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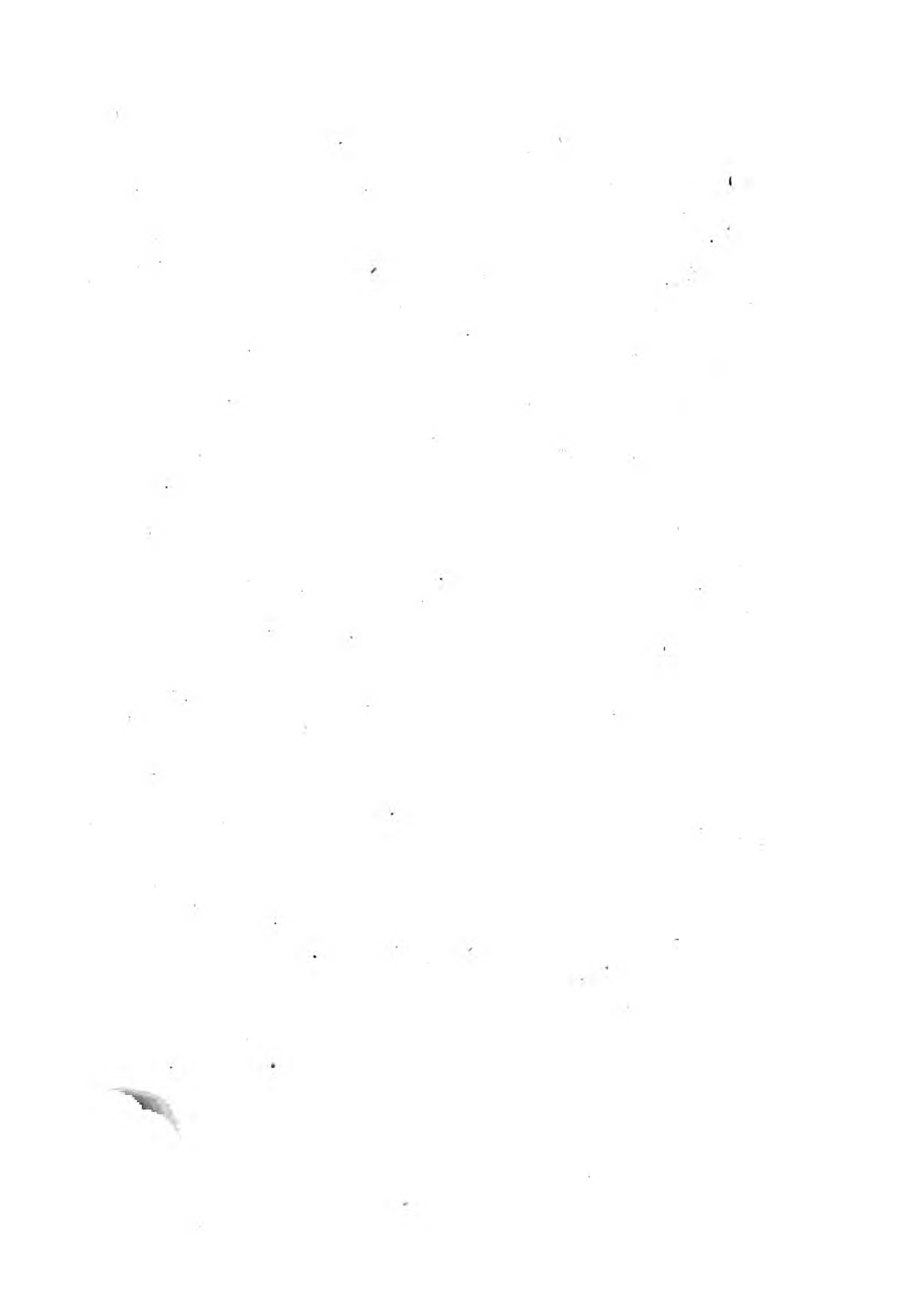


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THE
OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN ;

THE
LOVE CHARM ;

AND
PIETRO OF ABANO.

FROM THE GERMAN

OF
TIECK.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON :
JOHN W. PARKER AND SON,
WEST STRAND.

M DCCC LX.



ADVERTISEMENT.

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THIS little volume was printed several years ago by permission of the Translator, who intended to write a Preface to it. The publication was accordingly delayed until long after his lamented decease, and the book is now laid before the public without any addition to the sheets printed off during his lifetime.

London,
October 1860.



THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

THE name of Herr Balthasar was well known throughout the whole hill-country: not a child but had heard of his vast riches, and had some story to tell of him. Everybody too loved and honoured him; for his bounty was as great as his wealth: but at the same time he was viewed with fear; for he harast both himself and others by a number of strange whims which no one could understand; and his moodiness, his silent reserve, were especially irksome to those who were nearest about him. No person had seen him smile for many years; he scarcely ever came out of his large house on the hill above the little mountain-town, nearly the whole of which belonged to him: its inhabitants too were almost all his dependents, whom he had drawn thither to work in his manufactories, his mines, and his alum-pits. Thus through his means this small spot was very thickly peopled, and enlivened by the greatest activity. Wag-gons and horses were continually moving to and fro; and the clatter of the working machinery was mixt up with the roar of waters, and with the various noises from the pounding and smelting-houses. The smoke of the coals, however, the steam from the pits, and the black heaps of dross and slag piled up on high all around, gave the gloomy sequestered valley a still more dismal appearance; so that no one who travelled for the sake of seeking out and enjoying the beauties of nature, would have any mind to linger there.

Among the multitude of persons who in consequence of his large undertakings and the variety of his concerns were employed by old Herr Balthasar, none seemed to enjoy his confidence in so high a degree as Edward, the head-overseer of his mines and manufactories, and the manager of his accounts. He was about thirty years

old, tall and of a fine figure, had always something sprightly and goodhumoured on his lips, and thus formed a striking contrast to his morose monosyllabic master, who had grown old before his time, and whose withered, wrinkled features, with the faint sad look from his hollow eyes, were no less repulsive to all, than Edward's cheerful frankness was attractive of confidence and affection.

It was still very early on a summer morning when Edward was looking thoughtfully down into the smoking valley: the sun lay behind a thick mass of clouds; and the mists that were travelling along the bottom, and mingled with the black vapours from the steaming pits, checked his view, and wrapt the landscape in a kind of grey veil. He mused over his youth, over the plans he had once formed, and then thought how, contrary to them all, he had become fixt in this melancholy solitude, which, as he was already verging on the maturity of manhood, he probably would never quit again. While he was thus losing himself in his meditations, young William hurried by him, fully equipt as it seemed for a journey, without even bidding him good bye. The young man started as in passing he observed Edward standing there, and he looked very loth to meet his questions.

How now? said Edward; are you already leaving us again, young man, after all the entreaties and persuasions it cost us both but three weeks ago to prevail on our master to take you into his house, and after he has just forgiven you your sudden departure the other day?

I must begone! cried the young man: do not stop me! I must submit to appear ungrateful; but I cannot help it.

Without speaking to our master? replied Edward; without leave of absence? What are we to think of you? Besides, Herr Balthasar will want you; for there is no one here just now to take your post of secretary.

My dearest sir, exclaimed the young man uneasily, if you knew my situation, you would not blame or think ill of me.

Has our master offended you? have you any ground of complaint?

No, no! quite the contrary! cried the young man impetuously; the old gentleman is kindness itself; I appear to be base and good-for-nothing; but I have no other choice. Make the best excuse for me that your goodnature and your conscience will let you.

Be a man! said Edward, giving him his hand and holding him fast: you may earn a maintenance here, and may lay the foundations of your fortune hereafter: do not a second time thus wantonly trifle away your master's confidence and mine. We took you in, when you came to us without a character, without any recommendation, almost without a name: Herr Balthasar departed for your sake from all his rules, which till then had always been inviolable; I have in a manner pledged myself for you: are you resolved to reward our confidence in this way, and to run thus rashly into suspicion? And can you hope that a month hence or later you will be received among us again?

The young man was much distressed, but tore himself forcibly away, and cried: I know it too well, that I am closing this home, in which everything has gone so well with me, in which I have felt so happy, for ever against me. Misery and want await me, and the bitterest punishments for the thoughtlessness of my youth. But who can avoid his destiny? When a chariot is rushing headlong down a precipice, no human strength can arrest it.

But if you have any sense of honour, answered Edward, if you would not leave us all at a loss what to make of you, you ought to stay now at all events; for I am quite unable to conceive what power can be driving you away from us thus suddenly. You know, the most expensive and valuable cloths in our magazine have been purloined day after day; and though this has been going on so long we have not been able to get any trace of the offender.

I must put up even with this suspicion, said William with a quick blush. There is no saving me now, and I

have nothing more to lose : nor do I deserve the good opinion of any honest man, be he even the meanest of my brethren.

After these mysterious words the young man hurried away, without even looking round again. Edward followed him with his eyes, and observed how he bent his steps hastily toward the little town, ran almost at full speed through the streets, and turned into a footpath on the other side, to climb up a steep rock. He there lost sight of him in the mountain solitude.

The mist meanwhile had somewhat broken, and the little dells with their trees and bushes were seen rising out of it, like green islands, illumined by the morning sun, with ever and anon a house or hut half hidden by leaves leaning against the side of the hill.

An old miner, who worked a good way off in the pits belonging to the prince, came up now very much out of humour to Edward. Another run over here to no purpose ! he cried peevishly : I wanted to speak to the young shatterbrained jackanapes ; and now I hear from the smelting-lads down in the town, that he has just been scampering through it, and not a soul can tell where he is gone.

What business have you with him, friend Conrad ? asked Edward.

What business should one have with young chaps such as he ! replied the cross old man. There have I had to buy him a wonderful book about mines over yonder, of the whiteheaded master-miner who is as old as the hills, and who has been blind these three years : the marvellous greybeard copied the book ages ago, when he was young and had a younker's itching for knowing more than his neighbours, from the manuscript of a travelling Tyrolese, and took the trouble of scratching likenesses of all the foolish pictures in it. Now however that he is blind, he can't see to read it ; so I have bought it for young master Lorenz, our William here ; and lo ! the coxcomb is clean over the mountains.

What does the little book contain ? said Edward.

Only look into it yourself, continued the other : all

sorts of stories about ghosts and spectres; clews for finding out the places over there in the high mountains, where one meets with gold and diamonds at the bottom of caves and sandpits in spots which mortal man has seldom set foot in. There are a number of marks, they say, which in ages of yore were carved on the hard rocks or written on the banks of the brooks: certain knowing Italians notcht and scored the places some two or three hundred years ago, and stuck in pieces of tin and pebbles which they laid after a fashion of their own: now however, the old man tells me, they are hard to find; for the mountain-spirits and goblins, who hate being disturbed, have shoved away many of the stones that might have served for signposts, and have utterly deranged their order.

Edward laught as he turned over the leaves of the strange book. None of your scoffing, young gentleman! cried the old man: so you too are one of their super-clever newfangled wiseacres. But if you were once to see what I have seen, when all alone far down underground, cut off from the heavens and the whole world, with no light but my lamp, and no sound but my own hammer within hearing, and the terrible tall spirit of the mountain came to me; I'd wager you'd twist your face into some other look, and would not laugh as you do here where the merry morning sun is shining on you. Everybody can grin; but seeing is the lot of few; and still fewer can behave like men, when their eyes are thrown open.

I will pay you for the book, my good old man, replied Edward kindly, and keep it for our William till he comes back again.

Ha ha! cried the miner, laughing heartily and putting up the money; and read it too, and pore over it by yourself, and go on Sundays and holidays to look out for the marks and the secret passages. Only don't let them befool you, young man, or cajole, or frighten you; and when you have found anything, keep a fast hold. Look you, the lord of these hills, or the old man of the mountain, as many choose to call him, knows all about

the matter: he has thrust his hands into the pockets of all the richest ghosts and elves and goblins; and they have been forced to empty them out for him.

Whom do you mean? asked Edward, a good deal surprised; and at the same time he wanted to give the besmeared book back again to the old man, saying with some irritation: Since you cannot trust me, or rather hold me to be such a fool, keep the treasure-casket yourself for our friend, and only give the master-miner his money.

No! exclaimed the old man; what has once been made over and paid for, must stay in the hands of the buyer: that is a sacred law, and if we break it, the master-miner and I shall be under a ban. But whom do I mean, ask you, by the old man of the mountain, or by the lord of these hills? Are you ignorant of that? and have already been here a round dozen of years and more. Why, this is the name all the world gives to your high and mighty manufacturer, mine-holder, merchant, gold-maker, ghost-seer, your all-powerful man of millions, your Balthasar. And perhaps you would make believe into the bargain that you don't know how he comes by all his unnatural riches. Ay, ay, friend, the pale old sour-faced growler has them all in leading-strings, the whole posse of spirits: he is often absent for weeks, and tarrying with them in their secret chambers: then they pay away to him; then they break their old crowns in bits, and pour out the diamonds into his skinny hands; then they strike with their magical rods against the stone walls, and the water-damsels must needs swim up from the bottom of the brooks, and bring him gifts, corals, and pearls, and turkisses. As for gold he scarce heeds it now: he has a tribe of little elves that wash it out of the sand for him, and gather it up, like bees, into balls and grains, and then carry it like honey, and stuff his cane with it. Ay, ay, my worthy smooth-faced pedlar of all wisdom's small wares! this is why the old man is for ever moping so, and never dares laugh; this is why he loses his wits if he chances to hear music, which gladdens the heart of every godly man; this is why he never goes into company, and is always fretful and cross-

grained: for he knows full well what end he must come to, and that all his earthly grandeur cannot buy him off; because he has forsaken his God, and no human being ever saw him in a church.

This is the hateful part of superstition, exclaimed Edward indignantly, which otherwise would only deserve our contempt, and which, if it did not thus deprave the understanding and the heart, might delight us by its poetical features, and furnish the imagination with much fantastical amusement. Are you not ashamed, old man, to think and prate in this way of the most virtuous, the most beneficent of men? How many human beings are fed and supplied with comforts by his extensive transactions? is he not always giving the needy a share in the blessings with which heaven rewards his industry? He spends his life in thought, in watching, in care, in writing, in toil, for the sake of nourishing thousands, who but for him would perish without employment; and as whatsoever he undertakes with so much judgement is favoured by fortune, fools are audacious enough to slander his understanding which they cannot comprehend, and his virtues which they are unable to appreciate, with their stupid impertinent extravagances.

Fortune! laught the miner: you talk of fortune, and fancy that in using the silliest word in the world you have said something: why, it is the very same thing that I mean and believe; only that you don't understand what you say, nor can anybody make any sense of it. My jewel, the earth, the water, the air, mountains, forests, and valleys, are no dead lifeless dogs, as you mayhap think them. All sorts of things dwell and bustle about in them, things that you call powers and the like: these can't endure to have their old quiet abodes turned topsyturvy in this manner, and dug away and blown up with gunpowder under their very feet. The whole country for miles and miles round is smoking and steaming, and clattering, and hammering; people are shovelling and poking, and digging, and blasting, and laying waste with fire and water even into the entrails of the earth; not a forest finds mercy; there are glass-houses, and

alum-works, and copper-mines, and bleaching-grounds, and spinning-jennies: look you, this must bring mishap or goodhap to the man who sets such a sight of things a-going; it can't all end in nothing. Where there are no human beings, there dwell the silent spirits of the mountains and woods: but if they are too much squeezed,—for when not prest for room and left in peace they will live on good terms with man and beast,—but when one elbows them too close, and into their very ribs, they grow pettish and mischievous: then come deaths, earthquakes, floods, conflagrations, landslips, and all the other things they bring to pass; or else you must put a stiff yoke on them, and then they will serve you indeed, but against the grain, and the more toll they have to pay to anybody, the worse friends are they to him at the last. Now this, young master, is what you are pleased to call fortune.

The dispute would probably have lasted some time longer, unless an elderly man had now approacht them, whom Edward, whenever he was able, was glad to avoid. On this occasion however Eleazar came too quickly upon him, and besides had so much business to talk over, that the head-overseer was compelled to stay and hear what the manager of the looms had to say. Eleazar was a little sickly man, self-willed and sullen, even more so than his master, the old man of the mountain, as Conrad, after the custom of the neighbourhood, had called him. I heard yesterday, said Eleazar, of a carriage that was to stop the night in the next town; as I went by I told William of it; and now the fellow, who seemed aghast at the tidings, is up and off. My master will as usual have to endure loss and vexation from these vagabond knaves, whom he is so fond of trusting before his old tried friends.

His eyes fell on the curious book, he looked into it, and seemed delighted. If you like the nonsensical stuff, said Edward, I will make you a present of it, in case William, for whom I have bought it, does not return.

Thank you, thank you, from my heart! cried Eleazar, sniggering, as he lifted his sharp little eyes, and a strange

smirking grin made his yellow cramped face still uglier than before.

So you really meant what you said! exclaimed the old miner: well! the revelations of the spirit of the earth are in better keeping under the guard of that sickly gentleman, than with such a merry care-for-nought. He then turned down the hill on the side opposite to that which led toward the town, to betake himself to his mine; while Eleazar seemed buried in thought as he read with great eagerness in his newly-acquired treasure.

Meanwhile Edward was watching a carriage that was toiling up the hill from the valley, and had just come through the wood. Are we to have a visit? he exclaimed with some surprise. Heyday! what! returned Eleazar: it is our old master's carriage to be sure, which he has again been lending to the folks over yonder for a wedding; and his other coach has been sent off to a christening in the village at the further end of the mountains. Two such equipages! and he never uses either himself, since he never stirs out of the house; and coachman and lacquies always on their legs to wait on some beggarly strangers, who don't even thank him when his carriages and horses go to wreck, and new ones are to be bought at the end of every four years.

Can you really find fault with this bountiful kindness? replied Edward: but Eleazar relieved him from the trouble of prolonging the dispute, by carrying off his book in great haste, without once looking at him. Edward breathed more freely when delivered from the presence of this odious misanthrope, who took every opportunity of loading his benefactor with the bitterest abuse. The coach meanwhile was labouring up the second hill; and from the slow and unsteady footing of the horses it was evident they must have come out of the plain. The carriage too, Edward now saw clearly, was a strange one, and must probably be bringing some unexpected visitant. With much panting and straining at length the horses dragged the coach up the last slope; and an elderly lady got out at the door of the great house, and

sent her maid and servant with the carriage to the inn in the town.

Edward was surprised ; for the lady, whose face still betrayed that she had once been handsome, was entirely unknown to him. You will allow me, she said with a sweet-toned voice, to rest here under the portico for a moment ; after which I should wish to speak to Herr Balthasar.

Edward felt at a loss what to do, and led the lady with evident uneasiness to a chair in the entrance-hall. If you will give me leave, he then said, I will attend you into the parlour, and order you some breakfast.

Thank you for all your kindness, she cried : the only thing I wish for, is an interview with the master of the house. Is he up yet? In what room shall I find him?

That none of us knows, answered Edward: until he himself opens his door, nobody ventures to go to him ; and it is still shut. His wont however is to rise early, and he says he sleeps but little. Whether he employs these early solitary hours in reading, or in prayer and devotion, no one can tell ; so great is his reserve toward everybody. But as to announcing you—even by and by—I know not : for we all have the strictest orders, never to let in any stranger to him : he speaks to no one, except his managers and servants on business at stated hours ; and from this rule during the twelve years that I have known him he has not once departed. Strangers who have anything to request of him must declare their wishes to me or to master Eleazar ; and we either settle the matter directly ourselves, or, if it does not lie immediately in our power, we make a report to him on the subject, without his ever setting eyes on the person. These whimsical rules, if you choose so to call them, render his solitude unapproachable ; and that is the very thing he wishes.

O God ! cried the lady with a tone of anguish : and must this journey then, this hard effort of mine, be all utterly in vain ? For how could I ever find words to express my wishes and requests to a perfect stranger ? dear good sir, your eye bespeaks and reveals the

kindness of your heart: for my sake, for the sake of a miserable, deeply-afflicted woman, make an exception this once to the strict custom of the house, and tell your master that I am here.

At that moment they heard the sound of a large bell. That is the sign, said Edward, that we may go and speak to him, and that his room is open. I will say everything for you that you wish; but I know beforehand it is to no purpose, and I shall bring down his anger on my own head, without doing you any service.

He went dejectedly down the long passage: for it pained him that he could not assist the lady whose noble form moved and interested him. Old Balthasar was sitting in deep thought, his head leaning on his arm, at his writing-table: he looked up cheerfully and kindly at Edward's greeting, and held out his hand. When the young man, after making a long preface to excuse himself and conciliate his master, mentioned the wife of a privy-counsellor, whose maiden name was Fernich, the old man started up suddenly from his desk as if struck by lightning, with a frightful cry. Fernich! Elizabeth! he then exclaimed, with fearful vehemence; she, she here? in my house! O God, O heaven, quickly, quickly let her come in! O do make haste, my dear friend; he cried out again, and his voice failed him.

Edward was almost terrified, and went back to bring the stranger to Balthasar. In the mean time she had been joined by the young lady of the house, an adopted child, but whom the old man loved with the same tenderness and treated just as if she had been his own. The stranger trembled, and when she reached the old man's apartment was near fainting: Balthasar dried his tears, and was unable to find words, as he led the pale lady to a chair: he made a sign, and Edward left the room, in great anxiety about his old friend, whom he had never seen so strongly moved, and with whom, owing to this singular scene, he stood on an entirely new footing.

It was very good of you, Rose, he said to the young blooming girl, to entertain the stranger lady while she was waiting.

It was all to very little purpose, answered she, blushing: for she was so faint and exhausted that, whatever I could say, she did nothing but weep. She must surely be sick, or have some heavy load on her heart. It has made me quite sorrowful, and I too have been crying. These eyes in our head are certainly very funny creatures, just like little children. They run about, and stare, and gaze at everything new, shining and twinkling with joy; and then they grow so serious and sad, and when the pain at one's heart is very sore, they bubble with tears and overflow, and anon they become bright and glad again. There must be a vast number of sorrows in the world, my dear Edward.

May heaven preserve you from any very melancholy trials! replied he: hitherto your young life has glided along as peacefully as a swan over a silent pool.

You fancy, cried she laughing, that such a thing as I cannot have had any sorrows of its own, much less very bitter and painful ones. You are mightily mistaken.

Well? asked Edward, earnestly.

One can't remember all in a moment what one's sorrows are, said the goodnatured girl: wait a little. When I think of sundry great misfortunes in the world, about which I have heard people talking at times, then indeed there does not seem to be very much in what I have had to go through: yet for little things like me a little misfortune is quite big enough. Now is not it a real grievance that I must never hear music? that I don't know how people look, or how they feel, when they are dancing? Ah, dearest Edward, the other day, when we were taking a drive, we passed by the little inn over yonder on the other side of the town, where the country folks were having a dance: their jumping about, the sound of the fiddles, the strange glee in the airs, made such an odd impression on me, I cannot tell whether I felt glad, or sad to the very bottom of my heart. Here in our neighbourhood we must never have any music, either in the inn or anywhere else. Then when I hear of plays and operas, I cannot quite persuade my-

self that such wonderful things are really and truly to be found in the world. The lights, the numbers of finely-drest people, and then a real stage, and a whole story acted upon it, which I am to believe to be true : can there be anything more curious? And is not it then a grievous affliction, that I am to grow old here, without ever in my whole life catching a single short glimpse of all these grand doings? Tell me, dear Edward, you too are a good man, is this wish of mine, are those sights themselves very sinful? Herr Eleazar indeed says they are, and my dear fatherly uncle thinks the same of them, and hates everything of the sort : but the king and the magistrates allow them, and learned people approve them, and write and compose the things that are to be acted : can all this then be so very wicked?

My dear child, said Edward with the utmost friendliness, how sorry I am that I cannot procure you even this innocent pleasure! But you yourself know how strict Herr Balthasar is in all these matters.

O yes, she replied : why the miners in our town here must never even hum a tune ; we must never drive more than just two miles from the gate ; and no amusing book, no poem, no novel, is ever let come into the house. And added to all this we are perpetually frightened with being told that such a number of thoughts and fancies, and all that one is fond of dreaming about in many a lonesome hour, are impious sins. At such times I muse over all sorts of little stories about the loveliest spirits, and beautiful valleys, and how the miller finds his love in the mill-stream, who by and by turns out to be a princess and makes him a king, or how the fisherman jumps into the river, and at the bottom finds the most glittering and gorgeous wonders ; or a little shepherdess is playing with her lambs on the meadow, and a handsome prince, sitting upon a great horse, rides by and falls in love with her. And then, if the evening bells chance to peal through the dusk, and the wind brings the noise of the hammering and knocking from yon black mountain, or I hear the sledge-hammer from afar, I could cry, and yet in fact am glad at my very heart. But our surly gloomy

Eleazar, one day that I was telling him of this, abused me bitterly, and said that busying oneself with such thoughts is the very pitch of sin and wickedness. And yet I can't help it ; for it all comes into my head just of its own accord.

Dear innocent creature ! said Edward, and seized the blooming girl's hand.

To you, she went on, one may talk of all this, and you understand everything in the right way : but other people immediately begin scolding me, because they put a wrong meaning into everything. It was just the same with my old nurse, who is now dead. You had been a long time in the house before I ever thought I could tell you anything or trust you ; I was so very little then, and used to play with my doll. Dear Heaven, it is now full ten years since the last time I dandled my Clary, as we called her. To my old Bridget, and my father, and Eleazar, and the cook, I thought I might say everything, because they were so grave : you were always laughing ; and this made me fancy that you did not rightly belong to us. Now when prayer-time came, they would not let me look at Clary, or carry her with me ; but she was shut up in the cupboard. This made me very sorry ; for I fancied she must be crying after me. So I found out a way, and took her along with me hid under my pinafore, and held her close to my heart to keep her warm ; and when we came into the prayer-room I began by praying in private to God that he would forgive me if I was too fond of my Clary, that he would pardon me too, great and mighty as he was, for having brought her in secret into his high presence, and that he would not think I meant to deceive him or to treat him with disrespect, for he knew it was not so. After this preface I fancied I had made my peace, and repeated my usual prayers very devoutly. Thus all went on well for a week : then Bridget found me out. O gracious ! then there was a great to do : even my good father said, this shewed how the human heart from its very infancy is so corrupt and wicked as to give itself up to the idolatry of worthless and contemptible things. I cannot understand

even now what he meant by these words. Whenever one loves anything, is it not very beautiful and perfectly right that one does not pry into it and finger it too closely? What is a rose, when I pull it to pieces? It is so perishable, and therefore so dear. Was it my poor Clary's fault, that she was only a leather doll? Last week I was looking at her again one day, and could not make out myself how I came to be so fond of her formerly; and yet I could almost have cried to think that none of the feelings of those days will ever come back to me again. But surely this cannot be fickleness in me now, any more than my love ten years ago was idolatry and wickedness.

Dear angel, said Edward tenderly, our heart is trained by the love of visible perishable objects for the love of the invisible and eternal. When I see a child playing thus fondly and innocently with puppets of its own making, and crying for love and delight over the lifeless toy, I could fancy that at such hours angels gather about the little creature and sport lovingly around it.

Ah, exclaimed Rose, that is a beautiful notion!

When however, continued Edward, heart truly bends to heart, when two souls meet and give up themselves to each other in love, this faith and feeling of theirs invests the invisible with a palpable reality, and brings it for all eternity before them.

That again I don't understand, said the maiden pondering; but if you mean that sort of love which is necessary for a wedding, and to make a truly happy marriage, I think very differently on that score.

How so? asked the young man.

That is a hard matter to explain, answered the girl, putting on a look of deep thought.

Supposing now, said Edward, forcing himself to laugh, that he might hide his emotion, you had to marry to-morrow, whom would you choose? Which of all the men you have hitherto met with do you like the best? Have you enough confidence in me to answer me this question honestly?

Why should not I? she replied: for I need not even spend a moment in considering the point.

And . . . and the man you have already chosen?

Is of course our Eleazar.

Edward started back in utter amazement. A moment ago you did not understand me, he said after a pause; and now you have told me a riddle that terrifies me.

And yet, she answered with perfect simplicity, it is the most natural thing in the world. My father too, I fancy, has already made up his mind, that our honest Eleazar is to be my future husband. Were I to love and choose you, there would be nothing remarkable in it; for I like you, and so does everybody else; no one can help feeling confidence in you; and at the same time you are very handsome, and always friendly and good-humoured, so that, when one has once become acquainted with you, one hardly knows how to live without you. Such persons as our William would find a thousand girls to grow fond of them; and it is a pity that he has already run away from us again. Even old Conrad, and my father himself, must have been good-looking when they were younger: but only look at poor Eleazar, who is not so very old yet, and whom not a creature in the house, nay in the whole world, can endure;—what is to become of him, if I do not marry him?

How! said Edward interrupting her; is your fair life to fall a victim to this fantastical delusion? Can the perplexity in which dark spirits involve themselves, entangle the purity of innocence in its snares? and must love itself devise a robe to deck out the most frantic extravagance as an act of noble self-sacrifice and reasonable resignation?

We are quite at cross purposes to-day, she continued calmly. It is not that I really love him: I have not even a notion yet what this love they talk of is, or what it means. Let me tell you again about the sorrows of my youth, with which we began. In the days when I was still very fond of my Clary, I had also a cat in the house here, that was no less dear to my childish heart.

