dine with me to-morrow?—I do not promise you," continued he, pleasantly jesting "any thing like an O**sköld repast, but I give you my word not to treat you with an Aurén's fare. I confess that I myself should be little satisfied with it."

Half embarrassed, half rejoiced, Felix accepted the invitation.

After the visitors had left, we—especially my step-mother and I—made our "*reflexions chretiennes et morales*" on Aurén's and St. Orme's ideal of life. I

grew warm in advocating the former. My stepmother, however, threw cold water on it, spoke of "exaggeration," "exaltation," and "extravagance," and said, that people might be "very good," though, like others, participating in the pleasures of the world, and enjoying its luxuries. My stepmother was in favour of the maxim of Queen Christina — "The just medium," (which she herself, however, seemed entirely to forget.) Flora grew thoughtful, and said:

"When in my childhood and my early youth I had at times such Aurénian or Pythagorean fancies; I dreamed of——but I was pretty soon taught to laugh at imaginary schemes and look for others. But perhaps these are far more dreams and phantoms than the former! Ah!" continued Flora, with a sudden vent-giving of sad feelings, "that one could be born again, and become a child again!"

She melted into tears.

Selma clasped her in her arms and began to weep with her. My stepmother looked quite in consternation, and playfully rallied them about this "*lamentabile.*" Selma came over to my side, and so we ended "*scherzando.*"

December 14th.

We have spent several days in visiting the laboratories of art, academies, and various public institutions of the capital. To several of them I mean to pay frequent visits, for I have seen much in them of great interest to me. And wherein indeed consists the worth of a well-grounded education, if not in teaching us to comprehend and appreciate all the various useful operations of human ingenuity, and opening our eyes

to all the treasures of life, while at the same time it extends the sources of our existence? I likewise observe with satisfaction that men of liberal education gladly turn to those in whom they perceive real interest for general science, and by whom they feel themselves understood.

Lennartson, who accompanied us on these scientific rambles, by his own great knowledge, and by his manner of eliciting the explanation of others, enhanced our enjoyment in no small degree. And how esteemed and beloved he is every where! Flora, it is true, listens to him, but seldom to another, and thus too much betrays her disposition to shine herself. Selma is one of those who do not express all they think, but understand and treasure up much in their minds. Lennartson and I also pay particular attention to all her remarks; for they are always composed of some exciting or instructive materials. She is possessed of a fine, pure judgment; and a good head, next to a good heart, is a glorious thing in a human being.

The practice now in vogue is to sit still, diligently working, so as within two days to get all the Christmas presents ready.

A matter I have nothing to do with!

December 25th.

Christmas eve, with its yule presents, lights, and tarts, is past. My stepmother, who is very partial to children, had invited to her house those of her several acquaintances, and among others also the children of the Viking. Selma had worked several little articles for them, and we amused ourselves with contriving plays, in which

Selma acted the part of a child, as much as any one of them. Felix assisted us expertly, but Flora was in a bad humour, and would neither amuse herself, nor contribute to the entertainment of others. Brenner's children are sweet interesting little darlings. Rosina, the eldest, a girl of eight years, and Adolph, the youngest boy, I was most pleased with. The poor boy is rather lame in the hip. Whether was it "the motherly feeling," which one of my friends—a professor—maintains, is peculiar to all women, or was it a particular liking that attracted me to the boy; but certain it is, that when I had him sitting on my knees, and he looked up to me with his bright innocent child-like countenance, I was involuntarily constrained to clasp him in my arms, and with a pure feeling of ardent affection press him protectingly to my breast.

But, perceiving his father regarding us with an expression as if he would have liked to embrace us both, I became cooler in my tenderness. And the father, how he must love those children! Did I not hear him say this evening, that in choosing a partner our chief regard should be the future offspring of the alliance, and the father and mother one would give them! I could not do otherwise than for the most part pronounce him to be correct.

The crown of the evening to me was my countryman Runneberg's pretty little poem "Christmas Eve," which the Viking had with him, and recited with a noble pathos. It transported me again into my native land, its wild scenery, and amid its powerful, contented, and patient people. My heart swelled. And now it is church-time, and to church I shall go.

In the Evening.

The sun was streaming in through a large window into the choir as I entered the church, and light clouds of smoke from the matin tapers, just extinguished, floated through the rays of light upwards to the vaulted roof. The aspect was glorious. The church, though I came early, was full of people, so that it was not possible for me to obtain a seat. After several fruitless attempts, I determined to stand during the service, and found, moreover, a secure place near the wall, between seated ladies and standing maid servants, to whom I offered a little *eau de Cologne.*

I was joyful in my heart, and had never felt myself more *congregational.* When the organ struck up with its majestic tones my blood rolled in my veins, and a gentle thrill passed through me, when a single voice arose and sang of the most miraculous event of the world—that event of which the nations of the earth to this day, and at the present day, perhaps, more than ever, speak in wondrous praise:

"Behold this day a virgin hath conceived,
And born a son—our Great Immanuel!"

Then responded the congregation, and I with them, with a full, overflowing heart.

Scarcely had the chant been ended, when I heard a gruff voice close to me inquiring:

"Cannot Mam'selle Adele find a seat?"

It was the Viking who was so kind as to compel me to take his seat, not far from where I stood. For the sake of quiet in the church I was obliged to compiy. Brenner remained standing near me and escorted me home after the service, when I found Flora in an im-

petuous temper. She had "headach, with the children's noise last evening." She knew of no days worse than Sundays, "on which one is obliged to spend one's time so tediously and be religious." The whole of the day we had to stay at home, in consequence of my stepmother's rule to let the servants go to church that day and rest at home the remainder of it. Similar practices were observed also among our friends and acquaintances; hence we could not be invited out. What was to be done all the long day? We might kill ourselves with yawning. And what the day after?—Why, perhaps worse, for what we know; then perchance we should die of over-exertion. Then one great draught would draw to us the whole tribe—"a dozen and a half of uncles and aunts, all of the turtle species; and more than twenty fair cousins, all of the haddock tribe." And all these we were to see before us from mid-day to midnight, be civil to them from mid-day to midnight, and endeavour to *entertain* them from mid-day to midnight! Ah, enough to drive one to despair!

Selma and I, and at last Flora herself were obliged to laugh at these desperate circumstances, and made various proposals for opposing them bravely. I recommended that we should strive to be merry, and fully carry out any suggestions for Christmas amusements. Selma only received this proposal with a slight shake of the head, and the expression:

"That won't do! Some of our gracious aunts are rather finical, and the Lord has given me such a flow of spirits, that were I to give vent to them, they would doubtless think me silly."

My stepmother then came and begged us to be

"*tranquille*," all would "pass off well and easy;" she was accustomed to such things, &c. We were not by any means to trouble our minds but keep cheerful, &c.

Selma sighed and then began to sing a song. In the evening she entertained me with reading. Flora went early to bed, which was a relief to us all.

The Third Christmas Holiday.

The great draught of fishes is successfully past, and we are reposing on our laurels.

The dinner—well! During dinner one may always keep alive even in the society of forty persons. A good repast is good company and puts people in good humour. A great loss, at the same time to be regretted, was the absence of the Chamberlain on this occasion. We had calculated upon his excellent stories as the seasoning and spice of the dinner. But he takes no pleasure in any except small, choice dinner parties, and has no inclination to sacrifice himself.

Immediately after dinner comes coffee, which is also of an enlivening nature; but then follows a tedious interval—from coffee to tea-time. One feels drowsy from eating, drowsy from the heat, drowsy from the society of thirty drowsy persons, drowsy from the duty of entertaining them. All this is no easy matter. I know very well that the man who appears most petrified bears within him an animating shining spark, and that it needs but the stroke of a steel against his flint to call it out. I have with pleasure observed such frequent instances of this, and therefore began to go round as an experimenting fire-steel; but, whether it

was my fault or that of others, none of the flints would give fire, nay not so much even as a little smoke or glimmer. True it is (and this I said to my comfort), that I was too little acquainted with the greatest part of the guests present to know properly how to apply my instrument to them. Flora did not give herself the least trouble about the company, but sat there with an air of the greatest indifference in the world, turning over some leaves in a music-book. Selma moved about in the circle with the utmost politeness and agreeable attention, drawing out first one then another into conversation, and endeavouring to excite them to chat among themselves; and wherever she went her sweetness of manner did not fail to produce a little animation, which, however, drooped again, as soon as she was gone. In a word, things would not succeed, but on the contrary, grew more and more quiet, sultry, and heavy, which reminded me of the following description of a *soirée* in our highest "*haute volée*," given by a witty Countess:

"We were like fish in a cauf which, on account of the heat, swim heavily round each other, and now and then only move their fins."

Three or four card tables were occupied by a part of the gentlemen; but we had several who did not participate in the games, and far less in conversation, and a whole number of sedentary ladies; and these were to be amused till twelve o'clock at night.

It was a little more than six o'clock in the evening, my stepmother was sitting on the sofa, and concealed her yawning under polite gestures; but her appearance thereby became more and more uneasy, and her looks

wandered in search of Selma, evidently with an expression of inquiry:

"What are we to do now?"

Selma came to me, and whispered:

"This is horrible! In my despair I have just been advocating insurrection to Aunt Pendelfelt, but she made such a 'wry, miserable face,' that I immediately took to flight. But now we must stir up a revolution to keep us all alive. Poor mamma looks as if she were ready to give up the field . . . . Is there nothing that strikes you, no luminous idea?"

"Yes, a vivid one. We will get up a Finnish Christmas gambol, with singing and dancing, which has just come into my mind."

"Ah, that won't do."

"It will, it must do!"

And I raised my voice, proposing to the company to join in a Christmas gambol.

From the gloomy and perfect silence consequent on my proposal, I could perceive how hazardous it was; and my stepmother looked in some measure embarrassed on my account.

But I have a certain Finnish vein in me, which makes me cheerfully persevere in carrying out any thing I may have begun with boldness. Accordingly I very composedly renewed my proposal, turned to several ladies and gentlemen in the company, gave them a brief delineation of my plan of the game, and craved their assistance. I found also, especially among the ladies, several volunteers, "but—it was so difficult." "The game is connected with singing, and we cannot sing," &c. A thousand obstacles! And Krusenberg, the royal secretary, whom I solicited to "risk

the dance with me," started back alarmed, and exclaimed: "No, heaven keep me, *Fräulein*, I cannot possibly comply."

My prospect then became clouded, as to how the thing was to be set a-going, when my lucky star caused the door to open, and ushered in the Baron and Lieutenant Sparrsköld.

"We are happily delivered," whispered I to Selma, "if we can only prevail on *these* to interest themselves in our enterprise."

"In that I think we shall succeed," answered she, "I see Lennartson advancing towards us: we will speak to him."

As soon as Lennartson approached us, we communicated our trouble to him, and I earnestly entreated him to assist me in my hazardous undertaking. Throughout my future life shall I be grateful for the ready compliance and kindness with which he entered into the matter. There are in social life actions which evince as much goodness of heart and philanthropy as visiting prisoners and captives in their gloomy cells.

Unaccompanied by the Baron, I went to Signora Luna, to solicit her assistance; and now our horizon became perfectly bright, for she answered freely and cheerfully that, knowing the game, from having frequently played at it in her childhood, she would have very great pleasure in leading it. And when the friendly beaming Signora Luna with the Baron led off the dance and I followed them on the hand of young Sparrsköld, then Krusenberg, the royal secretary, rushed up to Selma, and begged to be allowed to dance with her, and there was a rise, a movement, and a

general upstarting among the company, and the train that turned out into the great saloon became greater and gr eater. My stepmother engaged herself to Mam'selle M * *, who had no partner, other ladies followed her example, elderly ladies and gentlemen also joined; soon all the guests were in it; the merry gambol was in full operation, and mirth and laughter abounded. My stepmother began to look happy.

It was a moment of surprise to me when I beheld St. Orme (whose entrance I did not perceive) with Flora among the dancers—and Flora no longer troubled with *ennui* or peevishness, but shining with ever increasing alacrity and beauty in the light which fully irradiated the countenances of the freshly arrived gentlemen.

The game, properly speaking, was not one of forfeits, but the Baron made it such at the instigation of Signora Luna, who thought that the redeeming part of it might prove amusing; and when the dance had continued a good while, and the people appeared to grow tired, a number of pledges had in the mean time been taken, and our lady "with the bright eyes" seated herself with pomp and dignity in the centre of the circle, and exclaimed:

"I glow and I burn
The pledge to return!
Who, then, will own it?"

One of the first who had to redeem a forfeit was Krusenberg the royal Secretary. His task was to recite something to the company; and being well known for his talent in that art, a general attention arose which was still heightened by the subtle air with which the

young declaimer set about his work. During the game he had already frequently evinced his desire to produce an effect,and now evidently aimed at "startling" us tremendously, which indeed he did, though in no very agreeable manner, while with much pathos he commenced:

"Our Father!"——

With a look of noble indignation flashing from her eyes, Selma rose, went to him, and said:

"Herr Secretary Krusenberg, I think it would be better never to pronounce such sacred words at all than to pronounce them here in such a manner!"

The reciter became mute, and looked "somewhat confounded."

"Bless me! How severe Fräulein Selma is to-day!" said he, reddening; and trying to appear unembarrassed, he added:

"Well, then, I suppose I must fix upon something else?"

And then he began to declaim some French verses, but by no means successfully, being obviously disconcerted by this little scene, and the impression it appeared to make upon the company. I cast a hasty glance at Lennartson, who was standing at some distance from the circle, and read in his eyes, which followed Selma, the expression of decided approbation and delight.

With deeply-blushing cheeks, Selma seated herself beside me, and after keeping herself quiet awhile, she turned her beautiful eyes, which had resumed their wonted benignity, towards me, and asked:

"Have I done wrong, Sophia?"

"You have acted quite right," answered I, pressing her hand.

"But I am greatly afraid I have been too warm, too severe?"

"No! But, if you think so, say something conciliatory to the young man in explanation."

"Yes, I have already thought of doing so," rejoined Selma.

An elderly gentlemen, who had distinguished himself during the game by his amusing contrivances and vivacity, came, puffing with his exertion, and seated himself beside us, saying gaily:

"It is very pleasant to be cheerfully excited. When one grows old and lethargic, and every thing around is still, one is often apt to feel so flat and dead that it makes one think, 'It's now all over with us poor fellows, yes, all over!' But when by the way one happens to be roused and exhilarated by any thing, why then one seems to have some evidence that one's end is not quite so near. Yes, then much that is dormant in us awakens and our drooping spirits revive, so that we are pleasantly surprised and constrained to think: 'Ah, how astonishiug that you can yet be so young and lively!'"

"To this I wisely remarked, that it was an additional proof that the spirit maintains the entire vigour of its essential existence, though in its evening twilight, which we term "old age," it slumbers a while.

The old man smiled, and again observed:

"How pretty she is! Her very appearance, and the opening of her lips, are enough to charm even an old man's heart like mine!"

As these words seemed to me altogether inappropriate to my remark, I gazed at the gentleman with amazement, and perceived that his eyes were directed

on Selma, with a radiant expression of delight, who, in order to redeem a forfeit, had been adjudged "to stand as a statue," and who performed her task in a very agreeable manner. While I, with my neighbours, were engaged in quietly contemplating her, I heard St. Orme's voice near me. He had, in his wonted soft, almost stealthy manner, seated himself beside me, while, with a sad expression, quite unusual with him, he said:

"I suppose you have some recollection of my lamented wife, now in heaven, Virginia?"

"Yes," replied I; "she was one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen."

"Does it not appear to you," continued he, "that Selma bears some resemblance to her—less in features than in expression and general demeanour: for instance, in the blending of pride and amiableness, in the union of the Princess and the Sylphide, and in that which is, in the fullest sense of the term, *maiden-like behaviour*. And her voice! It frequently recalls to my mind her whose lips are closed for ever!"

Such words from St. Orme! I looked at him with amazement, but he appeared to have lost sight of me, and all around him, quietly absorbed in sorrowful recollections.

Why did I, from the very first, set my face against St. Orme? Why have I not rather sought out his good qualities? From this hour his whole being appeared to me ennobled.

Were men *always* what they are in their best moments, we should have a heaven of beauty and goodness upon earth. But——!

The redeeming of the forfeits continued, amid singing and dancing, till supper.

After this I saw Selma gently directing her course towards the window at which Krusenberg was standing. Shortly afterwards she came to me, and softly whispered:

"I have made peace with Krusenberg!"

"And what did you say to him?"

"I begged him to forgive my warmth towards him, but told him at the same time what a painful impression he had made on me, and—in a word, I was friendly and candid with him."

"Well, and what did he say?"

"He—why, what do you suppose? He thanked me and acknowledged his error, his thoughtlessness; nay, he imputed so many faults to himself that I grew quite uneasy. But, Sophia! how much of good do we discover in people."

"Yes, to be sure; is not that the very doctrine I am continually preaching? But we must also carefully study and seize every opportunity to call it forth. As we holloa into the wood so does the echo respond to it!"

And such were the "*faits et gestes*" on this day, the memorandum of which I cannot, however, conclude without adverting to the "*mention honourable*" which I received from my stepmother at the close of the same, for my good behaviour, appearance, and toilet. The latter part of this panegyric I lost in the following CLAIR-OBSCURE.

"And in that dress with your beautiful fair arms and the pearls in your brown hair, and all that——you

did not look more than twenty—and so distinguished! I can assure you that more than one——hum, hum, hum!"

I.—(Abashed and half-inquisitive to hear more) "Ah, my sweet mother!"

My Stepmother.—Hem, hem! I shall not say any thing until—hem, hem, hem!"

December 28th.

FRAGMENT OF A DIALOGUE.

"But tell me, Selma, what am I to argue from Flora's deportment toward Lennartson and St. Orme? She doubtless loves the former, and is betrothed to him, and yet the latter exercises an extraordinary influence over her! And she—how odd and strange her behaviour towards him! At times she appears excessively complacent, and at others distant; at times almost virulent, and again at others quite tender, even humble; and then again so proud—what, indeed, can be the ground of all this?"

Selma—(with a sort of anxiety)—"Ah, question me not!—I neither know nor understand the connection of all these things; but this much I do know, that Flora is quite altered since St. Orme's arrival. She has always been of an odd temper, and her lively imagination always made her fly from one subject to another; but she was so agreeable, so entertaining and amiable withal!"

I.—"How long has Flora been betrothed to Lennartson?"

"A little more than a year—the ceremony took

place at the death-bed of her mother; but I do not know why their betrothment has not been declared since. The old General Lennartson was visited about the same time with a paralytic stroke; and his son travelled with him abroad for the restoration of his health. When Lennartson returned alone a few months ago, St. Orme was then already there, and Flora—altered. But she will not talk about it, nor hear it spoken of; and certainly the connection at present subsisting between them must soon undergo a change again—I think it so unnatural. I hope in the new year's sun, and his power.—Do you see how 'Matilde' is already blushing between 'King Hezekiah' and 'Lord Welington;' and here 'King Ahasuerus' is beginning to open his light-blue eyes! and certainly it must be a beautiful sight to see all these in full bloom!"

Thus my young sister sought to evade a subject so painful to her—thus she endeavoured to conceal dark images with bright ones; but the dark ones must not be overlooked, but be penetrated, and if possible, trans-*illumined*. Methinks my eyes are pretty well opened now.

January 1st, 18—

A nosegay of fresh flowers and a cordial shake of the hand from the Viking, is the happy impression I have retained from the forenoon visits.

In the Evening.

Dressed ready for the "*Exchange Ball*," in black satin trimmed with lace, pearls in my hair and round my neck and arms. Hush, dear Selma! you must not

make me vain: you should not put your eldest sister to the blush.

Flora is driving with "the Beauty" to the "*Exchange,*" and making her toilet with her. I am not in good spirits, and do not think that I shall be agreeable. But a calm *observer* need not be *disagreeable* when she herself intends to play no part in it. It is now upwards of ten years since I saw the world at the New Years' Assembly, in Stockholm. How will it now appear? "*Allons et voyons!*"

January 2d.

Now we will chat a little about the public anniversary ball.

On entering the spacious, splendidly illuminated Hall, (we arrived rather late) the whole of the upper, *i. e.*, the aristocratic part of the company, were already assembled. My stepmother, notwithstanding, directed her steps to it, while by way of encouragement, she said to us,—

"Ah, I have no fear of our finding room yet!"

But their Graces were sitting as immoveable as stone walls, and on Selma's whispering a warm entreaty, her mother desisted from all attempts to disturb them. We described, therefore, with all dignity a semicircle, while amid courteous salutations, we made our retreat to the lower region of the saloon, where we found seats in the proximity of the door. We were scarcely seated when Count Gyllenhöf's brilliant group entered, accompanied by the Silfverling's family, and halting for a moment at the entrance in order to take a survey of the room; my stepmother rose to speak to the Countess, but the latter turned away with a short, cold

salutation, and floated past with her splendid retinue as if she had never noticed us. My stepmother retired to her seat, evidently disconcerted and mortified. Selma appeared equally so from sympathy, and said with vexation: "What stupid people!" A comet-like phenomenon then moved swiftly through the apartment. It was Flora and her sister, with a suite of gentlemen. They were both dazzlingly beautiful, and dressed with the utmost elegance. Flora nodded to us with an air of sprightliness, and followed her sister to the upper part of the room, where they took their seats in the vicinity of the Count Gyllenlöf's family, who had installed themselves close to the platform prepared for the royal family. Selma's eyes involuntarily filled with tears as they followed Flora. We were sitting neglected among persons entirely unknown to us. My stepmother looked extremely troubled, and I felt myself much depressed on her account. At this crisis my sister suddenly took courage and began in her peculiarly vivacious manner to introduce several parties who were arriving or had already arrived, by which my stepmother was agreeably diverted, and challenged by me to display also her great knowledge of the world and mankind.

In the mean time we fell into conversation with a very pretty young lady, who appeared extremely desirous to be made acquainted with the great world around, which she then saw for the first time. The pretty young girl amused us with the sprightliness and natural frankness with which she also communicated to us her great fear of not being able to get a dance that evening, as she had scarcely any acquaintances there; and was, besides, so inexperienced in the world,

so timid, &c. She would, however, still console herself for remaining an inactive spectator for the whole evening, if she could but get a sight of the royal family, but she had heard that they would probably not attend the ball that evening. And she had promised her little sisters to wake them on her return home, and relate to them all the particulars about the princesses and the young princes. Her apprehension was soon, however, changed into the most lively joy when the royal chamberlains made their appearance, and all the assembly rose up to salute the Queen, who with the Crown Prince and Princess, and the two eldest princes, Charles and Gustavus, entered the room attended by a brilliant retinue, and walked through the assembly amidst cheers and friendly salutations, to occupy their places on the platform. And now Selma and I began to rejoice that we were seated near the door, where we had so good a view of the royal family.

Selma's new young friend was in perfect ecstasy, and at once bestowed her heart on Prince Gustavus, while Selma sportfully intimated to her that she had chosen Prince Charles for the favourite of her heart.

Scarcely was the royal family seated, when the Gyllenlöfs' group fell into conversation with their suite, while young Silfverling played the gallant to the maids of honour.

Slowly the *anglaise* began to form in the upper part of the saloon. The royal Chamberlains had sallied forth on their mission of invitations for the dance to the so honoured parties, in the name of the august visitors. Soon the Crown Princess was seen in majestic pomp and glittering with jewels, leading off the *anglaise* with Baker N * * *, a little round man, whose good-

natured and polite manner, however, showed that true education easily cancels every—even the most prominent distinction of rank. The Crown Prince danced with a young lady of the civil station, and Prince Charles with our new little friend, who was so very apprehensive of not being able to dance this evening, and was now led by the hand of the courteous young prince, beaming with all the charms of youth, and the beauty of innocent joy. She was mentioned as the eldest daughter of merchant M * * *. I fancied she might at that moment think: "What would my sisters say if they were here?"

Lennartson danced with, Flora Selma with Felix Delphin; and seeing my stepmother gradually becoming more and more contented, and engaged in a conversation with her neighbour, I began to exercise my eyes and ears more freely, in order to pick up and gather in whatever the occasion might offer.

The ball was charming, and the world, apparently, pretty much the same, since last I saw it, nearly twelve years ago; nor did I see much difference in my old acquaintances. Time had passed lightly over most of their countenances, marking here and there only a few furrows. Only on two faces familiar to me I could read an important history—a greater advancement; in the one for good, in the other for evil. Generally speaking, I saw many of interesting appearance among the young of both sexes. It is now commonly asserted that ugliness as well as stupidity are gradually disappearing in the world. Well, good speed to them.

At my right side I now heard the two young Bravanders quietly conversing together, at no great distance from me.

The one said:

"No, a legion of devils take and rend me, if I do!"

And the other answered:

"Yes, the devil ride me! The devil in hell ride me!

And the former continued:

"No, ten thousand *Donnerwetter* strike me dead!"

And the other rejoined:

"Yes, the devil govern me!"

An elderly gentleman of tolerably sarcastic appearance now joined the two speakers, and, with a smile, wished them "pleasant entertainment."

To the left of me, Hilda and Thilda Angel were passing their observations on the two gentlemen just mentioned.

Hilda said:

"Ah! he is *too* pretty, this Axel Bravander, with his beautiful eyes and his neat moustaches. Lawk! what a handsome fellow!"

THILDA. "And his brother, according to my taste, is no less handsome. And what a waltzer he is! positively divine! He has engaged me for the second waltz! ah, he is more than handsome!"

HILDA and THILDA, (together.) "Ah, they are both more than handsome, they are so sweet, so pretty."

"Aha," thought I, "it seems we have not altogether got rid of the stupid and the ugly."

I was now interrupted in my observations by a good-looking, middle-aged lady, of an apparently lively disposition, who saluted me with an expression of extreme cordiality, and seizing my hand, exclaimed:

"Ah, my dearest Mad—Mams—pardon me, I have forgotten the title—I wish you a happy new-year.

How charming to see Mad—Mams—here again. And how is the Lady of the Governor-General—I mean her Grace, the stepmother of Fräul——"

I was conscious that I had had some acquaintance with the lady who addressed me; but I could not at that moment call to mind her name or rank, and was therefore somewhat at a loss to know how to address her, since she appeared so certain of being recognised by me. While thus perplexed and vexed at the inconceivable awkwardness of our social usages, I was struck with the, as I thought, brilliant idea of styling my unknown acquaintance "Your Grace." She looked somewhat confounded at this manner of address, and our conversation was beginning to ebb, when Signora Luna, (whose honourable duties as one of the ladies-in-waiting on the queen had closed,) made up to us, and after giving me a hearty shake of the hand, pleasantly addressed my unknown friend in these words:

"Ah, good day, Lady Provost. Happy new-year! How is the honourable gentleman, the Provost?"

"Much obliged, my gracious Baron— or Countess, for the kind inquiry. I hope the Bar— I meant to say the Countess will forgive me for being so unfortunate as never to remember names and titles. May I not be allowed to say Countess?"

"Could we not simply say '*you*' to each other?" observed Signora Luna, smiling. "By so doing, we should avoid all ceremonies and—do you know what Kellgren says, 'the simpler the better.'"

"Ah, if that could be," exclaimed the Provost's Lady, with a brightening countenance, "it would really be a fortunate thing, especially for me, who am possessed of such a bad memory, and most scrupu-

lously sensitive of being in any way uncourteous. But is this really practicable?"

"I see nothing to prevent it," rejoined "our lady with the bright eyes," laughing, "if we, the Provostesses, the Baronesses, the Countesses, and ladies of all ranks only resolve to carry it out. For you know very well, 'that God wills what the ladies will.' Do not you think so, my much-respected Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies?" continued she, turning to the above-mentioned nice old gentleman, "does not your worship think that the Chief Master of the Ceremonies himself and we all would have a far easier life here in Sweden if we, like all civilized nations, were to make use of the mode and manner of address which our fine language affords us, in the words '*you*' and '*your*,' instead of these everlasting titles? To me it is positively appalling to speak to the Gentleman Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies, when I think for a moment that I have to address the Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies by the title of Mr. the Chief Master of the Ceremonies, and that all the impediments of which the title of a Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies puts in the way of my tongue and thoughts recur every minute. And now I vow never to speak to Mr. the Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies again, if Mr. the Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies does not give me permission to address Mr. the Master-in-Chief of the Ceremonies with a simple '*you*' and '*your*,' and that he will use the same style of address to me."

"You are perfectly right, my gracious lady," rejoined the polite old gentleman, smiling: "and if *you* can so far prevail with your purpose as to induce its adoption among mankind generally, *you* will gain the

thanks and esteem of all Sweden. I cannot conceive why people at court and in social circles wish to be less European than they are in the Swedish Academy, where they address each other very simply by "*you*" and "*your*," words, which, moreover, are of as good a *tone* and sound as the "*vous*" of the French, the "*Sie*" of the Germans, and the "*De*" of our northern brethren."

"That is excellent!" exclaimed Signora Luna. "This very new year's day we will conclude a treaty to adopt the words "you" and "your" in our common intercourse and every-day life; and a new, better time shall then arise for our spoken and written language. Allow me to introduce you to these two ladies, my very excellent acquaintances. I do not tell you whether they are mesdames or mamselles, but merely that they are very agreeable persons, that you may call them "you" and "your," and that they will do the same to you; and now—I leave the closer acquaintanceship to your address and reply."

And we conversed together, and all went off easily and well. The volubility and ease in the novel colloquial style gave wings to our discourse; and I found in the Master in Chief of the Ceremonies one of the most interesting old gentlemen, and in the Provost's lady, one of the most agreeable and lively persons of her class in the world.

The dance in the mean time proceeded, but—as usual at these New Year's Assemblies—without much life or spirit: the object of the visitors on such occasions is more to see and be seen, to salute each other with the usual congratulatory phrase, "Happy New Year," and to talk together, than to dance. Precisely at

eleven o'clock the royal family repaired to the room on the right to receive and return the compliments of the diplomatic corps. On their re-entering the saloon they began to make the great round of it; and I indeed pitied them on account of the many empty words which they had to say and listen to from several hundreds of persons unknown to them. Notwithstanding, the procession was a brilliant and beautiful sight. The splendid attire of the queen (she was almost entirely covered with jewels), and her condescending and courteous deportment, almost involuntarily called forth profound obeisance and courtesies; the tall noble figure of the Crown Prince and Princess, one feels a sort of pleasure in looking up to; and no one contemplates without a feeling of satisfaction and hope, the two young princes, the elder dark and manly, the younger fair and gentle, both lofty and slender in form, and with the bloom of unspoiled youth upon their ruddy faces.

It was the Crown Princess, however, who chiefly attracted my attention. I remembered how, twenty years ago, I saw her make her entrance into Stockholm, sitting in her gilded carriage with transparent windows, her delicate figure arrayed in silver gauze, with a crown of jewels on her head, the rosy tints on her lovely cheeks, and her light blue eyes so bright and beaming, while greeting the people who crowded houses and streets and flocked round her carriage, and with unceasing shouts of joy hailed in her the fair hope of their country.

Signora Luna has mentioned to me that at that time when the Princess, after the close of the procession, passing through the city to the royal palace, the car-

riage drove thundering through the lofty, gloomy archway, she quickly and deeply bowed down her head upon her hands, and, on raising it again, her eyes were filled with tears—as with solemn *devotion* she entered her future residence.

I thought of all this during the gradual advance of the royal procession to us. I thought how the hopes, then raised of the young princess, had been realised,—how her life since that period had been spent; how she had distinguished herself by quiet greatness, as consort and mother, as a vigilant guardian of noble manners, as a promoter of industry, and a helper of the poor and the afflicted; how she now stood there, an honour to religion, to her native land, to the people that she now called her own—and I loved and revered her in the depth of my heart. I fancied I could read in her large, expressive eyes, how wearisome were to her the empty words which she was constrained to speak and hear; I deemed it absurd that for mere courtesy's sake not a single truly cordial word should on that evening reach her ears; I therefore allowed my heart to emancipate itself and my lips boldly to utter the salutation: "God bless your Majesty!" Her large eyes gazed on me with some degree of astonishment, which, however, assumed a colour of friendship, when, gracefully greeting me, she passed on, and halted on coming up to Selma, whom she knew, and with whom she very freely conversed a while, seemingly delighted by the agreeable, unconstrained deportment of my young sister. The Queen and my stepmother spoke in French together, as if they had known each other from their youth. The Crown Prince talked to Lennartson, who had joined

us sometime before. From all this there arose a considerable pause in the movements of the royal suite, and their lingering before us drew all eyes upon us with a degree of curiosity.

Scarcely had the royal family passed us, when Count Gyllenlöf's, as if suddenly struck by a flash of light, hastened up to us, and requested us "at last" to bear them company. They had no fear of procuring places for us on the platform, and we must at all events follow them to the upper part of the room!

My stepmother, easily conciliated, allowed herself to be prevailed upon. We went, we arrived;—the Silfverlings began to move closer together, and we obtained places. My stepmother had to answer a number of civilities and friendly congratulations on the pleasure of their meeting; Selma rejected three invitations from young Silfverling, and I now comprehended the full sense of her expression—"*spasmodic acquaintances.*"

Shortly after the royal family left the Assembly, we did so likewise. The unfortunate "Philosopher" had forgotten Flora's galoshes, at which she became very angry and unhappy. Selma entreated her urgently to take hers, and Flora—after some hesitation—took them. Lennartson appeared to be confounded and displeased, and my stepmother grieved, at this. All my entreaties were unavailing to induce Selma to accept of mine. In the hall we were detained a considerable time by the crowd of people. Lennartson threw his cloak at Selma's feet, compelling her to stand upon it, that her feet might not get cold with standing on the cold stone floor. This mark of care and attention called forth the hideous trait of jealousy on Flora's countenance. St. Orme regarded her quietly, while at

the same time he paid every possible courtesy to her. He offered her his arm; Lennartson escorted my stepmother, and the Chamberlain myself.

We now came into collision with aunt Pendelfelt, who in a half-audible voice said to Flora:

"Well, my sweet friend,—if one may be allowed to ask such a question—when shall I have the pleasure to congratulate you?"

Flora's face expressed astonishment and vexation; but St. Orme answered smiling:

"Most assuredly before another new-year!"

At these words Lennartson looked at him with a sharp, inquiring glance; St. Orme turned his eyes in another direction, and Flora seemed to grind her teeth together.

Aunt Pendelfelt now made up to Selma and Felix, and, in fact, to all appearance, with a similar question, which Selma anxiously endeavoured to evade, while entreating Felix to go forward. At this moment the throng of people opened and we were liberated.

In the carriage, my stepmother vied with me in wrapping Selma's feet in our cloaks and shawls. At home, at a light supper, we all were in good-humour, and amused ourselves in projecting all sorts of improbable plans for the future. We laughed much; but at a whisper from St. Orme, Flora suddenly turned serious and gloomy. At the same time I perceived telegraphic signs between my stepmother and my uncle, which in some measure spoiled my humour; and on our separating this first day of the year, several of us were disconcerted. But Selma, good, gay, and sportful, prevented every fretful stiffness, and amid mutual agreeable wishes, we bade each other "good night!"

And so it is in our life—in our home here in the North. We live much *with* and *through* one another. are not unfrequently unpleasantly affected, troubled, and vexed, and must therefore seek for the remedy of it again at home and in ourselves, for without, things are not here as in the rich South. Hence it is found so charming when a tone of love and joy gives the key-note to general harmony at home. Then all dissonances gradually dissolve and we can then in peace say to each other—"good night!"

January 7th.

Good morning, Life! A beautiful bright day. Snow lies on the southern mountains glittering in dazzling whiteness against the clear, blue sky. It is not very cold yet, and the sun bathes palaces and huts, waves and banks, men and beasts, and statues, with streams of light. Sea-swallows * soar with swan-like wings over the Norrstream, when the water of the lake with its three hundred islands breaks into the salt-sea, and mingles its waves with the foaming billows. This stream plays an important part in my life. Its roaring is my lullaby at night when I am in bed. In the morning it supplies me with water for my bath, and its wild, fresh odour, its bracing coolness awaken in me vivid recollections of the days past on the shores of the Cautua—fresh, youthful feelings replete with the enjoyment of life. In its rushing waves I behold the reflection of the first rays of light, when from my window I greet the early morn.

* *Tarna*, a species of fish-mew, *lasus canus*, *sterna*

Light! Water! These primeval bounties of the Creator for the enjoyment of all men to the present day—why do we no longer appreciate their abundantly blessed efficacy; why do we not allow ourselves to be baptized by them every day to a new life, renovation of spirit, and renewed gratitude!

I have stood at my open window, and with full inspiration drunk in the fresh air, which with the sunny light, at once streamed into my window. I have had cheerful thoughts.

I remembered some Polish nobles who, last summer, visited Sweden, and thought of the respectful sentiments they cherished for this our father-land. "A land never vanquished by a foreign power! A people that has ever maintained its independence by its strength and valour!" said they, with an expression of mingled joy and sadness. (The latter remark applied to their own ill-fated country.) And softly I sang a part of *Malmström's* beautifully affecting song "*The Father-land*,"—words which have frequently touched the tender chords of my heart—I sang with sympathetic love:

"Bemourn'd, unhappy Sweden!
Thou battle-plain of misery!

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* * * * *

Thou richly honoured Father-land,
Whose bosom bear'st our fathers' graves,
Thou steep and hill-crown'd Strand,
Which faithful Ocean loves,
Thou Home of Joy! thou peaceful Land!
God shield thee with a fostering hand,
When weal abounds, or woe enslaves!"

I thought at the same time of my own happy state of independence. Oh, Liberty, how sweet to my taste art thou after long years of thraldom!

I also thought of something dear to me and of ever-growing interest. I feel that I am entering into an ever-improving and continually more harmonious relation with my fellow-creatures. Since my mind has become enlightened, since—at peace with myself—I am no longer excessively desirous to please others, nor zealously studious to gain their love and applause; since then I do in fact please them far more, and find far more pleasure in them also. Since in man, as in woman, I have chiefly looked and addressed myself to the essential *man*, I have had for mankind and they for me a sort of relationship, a kind of kindred feeling of confidence which opens heart to heart and enhances the charms of life; in short I feel with ever increasing distinctness that "philanthropy is precisely my *casus*."