I even fancied to myself that the doll and the little white playful creature must be very jealous of each other on my account. Now Herr Eleazar detested and persecuted everything that even looked like a cat; for he says they are malicious. This seems to be a general superstition. Wherever the sleek animals shew their faces, everybody, even the best-natured people, will begin shouting *puss! puss!* and will worry and hunt them, as if, in pursuing the harmless things, they were driving away Antichrist himself. And this it is that makes them, as no doubt they are, so mistrustful and wary. My cat had kittens, which were just nine days old, and opening their little blue eyes. What fun and pleasure it is for children, to see the mother with her young ones, and the droll sports of the kittens, and their skipping and tumbling and jumping about, nobody who is grown up can understand. On the very same day master Eleazar had just got a new air-gun, which he wanted to try. Complaints had for some time been made to my father, that my cat used to hunt the singing birds and eat them. It was taking the air behind the house, in the garden, and amusing itself by running up and down the big orange-tree. On the sudden Eleazar shot at it, and it fell dead; and now the kittens too were to be drowned. Never before had I thought him so brown and nasty, so unlike a human being. In the night I prayed that God would let him too die; but the very next morning, though I was still such a mere child, it struck me to the heart, how very, very unhappy he must be, that there was no creature he could love, and neither man nor beast could love him; and so I think still. Such an odious creature as he is, he will never find a heart on earth, if I were to blot him out of mine.

Dear little Rose, said Edward, somewhat calmer, you must not be too hasty, and assuredly you will change your mind on this point by and by.

My fate, she again began, while the tears mounted into her bright eyes, has in fact been just like that of the poor little kittens; only that God Almighty did not let me be drowned in the same wretched manner.

But I too never knew my mother ; she had never the happiness of bringing me up ; she died shortly after my birth. My foster-father here is very kind to me ; still it must be quite a different feeling to have a real father ; but he too is in his grave. Now, reckoning up all this, methinks we have here made out quite unhappiness enough for so young a thing.

Dearest Rose, said Edward after a pause, would it give you any pain, if you knew that I too was very unhappy ? or if I too were gone ?

Alas ! my dear good friend, she exclaimed, don't make me cry. I tell you, I never liked anybody so well as you. But happy and gay as you are, with all the world so fond of you, you can do very well without my love. But I cannot do without yours.

A servant now came and called Edward away to the old man. The conversation must have been of deep interest ; for Balthasar as well as the stranger seemed dissolved in tears, though both were trying hard to collect themselves. My dear friend, said the old man with a broken voice, my good gentle Edward, will you conduct the stranger lady to the inn ; but at the same time take along with you four thousand dollars in gold and bills out of my strong-box. No human being however, I trust and charge you, must know of this affair, least of all Eleazar. Only conceive, the savage has left three letters of the highest importance from this poor woman to me without an answer. His not shewing them to me I can forgive, since on that point he has full powers from me.

His wishes were executed, and the stranger set off again in the afternoon in better spirits, without paying her old friend another visit.

The next day Balthasar sent Edward a summons to his room. When he had lockt the door he began : You are the only person entrusted with a circumstance and a connexion, which agitated me so deeply yesterday that I was unable to tell you anything about it. As however

I look upon you quite in the light of my son, I feel myself bound to disclose something more of myself and my story to you, than any mortal man has ever yet heard.

They sat down: the old man gave his young friend his hand, which the latter prest cordially, and then said: You cannot doubt my affection and friendship; and what you confide to me will in my hands be as secret as in the silent grave.

I have watcht you this long time, said the old man, and know you well. Hitherto we have had but little talk together: I am now forced to change and break through my usage with regard to you, and I am anxious besides that there should be a being who knows and understands me.

Edward's curiosity was roused; and the old man went on with a tremulous voice: I am still so much moved, my whole frame is still so much disordered by yesterday's shock, that you must have patience with my weakness. That my life is a cheerless one, that I have long renounced all those recreations and enjoyments, which are in fact the only things most men live for, you must long ago have remarked. From my youth up I have got out of the way of pleasure, with a feeling which I might almost call dread. Educated by a rigid father, who lived in the greatest penury, my childhood and youth were merely suffering and sorrow. When I grew bigger, my ripening understanding only enabled me more distinctly to perceive the misery of my parents and the wretchedness of the whole earth. Often for many nights together no sleep visited my eyes, which were flowing with tears. Thus my imagination accustomed itself to view the whole world as nothing but a place of punishment, where sorrow and need were the lot of all, and such as were raised above the sordid wants of life were but in a yet sadder state of silly delusion, in which they neither recognized their own calling nor the destiny of mankind, but giving themselves up to vapid pleasures and pitiful comforts, reeled along toward the grave. One single star shed its light through this

dark gloom,—but it was as far beyond my reach as if it had stood in the heavens,—my relation Elizabeth, whom you saw: she was rich, highborn, and bred to a life of splendour and luxury. A cousin of mine, Helbach, who was still richer and haughtier, was designed for her husband; our family scarcely ever saw these proud relations of theirs; and my stern father had a special hatred for them, and never spake but with rancour of their extravagance. This hatred he also transferred to me, when he discovered my secret and strong affection. He gave me his curse, if I ever dared to think of that lovely and beloved being. Nor was it long before she was married to her overbearing kinsman; one stream of wealth flowed into the other, and produced such a splendid way of living that the whole town felt envy at it. My mother's brother, who gave his son this large fortune, was so much ashamed of our poverty, that he did not even invite my parents to the wedding; which so greatly increast the vexation and annoyance of my father, already a prey to bitter mortification, that the afterthroes of this insult brought him to the grave. My poor mother soon followed him. Of myself I will say nothing. If life had hitherto worn a dark aspect in my eyes, it now changed into a spectre, whose ghastly, distorted features and looks at first struck me with horror, and afterward, when use made me cold and indifferent, taught me to despise everything, above all myself. Elizabeth had known of my passion. Rarely as we saw each other, she had taken no pains to conceal the affection with which she answered mine. Though she was not like me utterly dead to all joy, yet a shade was cast over her whole existence, and heavy clouds covered it. She has suffered enough since. Her husband was a profligate spendthrift; he squandered thousands from vanity, and for paltry, contemptible purposes. It would look as if a number of illstarred men bore a kind of malice and hatred against money, so that they have recourse to the strangest devices to drive it away from them on every side, while the miser hugs and cherishes it with a blind devotion, and lets himself be crusht by his idol. Eliza-

beth was weak enough to give up her property to him unconditionally, and, when his credit had already fallen, to declare herself bound by his debts ; and thus the very house into which all the gods of Olympus had seemed to enter, bringing eternal joy as their gift, became a scene of misery, confusion, hatred, and strife. The wretched husband, counsellor Helbach, has sold his last shilling for an annuity, without a thought about his wife and son. This son of his is, as it were, possessed by the furies, unruly, headstrong, and without feeling : he ran into debt, then took to swindling, and finally, two years ago, when his weeping mother was trying to admonish him, abused and even struck her in his brutal rage. After this grand feat he set off into the wide world. His father meanwhile revels and laughs, devouring his income, which must still be large, at wellstored tables. This made her come to me, subduing her pride and her feelings, in order that I might relieve her from a debt, which would have brought her to shame and to a prison. These twenty years past she has been longing to die, but still lives, an object of horror to herself, and of pleasure to nobody.—Send her a thousand dollars every quarter : she has promised me that her abandoned husband shall know nothing of this assistance either now or hereafter.

Edward saw the old man's deep anguish, and was long silent : at last he began : But how could Eleazar be so cruel as not to tell you of those letters ?

I was in the wrong, replied the old man, to find fault with him for it yesterday. He acts in my name, and knows well that I am weak and soft-hearted : the particulars he was not aware of, and so only did his duty. Indeed I know not myself after all whether I have done rightly in following my torn and deeply agitated heart : for perhaps still she may have too little firmness to keep the wretch in ignorance of what has happened ; in spite of everything he is her husband, and of all her ties his are the closest. You no doubt, because you love me, but are of a tender disposition so that distress affects you, would have acted otherwise, and better ; and yet probably were I to put myself en-

tirely in your hands, you would spoil me and ruin me : for no quality a man can have is so dangerous as vanity, which draws food from everything.

What do you mean by vanity ? asked Edward.

All our feelings, answered the old man, the best and honestest, the gentlest and blissfullest, are rooted in this poisonous soil. But more of this another time. I only wanted to tell you briefly, how I acquired my fortune, how my character took that cast under which you have learnt to know me. After my parents' death I fulfilled my father's last wish by uniting myself to a girl who was also a distant relation of our family. She was poor, unprovided, unprotected, had grown up amid straits without any kind of education ; at the same time she was hideously ugly, and her temper was so morose and quarrelsome, that I never spent a pleasant hour with her, and had very few peaceful ones so long as she lived. My situation was horrible.

But how came you to marry her ? said Edward.

Because I had given my word to my father, continued Balthasar ; and because it is a principle of mine, that man must never gratify his passions, least of all that of love. My conviction is, that our life is a state of torment and woe ; and the more we try to escape from these feelings, the more awful vengeance do our terrors afterward take upon us. As to why this is so, who can fathom that question ?

This belief, answered Edward, is extremely strange, and at variance with all our wishes, nay with everyday experience.

O how scanty then must your experience have been hitherto ! replied the old man. Everything lives and moves, only to die and to rot : everything feels, only to feel pangs. Our inward agony spurs us on to what we call joy ; and all wherewith spring and hope and love and pleasure beguile mankind, is only the inverted sting of pain. Life is woe, hope sadness, thought and reflexion despair.

And supposing all to be so, said Edward somewhat timidly, do we not find comfort and help in religion ?

The old man lifted up his eyes and gazed fixedly in

his young companion's face: his dark look grew brighter, not however with pleasure or any soft emotion; but so strange a smile ran across his pale furrowed features, that it lookt very much like scorn; and Edward involuntarily thought of the miner's words.

Let us turn aside from this theme for to-day, said the old man with his usual gloomy air; we shall probably find time hereafter to speak of it. Thus I lived on in my state of damnation, and the thought of Elizabeth shone with a friendly but heart-piercing light into the hell around me. Still the frenzy of life had laid fast hold on me, and made me too take my place in the vast bedlam, and go through my part under the great taskmaster. People tell you that death cures all; others again look forward to being transported from one workhouse to another, where they shall keep on playing the fool through all eternity and evaporating in an endless succession of illusions. With a little money—it would be ridiculous were I to mention the sum; many take so much merely to fill their bellies—I engaged in a small line of business. It succeeded. I made a petty mercantile speculation. It turned out well. I entered into partnership with a man of considerable property. It seemed as if I had a talent of always guessing and foreboding where gain and profit were lying hid in distant countries, in uninviting, or hazardous undertakings; something like what is said of the divining rod, that it will hit upon metals and upon water. As many gardeners have a lucky hand, so in trade I prospered in every, even the most unpromising speculation. It was neither strength of understanding nor extent of knowledge, but mere luck. One becomes a man of understanding however, so soon as one has luck. My partner was astonisht; and, as he had a small estate here, we removed into this country, where till the time of his death we went on enlarging the number of our houses of business and manufactories. When he died, and I had settled my accounts with his heir, I might already have been accounted a rich man. But a feeling of awe came upon me along with this property as they call

it. For how great is the responsibility for managing it rightly? And why were so many honest men unfortunate, while with me everything throve so unaccountably? After a number of painful years my wife also died: without children, without friends, I was again alone. How singularly that blind being, that men call fortune, pampered me, you may see from the following story. I always felt an aversion to play at cards or any other game for money. For what does a gambler do, but declare that he will exalt the wretched stuff, to which even as money he attaches such an inordinate value, into an oracle and a promulgation of the divine will? And then he stakes his heart and soul on this delusion: the freaks of chance, things utterly without meaning, are to calculate and make out for him by certain fantastical combinations, what he is worth, how he is favoured: his dark passions start up when he supposes that this chance neglects him; he triumphs when he fancies it sides with him; his blood flows more rapidly, his head is in an uproar, his heart throbs tumultuously, and he is more wretched than the madman that is lying in chains, when every card, down to the very last, turns up against him. Look you, this is the king of the creation in his patcht beggar's garb, which he takes to be a royal robe.

The old man almost laught, and Edward replied: Such is the case with all life; it runs along on a narrow line between truth and fancy, between reality and delusion.

Be it so! cried Balthasar. But no more of this. I was only going to tell you how I let myself be persuaded by my partner in the last year of his life to put for once into the neighbouring lottery. I did so against my own feelings; because these institutions appear to me deserving of the severest punishment. By them the state sanctions highway-robbery and murder. Even without such things illfated man is immoderately inflamed by the lust of gain. I had already forgotten the paltry concern, when I heard I had gained the great prize: after receiving the payment it never let me rest. What the

vulgar fable of evil spirits, had come into my house along with these money-bags. This unblest sum supplied the funds for the hospital for sick old women in the valley a couple of leagues off, the building of which has been made such a merit of by senseless newspaper-scribes. What had I contributed toward it? Not even a stroke of the pen. Now you will understand how my perpetual gains, and the sums that flowed in to me from every venture, compelled me to plunge into fresh speculations, and how this has been going on year after year upon an ever-widening scale. And thus there is neither rest nor pause, until death will at length put the last full stop to the matter for this bout. Then some one else will of course begin to rave on just where I left off, and the same invisible power will perhaps meet his folly under the shape of misfortune.

Edward knew not what to say. You are not yet used, the old man continued, to my words and expressions, because we have never yet talked upon these matters; you do not yet know my way of thinking; and as these feelings, these views of life are still new to you, you are surprised. Believe me, my good fellow, the only thing that keeps one from going mad, is swimming silently along with the stream, letting five always pass for even, and fitting oneself to that which cannot be changed. At the same time there is also another remedy that may serve to keep one afloat. One may lay down certain fixt unshakable principles, a line of conduct from which one never swerves. Money, wealth, gain, the circulation and the flowing of property and of the precious metals toward every quarter, through every relation of life, and every region of the earth, are one of the very strangest devices the world ever hit upon. It is a creature of necessity like everything else; and as there is nothing on which passion has seized with such force, it has bred it up to be a monster more chimerical and wild than anything the fever of a heated fancy ever dreamt of. This monster is incessantly devouring and preying on all that comes within its reach; nothing satiates it; it gnaws and crunches the bones of the destitute, and laps

up their tears. That in London and Paris, before a palace, where a single banquet costs a thousand pieces of gold, a poor man should die of starvation, when the hundredth part of a piece of gold might save him,—that families should perish in frantic despair,—that there should be madness and suicide in the very room where a couple of paces off gamblers are rioting in gold,—all this seems so natural to us, such a matter of course, that we no longer feel any surprise at it; and everybody takes for granted with coldblooded apathy, that it all must be so, and cannot be otherwise. How every state pampers this money-monster!—indeed it cannot help doing so—and trains it up to be more ferocious! In many countries wealth can no longer increase except among the rich, whereby the poor will be still more impoverished, until at length Time will cast up the dismal sum, and then draw a bloody pen across the appalling amount. When I found myself thus rich, I held it to be my duty to keep this wealth in controul, so far as man can, and to tame the wild beast. Unquestionably the creation has been doomed to woe; else war, disease, famine, pain, and passion, would not run riot and lay waste so. Existence and torment are one and the same word: nevertheless every one who does not mean wantonly to play the fiend, is bound to alleviate misery wherever he can. There is no property in the sense which most people put on the word; there ought not to be any; and the attempt to keep hold of it is godless. Still worse is it to spread calamity by the influence of wealth. Thus then I administer mine, so as to help my neighbours, to find work for the poor, care and remedies for the sick; and by an ever-increasing activity I strive to bring things into such a state, that as many as possible shall eat their bread without tears and anguish, shall gather pleasure from their children and their occupations, and that, so far as my eye and arm can reach, the creation may not be the object of as many curses here, as in other villages and towns.

The blessings you diffuse, Edward threw in, must make you also happy.

Blessings! repeated the old man, and shook his head. It is all a mere drop in the ocean. How short is the time within which even the child that is now sucking at the breast must needs die! This time, these hundreds and thousands of years, how they mock at our frail edifices! how Oblivion triumphs in every part of the earth, with ruins crumbling beneath her feet! and Destruction, while with unfeeling malignity she tramples every form of life in the dust! I have just been comforting my good Elizabeth to-day. But can I really comfort her? She is for ever haunted by the thought of her destiny, of her life, of her lost youth, of her having flung herself away on a worthless being, of her having brought a tiger as her son into the world. In her dreams she is visited by the feeling, whether asleep or waking it pursues her, and thrills through every fibre, that she once loved me, perhaps loves me still; and so her heart has to bear my wretchedness along with her own. True she may now and then relish a morsel somewhat better; she may now and then forget herself, perhaps over some silly book, delighting in the good fortune of others, and feeling interest in afflictions which are merely faint shadows of her own; and this sentimental folly may help her over half a dozen minutes a little more at her ease. Verily it is a grand achievement that I have been able to do this for her. The consciousness however, that neither her husband nor her son, the offspring of her own blood and body, and surely of her soul too, is to know anything of my bounty, as it would be called, or else her sufferings will increase—do you not perceive how pitiful this, and the whole of life, is? But let us break off, and tell me instead what news you have heard.

Edward informed him that William had again gone off suddenly and without assigning any cause. I am glad of it, answered the old man; I always took him for our thief, and winkt hard in looking at him, that I might not ruin him utterly: this indulgence however must have come to an end. I was exceedingly fond of him, and for that very reason only hated him the more.

How do you mean? asked the young man.

Why, replied the other, foolishly enough I felt charmed by his countenance, by the soft sound of his voice, by his whole look and air: this perverse sympathy will keep following us everywhere. I took a liking to him: and catching my heart in this piece of folly, I punished myself by conceiving a downright aversion to the fellow, as we should and must do to everything we are greatly delighted with.

Edward wanted to ask further questions, but the striking of the clock called him to his business, and being dismissed by the old man he went away, with a multitude of thoughts concerning this singular conversation, to meditate further upon it at leisure.

Whenever Edward's thoughts now recurred, as they often did, to the nature of his situation, that and every thing connected with it, the appointment which had fixed him in this secluded spot, the business he was engaged in, as well as the persons with whom he had to hold intercourse, appeared to him in a light totally different from before. He was loth to acknowledge to himself how forcibly and singularly his imagination had been wrought upon by his late discourse with Rose. Hitherto he had only looked on her as a pleasing child; but now the lovely girl became an object to which expectations and silent hopes attached themselves: he watched her more attentively; he talked oftener to her and more at length; and the budding of her youthful soul, the frank artlessness of her thoughts, interested his heart more and more. And then, when he recollected the hideous, sallowfaced Eleazar, with his surly morose temper, and thought that this tender flower had already in secret devoted herself as a sacrifice to so odious a creature, his anger was moved by this absurd project, which at other times again he could not help smiling at. Eleazar had been absent for some days past. He had not taken much pains to conceal that he was going into the lonely, remote parts of the mountains in search of those marks

which he had read of in the masterminer's book. This absurdity sorted well with his strange dreamy character; for he was perpetually poring over books of magic and alchemical treatises, had a laboratory in his room, and would often boast in pretty intelligible hints that he had found the philosopher's stone. When Edward bethought himself of his singular conversation with his old master, and of the sentiments he had given vent to during that confidential hour, he no longer regarded it as improbable that Balthasar should have been led by his wild moody whims to design his blooming foster-daughter for the wife of the gloomy Eleazar. A shudder came over him to think with what dark and perplexed spirits he was so closely linkt; his head went round with the giddiness of all about him, and he seemed almost to lose his hold on himself. This made him still more regret the loss of young William: at the same time his annoyances were increast by the robberies of the warehouse, which instead of ceasing were carried on with more audacity than ever. He himself had entertained a slight suspicion of William, and was quite unable to make out how the crime was perpetrated.

In this mood it was with no very friendly welcome that he met Eleazar on his return from his wild-geese chase. Eleazar too grew highly indignant, when he heard that the robberies had been continued during his absence with the greatest impudence; and as he could not justly charge Edward with any negligence or supineness, this first conversation between them, little as they had ever been disposed to agree, took a tone of still more bitterness than usual. As soon as his hateful companion was gone, Edward determined to do what he now could not help regarding as his indispensable duty, by speaking more seriously than ever to Herr Balthasar, on this subject.

These depredations, which were prosecuted with so much security, excited the wonder of the whole neighbourhood; and at the public-house in the town there was often much talk about them. Old Conrad was sitting in the wooden arm-chair beside the stove, and

was just telling the fat thriving landlord the details of the last robbery, when a stranger came in, who immediately gave himself out to be a travelling miner. The stranger was much younger than Conrad, and therefore at first modestly said but little, and merely asked a few questions, insinuating however that there might probably be means of soon bringing the matter to light, if his advice were but to be followed. By these hints the curiosity of some peasants who happened to be present, having come with corn from the plain several miles off to this town high up among the mountains, was vehemently aroused. Conrad, who looked upon himself as the wisest person in the company, became grave and monosyllabic, waiting to hear what this new device or scheme for detecting the thief, would end in.

You must lay a charm, said the stranger, which the thief, when he has once set foot within it, will not be able to escape from; and so, as soon as the sun rises, you are sure to find him.

And what is such a charm to be made of? asked Andrew, who was the forwardest of the peasants.

Conrad laughed aloud and scornfully, while he said: Clownish dolts, don't thrust in your tongues, when people are debating about matters of art and science: stick to your straw and your chaff; they are things you are better skilled in handling. Proceed, knowing sir, he added, looking with suspicious graciousness toward the stranger; how do you mean that such a charm or spell is to be prepared, so as to be certain of its effect?

The stranger, whose pale face formed a singular contrast with the stout dusky-hued Conrad, the fat host, and the puffy cheeks of the peasant, said with a somewhat stifled voice: Yew-twigs cut and peeled beneath the new moon, and then boiled at the first quarter in a decoction of wolfs milk and hemlock, which itself must have been previously made on the selfsame night, are to be stuck in the earth, while some words that I know are repeated, at certain distances round the spot where the robbery is committed; and the thief, be he ever so daring, and ever so learned in laying spells and

breaking them, will be unable to step out of this circle, and will stand in fear and trembling, till the persons who set the magical trap pounce upon him in the morning. I have often seen this practist in Hungary and Transylvania, and it has always succeeded.

Conrad was about to answer, but the pert Andrew was beforehand with him and cried: My grandfather, the smith, had a spell with abracadabra, which was to be repeated backward and forward, along with certain verses of the Bible; and when he had said these words, every thief, whether he was in the wood, on the high-road, or in the field, was forced to halt on the sudden in the middle of his running,—or, if he was riding on horseback, it was just the same—and to wait in terror and affright, so that even children if they chose might seize hold of him.

Conrad gave the peasant a look of inexpressible contempt, and then turning with ambiguous courtesy to the strange miner, said: You are a man of experience and knowledge, as it seems; nevertheless your well-meant advice will hardly meet with acceptance here. For first the old man of the mountain will never have anything to do with sorcery and witchcraft, because he hates every kind of superstition, even that which is pious and unavoidable, much more than one of this sort, which he must needs hold to be utterly accurst. Besides, you don't even know in what way the thief goes to work, so as to take proper measures against him.

What do you mean? asked the stranger, somewhat abashed, but whose curiosity was stirred.

Have you never heard, continued Conrad, or read of those wonderful persons, or, as you have been such a great traveller, have you yourself never stumbled upon such, whose eyes can pierce through a board, through wainscot and wall, nay down into the depths of the earth and into the heart of a mountain?

In Spain, replied the stranger, there are said to be men, who without the help of a divining-rod can find out treasures and metals with their bodily eyes, even

though they should be lying ever so deep under rocks or forests.

Just so, proceeded Conrad; Zahori, or Zahuri, is the name borne, as I have heard tell, by the people who have carried their power and knowledge to this pitch. Only nobody knows whether one man can learn this of another, or whether it is a natural gift, or proceeds from a league with the evil one.

From the devil certainly! cried Andrew, interrupting him, having been gradually poking in his face nearer and nearer.

I am not talking to you, lowland lubber, said Conrad; you would do better to seat yourself behind the stove; that is your right place when people are canvassing grave questions of science.

Andrew muttered, and angrily drew back his chair a little; whereupon Conrad went on; Look you, man, this art in many countries is not the only one, nor even the highest, profitable as it may be for discovering veins of metal, or even gold and silver. Of much greater weight however and far more formidable are those who have a power in their eyes to do one an injury, and with a single glance can infect one with a disease, a fever, a jaundice, a fit of madness, or even look one dead. The better and godlier part of these persons hence always of their own accord wear a bandage before one of their eyes—for this power will often exist only on one side—so that they may walk about and deal with their neighbours, without harming them.

Of these I have never heard, replied the stranger.

That is a matter of surprise to me, continued the old miner, with the most perfect gravity: for since you come from Hungary, and probably were born there, where you have such a sight of vampires, or bloodsucking corpses, such swarms of goblins and manikins of the mountains, dwarfs and subterraneous creatures that will often come across you even by broad daylight, I fancied everything belonging to witchcraft must be in high vogue there and generally notorious.

No, answered the traveller, I never up to this present

instant heard anything of these prodigies, much as I have seen and myself experienced that by such as have not been so far from home may be deemed remarkable enough.

Now then, said Conrad taking up his word again, when the Zahori, as they call him, has once got so far that with his naked eye, instead of quietly seeing the treasures beneath his feet, he can give any one a fit of sickness or put him to death, he has only one step further to become perfect and a master in his art. Look you, my good stranger, when he has thus reacht the highest degree, he will set himself down before a dish of baked meat, while it is still standing in the oven covered up and shut down, and without anybody being able to observe him will with his mere eyes devour you a goose, or a hare, or whatever it may be, swallowing it up so clean and neat, that, if he chooses, not a bone will be left. Place some nuts before him or melons, he will eat up all the kernel or pulp out of them, without making even a single scratch on the shell or rind, but leaving them undamaged just as if everything was still within. He has had a good meal; nobody can prove, or even suspect what he has done; and others have nothing left them but a fruitless search.

The devil again! cried Andrew; that's the trick I should like, if I could learn the art.

An artist of this sort, continued the old miner, may however ascend a great deal higher; for such things after all would be merely a jest. If he has a spite against any one, he can pluck his heart out of his body with a look, just as easily as his money out of his pocket. The enemy he sets eye on will waste away and die miserably, or will sink into beggary, while he himself becomes as rich as ever he pleases.

It makes ones mouth water! cried Andrew unconsciously, so completely was he carried away by the visions presented to him.

Conrad turned his back upon him, drew his chair nearer to the miner, and then said: If we had not this rabble so close at our side, I could explain the matter to

you with greater tranquillity of mind. The truth is this. When the Zahuri has been promoted from being an apprentice or pounding-lad, to be a brother, and then a master or mine-surveyor, he will seat himself on his chair in his room, here overhead in this inn, or wherever it may be, will think of the warehouse of our old man of the mountain, or of the London docks, or of some place down in Spain where he knows that some banker, jeweller, or shipmaster has valuable goods in his hands, and so soon as ever he thinks of them with his eyes, he has them before him, and nobody knows of it or can hinder it. In like manner by merely willing it he can also send them forthwith from the place whence he takes them, to Russia, or Calcutta, or anywhere else, and bring back the money he asks for them. Now should there be a man of this class living here, in the neighbourhood, or even in America, and he took a fancy to rob the warehouse, you will easily understand, with your unassisted reason, that then your peeled and boiled twigs would be of just as much avail, as a basin of well-made water-gruel to cure an earthquake.

The stranger had wit enough to perceive that Conrad was making a fool of him; but the peasants, though there were some things that puzzled them, swallowed all these nonsensical stories. Conrad exulted in his superiority, and went on: Look you man, if there were no conjurers of this kind, how would all the contraband goods get in, which we find in every part of the world? and this is the reason why the preventive service can do so little, however strict and vigilant they may be. The learning the art indeed must probably cost some trouble; and this no doubt is why so very few seem to reach any mastery in it.

All that you have been telling me, answered the traveller, is mighty strange; and perhaps the neatest way of winding up our dialogue would be, if I were to affirm that I am one of the masters in this art. However you would immediately require some specimen of my skill; and at that indeed I might boggle a little. Nevertheless be it in earnest or in jest that you have

been talking all this while, there is most unquestionably, as no rational being will dispute, a number of incomprehensible and marvellous things in the world.

Conrad, who in the meantime had been regaling himself with some strong beer, and fancied he had gained a complete victory over his unknown antagonist, was irritated by this rejoinder, and the more so because the peasants, who had heard the conversation, were not capable of undertaking the part of arbitrators.

Heyday! he now exclaimed; you seem to me to be one of those people who have hardly a notion as to what is marvellous or what natural. Have you ever seen spirits with your own eyes, as I have? Have you ever held conversations with goblins, with the little creatures that go into and come out of the mountain-lord's great house there? Have you ever seen metals and precious stones a-growing? or gold and silver trees waving and tossing about, all alive and vegetating?

Do you believe then, asked the stranger, that stones grow and decay, that metals shoot up and propagate their species? Do you fancy that the beds under the earth sprout up just like a potato-field?

I know nothing about potatoes and all such vermin! cried Conrad in a passion,—it being something new to him to have an unknown, and, as it seemed, an insignificant person lord it over him: But that metals and rocks have life and motion in them everybody is aware, that they grow up and die away, and that, as there is sunshine and moonshine here above, rain and mist, frost and heat, so there are vapours and blasts there below, which burst in and rush out, and boil invisibly in the dark there, and mould themselves into shape. One of these blasts will curdle into a mist, and then it trickles down, and intermarries with the essences of the hills and of the regions under the earth; and according to the course and form the steam takes then, it begets metals or stones, it quickens into silver or gold, or runs along as iron and copper branching out or cleft asunder in veins that strike far and near.

What then, are you so far behind all the rest of the world here! asked the stranger with every mark of astonishment. O my good friend, with your leave, ever since the creation, or at all events ever since the deluge, the mountains, and stones, and rocks, and metals, and gems, have been lockt up in their houses and never gadded abroad. We dig and delve in here at top, and hardly get even at deepest below the upper skin of the warts, as the mountains are in comparison to the whole earth, much such a part as a nail-paring is of a man. Wherever we can set foot, we grub up these primeval stores, so far as we need them; and nothing ever shoots forth again, neither coal nor diamond, neither copper nor lead; and your notion of the matter is a mere superstition. In Africa, they tell us a story, people used from time to time to find little grains of gold in a sandpit, which they had to deliver up to the poor black king as his property. With the help of these he would then buy all sorts of things from foreigners. One day going a little deeper they fell in with two good-sized lumps of massy solid gold. The slaves in great delight carried the fruit of their labours to their black master, it being more than they had found for ten years past, and they thought how overjoyed the poor man would be at becoming rich thus all at once. But they were mistaken. The wise old king said: Look ye, my friends, these pieces are the father and mother of that little brood of gold-grains which we have constantly been finding for ages: carry them back immediately and set them in the very same place, that they may be able to go on producing fresh ones. Unless you do so, we should get a vast gain for the moment, but should lose a lasting source of profit for ever hereafter. The Moor was a goosecap, was he not?

Very far from it, cried Conrad, growing more and more enraged; he was quite right not to meddle with that which goes on in secret; although we, as miners, cannot see the matter exactly in the same light as he did. Solid masses have grown like the rest of us; and who can say whether they may not enliven and further the shooting

and coalescing of the metallic particles round about them?

I tell you, however, replied the stranger, that sprouting and growing, and spreading out into the regions of the air, or in the form of roots under-ground, are the properties of plants only. Stones rest in themselves; vegetables feed on light and warmth and moisture, and transform the particles of the earth they stand on into means of growth and enlargement. Then animals start off and break loose from the elements; but they move within them, and carry their roots about with them in their entrails.

No! no! screamed Conrad, still more violently: In this way the whole world, and above all my glorious mountains, with their glittering subterraneous chambers, will be hocus-pocust into mere storehouses, wretcheder ones than if they were made of wood, into miserable wareshops and stalls. What then would the dwarfish sprites, and the mighty mountain-spirit, and all the goblins and elvish imps, and the swarm of gnomes there below have to do? and yet they are always, some of them cleverly, some of them clumsily, putting their hands to the wheel. And the waters! and the vapours! O thou blind and deaf generation, that wilt not see and understand, what is yet much more easily comprehensible than your dead, lifeless world! If life and growth, and the workings by which life is propagated and multiplied, can never come to a standstill, then in your own realm too, in the places where you fancy you see life, it is a sheer illusion and cheat. The solid earth is alive, but in a different manner; and when it happens to draw in its breath, when the old giant yawns and stretches his tired limbs, and tries to arrange them more comfortably, you are all aghast, and set up a howl about earthquakes, while your walled hovels are running after you for variety's sake, and your towers are tumbling into your pockets and slippers.

You are a strange man, said the other, and much too hotheaded to listen to reason. Surely we ought to love truth above our puerile prejudices. We do not

make nature, but she is already such as she is, spread out before us, for us to watch her ways and learn from her teaching.

Nature! exclaimed the old miner; that is just another of their stupid words! My mountain has nothing to do with nature; it is my mountain. About that I know everything; of your nature I know nothing at all. Just as if a tailor, who had a coat to make, were to keep on prating about nothing but wool, and merino sheep! To such a pitch have people already brought matters, that they can't look at anything as what it is, but search out some great big generality to which they may tie it and slay it and embowel it. What say you to this? I once talked to a man out of Hungary, a fellow-countryman of yours, but he had his wits more about him; and he told me of a vine, I believe not far from Tokay, which must have stood upon a vein of gold, and in which a stream of gold brancht out and ran through all the wood. He shewed me a bit of this vine, and I could clearly see and distinguish the gleaming of the gold that had grown up with it. He gave me his word that in some of the biggest and juiciest grapes seeds had been found at times which were of pure gold.

Now only look! rejoined the stranger; Can one wish for more than this? Gold not only grows as a mineral, but even as a plant. However I know a still better story. Once upon a time, when the weather was very damp, a man dropt some ducats in the rocky ground at a short distance from Cremnitz. In spite of every search they were not to be found. They must have fallen down among the stones, and have been buried in the rubbish. What came of it? Some years after, when no human being, not even the owner himself, thought any more of the loss, a strange sort of shrub was seen, which not a soul in the country had ever met with. It flowered with wonderful beauty, and then formed a number of little pods. The pods soon after split like the fruit of the winter cherry; and, when people went to look at it closelier, every skin

contained a bright new Cremnitz ducat. Some fifty came to perfection; a good many, that had been nipt by the frost, were mere thin goldleaf. The oddest thing of all was that the ducats were always markt—for they took good care not to root up the beautiful weed—with the date of the year in which they ripened. Of late a wish has been entertained, if it were but possible, to graft a branch of a tree which peradventure might bear doubloons, on this lucrative bush, with a view of ennobling the fruit.

The very peasants laught at this; for they fancied they saw the jest: Conrad, however, though he perceived it, misunderstood it so far that he did not answer a single word, but drunk with beer and rage only lifted up his fist, and thrust it so violently into the story-teller's face, that he instantly tumbled from his stool to the ground, and a stream of blood gusht out from his mouth and nostrils. On getting up again the stranger, though evidently the weaker, wanted to take his revenge; but the peasants rusht in between, and brought about a peace at least for the moment. This was the easier, as some travelling musicians were just come with their instruments into the inn, where Conrad in his drunkenness immediately took them into his pay. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of the host and hostess, he made them first play some songs, then some dances, and gave no ear to those who admonisht and reminded him that the music might be heard up in the great house. Why should I trouble myself, he cried, about the old man of the mountain? He may for once let his evil conscience be sung to sleep a little. He now began dancing, first alone, then with the hostess; and as the noise soon got abroad, several men and girls walkt in, who were glad to take part in this unexpected public ball. When the younger peasants however also stood up, Conrad rusht suddenly upon them, shoved them violently back, and imperiously commanded the musicians to be silent.

When clodhoppers and such scums mingle with their betters, he bawled out, one of us must retire from the

foul contamination. But this I tell you, the first of you that budges, or even growls, I'll break every bone in his skin.

The peasants, whether alarmed by his drunken fury, or perhaps only unwilling to incense him still more, drew back to their table. Conrad seated himself, after all the victories he had achieved, majestically in his arm-chair again, and rolled his eyes round with a look of defiance. As nobody uttered a word, he said with a loud voice: Look ye, fellow-miners, I am one of the oldest men about the works here above; see here, comrades, and ye ragamuffins there, host and peasants I mean, these dollars my prince and lord has gained from our pit. He threw a handful of silver on the table. And old as I am, fellows, I was born and bred here in the mountains, and I never yet crawled down into the valleys and the plain. I can boast (and very few can say as much) I never yet saw any grain in the field, never yet saw corn growing or ripe atop of its pitiful straw. We work in gold and silver, are expert in mysteries and deep lore, hew blocks, amalgamate metals, fuse ores,—and the miserable louts there have to go about, as people have told me, carrying stinking manure into the fields and spread it out; and therefore I have a right to look upon their foul frocks as scandalous and vile; at all events, no miner should ever shake hands with 'em, or drink out of the same mug. I am determined too to die a man of honour, as I have grown old, without ever setting foot under their thatch roofs, or on their threshing-floors; I have preserved myself four and fifty years from this disgrace, and heaven will continue to guard me from it while I live.

Thus he went on prating, till at length he was so stupefied and exhausted that he fell asleep. The peasants, who now felt still sorelier affronted than before, had more than once cast significant looks on their cudgels. With these feelings they listened the more readily to the advice of the stranger, who had been washing himself in the meanwhile, to lift their insolent enemy, as he was fast asleep and seemed quite senseless,

upon the top of one of their waggons, and to lay him, when they got to the bottom, in a corn-field, that he might find himself there when he awoke from his fit. There was no difficulty in doing this, as the musicians had been paid and were gone, and the landlord was busied in the kitchen.

In the depths of the forest, where the iron-forges were at work, and where in the midst of dark rocks by the side of a waterfall the shouts and the hammering of the workmen resounded far and wide in rivalry with the roar of the torrent, Edward the next evening met the inspector of the mines, to talk over some business of importance with him, and to give him some instructions from Herr Balthasar. The fire in the vast furnace glared wildly through the dusk: the brighter glow of the half-molten iron, the myriads of dazzling sparks that spurted up from the anvil beneath the sledges of the sturdy smiths, the dark forms moving through the large boarded shed, into which the trunk of a tree in full leaf had forced its way, overshadowing the bellows in the corner with its branches,—this singular night-piece attracted all Edward's attention, when loud talking and laughter arose among the workmen. Some one had just been telling them how Conrad, when he was drunk, had been treated by the peasants the day before, and how to his extreme annoyance he had awaked that morning in the midst of a corn-field. The story seemed to interest everybody so much, that their work was suffered to stand still for a while.

It serves him right, cried one of the broadshouldered journeymen, the vapouring coxcomb! He is the most insufferable and rudest miner in the whole country for miles round; and fancies he knows everything better than his neighbours, and is the cleverest fellow in the world.

They say he is running about like a madman, and as if the fiend had got hold of him, continued the nar-

rator ; for now the very thing of which he has bragged from morning to night, is at an end : he has not only been forced to see corn growing in the field, he has lain in the midst of it.

Edward turned to the speaker and askt : Michael, are you quite well again already, that you come out thus into the open air ?

Yes, sir, answered the smith ; thanks to you and our old master. My eye is gone of course ; but how many of us have to work with but one ! The spark of iron that burnt it out might have been still bigger. It was great pain, to be sure : that could not be otherwise ; but with God's help I am become quite stout again after all. Herr Balthasar indeed has also done much toward helping me, and I owe a world of thanks to his care, his kindness, and his charity. And so we do all, everybody that belongs to him.

Another man with one eye chimed in with these praises, and added : It will fall out now and then that one or other of us gets maimed in this way ; for fire is not a thing to be jested with : but God has blest us in giving us our old master ; for even if a fellow were to become stark blind, he would never let him starve or want.

The workmen were gone back to the anvil, and Edward then first observed that Eleazar had come into the hut, and was talking to a stranger. This was the travelling miner, the planner of the disgrace inflicted upon old Conrad, which of all mortifications he could have endured was the bitterest. Eleazar was scolding vehemently, and said it was quite impious to drive an old man by such tricks into a passion, nay to the brink of despair ; for he had heard that Conrad was running frantically about the mountains, utterly deaf to all advice and consolation. The stranger excused and defended himself as well as he could ; and as the sledges had now begun hammering again, while the roar of the bellows mingled with that of the waters, the quarrel was lost sound of, and only grew somewhat more audible, when Conrad himself in a fury rusht howling with swollen face and red starting eyes up

to the disputants. My honour! he screamed, my honour as a noble miner! my glory and my pride! all are gone, irrevocably and for ever! And by a pack of base boors, by a puny, cream-faced, chicken-breasted, outlandish starveling, have I been robbed of it. Amid all the mountains round, and doubtless in many others likewise, there was not a miner nor a mine-surveyor who could boast that he had never in his life been down in the beggarly plain. I awoke in the straw, in the corn, such was the rascals' plot to ruin me. The ears were sticking in my nose and eyes when I came to myself, the sorry, brittle, bristly stuff, that I had never yet seen except in the pallet of my bed. Scandal and shame! Murder and housebreaking are not so detestable! and no law against it, no remedy, no mortal skill in the whole wide world.

The others had enough to do to tear the strong old man away from the weakly stranger, on whom he wanted to take personal vengeance.

As Conrad could not get satisfaction in this way, he sat down on the ground in a corner of the hut; and it being a holiday evening, the journeymen lay down round about him, some trying to comfort him, others jeering him. Be pacified, said the man with one eye, the whole affair is mere child's-play. Had the fire burnt out your eye, had you had to endure unspeakable torments in your brain, and to toss through sleepless feverish nights, then indeed you would have something to complain of. But as it is, the whole matter is a sheer trifle, and all fancy.

That is your notion! cried Conrad: there never was a fool that could not talk and chatter like one. Your having lost your eye in your vocation is an honour to you, and you may be proud of it, and glory in it. But their sticking me down in the middle of their muck-heaps, where I was forced to lie like a tumbledown sheaf, or a truss of hay,—it has knockt half a dozen nails into my coffin. Conrad! Conrad! ninnyhammer! sack of straw! so it seemed that everything was shouting in my ears. I have now seen the miserable, dirty ploughed

land, in which the scurvy clowns have to breed up their bread. It's so flat down there, you can see nothing, far as eye can reach ; and one hears no sledge-hammers, no rush of waters, not even a boy pounding. It looks just like the end of the world ; and I could never have fancied that the corn-country and the plains, where more than half the world have to live, were so utterly mean and despicable.

Thus they went on talking and squabbling, till some one for the sake of starting another subject began telling about the robberies, which their master, the old man of the mountain, was so incomprehensibly allowing to go on, doing next to nothing to find out the offender, although his losses, rich as he might be, must have amounted to very large sums. The stranger miner again spoke of his contrivances for making sure of catching the thief ; and Conrad, who recollected the former conversation, shook his fist at him in silence.

Eleazar seemed to enter into these strange schemes, and exulted with vulgar glee at the thought of thus at length getting hold of the rascal. As Edward eyed him in the dusky glare of the hut, and saw his face with its brown and yellow features unsteadily lit by the flickering flames, he thought that this disgusting and to him hateful monster had never looked so hideous before : a secret shudder crept over him when he thought of Rose, and that this was the confident and bosom friend of a man whom he could not but honour, although his weaknesses and caprices formed so strong a contrast with his virtues.

The smiths listened to the conversation with great earnestness : they believed the stranger ; yet every one of them brought forward some superstitious device of his own, in which the speaker himself always put still greater reliance. Edward, in spite of the disgust this gossiping excited in him, was almost unconsciously held fast within the circle. Ghost-stories were told ; the wild huntsman was talked of, and several said they had seen him ; others had met with mountain-sprites and goblins ; then they got to forebodings and omens ; and the conversation

kept on growing livelier, the story-tellers more eager, and the hearers more attentive.

Goblins, said Michael, there are assuredly: for I myself ten years ago was well acquainted with one; and he was a very passable fellow to have to do with. The urchin foretold too in those days that I should lose my right eye about this very time.

What sort of a chap was that? cried one of his comrades; and why have you never told us this story before?

When I had got through my apprenticeship, said Michael, at the mountain-town twenty miles from here, and was now come to work at old master Berenger's forge, I used to be plagued at first and quizzed by the other journeymen, as every youngster is when he is fresh. When I grew tired of laughing and grumbled, we came to blows; I gave and got my share, as in such cases always must happen. Among the rest there was a grizzly-bearded journeyman who worried and annoyed me most of all, a giant of a fellow, and all along with it so cunning, with such a sharp sting in his tongue, that one could not possibly help being vexed, however steadfastly one might have made up one's mind and determined with oneself at morning-prayers, not to allow the gall to mount into one's throat. In my distress I often cried with anger; for in the town I had fancied myself a clever fellow, and my unruly tongue had made many a one tremble. One night when I was thoroughly harassed and woebegone, I was lying over there on the jutting crag all alone in a little bit of a room—the only other person in the house was a woman as old as the mountains—on the sudden I heard something stirring and scraping near me. I opened the window-shutter at my head a little, and as the half moon peeped into the room, I saw a tiny creature brushing away at my shoes. Who are you? I asked the mite; for he looked much like a boy of eleven years old.—Hush! said the little thing, and brushed away busily. I am Silly, the good comrade.—Silly? asked I; he's one whom I know nothing of.—Dame knows him, Ursul knows him, said the little

one, and put my shoes on the floor.—Leave my things alone, cried I.—Make 'em clean, dust 'em, brush 'em neat, answered the creature, and set to work at my Sunday hat.—Is this farce never to end? I called out to him; brush your own nose.—He laught, and seemed to have no notion that I had any right to give orders in my own room. Art afraid, he then giggled out, of big Ulric? Need not be afraid. Ask him to morrow, when he sets at you again, where he got the brown firescar atop of his head over the right eyebrow; he'll soon be meek as a lamb. The creature was gone. I listened; there was nothing. I closed the window-shutter again and fell asleep. In the morning it seemed to me as if the whole had been merely a dream. My shoes however were clean, my hat brusht. At length I askt old Ursul about the unknown boy. She was very deaf; and it was long before I could make her understand what I meant. Ah! she at last cried, has the little boy been with thee? Well, well, good betide thee, my tall lad. The tiny thing harms nobody, and brings luck to everyone he takes notice of. I have known him now well-nigh these forty years. He goes round to the houses where he likes the folks, and helps them in their house-keeping, now in one thing, now in another. Cleaning everything is his darling employment. He can't bear dust; dirty sooty pots and other kitchenware are his aversion; and he will often scrub at 'em with all his might. Bright brass vessels, shining copper pans, are things he is quite bewicht with; pewter plates too he likes very well. Many a time has he brought me a gro-schen, bright and new, as if it had come from the mint.—But where does the imp live? I cried.—Where does the child live? she said: people choose to call it goblin, or manikin; he himself signs himself Silly; that is his christen-name. But he is a kind goodnatured sprite; and so thou must do nothing to hurt him, that he may not fall out with thee. I had heard of such fellows, but before this could never believe in them. In the smithy the baiting began as usual; old Ulric put me quite in a fury; for they had remarkt my soreness, and this made

them think it the better sport to badger me. I was just going to dash a red-hot iron at the grizzly-bearded lubber's snow-white head, when Silly came across my thoughts. And the brown fire-scar up there! I said; you know, Ulric! Thus I cried, without thinking there was anything in it, when on the sudden the old giant became so quiet, timid, and meek, that it made me stare my eyes out. From that moment forward the fierce fellow became my friend. Nay he was so humble in his behaviour to me, that I rose mightily in everybody's opinion, and thenceforth stood near the top of the board. When we grew better acquainted, he told me in confidence that in his youth he had once let himself be misled into engaging in an attempt to steal with the help of a servant maid. He had already crept into the room, supposing that everybody was asleep; but the smith being still awake had rusht against him with a firebrand snatcht up from the hearth; and thus his head and hair had been singed. He fancied that no mortal creature knew the story, of which he was heartily ashamed; and therefore he entreated me by all my hopes of heaven never to tell any one of it; indeed he was unable to make out how I could have learnt the affair. On this point however he was mistaken; for without his own confession I had never known a word of it. After this my life flowed along very peaceably, and the little creature came every now and then, and helpt me in what I had to do. Before long however we quarrelled. He often came upon me so suddenly, so unexpectedly, and many a time when nothing was further from my thoughts, that I was frightened to the very core. Whenever I said a word to him about this, he grew very pettish, and told me, I was an ungrateful fellow, not to acknowledge his manifold services. Now I had heard a little before from an English traveller, that the name of my goblin in his language meant *foolish*, and that in England such a creature was called Puck, or Robin Good-fellow; and when in the openness of my heart I told all this to my little guest, and at the same time, because he had just frightened me again, wanted to hang a bell

about his neck, that I might always hear him when he was coming, the urchin became angry and furious beyond all measure, prophesied that I should lose my eye about this time, and vanisht with a great rumbling. Nor have I ever seen the brat again since.

Thou prince of all babbling braggarts ! cried Conrad, when the story was ended : Can't you open your mouth, man, without lying ? and yet you are already come to years. Folks that hold traffic for any time with spirits, grow sharp-witted. The dealings of these creatures are with supernatural out-of-the-way-things ; and when they pay us a visit, the very terrour they arouse, till one grows used to them a bit, gives one something impressive and dignified.

More especially, cried Michael somewhat angered, when one has been sleeping a night in a potato-field.

That night, answered Conrad, and that abominable mischance, that foul scandalous deed of a vagabond, will be the death of me ; I know it as well as you. I shall not hold out much longer.

May be so, said the pale stranger ; yet you can't tell all this while whether I too may not be one of these goblins, who has been trying to cure you of your follies. To be good friends with you, my rough-spoken, overbearing sir, it was verily requisite that you should have treated me with a little more civility. Wisdom, experience, strength of mind, may often be learnt from those in whom one is the slowest to look for them. If however, my good companions, you would like to know which of you all will die first, I have a way of telling you that in a moment.

They all seated themselves in a circle on benches and stools. The stranger pulled a plated box out of his pocket, while he continued : When this little chip which I am going to light is burning, you must pass it quickly from hand to hand, and the person in whose hold it goes out will be the first of us to see the next world. All lookt at the stranger in anxious expectation. He thrust a little bit of wood down into the box, while he muttered some sounds, and then he drew it out again burning and

flickering. Eleazar, who sat next to him, received it, gave it to his neighbour, and thus the match went on spitting sparks from one hand to another. It had finished the round, and come back to Eleazar, who was very loth to take it, and was hastily passing it on, when on the sudden, it flared brightly and then went out between his fingers. Stupid stuff! he cried sulkily, as he threw the bit of wood on the ground and jumped up in a passion; nothing but empty superstition! And we are so good-natured as to let ourselves be made the tools of such nonsense.

He looked sharply at the stranger with his glaring eyes, then slapped him on the shoulder, and withdrew with him. Meanwhile the moon had arisen, and was pouring its bright light over the forests and rocks: the party went each his own way, and Edward too bent his steps homeward. As he was walking up the narrow footpath, he heard a warm discussion; it sounded like a quarrel; and when he drew nearer he fancied he distinguished Eleazar and the stranger. He struck off therefore into another path, partly for the sake of avoiding them and not being forced to return in their company, partly too that he might not have the air of wishing to overhear what they were disputing about; for Eleazar was of a very suspicious temper, and mistrusted everybody, though he took it extremely ill if any one did not place an unlimited confidence in him.

In the house everything was quiet: except that Rose was singing a simple air with a suppressed voice, scarce audibly in her remote chamber. Edward was moved by it, and so strongly, that he could not help being surprised at his extreme susceptibility. Before he fell asleep, his melancholy had so increased, that he could hardly refrain from shedding tears.

A few days after this Edward observed the stranger coming out of Herr Balthasar's apartment. He wondered what such a person could have had to do there; and, when he entered the old man's room, he found him

violently disturbed and enraged. Always the same wild irrational feelings, the same superstitious foolery, ruling over mankind! he cried, as Edward came in. That miserable fellow there whom you met flatters himself he shall gain a large sum of money from me, if he can detect our thief by means of some senseless artifice. He won't come back again, the blockhead! for I have at length given vent for once to my feelings. There is nothing in the world so insufferable to me, as when people try, by means of certain phrases fabricated at random, or of certain traditional ceremonies, most of them a misgrowth out of historical blunders, or out of ancient usages which formerly had a very different meaning, to put themselves in connexion with what they call the invisible world, nay fancy, though they deem it an object of terrour, that they can master it thereby. In fact, the greater part of mankind are crazed, without choosing to confess it: nay, the very wisdom of thousands is arrant madness.

It seemed as if the worthy old man himself felt ashamed of his passionate vehemence; for he immediately began talking on other subjects. He made Edward sit down by him, and had some breakfast brought, which was quite against his usual custom. Thus we shall be able, he then continued, to settle a number of matters this morning, which on other days we may perhaps hardly find leisure for.

The door was again lockt, and the servant was ordered not to interrupt their conversation on any account. I feel, Herr Balthasar then began, that I am growing old; I must take thought and provide for the future, as I know not whether I am doomed to die a slow lingering death, or a sudden unforeseen one. If I draw up no settlement of my property, if I die without a will, that spendthrift in my native town, who has made the beloved of my youth so unhappy, will be my next natural heir: and verily it appals me to think that my large fortune may hereafter be misused to maintain that despicable glutton in his rioting. All my poor people, all the hands now actively employed in this spot, would

again pine away and be condemned to beggary and sloth. It is a sacred duty to forestall this. What are your views, my young friend, for your future life ?

Edward was a good deal embarrass'd by this address. Some time back indeed he had formed certain plans, and had even meant to speak to the old man about them, in the hope of profiting by his experience : but since his lovely foster-daughter had appeared to him in so different a light, since he had felt so strongly attracted toward her, he was no longer equally forward and confident. He could not make up his mind whether to declare or conceal his affection ; for notwithstanding the familiarity with which Balthasar treated him, by many of the old man's feelings and views he found himself estranged and perplexed.

You are hesitating, said the old man after a while ; you have not enough reliance in me, because you do not know me. I look upon it as one of my duties to provide as a father for you : you are honest, sensible, diligent, and kindhearted ; you are perfectly vers'd in the various branches of my business ; and I feel a confidence in you such as I have seldom been able to put in anybody. Your exertions for me and my establishments, your prudence and integrity, everything obliges me, even though I entertained no affection for you, to leave you well and very richly provided, since I have so much to thank you for. But I should be glad to know, and I beg you to be perfectly candid to me, whether you could be prevailed upon by the possession of a large fortune to fix your abode in this country, in this house, or perhaps would prefer settling after my death as a rich man in the neighbouring town, engaging in some other occupation, and marrying, or, it may be, travelling about in search of the home which you may like the best. Tell me your thoughts on this subject now with entire sincerity : since you have a claim, which I will take care shall be a valid one, to a third of my property, I cannot well make my final arrangements till I have learnt your intentions : for my establishments here and up the mountains, my manufactories, machines,

mines, and various institutions, I also look upon as my children, and they must not be left orphans at my death.

Edward sank still deeper in thought. Never could he have expected this generosity and fatherly love from the old man; never had it occurred to him that this friend might one day make him rich and independent. This speech had changed the footing on which he stood with Herr Balthasar; he thought he should now be better able to confess boldly what for some days had been busying and disquieting his mind. He led the way by an assurance of his gratitude, saying that what the old man meant to do for him was far too much, that his relations after all had still a title to his affection, and that a great deal less would make him happy and as rich as he could desire.

I am aware of all that you can urge to me on this score, said the old man interrupting him: these relations of mine, even the scapegrace son and the good-for-nothing father, will be taken care of, so that they shall not have any reasonable ground of complaint. But I know that you have sacrificed the best years of your youth and strength to me. To a gay spirit like yours, to a person of your lively friendly temper, your long residence amid these joyless mountains must have been anything but pleasant. You many years since bade adieu to every sort of merriment and amusement: everything that charms youth—music, dancing, even society, plays, travelling, the literature of the day—you have given up for my sake; because you resolved, as I well markt, and that too very early, to suit yourself entirely to my inclinations. Scarce one man in a thousand could have done this; and you were this one: you have done it too without losing anything of your good-nature and kindly obliging disposition. If therefore you would like to settle elsewhere hereafter and in a totally different line of life, I cannot have the slightest objection to it, nor will it occasion the least curtailment of your fortune. But you must tell me your determination frankly, if you have already made up your mind, or can make it up on

the instant: for in case you choose to remain here and carry on my business, I must secure you the means of exerting yourself usefully, by a number of arrangements and explicit incontrovertible injunctions in my will; therefore speak.

Edward replied with emotion: Heaven grant you may long remain as a father amongst us! whether however I am to look on this country as my home or no, depends solely upon you: a word from you, and I can immediately resolve to spend the whole of my life here, even if you should be spared to us many years longer. But if you cannot or will not speak that word, I must sooner or later seek out another home; and I fear that in that case even your noble bequest will fail to procure me that happiness, which I must needs value higher than riches.

I don't understand you, my young friend, answered Balthasar; your words are a riddle to me.

Your generosity, continued Edward, and your affectionate benevolence have brought up a poor orphan girl; you have behaved like a father to her; and her fate must therefore be decided by you, and none else. Give me that dear maiden, give me Rose for my wife, and I will live and die on this mountain, without a wish beyond it.

The old man's face suddenly darkened, and put on an expression which might be called terrific. He started up hastily, walkt several times up and down the room, then sat down again sighing, and began in a bitter tone: So! this is it! You are in love! Is it not so? I am doomed again to hear this ill-omened, this calamitous word! I am doomed to witness this frenzy, this dark, heart-rending, heart-sickening absurdity, even in you, in a man of your sense! And all, all that one might otherwise esteem, and look upon as reasonable, is swallowed up in this whirlpool, in which horror, madness, wild passions, carnal lust, and capricious folly, are frothing and boiling all at once. This marriage however, Edward, can never, never be.

I have said too much, answered Edward calmly, to be satisfied with a bare refusal. Tell me what are your

plans for the dear girl, and I shall learn to bear them with resignation.

And she, the little fool! interposed the old man hastily, has she too tumbled in love with you? Has the luckless word already past to and fro betwixt you?

No, replied Edward; her pure youth is still hovering in that happy state of simplicity, which only desires that to-morrow may be just like to-day and yesterday. She has no wishes but the simple ones of a child.