Accordingly two beings advance nearer and nearer to my heart, viz. Selma and William Brenner, my young sister, and my *friend*. Selma renders me happy by her amiable disposition and cheerful, cordial deportment. She has at once laid aside the mark of mimicry, which disfigured the purity of her features and her natural wit, since then she seems to me only the more interesting. Satire may also play upon the lips of an angel, and Mirth and Wit be our servants in the mansion of our Lord. Does He not exhibit this to us in nature? Does He not disseminate over sea and land, amid clouds and stars, millions of cheerful inspirations and sunny smiles, which flash forth in bright as well as cloudy moments, and cheer the hearts of His creatures?

William Brenner, the Viking—why do I at the

thought of him feel, as it were, a sunshine in my heart? One thing I know for a certainty,—it is not love! My relative position, however, towards him affords me pleasure. For some time past I have enjoyed much of his company, and feel at all times happy in his presence. I like to talk to him of my Finnish father-land, of Aura's wild scenes, of the peculiarities of its people and manners, of its wondrous mythic legends and songs, its magic arts and mighty *primeval words*—the keys to the spiritual essence of things—about my own energetic days of childhood on the banks of the rushing pearl-abounding streams, beneath the shades of the thick-leaved elm trees. How pleasantly—nay, how gladly does he listen to me, how well does he answer the expression of my thoughts and feelings, sometimes seriously, and sometimes with benignant playfulness. At times he allows me, also, to call to his remembrance incidents of his own troubled life, images from the anti-polar circles, from ocean and desert, from torrid Africa, and wondrous Egypt, scenes of battle-fields around Mount Atlas. It is very rarely that he communicates any thing about these, his adventures; but eagerly do I then listen to them. There is such grandeur and sublimity in these pictures; and I feel at the same time something grand in the nature that apprehends them.

And what feeling can it be, I wonder, that induces the Viking so obviously and so cordially to court my society? Love?—No, that I never can nor will believe,—at least, not in the usual acceptation of the word. The pretty generally prevailing notion, that man and woman only approach each other in heart under the influence of this feeling, is by no means a

correct one. They mutually seek and require each other, because they admire a peculiar kind of excellence in each other; because they reciprocally contribute to the completion of each other's character. *He*, for instance, finds inspirations of life in her; while *she*, on the other hand, finds her own world brightly illuminated in him, and thus they find through the medium of each other the harmony of existence—the plenitude of life.

Such have been my reflections to-day while contemplating my bright sky amid the enjoyment of my fresh, free air.

The horizon of our family had since New Year's Day, exhibited itself tolerably free from clouds. My stepmother is in very excellent spirits amid a multitude of New Year's visits. This has prevented us from falling into a radical debate; but since the emancipation question of the fair sex we have been extremely on our guard towards each other; and my stepmother seems to suspect some conspiracies and revolutionary plots secretly fermenting beneath many of my perfectly innocent expressions.

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January 11th.

St. Orme pays us sometimes an early morning visit, requesting secret interviews with my stepmother. On such occasions she always looks perplexed; and when she returns from these private conferences, she is generally for some time afterwards peevish and troubled, till fresh impressions banish this state of feeling. I rather surmise that these private applications relate to some pecuniary matters, about some money which St. Orme wishes to borrow from my stepmother.

May her kindness not lead her into embarrassment! I have heard some unfounded reports about St. Orme's

affairs, his life, and his connections. Felix, also, seduced by his sophisms and the example of his friends, the Rutschenfelts, is said to be following evil ways. I have spoken to Brenner about my suspicion of St. Orme. But the Viking takes his part, and has, since his residence in Paris, had some connections with him, which renders him reluctant to believe any thing bad of him.

January 13th

My untoward foreboding has its good, *i. e.* its bad foundation. Hellfrid Rittersvärd addressed a note this morning to Selma, soliciting the loan of thirty Riksdaler. She was pressingly in want of this sum to pay her youngest brother's boarding-school account, and will be enabled to return it in two months. With eyes beaming with the desire of fulfilling Hellfrid's request, Selma showed the letter to her mother, and not happening to be just at the moment in possession of the demanded sum, begged her to advance the same.

"With infinite pleasure, my dear child!" exclaimed my stepmother, ever ready to give, and hastening to her writing-desk, opened a drawer, in which she usually keeps her money; but suddenly she seemed to bethink herself, and turned pale. She took up a purse, which the day before was full of weighty silver coin, put her hand instinctively into it, but fetched out merely a few Dalers. A painful confusion showed itself in her features, while, with an almost stammering voice, she said:

"Ah, I have not, I cannot, at present! St. Orme has borrowed all my money. He has promised me to

repay it in a few days, but, till then, what shall we do?"

My stepmother had tears in her eyes—and her troubled countenance, her pale cheeks——I instantly flew up into my room, and in a moment came down again with some *Canary birds.* (Such is the name which my stepmother and Selma playfully give to the larger species of yellow bank notes, while to the others they assign a different name of birds, according to their appearance and value.)

Selma embraced me, and danced for joy, at the sight of the yellow notes. But my stepmother accepted them with a sort of embarrassment and unpleasant condescension, which moved me a little. She promised that I should soon have them again, and if at "any time I should wish to borrow of her, I might be sure I should not be disappointed," &c. Her coldness completely chilled me; notwithstanding in the afternoon we jointly ruled the state, and systematically treated several matters of importance. I do not presume so very minutely to say according to what system, if not that of confusion. I had my thoughts elsewhere; they accompanied Felix and Selma. He appeared to be craving an interview *entre eux*, which she seemed anxiously concerned to avoid, and succeeded.

January 15th.

To-day Felix came to our house at an unusually early hour. Selma and I were alone in the inner apartment. She was tending her flowers at the window. After a few minutes' conversation with me, Felix advanced towards her. Selma went to another window; he

followed her; she would have escaped into the adjoining room, but was suddenly intercepted by Felix, who placed himself in the door-way and barred the passage against her, exclaiming in a tone of entreaty:

"No, Selma, you shall not evade me any longer! Selma, grant me an hour's interview, if you do not wish that I should quite despair!"

A deep blush suffused itself over Selma's countenance; a sort of anguish appeared to take possession of her heart, but she stuggled with herself, and while casting down her eyes on a monthly rose that she held in her hand, she seemed as if disposed to await what Felix would say to her. I, for my part, deemed it proper to go my way, and to leave the two young people to explain themselves to each other, and I took my departure, not without some feeling of disquietude.

In the saloon I met my stepmother, in a mysterious conference with the Chamberlain. She looked more than ever like *Metternich*. I took no notice, and proceeded to my room, where immediately after I received a visit from Hellfrid Rittersvärd. And out of this visit there arose quite unexpectedly a confidence, which——well, well, my gracious diplomatic lady stepmother, I suppose I may also have my state secrets! But to my Diary I may indeed confide the fact, that Hellfrid Rittersvärd, after manifold considerations and conflicts, has yielded to Ake Sparrsköld's true devotion and solicitations, and promises to be his, as soon as their pecuniary circumstances will permit of an alliance between them. It may, however, be a long time before they can accomplish their object. Before Sparrsköld gets a company, their can be no thoughts of it; and Captain Rummel, his superior, will, in all probability,

for some time yet remained in his post as Commander-in-Chief of the battalion. Hellfrid was full of anxiety, and wished to know my opinion as to whether she had acted prudently or not. I replied, "prudently;" and this made her happy.

Not until two hours afterwards had I an opportunity of seeing Selma again. On entering the room where I had left her, I found it empty; but I perceived that some one had lain on the sofa, and reclined their head on the soft cushion. I picked up several scattered rose-leaves, and saw tears glittering in their pale red shells. Being uneasy at this circumstance I pursued my search for Selma, and happily found her in her own room.

Her eyes glistened, as they are wont to do when she has been weeping, and her bosom heaved with sighs. To my tenderly anxious inquiries, her heart soon opened, and I learned her secret thoughts and feelings.

Felix had reproached Selma with the coldness and unfriendliness, which, for some time past, she had evinced towards him; and told her that this had made him unhappy, and that he should die, if she did not alter in her conduct towards him. He owned the weakness and levity of his character; but Selma could save him if she would, could make him a good and happy man. He begged her to give him her hand, and make seriousness of the sport she had so long carried on. As Selma's husband he would be a new—a better man.

"Ah!" continued Selma, "he spoke so well and so warmly of what I might be to him, and of all that he himself could and would be, that I had not the heart to withstand his entreaties and promises. But I set

him a time of probation, not until the expiration of which we——I have always thought highly of him, he has a kind heart and many good qualities, but he is so weak! And for the last few years—I should say since he became of age—he has shown himself so thoughtless, so volatile, that we have been quite dissatisfied with him. But he may amend, he may improve yet, and then——"

"And then you will make him happy, Selma?"

"Yes."

"And why are you weeping?"

"I do not know why."

"I must say I am not altogether pleased with Felix, for wishing, in some measure, to do violence to your feelings."

"Ah, I am persuaded that he has no such intentions; but he fancies perhaps that I cherish a greater affection for him than I do in reality, and that my coolness towards him arisés from my caprice or his own inconstancy. From our childhood a sort of agreement has subsisted between our families that we should be married, and *entre nous* we have always been looked upon as betrothed. Felix has always desired this alliance, so has my mother; and I have had no objection to it till I became better acquainted with myself. I now am fully persuaded that I can never love Felix with all my heart, because I cannot respect him so highly as I would and ought; but——"

"But what, my good Selma?"

"But, if I can make him and others happy, I shall not be unhappy myself. And then perhaps God will give me children that I can love, and that will be a source of joy to me."

Selma's tears flowed, as she paused, resting her head on my shoulder.

I was anxious to know what it was, in fact, that Selma had promised the young Delphin, and tenderly inquired.

"I have begged him," she replied, "that for the space of a year he should never speak of his love, but prove it by his actions and conduct. If thereby I should be convinced that his attachment for me is really so great as he professes, then after the expiration of that year of probation I will consent to become his bride. This I have promised. Felix desired nothing further; but only begged a ring of me, that he might wear on his finger as a memorial of this hour and of his promise; and I gave him the one with the sapphire. He was so joyous, so happy! Ah, Sophia! I too ought to be happy, for I feel that I have acted right; I have perhaps been the means of rescuing a human being from ruin!"

Selma's eyes were refulgent with pure joy, although through a veil of tears. I heartily rejoiced at her prudence and kindness, but felt, nevertheless, somewhat melancholy on her account.

January 18th.

"Invited out for the whole week!"

With these words my stepmother met me this morning, and her general appearance betrayed a secret pleasure through an assumed veil of well-bred weariness and satiety of the world. I expressed no condolence, especially as I saw my stepmother, as well as two of the young girls, much occupied with thoughts

of the toilet and other preparations. I felt happy within myself to be able to escape this unpleasantness and stay at home. My stepmother persuaded me, indeed, a little "to be present" on the occasion; but the tone does not indicate real earnestness.

January 21st.

Amid all the diversions which prevail in this house —amid all these beautiful dresses, artificial flowers, and all these so-called pleasures, strange symptoms still break forth, which betray the volcanic soil upon which we are dancing. Flora has, during the last few days, been as changeable in her temper as she is fickle in her dress; and I fancied as if by this capricious humour her only object was to fetter Lennartson's attention, or more correctly, to *fascinate* him; and his eyes do indeed follow her with attention, but more with the earnestness of the observer than the expression of an enraptured lover. At times it appears to me as if, with all those transformations of Flora, he would ask: "Which is the true one?" and that is my question too: for while she obviously seeks to draw Lennartson to herself, she does not disdain some subordinate conquests; and with her engaging manner and deportment there is no want of success in these. St. Orme all the while plays apparently an indifferent part, which he, however, frequently betrays by his subtle look and secret vigilance over her.

Among the pictures in the inner apartment, there is a beautiful portrait of "Beatrice Cenci," the unhappy parricide: to-day Flora stood for a long time contemplating it, absorbed in silent thought; I regarded her

attentively, for she was charming as she stood there with a "*guirlande ondine*" of coral and white water-lilies in her brown hair, arrayed in a dress of that chameleon-like silk which is so much in fashion this year. All at once she broke silence, saying,—

"Can you tell me, wise Philosophia! why it is that I feel pleasure in contemplating this picture—this Beatrice Cenci?"

"Probably because she is so affectingly beautiful?" said I.

"No! but because she was so strong-minded and resolute—people of that description have an invigorating influence on the minds of those with whom they come in contact, especially when they feel disgusted at the undecided weak creatures, void of all character, with which the world so greatly abounds. What is your opinion of Beatrice?"

"I pity her from my very heart. It is horrible to hate the author of one's existence—"

"Yes; horrible, indeed!" I interrupted Flora. "Yes, it is a horrible thing to hate one's parents; but it is dreadful also to be compelled to *despise* them!"

Flora hid her face in her hands as she utterd these words. I regarded her with astonishment and sympathy.

"Ah!" continued she, with excitement, "would that no one might say that it is a matter of indifference what kind of song is sung beside a child's cradle—its echo reverberates throughout his whole after existence. Lennartson, Selma!—Why are they so good, so holy, and I,—why am I so—and yet, Sophia, I am no ordinary woman!"

I was silent, and Flora proceeded, fixing a sharp look on me,—

"I know that you lightly esteem me, and judge me unjustly; but still you cannot say that I am an *ordinary* person."

"*Extraordinary* and nobly endowed, you unquestionably are,' replied I, "but in reality you are perhaps less extraordinary than you yourself believe. Besides, dearest Flora, I am not competent to judge of you, for I do not know you yet. You are frequently so unlike yourself, you appear as if you were not *one* person, but a compound of two, nay, of many.

"Yes, nor am I *one* person," rejoined Flora; "I have a double nature—a Fylgia and a Varsel—which is continually dancing about, and is my other *self*—which follows me like a shadow and places itself between me and all truth, night and day, at home and abroad, laughing or weeping, in the ball-room or at church—nay, even in church it interposes between me and heaven! How then is it possible that I can have peace; that I can be free! Ah, would that I could exchange my nature for that of a little sparrow in the field!"

"And why a sparrow?" inquired I.

"Because then nobody would trouble himself about me; because then I should know nothing of my .... But stop! I feel that one of my evil demons is near!"

"Suffer him not to gain any power over you!" I entreated, with seriousness and warmth.

"He *has* already power over me!" said Flora, bitterly, "and I stand on the brink of an abyss—and soon, soon enough I shall be dragged down, unless . . . ."

She became mute; the sound of soft steps was heard proceeding from the outer room, and St. Orme entered. Soon after came my stepmother and Selma, and all went to supper at the Silfverlings'.

January 23d.

New symptoms of disquietude. My stepmother had assumed her *Metternich* features and the telegraphic signs between her and the Chamberlain are increasing. I strongly suspect a conspiracy against my precious freedom.

"We must go cautiously and a little diplomatically to work," I heard my stepmother say a short time ago to my uncle in a whisper. "You surely have not let Sophia surmise any thing?"

"No; but I delicately sound my depth as I proceed, and depend upon me, I know how to treat with the ladies," answered he.

Moreover my stepmother torments me with eulogies on the Chamberlain, and the Chamberlain with questions as to my opinion of furniture; as, for instance, the form and shapes of tables, drawers, &c. He wishes, as he says, to be guided in the furnishing of some new rooms entirely by my taste. But what do I care about his furniture?

If my stepmother sings my uncle's praise, he is no less liberal in extolling her.

"She is one of the best ladies I know," was his observation again to-day. "Such tact, discrimination, and discretion! One may confide one's whole heart and soul to her, and I for my part—if I wish to do some good in secret—I know nobody whom I would so readily and with such perfect security make my confidant."

I begin to be out of patience with all this.

There is a rumour abroad of a marriage between Brenner and a handsome and rich young widow. This has annoyed me a little. Brenner's deportment appears to me strange. Why did he not speak to me about this alliance? Am I not his friend, his sisterly friend. And why . . . . I cannot bear any ambiguity of conduct in him. But perhaps I am wrong to view it in such a light.

January 24th.

Coolness between my stepmother and me. An attempt on her part to impose on me repelled. I—haughty, and displaying my sense of liberty in a not very amiable manner. Looks of displeasure from Flora, regards of anxious entreaty from Selma. General discomfort. If things were to continue thus, it will be amusing!

Ah, people say, life is stagnant when it is not quickened or incited by events from without. But such is not the case. I should conjecture that at such times the angels of heaven are attentively inclining to our life on earth, for then the chords quiver in its inmost depth, then are developed its finest nerves, then forms itself that which increases the power of heaven or of hell. Till the hour when the butterfly unfolds its wings it reposes quietly in the safe resting-place which it has chosen. Until that hour of transformation its life appears to be altogether internal. But the radiant day butterfly and the nocturnal sphinx are children of the same quiet summer hour.

January 25th.

A ramble out. Disagreeable, uncomfortable day, people's faces looking purple with cold, the sky grey, icicles on all houses, snow half an ell deep in all the streets; fretful thoughts, dull feelings! But "*this too, like every thing else, will pass away,*" was the apothegm which Solomon the Wise gave to an Eastern Prince, who desired from him a motto that might strengthen his mind in adversity and humble it in prosperity; and this motto shall be mine too.

January 26th.

To-day coming down to dinner, I saw, on entering the inner apartment, my stepmother and the Chamberlain sitting on the sofa, engaged in a whispering, confidential conversation, which they suddenly broke off at my approach. My stepmother seemed to be in an extremely good humour, came to me soon after, and said to me in a marked manner, while with pleasant attention she was arranging some part of my dress:—

"I must tell you that we have just had a long conversation about you, and about several matters concerning you. Hem—hem—hem!"

"About what matters concerning me?" inquired I, with an expression of dullness of comprehension.

"Why, about matters all severally of importance; hem—hem—hem!" said my stepmother, smiling. And then she commenced a little speech about the pleasure she felt at seeing all around her happy; how that all her thoughts and efforts were directed to the attainment of this object; how utterly regardless she was of her own personal interests and happiness; and how she

lived only for the welfare of others, &c. I thought of my bitter youthful reminiscences, and assumed a frigid demeanour at my stepmother's majestic speech.

We went to dinner. The Chamberlain was "*aux petits soins*" with me, and shared the best morsels between himself and me, which I did not well relish. To the polite attention of my stepmother I also responded coldly, and Selma's looks, which seemed to ask, "What have we done to you?" I avoided. The conversation at table happened to turn on youth, which was extolled as the golden age of life: during that period the Chamberlain had, as he himself remarked, "had his share of the cup of enjoyment." I observed that I, on the other hand, preserved from my youth the bitterest recollections, such as to this day had a marring influence on my mind. I perceived in the troubled countenance of my stepmother that she was smitten with self-reproach; while I felt as if a heavy avalanche was pressing on my heart.

In the afternoon, while working at a little collar, I made a somewhat peevish complaint of not having a particle of blond to trim it with. My stepmother immediately hastened into her room, and returned quickly with a quantity of beautiful blond, which she playfully put round my neck, begging me "to accept of that," and hoped "it might answer my purpose." At the same time I felt myself clasped in her arms, and her soft breath on my cheeks, while she archly whispered, that "my eager desire for emancipation should not prevent her from holding me fast." In my present *Spitzbergen* mood I could not, however, see any thing in this embrace except an attempt to curtail my freedom; I, therefore, disengaged myself from her coldly, and re-

fused to accept the blond, because "it did not suit me exactly." I should get some myself, such as I wanted. Quietly my stepmother went with the despised gift into her room again; and on Selma following her a moment after, I espied her through the opened door standing in a leaning posture at the window, quietly and sorrowfully looking out, and I fancied I saw tears on her cheeks.

The sight of this penetrated my very heart; with secret self-upbraiding for my conduct, I repaired to my room, there to sit in judgment on myself in silence.

But I could scarcely recognise my own room, so altered was its appearance, so greatly was it improved; for a moment I could scarcely tell where I was. Among several beautiful new articles of furniture there was one most attractive of all—namely, a most elegant mahogany book-case, through whose bright plate-glass windows a number of books in splendid bindings met my view, as it were, with a smile; and from the top a Minerva's head of bronze looked down majestically.

At the exclamation of gladsome surprise that escaped me, I heard behind me a half-snuffing, half-tittering tone; and on turning round, I saw my good-natured maid coming from a window niche, where she could no longer conceal her sympathy with my agreeable surprise.

"Her Grace has had all this in contemplation long ago," she related in the fullness of her heart; "and the Chamberlain himself ordered the book-case to be carried up here, and with *Fräulein* Selma, put every thing in order, as you see it, shortly before dinner."

A revolution now took place within me. I now saw the object of all these secret consultations, these tele-

graphic signs, these plots, which I fancied were aimed at my liberty, before me. And after all, it appears they had solely been directed to my comfort and gratification. Perhaps it was the thought of this surprise which had put my stepmother in such an excellent humour! I fancied I felt her embrace, and her breath on my cheek again. And I—how had I demeaned myself towards her!—suspiciously, distrustfully I had slighted her, and brought tears to her eyes!

With the rapidity of lightning I darted down to my stepmother, and here——

I have a dangerous kind of temper. When my feelings have been frozen, and then suddenly thawed by a sunbeam or dew-drop of life, I then generally become inundated by them as by a spring-tide, and am ready to deluge the whole world with them. In fact, there exists no human being whom I could not then press to my heart; and for those who are dear to me I have but one feeling, one craving desire—namely, to give them all I possess,—myself included.

Seneca and Cicero, and Hegel and Schlegel, and the precepts of all the sages of the world respecting self-government and serenity, and the propriety of moderation, are, at such seasons, only like oil on a waterfall. Manifold experience has, it is true, taught me in some measure to stem the rushing current; but at certain periods it gains the ascendency, and this happened to be one of them. Indeed, I was deeply moved by the kindness of my stepmother, and with such contrition for my own conduct, that if at this moment she had asked me to bestow my hand on the Chamberlain, I *believe* I should have done it. But, thanks to my lucky stars! she did not think of this, and I could

taste undisturbed all the sweetness of life, which diffused itself where human hearts overflowed with cordiality and affection.

Silently have I vowed by Minerva's head never again to torment my stepmother and myself with unnecessary suspicion. I feel my heart lighter by a ship's load. I hear Selma singing merrily. God bless the singing bird! her melodies generally resound in festive celebration of the sunny hours of home. Herein she resembles the singing birds of Sweden, that—as Nelson describes in his Fanna—"sing most charmingly after a gentle summer shower."

January 28th.

Continued rapturous delight on my part at the bookcase, &c. Increasing contentment and satisfaction of my stepmother. Light reflected on the fate of Europe by my stepmother and myself. Great traffic with the Counsellor-*esses* of Commerce; in betrothing, marrying, and *dispatching* people;—in short, in labouring at the progress of the world. Amid all this secret vexation of spirit, I have not seen the Viking for several days. He might, at least, and at all events, have come and announced his betrothal to his friend.

January 29th.

Walked out to-day. Met the Viking, who expressed his displeasure and vexation at never finding me at home, and although I had been at home, I would not receive him. I grew rather vexed at this, and responded with a frosty air, at which Brenner briefly and coldly left me. Well, well!

"I care for nobody, no not I,
If nobody cares for me."

Thank heaven! I can still continue singing thus.

And so, indeed, I mean always to be able to sing. I will have no unnecessary vexation. I have had enough of it in my life, and have been a sufferer from excessive warmth of feeling. I will have no more of it now. And therefore I mean to be cold and immoveable as the marble statues which we purpose inspecting by candle-light this evening in the sculpture gallery.

Eleven o'Clock in the Evening.

But when among cold marble figures and the pale light of wax tapers, we behold a living, warm radiant human eye resting on us with the power of gentle sunshine—who then can prevent the heart turning warm and soft, and even the gallery itself being transformed into a temple of the sun? Such was the case with me, when in the Niobe Gallery amid groups of Roman Emperors and Caryatides, I discovered the Viking. On meeting his look, I involuntarily extended my hand, and felt at the same instant his warm, faithful, tenacious grasp. Oh, we must after all continue friends!

Brenner, however, did not join us. He seemed to have taken upon himself the office of protecting two ladies, of whom one was young and very pretty. "Perhaps she is his bride," thought I. But I gave up this opinion, when again and again I saw his eye between the marble statues directed to me, with an expression that did my heart good. This rencounter of glances, the sense of deep sympathy, with a warm and

noble heart, rendered my promenade through the marble hall, leaning on the arm of the Chamberlain, peculiarly and singularly agreeable. I felt my heart beat with a full, although tranquil, life, amid these insensate statues, amid these perhaps still more insensate crowds of people who, in elegant dresses, filled the gallery, more occupied—as it appeared to me—with the beautiful toilets, with the Queen and the court (then likewise present), than with the masterpieces of art. But why should I censure this? Indeed I myself thought more of mankind than of the statues.

Lennartson gave his arm to my stepmother, and directed his words and observations chiefly to Selma, who looked beautiful but pensive; while Flora, resting on the arm of her brother, and with a sort of feverish exertion, appeared anxious to engage the attention of all around her by the charms of her person and the sallies of her wit. St. Orme, Baron Alexander, and several other gentlemen followed her with applause and admiration. She was very well dressed and looked beautiful.

In the so-called Sergel's room my attention was enchained by three different models, pertaining to the group of "Cupid and Psyche," the production of this artist, forasmuch as in them we distinctly discover the labours of the mind in obtaining a clear comprehension of its own creative ideas, and to catch the spirit it desires to express. In the first model, the figures are lumpy, coarse, heavy, spiritless, and like Egyptian marks they are united with each other in a block-like unity. In the second model they have received animation and motion, but they are destitute of harmony, beauty, and higher unity, which they do not gain until

the *third* formation. In this the artist has achieved the victory, and the glorious figures express the conflict of human passions softened by divine majesty and beauty. I fancied I discovered in these forms the history of every development, as in humanity so in the individual representation of man; and in the joy of this thought I turned round, anxiously desirous to communicate it to some one who could or would understand me. I saw only Flora near me, who with an expression of impatience and acrimony listened to St. Orme, who was speaking to her in an under-voice. On my eyes meeting Flora's, she quickly broke off the conversation, and with a playful expression said:

"What revelation has Sophia now had? Her countenance beams as if she had discovered a new world!"

"Only an idea," rejoined I, "has struck me."

And, carried away by my feelings, I pointed out to them the three model-groups, and told them what train of thoughts they had awakened in me on the development and perfection of life, and on the patience and power of the true artist, who unceasingly labours, and rests not until he has worked out his idea, and is able to say of it, with his Creator, that it is good.

St. Orme smiled sarcastically at my enthusiasm, but Flora listened to me with marked attention, and then said:

"Sergel was happy! He was not, like many others, checked in his development, checked in his onward course to perfection by——"

She paused, and I continued, inquiringly, "By what?"

"By the want of some great object!" pursued

Flora, with strong emphasis, and an expression of bitterness in her countenance. But I beheld the latter with joy; for in it I recognised the thought, the expression which occasionally lightens forth from Flora, and caused me to prognosticate the existence of a higher spirit lying at the base of her enigmatical being.

St. Orme yawned aloud, and then began a disparaging critique on the latter group, which was intended to prove the folly of my admiration, the imperfection of the artist, and the superiority of his own judgment. To me this criticism only betrayed St. Orme's poverty of mind.

I also felt aggrieved by his uncourteous behaviour; but I am so careful and jealous of degrading myself in such cases, by a retaliation or of allowing myself to be overcome by any petty feeling of revenge, that I quietly listened to St. Orme, without manifesting the least symptom of the displeasure I felt. But I was glad when I was freed from him by the Viking, who had left his ladies, heaven knows where, and now came hastily to me, to direct my attention to the group of Oxenstjerna, and history, and to the noble and energetic countenance of the great statesman. In Brenner's cheerful and open expression and manner, I experienced a sensation as of a fresh sea-breeze—an effect which his spirit frequently produces on mine. As for the rest, he complained of "*ennui*," he cared nothing about "those cold, lifeless figures."

It was, however, ordained that these lifeless figures should compensate me this evening for many ruggednesses of the living ones.

We were in that part of the sculpture gallery which extends towards the *Logärd* (Lynx-garden), where Odin stands so commandingly, Endymion slumbers so sweetly, Venus sports with Love, and Apollo plays on the lyre, encircled by all the Muses.

Here Krusenberg, the royal secretary, joined us, and making a graceful bow before gods and men, introduced himself by saying:

"It may of a certainty be said, that here we are in good society! We really feel ourselves exalted by it."

"Yes," said Baron Alexander, in reply, "here, at least, we escape the annoyance of mixing up with the lower class—the vulgar rabble that crowd the streets and alleys."

Such expressions I do not like, and I cannot let them pass in silence. Accordingly I answered with little courtesy.

"I certainly am of opinion, that among the so-called 'lower class,' we may find more honourable feeling, and better people, than among the heathen gods, There used to be plenty of "rabble" on high Olympus.

Just as a weathercock on a church-steeple might look down upon the pavement beneath, so did Alexander the Great look down upon me, and St. Orme said, sarcastically:

"Such it may appear to one who never dived into the spirit of antiquity, and has no mind to apprehend its works with an enlightened and unprejudiced eye. The catechism cannot exactly be applied here as a standard. The beautiful and the sublime must be meted according to their own measure."

"That is my opinion too!" said Flora. "The Grecian ideals should not be reduced to the circle of our every-day virtues."

I felt conscious that I blushed, for I found that I did not stand on perfectly firm ground against my adversaries. I looked at Selma, who was looking at Lennartson, and whose calm, bright glance, rested on me with an expression which cheered and strengthened me. And I was just on the point of answering, and explaining my meaning more clearly, when St. Orme continued:

"I, for my part, know nothing which more properly deserves our homage, than the divine gifts of *beauty*, *genius*, and *power*. I really know nothing that could be put in competition with them. Not, by the way, those little, nameless, modest beings, with which the earth swarms. No! for then I beg to be allowed to hold with the gods, and especially with the goddesses. With them we are ever in a temple of beauty."

"Worship of genius," said the Baron, smiling, "and many an one thinks that it is very sublime and grand. But more sublime and grand is that worship which turns away with indifference from all mere accidental showy gifts, and looks only to the essentials in man—*kindness and earnestness of will*, that sees an elect genius in every man, the heir of a heavenly inheritance, a living thought of God, that before Him and in Him advances himself to the citizenship of an eternal kingdom. We may do justice to the morality of paganism, and yet with all equity subordinate it to the highest, that is to *Christianity*."

This was evidently said for the purpose of helping me out of the dilemma, and I fancied as if the heathen

deities suddenly expired or evaporated into spectre-like forms, and the great Alexander shrivelled up into a dwarf. Krusenberg crept behind Odin, while Selma and I looked up to Lennartson with joy. St. Orme and Baron Alexander comforted themselves by communicating to each other their low opinions of persons who could make so much ado about a paltry incident among insignificant people, and who could attach importance to an event which had transpired more than two thousand years ago, as if it were of historical interest to the whole world. How ridiculous!

I listened to the two gentlemen, and wondered that *such great learning* could be associated with *such great poverty of mind.* The fact is, that in simple man and maid-servants I have frequently found a greater *penetration of mind* into the depth of life than in a certain description of learned men.

Some time after this we stood in the middle of the gallery before a marble group of "Cupid and Psyche," where the former is seen on the point of forsaking Psyche in anger, while the latter kneels before him in the attitude of entreaty.

"How could any one be so inexorable as Cupid is here to a fair supplicant like Psyche?" we have heard Krusenberg say.

"Yes," said Flora, while her eye sought Lennartson's look, "is it possible to repulse her who so loves and so entreats, even if—if—she had erred?"

"He must be an actual barbarian!" exclaimed Krusenberg.

"I believe," said Lennartson, rather coldly, "that there are offences which we neither can nor dare pardon."

"Not even in a beloved one?" whispered Flora, in a voice quivering almost imperceptibly; "not even in a bride—a wife?"

"Such an one least of all," rejoined Lennartson, mildly, but emphatically, and with a serious, penetrating look at Flora.

Shortly afterwards, somebody hastily laid hold of my arm, and whispered to me:

"Come with me, Sophia, I feel unwell."

It was Flora, who was as pale as death. But at the instant I moved to go with her (Felix was with Selma, and did not see us,) at the same instant Lennartson was at her side, and conducted us out of the crowd.

"A little fresh air! I shall choke!" stammered Flora.

Lennartson opened the doors leading to the Lynx garden terrace, and soon we beheld the starry firmament above our heads, and felt the cold wind of the winter night wafted fresh against our cheeks.

Lennartson ordered one of the velvet-covered seats to be brought out for Flora, gave her a glass of water to drink, and evinced the most tender care towards her. I withdrew a few paces from them. The place and time were solemn. We stood, as it were, in the heart of the palace, whose high and gloomy walls enclosed us on three sides, while the fourth opened to us the beautiful prospect across the harbour with its wreathed hills and cultivated islands, all shrouded in nocturnal twilight, illuminated only by the stars of heaven and the flickering lights of earth. On the high terrace in which we were then surrounded by snow-covered trees, the light from the gallery cast broad streaks between the shadows of the tree stems. I saw all this

while my ear involuntarily caught the words interchanged between two human beings, who at that moment seemed to approach the crisis of their strange relative position—the turning point of their lives.

I heard Lennartson ask something with a tender voice, bordering on affection, and Flora replying to it,—

"Better, better now, O Lennartson! for now you look mild and bright as the sky above us, and not as the cold marble images within."

Lennartson was silent.

Flora continued, with vehement emotion,—"Lennartson! are you really as harsh and stern as he—as inexorable as was the tone of your words just now?—O heaven! speak—how am I to understand you?"

"Flora!" said Lennartson, also deeply affected, "*I* it was who for some time past have directed this question to you. *I* it is who wish to understand you. If it is true that you love me—"

"More than all in the world!—More than my own life!" interrupted Flora, with warmth.

"Well, then!" continued Lennartson, taking her hands between his, and bending over her, "if *such* is the case, then—be open, be candid towards me. Explain to me—"

"Ah! all, all that you wish, Lennartson; but at a more suitable season; here it is—so cold!"

"Cold!" interrupted Lennartson. "That is only an excuse: be candid at least for this once, Flora. Your hands burn—you feel no cold at present."

"No! for my heart is warm, warm for you, Thorsten, and, therefore, you ought to have patience with me. I love you so cordially, so childishly!—yes, on this account it is that I fear you—that I dread seeing

you look serious and stern. O if I only knew that you really loved me, then I should no longer be incomprehensible to you. O say can you not love me thus, at least for my love's sake?"

I fancied I heard sweet tones of affection responding to Flora's words. I saw Lennartson stoop lower and lower to her, and at the same moment I heard the doors of the gallery open again, and saw my stepmother and attendants issue from them in anxious search of us.

Supported on Lennartson's arm, Flora again entered the gallery. Whether she now had gained some certainty respecting Lennartson's heart and feelings towards her, which she did not previously possess, or whether words were uttered which did not reach my ear, and had removed the secret fetters that had hitherto held her captive? certain it is that a bright joy seemed to elevate her whole character. Never was she more fascinating—never was Lennartson more fascinated by her charms. Mild but pale, Selma gazed on them both, while St. Orme contemplated them with a cunning look of inquisitiveness. That look leads me to surmise that Flora's romance is yet far from its conclusion, and that soon a fresh revolution may take place.

February 1st.

My conjectures were correct, a fresh revolution and all as dark as ever. This forenoon I heard a variety of strange jarring sounds before my room, as of some persons violently quarrelling. I went out to see what was the matter. The little corridor that separates Flora's room from mine was empty, but the door of her outer

room stood half open, and through it I beheld to my astonishment, Flora struggling to disengage her hands from St. Orme, who held them fondly, whilst the eyes of both were directed upwards to the window where they were standing.

"Oh, let go your hold," entreated Flora, with vehemence; "let me liberate it! It will soon be too late! Look, the ugly spider has already caught it!"

"Foolish thing! what made it fly into the web?" said St. Orme, with his cold sneer. "Let it alone; it will be quite interesting to see if it can liberate itself and effect its own escape. If not, why—*laissez faire la fatalité!*"

"Ah, it is already its prey! Poor thing! Adrian, let me go!!"

She stamped on the floor, and added:

"You are a cruel, abominable man!"

"Because I do not grieve and fret about the fly? Has not the little fool been the author of its own fate? And who knows whether it is of such a grievous nature! And the spider? why, who knows whether it is so cruel as we fancy! It is only embracing the little fly!"

At this moment a pair of fire-tongs were suddenly raised which rent the spider's-web asunder, and separated the spider and the fly. This catastrophe was occasioned by me; I had armed myself with the first weapon I could lay my hand upon, and softly approached the wranglers. At sight of me St. Orme released Flora, and exclaimed:

"Lo, there comes an angel of deliverance, as if from heaven! Pity only that the noble action has been performed too late!"

And it was too late. The fly fell dead upon the window-ledge.

"But," continued St. Orme, "Sophia, you know, might write an elegy or some moral reflections upon it, and thus it will always be a means of edification, and . . . ."

With her hands before her face, Flora rushed hastily into her inner chamber. I followed her, and St. Orme walked down stairs, whistling as he went an opera air.

Flora now abandoned herself to such an outpouring of violence as I had never witnessed before. She tore her hair, screamed, and threw herself on the floor with convulsive sighs and tears. Where was then the beautiful Flora? It was a fury that I now saw before me. I offered her a glass of water, which she drank up hastily, and then gradually became more composed.

"Dearest Flora!" said I, at length. "Why all this excessive ado? How can the fate of a fly so . . . ."

"A fly?" exclaimed Flora. "Do you think I trouble myself about it? No, indeed, I do not fret about that. *I*, Sophia, am this incautious, unfortunate fly. *I* it is who . . . . a prey to this . . . ., and he was aware of it, the detestable wretch; he felt a pleasure, a delight in looking upon this type of my fate, in seeing my anguish, the cruel one, the monster, the . . . ."

"But how? and why?" inquired I, interrupting the torrent of names which Flora was pouring on St Orme.

"Ask not!" exclaimed she, impatiently; "I cannot tell, nor would it avail if I could. Ah! why are there not in our country, protecting institutions and asylums, such as exist in catholic countries, in which one might escape from the world, from one's self and from others, yea, and even save one's self from humilia-

tion; in which a fallen woman, sustained by the cross, may raise herself, and under the protection of heaven, stand purified and ennobled before the eyes of the world!"

And Flora was again beautiful, as she raised herself, with sparkling tearful eyes, towards heaven. But this elevation was but for a moment; the next instant she continued with renewed bitterness:

"However, if he persecutes me, I will turn Catholic, Turk, or Idolator; I will worship the Virgin Mary, or Mahomet, or the great Mogul, or the devil himself, or him, whoever he may be, that will deliver me from this man."

"Your vocation for a conventual life," said I, smiling, "does not seem to be of a genuine kind. But, Flora, I thought that you had already given yourself up to a good and strong mind, that you were Thorsten Lennartson's."

"His? Yes, with all my heart and soul, but . . . ."

"But why do you not freely and fully unbosom your heart to him? He would deliver you."

"So you say. Ah! you do not know——Yes, if he, loved me as I love him! But—ah! if I knew, if I were fully persuaded!—Why are there no longer oracles sibyls, witches, or fortune-tellers in the world, to whom one could apply in one's need, and obtain counsel, a hint, a peep into the future? But every source of comfort is dried up. How intolerable, how flat and insipid is the world at present with its boasted order and intelligence! I am sick of it, and disgusted with myself. Every thing is adverse and insufferable to me. Do not stand staring at me, Sophia! Leave me. I will not be a spectacle for your amusement. I know

that you hate me, but I am now unhappy enough. Let me, at least, be alone!"

"No, not now. Let me influence you for a little while, Flora, you will then better understand my hatred. I was just intending to walk out a little. Go with me, and be guided by me. The snow will fall coolingly on your heated brow."

I advanced to her, and began to arrange her hair.

"Do with me whatever you please," said she, and remained passive.

I assisted her in putting on her winter dress, and silently we went out together into the open air.

It was snowing and blowing without. We walked down to the lowest quay of the river leading to the Norr-bridge. Flora gazed at the foaming waves.

"What roaring! what rushing! what conflicting!" said she. "Look, see how the billows are ever struggling to rise, and ever and anon pressed down again by others, and compelled to sink down in their exasperation, while the Mälar stream rushes proudly over them. Poor waves! I wonder if they are capable of feeling what it is to sink beneath one's self, to wrestle and to struggle without hope of ever conquering."

"In a few days," rejoined I, "the Mälar stream will, perhaps, have lost its power, and the contending waters will regain their equilibrium."

"However," observed Flora, "it sometimes also happens that the angry waves gain the ascendency, and rush over the others and exasperate them. There is a retribution, and this they may experience."

We were silent again. I conducted Flora across the bridge, and into the streets of the city. Here are Stockholm's most ancient associations; here is the

heart of the city of Stockholm, having also the form of a heart; here the blood of Swedish nobles has flowed in streams at the hand of Christiern; here the streets are narrow, the lanes dark—but here also is situated the palace of Stockholm; and here to this day are the remains of former mansions, whose inscriptions, hewn in stone, testify of the zeal and piety, which in ancient times founded the Swedish state.

It was into one of these, which had bid defiance to the dilapidating influence of centuries, and preserved over its dark gateway ornamented with sculpture, a verse of the Psalms of David in old Swedish, that we entered.

Flora was hesitating.

"Whither are you leading me?" inquired she.

"To a witch," was my reply.

"Are there such still in Sweden?" asked Flora, following me. "But," continned she, somewhat contemptuously, "in the witches of our time with their cards and coffee-cup wisdom, I have no confidence."

After we had ascended several steps I opened a door, and we entered into a room in which a young servant girl sate, and sewed. I begged Flora to wait for me here while I went into another chamber, the door of which was shut.

After awhile I returned to Flora, and took her with me into the room.

I saw an expression of amazement and curiosity depicted in her countenance, while she directed her eyes to the figure, which in a wide black silk robe sate in a large chair near the only window of the apartment, which was darkened in the lower part by a green curtain. The light streamed through the upper half of the

window full upon a face, apparently less consumed by age than by suffering; and whose strong, but not handsome features, forbade the idea that it had ever possessed any charms, or that looks of love could ever have rested on it. Yet this countenance was not without its sunshine. It had a pair of eyes of uncommon expression. On all subjects and topics of indifference they would be restless, and, as it were, wavering; but when animated by any feeling or thought (which they frequently were), they had beams that could warm, and power to penetrate, for they gave expression of great inward earnestness. Her hair, still dark brown and beautiful, was parted on her high forehead to the sides of her pale and pleasantly serious face, which was encircled by a plain snow-white lace cap. The left hand, of almost transparent delicacy and whiteness, rested on her breast; the other held a pencil, with which she appeared to be making annotations on the margin of a large Bible.

The furniture of the room was of such a plain description as almost to bear the stamp of poverty, while every thing at the same time had an impress of neatness and comfort, with which we seldom find poverty combined. A vase with fresh flowers stood upon the table, on which several books and manuscripts were lying; every thing in the room was simple and ordinary; the large remarkable eyes alone which beamed there, excited a feeling that this was the dwelling of a higher life.

Flora appeared to be peculiarly impressed as we approached the unknown, who welcomed us with great friendliness, while, politely apologising, she said:

"Excuse my not rising!"

She pointed with her hand to two cane-seated chairs near the table, which she invited us to occupy, and offered to each of us, with a smile, a sprig of blooming geranium from the flower-vase, on the table.

Her earnest eyes then fixed themselves on Flora's who lowered hers, and seemed to struggle to escape their power. I withdrew to a distant part of the room, and left them alone with each other.

I heard the unknown say with mild seriousness of voice:

"So young, so beautiful, and yet—not happy!"

Flora was silent for a moment, apparently struggling with herself; at length she said:

"No! not happy—but who can tell me how I may become so? If I knew anybody that could tell me that, I would press through darkness and horror to his abode; but oracles have vanished from the world."

"Not vanished," said the unknown, with composure, "they have only changed their abode."

"Changed? Whither?"

"From the ancient temples, from the deserts, into the most holy sanctuary of life, into the human heart."

"And access to these," continued Flora sarcastically, "is perhaps more difficult to obtain than to Delphi and Dodona. And what answer, I wonder, would these oracles make to my question: 'How am I to become happy?'"

"Follow the voice that speaketh within!"

"A true oracular sentence, amounting, in point of fact, to nothing. I have, at all events, no consciousness of any *one* particular voice speaking within me,

but of ten at least which distract my soul with their clamorous dissonances."

"We ought not indeed to give heed to them all; we should try the spirits, and seriously hearken till we hear the call of the true monitor. There are in the heart silent groves, solemn grottos and temples—into these we must enter—in them speaks our genius."

The unknown said this with a friendly smile and in an impressive manner. She seemed to derive enjoyment from the images she had called forth.

I fancied as if a sort of cooling breeze had passed over Flora's passionate mind, at these words. With a sigh and tearful eyes she said:

"Ah, happy he that could flee to these peaceful regions and be at rest! that could escape from the world and himself!"

"We ought not to flee!—we ought merely to collect ourselves, and to retire to the silent chamber of our heart for calm reflection, and for some great object in life!"

The thought which dawned on Flora's mind while contemplating Sergel's masterpieces of art seemed to awaken within her; her eye became animated.

"Ah!" said she, sighing, "I have at times had hopeful thoughts and anticipations, but—it is too late. The rootless flower cannot again take firm hold. It must drift with wind and wave."

"It is never too late," said the unknown, with emphasis. "But it may often be attended with many difficulties. Ah, I know it well—this flower without a root—this want of foundation and soil—the usual frailty of a false education. There is no path more thorny than that leading from dissipation to self-collection and

communing with one's own heart. But still there is such a way, and we may walk in it."

At this moment a sunbeam broke through the window, and flowed gently quivering through the flowers of the vase upon the pages of the Holy Scriptures. The eyes of the unknown followed this ray of light upwards, and became sparkling with great joy, while, in broken sentences, she said:

"No! It is never too late to tread the paths of light, which unite heaven with earth and men with each other in noble endeavours! They open in our days more richly than ever in all possible directions—in all spheres of life: and increasingly so to the eyes of men, and love is ever ready to extend her guiding hand. Courage only and a resolute will! . . . . and the apparently unrooted flower will take firm hold again and blossom beauteously in the light of the Eternal!"

Flora did not follow her. The more the spirit of the unknown raised itself towards the light, the more Flora's appeared to sink and look down into a dark abyss.

"And when all is said and done," observed she, with a gloomy countenance, "what then? Why it's altogether vanity. The life of every human creature has its canker-worm, against which no power is capable of contending. Sooner or later comes the time, when pleasures are at an end, when we sink under pain, old age, and death. Is there any power, any bliss that can withstand this?"

"Yes! accept the word of assurance from one who is dying, that there is. Mark you, I am now rapidly drawing nigh to the close of my earthly career, my dissolution is at hand, and my pains are great; yet I am

so happy that my heart overflows with continual praise . . . . Many a sweet draught has life presented to me, and many a bitter one has been changed for me into sweetness, but *the best wine* has been reserved for me till the last."

"The lots of men in this world are all differently cast," said Flora, not without acrimony. "Some seem to be created for unhappiness, while others, like you, for instance, have sunshine and happiness from the cradle to the grave. And to such it must be easy to be pious."

"You would perhaps think otherwise, if you knew me rightly." said the unknown, softly, "and a look into my breast would enable you to judge of that life, which you suppose to have been spent in perpetual sunshine and peace . . . . indeed you would behold a picture of torment there, which no human eye has seen, and which I myself have now almost forgotten. The bitter waves have long since ceased to beat, but they have left tracks behind . . . ."

She opened her black silk dress, took off a white handkerchief, and showed us . . . . an appalling spectacle! The bloody picture was soon concealed again.

"Pardon me," said the unknown to Flora, who with a shriek of horror had covered her eyes. "And now do not be alarmed! I feel the symptoms of a returning paroxysm of pain. I shall not be able altogether to suppress my moans; but be not afraid, it will soon be over."

Saying this she convulsively grasped a roll of paper, her whole body trembled, and a death-like paleness spread over her countenance, which, with stifled groans,

drooped upon the breast. This lasted for about ten minutes, after which the hyena of pain seemed to release the sufferer from its claws, but she was for a while evidently not in a state of perfect consciousness; her mind seemed to wander in remote regions, while her lips uttered incoherent words, like those which Asaria sang in the fiery furnace.

Gradually the highly-agitated expression of her countenance subsided, assuming the appearance of slumber. The unknown then opened her eyes; they were bright, and full of consciousness. She took up a little mirror, which was lying on the table, and contemplated herself in it. "It is over now," said she, as if to herself, with a look of gratitude towards heaven. Not until that moment did she seem to be aware that she was not alone.

"Now it is over!" said she, turning her languid look to Flora and me again. "Forgive me! But I am well persuaded that you do. Pity me not, I am happy, unspeakably happy!"

I rose in order to end our visit.

"Allow me to come again!" begged Flora with tearful eyes, as she took leave.

"With pleasure!" answered the unknown, directing a feeble but friendly look upon us, and affectionately extending her hand.

We went.

"Who is she?" inquired Flora, as we descended the stairs.

"She wishes to remain unknown," replied I, and we were silent till we reached home.

On going down to dinner I heard my young sister (who knew nothing of the revelation in the forenoon),

superintending the arrangements in the saloon as follows:—

"Trala, la, la! Jacob, put the dishes here. Do not forget to take this cake and bottle of wine to the old coachman immediately after dinner; and as you come back you are to bring some of the pastry which you know my mother is so partial to—Ulla! mind you do not forget to have Mam'selle Flora's dress ready this evening. You must work with all your might. La, la, la! la, la, la! And to-morrow evening you shall enjoy yourselves! You shall go to the Opera to see the 'May Day;' there you may amuse yourselves to some purpose, and Jacob shall be Ulla's and Catherine's protector, Falalali, lalali, la, la, la, la!"

Such was the harmonious domiciliary government I had just witnessed, which afforded me another little specimen of Selma's endeavours to render all around her happy; but *endeavour* is not the right term. When kindness has attained to its perfection, it then becomes an inward harmony, an ennobled nature, whose movements are as involuntary and charming as those of Taglioni in the "Sylphide." It lightens every difficulty, and imparts sweetness to every expression of life.

At table Flora was pensive and gloomy. In the afternoon Lennartson came and had a long interview with her in private. He appeared to be earnestly and warmly soliciting something of her—she shed abundance of tears. At length I heard her say with vehemence,—

"Not now, not yet, Lennartson! Have patience a little longer with me, and I will tell you all; you shall then see that you are the only being in the world whom I love."

Lennartson rose with an expression of strong displeasure—he seemed impatient, and came into the outer chamber where Selma and I were sitting. The sun shone through the crystals of the chandelier into the room, and hundreds of little prismatic flames quivered on the walls and paintings. Selma made some remark on the beauty of the colours, and the impression which their brightness made on the mind.

"Yes," said Lennartson, aloud, fixing his eyes on them, "whatever is light and *pure* in colour, or in the human heart, is charming. I cannot conceive how any one can love darkness, or wish to abide in it, unless there is something evil to conceal, and hence suspiciously shun the light."

Flora had approached, but remained at the door, and leaned against the frame, holding her hand pressed to her breast, and fixing a look full of bitter pain on the speaker.

Selma observed it, and tears started into her beautiful eyes. Sharply and almost reproachfully she said to Lennartson,—

"Clouds, indeed, often hide from us the sun, and still it remains equally as bright. If we could only raise ourselves above those clouds, we should then have eye-witness of the fact."

Lennartson regarded Selma with a penetrating look, which gradually became mollified.

"Yes, you are right," said he, slowly; "the fault may rest with those who complain."

He went again to Flora, took her hand, bowed himself over her, and said something to her which I did not hear, but whose effect I clearly saw in Flora's grateful look. Shortly afterwards Lennartson left us.

February 2d.

Flora is more tranquil, and every thing at home is still. I begin to be satisfied with the polemical connection between my stepmother and myself. But shall we ever attain to the idea of such controversy as *Feuerbach* and *Grollmann*, the German Professors, have exhibited to the world? These two celebrated men were the most intimate friends, and in the early part of their lives were of the same way of thinking. At a more advanced period they differed in their scientific views, without, however, allowing them to disturb their personal esteem and friendship. Invariably they dedicated their works to each other, in which they strove with indefatigable zeal to convert each other. Thus they maintained a continued controversy in the spirit of love, and by the production of excellent works to the end of their lives. Over such contentions the angels in heaven must indeed rejoice.

February 5th.

My acquaintance with the Viking begins to be rather stormy, but I console myself with the thought that "the stormy wind is part of God's weather,"* and may be ruled by His spirit.

We took breakfast yesterday with the Chamberlain. Without flattering myself and being too conceited, I could well perceive the correctness of my stepmother's hints,—namely, that this *déjeûner* was given on my account. The *hote* evidently did me "*les honneurs*," of his beautiful establishment—his splendid furniture, his *Athenienne*, with a thousand other little valuables; his numerous arrangements for the convenience and the

* Geijer.

enjoyment of the comforts of life; nay, even his own costly toilet I was constrained to see. While I thus wandered with him through the various apartments, I sought in vain for a picture of real merit, or an object of higher interest. I found nothing of the sort, nor could I say much for the other ornaments.

William Brenner's look was frequently directed upon me with marked attention, while I was thus made the object of my host's civilities. He, on the other hand, was occupied with the very pretty lady, Madame Z * *, a wealthy widow, the same whom I met at the museum. —"Z"—says a written copy—"is a superfluous letter in the Swedish language," and as such indeed appeared Madame Z * * to me at this breakfast. From the absent looks of the Viking, I might have inferred, that he thought so too; but nevertheless he remained near her, and amused himself with observing me at a distance. This put me a little out of humour, and therefore I allowed myself to be more than ordinarily entertained by the witty sallies of my polite uncle, made many a delectable remark myself, and contributed my share also to the entertainment of the company, for which I reaped much applause, especially from my stepmother.

About two o'clock they separated and returned home.

As the weather was fine, we walked. I saw Madame Z * * go away arm-in-arm with the Viking. The Chamberlain accompanied us, as did the rest of the gentlemen.

Scarcely had we reached the bottom of the palace hill, when the Viking came, under full sail, from the pontoon and joined us. He was very warm, and wiped his forehead.

I had the Chamberlain on my left; Brenner took the right, and heard what sport I made of love.

But what he did not hear, was the occasion of my satirical sallies; namely, the mournful sighs and lamentations of my uncle on his love and the warmth of his heart—and which left me dreadfully chilly, because I knew their cause and intention.

"I do not think," said I, "that people have at any time talked so much about love and know so little about it as at present. Those who speak so loudly in public about Christian love, and pull each other to pieces most unmercifully; and as to that species of love which we profess to ladies, why its motives are very dubious. How many tender flames (which are rather more smoke than flames) arise merely from want of occupation and a desire to amuse one's self in some way! Is not this the case even in glowing Italy, as you yourself have told me? Do not the people there form '*liaisons*' merely to while away the time, and continue them because they have nothing else to do? And thus they lamentably drag through their existence with sighing and drinking lemonade. In our North we certainly do seek a rather more substantial sustenance for love; for instance—the good things which open a prospect to comfortable life, good dinners and suppers, and so forth. But the principle is still no better, and the love is just as poor."

"Have you, then, never seen or met with any *real love* on earth?" inquired the Viking, in a tone betraying displeasure, and almost compassion for me.

"Most assuredly," continued I in the same temper, "most assuredly I have seen men who felt real love; some, indeed, who have actually pined away in con-

sequence; and when they happened to meet with hard hearts on whom they lavished their affection, I have heard them declare that their life was gnawed and consumed by worms, and that one would soon have to bewail their death. Indeed, I have no doubt but that they themselves have believed so for a time; but certain it is, that after a year or two I have seen the same men married to other objects, than those for whom they were on the point of death, and grown corpulent and merry withal. In a word, I have seen too much of life and the world, to have any faith in that love so much talked of in real life, and so highly extolled in romances, or to wish to have any thing whatever to do with it. It is not worth one of the sighs which it costs."

"*Femme Philosophia!*" exclaimed the Chamberlain; "your reasoning is perfectly 'just' with regard to that passion. I think quite as little of it. Esteem, delicacy, mutual *condescension*, form the basis of a far more permanent happiness than. . ."

We were just about stepping on the Norr-bridge, when the thought suddenly struck Flora, that she had to purchase something at Medberg's. My stepmother and Selma were reminded of similar wants; but I, who had no such intentions, but, on the contrary, was desirous to get home, declared that I would pursue my way alone, and await the company there. I firmly declined the offer of my uncle to accompany me; and on my escort turning off to the Mint-Market, I proceeded on my way over the bridge alone.

But hardly had I taken twenty steps before I saw the Viking at my side, and found—I know not how—my arm resting in his. He sailed forwards at such a tremendous rate, that it was with the utmost difficulty I

could keep up with him. On coming to that part where the bridge widens to the right, he suddenly made a right angle from the road, and stood still at the corner, beneath which the stream rushes, and the poplars rear their lofty heads to the granite balustrade. Here he dropped my arm, turned towards me with an angry expression of countenance, and said with a vehement, but suppressed voice:

"Tell me now! Is all that which you have just expressed, that accursed galimatias of love, your really earnest sentiments?"

"My earnest sentiments!" exclaimed I.

"That I never can believe," continued he with warmth, "or I pity you from my very heart. Good heavens! how is it possible that you can so mistake and contemn the highest and most sacred feeling in life? Why, when I hear such speeches I can scarcely keep myself from being rude. How can any one be so narrow-minded—nay, I must say so *stupid*, and see things in such perverted—such a wrong, and thoroughly false light! I could be angry when I hear a woman, who is created for love and to be loved, so mistake herself, and allow herself to be so misled by the little paltry things of life, as to confound them with *that* of which thought has no idea, and the tongue no expression, but which exists as certainly on earth as it does in heaven, and is the only feeling by which we can comprehend happiness, and which alone imparts worth to life. Speeches about knowledge and philosophy, which are to ennoble the heart and life! They are altogether trash, I say, compared with the ennobling influence of a noble love!"

"This is, indeed, quite a select spot for a *tête-à-tête*, and a sermon on love," thought I, smiling within myself as I regarded the violent gestures of the Viking, and the multitude of people passing by on foot, on horseback, and in carriages, of whom he in his ire never seemed to take the least notice. I certainly was a little confounded by his behaviour towards me, but still I was pleased with him. I looked upon the boisterous billows beneath me; I gazed on the tumultuous spirit before me, and I knew not what fresh breeze wafted through my soul. I was yet silent, when Brenner continued as before:

"And that wretched glass-case prudence, which makes a man shut himself up in a cage for fear of his life, stew himself to death in a stove for fear of the fresh air, and waste his soul for fear of strong feelings and great passions; tell me, how can you endure these? It is, in fact, just as false as it is pitiable, and good for nothing, say I!"

And the Viking struck with his clenched fist on the balustrade with such violence, that it would have shook again had it not been of stone.

As I still continued standing there, like Lot's wife, turned into a pillar of salt during the rain of fire, and was seized by a singular feeling, he proceeded with increasing warmth:

"Tell me; I wish to know what, or who it is that has influenced you with such distrust of life and of mankind, nay, even of our Lord himself? If it is your extolled philosophy, then away with it into the river!"

With the violent motion of the arm, which Brenner made to give additional force to his words, he struck

against my reticule, that rested on the balustrade; it fell into the river, and was rapidly borne along by its waves into the sea.

At this catastrophe, and the Viking's look of consternation, my immoveability all at once relaxed and resolved into a hearty laugh, and when Brenner seemed to be preparing to take some measures for saving the reticule, I held him back, and said:

"Do not trouble yourself in the least about it! There are only a few rennets that have suffered shipwreck with it. I do not care any thing about it. Let your anger go with it to the sea, for, in truth, you do me wrong!"

"Do I wrong you? Well, then, thank God for it!" exclaimed Brenner, with a look which deeply affected me.

I proceeded:

"Yes; for notwithstanding what I have just expressed, and which has so roused your indignation, is really the sentiment of my heart, I have still some points of restriction on this subject. I distinguish between *Amor* and *Eros*, and I have seen more of the former than of the latter in life; and it is of that which I spoke."

"But I suppose you believe in the other?"

"That I do; that is to say, I believe in the truth and order of feeling of which you speak generally; but in individual cases I am always mistrustful, in consequence of certain experiences I have made. At the same time I return you my sincere thanks for the proof of friendship you have now given me. Oh, let me think of love as I will, in friendship I do believe, and feel that we are friends."

And with this I took his arm, and began to proceed towards our residence. The Viking replied:

"Love, friendship, can they be separated? and how can we mistrust the one, and believe in the other?"

To this question I did not please to make any reply, and our conversation was now interrupted by the company we left behind having overtaken us. They regarded us with an expression of some surprise, and made various observations "about our rapid return home."

The Viking replied:

"Mam'selle Sophia lost her bag, or reticule, in the river."

But in what manner it was lost, he did not say. They began to deliberate on the means of its recovery, and the Viking—now in good humour—made several break-neck and impracticable proposals.

February 6th.

But a far more beautiful reticule, containing a bouquet of myrtles and roses, has been presented to me by him, under the name of the lost one, which—as he says—was fished up in that condition out of the stream.

"The *water-spirit* desires to speak to you in these flowers of his love," said the Viking, and eagerly awaited the reply he would receive.

I said: "Only the very best thanks!"

"And if he should not be satisfied with this?" asked Brenner.

"He shall *take back* his flowers," answered I, half in jest, half in earnest.

"You would have to throw them into the river," rejoined the Viking, quite seriously. "Have you no fear of inflicting any wound or pain? Can you be hard-hearted, unsparing——"!

"You forget," said I, curtailing, "that the water-spirit and his feelings are a fiction, and I am no longer of an age in which people believe in such things; still less, however, am I able to perceive why a nice joke—which in itself is a very harmless, agreeable thing, and for which I am much obliged to you—should be taken in such a serious light."

The Viking was silent, but looked dissatisfied.

I begin to fear that the man has a very bad temper.

February 7th.

The Viking also begins to discover a great number of faults in me. To-day he has reproached me with my obstinacy, or "Finnish spirit," as he calls it. I told him that this was precisely the best quality about my character, and as he shook his head at this, I gave him to understand that I was descended from the family Wasastjerna, who had given to the world one of the finest examples of Finnish national temper.

When the Russians, in the year 1809, subjugated Finland, there lived two brothers in the city of *Wasa*—the one a *Lagman* (judge) of the High Court of that place, the other a merchant—who, when the inhabitants of that city were compelled to take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor of Russia, alone and stedfastly refused to comply.

"We have sworn fidelity to the King of Sweden,

and if he himself does not absolve us from it, we cannot swear fealty to any other ruler," was their constant reply to all friendly as well as threatening persuasions. Provoked at this obstinacy, and fearing the example it might give to others, the Russians cast the two stubborn brothers into prison, and threatened them with death. Their answer, in spite of the increasing severity and threats of the Russians, continued the same.

At length the sentence of death was announced to them, and that accordingly they should be led to the gallows-hill, and there be executed like criminals, if they did not abandon their obstinacy, and take the oath of allegiance.

The brothers were immoveable.

"Rather," replied the Lagman, in the name of both, "will we die than forswear ourselves!"

Saying this, a hardy hand tapped the speaker on his shoulder. It was a Cossack, who had kept watch over the prisoners, and now exclaimed with bright sparkling eyes: "*Dobra kamerad!*"*

But the Russian authorities thought otherwise, and on the appointed day ordered the brothers to be led forth to the place of execution. They were sentenced to be hanged; but once more had pardon offered to them in the last hour, and for the last time, if they would but comply with what was required of them.

"No!" replied they; "hang us! hang us! We have not come here to parley but to be hanged."

This resolute spirit softened the hearts of the Russians. Admiration took the place of severity, and they

*Bravo, Comrade.

rewarded the fidelity and the courage of the brothers with magnanimity. They presented them not only with their life, but sent them also free of expense and under safe conduct to Sweden to that people and King to whom they had been faithful unto death.

The King of Sweden conferred a patent of nobility upon them, and they subsequently lived universally respected in the Swedish capital to an advanced age.

This narrative afforded much pleasure to Brenner. With a bright glance and bedewed eye he promised never to reproach me again with my "Finnish spirit."

February 9th.

"Striking intelligence" on the part of my stepmother and also myself, though not in a manner anticipated by her. For I was by no means taken by surprise when my stepmother conducted me with a mysterious air into her *cabinet* this morning, and appeared as *envoyé extraordinaire, ministre plenipotentiaire* of my uncle the Chamberlain to negotiate an alliance between him and me. But what really did surprise me was that my stepmother never said a word by way of persuading me to consent to this union. On the other hand, she said many pretty, and, to me especially, agreeable words about "this important step," and about the danger of persuading to or dissuading from it. She only desired my happiness; I myself should decide what would lead to it. On the one hand, one might be fully convinced that I should be happy with a man like the Chamberlain, and in that *état* in which a union with him must necessarily place me: but on the other

hand, it was also certain that I should find myself equally as comfortable unmarried, and in my present circumstances. Her home should always be mine, she would ever feel delighted and happy to see me in it, &c. She had on this occasion not taken upon herself the office to *woo* in behalf of the Chamberlain, but merely to ascertain beforehand whether he might present himself as a hopeful suitor. This caution on his part pleased me very much, for in this way I could reject his offer, and avoid the unpleasantness of pronouncing a word—contrary to my nature—the little vexatious word "No."

However he has been friendly towards me, has shown me kindness and confidence . . . . I am sorry that I cannot be the author of joy, but rather, I fear, of pain to him. What poor creatures we are. I feel quite melancholy and resigned.

February 10th.

And thou, honest William Brenner, shalt hear still less of this word of refusal. I now understand thine intention well; but thou shalt not express aloud what I cannot answer according to thy wishes; thou shalt not stretch forth thy warm, true hand to see it rejected; no, I esteem thee too highly, and respect thee too much to suffer any thing of the kind. I certainly do greatly value Brenner, but not so much as I value my independence, my peace of mind, and my prospects of a quiet future life, free from all cares. I will become his friend, but nothing further. I dread marriage, I fear the oppression, the calamities, the dark, deep suf-

fering, which so frequently proceed from the power of one being over another. I have seen so much of it.

I am well aware that, in pursuance of the wise laws of our evangelical church, marriage is no indissoluble bond, but may be dissolved in various ways; whence also the controversy which one hears from certain quarters against the nuptial ceremony and matrimony, is the most uncalled-for and absurd that I know of. For what pure and thinking man contracts such an alliance without an earnest desire *so* to regard it as in the beautiful language of our marriage ceremony, to acknowledge in the act the public declaration of the will of God, that must hence be considered as a law and rule on earth? If *He*, who himself but once or twice spake to the children of earth, and then left it to them to unfold the meaning of His words; if *He* even had not confirmed this view of the inviolable sanctity of marriage, which in the primitive ages of the world originated in the pure consciousness of the human race, yet human prudence itself would have led to the adoption of this, and to an ordinance for marriage when casting a look at the children that are the fruits of the same. The nuptial ceremony, which is to awaken in the conjugal pair the consciousness of the importance and object of such a union, raises them thereby to an elevation of moral greatness, from which they may easily conquer the accidental provocations which arise in married life. And this connection would certainly make a far greater number of people happy, if by the sacred rite of matrimony they would allow themselves to be consecrated to its high and holy object. Indeed, if ever mankind should so far advance in moral greatness as to rid marriage of all legal fetters,

they will assuredly, because of this very greatness, retain the *marriage ritual.*

I am also aware that the wife is frequently the cause of unhappiness in matrimony; I likewise know that many a wife is the husband's living torment; and as a terror and warning to all wicked wives, I will here relate to them what lately occurred in my neighbourhood.

An honest, industrious young man, in good circumstances, with a wife and three little children, poisoned himself a few days ago, by taking arsenic. During the agonising effects it produced, the wife, in her anxiety, offered him some sweet milk to drink. But he thrust her away from him, and said:

"Let me die in peace! For the last few years you have gnawed at my vitals as doth rust on iron; I cannot live any longer!"

But the wife would not let him have a moment's rest, even in his last hour, but continued reproaching him, and asked:

"Do not you perceive that you have committed a horrible sin against me and my poor children?"

"You have driven me to it!"

Saying this, he expired.

Listen to this, ye wives.

Nor, gentlemen, is it the less certain, that the troubles *I* have seen in the matrimonial state have chiefly originated with *you*, and therefore I never mean to take unto myself a *husband*, nor ever become a wife.

And shall I therefore live less for the service of my fellow-creatures? Folly, and notion of fools!—Friend, relative, fellow-citizen——noble names and duties! Oh, happy he that could satisfactorily discharge them!

February 11th.

Another sledge-party is in embryo, and the promoters of it are Lennartson and Brenner. Lennartson wishes to drive Flora, and it strikes me that his object in trying to gratify her with this pleasure trip is to get closer access to her heart. He obviously pays the most particular attention to her temper of mind, and this for several days past has been in the highest degree turbulent.

The Viking has offered me his sledge and I have accepted his invitation with the proviso that his eldest daughter Rosina, a dear girl, shall accompany us. To this he gave his consent, but only compulsorily. I do not like to engage in such a long excursion *tête-à-tête* with the Viking; but I shall take care to embrace the first opportunity that may present itself to foil his schemes of conquest, and let him know my resolution to maintain my independence, and to let friendship—not love—be the pulsation of my heart.

Selma has cheerfully declared that nobody shall drive her, but that she herself will drive her mother in her new sledge with the pair of beautiful Isabels. And this arrangement is quite settled. The procession will comprise some fifty sledges. Selma and Flora, like young girls, rejoice in anticipation of it. The gentlemen are fitting out their sledges with handsome tiger-skins. It has been our all-engrossing topic of conversation for the past week. If the weather would only be favourable!

February 15th.

Such a pleasure excursion in the pure wintery air, beneath the clear blue sky, and upon a snow-white

earth, is a genuine nothern sport of real northern life. They fly so gaily and lightly along, those open sledges covered with skins, while the white nets dance about the fiery steeds bedecked with hoar-frost; they fly along so swiftly to the jingling music of their bells. And there is a something so irresistibly cheering thus to dash along in a procession of gay people, and at the side of a friend who enters into every feeling and every impression.

All this I felt yesterday; and yet only one disquieting impression of our pleasure excursion is left upon my mind to-day: so it is with the joys of the world.

But at the commencement it was splendid. Our course resembled a triumphal procession as we proceeded through the principal streets of the city; and we were the admiration of a multitude of people, both within their houses and without. And then, as we passed through the city gate into the country, how the snow fields glittered in radiant whiteness—how pleasantly rustled the fir and pine forests—how enchantingly swift was our course over land and river; while the rocky wood-crowned banks whizzed past us. I was delighted—Brenner was enraptured to see my enjoyment; and the dear girl between us increased this happy state of feeling by her child-like joy.

After a tolerable long drive we drew up before an inn, of the sign of "The Fountain of the Zoological Gardens," where we proposed to take dinner. It was already served up when we arrived, and the dinner time passed splendidly and cheerfully, without any uncomfortable display of finery and superfluity; which, generally speaking, ought to be entirely banished from the society of thinking men. Our hosts, Lennartson

and Brenner, were the life and the joy of the party. Songs also were sung, in which the Viking's voice had much effect. When our friendship has advanced somewhat further, I mean to advise him to subdue it a little.

After dinner Lennartson asked me to play the favourite Polka, which immediately set the whole company in brisk motion, with their grotesque but pretty evolutions and gestures. Even aunt Pendelfelt came forward and whirled round with the rest. Both Flora and Selma distinguished themselves by their vivacity and gracefulness; but each in a different manner. At last we were obliged to think of our return, and to cool ourselves before setting out.

A part of the company was already on the point of departing, when Brenner directed my attention to two portraits that hung in the room in which we were: the one represented the great Queen Elizabeth of England, the other the noble Princess Elizabeth of Thuringen.

"Which of these two would you like to be?" asked Brenner.

In a playful tone I counter-queried,—

"Have you ever heard of one who, on being asked whether he would have warm or cold milk, said in reply, "Ale-posset, please." I must now answer you almost in the same way; for I am very glad that I have no need to be either of these Elizabeths, and like best to be what I am, although only an humble individual."

Brenner smiled and said,—

"But if you were obliged to choose between these two, could you hesitate for a moment? How charming is the self-sacrificing loving wife beside the cold politic egotist!"

"That I will allow!" answered I. "But it always

depends on *what* a woman loves, and *for whom* she sacrifices herself. Thus, for instance, it has always appeared to me, that the exclusive love of *one individual* is too narrow for man's existence on earth, and for the citizen of a heavenly kingdom; and, it is my belief, that whoever centres his affections exclusively on one single being, one single individual, loses the noblest objects in life."

"Oh, how narrow-minded and inconceivably perverse is this sort of reasoning," exclaimed the Viking.

"Not so narrow as you think," said I, somewhat hurt, "after what I have seen of life. I have seen many a young maiden endowed with a rich mind, and an open heart for every thing that is good and beautiful in human life, and with a determination to promote its cause; a few years after her marriage I have seen her shrunk up in a narrow circle of cares and pleasures, losing gradually more and more all interest in the welfare of the community, and the spirit of universal charity, and retreating further and further into the shell of her own private life, till she completely lost sight of her higher end, and at last was scarcely able to lift up her eyes even above the threshhold of her own house."

"But my dearest, gracious Fräulein Sophia," exclaimed the Viking, "this is positively quite a mistaken view—a perfect raving turn—a decidedly perverse tendency of mind. And why should we on such accounts overlook what is true and genuine? If a young lady chooses to throw herself, or is thrown away upon a poltroon, a dolt or any other monster, she must necessarily retreat into her own narrow circle; but it is not my fault, still less is it to be laid to the charge of *love* in

its true sense. For genuine love is properly *that*, which while it unites two beings together, unites them at the same time more intimately with society and mankind; marriage consecrates man to a higher and richer world; home, in its true sense, is that in which the fear of God rules as an invisible spirit, and renders all its members, each according to his power and abilities, co-operative for the weal of the great home—the world. This is a truth, indeed, as clear as the sun. I cannot conceive why people should view these things in such a wrong light, and then declaim against them with these false notions. This certainly appears so narrow-minded, and—pardon me the expression—a *little stupid!*"

"It is pardoned!" replied I, smiling. "For I now begin to be accustomed to your epithets applied to me as being 'stupid;' and your description of this union in its beauty touches me. But such marriages are only rarely found on earth, and I have never seen any such. On the contrary, I have seen and heard so much bitterness in domestic life springing from wedlock, that I have a dread of it, and have, for my part, resolved not to let myself be bound by it, but to live independent; convinced that in this way I shall best be able to discharge the duties of my vocation as a human being."

"That you ought not to do," said Brenner in a very decided tone of voice. "You mistake your own character. You are yet young, and in the prime of life; the world still makes advances to you, and you are still surrounded by all that is agreeable; but a time will come when the world will lose all its charms for you, when you will freeze and pine for the want of warm hearts and dear ties to bind you to life on earth."

"I hope, by God's might, that I shall neither freeze

nor pine," rejoined I with a smile. The human heart also has its sun, which diffuses its genial rays high above all that dwells on earth; besides, why should I want a warm heart as long as my own is warm? And it is not its nature ever to grow cold, even were all the snow of the world heaped upon it."