So much the better, said Balthasar; she will be ready to act rationally then, and will not throw any hinderance in the way of my plan. Surely you, who are tolerably well acquainted with me, ought to have perceived long ago that I had designed the child for Eleazar. I mean her to marry, to live in sober wedlock, not to dream away and dote in what you call love.

And will she, askt Edward, be happy with him for her husband?

Happy! cried the old man, bursting into a kind of loud laugh; happy! What is a man to think of when he hears that word? There is no happiness; there is no unhappiness; only pain, which we are to welcome to our arms, only self-contempt, beneath which we must bow our necks, only hopelessness, which we must make the partner of our table and of our bed. Everything else is a lie and a trick. Life is a spectre, before which, whenever I pause to look upon it, I stand shuddering: and nothing but toil and activity, and straining all my faculties, can enable me to endure and to despise it. I could envy the loom and the spinning-jenny, if such a feeling, such a wish had any sense in it: for what is our consciousness but a consciousness of misery? what is our existence but an unveiling of the madness, the frenzy of all life? to which we either abandon ourselves in chill patience, or weep and struggle against it convulsively, or play through a caricature of happiness and joy, while in our dreary heart we are fully aware that it is all a wanton lie.

Neither then must I ask you, continued Edward quietly and sorrowfully, whether you love Eleazar as a

friend, whether he is truly worthy of friendship and esteem; for all freedom of will, every movement of feeling, is crushed by these dark thoughts.

As if I had not felt, said Balthasar, and wept and laughed, like other men. The difference is only, that I soon stripped truth naked, and that I acknowledged and felt my own baseness, and that of all mankind, of the world, and everything in it. Eleazar! he and you! If we are to make use of such words, my friend, I love you; all the fibres of my heart twine fast around you; awake and in my dreams you stand before me: your being miserable might reduce me to despair. And this rawboned, loathsome Eleazar! If I am to give a name to this folly of my nature, I hate him; he is quite nauseous to me, whenever he stands before my eye or before my imagination: the bile which has tainted his eyes and face, his squinting glances, the twitches of his nose when he is speaking, while his long teeth stare out as if he were grinning, his shrugging up his shoulders at every word, whereby his odious snuff-coloured coat is every moment dragged upward and lays bare the skinny bones of his wrists, all this, his way of drawing in his breath, his hissing voice, is so revolting to my bodily senses, and always excites my wrath so strongly, so painfully, that no other created being ever gave me the same torment; and for this very reason, because there is so much I have to make amends to him for, because heaven and nature have so utterly neglected him, must he become my chief heir, my son. Besides, he has long known of it, and is pleased with the prospect of this union.

I only half understand you, answered Edward: you are fighting against your own feelings, you are wilfully putting yourself on the rack. I am not arguing now against your promise, since you have already given it to that man: but why do you cling to this image of life, that harasses and tortures you? Why not open your mind to those joyous feelings, to those sunny thoughts, which lie just as near, nay, nearer?

As you please, said the old man,—for you, but not for me. Day after day has taught me that very few men really live. Most of them are in a state of ceaseless dissipation; nay, what they call thought and reflexion is itself the very same thing, a mere attempt to raise a mist around the nature and inborn feelings of their hearts, and to keep themselves from discerning them. And arrogance starts up, the consciousness of their dignity and strength goads and spurs them on, till they rave with ungovernable pride. This too I have known in my youth, and outlived it. Then I loved, as I deemed. How clear and rosy-hued, how bright and smiling the world lay before me! My heart too was as it were bathed in pure ether, blue, boundless, with sweet hope, like morning clouds, floating and scattering freshness through it. And the primary stock of this love, what is it? Silliness, animal passion, which intertwines itself with our seemingly tender feelings, which tricks itself out with blossoms, and then eats canker-like into them, to make them too shed their leaves, to trample that, which is called heavenly, in the mire, and—far worse than the comparatively innocent beasts of the field, that are driven by a blind instinct without anything of volition—to deface and spoil everything which but now it worshipt as holy. From this conflagration then shoot forth ever and anon those disastrous sparks, which again grow into children, and again awaken to the consciousness of woe, if not of sin. And so the wheel goes evermore round and round, through a measureless, viewless eternity. And the charm, the beauty of the world! the fresh bloom of its appearances! Is not everything here again grounded upon that which nature teaches me to loathe and abhor? It is perhaps by this feeling alone, as an invisible inward prompter, that I understand what people mean by beauty. This, wheresoever it is found, in flower or tree, in human being, animal, or plant, takes its rise always out of filth and abominations. The lily and the rose falls to pieces in your hand; your touch withers it, and it leaves only rottenness behind: the

youth's, the virgin's beauty and loveliness—look at it without any self-imposed illusion, without the brutish sting of the senses—is horror and putridity and everything we revolt from! a few hours of death, a corpse dug out of its tomb, make this woe manifest to all.—And I myself! what is there within me but death? a ghost and a skeleton! the stench of my own corpse haunts me; and in all my feelings there is madness, in all my thoughts despair.

Cannot religion then, replied Edward, cannot philosophy, cannot the sight of the happiness you spread around you, lighten this gloomy mood, this melancholy, which is wasting your life away?

Alas, my dear good friend, continued the old man, I assure you that all I have read of those christian anchorites and self-tormentors, who out of overheated zeal transformed their life into a never-ending martyrdom, for the sake of stifling every impulse and thought save the highest of all, is less, far less, than what I have practised on myself since I became conscious of the cheerlessness of my existence. I too had once found a home for my whole soul in those regions in which the faithful feel the presence and the love of the deity, full of confidence and a blessed serenity. My spirit was transfigured; all my feelings were purified; my whole nature seemed as it were unfolding itself in a single blossom; all within me was bliss and calm; and in this heavenly tranquillity there was a sweet impulse to new contemplations, a ravishing excitement to plunge yet deeper into the flood of joy. And what was the end of it?

Pray go on, said Edward.

I discovered,—thus the old man after a pause resumed his speech—that here too sensuality, delusion, and folly, had again made me their captive. Those voluptuous tears which I often shed in my seemingly fervent devotion, which I took for the purest gush from my heart, even they sprang only out of sensuality and a state of bodily intoxication. My animal impulses had put on the mask of spirit; and the deliciousness of those tears soon seduced me into endeavouring to stir up

such emotions artificially, into abusing this mysterious close relation to infinite love as a stimulus of the most refined sensual excitement, which I then extinguish in a rapture of tears. I was appalled by this lie in my soul, when I detected and could no more deny it; and the fearfulest desolation of despair, the dimmest solitude of death closed round me again, when the deception had been broken, and the vision would no more descend among the childish toys of my imagination. When after this I wish to pursue my inquiries beneath the light of truth, horror itself met me in the very spot where but now, like a scene-painting, my rapture had been standing. I no longer felt doubt, for even in this there is still joy; I had no certainty, for even in the most terrible there is life; but the dead blank of the uttermost indifference, a barren enmity to everything holy, a scorn of all emotion, as being sheer foppishness and silliness, lay like a large field of snow in the wildernesses of my soul.—Soul! spirit!—thus I often cried to myself laughing, and even now I cannot refrain from laughter,—can there be anything else? And if this be so, in what does spirit differ from matter? where is the party-wall between life and death? In the spectral phantom of life, in the sphinx-born riddle of being, in that terrific fiat out of which the worlds sprang forth, to roll convulsively onward and evermore onward, till they can drop back into rest and nothingness—in this all contradictions and contrarities are mixt up and confounded, to petrify into an indissoluble curse.

Edward was silent at first for a while: then not without emotion he spake the following words: I cannot understand what you say except in part; for the bent of your thoughts and feelings I am an utter stranger to. Whatever sorrows I have undergone, whatever unprofitable or cheerless meditations I have indulged in, still I have never strayed into these deserts, which lie, it would seem, at the horizon of all such as abandon themselves with too passionate intensity to captious inquiries. I have heard and read of strong minds, who in the recklessness of passion, or in the extravagances of love,

strove to burst the bolts of nature and of life, in order to become one with the universe and to possess it. Despair, self-loathing, hatred of God, have often been the doom and the unhappy lot of men thus under the mastery of their impulses. We feel, no doubt, that reason is not absolutely sufficient to reveal all that we wish to understand, to reconcile all that we wish to see in harmony with the workings of the deity. But it may be dangerous to seek for help in the regions of our feelings and imagination, to give ear to our visionary forebodings. They try to set up their own supremacy, and may easily fall out with reason, though at the outset they seem to uphold her. If they gain their aim, and this noble mediatorial power, which seated in the centre of all our spiritual powers, irradiating and swaying them, first converts them into true powers, is overthrown and cast into chains by them, then each of our higher impulses begets a giant as its son, that will war against God. For doubt, wit, unbelief, and scoffing, are not the only faculties that fight against God: our imagination, our feelings, our enthusiasm do the same, though at first they seem to supply faith with so safe and mysterious an asylum. Consequently, my dear, my honoured friend, since our life is surrounded on all sides by these dizzying precipices, and every path, whatever course it takes, leads to them, what remains for us to do, except to trust with a certain kind of light-heartedness, which perhaps is also one among the noblest powers of our nature, with cheerfulness, gaiety, and humility, in the existence and the love of that infinite inexhaustible love, of that supreme wisdom, which puts on every shape, and can weave into its woof even what to us seems worthless and incongruous? so as to bear our life safely and easily, to take pleasure in our task-work, and to be happy, which we cannot else be, in the midst of affluence itself, making others happy as far as we are able. Is not this too piety and religion? I for my part have never met with them under any other form.

All this might be so, answered the old man, breaking off the discussion, if the root of life sprang out of love.

Does not every flower tell us so? cried Edward, every smile of a child, the meek thankful eye of the sufferer whom we relieve, the glance of the bride—

He stopt short suddenly; for Rose's bright childly glance beamed at these words with all its might through his soul. When he lookt up again, he was greatly surprised to see his old friend's eyes wet with tears. Edward, said he, greatly moved, you shall know all. Rose is no adopted child; she is my own daughter, my own blood. Alas! this again is another deplorable story of human weakness and vanity. While I was living here alone, a young beautiful girl came as a maidservant into my house. Her parents were exceedingly poor, but she had been well and religiously brought up. She was honest and virtuous. She was so fond of solitude, that, when she had done her work, she used to withdraw from all society, especially from that of the young. In a very singular manner she attacht herself to me; her devotion or love had almost a superstitious character. She revered me, wretch as I am, like a supernatural being. Never yet had my passions been moved by any girl, and least of all were they so by her, beautiful as she was: I was an old man, and fancied I loved her like a father, and thought of looking out a husband for her. But I neglected to do so, and at length the worst of consequences followed. I soon felt dismay at my own weakness and meanness. Shame, despair, dread of the world, waged war within my soul, and made me their recreant slave. I sent her away in my distress, for she was about to become a mother, and provided for her, richly, prodigally; but my heart was turned to stone. Grief, sadness, doubts, bitter mortification that she had forfeited my love, or was unworthy of it, while she burst into fearful accusations against herself, as the most innocent are the readiest to do, snapt the thread of her life. Did I not really love her? A miserable seducer I was not; but I had not the courage to acknowledge my sin, and to reward the love of her innocent heart. And thus I was a base wretch. She died, and I regarded myself with still more hopeless scorn. The poor creature's parents, whom

I placed in comfortable circumstances, blest me, old villain as I was, for not punishing their daughter's shame, and for bringing up her child in my house. This child, this fair girl, whom I love, beyond perhaps what is allowable—for her happiness is my thought day and night—will now perchance also be sacrificed to woe; for a destiny stronger than I constrains me to give her to Eleazar as his wife. Go now to him; he is to be my son-in-law; tell him the wedding will take place in a week; and if you cannot stay with me afterward, my dearest Edward, whom I also love as my own son, the fortune I designed for you shall be paid to you . . . and we too shall never meet again. Go now.

He sobbed so violently that he could not say more; and Edward went away in a most strange state of feeling, to look for Eleazar, who lived in a house by himself lower down in a narrow valley, carrying on his favorite pursuits there.

Eleazar was sitting in a loose flame-coloured bedgown before a small furnace with a still. The room was but dimly lighted; the curtains had been let half-way down, and the lower panes were blockt up with large books. Everything was in the utmost disorder, so that Edward could scarcely find a place to sit down in. Vials and retorts, crucibles, pans, hooks, cylinders, and all sorts of chemical instruments, were standing and lying about. A strange vapour from the fire filled the room. With a surly air Eleazar put down the bellows, and came out of his corner. He only half heard what Edward had to tell him, and said at length with his croaking voice: In a week? so soon? I shall never have finisht my great work by that time. Could not the old fellow wait patiently for another month or two? Why the silly child has not even a notion yet what marriage means.

Edward was utterly disgusted with these peevish words, and with the heartless ingratitude displayed in them. He called to mind how much Balthasar had been

saying to him about madness as the real groundwork and substance of life; and it seemed to him as if this were actually the foundation on which both father and son-in-law were about to erect their melancholy dwelling. The fate of the innocent girl cut him to the heart. Only lay your request before our master, he said indignantly, and no doubt he will allow you to enjoy your freedom some time longer. If you were to be very pressing, perchance he might even give up the plan of the marriage altogether; for it seems to me you have no very mighty anxiety about Rose's hand.

Softly! said Eleazar, throwing off his bedgown and putting on his coat very much at his ease; softly! He seated himself again before the furnace, and tasted the liquor while he clarified it. Be it so; for then his fortune will all keep together, and thus I shall be able at length to carry on my operations on a grand scale. But the old man will never listen to what anybody says; what he has once determined and pronounced must be fulfilled, though reason itself were to go to the bottom. Still this should not annoy me a jot, unless that outlandish raggamuffin had put me out of all patience, and made my choler boil over. One ought to have the right of knocking such mischievous scoundrels on the head.

What is the matter with you? askt Edward, somewhat surprised.

Have you already forgotten that miserable vagabond, continued Eleazar with a ferocious look, who played off his stupid trick upon us the other day at the forge? I am to die soon. This was the only thing wanting to set all our affairs in the most dismal confusion. But here, here at this furnace, I have it already preparing, the only sure safeguard against all such idle fears; and as I have succeeded with the help of wisdom in turning unsightly things into gold, so I shall not fail in producing that elixir for which so many mighty minds have heretofore sought and laboured, and often in vain.

Edward went nearer to him. In truth, he exclaimed, you amaze me. You talk about these mysterious mat-

ters with such a careless security, as I have never yet met with ; and it perplexes me the more since my reason tells me that your pursuit is a mere chimera, and the discovery of such an art a fable.

Reason ! cried the little man, drawing up his withered face into numberless wrinkles. This reason methinks is the true chimera, and never spawned anything but fables. Take these gold-bars, which I cast in this form yesterday, after extracting the metal last week from some lead : there lies a touchstone ; scratch it ; and then tell me whether it is not true genuine gold.

Edward took up the bars, put them to the test, and found them genuine. You must either fancy, continued the alchemist, that I begin by getting a heap of ducats, and then melt them down like a fool, or else you cannot have another word to say. Will you keep these two bars as a remembrance ? I make you a present of them.

Edward lookt at the stunted figure with astonishment, then laid down the bars on the table again, and said : No, I won't rob you ; the present would be much too valuable. But you should not let these vast treasures lie about here at random thus mixt up with all the rest of your things : it is holding out a lure to thieves and robbers.

Nobody will look for gold in my house, answered the other, busying himself again at his furnace : nobody will recognize gold under this ungainly form. Besides there are means after all for keeping off thieves and housebreakers, which none of you have ever yet dreamt of. If however you still doubt me, bring me a dollar next time, make a secret mark on it, and I will give it you back turned into gold. But the matter must not go further. And then you will no longer question my chance of discovering the elixir of life. Only I should like to punish that beggarly vagrant, that rascally herb-culler, and pitiful conjuror, as he deserves. Let him only come for once into my quarters ! With all his contemptible jugglery, I would astound him ! I am so enraged with the fellow, the blood runs into my head at the very thought of him.

How, interposed Edward, came that paltry jest to make so deep an impression upon you?

Jest! screamed Eleazar; Heavens! is it a jest that I have ever since been a prey all over to these hellish tortures, this ghastly fear of death? My own skeleton, my own rotting carcase is standing perpetually before my eyes. Old Conrad too over yonder has fallen sick, and is bewailing the loss of his reputation. Such a knave as this stranger is just as bad as a murderer: nay worse: for he pours the poison down ones throat in the midst of a large party without himself risking life or limb. He jumped up.—Hark you! he cried and threw his arms round Edward: Yes! the old man is right; the wedding must be very soon, as soon as possible, to-morrow, after-to-morrow, to make all safe. I can go on discovering my life-preserving elixir after the marriage: can't I? One shall not die all at once in a moment, friend Ned; flesh and bone still keep pretty tightly together.

He laughed so loud that he shook with it, and the writhings of his face squeezed the tears out of his goggle eyes. Edward, who had never yet seen the sullen creature laugh, shuddered at the sight. When the old man grew calmer, he told him that he could not possibly now communicate this wish of his to Herr Balthasar; and that the affair would probably proceed in the way already settled. He felt glad, when he had left the room and house behind him, and could again breathe in the open air. His determination to quit the place was stronger than ever; he even resolved, if it would hasten his journey, to forego the great reward which Herr Balthasar intended for him.

After a restless and almost sleepless night, Edward next morning found the lovely charming girl on the grass-plot before the house. She was very talkative, but he was in no mood to carry on a conversation. O dear mister Edward, said Rose at length; you don't seem to like me a morsel any more, you are making such sour faces at me.

I shall soon be forced to leave you and this country, answered the young man; and that makes me so sorrowful.

You be forced! you leave us! exclaimed Rose in dismay: Can there be anything that should force you? Good heavens! it never yet struck me that such a thing could be possible. I always thought you belonged to us, just like the great house in which we live, or the steep green hill facing us.

I have now heard from your father also, what I could not have believed, that you are to marry Herr Eleazar, and that very soon.

Did not I tell you so? answered Rose: Ay, ay, that is to be my fate, and I only wish I could make the crabbed man a little merrier. Time will pass away terribly slowly with him. But perhaps I shall then be able to go to the town some time or other, see a bit of the world, hear some music and have a dance; for I think at all events an old husband must do something now and then to please his young wife. And for all these matters I had counted very much upon you.

No, my child, said Edward gravely and gloomily; I am the very last person you must count upon; for to say the truth, this marriage of yours is the chief reason that forces me to quit the neighbourhood. It would break my heart to stay here.

Edward repented of having been hurried so far by his passion, as thoughtlessly to allow these words to escape his lips; the more so, when he saw the lovely girl go away from him, starting back as if in affright, and then relieve her opprest heart by a flood of tears. He tried to take hold of her hand and comfort her; but she pusht his angrily back, and then said after a while, when she had got the better of her violent sobbing and was able to speak again: No, leave me alone, for we are now separated from each other for ever. I could never have thought that you would have behaved to me so ill; for you had always been so kind to me. Oh God! how forlorn I am now! Yes, I meant to love my husband Eleazar with all my heart, and to do everything

to please him ; for heaven must grant him thus much, since he is hated and shunned by all mankind just like a leper or an evil spirit. I too can't bear him, if I were merely to follow my own feelings ; for he is a thoroughly utterly odious creature. But for his sake, and out of love to my father, and for your sake too, Edward, I had made up my mind so peaceably to all this ; and therefore I thought that you too would perhaps be very willing to stay here now, or might even do so a little for my sake, in case everything was not just as you wisht it.

How so, Rose ? is it partly for my sake that you have come to this determination ? askt Edward in amazement.

O yes ! answered the child, and her eyes had recovered their kind look ; but now I clearly see that I had reckoned without my host. You don't deserve it, indeed you don't like that I should be so fond of you. And now if you are really going away, it will then be indeed a shocking thing that I am to marry Eleazar : for in this lonely place, without you to help me and stand by me, he would seem just like a ghost.

But how is it possible ?—said Edward interrupting her—

Let me finish my speech ! exclaimed Rose hastily ; and then I will go away and cry again ; for that will very often be the case now. I thought thus : if Eleazar is so cross, Edward is so goodnatured ; and now I shall never be a day without seeing him, and he will talk to me, and perhaps give me books ; for my father, people tell me, won't have so much authority over me when once I am married. In this way I might be better able to forget my woeful husband, and might always think of you when you were away, and be glad and happy as soon as you came back to me. For thus do people live, and the parsons all order us to do so, with our hearts half in heaven, and the other half on this bad earth. Thus I should have kept my strength and spirits, so as even to make my unhappy Eleazar more cheerful at times ; but if you go away...then...oh where shall I find

any comfort! Then I shall soon die...or only wish that my father...or my plague of a husband would make haste and die. Alas! now that you don't love me any more, I am very very unhappy.

She began crying anew, and still more violently than before. Edward eyed her for a long time with a searching glance, and lost himself in a maze of thought. Whenever men, thus he mused to himself, give themselves up to dark phantoms, and make caprices and extravagances the main stock of, their life, mishap and horror will spring up of their own accord under their feet. Life is so tender and mysterious, so pliant and volatile, and so easily takes every shape, that there is no seed it will not readily receive. Evil sprouts up and runs wild in it; and brings up the intoxicating grape from the nether world, and the wine of horror. Here in this childish innocence and simplicity are already slumbering the germs of the most fearful events and feelings, if time and opportunity should but forward and ripen them; and close at my side stands the fiend tempting me to become the gardener in this beauteous garden of the deadliest fruits.

He awoke from his study and said mournfully: Dear child, thou dost not yet understand thyself, thy destiny, or the world. I am not frivolous enough to enter into thy plans, or to encourage thee in them in the innocency of thy youth. What thou wishest cannot, must not be; and in another year, or less perhaps, thou wilt see thyself how impossible it is. We should both become wretched, and to deepen our misery should despise each other. May heaven guide thy steps: but I love and prize thee so much, that I cannot ruin thee. Pray to God: he will support thee.

He talks for all the world just like my father! cried Rose, and walkt away, half in sorrow, half in anger; while Edward went musing to his room. Is Balthasar right then after all? he said to himself; is human nature so utterly depraved? or is it not rather the business of energy, resolution, and reason, to transform those very qualities in us as in all other things into virtues and

excellences, which else if they are neglected would become malignant and base?

He then wrote a long letter to Herr Balthasar, and once more told him positively that he must quit his house and the country, if the marriage of Eleazar and Rose was irrevocably fixt; and that he would readily forego his promised fortune, if Balthasar would only afford him some degree of support in his plans for his future life. He again however called upon him as a father to consider the unsuitable, nay, the shocking nature of the projected match. He conjured him to look at the happiness of his child with a steadier, more impartial eye. At the same time he begged for another, a last interview, and said he had a request which the old man must needs grant him, if he would have him leave the mountains with honour, with peace of mind, and without repenting of the years he had passed there.

It was with a very heavy heart that Edward went to his old master. The whole destiny of mankind lay darkly and with a crushing weight upon his breast. Anguishing was the conviction he felt, that in the very sweetest and purest innocence all the roots of evil and sin were already lurking, and that there needed only chance and caprice to foster their growth, for them to put forth their calamitous fruits. His situation was so completely changed, his chief wish was that the house which had so long been his home, the country he was become so fond of, were but far behind him, that gradually and with a steady hand he might erase all the recollections of the time he had spent there. He was resolved that at all events he would not be a witness of the disasters to which, he was persuaded, the dark spirits brooding there must infallibly give birth; that he would not stay to behold them; for he did not feel sure of being so firm, that his own passion and frailty might not lend a hand in bringing down the impending ruin. Heartily as at this moment he abhorred such a thought, he yet knew full well, from observation and experience, that no man is

always the same, and that even the best are not braced with the same strength at all hours: he knew how the sophistry of our passions will come athwart all our good feelings and resolves, and that the more secure they feel, the more easily it trips them up and overthrows them.

He found the old man in a serious mood, but without the agitation he had feared. Come and shake hands with me, cried Balthasar as he entered, although you choose to leave me. How I shall support your absence I cannot yet conceive, any more than I should know how I could live without light and warmth: but nevertheless I shall be forced to learn this lesson, if nothing can alter or upset your determination.

My fatherly friend, Edward began, can you then persist in your determination, which to me is so utterly incomprehensible? Is it quite impossible for you to consent to what alone will make me happy, and assuredly will make your daughter so too?

I had hoped, my dear friend, answered the old man very mildly, you would not have toucht on this string again, which thrills far too painfully through my whole frame. Pray convince yourself that this long-formed resolution, which you, if you please, may term a whim, I cannot possibly revoke; it is much too firmly intertwined with my whole being. What we do from conviction as we call it, from pondering about a matter and balancing it first in one scale and then in the other, over and over again, is seldom worth much. Whatever is permanent, characteristic, genuine in our nature, is instinct, prejudice, call it superstition;—a conclusion without question or inquiry, an act because one cannot help it. Such is this of mine! You may look upon it as a vow, a solemn oath which I have sworn to myself, and which I cannot violate without the most atrocious perjury against my own heart. I owe my poor good Eleazar much amends for having let my soul entertain and cherish disgust, bitterness, and aversion toward him for so many years.—And as to the happiness of the pair!—on this point my opinion is just the reverse of yours. He is wise, sensible, virtuous; he is happy

already, and will keep so, whether he marry or not. It is an act of condescension in a person of his grave character to take up with my daughter. A man who has got the philosopher's stone can never be harmed by any of earth's paltry troubles. And my Rose! O my dear friend, the truly dreadful thing would be, if I were to give her to you to wife: this being, this child, that I cannot help loving so dearly, that I fold up with remorse and sorrow in my heart, would go to wreck like others amid the pleasures of the world, in self-will and frivolity, in dissipation and recklessness. You would indulge her out of love in all sorts of follies, and so make her and yourself miserable. No, it cannot be on any terms; and you yourself will thank me hereafter for my reasonable refusal. And now not a word more, dearest Edward, on this subject: let us come to your other request, which I can safely promise to grant you.

Edward began, with a cheerless spirit, to reckon up the damage his master had sustained from the robberies that were carried on in such an inexplicable manner, and urged the absolute necessity that, before he left the country, effective measures should at length be taken to get some trace of the thief. The old man wanted to break off the discussion; but Edward reminded him of his promise. Above all was Balthasar averse to a proposal made by his young friend, to set a spring-gun secretly in the warehouse, whereby the audacious robber might at length be caught and punished. The old man regarded such a measure as impious, unlawful, and nearly akin to wilful murder. Edward tried to refute these notions, and at last said: You owe it to yourself and to me to adopt this plan, which I too am far from approving unconditionally, but which in the present instance is the only remedy. I need not again state the amount of the sums which have been stolen from you time after time during the last three years and more; they would make a large fortune, so large a one that many a wealthy man would have been ruined by such losses. It is your unaccountable indifference that has thus emboldened the

thief, who, it is clear, must be accurately acquainted with all our goings on. Whenever a watch has been set, nothing has happened. But as soon as we were off our guard again, no bolts, no bars however strong, no precautions however well-judged, availed us. William, and many other persons equally innocent, we have eyed with misdoubt. You cannot deny it; your suspicion must needs have lighted on everybody about you in turn. How can a heart so noble as yours hold fellowship with such a hateful feeling as to imagine now and then, for moments, that those on whom you bestow your friendship and esteem, may be capable of the most scandalous baseness? You are guilty of the most glaring injustice to hundreds of honest and honorable men, for the sake of screening a single villain with an indulgence which I cannot but call weakness, and a weakness under these circumstances quite unpardonable. In a few days I shall leave you. It is possible that the thief may not find any favorable opportunities hereafter, that another overseer may be more successful, that he may induce you to take stronger measures, and so to intimidate the offender: the robberies may cease: may not malicious persons, may not the offender himself perhaps, to secure himself against all chance of detection, and to frustrate every inquiry, spread a rumour that I am the heinous thief? Nay, might not such a report carry with it a very great show of probability, since assuredly no one could have got at your goods with so little risk as I? What will it profit me when far away, though you endeavour to vindicate me and to silence such a calumny? Will not your unwonted lenity, your present preposterous supineness, make the detestable rumour wear a look of the utmost speciousness, nay, of irrefragable truth? How, by what means, shall I then be able to clear myself? And, my loved, my honoured friend, who do nothing but good to mankind, and think nothing but evil of them, may not the same suspicion start up even in you, and strike deep root in the dark places of your soul, and by little and little grow into a conviction that I am the person?

Balthasar gazed at him, and walkt several times silently up and down the room. He was evidently struggling with himself, and seemed totally lost in thought. You are not mistaken, he said after a long pause; or rather you are perfectly right. You know my notions about wealth and property. I look on them with terrour. It seemed to me to be quite right, and to be a kind of slight amends to destiny for my incomprehensible luck, that what was flowing in so abundantly upon me from every side should at least have one outlet by which a part of it might run off. At times I have fancied that such a person or such another was thus making his fortune, who wanted it, and in a manner deserved it by his cleverness and sagacity in getting it. I took up a superstitious resolution to remain purposely in the dark, that I might not dissipate this strange dream and be deprived of this vague feeling. It gave me pain that I had to misdoubt so many of my people, nay, all of them; but at the same time it was a pleasure that I could not feel certain about any. Yes, my friend, you too, you too have I wronged. You now know me pretty well, and I entreat your forgiveness. I have oftentimes thought in secret, without however feeling the least anger against you: Well, he is taking beforehand what he has richly earned, by labour, by sleepless nights, by diligence of every kind...he cannot know for certain whether death may not snatch me away suddenly...peradventure he has some poor relations...he may wish to marry and set up with a handsome establishment...he may perhaps have the same notions about property as I myself. This has been the main ground of my lenity and weakness, as you call it; more especially, when after the removal of William and several other doubtful characters, all still went on just as before. Even your great anxiety, Edward, your indignation, even this turned my surmises against you. I have said to myself: Why does he talk so much about it, and make such a piece of work? I have given him the fullest powers in the matter: did he really take it so much to heart, he would have got hold of some clew long ago in one way or other by

craft or by force. I could not possibly do otherwise than approve of whatever steps he took for my good.