During the course of this conversation we had gradually proceeded into the antechamber, where a number of people were wrapping themselves up in their fur cloaks. The light of the full moon illuminated the landscape, which from the eminence whereon we stood, extended far and wide in wintry magnificence. But all was wintry and covered with snow. The trees glittered with ice-crystals in the cold moonlight. The frost was intense. An involuntary shudder thrilled through me.

The Viking had taken my fur-cloak from the waiter, and warmed it against his breast.

" The snow of life! said he, in a low and cordial tone of voice, " Oh, that we could preserve you from it!"

He put the cloak around me, but it was not *this* which made me sensible of a gentle embrace, warm as a summer breeze.

Soon we were again seated in the sledge, but the company by that time had already separated, and drove back into the city in small parties. Lennartson and Brenner departed together, followed by my stepmother, Selma, and Madame Rittersvärd in the covered sledge. We were the last of the train, because our hosts deemed it their duty to attend to the departure of all their guests.

Having been warned that the ice was not too strong, we had agreed to keep our sledges at a distance of

about thirty paces from each other, while crossing the lake.

The moonlight was beautiful, and beautiful also the illumination of the white ice-plains and dark banks. Far in the distance we saw the glimmering of the lights of Stockholm. The drive was romantic, but its effect was lost to me. Little Rosina soon fell asleep, with her head reclining on my breast, and the Viking availed himself of this opportunity to turn the conversation to a subject I dreaded, and therefore avoided by a few brief and cold replies. He grew peevish, and said some bitter things to me, at which I kept silence. At length he followed my example. We were both disconcerted, and with a feeling of melancholy, I contemplated the banks, as they swiftly hurried by, the heavy sky and the dark branches of the pine trees, which here and there projected out of the ice, marking the open places, and in the increasing twilight resembling gloomy fantastical forms of men and animals.

Some remarks of Brenner had wounded my heart, which was rendered the more sensitive by the gloomy impression of the passing scene; I could not refrain from weeping; though quite silent, I know not whether he surmised what was passing in the mind, but after a while, he said, with a tender voice:

"I have been rude to you again! Forgive me! Do not be angry with me, dear, dear Mam'selle Sophia!"

Softly he laid his hand on mine. I pressed it without answering, for at that moment I was not able to speak. Further communication was prevented by a hollow cry of distress which reached our ears,—it was the pitiful wailing of a child's voice.

Brenner stopped.

"Perhaps somebody has run into one of the ice-holes," said he, "I must see what it is. Will you allow me to convey you into the sledge of your step-mother? I shall come back as soon as possible.

"We will hand the little girl in it," replied I, "but shall *I* separate from you at a moment, when, perhaps, I may be able to render you some service? No, I shall accompany you!"

The Viking made no reply. We looked round for the sledge of my stepmother, and I was seized with anxious gloomy misgivings when we were not able to discover it.

At that instant two double-seated sledges came swiftly darting over the ice, from the direction from whence the cries proceeded. In the first sate two gentlemen, who were shouting and making a great noise, whose voices, and manner of driving, showed that they were not sober. They drove so furiously against our horse, that probably some accident would have happened, had not Brenner hastily turned it out of their way. A dark cloud concealed the moon, and the obscure twilight prevented us from distinguishing the countenances of the boisterous gentlemen, but, by their language, I fancied I could recognize the Rutschenfelts. The other sledge halted a moment, and a voice, which sounded to me like that of Felix Delphin, cried:

"Stop, stop! I hope we have not run over the lad yonder!"

"Ah, nonsense!" rejoined the other, who—I would lay a wager—was St. Orme. "He has only gotten a knock, I could swear. Let the accursed urchin roar, if it is any fun to him; we will drive on. Give the

horse the reins, or else we shall be too late, and the others will monopolize the best of the treat. Hark, he is quiet enough now. Let go!"

And the sledge whizzed past us in the direction of the city.

(N.B. The gentlemen I here fancied to recognise had refused joining our sledge party, under the pretext that they already accepted some previous invitation for that day.)

While in the act of setting off in the direction whence the cries proceeded, though they grew gradually fainter, we perceived that Lennartson also was steering his course thitherward, and heard Flora anxiously exclaiming:

"I will be bound that the ice has given way, and we shall all go down together!"

Lennartson resigned the reins to the servant, sprang out of the sledge, and called to us to stop and take him with us. We drew up, he sprang on the sledge-beam, and we speeded onwards.

We soon arrived at the spot at which a low plaintive moaning was still audible. The moon revealed to light a singular group. A young lady, in the most elegant winter attire, with white satin bonnet trimmed with roses, was stooping over a meanly dressed lad, whom a servant was gently lifting up from the ice; a tall old man with a staff in his hand stood near, with his sightless eyes turned towards the sky. The young lady was Selma, who having heard the alarm before we did, and perceiving all the other sledges pass on, had prevailed on her mother to drive straightway in that direction, to see if she could render any assistance. My step-mother stopped with her sledge close to the spot.

The old man related the circumstance of two sledges having come up so rapidly that he and the boy had not been able to get out of their way; the first had knocked down the boy and the second had passed over him, and pursued its course in spite of their cries. The hoary-headed old man himself did not appear to have sustained any injury, but the boy was seriously hurt, and after we had bound up his wounds with our pocket handkerchiefs, in the best way we could, Lennartson bore him into my stepmother's sledge, where he was committed to Selma's care. A servant was directed to conduct the blind man to his abode in the Zoological Garden, but the latter was reluctant to part from his boy—his sole comfort and stay ever since the death of his children, the lad's parents—and therefore obtained permission to take his place beside the coachman and to accompany us.

We all then turned round homewards, and on our way met Flora, who came driving slowly to meet us. Lennartson resumed his seat again, but I do not think that the journey back was particularly agreeable to either of them.

The same evening Lennartson fetched a surgeon to the boy, and this morning he has been conveyed to the hospital. He has received considerable injury, but happily not of a dangerous nature, and will probably in a month be perfectly restored again. In the mean time he is the child of Selma's care and mine.

The Viking and Lennartson have adopted the old man, whose blindness is pronounced to be of such a nature as to be capable of cure, by means of an operation.

Flora pouts her lips and looks a-wry on the whole of

this affair, and the common interest which has arisen between Selma and Lennartson, through their *protégé*, while the dissimilar conduct of the two young ladies on this occasion seemed to have made a strong impression on Lennartson's mind.

February 17th.

I have tried to sound Felix respecting the ice affair and its adventures. He pretended to be perfectly ignorant and highly amazed, but a sort of embarrassment in his manner convinced me that I have neither done him nor the rest wrong. I have heard from Ake Sparrsköld that St. Orme frequently entices young people to debauchery, and from drinking to gambling; and in this way wins their money; and that on the day when the sledge excursion took place, he had invited Felix and his friends to an orgie of the lowest description.

Seriously and cordially, nay with the kindness and sympathy of a sister, I now remonstrated with Felix, and warned him against this false and dangerous friend. I reminded him of his promise to Selma, and what was dependent upon it.

He answered me never a word, but his countenance bespoke his unhappy state of mind, and he embraced the first opportunity to withdraw.

I fear—I fear it will never be well with him. His improved conduct sometime after his interview with Selma seems not to have been of long standing, and he appears to be so weak that any insinuation of the Rutschenfelts, such as, "Do not let yourself be talked to, Felix, as if you did not know how to act without

other people's teaching. Be a man!" or their sneer, that "he is already under petticoat government," is sufficient to lead him away into every species of folly.

The thought has suggested itself to my mind to have a private interview with St. Orme himself, and try to call forth the good spirit in him, but—if the wicked one should show his teeth at me! However, I will let this idea digest a little while yet. Over hasty words seldom fall on good soil.

February 20th.

With respect to our children, the one of seven years and the other of sixty, things wear a hopeful and gladsome aspect. The old man has been operated upon, and the operation has proved successful and satisfactory. Lennartson was here to-day, and gave us the details of the procedure of the case in his usual humorous manner. The joy of the old man at being again able to behold the light of the sun and to see his child, at being able to work again, and lay aside his mendicant's staff, deeply affected us all. We deliberated on the future course to be pursued in behalf of our children, and unanimously adopted Lennartson's plan.

Selma has managed to get Flora engaged in the affair, so that she now forms one of the party, and seems to be warmly interested in it, that is to say, in Lennartson's presence.

February 23d.

The Baron has received new marks of honour in titles and orders. When coming to us this evening adorned with the latter, Flora evinced great joy at it,

while Selma and I congratulated him with the utmost simplicity. Lennartson received Flora's excessive demonstration of joy coldly, and was altogether not in the best humour. My stepmother observed this, and jestingly remarked:

"It looks as if Lennartson was at variance with fortune just when he is the most favoured by it."

"Fortune!" said Lennartson, with a melancholy smile.

"Yes," rejoined my stepmother, "most men at least think it so."

"Ah," replied Lennartson, while with a kind of filial confidence he seated himself beside her, "that is the very thing which makes me so dissatisfied, that people so frequently regard such things as fortune, and attach some worth to them, without ever inquiring whether they are a token of merit or have any real importance; it vexes me that *such* is really the case, and that I am childish enough not to be altogether free from such weakness; it actually torments me. But the superficiality in life is infectious, and therefore I long to escape it."

"Surely not by resigning your service?" inquired my stepmother, with alarm.

"No," replied Lennartson, "that is quite another matter. I wish to avoid it by penetrating more and more deeply into life. I well know *where* I might become indifferent to all mere external ornaments, and feel warm and rich in the reward which no human eye sees, by a look and silent mark of approbation."

"And where is that Dorado?" asked my stepmother, tenderly, and as if she anticipated his reply.

With a voice rendered at once softer and fuller in tone by deep feeling, he said:

"I once possessed it in the heart of my mother, and might regain it in the bosom of—my wife! *If*"—he continued, with emphasis—"if she should understand me—if she should prove to be what my soul desires and my heart seeks.—Many a one congratulates me on my good fortune and career in life, and I believe have never yet been happy, nor properly enjoyed *life*—since the earliest period of my youth!" he added, in a melancholy tone.

All this was said in a partially audible voice to my stepmother, who seemed evidently affected, and said some pleasant things by way of comforting him, but by no means in a cheerful voice.

"I looked at the young ladies. Flora blushed deeply; and I could only surmise that Selma turned pale, for on casting a glance at her she rose and walked out of the room.

Thus then I have become acquainted with one of Lennartson's faults at which the Viking hinted. But the manner in which it was detected has only given him additional interest in my eyes.

March 1st.

Brenner will not understand me or take my hints. He seems to be disposed to give free play to his heart in making an attack on mine. *Ehbien*! If he only does not come off wounded from the combat! While losing a lover, I do not wish at the same time to part with a friend, and one in fact so noble and precious to me as Willliam Brenner. I never was happy in love.

Where I loved my affection was never reciprocated, and those by whom I was loved I could not love in return. But to friendship, pure, sincere friendship, I owe many of my highest joys on earth. A rejected lover may easily become the most faithful friend; and that such is not the case, is frequently the fault of my own sex. In this instance that shall not be laid to my charge; thus much I know of my own character. I know of nothing more grievous than the circumstance of an acquaintanceship, began in cordiality, suddenly turning to bitterness, or feelings of ardour changing into coldness. Every seed of attachment which the all-benificent One scatters upon earth, is intended by Him to develope itself into a plant, and blossom; is designed to shoot forth here at his footstool, and to flourish one day still more gloriously beside his throne. If abortive—if the flower is nipped in the bud, it is man's own fault, and to be lamented.

I am writing this amid the fragrance of the lilacs which I have received from my friend, and with a heart beating warmly for him. All is serenity and light within me.

Thou comforter of hearts by grief oppress'd,
Enlightener of life's obscurest hour,
Honour'd in Earth's first days; and ever bless'd
As her supremest boon of worth and power,
Thou, when the world's foundations erst were laid,
Thou didst the Maker praise, and joyful song,
In glorious concert with creation made, *
And wrested what to void did once belong;—
Oh, *Wisdom!* life's both morn and even star,
Now can my soul rejoice, thou soughtest me

* Prov. viii. 30.

While darkly wandering from thy paths afar,
My heart in transport glows, filled with the love of thee.

March 2d.

The incorrigible, unfortunate, unlucky, poisonous, and poisoning ladies of the Counsellor of Commerce—I would that they sate petrified on the summit of some bewitched mountain, and could never move foot or tongue again. Would that they had already been fixed there yesterday; for then I should not have been obliged to-day to go about with the greatest burden of life, and return without alleviation—then I should not have been obliged to sit here now, and to write in a sort of despair, while the tears fall on my paper more copiously than the words I throw upon it, almost without seeing them.

But thus these evil portentous birds came yesterday afternoon, and settled down beside my stepmother. I was down stairs with her, and while sitting at my painting, I amused myself with observing the movements which were made by the three ladies among our near and distant acquaintances. They had already ran through a long list of—"they suppose," "they say," "they maintain," when Madame P * * warmly exclaimed,—

"But now for a piece of news which is certainly true! Our honourable Commodore Brenner is said to have met with a refusal last week from the rich widow, Madame Z * * ! I know it from her sister-in-law, who told me the whole story. She herself is said not to have been disinclined to this union as far as he was concerned; but the five step-children are supposed to have frightened her."

"Yes, poor man!" said the Fräulein. "He will not find it an easy matter, with that number of children, to pick up a wife; at least one with money."

"Has Captain Brenner, then, any occasion to look for money in the choice of a wife?" inquired I, a in no very enviable mood.

"That must always be a point of consideration with a man who has to provide for five children, and no property beyond his pay," answered Madame P * * . "Brenner's first wife had nothing, and he himself is said to be not one of the most frugal men in the world."

"Is Madame Z * * a woman of integrity?" I again inquired, and the *Fräulein* answered,—

"Well! I dare say she is, though she has neither head nor heart; but with a beautiful complexion, a fine figure, and a large allodial estate, such as Guldasa, there wants neither head nor heart to fascinate. A little vain, a little touched with matrimonial frenzy, she certainly is . . . . it is an unfortunate passion—the desire of getting married. I say, with Madame De Sevigne: I should prefer getting drunk."

"So should I," said I. "Do the people then know it as a *positive* fact, that Captain Brenner sued for Madame Z * * 's hand last week?"

"To be sure they do, my dearest friend! Why, I had it from the lips of her own sister-in-law. Besides, there are documents that can be produced to prove it; for the businesss has been transacted through the medium of letters, reported to be of a very touching nature; for Madame Z * * has wept and fretted day and night over them . . . . so that there has been quite a wash of pocket handkerchiefs solely on that account. But still she took her part, and is said now to

console herself with the thought of a certain gentleman without children. And *à-propos!* it is rumoured that Captain Brenner derives similar consolation in seeking it in the bosom of this family; nay, it is even asserted that Mam'selle Sophia Adele knows something about the affair."

Blushing like a guilty person, but with the pride of conscious innocence, I repelled the accusation, and declared myself entirely ignorant of the matter. And the sisters being still bent on teazing me, my stepmother said with a graceful dignity, which highly gratified me,—

As Captain Brenner has wooed Madam Z * * so recently it would little accord with the respect which he entertains for Sophia and with his own character, if he had such hasty intentions of suing for her hand. Besides this, I am also of opinion that such a match would be little suited to Sophia. With so many step-children it is no joke. If my Sophia wishes to marry, she will not lack opportunity of choosing among—hum,—hum,—hum——"

"Oh, of course!—To be sure!—when a person possesses so many attractions and talents, and property into the bargain, there is no lack of any thing; and there is already some talk about a certain Baron and Chamberlain, and—will it be deemed premature to congratulate?"

I could scarcely make a negative reply, and was rejoiced when the valet entered and announced the arrival of the carriage; the ladies of the Counsellor of Commerce then took their departure, and my step-mother drove out with Flora and Selma to pay some visits.

"Let no one be admitted! say, that nobody is at home," said I to the Philosopher (a trusty old servant of the family, whose office it is to watch during the day half-dormant in the saloon).

I threw myself into an arm-chair before the piano in the ante-chamber, where a solitary light was burning with a long snuff. It was dark in the room and dark also in my soul.

"It is the fortune, then!—a mere matter of speculation!" thought I. I felt so grieved in spirit that I could have wept. The image of the Viking was dimmed in my inmost soul. I beheld it before so pure, so noble, so free from every thing mercenary; and now!—But no!—I would not resign myself to the thought, which the news I had just heard, excited in me. "Hush! hush!" said I, to these tormenting spirits. "Let me enjoy undisturbed my faith in him! Leave me in the unmolested possession of my friend! And why, indeed, should I fancy that he has any intention of wooing me? He intends nothing of the kind; the only thing he seeks in me is a confidant, a friend, a sister!"

And then I mustered all the five children before me in order to explain his courtship of Madam Z * *.

Beethoven's "*Sonate Pathétique*" lay on the music-desk, and I commenced playing it. Its wild *Agitato* subdued the tumult in my mind and calmed my feelings, they rose on the floods of harmony and broke through all impediments to the serious and lovely all-emancipating, all-reconciling solution — the glorious Finale.

I was so deeply absorbed by the music that I heard nothing of the altercation which in the mean time was

passing in the saloon, and which terminated in the Philosopher's opening the door, and with a voice resembling that of the Ghost in Hamlet, he exclaimed:

"*Fräulein!* Commodore Brenner is in the saloon and is determined to have admission. Shall I request him to go away?"

"Did you not tell him that I ordered you not to admit anybody?" inquired I.

"Yes he did!" here interrrupted the well-known voice, "but I told him I was admitted already!"

And with a bound, Brenner stood before me, with an outstretched hand, so good-tempered, so glad, so cordial, that I almost forgot all the impressions with which I had just been conflicting, and felt my heart rise in sympathy towards him.

He presented a beautiful bouquet, continuing:

"Only pray do not tell me to go away!"

In a melancholy tone, but friendly manner, I replied:

"Oh, no, stay here, my mother will not be long before she returns home."

"Ah, that does not concern me much!" said Brenner. "I wish first to have a word with you alone."

My heart throbbed with secret anxiety. He looked at me, and my countenance might probably betray my state of mind, for he suddenly became disquieted, and asked me with tenderness and cordiality, "Whether I was unwell?"

"No, I am very well."

"Whether I was vexed?"

"Yes, I was, at something I had just heard."

"Whether it was any thing that concerned himself? And whether he might be allowed to console me!"

I was silent.

"Shall I tell him all?" thought I. "But, no! that would be folly, indeed, for he would then think that I am in love with him."

He repeated his question with increased earnestness.

"No," rejoined I, at length, "not at present—perhaps at some future time."

"Was I angry with him?"

"Yes—no—he must ask no more questions."

"No more questions!" exclaimed Brenner. He was silent for a while, and then proceeded in a low but agitated voice:

"And yet the object of my present call is to ask you a serious and very important question, a question which has frequently forced itself to my lips, and which I can no longer refrain from expressing—a question on which the weal or woe of my life depends. I come to ask you, Sophia, will you, can you love me?—I have for a long time loved you with unspeakable tenderness! —Will you accompany me through life, in joy and in sorrow?"

The voice, the expression—even the pressure of the hand which held mine——Oh, what eloquence of the heart! And all this he had last week devoted to Madame Z * *! And Madame Z * *, the lady without head or heart, with a "fair complexion and the free estate of Guldasa," rose like a ghost between Brenner and me, and excited indescribable anguish in my breast. Oh, had he only been the same to me he was a few hours before, how candidly and cordially I could have spoken to him. I could have refused his hand without wounding his heart; I could have alienated the lover, and yet preserved the friend for ever. But

amid the darkness which now overspread my mind, I knew neither him nor myself,—the whole world appeared changed. A benumbing coldness, a gloomy stupor took possession of my entire being. I felt myself, as it were, transformed into a marble statue, and thus I allowed Brenner to talk without understanding him; heard him speak of his children, "a crown of honour and rejoicing to him who was so highly favoured in possessing them;" heard him say, how he and his children intended to make me happy by gratitude and love; saw him bend his knee before me, conjuring me to listen and to answer him.

But I was bereft of power either to answer or to move; my look was void of expression and fixed immoveably upon him; yet I felt as if tears gradually filled my eyes. He then playfully reproached me for "suffering him to remain so long prostrate before me;" and with a hasty evolution he *seated* himself at my feet, ardently embraced my knees, and protested that he would not rise till I had given him my *assent.*

This manœuvre had nearly overcome me—I was on the point of bending down and of opening my whole heart to him; but at the same instant I heard a bustle in the saloon, and the voices of several persons entering.

By this I was roused to perfect consciousness, and to the full sense of the bitterness of my situation.

"Rise! for heaven's sake rise!" said I to Brenner. "They are coming!"

"All the world may come!" answered he, with defiance and ardent affection. "I shall not rise till I have obtained an answer from you!"

A thought of the nether region rose in my mind and whispered,—

"His object is to overwhelm you—his design to compel you—his aim to be seen here at your feet, so as to prevent the possibility of your refusing him."

With an expression of haughty indignation in look and voice, I sprang up from my seat, and said,—

"Commodore Brenner, I have done wrong to keep you so long in suspense. Apologising for this my imprudent conduct towards you, I now beg you to hear my final reply. I am determined to keep my hand and fortune independent. I do not entertain so high a respect for any man as to concede to him the right of dominion over both!"

Brenner, on his part, had not been dilatory in rising; while pronouncing my harsh reply, he riveted a look full of unutterable amazement on me. It seemed as if he could not possibly conceive what I meant.

Cheerful voices and the footsteps of several persons were approaching our door from the saloon; I slowly advanced towards the door leading to Selma's room. Here, with my hand on the lock, I turned round and gazed on Brenner.

He stood immoveable, with his eyes fixed on me; the expression of them I cannot describe, still less could I then rightly comprehend it; but I read in them an eternal farewell.

I fled up into my room, while my mind was assailed by inexpressible and conflicting feelings. What I then felt most acutely and painfully was that Brenner and I were henceforth parted for ever. I again represented to my mind Madame Z * * in all the danger of her person and Brenner's relation to her, in order to ex-

plain and exculpate my conduct—but then came the remembrance of Brenner's last look, that strange look that penetrated my very heart and soul——and all his guilt vanished, and I alone was the criminal, the only culpable one.

Amid this conflict, I was interruped by Selma, who entreated me to come down to the company. I first intended to excuse myself, but on ascertaining that Lennartson was present, a presentiment rose in my mind, and I followed her.

I was feverish from mental excitement. Soon I observed that Lennartson's eye was fixed on me with a scrutinising expression—soon, also, he was seated at my side in a "*causeuse*," and in a low tone said,—

"On coming hither this evening, I found Brenner alone in the saloon, and in a strange state of mind. He neither could nor would give me any explanation. Have you seen him this evening?"

"Pray tell me," said I in reply, interrogatively, "whether it is true, what I have recently heard, that there has been a rumour of a union between Brenner and Madame Z * * ? You are Brenner's friend, and must, therefore, know all about it."

"That I cannot deny!" replied the Baron, smiling.

"It is true, then, that such a wedding was talked of?"

"Yes, it has *been* talked of."

"It seems, then, that he has actually sued for her hand?"

"Hem!—That is quite another question," said Lennartson, again smiling.

"What! did you not tell me that there was some rumour about such a marriage?"

"Well, and does it necessarily follow that *he* made overtures to her?"

"Does it not?—I thought so. I entreat you do not make sport of this affair, but tell me plainly and unreservedly all the circumstances; it is infinitely important to me,—more indeed than I can express."

"Well, then! all that I know of the matter is briefly this: that Madame Z * * wished to have Brenner for her husband, but that he would not have her on any account for his wife. A third party had negotiated between them, bringing the offer and returning with the refusal."

"Oh heaven! is it possible?—And—pardon me—from what authority have you this? From Brenner himself?"

"No, certainly not; but from the third party just alluded to, who, for a twofold reason, ought to be dismissed from the office. I am truly glad, Mam'selle Sophia, to be able to give you an explanation on a subject respecting which you have been so wrongly informed. And now, dearest Mam'selle Sophia! allow me, as the mutual friend of Brenner and yourself, to put a question to you: What was his singular state of mind this evening owing to?"

"To *my fault!*—my unpardonable fault!" . . . . I could say no more, I was quite confounded.

Lennartson was silent, and regarded me with his grave shrewd eyes. After a short pause he said, in a gentle tone of voice and almost smiling countenance,—

"I shall probably meet him before night. May I be the bearer of any message or compliment from you?"

"Ah, of what use would that be? He cannot, he

ought not to forgive me. We are separated for ever through my fault, through my unworthy mistrust. But if you think proper, you may communicate to him our present conversation."

And with this it ended. But now commenced the compunction of my conscience.

Oh, what talisman is there indeed against the bitter crushing feeling of having been unjust towards a noble-minded friend, having cruelly wounded his heart—his dearest feeling, to have destroyed his faith in the object of his affection, and blighted his happiness? And for such an act there can be no consolation! Oh, William Brenner, now I understand the meaning of thy look, full of condemnation, full of god-like sorrow over me! But if thou knewest that this night I have bathed my couch with tears, and yet in the midst of my pain experienced a proud joy over thee, and thanked heaven that I have thy image so brightly reposing in my breast, wouldst thou—wouldst thou not forgive me?

I spent the night without closing an eye, and impatiently awaited the dawn of morning. I hoped that with it Lennartson would come. The morning came, gray and damp cold; but no Lennartson, no little sunbeam to shine into my benighted mind. Hour after hour passed on; expectation became insufferable; read I could not, music was a lament, and the most friendly expression of sympathy from human creatures only increased my anguish.

Suddenly amid this state of feeling, the simple adage came into my mind: "What pains the heel, pains not the heart." And instantly "the bewitched mountain" *

* The bewitched mountain—*Besvarsbacken;* a mountain in the vicinity of Stockholm.

rose before my imagination and I thought it would afford me particular gratification to ascend it.

I felt the need of seeking some means for tranquillising my mind by bodily fatigue and with an advertisement from the *Journal du Jour* in my reticule, I wandered in the fog and cold towards the south, up the lofty, heaven-aspiring mountain, and along the endless street leading to it. Our temper of mind often imparts its colour to the objects which surround us: but on that day my state of feeling was in deep sympathy with the scenes which presented themselves to my view. The advertisement led me to a dwelling where mould and damp covered the walls. No wonder, therefore, that dropsy was a tenant there. In the long street, consisting of a number of wretched buildings, I saw a crowd of pale children clothed in tatters, old women and men—living pictures of indigence, disease, and decrepitude—and beheld misery in all stages of human life, and in all shades of grief and woe.

And among all those living shadows there was yet probably not one that would have exchanged his lot with me, could he have seen into my heart. Ah, the severest kind of misery is not that which exhibits its rags in the street by day, and passes the night in some lowly hut. It is *that* which smiles in elegant society, which shows to the world a cheerful exterior, while grief is gnawing at its heart.

Had I been more cheerful in spirits, I should have thought with pleasure on the covered pitchers in many a hand, and on the warm soup which charity prepares at a never-extinguished fire, and which these poor people now carried home still smoking hot for their dinners.

On my return home I was in hopes of obtaining some word or intelligence; but no, nothing. Some hours have now elapsed; perhaps Lennartson will come in the evening.

Evening.

No! he did not come. By intrigue I have procured some tidings respecting Brenner. *He never went home last night.*

March 3d.

Another sleepless night. Another morning come. Whither shall I go to-day?

"When woman is no longer her own friend, she goes to her brother, who is so still, that he may pour the balm of consolation into her drooping spirits, and quicken her by his cheering influence."

These words of Jean Paul inspired me with a desire to go to my Selma; but I felt ashamed of the confessions which I had to make. At that moment she came to me with her beautiful eyes full of tender inquiry and heart-felt concern. I was constrained to open my heart to her. And how tenderly did she console me, how warmly did she defend me against my self-accusations, and how clearly did she foresee the hour of reconciliation! Ah, I dare not venture to hope for it! Did I but know how it is now with him, what are his present feelings towards me.

In the Evening.

Now I know. Lennartson came to our house in the afternoon, but not in the best spirits.

And well indeed that he did come. To have endured it another night, would have been a hard matter for me. To my look of inquiry he immediately responded, saying:

"I have seen Brenner just now, and communicated to him the purport of our last interview."

"Well, and what did he say?" asked I, almost breathless.

"He said that he himself surmised a misunderstanding of some kind was the cause of———of what he did not say."

"And, nothing besides?"

"He added: 'If any one had told me any thing bad of her, I should not have believed it.'"

"And was that all? Did he not say any thing more about this affair?"

"No!" rejoined Lennartson, with evident emotion. "But it was obvious that he had suffered, and is still suffering greatly in mind. What unhappy misunderstanding has brought you into a state of discord, and divided two beings who, I thought——but you are not parted yet! It is impossible! I know Brenner's heart. Commission me with a word, a cordial word to him—let me lead him to your feet."

"Impossible! I beseech you take no further step in the affair. You yourself would not desire it, if you knew all. Tell me only, do you think Brenner entertains any ill-will towards me?"

"Resentment is a feeling which has no place in Brenner's breast, least of all against you. What he expressed about you he said with seriousness, and in the spirit of tender affection."

"I may hope then, I suppose, that he does not de-

test me. Well, that is a great point in favour of the case. I feel sincerely thankful to you for your kindness."

"Rather thank me by making me the messenger of a word of comfort to my friend. He looked to me, as if he had not slept, nor would be able to sleep for some nights to come."

"Tell him, if you think proper, that I have had as little rest since——and now let us not talk any more about this subject. It is one of those which must entirely depend on the guidance of Providence."

Lennartson then bowed with profound seriousness, and, observing my tears, he took my hand, and said some gentle words with the voice of an angel to me. Oh, what a good, kind-hearted man he is, too!

It is almost midnight. I am much calmer. I have been relieved from painful suspense. There is an end, it seems, to this friendship, which has been such an abundant source of pleasure to me—which ought to have extended to eternity—terminated by my own fault.

I found a precious pearl in the stream of life, and cast it heedlessly away. I did not deserve it.

"If any one had told me any thing bad of her, I should not have believed it." What crushing reproof for me in these affectionate words!

But all this I fully deserve, and, therefore, I will bear it without complaining. Sleep this night I cannot, nor probably for several nights. But this is of no consequence, if I only knew that *he* would enjoy repose.

The elements without are in a state of agitation. The clouds, chased by the northwind, rush on over the lofty towers of the palace. The lamps on the bridge, and on

the quay are flickering, their reflection quivers on the enraged waters, while one after the other is extinguished by the storm. Poor, glimmering lamps, good night!

March 7th.

Brenner has set out on an expedition to several sea-port towns of Sweden on affairs of the fleet. He will stay away some weeks. That is good.

To-day it is cold—a clear sky and frosty air. The snow lies white and still on the ice of the "Knight's Bay," on the southern mountains—still and cold as indifference. Would that it lay thus upon my heart. But no! I would not desire it. *He still is suffering.*

I prided myself too much on my philosophy, on my strength and prudence, and am—punished for it. Burn, therefore, holy pain, purifying fire, burn to the very root of selfishness and vanity. Burn and consume!

In the Evening.

I shall overcome these sufferings that I can feel; I shall surmount them, for I have had a clear inward presentiment that he has forgiven me, that his feelings and sentiments towards me are merciful. And for the first time I feel the need of the compassion and sympathy of a fellow-creature. Such presentiments of the mental state of persons dear to me, I have frequently had, both of a favourable as well as inauspicious nature, and never yet have they deceived me.

The feeling which unites me and Brenner is really not of an ordinary kind, still less can it be annihilated

in a moment. It is deeply grounded in the nature of our being. And I feel persuaded in my own mind, William Brenner, that we shall once more meet and be united in heartfelt harmony, when once this scene of life is past; I feel conscious of it, and have never felt more fully persuaded of it than at this present time, in which, to all appearance, we are more separated than ever.

I have written some words to Brenner similar to these. They will meet him on his return to Stockholm.

This evening the stars shine brightly; there being not a cloud in the firmament to obscure their lustre. Good night, William! To-night thou wilt sleep; to-night I shall repose too; and to-morrow I shall again wholly devote myself to the interests of those around me. Thou hast given me an example of activity which I mean to follow.

March 10th.

And the drama which is now being performed in my vicinity, actually demands all my attention. In vain do I still seek for the thread that may lead me out of the labyrinth and set the captives free; that St. Orme is the Minotaur, I clearly perceive; and it looks as if Flora's prediction respecting herself—that she should take upon her his evil nature—would really receive its fulfiment. But why should Selma be her victim? Why should the Sylphide be bereft of her wings in this contest? Selma has for some time past been a true martyr to Flora's ever-increasing unhappy temper, who seems to take a sort of delight in tormenting her by capricious humours, harsh language,

and absurd suspicion. Selma bears all this with unexampled gentleness, but her cheerful voice is heard no more, and her light floating gait grows more and more sedate.

Yesterday I poured out before her the cup of my indignation against Flora.

"Forgive her!" entreated Selma, with her charming eyes full of tears: "she herself indeed is so little happy!"

And that is true enough. My stepmother, who does not understand Flora's real condition, but likes to see every one about her gay and happy, tries to cheer her spirits by all sorts of dissipations and pleasures; but these seem to have lost all influence over her at present, while her evil demon continues to gain deeper hold on her life.

The evening before last, after some visitors had withdrawn, and we, the ladies of the family, were left alone with St. Orme, Flora stood a long time absorbed in the contemplation of the portrait of Beatrice Cenci.

"Do you intend copying that lady that you contemplate her so minutely?" asked St. Orme, in his unpleasant, scornful tone.

"Perhaps!" replied Flora, in a voice which sounded almost unearthly. She then continued in an altered tone:

"I only endeavoured to realise to myself what must have been her state of mind."

"Prior or subsequent to the murder of her father?" asked St. Orme, as before.

"Subsequently," answered Flora. "Her *prior* state —that I understand, that I know."

"Dear me, my sweet Flora," said my stepmother, "how can you dive into such horrible thoughts?"

"Yes, I can and do," replied Flora. "She had tried every thing, every thing, St. Orme, to burst asunder the fetter of her unhappy situation: her tormentor would not set her free; she was driven to the extreme of exasperation, to despair . . . . in short, I comprehend the feeling which prompted her deed. But after it, after . . ."

"Well," interrupted St. Orme, "after its perpetration she could think about preparing for death, the scaffold, and the executioner."

"It is related of her," continued Flora, "that at the moment she was going to her death, at the moment she was to ascend the scaffold, her lips poured forth a stream of joyful thanksgiving, so full of what is most exalted and noble in the human breast, that those who should have administered consolation to her were struck mute, and their compassion was changed into admiration. It is said that her beauty never was more touching, or the glance of her eye more radiant, than in the hour in which she—a contrite but redeemed sinner—went to meet her death, free and triumphant. This does not by any means surprise me. But I should like to know what the feeling is—ah, I should like to know what it is—to be free—free and happy! I should like to know what the feeling, I should like to know what the sensation is, I should like to know how . . . ."

Flora loudly repeated these words several times, as if in a state of phrensy, and then suddenly fell to the ground in a swoon.

Our consternation was great. Flora was borne into

Selma's room, where our care and attention soon restored her to life, but only to see her lapse into an hysterical state, from which she did not recover until several hours after, when she sunk into a quiet slumber.

On her waking again, it was night. She lay still, her eyes fixed on the picture of Virginia, which hung at the foot of Selma's bed, (on which Flora lay,) and said half-aloud to herself:

"She, too, was a beautiful and unhappy creature; she, too, died in the bloom of her youth, broken-hearted. But she, like many a woman, died crushed by inward sorrow, died without glory, without revenge. Beatrice was the happiest of the two."

"That is known alone to the Eternal Judge," said I, with a gentle voice.

"Yes, what do we know?" continued Flora. "I know nothing but that I am more unhappy than both of them. It is strange, but for some time past the thought of a sanguinary deed—a murder, for instance—has had something refreshing in it. There must be a great change in the mind of one who is brought to commit any horrible deed—a something that bars the way of retreat against him, that admits of no uncertainty, precludes all fear, shuts out all hope. Then, indeed, the juggling spirit may depart, and man come to the full consciousness of himself. The heart, indeed, may grow calm and cool when the hour of death draws nigh, and all upon earth is past; then feelings may arise—feelings of resignation, of contrition, and then an angel from heaven may even come and kindle a light in the benighted soul ere it leaves the dying body. But then comes death!—to die, to be laid in the cold, black earth, to moulder, to turn to dust, to be trodden upon by the feet of men . . . . hoo! No, no!

I will not die, no! Why is it so dark here? Why do you let me lie here as in a tomb? Give me more light! And Selma—where is she? She used to love me; but I suppose she has forsaken me like all the rest!"

"Never, never!" answered a voice full of affection; and from the depth of the alcove on the other side of Flora's pillow, Selma's beautiful form, vested in white, slowly raised itself up. She took Flora's hands between her own, and entreated, with tears:

"Oh! Flora! Flora! if you still love me, hear my request. You have grown more unlike yourself every day: some heavy secret presses on your heart, which makes you unhappy."

"O Flora, Flora! tell us what it is; tell us all and every thing. You know that we love you! How could it be possible that we should want the means of consoling and calming you. Ah, entrust yourself wholly to us. You will feel yourself free as soon as you open your heart, as soon as your case is clearly known to those who love you."

"Clearly!" exclaimed Flora. "And if by opening my heart I should only appear darker than before? Selma, how would you bear that?"

"Ah, I can bear every thing except seeing you so altered and unhappy as you are!"

"You think so," said Flora; "but you are deceived. You are one of those good and modest creatures who abhor every thing extraordinary and eccentric, because they consider it wicked: because they do not understand it. They cannot look steadily in the face without trembling; they cannot love without illusions; they have not the strength to . . . . but forgive me. I will not be harsh; I myself stand in need of assistance and forbearance. Remedy the evil you cannot, Selma, nor

can any other creature; but you may calm the conflict. And now—will you read something to me, something that will tranquillize my spirit? what have you there? A book of Psalms!—Read some portions of them, if you will—it is a long time since I have read any thing of that kind."

On leaving the two young friends, I heard Selma read in a voice to which she in vain endeavoured to impart firmness,—

"Peace now extendeth over all the earth."