An overpowering pain seized on Edward during this speech; he felt on the point of fainting. With a look of utter despondency he threw himself into a chair, hid his face with his hands, and bent it down upon the table, till at length a flood of tears that streamed from his burning eyes, and a loud fit of convulsive sobbing a little relieved his heart, which seemed about to break. The old man was astonished to see so great and unlookt for an effect produced by a speech which he had uttered with perfect calmness, and even with kindness. He endeavoured to comfort and pacify his young friend, lifted up his head, and wiped the tears from his face, which still stared at him with an expression of the deepest grief and despair. He embraced him, he sought after words to heal the wound he had inflicted, to lull the storm he had called up. O my heavens! he at length cried, when he saw that all his efforts were in vain, what shall I do? Edward! I did not really mean any ill. I only think of others what I believe of myself. I love thee in truth, young man, above anybody I have ever known; thou art to me as a son: hence my perverse supineness under my unjust suspicions: thou must forgive me all, all, dearest Edward. I will do everything, everything you ask of me.

When Edward at length was somewhat recovered, he said with a broken voice, which was often checked by violent sobs: No, no, noblest, most upright of mankind, never, never could you have sunk down into a miserable thief! No want, not even hunger and nakedness, no opportunity however tempting, could have degraded your lofty mind so low. You only say it to quiet me. O heavens! this man, who treated me with the warmest affection and with unbounded confidence, who placed large sums in my hands, without ever inquiring about them, that I might become the dispenser of his bounty in feeding the hungry and taking care of the sick, this same friend could at the very same time deem me capable of such infamous wickedness. Observe now,

observe what a dangerous thing it is to admit such dark spirits and phantoms into ones soul, from which in time they utterly drive out all truth and love, and strength and faith. O thou bright pure form of Truth! O thou spotless beauty of Virtue! How changed does this man seem to me since that calamitous word, how changed am I myself! how fearfully, how dismally has the relation between us changed! It seems to me as though the very belief in the possibility of anything like what this man has believed possible of me, had cast a shade of vice and depravity over my whole life: for this noble being has hitherto been the mirror of my own worth, by looking at which I became conscious of my own well-meaning and integrity. Can everything, everything in our heart be thus transformed in a single moment? Yes, my dear, my fatherly friend, I shall evermore honour and love you; I admire you while I mourn over you; but even without any further cause this conversation would have parted us; this alone, without regard to my happiness or unhappiness, must drive me from you into the wide world.

So then we are now finally severed, said the old man very sorrowfully, by destiny, not by my fault. One may master everything, except ones own innermost self. Suspicion in me is not that bad thing into which your overstrained sense of honour, such as I never saw in any man before, converts it by the meaning you assign to it. But, my dearest friend, without whom my life will long be a mere blank, you will stay at least a few days, until you can take away the papers that will secure your fortune to you. For this compensation you must accept from me as from a father, unless you would quite overwhelm me with shame.

They embraced, and the old man gave Edward an unlimited permission to take whatever steps he thought proper for the sake of detecting and punishing the thief. Edward had regained his selfpossession, and the old man was all kindness and gentleness. They talkt about other affairs; and Edward took some account-books under his arm to look over and correct. Embrace me

once more with all your heart, said the old man, and forgive me too with all your heart.

Edward turned back, and after embracing him said: My dearest friend, what have I to forgive you for, thinking as you do? It is not the right word. What I have just endured I can never forget; and this shock will thrill through me to the latest day of my life. The human heart and soul, man and God, seem to have become totally different in my eyes since that terrific flash of lightning. Thinking as you do too, you cannot be angry with me, if I now say half in jest, that had you not allowed me to take my measures, I might have fancied after I was gone that you had been thus ingeniously and cunningly robbing yourself, who knows with what subtle views, perchance for the very sake of throwing suspicion on some one or other.

You are not altogether in the wrong, said Balthasar. Edward was again standing at the door. Wait another moment, young man! cried his master. Edward once more turned back. But when he drew nearer to the old man, he was astonished to find how totally his countenance and the expression of his eyes were changed. A quick fiery glance was sparkling restlessly upon him. You are fully convinced, I well know, the old man began, of the truths of the Christian religion; you read your Bible diligently and devoutly. You also believe in the historical parts of it, and regard the whole as an actual revelation: the rational, and allegorical, and learned philological interpretations, do not satisfy your mind. Is it not so? you are a true Christian with all your heart and soul.

Certainly, answered Edward.

The story, continued the old man, how the Saviour was tempted in the wilderness by the Evil One, is not in your opinion a parable, or an allegory, or mythical legend, without any substance? but you believe that this event actually befell Jesus Christ, the Son of God, along with the various circumstances and questions and answers recorded?

What are you aiming at? asked Edward hesitatingly

after a pause. Yes, I believe this story like a sincere and orthodox Christian.

Well! the old man went on, while his pale closed lips wrinkled into a strange smile: I have a double aim, though I should hardly need to say more, if you had ever thought deeply about this incident. In the first place, if our Saviour himself had to bear such things, if it was possible for him to be suspected though but by the Evil One, surely you might forgive me with all your heart, if with half or a quarter of mine I have now and then half misdoubted you. Meseems, this mysterious, marvellous story, with its fathomless, untold meanings does not downrightly condemn my views of human nature. They are not mere spectres that have taken possession of my soul, unless indeed they belong to one and the same family with spirits. In the second place, do your eyes see much meaning in this wondrous story, if the success of the temptation was totally and absolutely impossible?—Now then what say you? appalling are the feelings that seize on one of us, and you too cannot escape them, when all this is brought home to the heart and mind.—There is still a third remark that I would close with:—what would have become of the world and of mankind, of heaven and earth, if the tempter had won the day? if love had faltered and been beguiled?—O young man, the doors are not closed in every place where we see them put to. You fancy you have made out everything, when you have hardly counted up to five.—I too believed, I too inquired, was absorbed in love and devotion, beheld love in my own soul and in the souls of my brethren, and this is the very delusion the breaking up of which snap my heart and life asunder, never, never to revive and reunite. Cast away your pride in your feelings, think not to soar on the wings of your imagination; but crawl along the ground like worms, and eat dust; for that is what befits you.

The old man squeezed Edward's hand, and then with a bitter smile, and a sudden laugh that scared him, tore himself away. For a while Edward continued fixt in a

stupour, and when at length he lifted up his eyes, Balthasar was again immerst in deep thought, and standing at his writing-table with the gloomy suffering look which he usually wore. Edward felt as if he was leaving a dying man when he went away, and shut the heavy oaken doors slowly and carefully after him.

Edward had taken his measures with no less secrecy than judgment. None of the servants, foremen, or even of the overseers, knew that he was doing anything out in the warehouse. Every interruption had been guarded against. He was quite alone, nor did anybody even know of his having left the house, when he made his arrangements; and it was dark before he came back. He could not tell whether a fresh robbery might not be committed on that very night, or not till a future one. All the watchmen had been removed from the warehouse in such a manner as not to excite suspicion.

And now amid the solitude of the night he sat down to the account-books, for the sake of bringing all his thoughts to bear on a single point, and thereby recovering from the agitation he had lately undergone. It was of importance to have these matters perfectly arranged before he went away. At length he succeeded in banishing what had happened from his thoughts for the time; and he became so much engaged in his employment, he forgot that these very hours might be unravelling that unpleasant affair, which had given them so much annoyance for years.

When he had finisht and was turning over the leaves of an old book that he had taken up along with the rest, some written papers fell out of it: they were in Balthasar's hand, and had evidently been written many years. He read the following fragments.

Yes in truth weeping is a wonder, and, as they say, a gift sent from heaven. A bliss spreads through our soul, as soon as our flowing tears come, like the waters of a river, sweeping away black sorrow, and disquietude,

and trembling doubts. Ye are all given back to me, ye spirits that once were mine, and that a cruel destiny afterward severed from me.

For the sake of this, people will woo tears, and try to lure them with coaxing when they will not come. Our day's work is over, and now, as the rich man and the glutton will wind up his multifarious meal with sweetmeats, so after our toil, after closing our accounts, we court devotional thoughts and pathological emotions, we meditate on the dead, in order to entice this life's-wine of tears into our voluptuous eyes and our luxurious brain. Now a sentimental melancholy inhales every ordinary object around us; and amid the meek abasht feelings of a pining anguish and remorse, suddenly starts up nauseous arrogance, vaunting the grandeur of a spoilt capricious heart. O what poor wretches our fellow-creatures now seem to us in their common-placeness, who yet all, as the patient children and drudges of mother-earth, are better than we.

But laughter! This earthquake which invisible powers heave up out of the knotty entanglement of our dark enigmatical being! which in boisterous senseless noises announces that within, in the unseen world, the soul neither recks of nor knows truth or falsehood, and has just been murdering the innocent herald who was bringing these phantasms before it! These rude unmeaning sounds which will for a long time distort even the best face, the most mechanically regular mask!

How men long after this loathsome convulsion! While tears lie and cheat by aping heavenly feelings, laughter is awkwardly trying to let the craziness of evil demons skulk behind it, hides itself from vulgarity for the sake of being seen, feigns terroure when our unsubdued struggling feelings are detected, and saunters about in the midst of whatever is disgusting and impure, perpetually clapperclawing with some outcast among the rabble or other: one moment our intelligent, and higher faculties, as they call them, get the upper-hand; the next they are beaten down and trod upon by something base and profligate: and thus veering to and fro, now

toying, now scolding, laughter clatters down the steps of idiocy, which crumble with the decay of our bodily strength . . . and man grins, and is happy.

Blessed time, when there was a real existence, a life in life ! when the vast whole of eternity, being sufficient to itself, had not splintered itself out into time ! when the spirit did not need a succession, measured out by the atoms of time and space, to become conscious of its power and of its being ! What a portentous event was it, when eternity and life parted fellowship !—when the band by which spirits were bound in one, burst, and that strange creature, Death, rusht in through the chasm to domineer over all. Now that which is firm, stedfast, enduring, has concentrated itself in the depths of its own being, and has put on the unvarying aspect of solid meditation. Stones, rocks, metals, bid defiance to decay with their cold looks, and would make believe that they know not of change. Drops of water dancing like tiny elves along them, the sightless legions of the air, wherever they spread, are eating into the limbs of the rigid haughty giant ; the dwarf, man, digs into his bones, and, if his strength were equal to his fury, would reduce him to fleeting sand. May it not peradventure be the same with the eternal stars ? A little acid, and the monster sneezes sillily, and roars, and yawns, and for the moment remembers its spiritual nature.

And thou with thy butterfly wings in thy light summer-garment, thou that hoverest aloft, and flittest over the mountains, and sweepest along the earth ! from the airy changeling of the caterpillar, up or down to the lion and to man, ye all of you, fostering a brief momentary spark in you, like the glance from the flint and steel . . . gone is the red bubbling up of the spark . . . and again a mere slough is lying before us, after its short dream of life and love, dust upon dust, rottenness upon decay . . . the great-grandfather beside his mouldering great-grandchild . . . and neither knows the other, neither has ever heard of the other.

The plants around you prick up their ears at you in a thousand forms; the flowers smile roguishly and sadly, in the midst of the masquerade; and dream mingles with dream, when the lover plucks the rose, and blushing himself holds out the blushing blossom to his blushing maiden.

The beating of the pulse is not only a sign of life, it is life itself. No feeling, no thought, no sight or hearing, no taste or sensation flows along with a rushing stream, but all comes skipping, wave upon wave, drop upon drop, and this is its being. One thought is cast out by another; our feelings are only felt as they shift between life and death: the kiss only thrills on our lips when a chill void has already spread over them; our delight in a picture, in music, merely gushes through us; one moment it entrances us, the next it has vanished. Thus the sea breathes in its ebb and flow, time in its days and nights, its winters and summers. If I do not forget myself this moment, I cannot recollect myself the next.—And death...

Is this revulsion of the pulse, this alteration of strain, this change of tune, a prelude, a transition to a new piece of music? Every living creature exists to be devoured by another; man alone has apparently eluded these barrack-regulations, this military duty, and fattens himself up for the earth, that shattered chaos of stones and mould.

In love, in misfortune, in joy, in despondency, in labour and rest, death has always been my uppermost, I might rather say, my only thought. Suicide in me would have been of all human actions the most natural. I have never felt that any indescribable fear, any overpowering shudder draws us back, and flings the knife from our hands. If poor naked Joy, that is so meanly clad, she is ashamed to walk about the earth, were once to enter our doors, then the stab of the bright dagger would only be the last glittering pinnacle of our joyous transport. For after that brief pulsation is over, how bald is the

earth, how black is life! It is because I know not whither I am going, or whether I am going, or whether there be a whither, that the act is so alluring. Only men will not confess this, but give the name of cowardice and of courage to what is neither the one nor the other. In dissipation, in thoughtlessness, in indifference, the poor wretches lose both life and death.

A strange dream, that is to say, a dream, has visited me. The commonest thing is quite as strange as the uncommonest, only habit blunts our sense.

I was dead. I knew it distinctly; and yet I lived on in my consciousness. All my forlorn doubts, my stiffneckedness that would not bow to the yoke, my hard heart that closed itself so early against love, had shut me out, so my conscience told me, from the place to which the good hope to go. The state in which I found myself, and numberless others along with me, was one the common ordinariness, the dull triviality of which was quite appalling. I was utterly unable to recollect my friends and those whom I had loved, however intensely I strained my memory and put it to the rack. A longing, like that of one pining with thirst after a stream of fresh clear water, tormented me, to call up the forms and the ideas of those beloved beings in my imagination; I felt a yearning after them like a heavy weight that was crushing me in the hidden places of my heart. Just as little could I bring back those actions which during my life I might have called good. Every thing in this region of my thoughts was like a bare parcht waste. But everything evil rolled in whirling circles wearily and dizzily before my inward eye. My vices and errors, all the faults and misdeeds of my life, every wretched moment of my temporal existence gathered round me, as it were, with the cries and croaking of fierce hungry birds of prey. O these sins how hugely and gigantically they swelled out! How horrible it was to see their consequences unfolding themselves far, far away in the realms of the future! how they took root

and grew up riotously in after-generations! nothing but looks of anguish, of reproach, of pain, of bitter despair, was turned upon me from thence. In like manner I easily called to mind all the persons who had ever been objects of my hatred or dislike; every tedious hour, the recollection of which tortured me afresh; all the folly and absurdity that I had ever uttered myself, or heard from others.

In the numerous vast halls, countless swarms of men were sitting, standing, or walking about, all in the same state of deplorable woe. And no variety, no division of time, no hour, no sun or night disturbed or changed this melancholy monotonousness. One solitary amusement was there. Now and then some one reminded us of our former faith, how during our lives we had feared and worshipt a God. Then a loud burst of laughter, as at a most portentous absurdity, pealed through the hall. Afterward they all grew grave, and I strove with all my faculties to call back the reverence, the sanctity of my human feelings, but in vain.

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Edward had not observed that the morning was already dawning, so completely had he been wrapt up in these singular papers. Without doubt too he would have gone on reading much longer, unless he had now been interrupted by loud cries and a violent knocking at his door. He went to see what it was, and Conrad rusht into the room, heated, panting, and with a ferocious look.

Now we have him! cried the miner furiously: did not I say long ago that this vagabond is wickedness itself? Only let him instantly be bound, master overseer, hand and foot in the heaviest chains you can get, and then have the dog flogged till he is cut to pieces, that his life and his infernal soul may crawl out of him by inches.

What is the matter with you? askt Edward. I am afraid you must be in a fever, and are stark raving.

Hurrah! screamed Conrad; now my cruel illness will soon be gone, now that the miscreant has been caught at his wicked tricks. He will never carry me down again now into their rubbishy straw.

Whom are you talking of? Edward again began: surely not of the Hungarian miner?

The very person, answered Conrad: the monster has been stealing, and is in league with a whole gang of thieves. Hark you, to cut the matter short, I could not sleep last night, and so roamed about the woods, in part to get myself some herbs to cure my ailing. It was just beginning to dawn, when I heard something like wheels down below, along the lonely lane in the thick of the wood, and at the same time there was a moaning and groaning; for at night one hears and makes out every thing much plainlier. Off I ran. Two fellows were drawing a cart in great tribulation and fear, and the pale rascal was walking alongside, and driving them on. Scoundrels! I shouted in their faces; and the word was hardly out of my throat, when the two thieves had already scampered off; but the pale skinny mountebank I held fast; the cart with the stolen goods is standing in the wood. They will soon bring it after me however; for I met a couple of workmen whom I sent for it; and the Hungarian waivode I have dragged hither with my own hand.

Meanwhile the whole house was in an uproar. The stranger was sitting handcufft at the door; and miners, spinners, and weavers came crowding; others flockt from the mills; and all were shouting, all were staring with wonder at each other; everybody wanted to tell his story, and nobody seemed to know what it was that had happened; so that Edward and Conrad began with much perplexity and annoyance to question one after another, until the miner cried out with his thundering voice: Hold your jaws all of you. Not a soul shall speak another word, except he whom your young master shall ask.

One-eyed Michael was standing near them, and, as Edward turned to him, he said: It may have been about three in the morning when I set off from the forge to deliver a message betimes at the smelting house up in the mountains. I was walking along the path through the wood, thinking no harm, save that when I got pretty

near to the warehouse all the nightly robberies came across me which have been going on this many a long day there. I'd give the world to catch the rogue, I said to myself, when all at once a gun went off. A gun! what ho! that put me to my wits. There are never any sportsmen hereabout, I said, and began marching and bustling on with a little more haste and speed. In a few moments I hear cries and yells and shouts, and a pothering and squabbling. All this methinks can never be right. I get to the top, and now I see the whole business. The warehouse is open, several barrows and men are before it, they are piling up the goods: a short figure that I could not make out in the dark, panting and whining, screaming and grumbling, is shuffling and tumbling about. I make up to the fellows with the stolen goods. Then some of them seized me fast and prest down my eyes. The noise lessens, I can't cry out, nor would it do me much good. When they let me loose again, there was nothing to be seen. Even the limper, in spite of all my search, had got off, and was not to be found. When I came nearer the houses I awoke everybody with my shouts, telling them to go and watch the warehouse, and scour after the rogues.

And I, cried Conrad, have lugged the commander-in-chief of the cutpurses by the throat, that sapient soothsayer that was playing off his pranks with his match the other day at your forge.

Then they all set off again telling their stories, shouting and screaming, just as noisily as before. Edward however gave orders what all were to do; the stranger was to be watcht, the stolen goods to be taken into the house, and everybody was to be quiet, not to disturb their old master's rest, should he be still asleep. He himself hastened with a few others to the warehouse, to arrange matters there, and, if possible, to find out more about the thieves.

Edward found marks of blood in the warehouse and on the ground without, and he and his companions fol-

lowed them. Anon they lost sight of them, then discovered them again in a thicket on one side, and a little after in one of the bypaths. Edward walkt on with anxious feelings; a boding prest upon his heart; he was unwilling to confess his misgivings even to himself. Ere long however they turned to certainty; for the traces led to the house of Eleazar, which lay on a green slope. When they got up to it they found all the neighbours already in motion; people were coming from the town; the priest of the parish was just passing through the door. Within everything was in confusion, and a physician and surgeon were busy upstairs.

Edward left his companions without, and with a beating heart opened the chamber-door. Eleazar was lying pale and with ghastly features in his bed. His wound had just been examined, and a bandage placed on it. Everybody in the room, the physician, surgeon, priest, and servants, lookt frightened and distrest; for there was something in this accident so mysterious and terrible that no one could help being struck with awe by it.

The surgeon, whom Edward took aside, shook his head, and assured him that all assistance was in vain; the patient would hardly live through the day. Eleazar now raised himself out of his stupour, lookt round, and perceived Edward. Aha! he cried with a strained and faint voice, You too are already there! Well! You have at last got the better of me. This is what you have been driving at this long time. I am now lying here, and all is over, all is found out; there are no more questions and answers, no more to-days and to-morrows. How it will fare with you remains to be seen hereafter. Not well most undoubtedly. So don't triumph in your imaginary virtue.

He beckoned and made the priest bring him a paper that was lying in the window. Give this to the old man of the mountain, he then went on; he will see from it how I loved him; for it is my will.

The priest now said a few words, begging to be left alone with the sick man. Edward was glad to

leave the room and refresh himself in the open air. Here Conrad again ran up to him out of breath, and cried...Confusion worse confounded! Only think what he has been doing, our virtuous Eleazar! his last loaf has already been baked for him. Look you, this fellow, this lord and master of the country, this son-in-law of the old man of the mountain, is a scurvy thief...Now I will forgive that whitefaced Hungarian wretch for serving me as he did the other day; for what is all the reputation in the earth, all the honour in the world come to?

The whole neighbourhood, town and country, was in consternation at this event. The most incredible thing in the world had taken place, a crime that could neither be denied nor concealed, committed by a man whom all had been forced to regard with respect, whom all had looked upon as their future master and protector; and they could not recover from their astonishment, or fall back into their ordinary occupations; for their minds in this turmoil had for a while lost every standard by which a man measures himself.

The old man amid the general tumult had already learnt the whole story, in spite of the pains Edward had taken to prevent it. He had locked himself up in his room and let nobody in.

Edward now interrogated the stranger. This man had for a long time had dealings with Eleazar; he lived in a town a good many miles off, and had often sent agents up the mountains and helped in selling the stolen goods. A tradesman in another small town was also a party in the affair. The Hungarian had quarrelled with Eleazar, and had come up into these parts with a view of going to old Balthasar, sounding him, and, if he found him inclined to pay well for it, disclosing the whole history of the abominable transaction. But as the old man had not shewn any mind to have recourse to superstitious devices, still less to give ear to his covert hints, so that the stranger might have brought his own neck into the noose if he had betrayed too much, he drew off and remained faithful to his confederate Eleazar,

who had quieted him with a sum of money, along with large promises for the future.

The old man's great bell now rang, and Edward took up his papers and went to him. You have lookt over and corrected all my accounts, my dear friend? he began with outward calmness. Edward said yes, as he set down the books; but he hesitated, and knew not whether to give in Eleazar's will along with them. The old man however took it himself out of his hand, and cast his eyes over it. It is now three months, he began, since he made me heir to all he has, in case he should die before me. He has drawn up a list of all his effects, and points out where each thing may be found. The chief article is a number of gold bars, which he says are of his own making. Read it.

Edward took the papers with some embarrassment. Is it not true? said the old man after some time, does any thing but madness animate and rule the whole world? Can you understand this man and his character in any other way? To be sure this word itself does not help us to understand it. O young man, young man, do you not feel now how thoroughly right I was? I trusted this man unlimitedly, because he was not girt round with any delusive deceitful show; because nothing in my heart sallied forth to meet him, and I did not lie to myself in his behalf for the sake of pampering my own vanity. Ay, my friend, now everything is detected and noised abroad; he is going...and in this will he gives me back what the lawyers would call my property. His will! Now forsooth it must also be time to make mine, and a different one from what I intended. Now your nice feelings of honour will no doubt condescend to stay with me a little longer...and my child, my Rose! alas, how fearful it is that this darling of my heart is also a human being!

At such an hour as this, answered Edward, which must needs strike you with horror, I will not again declare the wishes of my heart to you; you yourself have toucht upon them, or I should have refrained even from these words. But undoubtedly I must now stay

with you : destiny compels me to do so, and imposes it as a sacred duty upon me.

Destiny with a vengeance! said the old man with his bitter smile: you take a fancy to Rose; you hear she is already engaged; this drives you away from me; but before you take leave, your honour must be cleared and furbisht up; and as a remembrance you shoot my most intimate friend, the man after my own soul, and tear him from my side. Now Rose is at liberty, you are your own master, your rival is got rid of; and destiny has managed the whole matter admirably. But whether this shot has not pierced through my heart, whether it has not rent and burst asunder the innermost sanctuary of my soul...these questions are never thought of. There is, as it were, a huge chasm yawning in my spirit... confidence, faith...everything...did not I say so? good is the only real evil...Edward! don't look so sad... methinks I am talking quite wildly.

He took the young man's hand. Bring me the mayor this evening, and the priest and bailiff as witnesses. You are now my son, and this is the spirit I shall now make my will in. I feel it is high time; for it would be horrible if Helbach were to fling all my fortune to the dogs. O if I could but totally forget this shot and Eleazar! if such wild thoughts did not keep rushing about in my brain! Now you and Rose will stay with me.

Edward withdrew. He went to look for Rose in her room. She burst out a crying, jumped up from her chair, and threw herself into the young man's arms with an expression of the fondest affection. Alas Edward! she cried sobbing, and hid her face on his breast: only look now at what I have to go through in my youth. This was never sung over me in my cradle, that I should lose my husband in so shocking a manner, and even before our wedding. And the last thing I should have thought of was that you were to shoot him dead; you, the dearest and kindest of all men. Alas! poor, poor Eleazar! when he came from nature's hands, such an odious misshapen abortion of a man! And now

into the bargain to steal, to lie, and to cheat! to rob my good father, who meant to give him everything! What will become of his poor soul now? Oh yes, he has perisht still more cruelly, he is much more unhappy than my cat with her kittens, that he shot so barbarously on the orange-tree. Alas, Edward! are you then in real truth such a good creature, as I have always believed you? or are you perchance very wicked too? You did not mean it, did you? that Eleazar should die so?

Edward took pains to explain the nature of the whole affair to her. Be composed, he continued; the course of our lives here has suddenly undergone a violent change; we must all overcome this shock, to get back again into the path of our ordinary duty. A few days since you were sorry that I was going away; if it can give you any comfort, let me assure you that for the present at least I shall and must stay here. Do you still wish that I should?

She gazed at him affectionately and seemed comforted. So then that is settled now! she exclaimed: ah yes, I always thought you would stay; for I can't live without you; and my father can't live without you; and all our poor workmen and spinners, our good miners, for whom you are always saying and doing something, and who, when they come for their wages or for relief, look with their whole souls into your kind eyes, these above all can never live without you.

This calamity, said Edward, may hereafter make you, your father, me, and all of us, happy. The discovery was inevitable; and perhaps, if it had not taken place now, it would have come at a time when it would have plunged us all in misery.

If my father now, said Rose, were to have no objection, I might perhaps in time accustom myself to look upon you as my future husband. If I could but feel a little more respect and awe for you! If you would behave very roughly to me now and then, not always so kindly, but angrily and savagely at times, I might by and by grow reconciled to it.

Edward went to his business. The uproar had ceased, and the whole house was now quiet and silent: it seemed as if people were afraid of even breathing: all walked about softly and on tiptoe. News came that Eleazar was dead.

Toward evening Edward went with the mayor and witnesses into old Balthasar's room. He was surprised to find him in bed. On being spoken to by his visitors he lifted himself up, stared fixedly at them, and seemed to know no one. Aha! reverend sir, he cried out after a while, you are come to fetch away a second poor sinner to-day. It is a busy time in your vocation. Is master Eleazar come with you?

He beckoned to Edward. Thou yellow blockhead! he whispered to him; what am I to do with thy gold-bars that thou has left me? don't thrust thy stupid cheat into men's eyes so...it is far too glaring. But beware of Edward, he is wise and good. If he should ever suspect thee, thou art lost.

He talked to the others, but still quite at random, and was taken up with the phantoms of his own brain. The mayor and witnesses retired, and Edward went after the physician. The business of drawing up the will was put off, until the sick man should have recovered and be restored to his perfect consciousness.

The physician found the patient's state very alarming. Edward was called up in the night; but when he entered the room Herr Balthasar had already breathed his last.

The dismay, the sorrow was universal. The mayor sent to have everything sealed up. In the midst of this confusion, it seemed a matter of very little moment that the Hungarian had found means to escape from his prison.

In the town where the extravagant counsellor Helbach lived there was a great feast at which all the epicures famous for their love of good eating and their knowledge of good dishes were assembled. The counsellor himself was the soul of such parties: his word was

law in them ; and he it was that had managed the present banquet.

The dinner was nearly over ; some of the guests, who had business to call them away, were gone : the company had grown quieter ; and it was only at the upper end of the table, where the counsellor and some of the scientific eaters were sitting, that the conversation was carried on with any spirit. Believe me, my friends, said the counsellor with great earnestness, the art of eating, the skill men may attain in it, has its epochs, its classical ages, and its decline, corruption, and dark ages, just as much as every other art ; and it seems to me that we are now again verging to a kind of barbarism in it. Luxury, profusion, rarities, new dishes, over-peppering, over-spicing, all these, my good sirs, are the artifices now commonly made use of to obtain admiration for a dinner ; and yet these are the very things from which a thinking eater will turn away with contemptuous slight. In the whole of this department indeed much still remains to be done ; and the stories we read of the old gormandizer, Heliogabalus, and others who lived during the decrepitude of the Roman empire, stories at which many men stare with stupid astonishment, ought only to excite our pity.

It must always be difficult, no doubt, said one of the guests, to frame any distinct conception of the dishes and the delicacies of a former age. If we dress them by such receipts as remain, the result will always have something absurd in it, like the dinner which Smollet describes so humourously in his *Peregrine Pickle*.

That tact on which after all everything depends, answered the counsellor, is sure to be wanting, that nice knowledge of the exact limit between too much and too little which nothing but instinct can bestow ; and even this instinct must be cultivated by studying the properties of fire, the culinary powers of which can never be described, and which a cook can only make himself master of by long experience, judgment, and observation, nor even then unless he was born a cook. The main point however is, that our tongue and palate

have been trained and fashioned from our childhood to particular tastes, likings, and antipathies; so that often the very best, most judicious, and admirable thing, if it come across us on a sudden as a novelty, as something we have never set tooth on, and thus give a shock to all our prepossessions, will be disregarded and abused; until at length in course of time on our becoming familiar with the stranger's merits, he is naturalized: and then the new knowledge we have acquired will often exercise the most salutary influence and throw much light on other dishes, both old and lately invented ones, so that our palate is, as it were, strung with a new chord, which sends forth a variety of delicious notes. Moreover, the ages that are gone and the ideas that prevailed among our forefathers are still acting upon this *tastature* of mankind, as a race made to relish, to discern, and to enjoy; and as in philosophy and science, in politics and government, so here too there is an unbroken chain; the accumulated experience of centuries moulded us to be just such as we are; and this state of our taste can and must only be modified by degrees; nor could anything be more ruinous than a sudden revolution which should throw everything topsy-turvy. In every field of human action history is man's best master.

You yourself, said the guest, should write a history of the articles of food, the art of eating, and the progress of the human mind in it.

When one is oneself a practical artist, answered the counsellor, and so devoted a one as I am, so diligent in working at my art, and so ready to try every new experiment in it, one must leave such matters to people of an idler and more contemplative turn. If you aim at doing everything, you will never do anything well and thoroughly.

Why, resumed the other, do we hear this perpetual abuse of sensuality? why will men so seldom confess, and even then but reluctantly, the pleasure they take in eating and drinking.

Because, said counsellor Helbach, they never know what they are really at. It has always struck me as

very remarkable and singular that, in the little round box in which all our finer senses are ranged and stored up, and in the top of which moreover our thinking powers, and all the noblest intellectual products of our soul are deposited, we should find that red-lined drawer close beneath, with the delicate little bosses set like jewels over the tremulous vocal tongue and palate, garnisht in front with teeth that toil and cut, and closed by the graceful mouth. Eating is only another mode of thinking. Thus this box is a coppel in which the essences of all created things, the finest and the grossest, vapours and juices, the soft soothing oils, the bitternesses and tartnesses which at first seem grating, the flavour which evaporates in a momentary enjoyment, are put to the test. First the teeth begin chopping and grinding; the tongue, at other times so talkative, silently and busily rolls about and makes much of the morsels it receives, presses them affectionately and benevolently against the palate, to double its pleasure by sharing it; and when this tender dalliance has been sufficiently indulged in, at length pushes them back almost unwillingly to its friend that swallows them down, and that indeed has the real enjoyment of them, the highest of all, though but for a moment, and then with heroic self-sacrifice makes them over to another power. Straightway the same game is repeated a second, a third, a thousandth time. I never yet heard it said that any self-tormenting anchoret had courage enough altogether to forego the pleasure of eating, even though he stinted himself to bread. Indeed, kind Nature has taken such good care of her children, that it is next to impossible.

A very just and profound remark! exclaimed his neighbour.

We see too, continued the dissertator, what high importance nature has attacht to these processes of devouring, eating, chewing, and swallowing, and how in every sphere of existence they have been her main end and aim. What would become of all the animals upon the earth, of all the birds that roam through the air, and all the swarms of greater and lesser creatures

that people the waters and the sea, unless every one of them had received a bill, payable at sight, upon his neighbour. What would they live on, if they did not live on one another? or where forsooth would they find room to live? Is not the world perpetually oscillating between the two great works of producing and of devouring? The king of the creation, man, stands at the summit, as the crown and the final object of all these multiform guests. Those his subalterns, who have an assignment either one upon the other, or upon the vegetable world, look up to him with reverential awe: for it is not merely one thing or another, not merely beasts or vegetables, not merely fishes or birds, no, almost everything without exception he turns into food, making all classes of his subjects the sources of his happiness. It is only from his own kind, and from a few which serve him as his immediate vassals, or the flesh of which, whether from prejudice or in reality, does not taste agreeably, that he abstains. By means of fire, that performs his bidding, out of strong essences, butter, oil, and spices, vegetables and flesh, all artfully mingled and chemically prepared, he concocts the most extraordinary combinations to please his palate. While the eye is weeping at top, and the brain above it is brooding over touching thoughts, or kindling itself and the heart with inspiring ones, while the nose inhaling hyacinthine odours awakens visions of sweet desire in the imagination, the mouth below is already lusting and licking its lips after the venison or the liver-pasty that is carried by. The sentimental young lady feeds her pigeons with pathetic grace, and the very mouth which lisps the prettiest verses and most moving idyls to them, will swallow the same innocent creatures by and by with exquisite relish. Could animals make observations as we do, and were a poet some day to rise up amongst them, in what strange colours would he represent man!

Truly, said his friend, such a jest, thus retorted upon mankind, would be extremely amusing.

We are fond of boasting of our universality, counselor Helbach went on, and yet in the very art in which

Nature herself has so manifestly intended us to be universal, I mean in that of eating, many people scorn to become so, and fancy it is more dignified to treat this whole branch of knowledge with contempt. And yet the flocks of birds of passage, the shoals of wandering fishes, come from distant regions, flying and swimming into our nets, for the mere pleasure of our palates: and the fruits of every climate, of every soil, of every quarter of the globe, blend into enjoyment within us. Who does not perceive in an oyster, if at least he is gifted with a true sense for it, the might and the freshness of the sea! O asparagus, he that has not the wit to enjoy thee, can know nothing of the mysteries which the dreaming world of plants reveals to us! Can one understand anything of the history of the world or of poetry, if one is a stranger to all these natural elementary feelings, and incapable of doing justice to the worth of a snipe, or even of a turbot?

The other guests had already retired; the dinner was quite over; and only counsellor Helbach and his two nearest and most intimate friends were still sitting engaged in this and the like conversation. I am quite surprised, one of them began, at the buoyant youthful spirit which you still retain, at your jovial animation, your lively poetical playfulness. All the rest of us have grown so old, and the weight of years presses so heavily upon us, while you are still jesting, and pleasure has lost none of its freshness or charms with you.

We are all alone now, said the counsellor, and I may therefore speak more from my heart to such old friends. It is true, this sensual enjoyment gives me pleasure, and will console me at times for the want of much: but I am not the frivolous person you take me for, perhaps never was so. Almost everybody has a mask; and this is mine. I move about in it lightly and with ease, and so most people take it for my real character. My youth was a very sad one: my parents displayed all their weaknesses, their extravagance and ostentation, so glaringly to me and to all the world, that I could not look upon them with esteem; and this to a young man is of all

feelings the most terrible. Poverty and distress, privations of every kind may be borne much more easily: but a calamity like mine crushes the heart before it is yet grown up. I had to play the part of a rich man, to squander money, to give myself airs. When one puts on the semblance of anything for a time, it will soon become a portion of our nature. Imitate a stutterer for a while, and you will have to keep diligent watch over yourself not to stammer in earnest. I fell in love, and was on the point of changing into a totally different person; for my passion was sincere and ardent. But new distress. The noble being who soon became my wife, could never give me her heart. The strongest passion must die away when it finds no return; and in such a case a man has done enough, if this finest feeling of his nature do not turn into hatred and malice. For myself I was thrown back by this into my apparent frivolity: and not to make a show of my unhappiness, like my wife, who, though otherwise admirable, gave way too much to this weakness, I abandoned myself to riotous conviviality, turbulent pleasures, and unprofitable society. There is often a spirit of defiance in us, having something of nobleness in it, and not utterly condemnable, which withholds strong characters from reforming and improving, notwithstanding all the admonitions of conscience. The more unhappy I felt myself, the more I acted happiness. After my son was born, my wife began to shun me altogether, and would often wilfully misunderstand me. She devoted all her affection and care to her child, lived only for him, and brought him up to be so capricious and headstrong, that she herself was the greatest sufferer by his faults, and yet had not strength of mind enough to eradicate the fatal perverseness, which she herself had first fostered in him. My advice was not listened to: it had been taken for granted that I could no more love the child, than appreciate and esteem the mother. My heart bled; and yet I could not interfere authoritatively, unless I would consent to be regarded by her and by the whole world as a monster, being already called a tyrant, unfeeling,

and frivolous, and having been so long wont to give up the point that I often lookt on myself as such. Thus my son was bred up as a stranger to me, with all his feelings purposely and studiously alienated from me: but his over-weak, too passionately fond mother was no gainer thereby; for she likewise lost his depraved heart, over which, when the boy was grown up, she had not the slightest influence. How reckless and unmanageable he has been, you well know; how wretched his mother has become, is notorious; but my life too, my friends, is a lost one.

A servant came hastily in, and told the counsellor he must go home immediately: for something of great importance had happened.

The wife of counsellor Helbach was sitting in her bed-room, which only let in a faint dim light from the court. Her tear-worn eyes were stedfastly fixt on an open gospel; she read devoutly, and prayed. Suddenly she heard a noise; her servant was pusht forcibly back by some one whom he was trying to keep away; the door was thrust open, and a young man threw himself impetuously at her feet, seized her hand in her fright, and covered it with kisses, while a hot flood of tears gusht from his eyes. It was not till after a while that the mother recognised the son whom she had deemed lost. Her strong emotions overcame her: she askt: Whence comest thou?...stand up...my unhappy child, come to my arms...More she could not say.

You do not cast me off, you do not abhor me? cried the youth in a trance of grief: Oh God! have I deserved that a single spark of love for me should yet linger in this noble heart! Am I worthy of a single look from her!

They continued long closely embraced, and quite unable to speak. But, mother, the young man said at length, can you hold the monster in your arms, to your heart, who, when he last saw you—

No, my son, my beloved son, do not call back that

horrible moment, which we must forget ; so the mother stammered out. I too know now that I did you injustice then ; the girl you loved is worthy of your love, as has been proved since. I myself had not taught you sufficiently to controul your passions. Let that hour vanish for ever like a painful dream from our lives. But whence comest thou ? where hast thou been living all this time ?

They sat down ; they both tried to regain their self-possession and calmness in this sudden change from sorrow to joy. The young man related—while from time to time he again embraced his beloved mother, or kist her hands—how after that fearful moment he had roamed about in despair without any plan or view ; how, when he was destitute of all means of subsistence, finding himself near the mountains, he had made up his mind to apply to Herr Balthasar, in the chance of obtaining support from him. Hearing however of his singular peculiarities, and how difficult it was to gain admittance to him, he had altered his plan, formed an acquaintance with his overseer, Edward, under the assumed name of William Lorenz, and been taken into the house as secretary. To see his beloved, who was travelling in the neighbourhood, he had left his post, returned, and again gone away on being alarmed by hearing that his mother was coming to visit her kinsman.

This very day, he concluded, I met a traveller, a Hungarian, who was come in haste from the mountains, and who told me a very important piece of news. I was on my way hither to throw myself at your feet, whether you would forgive me or no, when I met him in the next town. Do not be too much shockt... Herr Balthasar is no more... he died suddenly in a fit, without having made a will, as the stranger said he knew for certain. The house, the little town, the whole neighbourhood are in the utmost confusion. O my mother, we may all be happy, we may all live affectionately together, if you will believe in my repentance and reformation, if we can persuade my father to assent to

the plan I have to propose to him. I know you will now no longer refuse your consent to my marriage with Caroline: the objection that we were both of us so poor, is now done away: we are become too rich, far too much so, to trust ourselves with all this wealth.

When their spirits were grown calm, and everything had been explained, a servant was sent after the counsellor, who came home in a more serious and susceptible mood than was his wont. How great was his astonishment at having to embrace his lost son, reformed and become a reasonable being! He was quite unprepared for so joyful a shock. His wife too received him with more confidence and affection: the death of the beloved of her youth had affected her deeply.

Thus for the first time this family was united and happy, and amid their sorrow felt a pure joy in the prospect of a comfortable and prosperous future. The old man, who resolved to amend after the example of his son, and to pass the remainder of his life more decorously, agreed, even without any persuasion, to make over the uncontroled management of the property legally to his son, who was now of age. It was settled that the mother and son should go first to their new estate, to arrange everything, and that Caroline should follow soon after, and become his bride: the counsellor himself preferred living still in his native town, and merely visiting his family occasionally in the summer. Thus, he concluded, we may still restore a household that was almost lost, and raise it above what it ever was by mutual affection and unity. My annuity is more than enough to support me; and should it fall short, as I think can hardly happen, my son will assist me with a small contribution.

Up in the mountains everything was now quiet. Balthasar, as well as his treacherous old friend, was in his grave. William, as he had formerly been called, arrived there with his mother to take possession of the estate. The mayor and Edward gave everything up to him; and when the surrender was completed, and Edward was left

alone with the mother and son, William thus interrupted their silent meditations: Now we are all among friends, my dear Edward, and I may talk with perfect frankness to you, and shew my gratitude, if you choose so to call it, for your former kindness. One night, when I was here, and had been copying papers till very late, I was lockt into the anteroom; the door had been fastened on the outside, and I did not like to make a noise and call up the servants, more especially as Herr Balthasar used to be much annoyed and worried by any disturbance. During the night, while I kept perfectly still, I heard the unhappy old man walking to and fro in his room, sometimes sighing heavily, sometimes moaning and wailing as he talkt to himself. They were not merely broken sounds and exclamations; but it seemed to be his custom to talk over sundry events of his life, as if he was speaking to some invisible person. Thus I heard the story of his youth, of his intolerable woes, but at the same time of his love for Edward, and what part of his fortune he meant to leave him. The chief thing however, and what toucht me most, was to learn that Rose was not his adopted, but his real daughter. His self-reproaches, his lamentations over her deceast mother, his bursts of pity for Rose, were heart-rending. Now then, my beloved mother and my dear Edward, what remains for us to do? Our conscience, if we consult it honestly, declares that Rose is his true rightful heir, and ought to have the largest part of his fortune.

After this declaration his mother treated the lovely girl as a beloved daughter; and on the same day on which William celebrated his wedding, Edward had also the happiness of receiving Rose as his bride. The fortune was divided; Edward continued to manage all the most important affairs; and a happy joyful family inhabited and enlivened the old house, which lost its gloomy character, and often resounded with music, songs, and dancing, to the delight of all the inhabitants of the little town.

THE LOVE-CHARM.

EMILIUS was sitting in deep thought at his table, awaiting his friend Roderick. A light was burning before him ; the winter-evening was cold ; and to-day he wisht for the presence of his fellow-traveller, though at other times wont to avoid his society ; for on this evening he purpost to disclose a secret to him, and ask his advice. The timid, shy Emilius found so many difficulties, such insurmountable hinderances, in every affair he was engaged in, and in every event that befell him, that it almost seemed as if his destiny had been in an ironical mood when it threw him and Roderick together, Roderick being in all things the reverse of his friend. Fickle, flighty, always determined and fixt by the first impression, he attempted everything, had a plan for every emergency ; no undertaking was too arduous for him, no obstacles could deter him. But in the midst of the pursuit he wearied and broke down just as suddenly as at first he had kindled and sprung forward : whatever then opposed him did not act as a spur to urge him more eagerly onward, but only made him abandon and despise what he had so hotly rusht into ; and thus Roderick was evermore thoughtlessly beginning something new, and with no better reason relinquishing and carelessly forgetting what he had begun just before. Hence no day ever passed but the friends got into a quarrel, which threatened to be a death-blow to their friendship : and yet what to all appearance thus divided them, was perhaps the very thing that bound them most closely together : each loved the other heartily ; but each found passing satisfaction in being able to discharge the most justly deserved reproaches upon his friend.

Emilius, a rich young man of a sensitive and melancholy temperament, had become master of his fortune on

his father's death, and had set out on his travels for the sake of cultivating his mind: he had already been spending several months however in a large town, to enjoy the pleasures of the carnival, about which he never gave himself the slightest trouble, and to make certain important arrangements concerning his fortune with some relations, whom he had scarcely yet visited. On his journey he had fallen in with the restless, ever-shifting and veering Roderick, who was living at variance with his guardians, and who, to get rid altogether of them and their troublesome admonitions, had caught eagerly at his new friend's offer to take him with him on his travels. On their road they had already been often on the point of separating; but after every dispute both had only felt the more forcibly that neither could live without the other. Scarcely had they got out of their carriage in any town, when Roderick had already seen everything remarkable in it, to forget it all again on the morrow: while Emilius took a week to study thoroughly whatever was said in books about it, that he might not leave anything unnoticed; and after all, out of indolence thought there was hardly anything worth going to look at. Roderick had immediately made a thousand acquaintances, and been to every public place of entertainment; and he would often bring his new-made friends to Emilius in his solitary chamber, where, as soon as he began to be tired of them, he left him alone with them. At other times he would confound the modest Emilius by heaping extravagant praises on his talents and acquirements in the presence of learned and intelligent men, and by telling them how much information they might derive from his friend with regard to languages, antiquities, or the fine arts, though he himself could never find leisure to listen to him on these subjects when the conversation happened to turn on them. But if Emilius ever chanced to be in a more active mood, he might almost make sure that his truant friend would have caught cold the night before at some ball or sledge-party, and be forced to keep his bed; so that, with the liveliest, most restless and most com-

municative of men for his companion, Emilius lived in the greatest solitude.

On this day he confidently expected him, having made Roderick give him a solemn promise to spend the evening with him, in order to hear what it was that for several weeks had been depressing and agitating his pensive friend. Meanwhile Emilius wrote down the following lines :

'Tis sweet when spring its choir assembles,
And every nightingale is steeping
The trees in his melodious weeping,
Till leaf and bloom with rapture trembles.

Fair is the net that moonlight weaves ;
Fair are the breezes' gambolings
As with lime-odours on their wings
They chase each other through the leaves.

Bright is the glory of the rose,
When Love's rich magic decks the earth ;
From countless roses Love peeps forth,
Those stars wherewith Love's heaven glows.

But sweeter, fairer, brighter far
To me that little lamp's pale gleaming
When, through the narrow casement streaming,
It bids me hail my evening star ;

As from their braids she flings her tresses,
Then twines them in a flowery band,
While at each motion of her hand
The light robe to her fair form presses ;

Or when she wakes her lute's deep slumbers,
And, as at morning's touch updarting,
The notes beneath her fingers starting,
Trip o'er the strings in playful numbers.

To stop their flight her voice she pours
Full after them ; they laugh, and fly,
And to my heart for refuge hie :
Her voice pursues them through its doors.

Leave me, ye mischiefs ! hence remove !
They bar themselves within, and say :
Till this be broken here we stay,
That thou mayst know what 'tis to love.

Emilius stood up fretfully. It grew darker, but no Roderick came; and he was wishing to tell him of his love for an unknown fair one, who dwelt in the opposite house, and who kept him at home all day long, and waking through many a night. At length footsteps sounded on the stairs; the door opened without anybody knocking at it: and in came two gay masks with ugly visages, one of them a Turk, drest in red and blue silk, the other a Spaniard, in pale yellow and pink, with a plume of feathers waving on his hat. When Emilius was losing patience, Roderick took off his mask, shewed his well-known laughing countenance, and cried: Hey-day, my good friend, what a drowned puppy of a face! Is this the way to look in the carnival? I am come with my dear young officer here to carry you off: there is a grand ball to-night at the masquerade-rooms; and, as I know you have forsworn ever putting on any other suit than that which you always wear of the devil's own colour, come with us black as you are; for it is getting somewhat late.

Emilius felt angry, and said: It seems that according to custom you have totally forgotten your engagement. I am extremely sorry (he added, turning to the stranger) that I cannot possibly be of your party: my friend has been overhasty in promising for me; indeed I cannot go out at all, having some matters of importance to talk over with him.

The stranger, who was well-bred and saw Emilius's meaning, withdrew: but Roderick with the utmost indifference put on his mask again, took his stand before the glass, and exclaimed: Verily, I am a most hideous figure, am I not? After all my pains it is a tasteless, disgusting device.

That there can be no question about! answered Emilius in vehement displeasure. Making a caricature of yourself, and stupefying your senses, are among the pleasures you are the fondest of driving at.

Because you don't like dancing, said the other, and look upon it as a pernicious invention, not a soul in the

world is to be merry. How tiresome it is when a man is made up of nothing but whims!

Doubtless! replied his irritated friend; and you afford me ample opportunity for finding that it is so. I fancied that after our agreement you would have given me this one evening; but—

But it is the carnival, you know, interposed the other; and all my acquaintances, and divers fair ladies, are expecting me at the grand ball to-night. Rely upon it, my dear friend, it is mere disease in you that makes you so unreasonably averse to all such amusements.

Which of us has the fairest claim to be called diseased, said Emilius, I will not examine. But I cannot think that your incomprehensible frivolousness, your hunger and thirst for dissipation, your restless chase after pleasures that leave the heart empty, are altogether the healthiest state of human nature. On certain points at all events you might make a little allowance for my weakness, if you are determined to call it so; and you know there is nothing in the world that so sets my whole soul on edge as a ball with its frightful music. Somebody has said, that to a deaf person who cannot hear the music a party of dancers must look like so many patients for a madhouse: but to my mind this detestable music itself, this twirling and whirling and pirouetting of half a dozen notes, each treading on its own heels, in those odious tunes, which ram themselves into our memory, nay, I might say, mix themselves up with our very blood, so that one cannot get rid of the taint for many a woeful day after,—this to me is the very trance of madness: and if I could ever bring myself to think dancing endurable, it would be dancing to the tune of silence.

Bravo, signor paradox-monger! exclaimed the mask: You are so far gone, that you choose to think the most natural, the most innocent, and the merriest thing in the world unnatural, ay, and shocking.

I cannot change my feelings, said his grave friend. From my very childhood these tunes have made me unhappy, and have often all but driven me

out of my senses. They are to me the ghosts and spectres and furies in the world of sound, and they come and buz round my head, and grin at me with horrid laughter.

Sheer nervousness ! returned the other ; just like your extravagant abhorrence of spiders and divers other harmless insects.

Harmless you call them ! cried Emilius indignantly, because you have no repugnance to such things. To him however that feels the same disgust and loathing, the same unutterable shuddering, as I feel, start up within him, and shoot through his whole frame at the sight of them, these miscreate deformities, such as toads, beetles, or that most nauseous of all Nature's abortions, the bat, are not indifferent or insignificant : their very existence is a state of direct enmity and warfare against his. In good truth one might smile at the unbelievers whose imagination is too barren for ghosts and fearful goblins, and such births of night as we see in sickness, to grow up in it, or who stare and marvel at Dante's descriptions ; when the commonest everyday life is perpetually paralysing our eyesight with some of these portentous distorted masterpieces among the works of horror. Yet how can we have a real feeling and love for beauty, without detesting and recoiling from such monstrosities ?

Why recoil from them ? askt Roderick : why should we see nothing in the vast realm of water, in lakes, rivers, and seas, but those dismal objects which you have taught yourself to find there ? why not rather look on such creatures as queer, amusing, and ludicrous mummers ? so that the deep might be called a kind of large maskt ball-room. But your caprices go still further ; for while you love roses with a sort of idolatry, there are other flowers for which you have a no less passionate hatred : yet what harm has the dear bright tulip ever done you ? or all the other gay children of summer that you persecute ? Thus again you have an antipathy to sundry colours, to sundry scents, and to a number of thoughts ; and you never take any pains to strengthen

yourself against these moods, but give way to them, and sink down into them as into a luxurious feather-bed; so that I often fear I shall lose you altogether some day, and find nothing but a patchwork of whims and prejudices sitting at that table instead of my Emilius.

Emilius was wroth to the bottom of his heart, and answered not a word. He had now given up all thought of making his intended confession; nor did the thoughtless Roderick shew the least wish to hear the secret which his melancholy companion had announced to him with such an air of solemnity. He was sitting carelessly in the arm-chair, playing with his mask, when on a sudden he cried: Be so kind, Emilius, as to lend me your large cloak.

What for? askt the other.

I hear music in the church over the way, answered Roderick; and somehow or other I have mist this hour every evening since we have been here. To-day it comes just in the nick: I can cover my dress with your cloak, hiding my mask and turban under it; and so, when the music is over, I may go straight to the ball.

Emilius muttered between his teeth as he went for the cloak to his wardrobe, and then, forcing himself to put on an ironical smile, he gave it to Roderick, who was already on his legs. There, I'll leave you my Turkish dagger that I bought yesterday, said the mask, as he wrapt himself up: Take care of it for me; it is a bad habit, this carrying about toys of cold steel; one can never tell what ill use may not be made of them, should a quarrel arise, or any other knot that it is easier to cut than untie. We shall meet again to-morrow; good bye; a pleasant evening to you. He did not wait for an answer, but ran down stairs.

When Emilius was alone, he tried to forget his anger, and to look only at the laughable side of his friend's behaviour. His eyes rested on the shining, finely wrought dagger, and he said: What must be the feelings of a man who could thrust this sharp iron into the breast of an enemy! but oh, what must be his who should hurt a beloved object with it! He lockt

it up, then gently folded back the window-shutters, and lookt across the narrow street. But no light was stirring; the opposite house was quite dark; the dear form that dwelt in it, and that was wont to appear there about this time engaged in divers household affairs, seemed to be absent. Perhaps she may be at the ball, thought Emilius, little as it sorted with her retired way of life. Ere long however a light came in: the little girl whom his beloved unknown had about her, and with whom she used to pass a great part of the day and of the evening, carried a candle through the room and closed the shutters. A chink still let the light through, wide enough for Emilius, where he stood, to overlook a part of the little room: and there the happy youth would often stay till after midnight as if charmed to the spot, watching every motion of her hand, every look of her beloved face. It was a joy to see her teaching the child to read, or giving her lessons in sewing and knitting. On inquiry he had learnt that the little girl was a poor orphan, whom his fair maiden had charitably taken into the house, to educate her. Emilius's friends could not conceive why he lived in this narrow street, in this comfortless lodging, why he was so little to be seen in society, or how he employed himself. Without employment, in solitude, he was happy: only he felt out of humour with himself at his own bashfulness, which withheld him from trying to become nearer acquainted with his beauteous being, notwithstanding the friendliness with which she had several times greeted and thankd him. He knew not that she would often gaze over at him with eyes no less love-sick than his own: he guessed not what wishes were forming in her heart, of what an effort, what a sacrifice she felt herself capable, so she might but attain the possession of his love.

After walking a few times up and down the room, the light having gone away again with the child, he suddenly made up his mind, in spite of all his feelings and inclinations, to go to the ball; for it struck him that his unknown might have made an exception

for once to her usual secluded habits, for the sake of enjoying the world and its gaieties. The streets were brilliantly lighted up; the snow crackled under his feet; carriages rolled by him; and masks in every variety of dress whistled and twittered as they passed him. Many of the houses resounded with the dancing music which he so much abhorred; and he could not bring himself to take the nearest way to the ball-room, to which people from all quarters were streaming and flocking. He walked round the old church, gazed at its high tower rising majestically into the dark sky, and enjoyed the stillness and solitude of this deserted place. Within the recess of a large doorway, the varied sculptures of which he had often contemplated with pleasure, while calling up visions of the olden times and the arts that adorned them, he now again took his stand, to give himself up for a few moments to his musings. He had not been there long, when his attention was attracted by a figure that was pacing restlessly to and fro, and seemed to be waiting for somebody. By the light of a lamp burning before an image of the Virgin, he distinctly made out the face, as well as the strange dress. It was an old woman of the uttermost hideousness, which struck the eye the more from her being grotesquely clad in a scarlet bodice embroidered with gold. Emilius fancied at first it must be some extravagant mask that had lost its way: but the bright light soon convinced him that the old brown wrinkled face was one of Nature's ploughing, and no mimic exaggeration. In a few minutes two men made their appearance, wrapt up in cloaks, who seemed to approach the spot with cautious steps, often turning their heads aside to see whether anybody was following. The old woman went up to them. Have you got the candles? she asked hastily and with a gruff voice. Here they are, said one of the men: you know the price; let us settle the matter and have done with it. The old woman seemed to be giving him some money, which he counted over beneath his cloak. I rely upon you, she again began, that they are made exactly according to rule, at the right time and place,

so that they cannot fail of their effect. You need not be uneasy on that score, returned the man, and hurried away.