The day following Flora was better; but Selma's appearance bore traces of a deep dejection of mind. I proposed to her to take a walk to the Museum after breakfast to see some statues which had lately arrived. She gladly consented; and that Flora declined the invitation to accompany us was by no means unpleasant to me.

We had not been long among the noble works of art, when I perceived Ehrensvard's young pupil become cheerful, and the burden that oppressed her spirits gradually remove in the contemplation of the beautiful and sublime. I acknowledged, with joy, how a mind sensible to the beauties of art or nature can set us free from the tortures arising from the pressure of circumstances, and by the sensibility of the heart. Yet this remedy is not efficacious in all instances, and still less ought it to be so. There are sufferings which are more elevating than all enjoyment; I mean, nobler. These ought not to be avoided; but they may be softened. The chrysalis of suffering even may receive wings, may fly in the night, be lightened by its stars, and bathe in its dew.

A deeply irradiated melancholy took the place of the troubled dejected expression of Selma's countenance, as my observations induced her to think and give utterance to her sentiments.

At sight of the statue of "Niobe," I expressed my opinion that she appeared to me too apathetic; I wished to see more despair, more indignation in her countenance.

"She combats with higher powers," answered Selma. "Neither revenge nor hope are possible to her. Besides it is the first time she has known misfortune, and it comes upon her so suddenly, so mightily as to overwhelm her; she does not attain to the extremity of suffering ere she becomes paralysed. Look! take a view of her from this side—notice the expression of quivering pain about her lips! It seems that it needs but another moment, another dart, and her sufferings are at an end! She is turned into stone."

I looked at Selma—there was a remarkable resemblance at that moment between Niobe's expression and hers; I fancied as if she also would thus suffer, and thus be petrified But heaven preserve my young sister!

At the antique head of Zeno I observed,—

"Do you not discern in this expression of countenance a prototype of Christianity?"

"Yes," she replied; "it expresses self-denial, but without exaltation."

"She will not turn to stone like Niobe!" thought I again, while casting a glance at her countenance beaming with mind. "She will effect her own deliverance and conquer. The sylphide will not lose her wings for long."

We then heard somebody whispering close to us,—

"Lieutenant Thure will not attend the ball this evening. It really is provoking!"

"Nor Von Bure, the royal secretary, either; and yet he promised me that he would come on my account. But one can never place any dependance on gentlemen. He had as good as engaged me for the first waltz. The next time he comes, and shows me any of his civilities, I shall not be very gracious to him."

"Yes, to all appearance, you seem to have made a conquest. Does not that marble head there appear to you to be like Von Bure? Do you know what pretty thing he said to me last evening?"

This communication was made in so low a tone that I did not hear it. We had already recognised Hilda and Thilda Angel, who were standing before the bust of Septimus Severus, complaining of their lovers. They then caught sight of us, and we mutually saluted each other.

As it began to grow cold in the Statue Gallery, I proposed a walk to the Zoological Gardens, over the Ship's-holm, and asked the Angels if they would join us, who replied:

"We would certainly have felt great pleasure—but —four ladies without a gentleman—that would never do!"

Selma and I assured them laughing, that it would do extremely well, especially if we went two and two: and we marched off, each with an Angel at her side, and were any thing but amused.

Arriving at the Zoological Gardens, we encountered Madam Rittersvärd and her daughter. They met us so warm-heartedly and were so cheerful, that it infected us. Madam Rittersvärd was considerably improved in

health, and Hellfrid felt quite happy to be able after so long a confinement to enjoy once more the fresh air, strolling in the wood.

No wonder, for it was delightful indeed. The snow melted in the meridian sun, the young fir-trees exhaled fragrance, moss and fern vegetated, and grew verdantly on the earth and on the stems of the trees. Hellfrid, who was well-informed on all such matters, communicated to us, at Selma's and my solicitation, many things respecting their lives and properties, and excited in us a great desire to make ourselves better acquainted with those children of nature: while we congratulated Hellfrid on the acquirement of her knowledge and this fresh source of enjoyment.

But the Angels grew more and more peevish and I discovered in them that lamentable poverty of mind which is too frequently the consequence of our education, and causes dullness and want of taste and relish amid the treasures of art and nature, while the thoughts scarcely extend beyond a ball and a lover. In addition to this our party was now augmented to six ladies and not one gentleman. Fate was cruel to the poor children. Their countenances, however, brightened up on beholding the approach of two young gentlemen, arm in arm, and I heard them whisper the names of "Thure and Bure." But Thure and Bure greeted and passed on. The Angels looked in actual despair.

Again a gentleman approached us, but he did not pass on; but after an exclamation of joyful surprise and friendly salutation, he accompanied us back to the city. It was Lieutenant Sparrsköld, but he walked beside Hellfrid Rittersvärd. Hilda and Thilda walked together.

At a hint from her mother Hellfrid invited the two Angels, together with the rest of the company, to walk home with her and take a cup of chocolate in the shadow of her hyacinths. The Angels declined the friendly invitation with countenances expressive of extreme ill-humour; but Selma, young Sparrsköld, and I, accepted it with pleasure.

In the shade of Hellfrid's fragrant hyacinths we enjoyed some excellent chocolate, and carried on a lively and interesting conversation on the best ways of improving and employing life and time.

No one was more delightful to listen to on that occasion than the good old lady, to whom life is still so abundant with enjoyment and so full of interest, that she orders her servant to call her every morning at six o'clock, for fear of wasting some of those precious hours which fly too fast for her.

Young Sparrsköld asserted playfully, that it would be much better to sleep, and kissed her hand at the same time, with filial, nay, almost child-like tenderness.

Hellfrid regarded both with tearful eyes.

A shocking catastrophe changed this scene of affection and comfort into one of terror and alarm. A hollow report of a pistol-shot was suddenly heard, apparently proceeding from the room under us. Sparrsköld started from his seat.

"That was in Captain Rumler's room," exclaimed he, and rushed out of the apartment, as if seized with a horrible misgiving.

About a quarter of an hour after, he came back with an extremely pallid countenance.

'Captain Rumler has shot himself," said he: "the vital spark had already fled when I arrived."

The embarrassment of his pecuniary circumstances, and his inclination for strong liquors, had, for some time past, been a topic of conversation; he seemed to have gradually undermined his constitution, and to have laboured at his own ruin, which was now accomplished by an awful suicide.

Excited and saddened by this occurrence, we separated from each other.

"He was one of Felix's intimate acquaintances," said Selma, on our way home. "I only hope he may not——"

She did not finish her sentence.

It was distressing intelligence with which we were now about to surprise my stepmother.

March 13th.

The report of Captain Rumler's unhappy end rapidly spread through the city. The ladies of the Chamber of Commerce gave us a proof of it to-day.

"They say that he had made so free with the money of the regiment, that he was no longer able to conceal it, and would not survive his disgrace. Another young gentleman, the son of wealthy parents, and implicated in the affair of Rumler, had fled."

"It is said that many more occurrences of a similar kind will shortly follow."

Out of misfortune, a fortunate circumstance has, after all, arisen. Ake Sparrsköld is next in rank to Rumler, and will be appointed to the command of his company. Nothing now stands in the way of his union with Hellfrid, and the happiness of this whole family.

March 14th.

"The Rutschenfelts also have taken themselves off. Heaven preserve Felix."

With these words my stepmother came to us this noon, and was so dejected by the news, and so troubled about the consequences, that she forgot all thoughts of surprising me, and all her Metternich airs.

Among the list of those who have fled for debt, the Messrs. Bravander are also mentioned—the same brothers who, at the New Year's Assembly, talked so frequently about the "devil fetching them."

March 15th.

"Has Felix been here? Do you know any thing of him?" was Lennartson's inquiry to-day, almost the very moment he entered the room; and when we replied in the negative, it appeared to be a matter of grievous disappointment to him, though he endeavoured to conceal it.

St. Orme, the Chamberlain, and several other gentlemen, including the Baron, were here at noon, when the conversation soon turned on the Rutschenfelts set, who had partly taken to flight, and in part were ready to fly. The names of a number of people were then mentioned, whom they had defrauded and robbed out of their little fortunes, families whom they had plunged into the deepest distress, mothers, brides, whose hopes were blasted, and future prospects darkened. The venerable old father of one of the fugitives had been struck with paralysis from grief—but it would occupy too much time and space to give a circumstantial account of all the calamitous cases which are now cursorily spoken of.

Lennartson was silent all the while, but I gave vent to my heart by several strong expressions.

St. Orme, who always places himself in opposition to me, shrugged his shoulders at "the tragic manner" with which people take things of such common occurrence, and the great ado they make about the youthful errors of some rash young men. He, for his part, sincerely pities them, but he would not condemn any one. We ought not to be too severe against youth. They must have time to cool the ardour and buoyancy of their spirits, and then there is no fear of their return to thoughtfulness and discretion.

"That is very fine indeed," observed the Chamberlain, in a subtle voice and keen satire; "and I, for my part, intend always to say 'the blessed Rumler,' though I would not exactly take an oath that the blessed Rumler is really blessed. It is *my* belief, however, that we are bound to pay our debts, and live soberly and decently in the world; and, moreover, that it must be rather a venturesome thing to go into the other, like Rum—like—'the blessed Rumler.'"

Lennartson then took up the matter; and fixing a calm firm look on St. Orme, he very seriously animadverted upon the conduct which had just been described, and the sentiments which were held to be so innocent. He pointed out their influence on society in general—he pictured a people in their decline—laxity of principle; its pernicious root—inordinate craving after enjoyment, excess of levity—the inviolability of an oath totally disregarded, order and integrity departed, and with them confidence, security, kind offices, and all pure, all generous feelings, all human ties poisoned, and the health and fresh joy of life fled for ever. Thus

it was with the nations of old when advancing towards their dissolution—towards a disgraceful lingering death—a spectacle for compassion and contempt; and thus it would be with us also if we did not seize with seriousness on life and ourselves.

"I wish," continued Lennartson, while his eyes flashed and his words issued like thunder from his lips,—"I wish that all honest men, the better class of society, would brand with abhorrence and contempt those libertines, those young deceivers who sacrifice all for the gratification of their wretched passions. I know but one character more culpable and despicable than these, and that is *He*—who under the semblance of prudence poisons their principles, and under the show of friendship seduces to misery, making them the instruments and victims of his selfishness and of his base schemes; in short—the serpent* of society, the calculating seducer!"

Whether was it Lennartson's intention to hurl a thunderbolt at St. Orme with these words; or was it the evil conscience of the latter smote him? Certain it is, that I saw him for the first time lose his scornful assurance, and filled with confusion and dismay. The blood forsook his cheek; he attempted to speak, but his voice failed him; he tried to smile, but his thin lips quivered with a convulsive motion.

Flora contemplated him with astonishment, and a sort of enjoyment. She seemed to delight in his humiliation and torture. She smiled—malignantly. A deathly silence ensued at the table; and when my

* In the original there is a pun here on the name of St. Orme, serpent in Swedish being "*ormen.*"

stepmother suddenly made a motion to rise, though the dessert had not been touched, we all cheerfully followed her example.

St. Orme soon recovered himself: he was shortly after heard laughing and jesting with the Chamberlain; but the tones of mirth from him sounded unnatural. He then left the company, casting a malicious poisonous look at Lennartson.

After our guests had withdrawn, we were all highly disconcerted. I endeavoured to attract my stepmother's attention by some "question of the day," but it did not succeed.

Better success, however, attended the Ladies of Commerce, who came laden with news, and as eager to communicate as we were to hear. It related chiefly to the Rutschenfelt party, and the confusion and misery which the fugitives had left behind them. The causes also of the ruin of these young men were likewise spoken of; and among these injudicious parents, bad examples, and want of vigilant care in youth.

With all these sad stories, Madame and Mademoiselle P * * helped us to get over the long evening.

During this interval two messengers had been dispatched to inquire after Felix, but had not found him at home.

On separating for the night, Selma and I, as we were frequently wont to do, remained yet awhile among the pictures in the inner apartment, contemplating them by the soft light of the lamp. Selma stood a long time before a picture, after Guido Reni, which represents St. Michael, who with the flames of wrath in his divinely beautiful countenance, sets his foot upon the breast of Satan, and pierces him with his lance.

"Why does my Selma gaze so long at this picture?" asked I, joining her. "There is a something very awful about it."

"But something very grand also," replied she. "It is easy to understand what *holy indignation* is. Look at St. Michael's countenance! Tell me, does it not remind one of—does it not resemble . . . ."

Selma checked herself, and blushed in confusion.

"Lennartson, you mean, as we saw him this evening," said I, finishing the sentence; and Selma's looks told me that I had expressed her thoughts.

At that moment we were interrupted by some one who opened the door leading from the saloon. It was the figure of a man wrapped in a wide mantle, which on his entering he dropped, and we recognised Felix Delphin.

But oh, how altered he was! His pale, disfigured countenance wore scarcely a trait of its former beauty.

"Selma," said he, in a hoarse, agitated voice, "do not be afraid of me. I only wish to say farewell to you before I . . . ."

"Before what, Felix?"

"Before I leave you and Sweden for ever. Oh, Selma, I wished to see you once more, to entreat you to think of me, and to pray for me when I am far away from you."

"Felix, why must you go away?"

"Because I am—ruined, ruined by my weakness, my folly! Fortune, health, honour—all are lost; I cannot, I will not here survive my disgrace."

"But is there no remedy? Cannot Lennartson—"

"No; once before he rescued me from the hands of the usurer. I then gave him my word of honour never

to fall into such again; but this I have broken. I would rather die than meet his look."

"But I and Flora, we are your nearest relatives, and not without some valuables."

"Hush, good angel! I am not sunk deep enough yet to accept favours of . . . . Besides, of what use would it be? Oh, Selma! all matters between us must now have an end. Here, take back your ring; I am not worthy of you. Crave Lennartson's pardon for me. Remember me to Flora. May she be worthy of him. And you, good angel—heaven bless you! Farewell!"

He kissed the hem of her dress, and was on the point of rushing out of the room, when he was prevented by a man who intercepted his way, seized him by the arm, exclaiming, with sternness:

"Where are you going to, Felix?"

It was Lennartson. Felix gasped for breath; the next moment he made a violent effort to tear himself away and to escape. But the Baron held him in the grasp of his powerful hand, and said, in a serious tone of voice:

"Be quiet, young man! No nonsense! Do you wish to make yourself a spectacle to the people outside. Besides this will avail you nothing. You *must* follow me!"

"You will dishonour me," stammered Felix, pale with impotent rage.

"*You* will dishonour *yourself*, but *I* will save you even in spite of your own will," said Lennartson.

"It is too late," exclaimed Felix.

"It is *not* too late," answered Lennartson. "I know all about you, and I promise to extricate you; but I demand *one* thing on your part, and that is—that at

this moment you bind yourself entirely and unreservedly to take no step without my knowledge, but obey me in all things. My first injunction, then, is that you now very quietly follow me to my carriage, which is waiting at the door."

Lennartson had said all this in a low tone of voice, as if intending to be heard by Felix only; but the strong emphasis he gave to his words made us not lose a single one of them, though standing at some distance. Felix seemed annihilated; his will was subdued by a mightier than himself, but he could not sustain himself. Almost fainting, he leant against the wall.

"Lean on me," said Lennartson, quickly, with a gentle and tender voice, taking the young man in his arms. "Why do you fear? Am I not your friend—your fatherly friend? Trust to me! Come! be a man. Think of the eyes that are now looking upon you. Come!"

At these words Felix took courage, and said, in a soft tone:

"Do with me as you please. I am willing to obey.

Lennartson, seeing him stagger, took him by the arm, motioned to us kindly as we were approaching to render assistance, to keep off, and, conducted the young man away, with a look at us, that said:

"Make yourselves easy!"

Selma, with agitated feelings, threw herself into my arms. I did not leave her that night, which we both passed without sleep, and I have written this in her bed-room.

March 16th.

Felix is ill, but—as they assure us—not dangerously. He has been bled: and Lennartson sat up with him the whole night. Flora has just returned from her brother, and I rejoice to see her really affected and troubled at his condition.

In the Afternoon.

Lennartson has just been here, so full of kindness—so comforting. Felix's affairs are not so bad by far as he himself imagined. A sudden demand upon him by his creditors—who had been alarmed by the flight of his friends—their threats, at a moment when he was entirely without money, and his ignorance of the real state of his concerns, had occasioned his desperation. Lennartson is quite sure of his being able to extricate him out of this embarrassment, although there are many difficulties in the way that will have to be surmounted.

On expressing our regret at the trouble and time which this wretchedly complicated affair would cost him he mildly said:

"May Felix only be led to profit by this warning, and I will then not complain of what has happened, neither on his account nor my own."

"How kind you are, how infinitely kind you are! Oh, that Felix and we all could duly express our gratitude."

Saying these words, Selma turned, as if involuntarily, to Lennartson, while her eyes sparkled, and were full of tears. He seemed surprised, and his cheeks coloured, as he said:

"Such words from *Fräulein* Selma! Can I deserve

them? But I gladly wish, I sincerely wish, I could in any way contribute to make you happy!"

There was melancholy mingled with the cordiality with which he spoke these words, while he took hold of Selma's hand, and looked penetratingly into her eyes. But her eyelids quickly sank beneath his searching, tender gaze; she grew pale, and retreated.

At this instant Flora entered, and cast a look full of burning jealousy on both. Selma hastily drew back; Lennartson became silent and absent, and soon went away.

Flora then turned to Selma, and said, pointedly:

"That was a most touching scene indeed that I disturbed! May one be allowed to know what tender effusions took place here? No answer? This looks, I do declare, as if you were all in a conspiracy against me! Selma blushes like a criminal. You, Selma, you too, against me! Well, then, I do indeed stand alone, forsaken———"

"Flora! Flora! cease from such language, if you do not wish to kill me!" exclaimed Selma, with an expression of the most violent pain, and ran out of the room.

"Flora!" said I, "you are really not worthy of a friend, such as Selma."

"Let me alone!" replied she; "I do not care for the whole world!"

I followed Selma, and found her in her chamber, prostrate on her knees, with her face concealed in her hands.

"Selma!" I entreated, "do not take Flora's absurd words to heart. Your own conscience bears you testimony, and we all know how innocent you are."

"No, no" exclaimed she, with vehement emotion.

"I am no longer innocent. Oh, Sophia! It is this which makes me unhappy. I am acting a false part towards her. Ah! I now begin to be conscious of it. Innocent? yes, with regard to design and wishes, but not as to feelings, or private thoughts.—Oh, Sophia! I am guilty."

"That you are not!" said I with confidence, and then employed all my eloquence to reconcile the young girl with herself. I made it clear to her that she had no wish whatever to sever the ties between Lennartson and Flora, nay, that she would even sacrifice her own happiness to promote theirs. This Selma was obliged to admit, and then lifted up her head again. I then told her that an affection like hers to a man of Lennartson's character was not a feeling of which one need be ashamed. On the contrary, it was both noble and ennobling. And at last I hit upon the happy thought of representing myself as a rival of Flora's, but a clandestine one, as no noble, womanly heart could remain indifferent to manly worth and manly amiability like his; and on this ground I gave myself full permission to love Lennartson.

Selma could not refrain from smiling at this, while with suffused tears she threw her arms round my neck. I left her, in some measure reconciled to herself, to seek Flora, who in the mean time had retired to her own room.

On entering it, I saw her hastily conceal in her bosom a small white bottle which she held in her hand; red and white alternated in her cheeks. Perceiving her extremely unhappy state of mind, I spoke kindly to her, spoke of Selma's purity and tenderness, and of all our wishes to see Flora peaceful and happy. I cordially

entreated her to meet us with similar feelings, and cherish confidence in us.

Flora listened to me with downcast countenance; all at once she exclaimed vehemently:

"Sophia! I am at times dreadfully unhappy. I am afraid of myself. Sometimes I feel as if I were capable of any thing to make an end—an end! Yes, if then it were an *end*—an end for ever! But I know, or rather I fear, what may come hereafter! Ah, how grievous, that there is no total annihilation! I am so weary!—If you entertain any benevolent sentiment towards me, do not leave me much alone; I cannot answer for my conduct. How the sun shines on the snow, as if there were no confusion and darkness in the world! No matter!—Will you go with me to the unknown? Perhaps she may have a balmy word to soothe my spirits."

I was willing and soon ready. We went; but on approaching the house of the unknown, we observed a narrow track of fresh pine-branches strewed upon the snow, which led to her door. We found it locked. The unknown had the day before gone to the churchyard at Solna,

> "Where, numbered among the dead,
> She rests beneath the pine-grove shade.

"This door closed against me, too," said Flora, in a dismal tone, as we took our way home. But now the flood-gates of my eloquence opened; and with the hearty desire to comfort Flora, and under the powerful influence of all that life possessed of great and good, poured many things—well, I think. But in this we are always ready to flatter ourselves. Altogether, however, my endeavours were not abortive, for Flora listened to

me with calm attention, and when we arrived at home again, she pressed my hand with a pleasant, but melancholy—

"Thanks, Sophia!"

Notwithstanding this, she remained reserved as before.

Ah! I preach wisdom to others, and yet myself act unwisely; I try to console others, and have no peace in my own heart.

Our home is now the seat of disquietude. My stepmother carries herself coldly towards me; I know not why.

William! thou with thy rich, warm heart, thou whose conduct towards me was ever open-hearted, ever full of affection, where art thou?—Oh, the pangs of having wounded, of having alienated thee from me. For thee—at thy feet falls this burning tear of penitence. Thou wilt never shed such——happy thou!

March 23d.

Heavy, dull days—days in which life moves like the slow course of a ship with a deep bent prow in a head-sea, on which nothing will go forward, not even self-improvement, that ought never to be stationary. A heavy cloud seems to impend over us. Flora is as usual torn by restless spirits, and Selma is no longer what she was.

My stepmother is in an irritable state of mind. I see clearly that she is not pleased with the confidential conversations which I sometimes hold, first with one and then another member of the family. She looks

as if she suspected me of exciting commotions in the house.

Felix, in the mean time, has recovered, but his health appears to be undermined by his dissipated habits. He rallies but slowly. Lennartson endeavours to revive his spirits and cheer his mind. He frequently spends his evenings in reading Sir Walter Scott's novels to him.

It is a true remark: "Nobody is so good as the strong-minded."

March 25th.

A little joy. "Ake Sparrsköld and Hellfrid Rittersvärd have been publicly betrothed!" With this piece of intelligence my stepmother surprised me to-day, and was herself highly rejoiced at this event, which will prove a source of great gratification to her good old friend. Next week my stepmother purposes giving a *soirée* in celebration of this bethrothal, which is to redound to the honour of the house. By this also she appears to aim at silencing at once the various disquieting reports respecting the affairs of the family, which are said to have began to spread abroad, but, as I sincerely hope, without foundation. As long, however, as St. Orme comes sneaking about here, and holds private interviews with my stepmother, I cannot be sure. A bad sign it is also, that our "spasmodic acquaintances" have not made their appearance here for some time.

March 29th.

The impending cloud lowers more and more; it becomes darker and darker around us. My stepmother

talked yesterday of getting a new carpet for the great anteroom, against her festival. The present one has long looked shabby, and besides, is covered with spots and stains; in short, she was determined to have a new and handsome carpet. But Selma gently opposed her, and at length said in a tone of entreaty:

"Ah, pray let us not now run to any more expense, till we know how our affairs stand!"

From this I observed, with some alarm, that Selma (who superintends the domestic economy of the house) entertains a suspicion which she had hitherto concealed from me.

At the same moment the Philosopher entered and said, in his dismal voice:

"Accounts, my lady!" and laid a bundle of papers on the table. My stepmother cast a troubled look at them, and pushing them aside she said to Selma:

"My dear child, look them over——I am not at all in a mood at present to attend to them. It gives one the horrors to hear what an awful voice honest Jacob has at times. He positively almost frightens me out of my wits. I declare it sometimes makes me quite ill."

Selma silently embraced her mother, took up the accounts, and went into her room with them.

My stepmother was still and thoughtful. She reclined her head on the sofa cushion. In her beautiful pale countenance there was an expression that deeply pained my heart. It was late in the evening and the lamp burned dimly. I fancied I saw shadows of care and trouble gather around her, and her face gradually growing paler and more aged. Silent wishes for our repose in the grave crossed my mind.

April 3d.

To-day after breakfast, while I and my stepmother were sitting alone, she introduced the subject of the carpet again. She could not endure the dirty spots. Besides, on Wednesday, an elegant musical *soirée* was to be given at our house. How could any one think of having such a carpet down, and what would the people say about an establishment where such things are tolerated? That very day a new one should be procured.

I endeavoured to oppose the subject by counter-arguments, alluding to the cost, the superfluity of such an expenditure, &c.—all in the tone of the greatest kindness of intention and in the spirit of the utmost gentleness; but my stepmother took it very ill, and all at once burst forth in the most passionate strain:

"I must beg you, my dearest Sophia, not to trouble yourself at all about my affairs,—and I also desire that in other matters you would not act too much the mistress in my house. I have hitherto been quite competent to take care and govern my own affairs in my own house, and I do not consider myself at present any less incapable of it. Emancipate yourself as much as you please; that I cannot hinder; but I must beg you to let me have my liberty too."

This sally, so groundless and unmerited, both provoked and grieved me at the same time; I sat silent with tearful eyes, and reflected whether or how I should reply, when we heard St. Orme's voice without in the saloon. With a sort of alarm my stepmother started up, saying to me,—

"Say that I am indisposed and cannot receive him."

With these words she hastened to her own room.

"Alone!" exclaimed St. Orme, as he entered.—"Where is the rest of the family to-day?—I come to say farewell to you for several weeks. I am going to W * * 's for the sake of fresh air and hunting; but I fear you will miss me very much?"

I was silent. As for jesting I was not in a mood: still less could I seriously tell him, as I thought, "I am glad beyond measure that you are about taking your departure."

"You do not speak a word," continued St. Orme, "and silence gives consent, they say. Where, then, are the other ladies? Do they not intend to be seen to-day?"

"My stepmother is unwell and cannot receive any one," replied I. "Flora is just gone to her brother, and Selma is occupied elsewhere.'

"It looks then as if we should have a *tête-à-tête*," continued St. Orme. "I have no objection to that, for I have one or two things to say to you. Listen, now, my dear sister-in-law, I have some reason to believe that you do not render me the best services in this house. What have you against me, if I may be allowed to ask?—Perhaps I have not been courteous enough to you; nor flattered you sufficiently. However, I advise you as a friend, not to intrigue against me, for you have '*affair à trop forte partie.*' You would do better to come over to my side, and persuade Flora to comply amicably to what she cannot escape."

"I do not understand you," replied I, haughtily; "and as to intrigues, I understand them still less; but my honest thoughts I intend at all times candidly to express, when called upon so to do, and neither flattery nor threats can move me from my purpose."

"Superb, and Finnish in an especial manner!" said St. Orme, regarding me with a cold and sarcastic air, that might have embarrassed me, had it not produced the very opposite effect, namely, that of steeling me.

"I see how matters stand," continued he, after a momentary pause, with the same cold sneer, "and I will tell you how they will be: all your Finnish magic arts will prove ineffectual, and the victory will eventually be *mine*. Adieu! I wish you health! Forget me not. Farewell!"

At these words he seized my resisting hand, and shook it with a malicious air of triumph.

At the same moment Flora entered, and her suspicious mind led her to fancy she saw a bond of friendship in that which was almost the opposite. She cast some glowing looks at St. Orme and me, and turned her back to him as he approached her. He then coldly said,—

"*Adieu, belle cousine! Au revoir!*" and went away.

"How!—Have you and St. Orme, then, suddenly become good friends again?" inquired Flora, approaching me with an almost wild expression of countenance. "Have you consulted with him how to betray me?—Confess, confess it honestly, Sophia! You do not wish me to be Lennartson's wife!—You think him too good for me—you wish him to marry another—do not deny it. I am not so easily deceived, and I have long since seen through you; but that you would enter into a conspirary with St. Orme, I never could have thought your animosity to me would have led you so far."

This new piece of injustice gave me more pain than indignation.

"O Flora, how unjust your conduct is towards me!" said I. "But you are unhappy, and I forgive you."

With these words I left the room.

I found that it was my fate to-day to be misunderstood at home, and felt a longing to go out. I, therefore, dressed and went.

It seemed as if the heavy cloud that had so long impended over me now suddenly burst upon my head with all its lightnings. I fancied I was selected for the scape-goat to be laden with and atone for all the faults and transgressions of others; a thousand agitated feelings swelled my breast, till I reached the door and felt the air waft coolly upon my brow.

The breath of spring had breathed upon the earth, it thawed fast; foot-passengers stepped cautiously upon the melting ice, glittering drops descended from the roofs. The sky was livid, but here and there the clouds opened their heavy eyelids a little, to give emission to a few pale rays of light, resembling a smile through tears. The air was calm and rather heavy, but filled with hundreds of little twittering birds, that were disporting upon the leafless trees, and I know not what kind of singular refreshing fragrance, full of the vivifying breath of spring, reminded me of the ocean and pine forest. I involuntarily stood still for a moment in the field studded with trees, which is opposite the Palace, and drank in the vernal breeze in deep respirations, listened to the murmur of the stream, and let my eyes range over the changeful world around me. A feeling then came over me, as if a breath from the heaths of Finland blew upon me, and awoke the spirit of childhood within me. Clouds and mists disappeared,

and like warbling larks those bright, great thoughts, which enhance the beauties and charms of life, arose again. Conscious innocence regained its triumphant power, and, in a word, I was transformed, as it were, into another being.

I know not whether, as one of my lady friends says, "it is better to be a *Troll* * than a mere *Null;*" but, certain it is, that there is something of the magic spirit in me, which, from ancient times, is said to have had its home in my father-land. This "something" I do not myself comprehend, and I feel it to be a *wonderful* instantaneous, inflammable power, possessing both *will* and the *ability*. At such moments, nothing is impossible to me; I feel conscious of a potency capable of binding or releasing other spirits; *primeval words* move within me; indeed, I have experienced moments in which I felt that I could enchant human souls to me, and *have done so*. In my young days, I had much of the heathen sorceress about me. This, at a more advanced period, was washed off by the waves of mental suffering, burned out in the furnace of love, but it is not yet quite rooted out, and sometimes quite unexpectedly it arises within me with renewed life. I know that it has played me many tricks, but I also know that frequently when reason did not avail me magic has, and enabled me to find both words and tunes to charm myself free from the shackles of existence, and like the ancient *Wäinemöiren*, to lure sun and moon into my tree of life. And there are hours in which I can make of every stick that lies as an obstruction in my way a Hippogriff, mounted on which I can ride through the

* An enchantress.

narrowest chimneys of life, not exactly up to the top of the *Bläkulla* * but out into the fresh pure ether.†

The hardest thing during such moments of vital energy, is having no difficulties to surmount, no opposition to conquer, no heroic deeds to perform. And such was at present my sad case. For to seek, to find, to purchase, and lay at my stepmother's feet a splendid carpet for the antechamber—a carpet with a sky-blue ground, covered with stars, flowers, and necromantic figures, required no magic power. However, I found pleasure in it, and while I rejoiced *in petto* at the thought of triumphing over St. Orme, Flora, and the whole world, and writing letters to all my female friends—for it is remarkable what a host of things I accomplish at such times—I strolled without an object along the quay by the river, looking at the ice breaking up in the Knight's Bay, and the soft brilliancy of the sky above the liberated water. My spirit then led me down to the river parterre, and to the side near which the waves foamed most violently.

Ah, it was here, where once I stood with William Brenner, heard the tumultuous murmurs of the waves of his heart, and saw the heaven of his soul brighten in his eyes; and the remembrance of this rushed with painful force into my mind, but—good heaven! was it

* *Blakulla*, a rock in the sea situated between Smaland and Oeland, in which a number of vessels suffer shipwreck every year; from which circumstance the saying originated that it was inhabited by evil spirits, and that the witches assembled there every year to celebrate their annual feast.

† In case this Manuscript should fall into strange hands, I herewith explicitly declare that the above must not be taken literally.

reality indeed? Was it *he* who now stood there again leaning upon the iron railing, and looking down upon the foaming waves?

It was he. A look was sufficient to convince me of the fact, and softly I advanced towards him. The charm was alive within me; I felt conscious that he would not escape me; felt inwardly my power over him at that hour. What I then experienced of life, and will, and warmth, it is beyond the power of language to express; but all this I embodied in my hand, and the hand I softly laid upon his arm.

He started as if struck by an electric shock, and stedfastly gazed in my face.

I quietly looked at him, and merely whispered:

"William!"

He continued gazing at me, but his look suddenly changed, assuming an expression of ineffable melancholy and cordiality, and with a sigh drawn from the depths of his heart he said:

"Sophia! is it thou?"

And we addressed each other by the familiar *thou*, for at that hour our hearts were wholly *united*.

Slowly and gently he again repeated the question:

"Is it *thou*, Sophia? It is a long time since I saw thee."

"Art thou still angry with me?" inquired I, and my tears flowed, for I could tell by his countenance that he had suffered greatly.

"I cannot," replied he, "I could not if I would. The thought of thee softens my heart, and when thou lookest on me thus with thy clear, beautiful eyes, I am comforted by the thought that all is well. Thou art doubtless aware of thy power, Sophia!"

"Oh, William, we are friends then, friends for ever! It cannot be otherwise, when even my faults do not separate us. I never had a brother, but I have always had a great wish for one. Be, then, a brother to me."

He made no reply, but looked at me tenderly, though with seriousness. But I was made so happy by this expression of tenderness, so happy at having found my friend again, and that I could again feel the strong inward harmony which united us, that I regarded this new compact as concluded, and from the fullness of my heart I spoke to him of our past friendship and of what our future would be—of the sublimity and loveliness of friendship, and of its power to ennoble the heart and to enhance the charms of life.

He listened to me with calm and marked attention, but answered not. At last he cut short the conversation by briefly saying:

"Hast thou been happy at home since I last saw thee? How do matters stand with Lennartson and Flora? What is St. Orme doing?"

I was happy to be able to unbosom my heart to Brenner, and to tell him what had transpired during his absence. On hearing St. Orme's conduct and threats, the Viking's wrath was kindled, and he was on the point of leaving me that instant to repair to him in order to give him a reprimand.

"He is gone to some other part of the country," I hastily informed him, "and does not intend to return very soon," ('advise with the storm how to hush the tempest') I added, aside, while the Viking muttered his displeasure at St. Orme, on account of his intrigues, and at Flora, for her want of sincerity; and at me, because I had not remonstrated with her, and for not

having acquainted him with an affair which so closely concerned Lennartson.

"See, there I am again involved!" thought I. "Ill-fated creature, to be always blamed for misfortune!"

"The only consideration which consoles me," continued Brenner, "is my secret persuasion that it would be a fortunate thing for Lennartson if he could get rid of Flora with a good grace. She is in point of fact not at all suitable for him, and I am greatly deceived if he himself has not the same feeling, and secretly, at the bottom of his heart, is attached to another——what thinkest thou, Sophia? Is not thy sister Selma the object of his choice and affection?—according to my view she is created to make him happy!"

I could not but tell Brenner, that privately I entertained the same fears and wishes; but I had Flora's interests also deeply at heart. Her rich mental endowments, her excited and unhappy condition had bound me in sympathy to her.

"If St. Orme would but return," said Brenner. He did not finish his sentence; but I discerned in the depth of his heart his determination to compel him to answer for his conduct.

By this time we had arrived at my residence; and being about to separate, I intreatingly said to the Viking,—

"Thou wilt come again to us, to me, to my brother William?"

"Yes; I will come."

"When?"

"Whenever thou wishest."

"To-morrow?"

"To-morrow."

"Thanks!"

He pressed my hand as warmly and kindly as ever; and with a heart happier and lighter than I had had for a long time, I hastened up into my room; there, in peaceful retirement and fullness of heart, to chant my *Te Deum*.

My next thought was to form a treaty of peace with my stepmother; but in order to effect this object, I was obliged to go rather diplomatically about it.

People of good disposition always soon repent the violence and injustice into which their tempers have misled them; and I was now sufficiently acquainted with my stepmother to be assured that in her heart she was grieved at her own hasty conduct towards me, and would gladly make the "*amende honorable*," if it could be done consistently with her position and her dignity. To have surprised her now with the new carpet would have humbled her; and this, together with the consciousness of her own unreasonableness, would have been more than she could have borne. It was necessary therefore to bring about the matter in another way.

Accordingly I went down stairs, entered the room where my stepmother was sitting on the sofa, with an air of no little chagrin and embarrassment, while Selma was reading near the window, as if nothing had happened, and undauntedly feigned to be in great want of some black silk for my dress.

With the expression,—"I am almost sure I have some that will match it," my stepmother rose up in an instant from the sofa, and went to her boxes, in which she soon found several pieces of black silk, which she begged me to accept and use, in the most pressing manner. In addition to these, I afforded her gratifica-

tion by receiving at her hands a quantity of beautiful lace which I did not want, but which my stepmother in the warmth of her heart felt anxious to present me with. This now led to a little treatise on prohibition enactments, luxury, and national economy; and of this also I received more than I wished. But my heart was tuned in grateful concert, and therefore I took all as circumstances would have it.

After my stepmother had thus considerably lightened herself of articles of luxury and learning, I could, without scruple, burden her with the carpet: I resolved, however, to wait till the next day. I was now, on my part, satisfied with the position of things, resigned myself to the opinion that such also was the case with my stepmother, and retired in peace to my room. It was therefore no little surprise to me when I saw my stepmother enter, and with the most amiable kindness, and tears in her eyes, heard her say,—

"I must beg Sophia to forgive my passionate temper this morning; I know not what induced me to be so disagreeable. But you are well aware that your old mother has no such bad intention, though she is sometimes irritable when her mind is too much oppressed. At the same time I can scarcely forgive myself—"

This was indeed saying much, and I was well-nigh falling at the feet of my stepmother, from a feeling of profound veneration. However, we merely fell into each other's arms; but our bosoms have never reposed on each other more cordially—or rather it was the first time that they ever so warmly met. I was deeply moved, as is my usual wont on such occasions. My stepmother was less affected, but she expressed herself well and charmingly about her character and failings,

and about the duty of persons at every stage of life to strive for improvement, herein coinciding with Madame de Genlis's sentiment.

I cannot bear to hear people advanced in years say "I am too old to improve;" I would rather forgive young people for saying, "I am too young." When we have attained to full maturity, then is the very period when we are most especially bound to labour to perfect ourselves, and to compensate by good qualities for what we lose in the agreeable.

With perfect conviction, I admitted that my stepmother and Madame de Genlis were correct in their observation on this point,* and requested the favour of writing down these words for my own use; and at peace with each other, and somewhat satisfied with ourselves, we separated.

April 4th.

The carpet was this morning laid down with great joy by the domestics, and received my stepmother when she came down to breakfast. She was as much surprised and delighted at it as I could possibly wish; and Selma regained her former alacrity of spirits, and danced before her mother upon the flowers and stars of the carpet.

This little incident seems to have diffused no little joy throughout the family.

"By a mutual exchange of gifts, friendship is cemented," says one of our wise old bards.

My stepmother is now occupied with cheerful thoughts about our proposed *soirée* on Wednesday

* But I must beg my stepmother's pardon; it is not Madam de Genlis, but Madam de Sevigné, who so expresses herself in one of ner epistles.

and has requested us to take particular pains with our toilet, so as to make a beautiful and elegant appear ance as the daughters of the house.

April 5th.

The Viking has been appointed to the command of the frigate *Déssirée*, which is to sail in the spring, on an expedition to the Mediterranean. He will be away *one*, or probably *two* years. This news suprised me. Why, will he—— But, perhaps, it is better as it is. Notwithstanding, it is hard for me.

April 8th.

Yesterday was our *soirée ;* which passed off with *éclât* and perfect success. Flora, who seems to breathe more freely since the absence of St. Orme, enjoyed again a period of blooming beauty. She—as on the first evening I saw her—was dressed in scarlet gauze, Selma in sky-blue crape, and I in white French cambric, trimmed with lace. My stepmother regarded me with pleasure when we assembled in a room below, previous to the arrival of the guests, and was proud of her daughters, called us "*les trois graces*," and pronounced my appearance to be "vestal like."

A quantity of splendid flowers adorned the room—all was in perfectly festive and beautiful order. The new carpet glowed brightly beneath our feet, and warmed the heart of my stepmother.

Such an evening has its fate, like all other things in the world ; and though it is not worth while to attach any great importance to it, it is, nevertheless, an agree-

able thing to see that the fairy of joy, and not of chagrin, wields the sceptre.

A great deal depends upon the inclination or ability of any of the company present to take in hand the general life-giving magic wand; and the Sylphide performed this part this evening, and entwined her invisible wreath uniformly around the company.

As my stepmother herself gave reception to her guests in the inner anteroom, it formed consequently the place of general *rendezvous*, and became crowded and warm, till Selma, taking the arm of Hellfrid Rittersvärd, proposed to her, and some other young ladies, to "establish a colony" in another apartment. They emigrated; soon several of the party followed them, and in a very short time the colony, as Selma playfully observed to her young friends, was in a very flourishing condition. Ladies and gentlemen did not—as, I am sorry to say, is the prevailing custom in our northern assemblies—divide themselves into separate parties, but joined in little circles, endeavoured to render themselves mutually agreeable to each other, and thus arose a lively conversation. The circumstances of our having also some literary, scientific, and musical notables—some "Lions" (N.B. of the noblest breed) among us, considerably enhanced the splendour of the evening.

My stepmother was brilliant. Hellfrid Rittersvärd, and her bridegroom, looked heartily happy; and their agreeable, easy, and tranquil deportment diffused, as usual, pleasure around them. A toast of congratulation was proposed for them by my stepmother at supper, and drunk with solemnity.

Flora's sister, the "Belle," looked this evening un-

commonly unattractive. It was evident to all that the period of her youth was gone by, and that those days were coming of which wise men say: "I have no pleasure in them."*

Flora's sister has never been a particular favourite of mine, nor have I ever discovered more than two thoughts in her mind—theatre and dress; on which account I have gladly avoided every occasion of coming in contact with her. But this evening there was an expression of dejection and secret anguish in her countenance, which induced me to seek her out, when, for a while, she retired from the animated circle in the assembly room into my stepmother's cabinet, which was illuminated only by the soft glimmer of a lamp, and adorned with white flowers. In this delightful little blooming world sat the fading beauty, with her head supported on her hand.

I spoke some kind words to her, and my voice must have testified my sympathy, for unexpectedly she unbosomed her heart to me, and this, indeed, excited fresh interest in me.

"I feel," said she, among other things, "that I have sacrificed too much to the world, which, with its votaries, are so ungrateful. I have been too solicitous to attract and to please them. Now I find all such attempts fruitless. Now that I no longer possess youth and riches, or any thing that amuses or flatters them, they draw back from me, they leave me deserted, and I—I know not what to do. I fancy as if the world around me was shrouding itself in darkness. I feel a sort of horror as if haunted by evil spirits—all seems

* Ecclesiastes xii. 1.

so vacant, so desolate—I have nothing which interests me—I feel the days so long—my time hangs heavy on me!"

The stream of bitter tears which followed these words expressed still more forcibly the sad state of the fair mourner's mind. And what indeed is harder to bear than emptiness of life?—what more dreadful than twilight in life without a star, in heaven or one single little taper on earth?

But why can we not kindle such a one for ourselves? Why can we not borrow fire for it from kind neighbours? Ah! light and warmth, objects of interest, activity and joy, are so abundant in life, that to me nothing seems more difficult to conceive than the possibility of any rational creature feeling actual *ennui*, unless he be bound hand and foot, and then—one may be released by benevolent hands! and a ransomed spirit for which life rises in its beauty and grandeur—how glorious!

At these words I, like a balloon inflated with vital air, felt ready to make my ascent and courageously take with me the "Beauty" on my journey—to the sun. I began to talk (and, as I thought, particularly like the book of wisdom) of life and its object, of man and society, of the relation of the individual to the community at large, and so forth, and then made an application of the subject to the particular sphere of life of my auditor, proposing to her in conclusion as a remedy for the evil, that she should adopt a few orphan children and train them for happy and useful members of society, and so prepare them for the company of the blessed in heaven.

The "Beauty," on hearing my sermon, looked at me

with a pair of large eyes full of astonishment. "Such things really never entered her mind," said she coldly, and a little hurt at the proposal.

I then spoke of an interest in public institutions, of the honour and happiness of presiding over some benevolent establishment, and thus render ourselves useful to society by our life and activity. I mentioned my own plans and wishes to labour in such a sphere of usefulness, spoke of one object worthy of attention, the excellent institution for the care of the children of the destitute, and in my zeal proposed to the "Beauty" that on the following day we should visit it. But then I began to discover that she was regarding me with an expression of countenance that seemed to say: "Is the girl in her right senses?" And at the same time also I found out that I had hoisted my sails too high.

Half smiling at myself, I endeavoured to direct my course towards regions lying nearer to the sphere of the "Beauty;" but I found her to be so strange and apathetic to all that appeared charming and entertaining to me, that I felt quite at a loss, and only began to breathe more freely when I saw the Chamberlain approaching us.

With the eagerness with which we turn from a foe to a friend, the Baroness Bella turned from me to my uncle, and in a tone of lively gratitude expressed to him her acknowledgment for some marks of courtesy evinced towards her, among others that of surrendering to her his private box at the last representation of "Norma." "I am so full of grateful feelings," I heard her add.

"Ah, my dearest cousin," replied he, in his usual tone of jocularity, "it would be better if you were full

of chandeliers, for I just happen to be in want of some for a couple of rooms, and know not where to meet with any suitable ones."

The Baroness Bella answered, smiling, that though she was not a furniture depôt, yet she could direct him to one, where he would meet with "perfectly divine chandeliers."

The Court-Chamberlain was indescribably glad he could obtain "divine chandeliers," and still more so to be enlightened and assisted by the eye and taste of the Baroness Bella. An appointment was made for the following day to see the chandeliers and with a side glance at me, my uncle offered the "Beauty" his opera-box for the next subscription night. Her grateful feelings already swelled more and more, and he was equally full of courtesy; while I, feeling myself more and more superfluous in this *tête-à-tête*, which was growing more and more lively, left the party with rather a melancholy impression, though not altogether unamused.

I returned to the other part of the company. The Viking was there, but seemed to be in a serious, almost gloomy mood, spoke to nobody, and did not approach me. This grieved me, especially as I had not seen him since I had heard of the long and adventurous expedition he was about to undertake. I felt a great desire to say something to him, but had not the courage. This evening I was not possessed of any magic charm, but was nothing more than an ordinary woman. I perceived by the Viking's looks that there was a storm raging in his breast, and that intimidated me.

I was asked to play something, and sitting down to the pianoforte, and seeing Brenner approaching the

same, the thought struck me that I might converse with him in sound, and thus communicate to him what I felt unable to express in words. Accordingly I selected one of Felix Mendelssohn's "Songs without words," the character of which is constantly increasing triumph amid sufferings and conflicts; a song, a poem, whose peculiar beauty has always deeply affected my heart. I played indeed with all the pathos of my soul, being anxious to pour the feeling which animated me into Brenner's heart, and raise us both above earthly conflicts and earthly sorrows. And I fancied—I felt that he understood me.

Lennartson, Selma, and several others had in the mean time collected round the instrument and listened to the music. After I had concluded, Brenner's expressive look met mine. Lennartson said to him:

"This piece reminds me of the story of your Egyptian vulture, Brenner; relate it to us, and Mademoiselle Adelan shall declare whether it does not contain the words adapted to this music."

Brenner then proceeded to relate:

"It was in Egypt, in the vicinity of Thebes, where one morning roving about in the desert in quest of sport, I espied, at no great distance from me, a vulture, sitting among the ruins of fallen monuments. This bird is known for its strong vital power; it is dangerous to approach it when it is wounded; it possesses almost incredible strength. I shot at it, and wounded it on the breast, and, as I was led to conclude from its convulsive motions, mortally. Notwithstanding, it remained immoveable in its place, and I sprang forward to despatch it; but at the same instant the

bird raised its wings and soared on high. Blood streamed from its breast, and a portion of its viscera fell out; but in spite of all this, it continued to rise in wider and wider circles. A few after-shots had no effect. It was a beautiful sight to see this bird in the vast, still desert, mortally wounded, and dyeing the sand with its blood, continue to mount higher and higher on its huge wings. The last circle it described was certainly a quarter of a mile in diameter, and then I lost sight of it in the azure space."

"Ah, heaven! who would not like to have been in Egypt," said the Chamberlain, smartly, "and seen vultures, and crocodiles, and the like prodigious sights. How extremely interesting all this must be."

"Ah, pray do tell us a little more about Egypt and the crocodiles," exclaimed little *Fräulein* M * *

"Is social life in Egypt animated? and what is the tone of conversation there?" inquired Krusenberg the Royal Secretary.

I do not know what reply Brenner made to these attacks, for I retired just as they commenced. We did not approach each other any nearer during the course of the evening; but I could read in his frequent glances at me that his heart was full, and so—to tell the truth—was mine too. Brenner's speedy departure, the images called forth by the music and the story of the vulture filled me with sad-sweet emotions.

I scarcely knew whether it was a secret wish in us both or a mere accident; but when all the guests had taken leave, and my stepmother, Selma and Flora were accompanying the last of them out of the room, conversing with them in the hall while they were getting

ready to leave, Brenner and I found ourselves alone in the white-flowered cabinet. We both stood still; he excited, and I embarrassed and confused.

"Thou art going a voyage, I suppose?" said I at length.

He made no reply.

"It is a long voyage!" I said again. "Shalt thou be long away?"

"Yes," answered he, with half-suppressed agitation. "Yes; I shall be away a long time. I am going abroad because I find things too confined and contracted for me at home, because if I would live I must seek a free space to breathe in—I must hence go to distant regions, where I shall neither see nor hear thee."

He seized my hand, and pressed it to his eyes; I felt them bedewed with tears.

"Oh," continued he, "this is all childishness; nevertheless, let me indulge it a while; it will soon be over. Be not uneasy, Sophia; I have no other will or desire than to see thee for one moment, and to be happy in loving thee, and in thus loving, although thou hast rejected me. I never loved any one more ardently; I have been happy in this feeling, happy in the foolish hope that thou sharedst it with me, that we were made for each other, that thou wouldst consent . . . . but that is past; and in future my affection would only become a torment to me when near thee. When the storm has subsided in my breast, I will return to my children and to thee. Think of me when I am far away——think, that my heart is not one that thou mayest despise! Do not weep; for I do not complain. I wish not to have loved thee less; on the billows of the ocean, or in the deserts of Africa, I shall feel myself

rich in this love. Do not wish me to be free from it unless thou desirest my misery. I love thee now, and will love thee for ever. I defy thee to move me from my resolution, but . . . . this is the last time that I shall speak to thee on the subject. And now farewell! farewell, *my* Sophia. Heaven bless thee!"

And before I could consider what to say or do, he had embraced—left me.

This was a thunderbolt. As for peace after this scene I had none; and a long time methinks it will be ere I shall have any again. But when *he* will have found peace on the stormy ocean, then I shall be satisfied that . . . .

April 15th.

For several days past he has not made his appearance here. I feel so desolate, but I dare not murmur. He does what is right and manly. That tender, but proud heart will not complain nor show his wounds, but, like the bird of the desert, quietly conceal them and his pains in the free, lofty space into which no human eye can penetrate. He is noble and high-minded; but I? . . . .

For the last few days we have had much more quietness and peace at home than we have known for a long time. It arises from Flora's tranquillised and relieved state of mind; but how long will this last?

April 19th and 20th, at night.

Yesterday, Flora being rather unwell, I stayed at home from a dinner-party, to which my stepmother went with

Selma. I have a peculiar friendship for the sick. I look upon them as my children, and accordingly I treat them in a way in which they generally feel themselves comfortable. It therefore gave me a little pleasure to be with Flora yesterday; and while I nursed her in a tender and playful manner, and we said a great many horrible things about our hatred, we gradually approached nearer in heart to each other than we had done hitherto. In the afternoon I read to her, while she lay on the sofa in the inner apartment. During a pause I made in reading, to rest a little, Flora said:

"You really are very kind to me, Sophia; and were I but good, that is to say, calm and contented, I should be able to thank you, as at present I cannot. I am not bad; but one may lose one's self—one may become frantic if one is chased and persecuted, as I have been for some time. Have you not perceived a great change in me for the last few days?—This is owing to my persecutor having left me at peace. I have known nothing about him for some time. I cannot conceive .... Can it be possible that he has left me for good—that I am released? Ah, that it were so! Then should a new ...."

"How are you all here?" inquired a clear friendly voice, and Signora Luna showed her sweet face at the door. She is always a welcome visitor; and though at this moment I wished her in the moon for interrupting a conversation which had a great interest for me, nevertheless she was received as usual; and, throwing herself comfortably into a corner of the sofa, she proceeded with friendly talkativeness,—

"I am very glad I have come so *à-propos* as to find you both alone; for I intend to take up my residence

here for the afternoon, and get to the bottom of several little things. Have you any idea here at home what rumours are circulating in the city?"

"About what?—About whom?" asked I.

"About Flora: they say she is to marry St. Orme, and accompany him to Constantinople, whither he is going in the Spring as Ambassador. Can it be possible?"

"I really do not know," said I, with a glance at Flora.

Flora turned pale.

"The rattle-snake is at hand!" whispered she, as if to herself. "I hear it approaching!"

"Ah, a very likely thing, indeed, for people to be ignorant about matters that are passing before their own eyes," said the Countess G * * , with some impatience, though pleasantly; "and if we were to come to the point, it is very likely Flora herself does not know whether she is betrothed, or to whom. But this much I know, that I shall do every thing in my power to contradict the report. Flora is my own cousin, and I love Flora and will take care that she shall not be made unhappy, which she will be with St. Orme. I know that he is a bad man; he caused the death of his first wife, and would be no better to the second; for—depend upon me—there is nothing that has such a pernicious influence, both on the body and soul, as an unhappy marriage."

The beautiful eyes of the Countess filled with tears as she uttered these words.

At that instant we heard doors violently opened, and proud footsteps traversing the rooms: immediately after the great Alexander entered the room in which

we were sitting. After a brief salutation to me and Flora, he turned with an imperious air to his wife and said,—

"I thought, my friend, you had heard me, when I told you this morning that you were not to go out this afternoon, but stay at home till I returned from dining at L * * 's."

"Ah, my dear friend! I had quite forgotten all about it. I did not think that it was a matter of such importance."

"Importance!—In the first place I am not in the habit of saying things without good reason; and what I told you this morning was maturely considered, and had its cogent reasons. The determination of a man is not to be thwarted by the whims of a woman; I therefore hope you will be so good as to follow me home instantly."

"My dearest Alexander, now that I have come, let me remain here quietly; I sit so comfortably here, and—I have something of importance to say to my friends. As soon as this is finished I will come home to you. Let me for once in my life do what I wish."

"Never!—You must have the goodness instantly to follow me; and if you wish to have a good reason for this my injunction, I will give it you,—it is, *tout simplement*,—I will it."

"But I have a will too!" exclaimed Signora Luna, with suddenly kindling energy, while her eyes flashed like real moon-stones. "Hitherto it has lain dormant, but if you teach me to use it, it may prove stronger than yours. And now I *will* stay here, and shall not go away until *I* will. Moreover, if you do not give

your *good will* to this separation, I shall soon seek a longer one."

The great Alexander was evidently greatly confounded at this unexpected outbreak of will and passion in his usually passive wife. He seemed to dread it and retired, muttering something to himself about the "follies and caprices of women."

He was scarcely gone before Lennartson came. The Countess G * * , not wishing to be seen by him in this state of momentary excitement, repaired into another room, where, after having in some measure composed herself, she said to me:

"It will be the best for me to go away, after a while. I will not make him seriously angry, but simply show him that he must not go too far with his authority. Alexander is possessed of very many good qualities, and would have many more, if he did not busy himself so much with Aristotle. He, and his logic, have quite bewildered him. And for men of such a stamp, it is not meet they should have too complying wives, for then they immediately become tyrants; and I will show Alexander—— But go you in, Sophia; I fancied Flora was uneasy, as you came out; go in, and do not be concerned about me. I shall softly and quietly go my way, when I think that it is time; for he must wait a little while there. But pray go in, go in."

I obeyed the injunction, eager to see what was going on between Lennartson and Flora.

When I entered, Flora was reading a letter, which Lennartson apparently had put into her hands; he was standing at the window, with his serious eyes keenly fixed upon her. She was extremely pale; and, after a while, putting the letter aside, she said:

"I cannot read it; I feel a dimness over my eyes. Read the letter aloud to me, Lennartson, Sophia may hear all."

Lennartson took the letter, which he read aloud with a firm voice. It contained a warning to Lennartson, not to enter into an alliance with Flora, with an admonition, in case he had already done so, to break it off immediately. Flora was already bound *by the ties of love and honour* to another, which should be made public, if this admonition were not attended to. To this extremity, however, the party in question would resort with reluctance; and, providing Lennartson quietly withdrew from Flora, every thing which could affect her reputation should be buried in silence. The letter was subscribed "Anonymous," and evidently written in a feigned hand.

Incapable any longer of self-control, Flora exclaimed, with phrensy: "Base, crafty, detestable St. Orme!"

"It is *he*, then!" said Lennartson, with flashing eyes. "He then is the disturber. I have long suspected it; and now, Flora, I am *determined* to know what right and what ground he has for this."

"This hour must dissolve our connection, or cement it for ever. I have more than once entreated, nay, implored your full confidence; to-day I must *demand* it."

"You shall know all," exclaimed Flora, with determination. "You shall be my judge. But oh, Thorsten, remember that even God's highest judgment is mercy."

Lennartson made no reply. He sate grave and gloomy, and seemed to await Flora's confession.

"Well then," exclaimed she, while apparently making a violent effort, "all shall be told.—This St.

Orme devoted his attention to me five years ago when he was in Stockholm, and acquired a degree of power over me. His bold, self-confidence, his talents, his intellectual endowments, which I then deemed of a superior order, made an impression upon me. I fancied I loved him. He took advantage of my blindness and inexperience to draw me into an epistolary correspondence, and thus extort from me a promise of eternal fidelity and the like. St. Orme, however, on his part did not concern himself to fulfil the promises which he made to me. As I was then poor in circumstances, he left me and went to Paris, from whence for a long time I received no tidings of him. In the mean time I formed your acquaintance, Lennartson, and learned what real affection was. I deemed myself forgotten by St. Orme, and on my part also forgot him and my childish, foolish promises; ah, I forgot the whole world, when you, Lennartson, offered me your heart, and life arose before me in renewed beauty. But shortly afterwards I became *rich*, and St. Orme came back and enforced his former claims. He had forgotten *Flora*, but remembered the rich heiress. And I was well aware that it was not my heart which he then sought, but my fortune; I no longer loved him, but—but I was obliged to deal with him guardedly, and by kindness endeavour to operate upon his hard heart in order to regain possession of those imprudent, unfortunate letters which he had in his power, and ungenerously enough threatened to produce against me, if I did not break off my connection with you, and consent to give him my hand.—

"See, Lennartson," continued she, "that is the secret of the gloom, the conflict and the discrepancy

in my character for several months past. I have long hoped to be able to triumph over him. I have long struggled—but this hour proves to me that all is vain. St. Orme has driven me to extremity, to the confession which my pride, my womanly modesty, my love to you, Thorsten, made me shun, more than death. And yet, now that all is divulged, and this is rolled from my heart—I wonder how I could have regarded it as so formidable; for, Lennartson, *you* cannot look upon a youthful act of imprudence in so serious a light—you cannot condemn me on account of a few foolish letters, or deprive me of your love."

"Have you made full declaration, Flora, of *all?*"

"I have told *all.*"

"Farewell, Flora."

He extended her his hand; she held it fast, and exclaimed with anxiety:

"Whither are you going? For pity, for mercy's sake tell me what you intend to do!—what you intend to do?"

"Amicably or by force to wrest those letters out of St. Orme's hands, and replace them in yours."

"Thorsten, you are my angel of deliverance!" exclaimed Flora, throwing herself on her knees.

Lennartson had already disappeared.

Selma came home alone. Her mother was spending the evening with Madam Rittersvärd. Selma was now informed of what had transpired during her absence, and to which she listened with astonishment and disquietude; she seemed most of all surprised that Flora had not long since opened her heart to her and to Lennartson; but on hearing Lennartson's last words she was seized with great consternation, and exclaimed:

"Amicably or by *force!* And you, Flora, suffered him to go with such a purpose. You place his life at stake!"

"Good heaven! Is it possible!" burst out Flora. "I never gave that a thought. But, no! St. Orme will never venture——"

"St. Orme will venture every thing to obtain you, and Lennartson every thing to set you at liberty. St. Orme is well known as a successful duellist; Lennartson shuns no danger; and I know that in certain cases he considers duels as——Flora, Flora, what have you done?"

"And what would you have had me do? Would you have me sacrifice myself?" asked Flora, gloomily.

Selma wrung her hands in despair.

"Fortunately," continued Flora, "it so happens that St. Orme is not in Stockholm at present, and——"

"The *Envoyé* St. Orme is waiting without, and solicits permission to speak to Mam'selle Flora," was at that moment announced by the Philosopher in his unearthly voice.

Flora turned pale, and so, I believe, did we all.

"Go, Flora, go," said Selma, in an almost imperative tone of voice. "Go and speak to him. Prevent their meeting. Save, save Lennartson!"

Flora again looked at Selma with a dark expression, and then turned to me, saying:

"Will you go with me, Sophia? I will have nothing more to do with that man in private. But I will speak with him once more, and try my utmost."

I followed Flora. St. Orme stood in the large anteroom. He looked calm and self-possessed, went to meet Flora, and was about to take her hand. She

proudly stepped back, and cast an annihilating glance at him.

He regarded her with a cold look, and then said: "I see how matters stand, and, no doubt, you will perceive it too. Well, then, what do you say? But can we not speak *entre nous?*"

"No, I will never have any private interview again with a man like you."

"Aha! that sounds severe, indeed. Well, then, you must blame yourself if any thing should come to light that you would rather have had concealed."

"You are a base calumniator, Adrian St. Orme!"

"Flora Delphin, let us avoid invectives—at least till there be a further occasion—at present they serve no purpose. We will now talk together candidly and reasonably. Let us consider things in their simple and true light, for what avails it for us to resist necessity? You have not a better friend than I, Flora; and, indeed, I give you a proof of this by my constancy towards you in spite of your whims and caprices. I have ever acted an honest, an open part towards you, even in declaring that you *must* be *mine*, and I should defy heaven and hell to prevent you committing perjury. My affection and my disposition are quite of a different calibre from those of ordinary men; they take higher paths, and aim at higher objects. My will is not to be bent by storm and wind; what I will, that will I, and——"

"Spare your words, St. Orme," said Flora, interrupting him impatiently. "I know you now, and am no longer to be deceived by fine speeches. Tell me briefly what it is you desire, and I will then tell you what I have resolved to do."

"What I desire you know already—my love and my wishes you are alike acquainted with. Let me rather now tell you what is your desire."

"*My* desire?"

"Yes, *your* heart's desire. What you must desire. Or, think you, that I do not know yours? Do you think that I am to be baffled by these convulsions in your feelings, by these phantoms of a new love created by your fancy? Child, child, no one yet has ever reposed on my bosom whose inmost heart I have not penetrated, and whose softest pulsation I have not heard. And to *yours* I have listened with the ear of sympathy and love. Flora, you are bound to me by the closest, strongest ties; not by your love, not by your oath, not by what your affection has given me;—but by mightier bonds—by the power of sympathy, by virtues, by errors, yes, for even your errors are mine, and in your character I recognise my own. Fools command people to amend their faults; I have loved yours and adopted them to make you happy. Look around you if you can find such a love? And from this you will turn away, mistaking both yourself and me! Do you fancy it is your beauty, your talents, that have fettered me to you? Hundreds there are who are possessed of such in a far higher degree than you. No it is your deeper self, your sublime eccentric nature, wavering and flickering between heaven and hell. Upon the track between these poles I will accompany you; *you must* accompany me — sharing condemnation or bliss. At this hour I offer you bliss. Judge for yourself. You are no northern maiden, Flora, and cannot be measured by the spiritless life of the North; you are of a southern nature, and require a warmer sun to

expand your flower. Therefore follow me to the East, to magnificent Constantinople, and there learn to know me thoroughly. For you do not know me yet, Flora. It is a peculiarity in the constitution of my nature to open its depths only to unreserved devotedness. My love is a consuming flame to the object it cannot make happy, and you yourself, Flora, shall fear me from the hour in which you turn against me. I have used sharp weapons against you, and will use them until the hour in which you surrender yourself captive! But then you still also make experience of a love, stronger than the glow of eastern regions, more beautiful than your own fine and ardent imagination——believe me. You will not be completely yourself till the hour when you fully return to me; to your first, your strongest love: fulness of life is not reserved for you save in my arms. I know you better than you know yourself. For your own sake I call upon you: turn to me again with all your heart and affection, throw yourself into my arms now open to receive you, come to this breast and find there a heaven—no, *that* is too mild—no, a *hell* of bliss."

And St. Orme prostrated himself on his knees before Flora, with his arms extended towards her.

While he was speaking she had let her head sink upon her breast. When he had finished she raised it and slowly lifted herself up, while in an excited tone of voice, she said:

"What words! what expressions! I recognise them again—they strike the chords I thought were broken; but they vibrate still. Oh, that I could but believe you and——but in vain! At this very hour, while I am fascinated by your words, I feel, I know, that your

sole object is to deceive me, that you do not love me, that you are only playing a part. Oh, St. Orme, how great, how glorious a character would you be, were you but *honest*. But of this least and yet greatest trait you are wanting, and consequently destitute of all that characterises worth."

St. Orme sprang up, as if struck by an arrow, and a great change passed over him. His arms, extended but a moment before, he folded upon his breast, the colour on his cheeks paled, and with icy scorn he advanced to Flora, and said:

"You can, in that case, the better extend me your hand, for you surely do not mean to assert in earnest, dear Flora, that you are what the world calls 'an honourable woman.'"

Flora felt the thrust as acutely as St. Orme had felt hers. Glowing with anger, she exclaimed:

"Yes, *too* honourable, *too* good, I am, forsooth, to be yours, base man! And let come what may, your wife I never will be!"

"You shall be my wife or nobody's; and you shall descend to the grave with a stained reputation. If it is your will to have me for your enemy, then I will treat you accordingly."

"Do! I fear you not, wretched coward! Thorsten Lennartson will soon rid me of you and your aspersions. I have seen you pale and quail in his presence; you shall for once find your match—a power capable of crushing yours."

At this monition, St. Orme's pale cheeks coloured; with a vindictive smile, he said:

"Thorsten Lennartson will abandon you, when I show him certain letters, especially *one* particular letter.

. . . . My poor, dear Flora. You seem to have grown a little oblivious, and lost all recollection of the letter, in which you invited me . . . ."

Flora here interrupted him by a torrent of words and expressions, with which I will not soil my paper. The principal purport of it was, that St. Orme had taken advantage of her credulity and want of circumspection to cast suspicion on her intentions and deportment. But it was not an innocent, aggrieved woman, but a fury who spoke in Flora.

St. Orme listened to her with coldness, and when she became silent from exhaustion, he said:

"When your storm of passion is hushed, you will perceive that all this avails you nothing. Whatever opposition you may make, there is but *one* lot for you to choose, and that is to accompany me next month as my wife to Constantinople. You have made the way more difficult, but it still remains open to you. Shall I point it out?"

Flora made no reply, and St. Orme continued:

"This very day you write to Lennartson, and tell him that, owing to a prior engagement, which you had long forgotten, you must forego the honour of becoming his wife. You know best whose you must be. And then give your hand to your former lover, and he will conduct you to his beautiful country-seat, near Constantinople."

"Know, St. Orme," broke forth Flora, "know that if in this you succeed—and a something tells me at this moment that you will succeed—you will lead calamity, your own Nemesis into your house."

At these words, she rose up, and with outstretched hand and a fearful expression, she continued:

"For I shall hate you, Adrian, I shall so hate you that you yourself shall be terrified and afraid of—your own wife! Yes, smile on. One day you will not smile, one day I shall hate you . . . . take care of yourself, St. Orme. You have excited a horrible thirst in me. You have kindled a desire in me to be next you, to become your wife, for the sole purpose of punishing you and avenging myself. There—but mind—take my hand, take it if you dare, take it and—my eternal hate."

"I take it and your hate. It has sometimes been my delight to overcome indifference; now I feel tempted to try to convert hatred into love. By so doing, I only follow the precepts of Christianity . . . . I take you, then, fair bride. On Sunday our banns shall be published thrice in the church, and in a week we will be married. But I feel quite pleased with you for your spirited combat and vigorous resolution. They really deserve a bridegroom's kiss."

Saying these words, he took her in his arms by force, and kissed her. So the spirits of hell embrace each other.

With a shudder, with a dreadful shriek of horror, Flora recovered her consciousness. St. Orme had vanished.

At that moment, Selma appeared at the door, and silently beckoned me to her. I went to her, and she whispered, quickly:

"Brenner is here. He wished to meet St. Orme, whom he understood to be here. In my anxiety I told him something of what had taken place here, and of the meeting I dreaded between St. Orme and Lennartson. He seemed determined to be beforehand in

this by fighting first with St. Orme. I have had great difficulty in keeping him back till the interview within was finished, and he could hear from you the issue. Come now, and speak to him; tell us how it is."

And she conducted me to Brenner, who was in my stepmother's *boudoir*. I found him in a most impetuous mood, and so eagerly impatient to fight with St. Orme, that it was with the utmost difficulty only that I could keep him back, by telling him what turn the matter had taken, and expressing my doubts whether Flora deserved that such men as Lennartson and Brenner should hazard their lives in a sanguinary contest for her. I earnestly entreated him to keep himself quiet, at least for that day, and to wait for further intelligence on the subject. I promised to write to him early the following morning, and to communicate to him all further particulars.

With this promise Brenner departed, and Selma and I went to Flora. She was violently pacing up and down the room, talked aloud, and appeared not to notice us.

"Well, very well!" exclaimed she. "All is now decided; all choice, all torment over. He has won the game. But do not be elated by your triumph. You have barred against me *one* door of hope, but you have opened another. Now I shall have a new object, a new interest in life, and that is to plague, to torture, to punish you."

"Flora!" exclaimed Selma, with an indescribable expression of pain and tenderness.

"Yes," continued Flora, "we will let him know what the object of his tyranny can do. Ha! Adrian St. Orme! we shall see, we shall see. Long have I

halted between heaven and hell—hell has triumphed. Well then!—I will go to school; there I will become expert in its arts, and outrival him: in such things woman is always more skilful than man."

"Flora, Flora!" exclaimed Selma again.

"Who calls Flora?" asked the latter, wildly. "Is it my good angel?—Then let him know that he calls me too late; I will no longer hearken to him. I have something else to do at present; and whether voices are raised to condemn me, or tears shed to deplore me, it is all the same: I care not for them. All my feelings, all my thoughts are hatred and revenge. Ah, if I only could revenge myself to my heart's content!"

She paused awhile, pensively looking down to the ground; but suddenly she lifted up her head, clapped her hands, and exclaimed,—

"I have it, I have it!—He fancies he will get a fortune with me, but he shall find out his mistake. As soon as I am married to him I will become a spendthrift and a gamester; I will squander away my fortune in every possible way; contract debts and weave a web of trouble and misery around him. Ha! St. Orme, with all your cunning you shall be deceived, indeed. To have lavished so much trouble, so much craft, so much eloquence—for what?—to introduce poverty and hatred into your house! Gold and hate you may grasp; but poverty and hate, if they embrace you—then, peradventure, we shall see that brazen brow of yours turn pale—that audacious look be cowed—then you will wish yourself far away; but—you shall not escape me."

In this manner, and in this spirit, Flora long continued her soliloquy.

Selma in the mean time had disappeared.

It had grown dark—a wild storm was raging over the fields—showers of hail and rain fell violently dashing to the ground. The commotion in nature seemed to calm that in Flora's soul: she became quieter. For a long time she stood at the window, contemplating the fury of the elements without. After a while her tears began to flow. She wept long, and seemed to be relieved by it.

When she had in some measure composed herself, she seated herself to her writing-desk, saying,—

"Now I will write to Lennartson, and beseech him to give up all thoughts of me. I shall tell him that I am unworthy of his affection and esteem. This is no true, but what of that? I shall thereby save him fro all danger and . . . . I am now quite indifferent towards myself!"

Deeply affected by these words, I exclaimed,—

"Wait, delay yet a while, Flora!—Let us reflect, let us deliberate; there must be some outlet, some means of escape from this dilemma."

"No; there is none!" sighed Flora, with a sort of quiet desperation. "And I am weary of labouring and fighting against an irresistible destiny. This St. Orme is my dark fate, and I feel I am ordained to be his! Oh this Lennartson! so strong, and yet so good—he alone could have saved me!—Yes; if he could have loved me as I love him—supremely. But he could not love me thus; and yet I am not entirely unworthy of his affection . . . . I bear within me a something that, under his protection and at his side, might have unfolded itself to great beauty. Oh, Lennartson! had I become yours how different should I—how different

should every thing have become. That which you had loved I should have loved; and talents, fortune, all the gifts which I possess, and which are now to be employed in deeds of darkness, would in your hand have proved a blessing. Oh, to stand so near to such a goal, and to see it vanish!—To hold in one's hand the best lot of life and see it snatched away!—to be compelled to renounce a Lennartson to become the despised and despairing prey of a St. Orme! Oh why can I not die?"

And in another outbreak of the most violent anguish, Flora threw herself down on the floor.

At that moment a light broke through the clouds into her room, and I fancied as if in its reflection a white dove was descending, and extending her wings over Flora.

It was Selma, who with the lightness of a bird flew into the room, couched on her knee beside Flora, and throwing back a white shawl which covered her head and shoulders, exclaimed as she stretched out her hands,—

"No; live, live, my Flora!—Live, and be happy! Here are your letters!"

A letter case of crimson silk shone brightly in her hand.

With an exclamation of joy,—"My letters! My letters!" Flora threw herself upon them.

"You are free, Flora!" continued Selma, with a voice apparently stifled by emotion. "St. Orme resigns you—he will soon depart—you are free—be happy, be happy!"

"Selma!—what do you say?" exclaimed Flora. "Are you out of your wits, or am I?—Who?—What?—How have you—"

With incoherent, eager inquiries, Flora and I attacked Selma; but she did not answer us—she heard us no more. Deprived of consciousness she lay prostrate on the floor, with her hair and apparel saturated with rain.

We carried her to bed, but vain were our attempts to restore her to consciousness. Quickly I despatched a messenger to my stepmother, and a second to Dr. L * *, the family physician. Soon they both stood beside Selma's bed, my stepmother with a face as pale and almost as death-like as that of her beloved daughter.

After Selma had been bled she returned to life, but not to consciousness. Her mind wandered in an awful manner.

Her bright friendly eyes were now wild and staring, and seemed anxious to avoid some dreaded sight.

She drew me to her and said, in a half whisper:

"Do you know, it was frightful! I met him just as he was coming out of—hell; and he looked at me with such terrible flaming eyes—"

"Who looked at you so, my sweet Selma?" inquired I.

"He—St. Michael—you know whom I mean. I wanted to flee but he held me back, and marked my forehead with his finger because I had been among the wicked; and since then I feel such burning pain there, and I know that I cannot show myself any more before men. They all behold me with such terrified looks, and you too—I must look frightful!"

"You are ill, Selma, and therefore everybody looks at you so anxiously; but you yourself look like a good angel, as indeed you are."