His companion, who staid behind, was a youth: he took the old woman by the hand, and said: Can it be true, Alexia, that certain rites and spells, as those old wild stories, in which I could never put faith, tell us, can fetter the freewill of man, and make love and hatred grow up in the heart?—Ay forsooth! answered the scarlet woman; but one and one must make two, and many a one must be added thereto, before such mighty things come to pass. It is not these candles alone, moulded beneath the midnight darkness of the new moon, and drencht with human blood, it is not the mere uttering magical words and incantations, that can give you the mastery over the soul of another: there is much more belonging to such works, as the initiated well know.—I may depend upon you then! cried the stranger.—To-morrow after midnight I am at your service, replied the old woman. You shall not be the first person that ever was dissatisfied with my skill. To-night, as you have heard, I have some one else in hand, one whose senses and soul our art shall twist about whichever way we choose, just as easily as I twist this hair out of my head. These last words she uttered with a half grin; and they separated, walking off in different directions.

Emilius came forth from the dark niche shuddering, and lifted his looks to the image of the Virgin with the Child. Before thine eyes, thou mild and blessed one, he said half aloud, are these miscreants audaciously holding their market and trafficking in their infernal drugs. But as thou embracest thy child with thy love, so doth heavenly love encircle us all with its protecting arms; we feel their touch; and our poor hearts beat joyously and tremulously toward a greater heart that will never forsake us. Clouds were rolling along over the pinnacles of the tower and the high roof of the church; the everlasting stars lookt down through the midst of them gleaming with mild serenity; and Emilius drew

his thoughts resolutely away from these nightly abominations, and mused on the beauty of his unknown. He again entered the peopled streets, and bent his steps toward the brightly illuminated ball-room, from which voices, and the rattling of carriages, and now and then, when there was a pause, the clamorous music, came sounding to his ears.

In the ball-room he was instantly lost amid the streaming throng: dancers ran round him; masks darted by him to and fro; kettle-drums and trumpets stunned his ears; and it seemed to him as if human life had melted away into a dream. He walkt along one row after another, and his eye alone was wakeful, seeking after those beloved eyes and that fair head with its brown locks, for the sight of which he yearned this evening more intensely than ever, at the same time that he inwardly reproacht their adored possessor, for allowing herself to plunge and be lost in this stormy sea of confusion and folly. No! he said to himself; no heart that loves can willingly expose itself to this dreary hubbub of noise, in which every longing and every tear is scoft and mockt at by the wild laughter of pealing trumpets. The whispering of trees, the murmuring of brooks, the soft notes of the harp, and the song that gushes forth in all its richness and sweetness from an overflowing bosom, are the sounds in which love dwells. But this is the very thundering and shouting of hell in the frenzy of its despair.

He saw nothing like her whom he was seeking for; and he could not possibly give entrance to the notion that her beloved face might perhaps be lurking behind some odious mask. He had already ranged up and down the room three times over, and had in vain run his eyes along all the ladies that were sitting and unmaskt, when the Spaniard joined him and said: I am glad you are come after all; are you looking for your friend?

Emilius had quite forgotten him; he said however somewhat embarrast: In truth I wonder I have not met him here, for his mask is not to be mistaken.

Can you guess what the harumscarum fellow is

about? answered the young officer. He never danced at all, and hardly staid ten minutes in the ball-room; for he soon fell in with his friend Anderson, who is just come up from the country: their conversation turned upon books; and as Anderson has never seen the new poem, Roderick would not rest till he had made them open one of the back rooms for him; and there he is now sitting beside a solitary taper, holding his companion fast, and declaiming the whole poem to him, not omitting even the invocation to the muse.

It's just like him, said Emilius; he is always the child of the moment. I have done all in my power, and even run the risk of some amicable quarrels, to cure him of this habit of for ever living extempore, and playing out his whole life in impromptus, card after card, as it chances to turn up, without once looking over his hand. But these follies have struck such deep root in his heart, he would sooner part with his best friend than with them. That very same poem, which he is so fond of that he always carries it about in his pocket, he wanted to read to me a few days ago, and I had earnestly begged him to do so: but he had scarcely got beyond the first description of the moon, when, just as I had resigned myself to the enjoyment of its beauties, he suddenly jumpt up, ran out of the room, came back with the cook's apron round his waist, tore down the bell-rope in ringing to have the fire lighted, and insisted on broiling me some beefsteaks, for which I had not the least appetite, and which he fancies nobody in Europe dresses so well, though, if he is in luck, he does not spoil them above nine times in ten.

The Spaniard laught, and askt: Has he never been in love?

After his fashion, replied Emilius very gravely; as if he were making game of love and of himself, with a dozen women at a time, and, if you would believe his words, raving after every one of them: but ere a week passes over his head, they are all sponged out of it, and not even a blot is left behind.

They parted in the crowd, and Emilius walkt toward

the remote apartment, from which, long before he reacht it, he caught his friend's loud recitative. Ah, so you are here too! exclaimed Roderick, as he entered: you have just hit the right moment; I am at the very passage where we were interrupted the other day: sit down, and you may hear the remainder.

I am not in a humour for it now, said Emilius; besides, the time and place do not seem to me exactly suited to such an employment.

And why not? answered Roderick. Time and place are made for us, not we for time and place. Is not good poetry just as good at one hour as at another. Is not it right to read it? and can that which is right ever become wrong? Or would you rather dance? There is a lack of men; and you need only jump about for a few hours, at the mere risk of tiring your legs, to lay strong siege to the hearts of as many grateful beauties as you choose.

Good night! cried the other with his hand on the door; I am going home.

Roderick called out to him: Only one word! I shall set off to-morrow at daybreak with my friend here, to spend a few days in the country, but will look in upon you to say good bye before we start. Should you be asleep, as is most likely, you need not take the trouble of waking; for, before a week is out, I shall be back again.—The strangest being upon earth! he continued, turning to his neighbour; so moping and fretful, such a splitter of thoughts, that he turns all his pleasures sour; or rather there is no such thing as pleasure for him. Instead of walking about with his fellow-creatures in broad daylight and enjoying himself, he gets down to the bottom of the well of his fancies, in the hope of now and then catching a glimpse of a star. Everything must be in the superlative for him; everything must be pure, and majestic, and ethereal, and celestial: his heart must be always throbbing and heaving, even when he is standing before a puppet-show. He never laughs or cries, but can only smile and weep; and forsooth there is mighty little difference between his weeping and his smiling.

When anything, be it what it may, falls short of his anticipations and preconceptions, which are always flying up out of reach and sight, he puts on a tragical face, and complains that it is a base and soulless world. At this very moment, I make no doubt, he is requiring that under the masks of a Pantaloon or a Punch there should be a soul glowing with unearthly desires and ideal aspirations, and that Harlequin should outmoralize Hamlet on the nothingness of sublunary things: and if these expectations are disappointed, as they can never fail to be, the dew is sure to rise into his eyes, and he will turn his back on the whole motley scene in desponding contempt.

He must be atrabilious then? askt his hearer.

Not that exactly, answered Roderick: he has only been spoilt by the indulgence of his over-fond parents and by his own. He has accustomed himself to let his heart ebb and flow as regularly as the sea; and if this motion is ever at a stop, he cries out *a miracle!* and would offer a prize to the philosopher who should give a satisfactory explanation of so marvellous a phenomenon. He is the best fellow under the sun; but all my painstaking to break him of this perverseness has been utterly vain and thrown away; and if I would not earn scurvy thanks for my goodwill, I must even let him follow his own devices.

Might not a physician do him good? remarkt Anderson.

It is one of his whims, replied Roderick, to entertain a supreme contempt for the whole medical art. He will have it that every disease is something different and distinct in every particular patient, that there is no arranging it under any class, and that it is absurd to think of healing it by attending to ancient practice, and still more so by what is called theory: he would much rather apply to an old woman, and make use of sympathetic cures. In like manner he despises all foresight in other matters, and everything like regularity, moderation, and common sense: the last above all he holds in special abhorrence, as the antipode and arch-enemy to

all enthusiasm. While yet a child he framed for himself an ideal and noble character; and his constant aim is to make himself what he considers such, that is to say, a being who shews his superiority to all earthly things by his scorn for riches. Merely to avoid being suspected of stinginess, or of giving unwillingly, or of caring about money, he flings it right and left by handfuls; with all his large fortune he is for ever poor and distrest, and is the bubble of all such as are not gifted with precisely the same sort of magnanimity which for himself he is determined to attain to. To be his friend is the task of all tasks: for he is so touchy, you need only cough, or eat with your knife, or not sip your drink as delicately as a cow, or even pick your teeth, to offend him mortally.

Was he never in love? askt his country-friend.

Whom should he love? whom could he love? answered Roderick. He despises all the daughters of earth; and if he had a favourite, and were ever to suspect that she had not an angelical contempt for dress, or liked dancing at times as well as star-gazing, it would break his heart: still more tremendous would it be, if she were ever so unlucky as to sneeze.

Meanwhile Emilius was again standing among the crowd: but on a sudden he was seized by that heart-burning, that shivering, which had already so often come over him in the midst of a multitude in a like state of excitement. It drove him out of the ball-room, out of the house, and along the desolate streets; nor did he recover, and regain the quiet possession of his senses, till he reacht his lonely chamber. The night-light was already burning; he sent his servant to bed; everything over the way was silent and dark, and he sat down to pour forth the feelings which the ball had aroused, in verse.

Within the heart 'tis still;
 Sleep each wild thought encages:
 Now stirs a wicked will,
 Would see how madness rages,
 And cries: Wild spirit, awake!

Loud cymbals catch the cry,
 And back its echoes shake ;
 And, shouting peals of laughter,
 The trumpet rushes after,
 And cries : Wild spirit, awake !
 Amid them flute-tones fly,
 Like arrows, keen and numberless ;
 And with bloodhound yell
 Pipes the onset swell ;
 And violins and violoncellos,
 Creaking, clattering,
 Shrieking, shattering ;
 And horns whence thunder bellows ;
 To leave the victim slumberless,
 And drag forth prisoned madness,
 And cruelly murder all quiet and innocent gladness.

What will be the end of this commotion ?
 Where the shore to this turmoiling ocean ?
 What seeks the tossing throng,
 As it wheels and whirls along ?
 On ! on ! the lustres
 Like hell-stars bicker :
 Let us twine in closer clusters,
 On ! on ! ever closer and quicker !
 How the silly things throb, throb amain !
 Hence all quiet !
 Hither riot !
 Peal more proudly,
 Squeal more loudly,
 Ye cymbals, ye trumpets ! bedull all pain,
 Till it laugh again.

Thou beckonest to me, beauty's daughter ;
 Smiles ripple o'er thy lips,
 And o'er thine eye's blue water ;
 O let me breathe on thee
 Ere parted hence we flee,
 Ere aught that light eclipse !
 I know that beauty's flowers soon wither :
 Those lips, within whose rosy cells
 Thy spirit warbles its sweet spells,
 Death's clammy kiss ere long will press together.
 I know, that face so fair and full
 Is but a masquerading skull :
 But hail to thee skull so fair and so fresh !

Why should I weep and whine and wail,
 That what blooms now must soon grow pale,
 And that worms must batten on that sweet flesh?
 Let me laugh but to-day and to-morrow,
 And what care I for sorrow,
 While thus on the waves of the dance by each other
 we sail?

Now thou art mine,
 And I am thine;
 And what though pain and trouble wait
 To seize thee at the gate,
 And sob, and tear, and groan, and sigh,
 Stand ranged in state
 On thee to fly,
 Blithely let us look and cheerily
 On death that grins so drearily!
 What would grief with us, or anguish?
 They are foes that we know how to vanquish.
 I press thine answering fingers,
 Thy look upon me lingers,
 Or the fringe of thy garment will waft me a kiss:
 Thou rollest on in light;
 I fall back into night;
 Even despair is bliss.

From this delight,
 From this wild revel's surge
 Perchance there may emerge
 Foul jealousy, and scorn, and envious spite.
 But this is our glory and pride;
 When thee I despise,
 I turn but my eyes,
 And the fair one beside thee will welcome my gaze,
 And she is my bride!
 O happy, happy maze!
 Or shall it be her neighbour?
 Whose eyes like a sabre,
 Flash and pierce,
 Their glance is so fierce.

Thus jumping and prancing,
 Altogether go dancing
 Adown life's giddy cave;
 Nor living, nor loving,
 But dizzily roving
 Through dreams to a grave.

There below 'tis yet worse :
 Earth's flowers and its clay
 Roof a gloomier day,
 Hide a still deeper curse.
 Ring then, ye cymbals, enliven this dream !
 Ye horns shout a fiercer, more vulture-like-scream !
 And frisk caper skip prance dance yourselves out
 of breath !
 For your life is all art,
 Love has given you no heart :
 So hurrah till you plunge into bottomless death.

He had ended, and was standing by the window. Then she came into the opposite chamber, lovely, as he had never yet seen her: her brown hair floated freely, and played in wanton ringlets about the whitest of necks; she was but lightly clad, and seemed as if she meant to finish some little household matters at this late hour of the night before she went to bed: for she placed two candles in two corners of the room, set the green cloth on the table to rights, and withdrew again. Emilius was still sunk in his sweet dreams, and gazing on the image which his beloved had left in his mind, when to his horror the frightful, the scarlet old woman walkt through the chamber: the gold on her head and breast glared ghastly as it threw back the light. She had vanisht again. Was he to believe his eyes? Was it not some delusive phantom of the night that his own feverish imagination had conjured up before him?

But no! she returned, still more hideous than before, with a long grey and black mane flying wildly and haggardly about her breast and back. The beauteous maiden followed her, pale, stiff; her lovely bosom was all bared, but her whole form was like a marble statue. Betwixt them they led the sweet little child, crying and clinging imploringly to the fair maiden, who lookt not down upon it. The child lifted up and claspt its little beseeching hands, and strokt the pale neck and cheeks of the marble beauty. But she held it fast by the hair, and in the other hand a silver basin. Then the old woman growled, and pulled out a long knife, and drew it

across the white neck of the child. Here something crawled forth from behind that they seemed not to perceive, or it must have struck them with the same thrilling terrour as Emilius. A serpent curled its loathsome neck, scale after scale, lengthening and still lengthening, out of the darkness, and stooped down over the child, whose lifeless limbs hung from the old woman's arms : its black tongue lickt up the spiriting red blood, and a green sparkling eye shot over into the eye, and brain, and heart of Emilius, who instantly dropt on the ground.

He was senseless when found by Roderick some hours after.

A party of friends were sitting on the brightest summer-morning in a green arbour, assembled at an excellent breakfast. Laughter and jests passed round ; and many a time did the glasses kiss with a merry health to the young couple, and a wish that they might be the happiest of the happy. The bride and bridegroom were not present ; she being still engaged in dressing, while the young husband was sauntering by himself down an avenue some way off, musing upon his happiness.

What a pity it is, said Anderson, that we are to have no music ! All our ladies are beclouded at the thought, and never in their whole lives longed for a dance so much as to-day, when it is quite out of the question : it is far too painful to his feelings.

I can tell you a secret though, exclaimed a young officer, that we are to have a dance after all ; and a rare riotous and madcap one it will be. Everything is already arranged ; the musicians are come secretly and quartered out of sight. Roderick has managed the whole business ; for he says one ought not to let him always have his own way, or to humour his strange caprices overmuch, especially on such a day as this.

Besides, observed another young man, he is already become much more tractable and sociable than he used to be ; so that I think he himself will not be sorry at the alteration. Indeed the whole wedding has been brought

about all on the sudden, and has taken everybody by surprise.

His whole history, resumed Anderson, is just as extraordinary as his character. You must all remember how, being on his travels last autumn, he arrived in our city, and spent the winter there, living like a melancholy man almost entirely in his own room, and never visiting our theatre or taking part in any other amusement. He all but quarrelled with Roderick, his most intimate friend, for trying to divert him, and refusing to pamper all his moping fantasies. In fact this overstrained irritability and moroseness must have been a disease that was gathering in his body: for you know he was attacked four months ago by such a violent nervous fever, that his life was for a long time despaired of. After his frenzy had raved itself out, and he returned to his senses, he had almost entirely lost his memory: nothing but his childhood and early youth kept its hold on his mind; and he was totally unable to recollect anything that had happened during his journey, or immediately before his illness. He had to begin his acquaintance afresh with all his friends, even with Roderick; and it is only by little and little that his thoughts have grown lighter, and that the past, with all that had befallen him, has come back, though still in dim colours, into his memory. He had been removed into his uncle's house, that better care might be taken of him; and he was just like a child, letting them do whatever they chose with him. The first time he went out to enjoy the warmth of the spring in the park, he saw a girl sitting pensively by the roadside. She looked up; her eye met his; and seized with an inexplicable yearning he stopt the carriage, got out, sat down by her, took hold of her hands, and burst into a flood of tears. His friends were again alarmed for his intellects. but he grew calm, cheerful, and conversable, got introduced to the girl's parents, and at his very first visit asked for her hand, which, with her parents' consent, she granted him. Since that time he has been happy, and a new life has sprung up within him: day after day he has become healthier and more contented. A week

ago he paid me a visit at this country-house, and was above measure delighted with it; indeed so much so that he would not rest till he had made me sell it to him. I might easily have turned his passionate desire to my own advantage, and his loss; for when he once sets his heart on a thing, he will have it, and that too forthwith. He immediately let it be got ready, sent furniture that he may spend the summer-months here; and thus it has come to pass that we are all met for his wedding in my old garden.

The house was large, and in a very lovely country. One side of it lookt on a river and some woody hills beyond; shrubs and trees of various kinds were scattered about the lawn; and immediately before the windows lay a flower-garden sweetening the air. The orange and lemon-trees were ranged in a large open hall, from which small doors led to the store-rooms, cellars, and pantries. On the other side a meadow spread out its green floor, opening immediately into the park. The two long wings of the house formed a spacious court; and broad open galleries, borne by three rows of pillars standing one above the other, ran round it, connecting all the rooms in the house, and giving it a singular and interesting character: for figures were perpetually moving along these arcades, some engaged in one employment, some in another; new forms kept stepping forth between the pillars and out of the various rooms, which anon vanished and then reappeared above or below, to be lost behind one of the doors: parties too would often assemble there for tea or for some game; and thus from below the whole had the look of a theatre, before which everybody was glad to stop awhile, with a foreboding that something strange or pleasing was sure to meet his eyes ere long.

The party of young people were just rising, when the bride came in her full dress through the garden walking toward them. She was clad in violet-coloured velvet: a sparkling necklace lay cradled on her glittering neck; the costly lace just allowed her white swelling bosom to glimmer through; and her wreath of myrtle and

white roses gave her brown hair a still more beautiful tint. She greeted them all graciously, and the young men were astonisht at her surpassing beauty. She had been gathering flowers in the garden, and was going back into the house to see after the arrangements for dinner. The tables had been set out in the lower open gallery, and shone dazzling with their white coverings and their load of sparkling crystal: rich clusters of many-coloured flowers rose from the graceful necks of alabaster vases; green garlands, starred with white blossoms, twined round the columns: and it was a lovely sight to behold the bride gliding along with gentle motion between the tables and the pillars, amid the light of the flowers, overlooking the whole with a searching glance, and then vanishing, and reappearing a moment after above, to pass into her chamber. She is the loveliest, most enchanting creature I ever saw! cried Anderson: our friend is indeed a happy man.

Her very paleness, added the officer, heightens her beauty. Her hazel eyes only sparkle the more intensely above those white cheeks and beneath those dark locks; and the singular, almost burning redness of her lips gives her face a truly magical appearance.

The air of silent melancholy that surrounds her, said Anderson, sheds a noble majesty over her.

The bridegroom joined them, and askt after Roderick: he had been missing for some time, and they could not conceive what he was about. All set off in search of him. He is down in the hall, said at length a young man whom they happened to ask, in the midst of the coachmen, footmen, and grooms, shewing off tricks at cards, which make them stare till their wits ache. They walkt in, and interrupted the boisterous admiration of the servants, without however disturbing Roderick, who quietly went on conjuring. When he had finisht, he returned with the others into the garden, and said: I do it only to strengthen the fellows in their faith: these puzzles give a hard blow to their groomship's free-thinking inclinations, and help to make 'em true believers.

I see, said the bridegroom, my all-sufficing friend, among his other talents, does not think that of a mountebank beneath his cultivation.

We live in strange times, replied the other; who knows whether mountebanks may not come to rule the roast in their turn? One ought to despise nothing now-a-days: the veriest straw of a talent may be that which is to break the camel's back.

When the two friends found themselves alone, Emilius again turned down the dark avenue and said: Why am I in such a gloomy mood on this the happiest day of my life? But I assure you, Roderick, though you will not believe me, I am not made for moving about amid such a mob of human beings,—for this parade of heartless courtesy,—for keeping my attention on the *qui vive* to every letter of the alphabet, so that neither A nor Z may complain of being treated with disrespect,—for making low bows to her tenth cousin, and shaking hands warmly with my twentieth—for this formal reverence to her parents,—for handing a flower from my nosegay of compliments to every lady that crosses the room,—for waiting to receive the tide of new-comers as wave after wave rushes over me, and then turning to give orders that their servants and horses may each have a full trough and pail set before them.

That is a watch that goes of its own accord; answered Roderick. Only look at your house! it was just built for such an occasion: and your head-butler, with his right hand taking up at the same time that his left hand is setting down, and one leg running north while the other seems to be making for south, was begotten and born for the very purpose of putting confusion in order. He would set my brains to rights if he could get at 'em: were the whole city to come, he would find room for all; and he'll make your hospitality the proverb of fifty miles round. Leave all such matters to him, and to your lovely bride; and where will you find so sweet a lightener of this world's cares?

This morning before sunrise, said Emilius, I was walking through the wood; my thoughts were solemnly

tuned; I felt to the bottom of my soul that my life is now taking a determinate cast, that it is become a serious thing, and that this passion has created me a home and a calling. In passing by that arbour yonder I heard sounds: it was my beloved in close conversation. Has not it turned out now as I told you? said a strange voice; just as I knew it would turn out? You have got your wish; so cheer up and be merry. I did not like to go in to them: as I came back I walkt nearer to the arbour; they had both left it. But I have been musing and musing ever since, what can these words mean?

Roderick answered: Perhaps she may have been in love with you this long time without your knowing it: this should make you all the happier.

A late nightingale now lifted up her song, and seemed to be wishing the lover health and bliss. Emilius sank still deeper in thought. Come with me to clear up your spirits, said Roderick, down to the village, where you will find another couple; for you must not fancy that yours is the only wedding on which to-day's sun is to shine. A young clown, finding his time lag heavily in the house with an ugly old maid, for want of something better to do thinks himself bound to turn her into his wife. They must both be drest out by this time; so don't let us miss the sight; for doubtless it will be overpoweringly interesting.

The melancholy man let himself be dragged along by his merry talkative friend, and they soon got to the cottage. The procession was just sallying forth on its way to church. The young countryman was in his usual linen frock; all his finery consisted in a pair of leather breeches, which he had polisht till they shone like a field of dandelions: he had a very simple look, and was a good deal ashamed. The bride was tanned by the sun, and had only a few farewell leaves of youth still hanging about her: she was coarsely and poorly but cleanly drest: some red and blue silk ribbons, already somewhat faded, flaunted from her stomacher; but what chiefly disfigured her was, that her hair, after being stiffened with lard,

flour, and pins, had been swept back from her forehead and piled up at the top of her head in a mound, on the summit of which lay the bridal chaplet. She smiled, and seemed glad at heart, but was bashful and downcast. Next came the aged parents : her father too was only a labourer on the farm ; and the hovel, the furniture, the clothing, all bore witness that their poverty was extreme. A dirty squinting musician followed the train, grinning and screaming and scratching his fiddle, which was patcht up of wood and pasteboard, and instead of strings had three bits of packthread. The procession halted when his honour, their new master, came up to them. Some mischief-loving servants, lads and girls, tittered and laught, and jeered the bridal couple, especially the ladies' maids, who thought themselves far handsomer, and saw themselves infinitely better drest, and wondered how people could be so vulgar. A shudder came over Emilius : he lookt round for Roderick ; but the latter as usual had already run away. An impertinent fop, with a head pilloried in a high starcht neckcloth, a footman to one of the visitors, eager to shew off his wit, shoved up to Emilius, giggling, and cried : There your honour, what says your honour to this grand couple ? They can neither of 'em guess where they are to find bread for to-morrow ; and yet they mean to give a ball this afternoon, and that famous performer is already engaged.—No bread ! said Emilius ; can such things be ?—Their wretchedness, continued the chatterbox, is notorious to the whole neighbourhood ; but the fellow says he bears the creature the same good-will, though she has nothing to boast of but her charms. Ay verily, as the song says, love can make black white ! The brace of beggars have not even a bed, and must pass their wedding-night on the straw : they have just been round to every cottage, begging a pint of small beer, with which they mean to get royally drunk : a brave treat for a wedding, your honour !—Everybody around burst out a-laughing, and the unhappy despised pair hung down their heads. Emilius pusht the coxcomb indignantly away, and cried : Here,

take this! tossing a hundred ducats, which he had received that morning, into the hands of the amazed bridegroom. The betrothed couple and their parents wept aloud, threw themselves clumsily on their knees, and kist his hands and the skirts of his coat. He struggled to break loose from them. Let that keep hunger out of doors as long as you can make it last! he exclaimed, quite stunned by his feelings. Oh! they all screamed, oh your honour! we shall be rich and happy till the day of our deaths, and longer too, if we live longer.

He did not know how he got away, but he found himself alone, and hastened with tremulous steps into the wood. There he sought out the thickest loneliest spot, and threw himself down on a grassy knoll, no longer keeping in the bursting flood of his tears. I am sick of life! he cried: I cannot be gay and happy; I will not. Make haste to receive me, dear kind mother earth, and shelter me with thy cool refreshing arms from the wild beasts that trample on thee and call themselves men. Oh God in heaven! how have I deserved that I should lie upon down, and be clothed in silk, that the grape should pour forth her precious heart's blood for me, and that all should throng around me with offerings of homage and love! This poor wretch is better and worthier than I; and misery is his nurse, and mockery and venomous scorn alone wish him joy on his wedding. Every delicacy that is placed before me, every draught out of my costly goblets, the soft luxury of my bed, my wearing gold and rich garments, will seem to me like so many sins, now that my eyes have seen how the world hunts down many thousand thousand miserable beings, who are hungering after the dry bread I throw away, and who never know what a good meal is. Oh now I can fully enter into your feelings, ye holy saints, whom the world scorns and scoffs at, ye who did scatter your all, even down to your very raiment, among the poor, and did gird your loins with sackcloth, and did resolve as beggars to undergo the gibes and the kicks wherewith brutal insolence and swilling voluptu-

ousness drive the needy from their doors, that by so doing you might thoroughly purge yourselves from the foul sin of wealth.

The world with all its inhabitants floated in a mist before his eyes : he resolved to look upon the destitute as his brethren, and to depart from the communion of the happy. They had been waiting a long time for him in the hall, that the ceremony might be performed ; the bride had grown uneasy ; her parents had gone in search of him through the garden and park : at length he returned, lighter for having wept away his agitation ; and the solemn knot was tied.

The company then walkt from the hall on the groundfloor to the open gallery, to sit down to dinner. The bride and bridegroom led the way, and the rest followed in their train. Roderick offered his arm to a young girl who was lively and talkative. Why does a bride always cry, and look so serious and sad during the ceremony ? said she, as they mounted the stairs.

Because it is the first time that she ever thoroughly feels what a momentous and mysterious thing life is, answered Roderick.

But our bride, continued the girl, in her gravity goes far beyond all I have ever yet seen. Indeed, there is always something melancholy about her, and one can never catch her in a downright merry laugh.

This does the more honour to her heart, replied Roderick, himself more serious than usual. You don't know perhaps that the bride a few years ago took a lovely little orphan girl into her house to educate her. All her time was devoted to this child, and the gentle creature's love was her sweetest reward. When the girl was seven years old, she was lost on a walk about the town ; and in spite of all the pains that have been used, nobody has ever found out what became of her. Our noble-minded hostess has taken this misfortune so much to heart, that she has been a prey ever since to silent grief, and nothing can win her mind away from longing after her little playfellow.

A most interesting adventure indeed ! said the young

lady. One might see a whole romance in three volumes growing out of this seed. It will be a strange sight, and it will not be for nothing, when this lost star reappears. What a pretty poem it would make! Don't you think so, sir?

The party took their seats, the bride and bridegroom were in the centre, looking out on the gay landscape. Everybody talkt and drank healths, and all was mirth and good-humour: the bride's parents were perfectly happy: the bridegroom alone was reserved and thoughtful, ate but little, and took no part in the conversation. He started on hearing musical sounds roll down through the air from above, but grew calm again when he found they were only the soft notes of some bugles, travelling along with a pleasant murmur over the shrubs, and through the park, and dying away on the distant hills. Roderick had placed the musicians in the gallery overhead, and Emilius was satisfied with this arrangement. Toward the end of the dinner he called the butler, and, turning to his bride, said: My love, let poverty also have a share of our superfluities. He then ordered him to send a number of bottles of wine, and abundance of pastry as well as other dishes, to the poor couple, that with them too this might be a day of rejoicing, to which in aftertimes they might look back with pleasure. See, my friend, exclaimed Roderick, how beautifully all things in this world hang together! My idle trick of busying myself in other folk's concerns, and chattering about whatever comes uppermost, though you will never give over finding fault with it, has at all events been the cause of this good deed.—Several persons began making pretty speeches to their host on his kind and charitable heart: and Roderick's neighbour lispt about the sweetness of romantic compassion and sentimental magnanimity. O say no more! cried Emilius indignantly: this is no good action; it is no action at all; it is nothing. When swallows and linnets feed on the crumbs that are thrown away from the waste of this meal, and carry them to their young in their nest, shall not I remember a poor brother, who needs my help? If I

might follow my heart, ye would laugh and jeer at me, just as ye have laught and jeered at many others, who have gone forth into the wilderness that they might hear no more of this world and its generosity.