"Yes, you say so, but he knows better, he who saw me there——he would have killed me, he would have pierced my heart with his spear, if I had not fled from him. Yes, I fled before him, but yet I felt that all was over with me; that I was branded; and the whole world flies at sight of me, because I fled——"

"You must not talk so much at present, Selma; you must try to sleep."

"Sleep! No, I shall never sleep again. I have too much burning pain here," said she, pointing with her hand to her forehead. "And I see the look everywhere;—it will keep me awake till the day of judgment. No, I dare not sleep any more."

While I was listening to these terrible delirious ravings, and inquiring ineffectually into their cause, Dr. L * * explained them to my stepmother by the terms "*inflammation of the brain*," but of a very *mild* character. He said that this disease was at present very prevalent, and assumed in most cases a very malignant form, frequently without any apparent cause. We immediately attended to all the directions he prescribed, and which are usual in the treatment of such patients. Selma's head was pillowed high, the chamber kept dark and quiet, and cold applications laid upon her burning head. While engaged in attending to these matters, I was called out of the room. In the antechamber I found Lennartson, but in such a state as I had never beheld him before—so pale and agitated.

"Where, where is Selma?" inquired he hastily. "What had she to do at St. Orme's? Who sent her there?"

"You surely cannot suspect Selma of any thing bad or incorrect?" asked I.

"Her? Impossible! but I suspect others; I fear that some may take advantage of her self-sacrificing, affectionate heart."

"How and when did you meet Selma?"

"A little while since I went in quest of St. Orme. A female figure wrapped in a white shawl was just coming out of his room. Several rude young men were endeavouring to detain her on the stairs; I set her at liberty, and observing that she trembled, I took her hand to escort her down the stairs; and then, to my surprise, I recognised—Mam'selle Selma. She tore herself from me and fled away so swiftly that I could not say a word to her; to run after her I did not like—but now I must know wherefore she was there."

In as few words as possible I related to the Baron all that had occurred.

We now perceived that Selma, urged by an impulse of the moment, in order to save Flora and to prevent a meeting between St. Orme and Lennartson, had hastened to the residence of the former, supported solely by her enthusiasm and self-sacrificing affection. But by what talisman she had been enabled to snatch from St. Orme the treasure he had so long guarded with the watchfulness of a dragon was incomprehensible to us.

Lennartson became deeply dejected when informed of Selma's present condition. It being already late in the evening, he was obliged to go.

"I shall be here early to-morrow," said he. He made inquiries also about Flora, but seemed scarcely to hear my reply.

Oh, I see more and more plainly which is the object of his heart's affections.

April 20th, in the Morning.

The night now is past, but what a night! Selma has been in a state of constant delirium. The same phantasies recur again and again, only under different forms; and now I well comprehend the cause from which they proceed. Oh, my poor young sister! In the morning she asked for some myrtles and flowers, and commenced twining a garland, which she calls "Flora's bridal wreath;" she zealously perseveres in her labour but her hands ever and anon sink down exhausted and the work does not progress. She also sings snatches of her joyous songs, but never finishes one. My poor stepmother goes about with mute anxiety in her eyes, and seems to ask: "How is it now? What course will it take?"

Flora, after having sate up with me all night in watchful attendance on Selma, has driven to her sister's this morning. I have just written to Brenner, and shall not leave my Selma's room again where I write this.

In the Evening.

The same as ever! Selma continues to weave her chaplet, but complains that it never will be ready. Sometimes she sings. Dr. L * * looks troubled, and talks of having her hair cut off;—her beautiful hair.

Lennartson has been here several times to inquire after her. This evening they spread straw in front of the house, to deaden the noise of carriages; this is owing to Lennartson's care, I understand.

Brenner also has called, but I did not see him.

April 21st.

Another night, full of unspeakable disquiet and anguish. Dr. L * * does not think that she can survive four and twenty hours, unless the crisis takes a favourable turn.

Jernnätter, (*i. e.* Iron-nights,) is the name applied in Sweden to certain nights about Midsummer time, in which frost appears and breathes upon the blooming fields. Often it is fatal in its effects, destroying in a few hours the hopes of a whole year. Then the sky is clear and the air serene, and when the sun rises the corn-fields glisten in their most beautiful silver garb, but it is the *garb of death*,—an icy garment, beneath whose folds the blooming life of the ear lies blighted.

In human life also such Jernnätter appears, blasting the young, the gay, the blooming; and fortunate are they, if when in heart they die, they are not doomed to linger on earth, like the withered ears on the field, without sap and without vital power. Selma, thou good young creature, I can hardly wish that thou mayest live, for clearer and more distinctly I can hear from the wanderings of thy imagination the secret of thy heart, the sorrows of thy soul. But when thou departest, how desolate . . . .

Later.

There appears to be a change going forward in Selma; she still continues in a state of delirium, but her wandering imagination assumes a more quiet character. She is now deeply impressed with the persuasion of her approaching dissolution, and has called me several times, merely to say:

"When I am dead, remain in my place with my mother. Love her. She is so good!"

Flora is but a momentary visitor here; she cannot bear to hear and see Selma. She is for the most part with her sister

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In the Evening.

Oh, now there is an hour of hope! May it not disappoint us! In the afternoon Selma called me, and said:

"Now I am dead, Sophia! You perceive, no doubt, that I am lying in my grave; and it is good to be there, if I only could rest and could but sleep. I suppose they sleep in the grave, do not they?—sleep and forget—till they awake to meet their God. I wonder why I cannot sleep like other people;—ah, yes, I know, I know the reason—it is *his* look. Have you seen him?"

"Seen whom, my sweet Selma?"

"St. Michael. It is his flaming look which burns me and keeps me awake in the grave. But I feel persuaded that when I shall one day see him in light beyond the clouds, he will look upon me quite differently. I know that all evils here below are only owing to the great darkness upon earth, which prevents our seeing every thing in their real form and character."

At these words, a thought quickly flashed across my mind, and, endeavouring to fall in with her ideas, I told her that I had seen him of whom she spoke, and that he looked upon her without suspicion, but was anxiously desirous to behold her in the realms of ligh and love.

"If I could believe that," said Selma, with a melancholy joy, "I should soon be more at rest. If he would deign to cast a look of blessing on my grave, it would penetrate through the earth into my coffin, pain would then cease, and I could sleep in peace. But do not tell it to any one creature in the world," continued she, warmly, "do not let anybody know that I have loved him. Say to all, 'She loved nobody except her father and mother, her friend Flora, and her sister Sophia!' And do not tell Flora that Selma died for her. Say that I was stung by an *Orm*, * and from that became so sick —mortally sick."

While Selma was thus speaking in a loud, full-toned voice, and with feverish glowing cheeks, a faint rustling noise was heard in the room, and on looking round I beheld Lennartson and Flora, standing at the head of Selma's bed. They appeared to have heard all; he held his hand, pressed to his breast, and seemed to breathe with difficulty.

According to the orders of the physician, Selma was pillowed high, in a half-sitting position; her beautiful hair fell down in waves, and upon her head she had placed the half-finished wreath which she had twined for Flora. It was a lovely victim which gloomy death strove to embrace; it was the Sylphide who had lost her wings, but could not lose her beauty, even while sinking and paling into death.

Gloomy imaginations seemed again to rise in her mind.

"No, no!" she exclaimed, with outstretched hands

* *Orm*, serpent or viper, another pun like the former one with the name of St. Orme.

folded in supplication. "Do not hurl me down into the dark abyss. I have no intention whatever to do evil. Help, Lennartson!"

She had no sooner uttered the last word, than Lennartson stood before her, took her outstretched hands between his, and said, with an expression of unutterable affection:

"What fears assail Selma? Lennartson is here. He will defend thee with his life, even unto death! Look at me, Selma, and believe what I say."

She looked at him, at first with a glance of timid amazement, which, however, was soon changed by the powerful expression of Lennartson's glorious beaming eyes. He seated himself on the edge of her bed, and continued to gaze on her with quiet and uninterrupted attention. And strange, during this process, the strained expression of her eyes vanished, and their clear, lovely look returned. They spoke never a word; but it seemed, as if the fettered harmony of their nature, hitherto unexpressed, now effused itself in calm streams, uniting and filling them with happiness. Over the countenance of the poor patient an expression of infinite peace diffused itself more and more, her wearied eyelids sank, and she fell into a calm slumber.

For a long time after this Lennartson sat there with his eyes fixed on the countenance of the slumberer, till a mute sign from my stepmother at length prevailed upon him to withdraw. Silently she extended her arms towards him; he clasped them in his, and reclined upon her shoulder, and deep sighs struggled forth from his breast.

Flora had disappeared, but none of us had observed when she went.

All is still, so very still at home; for all are aware that the beloved daughter of the house now sleeps a most critical sleep.

The Philosopher looks gloomy in the highest degree. In his unearthly voice he said, yesterday:

"If *Fräulein* Selma dies, there will be very little left worth living for. Then sunshine will have vanished from the world."

April 22d.

Our home it seems is not to be bereaved of its cheerful sunshine. The crisis is past, and Selma out of danger. Our hearts ascend in grateful acknowledgment to heaven; we congratulated each other, and yet we cannot yet perfectly rejoice. The aspect of the life now opening again to Selma is not a cheerful one. Recently, while Selma was yet asleep, I met my stepmother with an open letter in her hand, and with an expression of deep dejection in her countenance. She appeared to me as if she had suddenly grown several years older.

"*She* is still asleep!" said I, in a tone of encouragement, "and I fancy she begins to breathe more freely.

"God's will be done!" answered my stepmother, quietly and dejectedly. "I hardly venture to wish her life may be spared. There is so much that may render her future life gloomy—I see that now. Flora will marry the man who of all men is best suited for my Selma, the only one she truly loves, the only one I could sincerely wish to call my son. St. Orme has taken his departure and sent me a letter which confirms all that I apprehended for some time past. During the whole

of the winter he has borrowed money from me, sometimes in large and sometimes in smaller sums, which he has always promised to repay, but has not refunded it yet; and I have been credulous, or rather weak enough to let him have these loans on his bare word of honour, without any written bond. And now he writes me in a brief and indifferent manner: 'I shall pay you as soon as possible,' &c. But I know what that means; he will *never* pay me, and I, who have lent him amounts far beyond my means, and have consequently been obliged to borrow from others, am thereby plunged into the greatest trouble. I did not deserve this at St. Orme's hands. And yet it would not be so grievous to me if I were the only party concerned. But it will be too distressing to me if my good sweet daughter is obliged to live in want and privation. No, rather may God take her, if it be his will; though I shall be very lonely and forsaken in my old age."

Large tears rolled over the pale cheeks of my stepmother, she dried them gently with the corner of her silk shawl. The sight of this quite overwhelmed me, and kneeling I conjured my stepmother to consider all that I possessed as her own, and to cede me the rights of a daughter in her heart; and, should Selma die, I would never forsake her.

She thanked me, she embraced me, but—she seemed to find little consolation in that which I offered her. Selma's reawakening to life made all troubles retreat for a time, and joy alone prevail; but the birds of night soon made their appearance again.

The Philosopher looks very happy, and casts such bright glances at me that I cannot help returning them pleasantly.

—

April 23d.

The Viking also, honest, warm-hearted William Brenner, has been deceived — almost ruined by St. Orme.

And his children! My heart bleeds for him, and feels bitterly his estrangement from our house.

Lennartson has called every day, happy at the fortunate turn in Selma's illness; but he has not expressed his desire to see her. He is at present deeply concerned about Brenner's misfortune, though the latter bears the stroke with manly fortitude. Lennartson, in brotherly kindness, offered him his assistance; but Brenner has refused to accept it, being firmly convinced that in a few years' time he shall be able to raise himself out of his involved circumstances.

"But this I will tell you, brother," said he, with melancholy vivacity, "if our Lord should call me to his army above ere I once more get a firm footing and position here on earth for myself and all belonging me, I will bequeath you an inheritance."

"Consisting of—?" inquired the latter.

"My children."

A silent pressure of the hand between the two friends then followed. And thus it is that noble minds understand each other.

But these words affected me to tears; for the Viking would not allow me to have any share in the inheritance. He does not esteem me highly enough for that. In the middle of May he sails for the Mediterranean.

April 26th.

Deeply affected by the situation and afflicted appearance of my stepmother, I asked her to-day why

she did not confide her case to her half-brother, as he would certainly be able to advise and assist her.

But this she rejected with a sort of alarm, exclaiming:—

"No, no! it would not be worth while, nor be of any use."

I was astonished; I thought that this was the very thing that would be most availing; never could the Chamberlain find a better opportunity of gratifying his passion, so frequently expressed, "for doing good in silence."

"Yes, I know what that means," rejoined my stepmother, with a sigh; still greatly troubled about a considerable payment she had to make in a few days, she resolved at length in the evening to send for her brother.

He came, and seemed much embarrassed at the confidence which she reposed in him. At last he advised his sister to make an assignment of her property, and to declare herself *insolvent*. In this way she would be best able to extricate herself out of her difficulties.

With a high-minded indignation, which won for her my whole heart's affection, my stepmother rejected the proposal. "Rather," said she, "would I live on bread and water, and experience the most extreme want, than that anybody should suffer by me."

The Chamberlain declared these sentiments to be "very fine, very respectable," but begged her "to make use of her reason," and so on.

My stepmother would not listen to any thing of the kind; her brother had no other advice to give; and he then got a look from me, after which he quickly with-

drew, jesting at my "Jupiter-mien," and pleading as a pretext important "business."

My warm and hearty approval of my stepmother's manner of thinking and acting seemed afterwards to comfort and raise her spirits.

April 29th.

Beautiful, warm days, rendered still more charming by Selma's convalescence. The quiet seriousness which now pervades her general demeanour does not hinder her from accepting with grateful joy every little gift which life and friendship offer.

My stepmother tries to conceal from her the secret disquietude and trouble which harass her mind, but she is frequently very near betraying them. At my solicitations she has now confided her state affairs to Lennartson, who seems to be selected to be every body's helper.

As to the mutual position of things at present between Lennartson and Flora, I am ignorant. Yesterday I found them both in the antechamber; he had thrown his arm round her waist; she reclined her head on his shoulder. On the table before them lay the red letter-case, the object of so much anguish and confusion; serious and tender words seemed to have been spoken by Lennartson. Flora was deeply affected, but to me it appeared as if neither of them were happy. Flora has been very little here, and with Selma, and it still continues to be a riddle to me. I have just received a few lines from her, stating that as she may now be at rest respecting Selma's health, she purposes to accompany her sister on a pleasure tour to Swartzjö, to hear the

song of the nightingales: but intends to be here again on the 3d of May.

Flora engages on a pleasure excursion, and leaves the friend who has sacrificed herself for her, to her silent sufferings! Flora's brother also might at this time have claims on her society and care; his health is very precarious, and he had been ordered by the physican to go abroad in the spring, and to try one of the warm baths of Germany. But amid all the afflictions of her near relatives, Flora thinks of nothing but amusing herself, and listening to the songs of the nightingales. What deep-rooted egotism! But I will not yet condemn her; perhaps she travels to the quiet parks of Swartzjö, there to listen in peace to her "inward voice."

April 30th.

To-day Selma was so well that I could ask her respecting her meeting with St. Orme, and the magic power by which she had been enabled to extort from him in a moment the weapons he had held fast so long, and nullify the victory he had just won. The little which Selma told me about this subject, and which I would not allow her to enter into further, lest she should become too much excited, has given me the following view of that circumstance:

It was at the crisis when Flora seemed sinking into a bottomless abyss, that Selma felt inspired with a courage and determination powerful enough to bid defiance to all opposition—to save her. The fear of arriving too late to prevent a meeting between Lennartson and St. Orme; the inward consciousness of danger pressing on many sides, made her almost unconsciously

follow upon his footsteps. She scarcely knew what she was about when she found herself at St. Orme's door; and the singular reception which she met with from him can only be explained by an extraordinary state of mind in himself.

St. Orme had left the bride whom he had bound to himself with force and subtlety—left her with apparent coldness and joy of triumph. But no man remains cold to the frenzy of a woman who has once had a place in his heart. St. Orme was any thing but tranquil when he left Flora. The storm of that hour shook its portentous pinions over her; and through the force of contrast there awoke in him probably at that moment a remembrance of quite a different character.

It was on that very day when St. Orme, several years before, had led to the altar the beautiful and noble Virginia Adele, his only noble, his only pure love.

And now they stood there close together—the two opposite periods—the two dissimilar brides! He thought of Virginia's modest kiss on that day—he still felt the glowing one which proceeded, like a malignant flame from Flora's lips, and his heart recoiled from her, and was, at the same time irresistibly drawn to the fair young creature who was once his wife. He thought on her beautiful affection; how he possessed it to her last hour; perhaps he thought how at that time, in mysticising grief, he had entreated her forgiveness, and besought her to reveal herself to him after her death; and how she had promised to do it. Perhaps St. Orme wished to discard these thoughts, and conjure up others from the Opera tiring-room and the Parisian *boudoir*. But amid these sparkling and glittering images arose again and again the picture of

his pale young consort, as he had seen her for the last time in her white shroud—and a gloomy sensation stole like a weft of death, like a savour of the tomb, into St. Orme's breast.

He was sitting in his room, silent, oppressed, and thoughtful, looking in his state of gloom upon the increasing twilight, when the door softly opened, and a female form clothed in white from head to foot, appeared before him.

St. Orme rose, but he staggered and sunk back on the sofa, while he hoarsely stammered out,—

"Virginia!"

"Virginia invokes you togetner witn me!" replied Selma's sweet voice. "Oh, St. Orme, hear us!"

And then from her lips flowed words which she herself could not recollect, and with which a higher power seemed to have inspired her. The high-wrought excitement of the moment had opened St. Orme's heart; the remembrance of Virginia—the petition in her name—the peculiar interest he had cherished for Selma—the singularity of her present conduct—the profound seriousness of her representations—the speaking of life and death from such beautiful young lips—all this contributed to shake his mind, and made him listen to Selma's petition for Flora's liberation. Selma observed him waver, but fancied also that she saw the approach of the moment in which this unsettled state of feeling would cease, and he would harden himself against her solicitations. And suddenly she abandoned the tone of a suppliant to remonstrate with him threateningly on the inevitable consequences to himself, if he persisted in his intention. She communicated to him Flora's words and resolutions for the future; she

pointed out to him danger, death, and destruction on every side, which like furies he would have to meet with on his way; and St. Orme shuddered.

It has uniformly been a rule in romance-literature to exhibit the vicious, or *miscreants*, as pre-eminently strong and powerful men. But real life shows us things in an opposite light. It demonstrates to us the fact that the man of probity is pre-eminently the noble one who, endowed with strength and power, remains firm in his will and stedfast in his faith—even unto death. The ignoble, the grovelling-minded man, may at certain times appear strong and daring; but in the hour of danger, sudden breaks of irresolution or cowardice prove that he bears a craven heart in his breast, that he feels himself standing upon an insecure ground.

What at that moment passed in St. Orme's mind, I will not take upon myself to define; still less is it my intention to decide which part of Selma's words made the most impression upon him—suffice it to state, that he then felt the necessity of yielding to her demands.

Looking gloomily before him, and muttering the words of the unhappy Philippe Egalité, when mounting the guillotine:

"One abyss is as good as another!"—

he went to his desk and took out the red letter-case containing Flora's letters. He surrendered them to Selma with the words:

"You are the sister of my Virginia, Selma, and for your sake I voluntarily resign what no other power would have prevailed upon me to give up. Tell Flora that she is free. My presence shall not long be an incumbrance to you—I shall depart the day after to-morrow.

You may now go; you have obtained your object and may be satisfied."

Selma wished to thank him, but he interrupted her with harshness, almost with rudeness, and begged her to spare him "her sentimental talk and to go her way."

Selma timorously withdrew, but at the door she turned round, with these words:

"Oh, St. Orme, whatever you may say, my blessing shall still follow you."

Hearing St. Orme whistle, she hastened down the stairs; where she was met——what I have already hinted at, and which was too much for her fine, sensitive, noble nature.

After Selma had told me what I was desirous to know, she entreated me, with highly flushed cheeks, to describe to her Lennartson's deportment during her illness, of which she had but an obscure notion. I told her every thing, and an unspeakable inward joy beamed forth from her eyes during this statement, and found vent in grateful tears. She felt herself beloved by him, she was conscious of her purity and innocence in his sight. That was an infinite happiness to her.

May 1st.

The commercial Ladies are crammed with slander and gossip of every description up to their very throats and mouths. The rumour of Flora's marriage, not with St. Orme, but with Lennartson, was the principal topic; the grand ball at the Palace which was to take place the day after to-morrow, was the next; the afternoon promenade at the Zoological Gardens, and

the fine new equipages that would display themselves there, was the third; and the fourth was Brenner's loss of all his accumulated fortune, together with his departure to the Mediterranean and his long absence. They knew with the greatest accuracy how he would arrange his domestic affairs during his absence, and had a number of anxieties on the subject. The eldest boy was to be placed at the orphan-school, and for the superintending care of his house and the rest of the children, Brenner had engaged a Madam Trollman, a "tolerably decent woman, but an inveterate coffee-drinker," who keeps a coffee-pot for ever boiling, and is the worst rattle-tongue in the world. And as to her housekeeping qualifications and proceedings, one may readily imagine their course, from the fact that during the life-time of the late Trollman, there was no such thing as baking at home, but all the bread for their consumption was sent for from the baker's, though they had four children and two servant maids in the house!!! One could form some idea how things would go. It is really inconceivable how a man like Commodore Brenner could take such a person into his house; but no doubt she had thrust herself upon him when, during the children's illness, she, as a neighbour, had rendered them such kind and efficient services.

"Have the children been ill, then?" exclaimed I.

"Yes, they have had the scarlet fever, the poor little things; and the two youngest are said to be still very ill, especially the lame boy. Well, it would be a happy thing if the Lord took him."

"The poor father!" sighed I.

"Yes, poor man!" cried Mam'selle P**. "And

what a sad thing for him to be obliged to leave his home now, in such a state of misery! And it is said that he looks, too, as if he had not been buried *once*, but *twice*."

"But tell me *entre nous*, my dear *Fräulein*," whispered the lady of Colonel P * * , in a confidential manner, "when is the grand and extraordinary betrothal here to be declared?"

I expressed my perfect ignorance respecting it.

"The sooner it takes place," continued Madame P * * , "the better it will be for Flora to silence all evil tongues, which assert that it will all probably come to nothing. There were some strange rumours in circulation at one time; and one is looked upon with suspicion by inquisitive people, who believe me necessarily to know something of what is going on here, where I am so intimately acquainted, and—I had almost said—know every chair; yes, they positively reproach me for my want of better information on the subject—but unfortunately I have so little curiosity. On this affair, however, I confess I should like to be accurately informed, both for Flora's and my good friend Madame Adele's sake."

"If the Colonel's lady was unfortunately so little inquisitive, I also was as little communicative; and, to speak the truth, what I had just heard about Brenner, made me incapable of hearing or talking on other subjects.

I am anxious to know whether Brenner will see me before his departure.

May 3d, in the Evening

To-day, for the first time, Selma was able to enjoy the mild refreshing air of spring, which came softly through the open window into my stepmother's boudoir.

A lark soared joyously over the river, up into the azure sky; white sails glide slowly along in the Knight's Bay; and the hills and the shores were clothed with verdure. Selma saw all this, and smiled, with tears in her beaming eyes.

"What a delightful scene is this!" said she. "How good and beautiful is life!"

She extended her hand to my stepmother and me, who were standing at her side, and regarding us attentively, she continued, with a tender smile:

"Why so serious? Why so solemn, as if the conversation were about my burial? Now I am well, now it is spring, now we will be cheerful."

My stepmother rose hastily, that she might conceal her emotion by retiring; but Selma held her back by her dress, and throwing her arms around her, she exclaimed:

"No, my mother! Do not go away! Now we can speak without constraint; now I can hear all; now I must know what it is which makes those whom I love look so perplexed. And, perhaps, it is unexpected by me; perhaps I have already surmised the present position of things. Tell me, tell me plainly, has St. Orme deceived us? Are our affairs in a bad state?—in a word, are we poor?"

"Yes, we are poor, my sweet child!" said my mother, weeping aloud, and bending over the head of

her sitting daughter, whose hair and brow were flooded with her tears. She could say no more.

"But we are not poor in love," said Selma. And then, it is no such great calamity. I have my mother, and my mother has me; and we both have Sophia; we are, therefore, still rich withal."

"And we have Lennartson, too," said I, and added a few words on the manner in which he was interesting himself at present in our affairs.

"That is just like him," said Selma, with deep, almost unutterable emotion.

After we had become more composed, we discussed the subject of our present condition in peace and serenity. Selma was the one who construed every thing lightly, and proved to her mother, that by the sale of all her trinkets, and her beautiful collection of paintings, she could satisfy all demands, and even realise a surplus for ourselves. Selma had evidently a clearer conception of the family's concerns than her mother.

"And," continued she, with reanimated spirits, "after we have settled all our affairs here in Stockholm, we will retire to some pretty little town, settle there, and live in quiet retirement. And I mean to try, too, what I can do in the way of providing *food and raiment*, and live, not as I have done hitherto, merely like *the lilies of the field*. I shall call to aid some of my accomplishments, which I will teach to any who may be desirous of learning, or translate foreign works, or even turn author myself. Who knows what inspiration may come? And Sophia shall be my reviewer. Ah, you will see we shall do great things yet."

"Ah, if the Sylphide will only hover about us and

herald us as before," said I, "then I shall fear nothing in the world.

My stepmother no longer wept. Comforted and cheered she embraced her daughters, and thanked heaven for them.

The Philosopher announced—"Baron Lennartson."

Selma turned pale and arose, evidently trembling. I asked her if she would like to retire and compose herself a little.

"No," she replied, "I feel strong enough to see him. Besides, have I not my mother and my Sophia with me?"

With an exclamation of joyous surprise, Lennartson hastened to Selma the moment he saw her. She extended him her hand, which he seized with animation, but both were too deeply moved to be able to speak to each other immediately. It was Selma who first broke silence, as with a tolerably firm voice she said:

"We are all so greatly obliged to you, so infinitely indebted to you. How kind you are in taking so lively an interest even in these our adverse circumstances."

We now came to Selma's aid, and related to Lennartson what we had just been discussing among us. Lennartson appeared rejoiced at the opportunity now afforded him of speaking to Selma unreservedly on the position of affairs, and showed her a statement which he had drawn up on the subject. And according to this it appeared that our situation was far better than we thought.

When Selma cheerfully alluded to the sale of her pictures, Lennartson seemed affected, for he well knew how dear and precious they were to her, even on ac-

count of him who had collected and presented them to her—her beloved father. But he admitted that by this sale, the affairs of the family might be most effectually and speedily rectified, and said he knew a conscientious purchaser. (I am greatly deceived if that purchaser be not—the Baron himself; I fancied I could read it in his very countenance.)

At all events, he requested my stepmother and Selma to be perfectly at ease, and to leave all to his management; he would endeavour to turn every thing to the best advantage.

Matters of urgency then requiring his presence elsewhere, he reluctantly withdrew. On taking leave he held Selma's hand long in his; he seemed wishful to say something, but his eyes only spoke a mute, yet expressive language. At length he pressed her hand reverentially to his lips, bowed profoundly to her, and retired.

And Selma! She stood there so still, so beautiful in her feminine dignity, happy amid her misfortunes to feel her own worth, and to see it acknowledged by such a man; and this raised her at that moment above all embarrassment, above all pain. She did not cast down her eyes before his impassioned, eloquent glance, but met it with cordial brightness . . . . she shunned not his gaze which penetrated the depth of her soul; she knew that his great mind was quite capable of discerning the feelings that operated there in vital affection for him, without misunderstanding her or allowing himself to be misled. Thus they both stood, full of divine confidence in each other.

But yet the scene of the afternoon had been too much for Selma's weak bodily health. As soon as

Lennartson was gone her outward fortitude also disappeared, and almost fainting she sank into my arms. Perhaps she, like myself, felt something peculiar in Lennartson's silent adieu; perhaps it is true, as report says, that this evening he will appear at the palace as Flora's betrothed, and receive the congratulations of the royal family and of the whole world.

When about to retire to rest, Selma asked me if I knew any thing about Flora.

I answered that I had heard that she had returned on that day from her excursion to Swartzjö, and would be present with her sister at the Palace Ball. I could not refrain from adding at the same time some serious words of censure on Flora's conduct.

"Ah!" sighed Selma, "it is really strange! I cannot comprehend her; but no doubt every thing will one day be clear, and Flora's character also. I have loved her so dearly."

Saying these words, Selma began to weep bitterly.

I left my stepmother reading aloud to Selma by the evening lamp, and retired to my room, longing to be alone with my own thoughts.

And now I sit here, recording the scenes of the past, amid the dull rattle of carriages, which roll over the Norr bridge up to the palace. It is now midnight, and all is still in the streets. From the palace windows towards the Lion-hill a bright reflection of lights is seen through the semi-dark May night;—there are situated the great state-rooms: and when I think on the different scenes *there* and *here*,—when I fancy to myself Flora shining in joy and beauty, hailed with homage as the bride of Lennartson, whilst she forgets her nearest connections in their affliction, leaving her

friend and deliverer to a life full of privation; then my heart grows embittered against her, and I feel that the hatred at which we played for a time has turned to earnest. If at this moment she was standing before me, she should hear words that would cover her face with shame, inspire her with self-abhorrence, and . . . sooner or later she shall hear them.

May 4th.

Last-night I was interrupted by a carriage stopping before our door, followed by a gentle stir in the house; immediately afterwards I heard, to my great surprise, soft footsteps on the little staircase which led to my room and to Flora's.

It was about one o'clock in the morning. With a light in my hand I went out into the corridor to see who the night-walker might be, and started not a little when I beheld before me—Flora, Flora in her brilliant ball-dress, with a wreath of white roses upon her head, but so pale, so altered, that she appeared rather like one come from the grave than from a splendid ball.

"Can I speak a word with you," said she, in a voice which I also thought altered. "But pray put the light out, for my eyes cannot bear it. I have seen too much light lately!"

I complied with Flora's request and followed her into my room, where she threw herself into an easy-chair. We were both silent. I forgot all about my condemnatory lecture.

"Is it not true, Sophia," Flora at last began, "that latterly, especially this night, you have hated me in good earnest?"

"Yes, that is true," answered I.

"I am not surprised at it," continued Flora; "but you have not acted altogether right in so doing, and soon perhaps you will——hate me no longer."

"You have more than once been kind to me, Sophia, and therefore I now request you—after the fashion of the world—to extend your kindness to me still further, and give me a patient hearing. I know the baneful influence of bitter feelings, and will endeavour to extinguish those I have inspired you with, if possible, before———But I must hasten to my purpose.

"You have found me a strange and incomprehensible being, and I will now give you the key thereto. You have sometimes talked to us about primeval words, and the primeval word of my mysterious being lies deeply rooted in my childhood and youth, in the influences that surrounded my cradle and accompanied me to my twentieth year. My mother was a good-natured, but weak and vain woman; my father a stern and haughty man, who despised all women, probably because he had found none whom he could properly esteem. Discord prevailed in the house in one thing only: were my parents agreed to educate their child merely for outward attraction, merely for brilliant display, by which she might make her fortune in the world. From an early period vanity and ambition contended in my mind against nobler impulses; but the latter were soon compelled to yield to the former: the heart that might have beat for a noble affection, was forced to beat for paltry and ignoble objects; and all the endowments that might have been subservient to higher and better purposes, were soon debased to the service of vanity. O fatal lot of woman!—In child-

hood my mind was already poisoned by flattery and presents—when in company I acquitted myself with *éclât*, and attracted attention and admiration. This continued throughout the whole period of my youth; to make a great match, to gain a brilliant position in life, was represented to me as the sole object of my existence. Accordingly I lived more and more for this end, and studied only to foster my ever-increasing and almost boundless vanity. My natural gifts favoured me, and whenever I would I made conquests; but wantonly I rejected such easy triumphs; refused soon to aid the intentions of my parents, and lived exclusively for the gratification of my own pleasures. That by such conduct I became the cause of unhappiness to some honourable men served but to flatter my vanity. I myself remained cold.

"About that time I met St. Orme. You are aware how his reputation, his talents, and his personal appearance enchanted me. For the first time I became acquainted with love: his courteous attention flattered my self-love. His principles completed the annihilation of the little good which I still possessed—he imposed upon me by a certain superiority of will and thought, and for a time exercised an extraordinary power over me. But this was of a demoniacal nature, and had not properly taken root in my heart, in my better self. Seeing myself forsaken by him, my pride and love of the world enabled me to achieve forgetfulness of him in turn. New impressions also came to my aid. Selma, with whom at this time I was in more constant intercourse, exercised a healthful and beneficial influence over me; I clave to her as far as my egotism would permit; and this inward friendship fostered and

developed many a better feeling in my bosom, reanimated by her pure and lovely nature.

"My father was dead, and by his will had appointed Lennartson my guardian, probably in the expectation that he would become yet more to me. My vanity and ambition indicated him as in every respect a most eligible *partie*; and I needed not my mother's hints to determine on making a conquest of him. This appeared easy enough; but I was in error, for the more I penetrated the depths of his mind, the more I became aware that his soul, his energies and aspirations, were all replete with a grandeur, in comparison with which all that I had hitherto desired and aimed at seemed dwarfish and contemptible. Besides, he was so amiable, so conciliating even when he blamed me, that my heart soon became involved in my project, and he became the goal of my existence. I saw clearly enough that he had not been quite proof against me; and although he had rallied his whole resolution and fortitude against my enchantments, still I doubted nothing that I should ultimately be victor, under some of the ever shifting guises which, Proteusl-ike, I was wont to assume to suit various dispositions and temperaments. But the shapes I had taken were all soul-less; and as the sun's far darting beams disperse the gloomy uncertainties of the darkness, so did Lennartson's clear glance penetrate and turn to confusion these fictitious sembiances. His character was more and more powerful, more and more crushing to my self-esteem, and not less perilous to my peace of mind. And never had I been so keenly sensible of his power, as at the moment when I was aware that he saw through and—despised

me! Contempt from him you love! and to know the contempt merited—inexpressible misery!

Flora sprang hastily up, opened the window on the stream, dashed back her curls, and appeared to be inhaling with eagerness the cold night air. And the scene she was gazing on was certainly calculated to tranquillize and restore a perturbed spirit. Clear and still was the May night above the city: the dark mass of the palace, illuminated by the lights flitting about, rose in gloomy majesty against the dark blue sky; in dark shade below lay the Heilizegeistholm, with its lonely reminiscences of blood; the silvery waves of the Maelar rested quietly within the shores, spreading out its undisturbed mirror-like surface, with a light cloud resting over its far-distance, and the flags lay motionless on the masts of the vessels in the harbour. All seemed to sleep, and the peace of the night brought to mind the past struggle of the day.

Flora after a while resumed more composedly: "I well remember, as if it had been but yesterday, that partly from old habit and partly from a new-sprung desire to awaken jealousy in the bosom of Lennartson, I had been coquetting with a man who evinced some *penchant* for me, but in whom I took not the slightest interest whatever; I urged him on to acts of folly and made him ridiculous in Lennartson's presence. Lennartson broke off the tone of kindness in which he had hitherto spoken; and in sharp and cutting language took away the veil which concealed me from myself, and showed me the precipice on which I stood. Never before had such serious words been addressed to me; never had any one dared to speak in terms of

such unmeasured blame. My first impression was haughty anger, and I drove the bold intruder for ever from my presence. My second idea was to write to him, to open my whole heart to him, and acquaint him with the feelings he had infused into it. I was so habituated to triumph that I expected to see Lennartson at my feet immediately on receipt of it. He came, but—like a brother—gentle yet grave; and it was only from a certain embarrassment in his demeanour I could argue he had understood me but that he *would* not understand. Alas! I was not the woman he could love and whom he would select as the companion of his pilgrimage through life.

"When I remarked this, my pride once more rose up, and bade me quench an unrequited love; but love again counselled me, and it was to subdue my evil tendencies and to become worthy of him. The goodness and the sympathy he evinced towards me, the pleasure he took in my talents, bound me still more to him, and the wish grew upon me to transform myself into the ideal of woman's loveliness, which seemed ever to be floating in Lennartson's mind. But alas! man once perverted finds it but too difficult again to regain his position of innocence and truth. It is easier to loose the most tangled knot than to rectify an insincere and subtle nature. They alone can comprehend me, who, like myself, with all their energies strained to rise superior to themselves, have been hurled back by some evil influence into that abyss from which they had been eager to escape.

"About this period my mother became afflicted with a painful malady which ended only with her death. I tended her with affection: and this one simple circum-

stance brought that to pass which all my gifts and talents had essayed in vain. When Lennartson saw me discharging my duties as a daughter, he approached me again. I gained ground in his esteem, and his heart seemed to be responding to my sentiments for him. At my mother's death-bed side he pressed the fatherless and motherless girl to his heart, besought me to place my hand in his, and there we plighted our troth.

"What follows, you know. Lennartson was summoned to attend his father, and went abroad with him. An unexpected legacy made me wealthy, and St. Orme reappeared, and taught me to know the net in which I had enmeshed myself. I still loved Lennartson, but he was away when St. Orme returned, and the latter again began to recover and exert over me some of that noxious power he had of old. His fiery will and his strength of mind pressed upon me again, and he flattered my not quite extinct predisposition for the joys and triumphs of vanity. Lennartson, in his turn, came back and recovered his power, and St. Orme's star waned, but I had not freedom to shake him off from me altogether. I was in his power, and my prayers were as ineffectual as my threats. Then arose hate and fury in my breast, and increased the more I was convinced that he did not love me, but my wealth. But you know all; you know my struggles, you know how victory was won at the very point when all seemed lost, and I not repeat it. But do you know, Sophia, to what extent the victory is mine?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that nothing hinders me at this moment from being Lennartson's wife. He has offered me his

hand, overcoming that in his noble nature which was to separate us. He knows, and forgives me all for my love's sake. The pitcher is once more brimful of happiness, and the hands of Fortune and Mercy present it for the draught. Now but one thing remains—"

"And that is?"

"To refuse him!"—

"To what?"

"To refuse him! In that hour when I saw Selma lying on her bed of pain for my sake, and heard her in the heat of her fever disclose the pent-up secret of her heart; when I perceived Lennartson's feelings for her, and saw their glances mingling and reciprocating—the idea was first awakened to sacrifice myself, and to be the only miserable one; but I was as yet little accustomed to foster lofty conceptions—I even strove to overreach myself by the thought that Lennartson loved me in reality and truth, and that I could soon recover the love I had lost by my misconduct. I wished to display myself high-minded and correct, and laid the letters that had made me so wretched in Lennartson's hands for him to judge me. I was almost certain he would not accept them. I was not mistaken; he pushed them away, but took my hands between his, and made me vow—yes, solemnly vow, that there was nothing in those letters, or in my earlier circumstances, to prevent me from being "*the wife of an honest man.*" So ran his words, and I swore the oath. Thank God that I could do so! He then drew me to him, and spoke words full of divine goodness and generosity; but he acknowledged that his heart was no longer mine as once—acknowledged another love. I knew full well for whom, though her name never passed his lips. He

asked if I would have patience with him, and aid him in his endeavours to suppress those feelings, and to do his duty towards me. For that purpose he was about again to exile himself voluntarily from his native land until he should be once more his own master, and could offer me a heart more worthy of me than at present, and more capable of making me as happy as his will and intentions were to see me. 'We have,' he concluded, 'both gone astray; but the right road is before us, and let us fall into it. I shall soon leave Sweden, but during my absence we will correspond: by this means we shall be better understood, and more intimate with each other. We will only part now to unite more cordially after a while. We will not, my Flora, wed in untruth, but in truth. I have laid open my heart to you now, as it shall always be unfolded to her whom I hope to call my wife. I see that I have troubled you. Forgive me! Love me, nevertheless, and believe me—I will not quit you.'

"So saying, Lennartson folded me in his arms once more. And at that moment I felt a change come over my spirit. The greatness and goodness of this man overwhelmed all littleness and paltriness in me—it lifted me up, and pointed out my future path. I requested a few days for deliberation from Lennartson before giving him an answer, and departed to Swartzjö, —not to hear the voice of the nightingale, but to hear the small inward voice; to commune with myself,—to pray. O Sophia, on those days and nights for the first time I prayed from the bottom of my heart, and, feeling that my prayer was heard, experienced the full value of the words, 'God's strength is mighty in the weak.' In those days I felt my will turned, my good

intentions strengthened, my nature renewed, and life and the world set clearly before me.

"I returned to Stockholm, to be present at the Court Ball. I put a little colour on my pale cheeks, and made myself as handsome and brilliant as possible. In the greatness of my pride I wished once more to triumph over the world, which I knew was now enjoying its full malevolence against me. And then to complete my great work;—to liberate two noble beings, to unite them, and then to retire from the scene. Do not look upon me melancholy, as if in sad question, Sophia! Be patient! Suicidal thoughts have no longer a place in my heart. No! its experiences and impressions have been too great and too gentle, my good angel. Selma and Lennartson have chased away the night from my inward mind, and the day-break has visited me; some rays of it must reward and bless them. Grieve not for me! I will bear my life and the sorrow that must accompany it in silence."

"Oh, Flora!" I exclaimed, much affected, "you are indeed worthy of a happier fate."

"No commisseration," replied Flora, with a brisk and lively expression. "I have been a great gainer—I have won a great deal I did not possess before—I have gained true esteem. And in this minute I experience a certainty and tranquillity in my soul which I never have known before—I feel I am elevated; I feel I shall rise in the estimation of all those whose good opinion and approbation have any value for me. Oh, leave me this consciousness, boastful as it may sound, to sustain myself by its assistance in a heavy, a bitter-coming hour.

"No, do not commisserate me! I have conquered.

But well can I pity many, who in like straits have no such allies as I have, and are for ever lost; who, through a false idealism, an erroneous education, are already wrecked at the very outset of their voyage, and can never again be restored to a compact unity.

"Alas! I am also shattered to my very heart's core, and shall never again be a unity. Like a fragment of a better being, I shall pass through life perhaps merely to give warning of the present, and to point the way to a better hereafter.

"See you! It is day! Dost see the world once more illumined? Of a surety so will the dawning of mankind be again illumined. In like manner the knowledge of life's great end—of the true value of the world—shall be more and more vivid in the heart. Of a truth woman shall be more esteemed for her native worth, and the uprightness of her nature be acknowledged. And when it is so acknowledged, when she reaches her true station in society as a reflective being, and a burgher of the great community, then she will again be the mother of a divinity on earth, and bring forth a regenerated and exalted posterity."

The fire of inspiration blazed in Flora's eyes, burned on her cheek and her eloquent lips. She was indeed incomparably beautiful! And beautiful too was the landscape. The sun was rising, and threw his earliest beams on the heights; the pinnacles of the steeples were radiant; the hill tops glowed in the glorious lights; the windows of the palace on the Luchshof seemed to be on fire. A light air, full of the life of spring, rustled through all the trees, and waved the poplars over the river, the flags fluttered gaily in the morning wind, the foaming river, swelled by the rising Mälar,

dashed through the arches of the Norr bridge more boldly than ever, while the larks, mounted high in air, carolling their morning hymn, and the snow-white gulls swept along below.

Flora and I stood silent some time, watching the increasing light and life; at last she turned her eyes on the harbour, in which a small black column of smoke was seen, as if to show the passage out of the harbour of Stockholm.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "Gauthiod is already making a signal, and urges me to haste."

"You are going abroad?" I exclaimed, in vehement surprise.

"With Felix—with my poor brother. He has been ordered to Ems, and I am accompanying him for his sake as well as my own. It is necessary for me to disappear; I am only an obstacle here, and I need, besides, the air of another country. Felix shall be my next care. He has hitherto never found a sister in me such as he has deserved;—but in future he shall find one. Perhaps some time or other the pair, whose happiness and joys have been shipwrecked, may return to their father-land with restored health and increased worth."

"And what is your wish—what object have you in the future?"

"At present, and for some years to remain abroad—Felix and I will travel. I shall observe the world with increased acumen. I will consider woman in the new and loftier relation with regard to social existence she is beginning to assume; I will see and decide freely and unprejudicedly, and then fix upon some point for myself in the realm of the beautiful or the good, a motive, a noble end for my restless and ardent spirit.

Oh, Sophia! I will commence a new life. I feel the epocha of my life is now! Farewell to error! Adieu to weakness.—Adieu illusions! And now for a new sun, a new earth, a new existence!—And God's grace be with my good will."

Flora then stretched out her clasped hands to Heaven: tears sparkled in her beaming eyes. We were both silent—I was deeply affected. Flora, in more composure, again spoke,—

"See, Sophia, here is a letter to Selma, and here ne to Lennartson!—they will tell them every thing. They will also tell them that the determination I have come to is the only way to happiness and peace now open to me. No one who is my friend would attempt to divert me from it. Gladly would I again see my Selma—most gladly would I look again into her serene countenance, and into her good clear eyes; but I must spare her this painful parting . . . . she has already suffered enough on my account! But this wreath—" and she removed a wreath of white roses from her hair. "You shall take it to her couch, Sophia; lay it at her feet, and beg her to keep it, and to wear it as a memorial of her friend Flora. I know that I deserve not so innocent an emblem; but I also know that her gentle heart would not tolerate another souvenir of me without pain. In Selma's letter I have added a few lines to her mother: remember me to her also—to all, in short, who you think trouble themselves about me, and say to them, that I have only left home so quietly to spare us all the pain of leave-taking. And now I must be speedy: Felix is waiting for me—my luggage and maid are already on board, and I will soon wrap myself up, and then—Sophia, will you go with me down to the port?"

"To the end of the world, if you wish!" was my reply.

"Thanks!—You do not hate me, then?"

"Hate you! I love, I admire—"

"Hush! Hush!—You will put my virtue to the blush."

With these words Flora quitted the room. Soon returning equipped for travelling, and I was ready to accompany her. The morning was lovely, teeming with the signs and animation of the young year.

In earnest but cheerful conversation we went down to the harbour. Our parting was full of affection and deep feeling. Flora was strong and resolute to the last; and it was not until I could no longer see her white handkerchief waving in the distance that I quitted the strand. My heart was heavy; but as I returned into the house, and thought on the revolution which had come to pass, as well as on the news I was bearing to my darling, I thought I had received some new impulse in mind and body; and that wind and wave, man and beast, church tower and lowly pavement, heaven and earth, were all joining in my jubilee of—

"The Good has gained the battle."

Now will I surprise my stepmother; she and Selma yet sleep: "They went to sleep late," said Carina. I am waiting impatiently, and writing while I wait. I would not now exchange places with an archangel, if it happened that he had any other commission save the bearing of glad tidings.

May 10th.

Oh, joy! thou lovely seraph of heaven! How beauteous art thou, how worthy of adoration, when thou lightest up the tear-bedewed eye, when thou shinest forth in the glance of the dying; how good art thou when filling the pitcher for the great and fortunate; how beneficent and full of mercy when relieving the afflicted of the burden on his memory, and strewing his couch with roses; how charming and delightful seemest thou to me when I perceive thy light step in the hearts of men! Oh, that thou wert but a mortal that with my prayers, with my heart's blood, I might summon you when needed. Then should you be a still more frequent visitor of earth.

But perchance thou mightest be less beautiful, less entrancing if grief did not precede you; as the sun never shines more gloriously than after storm and rain! Are not joy and sorrow the wings of life, wherewith man raises himself to the final end?

The light step of joy in the hearts of men. Ah—I have this day in our own house, in my own people seen it, although we dare not yet speak openly of it. Respect for Flora's memory and her self-denial has laid an embargo upon our lips, but the glory she has thrown around herself by her conduct is fast dissipating all the gloomy shades of grief.

Lennartson and Selma have met like two creatures who have long been in search of, and at last met each other like two souls originally in unison by the wish of the Creator.

Her happiness has been extracted from suffering too severe for her joy to have full scope at present; but behind the veil of deep melancholy which yet enshrouds

her, I hear the laughing god of love and the flutter of his wing. Yes, the Sylphide will yet dance, dance on roses!

Flora's letter to Lennartson is such that he cannot reject the emancipation she proffers to him. She expresses herself decidedly and unmistakeably, and beseeches him to concede her the satisfaction of making two loved beings happy, and thereby restoring to her their and her own esteem.

"Repentance and self-condemnation," she writes, "would ever pursue me even at thy side, Lennartson! and you would be unable to protect me against them, for you could not love me. But apart from you I shall be nearer to you. Oh, Thorsten, I am sure that when united to Selma you will think on me with tenderness, and I shall again be lovely in your eyes. Alas! possibly it is more of selfishness than pure affection which instigates me even now. If it be so—forgive me."

Lennartson's reply to Flora must pierce her heart with an ineffaceable thrill of pleasure and noble content. And Flora is in the right. They will now be more closely attached than if they had been husband and wife.

My stepmother is delicious; she pleases and touches me at the same time. She is silent and quiet, often laying her hands together and sighing; but her sigh is qualified by a smile, and brighter thoughts break forth from her heart through the sedateness which she yet sees fit to adopt. She speaks very admirably of the "wonderful ways of providence," and of the duty of man "to be resigned." When will she take courage to give us Prince Metternich again?

And myself—for I am also in the business—I partici-

pate. I rejoice, I hope, and am thankful; but in my heart of hearts I am not happy nor at ease. I am disturbed about William Brenner, and am not on good terms with myself.

Many people remain single from worthy, nay estimable grounds; but many—from selfishness; the latter I detect in myself, and with shame. We desire to be beloved, we desire to receive warmth from the flame of a noble heart, nay even to give back some portion of that flame—as much at least as our convenience, our personal comfort will permit. But marriage, particularly if this is associated with a few difficulties, with some apprehension of trouble in the future, we cannot face; we have not virtue enough!

Meanwhile I am anxious whether I shall see the Viking again before his departure! No either! I am not anxious! For if he will not, I will, and "*ce que femme vent Dieu levent.*"

May 13th.

Most memorable event in cabinet between my stepmother and myself.

When we were yesterday afternoon settling the state of the nation, we remarked an unwonted concurrence in our views. Congratulating ourselves on this, we set about inquiring into the cause of this approximation; and it transpired that my stepmother, who had zealously read certain royalist journals, had lapsed a little over to the side of the opposition; while I, after daily plodding through the columns of an opposition paper, was inclining towards the government. Specially delighted at this discovery, and felicitating each other on

our independence, we settled for the future to keep the balance even, to consider ourselves the organs of both parties, and terminated our political discussion by having patience with each other.

May 14th.

Something of the altered condition and circumstances of our house must have got wind, for our "spasmodic acquaintances," who during the dark periods had let us hear nothing of them, were now reviving like flies in sunny weather.

The Gyllenlöfs and Silfverlings have been smothering us to-day with friendship and compliments. Lennartson came, and now their friendship knew no limits, but made the most desperate rush for an indissoluble personal intimacy. My stepmother was polite, and took the world as it was; but Selma put on her princess's mien, and responded very coldly to the Silfverling *empressement*.

The not-spasmodical, but in all circumstances friendly Signora Luna was allowed a peep into our recent happy position, and her fine eyes were radiant with pleasure, as well at Flora's behaviour as at Selma and Lennartson's happiness. She was in full court dress, and so handsome and brilliant, that I could not help saying:

"Signora is in full moon to-night, and must feel herself equal to a most shining course."

She threw a look at me, which manifested a secret sorrow, and replied:

"Ah! my dear, all is not gold that glitters, and the shining course . . . . But it will do. All goes on,

albeit one might sometimes think every thing is standing still.'"

Baron Alexander now made his appearance, and with his customary superiority, remarked:

"I must remind you, *cher amie*, that it is nearly nine o'clock; it is time to go to court; it will be splendid to-night."

"And I," whispered his wife to me as she rose, "shall this night with many another sigh in secret, as Tegner says:

> 'Tell me, watchman, how wears the night?
> Will it never come to an end?'"

"But, in earnest," said I, "is it not entertaining to be in so splendid an assembly, to see life in gala costume?"

"That would undoubtedly be the case," replied Signora Luna, "especially when one comes in contact with many agreeable and eminent persons — if the heart were only ache-free. But how few are there who pass light-hearted through life; and perhaps not without good too, for in the opposite case we should become too trivial."

She smiled sadly, nodded to me, and disappeared, shaded by the Great Alexander.

Domestic happiness or unhappiness. That it is which assimilates the lot of all on earth more than aught else, which levels the palace with the hovel, places the labourer on a footing with the king, and raises up immeasurable differences between the existence and fortune of the mighty.

"Domestic troubles," writes a king, complainingly, who has fretted his little part in this world's scene,

"are thus far different from ordinary troubles,—that they press down the soul with the reiterated grief which they call into action every moment."

"I am the happiest of men," writes another monarch, who still wears one of the noblest crowns of Europe, in a confidential letter, "I am the happiest of men, and you will meet with few who, after a three-and-twenty years' acquaintance, and nineteen years' marriage, find, like myself, the heart of their wife just as loveable, and her eyes just as heavenly as in the first days of their attachment."

May 15th.

The Commerce Council Ladies, Madame and Miss ———. Miss made great eyes, looked faces most pregnant of meaning, and put several searching questions, such as:

"Well, when shall you be going to Tornea? Does Miss Selma take pleasure in a book entitled 'Hints for Economical Preparations of Food?' I was thinking she might require it. Shall I buy it for her? Price is about sixteen shillings, banco."

A tea meeting in the afternoon between two happy mothers, my stepmother and Madame Rittersvärd. The first cloudless day in the month of June is to light Ake Sparrsköld's and Hellfrid Rittersvärd's wedding.

What do I write this down for? To seek to forget that of which I am constantly thinking.

The Viking will sail on Sunday evening. The youngest boy will not be in bed. Is it possible that Brenner will not see me or come to bid me adieu before he leaves.

May 16th

A letter from Flora has cheered us all. Her change is rendering her courage wonderfully strong and unswerving. But why should one wonder? Let heaven once have opened over the head of mortal, or let his prayer have opened its gates to him and discovered the way whereon angels are passing up and down, then something unaccountable is surely happening—then the wisest and best in this generation must bow in wonder and honour—such a mortal must be left alone, alone with his Creator.

This is the last and highest point of all human culture, all exaltation. To that pinnacle the State, with all her wisest teachers and institutions, is striving to raise mankind. In opposition to it none have ever succeeded; he that believes otherwise deceives himself; but sanctified and supported by this, he mounts to regions he has never before attained. New life, new relative positions, is then created for him, and the immediate connnection is established with everlasting good which confers with pleasure its gifts upon man, and "gives gifts of the spirit not by measure." This condition may be designated on the part of men the child-like. It is the intensitum of earthly existence. It can be reached by the simplest man whose will is good; but cannot be attained by the most consummate philosopher, if albeit he have surmounted the highest step in the ladder of logic, he cannot like a humble and helpless child fall on his knee and call on his father and the father of us all.

How happy was Lennartson this evening in the company of his loved Selma and her mother, sketching plans for the future! How amiable was he in his joy, in the over-gushing existence to which, for the first time, he gave full play! He left his bride no peace the whole time, which of course gave her vast disquiet.

And my stepmother, how happy was she!

And I———oh, I was happy too, in seeing all around me happy; I received the lively comfort of a life with them (for it is settled I am to take up my quarters in Lennartson's new home) in taking part in every thing, whether art, science, public and private matters of interest, and regulation when in contact with individuals of importance or in their ordinary circles.

I feel well how easy and pleasant life may be in a daily enjoyment of what Ehrensvärd terms "pleasant wants;" but———

Aye but—what sayest thou dumb speaker, beating within my bosom? And you wisdom, baptized in the living fount of love—thou whom I have summoned to guide my steps, to illumine my way—what have you to say?

Here a life of sunshine free from shadow, full of pleasant enjoyment and comfort in the society of noble and amiable people, who, however, have no need of me, and are enough to themselves without me. Reverse the picture:—a falling house I might prop up, orphan children, whose mother and protector I might be, a man of worth I might make happy—who loves me, and whom I could say *I do love*. A life full of toil and care, on which nevertheless the eternal eye would look down with mute complacency: then on the

other—a life without splendour on earth but glorified by——Can I doubt? But Madame Tröllman? Good. The one Trölla* will drive out the other. The same has happened before. But the world? How will it cross itself and shout, "Mad, my masters! Marriage mania! Folly!" Well, what then? Selma, Lennartson. I know what they will say. But, stepmother! How my stepmother will be surprised.

This is Saturday evening.

Sunday Morning.

A note from the Viking—manly heart—any thing but full of feeling. He says, however, he has not sufficient reliance on his fortitude to take leave of me in person, and, therefore, does it in writing, begging me to remember him to my friends, hoping to see me again, and subscribing himself my "true William."

A nosegay of fine flowers says more than the note. But I hold it inexcusable in my "true William" that he will not see and hear his mistress before setting off to the other end of the world. I feel the charm at work within me.

Evening.

But a very little space, but a very little while often intervenes between the present moment, and that in which by a magic stroke we may have changed the whole aspect of our life, and altered the whole future. We ourselves generally hold the wand in our hand, but when applying its mighty force—whether for happiness or the reverse—of that we are often utterly ignorant.

* An enchantress. The reader will recollect Troila in the "Pirate."

I was nevertheless tolerably undisturbed, when at the same hour as Lennartson went out with Selma and my stepmother for an airing in the park in his carriage, I quietly and alone took a walk down towards Schiffsholm. The afternoon was tranquil, somewhat dull, but like summer. I looked about the neighbourhood as if taking leave of it; saluted the Norr bridge with the palace, the statues, the quays and river; bade adieu to the *beau monde.* At the head of the Schiffsholm bridge I stood still. Before me, on its blue flood, rested the verdant Schiffsholm with its alleys and groves, its temple built on the rocks, and mirrored in the sea. Behind me brushed past the crowd of wayfarers riding and walking, streaming onward in their holiday clothes to the park. I thought of the carriage that was bearing my kindred along in the gay scene of fashion, in which they had affectionately called to me to take my place; my heart sank; it was as if invisible bonds fettered my feet and drew me back. It was an hour of mental anguish. At that moment the bells of the churches began to strike up; and as in earlier ages the bells of the temple had the virtue of dispelling heathen enchantments, so did these now operate upon me. The encircling bonds were loosed, and I stepped onwards —excited, but resolved. And when I came to the green grove—an old man had planted it, and thereby embellished his declining years in that he had embellished his native city—when I saw the tender leaf, and thought on the tender children, then I became more composed, more free of heart.

It was not till the long Geil, or the Admiralty threw its shade across my path, that a certain timidity, but of another kind, restrained me. My procedure was un-

usual. What would be said of it? What might even Brenner himself——

"The million," said I, to myself, sorrowfully, "I trouble myself not about the world. I am going merely to say good bye to a friend. *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*"

Brenner was not at home, and was not expected just yet. I was glad of it. I told Frau Tröllman, who came forward with this information, and who certainly had not the air of a very dangerous enchantress, that I would wait till the captain returned, as I had something of consequence to say to him. I would meanwhile see to little William, in case she had any thing else to do. Frau Tröllman was quite content, and I soon detected the odour of roasting coffee in the house. And now at the bed of the little fellow, all the other children around me, I began telling stories, and making myself quite comfortable with them. My stories were interrupted by footsteps in the hall, and by the sudden joyful cry of all the children at seeing their dear father. He was soon inside with his sick child, who called anxiously for his father. When he saw me, he stood perfectly astounded.

"You here!" was his first word, and grasping my hand and motioning to the children to leave us alone, as he led me into another room. "You here, Sophia!" and he threw an inquiring glance at me.

I left him no long space for his surprise, but replied,

"How could you think of leaving me without a single friendly word of leave-taking? That was not good—it was not right of you. I dare say you thought no more of me than of a *sea-gull!*" My tears were very near.

The Viking held his peace: I went on,—

"We can see now who understands keeping true to one's friends best: you would not come to me, but here am I come to you to—say farewell."

"And you are come for that only?—Thanks!" He pressed my hand.

It was a little more difficult now to go on. I was silent—he was silent. At last he made an effort, and commenced with a mild and subdued voice,—

"Thanks for so friendly a punishment of my apparent neglect! Will you permit me to accompany you home now, and make my peace with your relatives?"

"Go if you wish: I remain here.

"How?"

"I remain with thy children, William, till your return from Africa."

Brenner examined me awhile, and his eyes filled with tears.

"Oh, woman's heart!" he said at last, as he seized my hand, and with a deeply meaning glance. "And when I return, what will you do then?"

"What—you please," I faltered.

Brenner was again mute, and then his voice was tremulous with emotion.

"Those are words for which some little time back I would have surrendered the half of my life; but now,—it is otherwise.—What I then wished I wish no longer."

I looked on him inquiringly, and in amazement.

"Now," he resumed, "my position is very different: "On earth I possess nothing, save these poor children."

"I am aware of it."

"I comprehend you, Sophia," said Brenner, sadly,

"and your conduct does not amaze me. But it involves a sacrifice which I will never, I can never permit. You refused your hand to the wealthy man; you shall not bestow it on a—a beggar."

"Royalty has made his proclamation. May I not do as I will with mine own?"

"No," replied Brenner, "you may not! Your determination, albeit high minded, is precipitate; and you must not do what you might hereafter regret. Your peace for life, and your property, must not be devoted to a ruined house—that must not be, I say. Do you think, then, I am such a selfish wretch!—such a—"

"Stop, for creation's sake!—silence! The children else will think we are quarrelling; and that will not do. Besides, we need not just now settle about what is to happen; we can take time on both sides, and wait till you join us again. May be you will find some beauties in Africa."

"Psha!—What nonsense is this? But if I should never return home? My voyage may be protracted, stormy, perilous. If I should never reach home—"

"Then I remain here as the mother of your children, till the day of my death."

"Sophia!" cried Brenner, passionately, "You are an angel! and on my knees will I thank you for this proposal; but, nevertheless, it cannot be—it is a sacrifice, and is indefensible—irrational."

"Very well, then; let us dispense with reason and argument: is it worth discussing after one's heart is fairly given away?"

Now I was lying on the breast of the Viking, encircled by his arm. He called me his, and challenged

the whole world to part us. He placed his ring on my finger—he brought his children to my arms, telling them that I would be their mother—he introduced me to Frau Tröllman, who let fall her coffee-pot with surprise, as his bride.

"Now I accompany you home," he said at last; "I must let the whole world know you are mine."

"The Viking is a little stormy in his joy," thought I, "but I must let him have his own way. What will my stepmother say?"

I returned on the Viking's arm. His heart was overflowing, and sweet as it was to me to receive the bubbling fount, I was obliged when he kissed my hand in the very face of the sentinel on the Schiffsholm, to beg him "not to expose me, and not to behave quite like a pirate."

"Acknowledge then that your philosophy has not stood you in good stead to allow you to marry a pirate like me."

"Philosophy?" replied I; "why it is precisely that has made me do so."

"Bah, bah! I will not hear it. Confess sincerely that it is love, pure, divine, unreasoning love."

"No, it is not unreasoning."

"Well, then, reasoning love. You say well. Why make compliments of this word? it is the main-spring and root of existence, dearest; the true enchanter's force can only be acquired through it. Only do not come near me with 'Christian love,' or I shall throw myself or you into the sea."

As a matter of course I thought him a pagan, and told him so.

In such like converse we reached home.

It happened fortunately that we encountered my stepmother, Lennartson, and Selma, all together in the parlour. The Viking threw the door wide open, marched, my hand in his, right into the centre of the apartment, and stood before the trio, saying:

"Congratulate us. Do you not see that we are bride and bridegroom?"

With a cry of joy, Lennartson sprang forward, and with the most cordial expressions threw his arms round both. Selma rose, half-alarmed, half-delighted, exclaiming, as she embraced me:

"Sophia!"

And my stepmother;—she remained on the sofa, so overcome and astonished, that I was afraid she had been seized with paralysis, and was quite alarmed.

I hastened to her side, kissed her hand, and begged her to pardon and overlook my apparent reserve and want of confidence; that two hours previous I had not myself known my destiny, and I now proceeded to give a hasty explanation of what had happened; but I was cut short by Brenner, who told the thing in his way in such fashion, that I believe nobody was quite *au fait*, but still all were affected by the narration and content, even my stepmother.

Just then six o'clock struck, and the Viking ought to be on board. When it was time to part, we found it a trial.

"Accompany me to the Lindens below," he asked; I must yet say something to you under the free sky."

I followed him to the spot, and the trees were already gilded with the setting sun. We sat down on a bench.

"This is lovely," cried Brenner; "within there it

was too circumscribed, too oppressive, to take my leave. To-morrow, I shall be at sea; but you, Sophia, will be living in a small still house, and for my sake."

"I shall be with your children, William," I responded.

"I have often," said he, "heard you express fear of difficulties, annoyances, troubles in life, suffering. Sophia, I fear what may befall you, I fear for your fortitude, your strength of mind."

"In that case you know me not, William! Remember that I am of the race and people of Wasastjerna! Besides, the sufferings I dread is that which limits the soul, not that which ennobles and expands it. You have several times spoken to me of endurance, as of nobleness, of beauty, and for some time I have felt you are right."

"You know, then, what, in becoming my wife, you will have to endure?"

"Yes, William, for I know there are many tempests and perils in the world for those whose business leads them down to the great waters; I know that every stormy night will find me sleepless and full of trouble; but every evening and morning will I lift up the hands of your children in prayer for their father, and the sighs of those innocents will drive away off the clouds from you, and still the wind and the waves. Oh, William, be at ease for me. I rejoice in that I shall love and endure. But," I observed, desiring to give our party conversation a livelier tone, "you have not given me any directions as to the education of the children. I suspect I must not inculcate philosophy."

"In God's name teach them what you will, even philosophy itself, especially if that same which has

made you mine, teach them that love is perfect wisdom. And now I must quit you, my own,—my own Sophia. Remain here, and let me look on your figure under the blue sky till the very last."

He took my handkerchief, moist with my tears, and thrust it into his bosom, saying, "It shall be my flag." He again pressed my hand, and again his glance dwelt upon my eyes, and sank into the depth of my heart. Then he departed, with long steps. Before he disappeared behind the house, he turned, again looked back, and waved his hand; so I lost sight of him, and returned slowly into he house.

Lennartson had gone out, to take leave of his friend on board the frigate. My stepmother and Selma sat by my side, but the former was evidently a little dissatisfied. I now opened my heart to both, and let them see all that had moved it for some time.

I had the trifling selfish pleasure of seeing my Selma shed tears over the idea of my leaving her, and the better pleasure of hearing my stepmother's full concurrence in the resolution I had come to, and so of seeing my plan of action not quite condemned. A little careful was she as to whether it was to be made public, and what would be thought of it; but after we had all given utterance to our "Christian and moral reflections" on the subject, we found that the matter was not so terrible, and the world still less so, if one did but meet it with ready sense and polite demeanour.

When we parted for the night my stepmother placed a handsome bracelet of her own hair on my arm, and said:

"You must not believe, my dear Sophia, that I have not thought of all this, nor seen clearly, although in

quietness, how it would all turn out, although I have made no comment. I foresaw every thing."

"No! have you indeed, mamma?" said I.

"Hum, hum, hum!"

"Prince Metternich again," thought I. "Good night, my sweet kind mamma," said I.

Monday, May 26th, Morning.

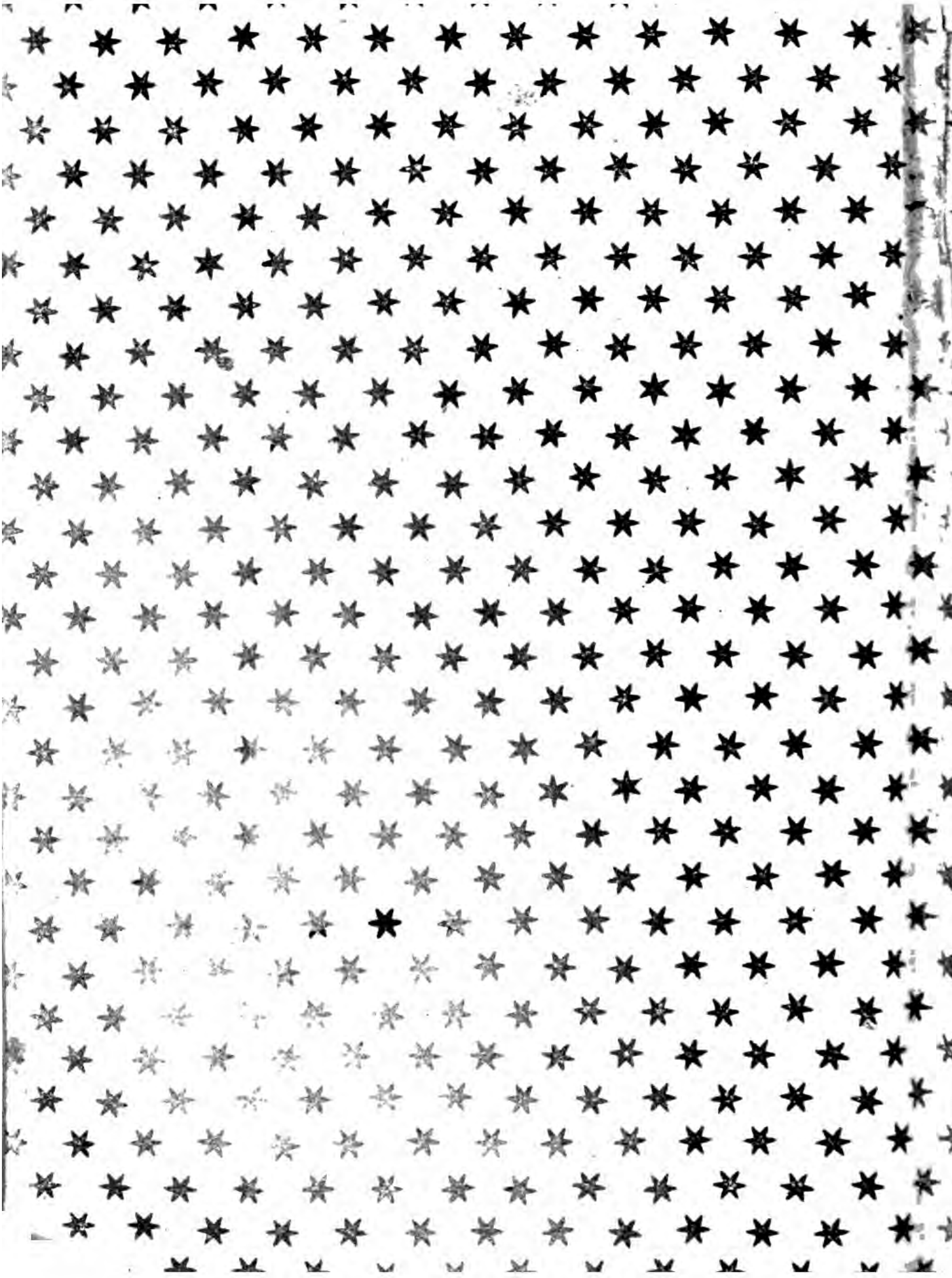
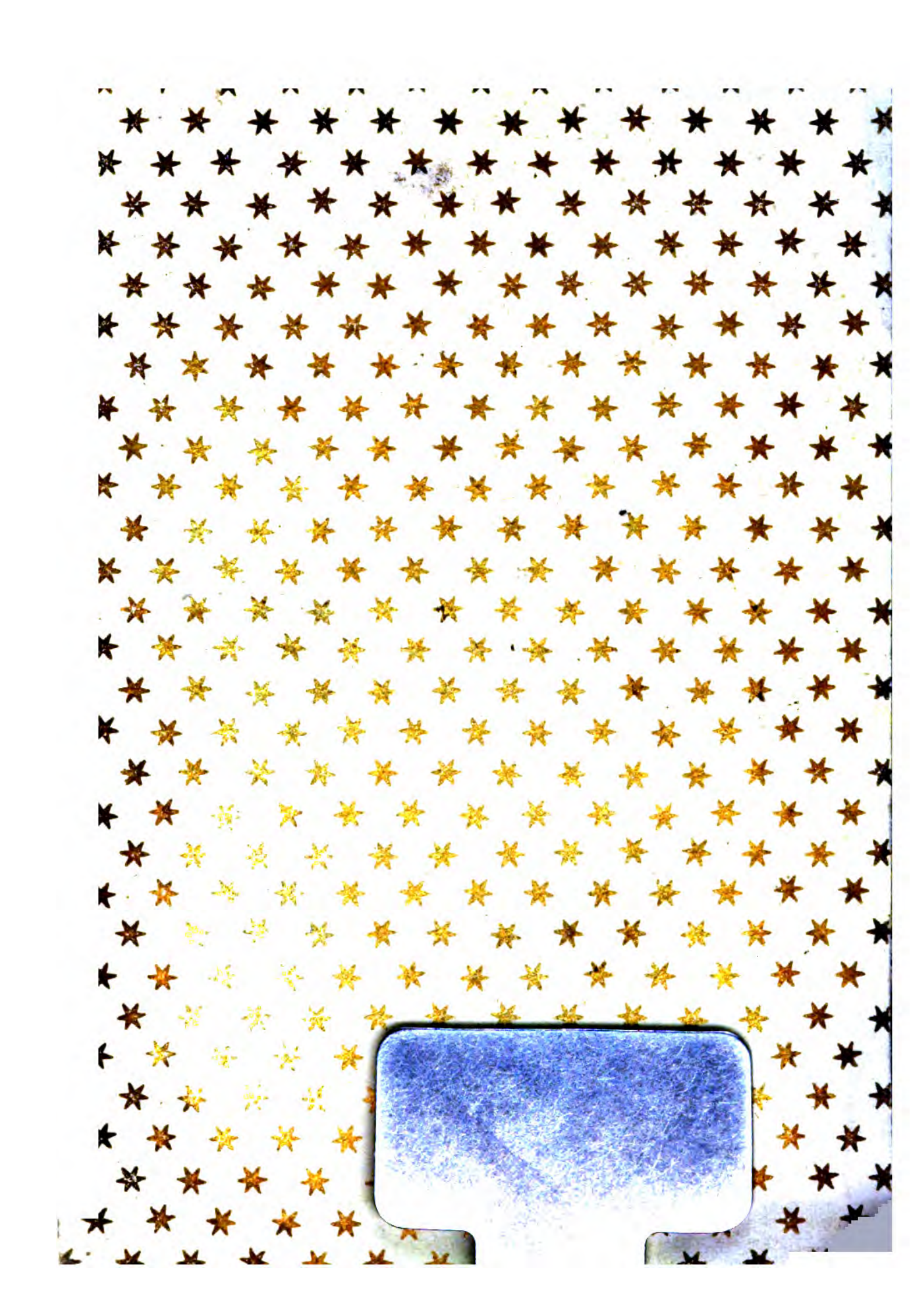
Another day, another revolution of light and darkness. New, friendly day, I salute you in my new domicile. Gently may life pass away in it.

My mother, Selma, and Lennartson, all accompanied me here. I hope to often see them here.

I already feel myself at home and Frau Tröllman the same with me. Upper Troll and under Troll have ratified a peace on certain stipulations, which are in the hand of our master. Gaily dance the waves at sea, bearing the Viking from all he holds dear. In my bosom I carry a few words from him written on board the frigate, and borne to me, as I know not, by what air of heaven. Love is in it, and the fundamental word of existence lives in my heart.

Within the children are just awaking from the arms of sleep, and in me are awaking the cares of house and household economy.

Past now is my life of quiet reflection and daily reckoning. Away with you, garrulous but dear pen, which has filled up so many hours! And in sooth, when one has surrendered liberty, reason, and heart, it is high time too to close—the Diary.

London: H. G. Clarke and Co., 66, Old Bailey.

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