Everybody was silent: and Roderick, perceiving from his friend's glowing eyes how vehemently he was displeased, was afraid that in his present irritation he might forget himself still further, and tried to give the conversation a rapid turn on other subjects. But Emilius was become restless and absent; his eyes wandered, more especially toward the upper gallery, where the servants who lived in the top story were engaged in a variety of occupations. Who is that ugly old woman? he at length askt, that is so busy up there, and is coming back again every moment in her grey cloak?—She is one of my servants, said his bride; she is to overlook and manage my chambermaids and other girls.—How can you endure to have anything so hideous perpetually at your elbow? replied Emilius.—Let her alone, answered the young lady: God meant the ugly to live as well as the handsome; and she is such a good honest creature, she may be of great use to us.

On rising from table everybody gathered round the bridegroom, again wisht him joy, and urgently begged him to let them have a ball. The bride too said, breathing a gentle kiss on his forehead: You will not deny your wife's first request, my beloved; we have all been delighting in the hope of this. It is so long since I danced last: and you have never yet seen me dance. Have you no curiosity how I shall acquit myself in this new character? my mother tells me I look better than at any other time.

I never saw you in such gay spirits before, said Emilius. I will not throw a damp over your mirth; do as you please: only don't let anybody ask me to make a laughingstock of myself by trying to cut clumsy capers.

Oh, if you are a bad dancer, she answered laughing, you may feel quite safe; we shall all readily consent to your sitting still. The bride then retired to put on her ball-dress.

She does not know, whispered Emilius to Roderick, as he withdrew, that there is a secret door by which I can get from the next room into hers: I will surprise her while she is dressing.

When Emilius had left them, and many of the ladies were also gone to make such changes in their attire as were requisite for the ball, Roderick took the young men aside and led the way to his own room. It is wearing toward evening, he said, and will soon be dark; so make haste all of you and mask yourselves, that we may render this night glorious in the annals of merriment and madness. Give your fancies free range in choosing your characters; the wilder and uglier the better. Try every combination of shaggy mane, and squinting eye, and mouth gaping like a volcano; pile mountains atop of your shoulders, or plump yourselves out into Falstaffs; and as a whet to your inventions I promise a kiss from the bride to the figure that would be the likeliest to make her miscarry. A wedding is such an out-of-the-way event in ones life; the bride and bridegroom are so suddenly plunged, by a sort of magic, head over heels into a new unaccustomed element, that it is impossible to throw too much madness and folly into this festival, in order to keep pace with the whirlpool that is bearing a brace of human beings from the state where they were two to the state where they become one, and that all things round about may be fitting accompaniments for the dizzy dream on the wings of which they are floating toward a new life. So let us rave away the night, making all sail before the breeze; and a fig for such as look twice on the dull sour faces that would bid you behave rationally and soberly.

Don't be afraid, said the young officer; we have brought a large chest full of masks and mad carnival dresses from town with us, such as would made even you stare.

But see here, returned Roderick, what a gem I have got from my tailor, who was on the point of cutting up this peerless treasure into strips. He had bought it of an old crone who must doubtless have worn it on gala-

days, when she went to Lucifer's drawing-room on the Blocksberg. Look at this scarlet bodice with its gold tassels and fringe, at this cap besmeared with the last fee the hag got from Beelzebub or his imps! it will give me a right worshipful air. To match these choice morsels I have this green velvet petticoat, with its saffron lining, and this mask which would melt even Medusa to a grin. Thus accoutred I mean to lead the chorus of anti-graces, myself their mother-queen, to the bed-room. Make the best speed you can, and we will then go in solemn procession to fetch the bride.

The bugles were still playing: the company were strolling about the garden, or sitting before the house. The sun had gone down behind thick murky clouds, and the country was lying in the grey dusk, when a parting gleam suddenly burst athwart the cloudy veil, and flooded every spot around, but above all the building, its galleries and pillars and wreaths of flowers, as it were with red blood. At this moment the parents of the bride and the other visitors saw a train of the most grotesque figures move toward the upper corridor. Roderick led the way as the scarlet old woman, and was followed by humpbacks, bulging paunches, cumbrous wigs, Scaramouches, Punches, shrivelled Pantaloon, curtsyng women embankt by enormous hoops, and over-canopied with a yard of horse-hair, powder, and pomatum, and by every disgusting shape that can be imagined, as if a nightmair had been unrolling her stores. They jumpt, and twirled, and tottered, and stumbled, and straddled, and strutted, and swaggered along the gallery, and then vanisht behind one of the doors. But few of the beholders had been able to laugh, so utterly were they astounded by the strange sight. Suddenly a piercing shriek burst from one of the rooms, and forth into the blood-red glow of the sun-set rusht the pale bride, in a short white frock, about which wreaths of flowers were dangling, with her lovely bosom all naked, and her rich locks streaming through the air. As though mad, with rolling eyes and wrencht face, she darted along the gallery, and blinded by

terror could find neither door nor staircase ; and immediately after dasht Emilius in chase of her, with the sparkling Turkish dagger in his high-uplifted hand. Now she was at the end of the passage...she could go no further...he reacht her. His maskt friends and the grey old woman were running after him. But in his fury he had already pierced her bosom, and cut across her white neck ; her blood spouted forth into the radiance of the setting sun. The old woman had claspt her hands round him to tear him back ; he struggled fiercely, hurled himself along with her over the railing, and they both fell almost lifeless at the feet of the relations who had been staring in dumb horror at the bloody scene. Above, and in the court, or hurrying down the steps or along the galleries, were seen the hideous masks, standing or running about, in various clusters, like fiends of hell.

Roderick took his dying friend in his arms. He had found him in his wife's room, playing with the dagger. She was almost drest when he entered. At the sight of the detested red bodice his memory had rekindled ; the horrid vision of that night had risen up before his eyes ; and gnashing his teeth he had darted after his trembling, flying bride, to avenge that murder and all those devilish doings. The old woman, ere she died, confest the crime that had been perpetrated ; and the gladness and mirth of the whole house were suddenly changed into sorrow and lamentation and dismay.

PIETRO OF ABANO.

THE setting sun was flinging its red rays upon the towers and over the houses of Padua, when a young stranger, newly arrived, had his attention excited by a throng of people who were hurrying and running along, and was carried by them out of his way. He asked a girl who was passing quickly by him, what had set the whole town in such an extraordinary commotion. Don't you know then? answered she: the beautiful Crescentia, the young thing, is just going to be buried; everybody wishes to have one more sight of her; for she has always been counted the sweetest maiden in the whole city. Her parents are heart-broken. The last words she called back to him, from some distance beyond him.

The stranger turned round the dark palace into the great street, and his ears were now met by the funeral hymn, and his eyes by the flickering light of the pale-red torches. On drawing nearer, pushed forward by the crowding of the people, he saw a scaffold covered with black cloth. Around it were raised seats, likewise black, on which the sorrowing parents and relations were sitting, all in stern gloom, some faces with the look of despair. Figures now began to move forth from the door of the house; priests and black forms bore an open coffin, out of which wreaths of flowers and green garlands were hanging down. In the midst of the blooming gay plants lay the maidenly form raised upon cushions, pale, in a white robe, her lovely slender hands folded and holding a crucifix, her eyes closed, dark black tresses hanging full and heavy round her head, on which a wreath of roses and cypress and myrtle was gleaming. The coffin with its beautiful corpse was placed upon the scaffold; the priests cast themselves down to pray; the parents

gave yet louder vent to their grief; yet more wailing grew the sound of the hymns; and everybody around, even the strangers, sobbed and wept. The traveller thought he had never yet seen so lovely a creature, as this corpse that thus mournfully reminded him how fleeting life is, how vain and perishable its charms.

Now sounded the solemn tolling of the bells, and the bearers were on the point of taking up the coffin, to carry the corpse into the burial-vault of the great church, when loud riotous shouts of exultation and pealing laughter and the cries of an unrestrained joy disturbed and alarmed the parents and kinsfolk, the priests and mourners. All lookt indignantly round, when out of the next street a merry troop of young men came boisterously toward them, singing and huzzaing, and evermore again and again crying a long life! to their venerable teacher. They were the students of the university, carrying an aged man of the noblest aspect on a chair raised atop of their shoulders, where he sat as on a throne, covered with a purple cloak, his head adorned with a doctor's hat, from beneath which white silver locks hung forth, while a long white beard flowed down majestically over his black velvet doublet. Beside him came a fool with bells and in a motley dress, jumping about, and striving by blows and by jests to make way for the train through the people and the line of mourners: but on a sign from the venerable old man the students lowered his chair; he descended, and approacht the weeping parents, much moved and with a solemn demeanour. Forgive me, said he mournfully and with a tear in his eye, that this wild tumult thus breaks in upon your burial-rites, which grieve and shock me to the heart. I am just come back at length from my journey; my scholars wisht to celebrate my entrance by their joy; I yielded to their entreaties and preparations; and I now find...how? your *Crescentia*, that fairest emblem of all loveliness and virtue, here before you in her coffin. And all around there is this dark pomp and these forms of sorrow, accompanying her with tears and the heart's woe to her place of rest.—

He beckoned to his companions, and spake a few words. All had long since become quiet and silent, and most of them now withdrew, that they might not interrupt the funeral.

Then the mother came nearer tottering, and sank down before the form of the old man, while she embraced his knee in convulsive grief. Ah! why were you not here? she cried despairingly; your art, your knowledge would have saved her. O Pietro! Pietro! you, the friend of our house! how could you thus let your darling, the apple of your eye, perish? But come! Awaken her even now! Pour into her even now one of those wonder-working elixirs which you know how to compound; and in return take all that we possess, so she be but again here, walking about among us and talking to us.

Let not despair guide your tongue, answered Pietro: the Lord had lent her to you; he has demanded her back from you; let not man presume to arrest the arm of his wise counsels. Who are we, that we should murmur against him? Shall the child of the dust, that is scattered to nought by the wind, puff forth its weak breath in anger against the eternal decrees? No, my dear friends, as Crescentia's parents, as having loved her and been loved by her, cherish the feeling of your grief; let none of it escape you. Grief should be as familiar an inmate in our hearts as Pleasure and Gladness; for he too is sent us by our Father, who beholds all our tears, and well understands and tries our hearts, and knows what frail mortals can bear. Bear then this great overwhelming woe for his sake, out of love to him; for it is all love, whatsoever burthen he may cast upon you. Is not grief, is not the heart in its wringing agony, the soul that would melt away in sorrow, a holy and godly offering, which amid your burning tears you lay, as the most precious of your possessions, before the everlasting Love of the Most High? As such too is it considered by Him above, who numbers all your sighs and tears. But our wicked enemy, who is always lurking at our side, grudges us the holiness of this hea-

venly sorrow: it is he who would foment and stir it up in you into despair, into rage against the Father of love and of grief, that you may not in your anguish become yet more thoroughly the children of Love, but may plunge and sink into the abyss of Hatred. He, this Spirit of Lies, is now beguiling you and maliciously whispering his tales in your ears, as though you had for ever lost her, who yet was one with you only in spirit and soul and love, and belonged to you only so far as she was invisible. He would have you forget that this beauteous covering was only her garment, akin to the dust, and now going back to the dust. Cast him back from you, this lying Spirit: shame and confound him with the eternal almighty truth which you hold up before him, that she is still yours, still near you, still at your side, yea far more, far entierelier yours, than when these party-walls of mortal flesh kept you asunder, and in the midst of all your love estranged you from each other. From this day forward she is all your memory and hope and sorrow and joy; she shines upon you in every gladdening light; she cheers you in the flowers of spring; she kisses you in the gentle airs that breathe on your cheeks: and every delight that henceforth blossoms in your hearts, is her heart and her love to you; and this delight and this everlasting deathless love are one with God. Carry her then to her resting-place, and follow her in silent humble resignation, that her soul in the abode of everlasting peace may not be disturbed and made uneasy by you.

All seemed to have become calmer; the father speechlessly held forth his hand to him with an expression of cordial friendship and of a comforted heart. They drew up in order; the procession set itself in motion; the masks, the fraternities that made it their duty to attend corpses, ranged themselves in their white gowns, with hooded faces, of which nothing could be seen but the eyes. Silently the train moved on: they had now nearly reached the church, when a rider on a foaming horse galloped toward them. What is the matter? cried the youth. He threw a look into the coffin, and with a

shriek of despair turned his horse, darted away, and in his wild speed lost his hat, so that his long hair waved about behind him in the evening breeze. He was the bridegroom, come to the wedding.

Darkness gathered round the train of mourners, and their husht rites, as the beauteous corpse sank down into the vault of her family.

When the crowd had disperst, the young stranger, who had followed the procession in wonder mixt with sadness, went up to an old priest who remained alone praying by the grave. He longed to learn who that majestic old man was, that had seemed to him gifted with godlike powers and more than earthly wisdom. When the youth had laid his question modestly before the priest, the latter stood up, and, by the light of a lamp that shone upon them from a window, lookt sharply into his eye. The old man had a little spare form; his pale narrow face heightened the fire of his eyes yet more; and his pincht lips quivered, as with hoarse voice he answered: How! you don't know him? our far-famed Petrus of Apone, or Abano, of whom people talk in Paris, and London, and in the German Empire, and throughout all Italy? You know not the greatest of philosophers and physicians, of astronomers and astrologers, to learn from whom and to see whom the wild youth flock hither from the far parts of Poland?

The young Spaniard, Alfonso, had moved back a step in delighted surprise; for the renown of this great teacher had driven him too from Barcelona over the sea. Then it was he, it was himself! he cried enthusiastically: this too was why my heart felt so deeply moved. My spirit recognized his. O generous, pious man, how I love you for honouring him no less than do all the noble-minded and good in the Christian world!

You too mean perchance to study under him? askt the priest with a bitter tone.

Certainly, answered the other, if he will vouchsafe to receive me among his scholars.

The old man stood still, laid his hand on the youth's shoulder, and then said mildly : My dear young friend, there is yet time : listen even now to my fatherly warning, before it is too late. Do not deceive yourself, as so many, even without number, have done already ; be on your guard, and watch over your soul. Are you then at your age thus beforehand weary of your peace and future blessedness ? would you requite your Saviour's love by becoming a runagate from him, and denying him, and taking up arms as a rebel against him ?

I understand you not, old man, replied Alfonso : did not you yourself see and hear how piously, how christianly, with what a heart-stirring majesty, the glorious man spake, and led back the erring footsteps of sorrowing love by his heavenly comfort into the right path ?

What is there that he cannot, that he will not do, the trickster, the magician ! exclaimed the old priest warmly.

Magician ! returned Alfonso. So you too would take part in the folly of the rabble that is unable to appreciate the knowledge of lofty spirits, and would rather credit any absurdity than strengthen their own souls by gazing upon the grandeur of a fellow-creature.

Only go on in this way, said the priest indignantly, and you scarcely need go into his vaunted school. It is clear his magic has you already in its snares, just as he subdues every heart that but beats within his reach. Yes forsooth, the heathen, he has spoken and prophesied to-day like a priest, and has for once besmeared his lies with this varnish. In the same manner he is lord and master in the house of the Podesta. Poor Crescentia could hardly in her last hours find her way back to holy church : so bound and held fast was her soul by the false doctrines the wicked hypocrite had flung like poisonous nets around her young spirit. Now she has escaped him ; the Lord has called her to himself, and has sent this disease to save her soul with the loss of her body.

The speakers were come into the large square be-

fore the church. The youth was irritated, and, to give his feelings vent, exclaimed: What boots all this fierce envy, my ghostly sir? Do you not see, can you not perceive, how the world only falls away from you more and more, the more you by your excommunications and anathemas and persecutions strive to quench and stifle the new spirit? that spirit of eternal truth which is now awakening all nations from their sleep, and which in spite of your arts will never sink upon the pillow again to swallow your legends in submissive faith.

Bravo! said the old man in high wrath: Have we not Averroes now instead of Christ, and Aristoteles instead of the Almighty, and this Pietro of yours, this Iscariot, instead of the Holy Ghost? And verily the spirit of the earth has built up a high and stately body for him, and has crowned it with a noble brow, and has set an eye of fire in it, and the sweet mouth of persuasion, and has poured grace and majesty over his motions, that he may juggle and delude: while I, the unworthy servant of the Lord, walk about here sickly and weak and without all comeliness of feature, and have only my own confession, only my faith, to give assurance that I am a christian. I cannot descend like him into the depths of dazzling knowledge, nor measure the course of the stars, nor foretell good and evil fortune; I am reviled and scorned by the overwise; but I bear it humbly, for the love of him who has laid all this upon me. Wait however until the end, and see whether his seven spirits whom he holds under his magical spell can save him then; whether his Familiar, that spawn of hell, will then assist him.

Was his Familiar with him? asked Alfonso eagerly.

Did not you observe the monster, answered the monk, that had trickt itself out like a clown? the abortion with that hump, those twisted hands and arms, those crooked legs, those squinting eyes, and that enormous nose jutting out from its unsightly face.

I took all that for a mask; said the youth.

No, this creature, replied the old man, need not put on a mask. Such as he is, he is mask enough, and

spectre, and imp of hell, this Beresynt, as they call him... Will you pass the night in our convent, young man, until you have found a lodging?

No, rejoined he very positively; I will be indebted for no hospitality to a man thus unjust and slanderous toward the noble being whose name I heard with rapture while yet in my own country, and who shall walk and shine before me here as my guide and model. It is bad enough that I have been forced to hear such language from you, from a man whose condition and age forbid my calling him to account for it. If he alone is to be esteemed godly, who despises science and knowledge, he alone a christian, who in a waking slumber dozes away the days of his life and the powers of his soul, I depart out of the dull communion. But it is not so; nor is it the man, the christian, or the priest, that has been speaking from your lips, but your guild and fraternity. Farewell, if with such feelings you can.

They parted, both much out of temper.

The young Florentine who had met the funeral procession in the city, dashed like a madman through the gate, and then galloped with reckless vehemence across field and wood. When he found himself in the open country, he hurled forth imprecations against the world and fate, tore his hair, cursed his stars and his youth, and then rushed almost unconsciously onward. He spurred in the face of the wind that arose at nightfall, as though seeking to cool the fire in his cheeks. When it grew later, his horse, which had often stumbled already, and which he had pulled up furiously every time, dropt exhausted to the ground, and he was forced to pursue his way on foot. He knew not where he was, still less whither he should go; only there stood before him with inextinguishable features his own misery, and the vanity of the world, and the treacherous inconstancy of all happiness. Accursed madness of life! cried he in his despair through the darkness: thus, thus cruelly dost

thou awaken me out of my slumber! I cannot choose but hate thee mortally for thy jugglings, thy presumption, and for all those senseless hopes which smile upon our youth and go along with us so like friends upon our journey, and, when they have beguiled us into the wilderness, fly away from us and grin and make mows at us. Life! what is this web of folly, this silly dream of a fever-sick heart? One faint shivering-fit follows another; one crazy phantom drives another out; our wishes caper around in the bald waste, and do not even know themselves again. O death! O rest! O nothingness! come to me, let me embrace thee, and set this stormy heart free. O that I could but gasp out my last convulsive breath this very instant! that to-morrow's sun might no more find my place upon earth, that no thought might rise within me to greet its returning ray! Am I not the very wretchedest creature that breathes? and so much the poorer, for that a few hours since I deemed myself the happiest. Woe be to youth! woe to love! woe to the feelings of the heart, that let themselves be so readily, so grossly deceived!

A shower now drizzled through the cold air, and soon the drops grew larger and thicker. The youth knew not whither he had strayed; the wood lay already far behind him; no shelter was near. He began to gather up his recollections; his grief became gentler; tears flowed from his eyes. He already hated life less; it seemed to him as though the night itself wisht to comfort him and to soothe his sorrow. Uncertain whether to seek for his fallen horse again, or to hide himself in some hollow from the rain, he lookt once more around, and at length far below him across a valley and at the back of some trees discovered a little dancing light, that like a friendly eye winkt to him through the thick darkness and called him to approach it. He hastened toward the dubious gleam, which now vanisht, and now again shone forth. All his powers, all his feelings were bound as in sleep; his whole being had as it were past away into a dream.

A storm now got up, and heavy low-hanging thunder-

clouds were rolling slowly along. He was already approaching some trees, as it appeared to him; but the darkness made it impossible to distinguish anything whatever. A flash of lightning here dazzled him and a loud clap of thunder stunned him, so that he fell into a ditch. On lifting himself up again, the light which had allured him was close at hand. He knocked at the little window that peeped through some trees, and begged for admittance and shelter from the rain and storm. A loud hoarse voice answered from within; but the youth did not catch a word; for the wind and thunder and rain, and the rustling of the trees, all now raged so violently at once, that every sound beside them fell dead.

The door of the little house opened into the garden: he had to hasten through it; a female hand then took hold of him, led him along a dark passage, and into a little room, from which the light of a lamp and the fire on the hearth shone in his eyes. In the corner by the lamp sat a hideous old woman spinning; the girl who had conducted him in set to work over the fire; and for a long time he was unable to examine the figures closelier by the doubtful quivering light; for a long time no conversation could be carried on, the roaring of the thunder overpowering every other sound.

This is a cruel storm! said the old woman during a pause with a croaking voice. Whence do you come hither, young man?

I come from Padua since this evening.

Far indeed, cried the old woman: it lies six good leagues from here. And whither are you going? for there is no public road hereabout.

I know not, and care not to know. The wretched cannot frame any plan or think about the future. Indeed, how happy should I feel, were there no future at all for me!

You are talking nonsense, young man; and that must not be. Heyday! she exclaimed, as she lifted up the lamp and lookt at him more narrowly, why he is a Florentine! That doublet and cape is what I have not

seen this many a day. Well now, this must surely bode me some good. So the ugly weather has made me a present of a dear guest; for you must know, my young gentleman, I too am from that blessed land. Ay Florence! Ah, if one might but once more tread on thy ground and see thy dear hills and gardens again! And your name, my dear young gentleman?

Antonio Cavalcanti, said the youth, who felt more confidence in the old dame on finding that she was his countrywoman.

O what an accent! cried she almost rapturously: Cavalcanti! such a one I too knew some years since, one Guido.

He was my father, said Antonio.

And is he no longer alive?

No answered the young man; my mother too was taken from me a long time ago.

I know it, I know it, my dear pretty boy. Ay, ay, it must now be full fifteen years since she died. Alas yes, it was then, in those troublous times, that she had to give up the ghost. And your dear worthy father, he is the only person I have to thank for the judges not having treated me just like a faggot some years after: they had somehow got it into their pates that I was a witch, and there was no avail in denying it. But Signor Guido fought my battle, what with reason and what with ranting, what with entreaties and what with threats: so they merely banisht me out of the dear land. And now this thunderstorm brings me the son of my benefactor into my poor little cottage. Come, give me your hand on the strength of it, youngster.

Antonio gave it to the old woman shuddering; for now at length he was able to observe her more distinctly. She grinned at him friendly, and displayed two long black teeth standing out between her bristly lips; her eyes were small and sharp, her brow furrowed, her chin long; she stretcht out two gaunt shrivelled arms toward him; and being compelled, however loth, to embrace her, he felt the hump which made her ugliness still more disgusting. True! she said with a forced

laugh, I am not remarkably pretty; I was not so even in my younger days. There is something whimsical about beauty; one can never tell or describe downrightly in what it consists; it is always only the want of certain things which, when you have them at their full size, make up what folks call ugliness. Come now, tell me, such as I am, what do you think the most hideous thing about me?

My dear old dame, said the youth in confusion...

No, she cried, plump out with the truth, and without any flattery. Everybody, you know, has some odd maggot or other; and as for me, I pride myself no little on being utterly without all those things which in the world they christen handsome. Now let me see your taste! speak out!

If I must, stammered Antonio, while in spite of his grief a smile curled his lips, those two teeth are...to my mind...

Ha, ha! cried the old woman laughing aloud, my two dear good old black teeth are what pleases you the least about me. I can well believe it: they stand like two scorcht palisades among the ruins of a fortress in the wide empty space there. But you should have seen me ten years back; then matters were much worse still. In those days I had a whole mouth full of such portentous grinders; and they who loved me never would say it lookt frightful. Well, one by one they fell out, and these two alone are left behind the last of all their race. When they are once gone, my jaws will clap together like two doors, the upper lip will grow just thrice as long, and again one can't tell what sort of a face will come of it. Time, my dear young friend, is, as somebody found out many many years ago, a bungling workman; he makes a creature pretty enough; then he daubs and trims and pares and pulls and squeezes the thing about, draws the nose and chin out of their sheaths, knocks in the cheeks, eats ruts into the forehead, till he has turned it into a scarecrow; and then at last he gets ashamed, smashes the whole wretched concern to pieces, and shovels it over with earth, that all

the world may not see his disgrace. Your cheeks too, smooth and polisht as they are, will not be so like a rose-leaf by and by. Here! let me look! verily you have the rarest pearls of toothikins! a pity they must be used in chewing bread and bullock's flesh. Hey, hey! shew them to me...wider open with the mouth...but they stand very oddly...hem! and that eyetooth! there is meaning in all that.

Antonio knew not whether to scold or laugh; however he constrained himself to be calm, and to let the old woman have her chatter; for owing, as it seemed, to her former acquaintance with his family, she possest a strange power over him. But how did he start with amazement when she suddenly cried out: Crescentia!

For Heaven's sake! he said, almost breathlessly: do you know her? can you see her? can you tell me anything about her?

What's the matter with you? howled the old woman: how can I help knowing her, seeing she is my own daughter? Only look yourself how the lazy slut has fallen asleep in her chair there, and lets the fire go out and the soup get cold.

She took up the lamp and went to the chimney; but what were the youth's feelings, when again for the second time on that day he beheld his beloved, almost the same as in the evening? Her pale head lay dropt back; her eyes were closed; every feature, even the dark tresses, were those of his bride; just so were her little hands folded, and just so did she too clasp a crucifix between them. Her white dress helpt to increase the illusion; the flowers alone were wanting; but the dusk wove something like wreaths of dark heavy foliage around her hair. She is dead! sighed Antonio, gazing fixedly upon her. Sluggish is she, the lazy jade, said the old woman, and shook the fair slumberer awake: she can do nothing but pray and sleep, the useless baggage.

Crescentia roused herself, and her confusion still heightened her beauty. Antonio felt on the brink of madness at thus again seeing before him one whom he

had yet lost for ever. Old witch! he cried out vehemently: where am I? and what forms art thou bringing before my wandering senses? Speak, who is this lovely being? Crescentia, art thou alive again? Dost thou still acknowledge me as thine own? How camest thou hither?

Holla! my young prince, screamed the old woman; you are gabbling away there, as though you had quite lost your little bit of an understanding. Is the storm beating about inside of your pate? has the lightning perchance singed your brains? She is my daughter, and always has been so.

I do not know you, said the pale Crescentia, blushing sweetly: I was never in the city.

Sit down, the old woman interposed; and eat and drink what I have to give you. The soup was placed on the table, along with some fruit; and the old woman going to a small cupboard took out a flask of excellent Florentine wine. Antonio could eat but little; his eye was spell-bound upon Crescentia; and his disturbed and shattered imagination was evermore persuading him anew that this was his lost bride. Then again he often fancied he was lying enchained by a heavy dream, or had been seized by a trance of madness which was transforming every object around him, so that he was perhaps still in Padua, or at his own home, and saw nothing but phantasmal forms, and could not recognize or understand any of the friends who might be round about consoling him or mourning over him.

The storm had raved itself out, and the stars were shining in the pacified dark sky. The old woman ate greedily, and drank still more plenteously of the sweet wine. Now at length, young Antonio, she began after some time, tell us, prithee, what brought you to Padua, and what has driven you hither?

Antonio started as from sleep. You may well, he replied, demand some account of your guest, since, beside that reason, you knew my father, and it may be my mother too.

To be sure I knew her, said the old woman sniggering; nobody so well as I. Yes, yes, she died just six

months before your father celebrated his second marriage with the Marchesa Manfredi.

So you know that too ?

Why, it seems to me, she continued, as though I could see the dainty trim doll at this very moment before me. Well, is your beautiful stepmother still living ? When they drove me out of the country she was just in her prime full bloom.

I cannot again go through, said Antonio with a sigh, what I suffered from that alien mother. She held my father as under enchantment ; and he was readier to wrong all his old friends, readier to wrong his own son, than in anywise to offend her. At last however their behaviour to each other altered ; but my heart almost broke at the sight of their hatred, while before it had only bled at the insults I had to endure.

So there was plenty of bitter malice, askt the old hag with a nauseous grin, throughout the whole family ?

Antonio eyed her with a sharp look, and said confusedly : I know not how I have come to be talking here about my own and my parent's misery.

The old woman swallowed a bumper of red wine, which stood like blood in the glass. Then with a loud laugh she said : Faith, I know no such glorious pleasure, nothing, I mean, so like what one may call perfect rapture and bliss, as when such a wedded couple, who in earlier days were once a pair of fond lovers, fall out in this way, and snarl and snap at each other, like cat and dog, or two tiger-beasts, and scold and curse each other, and would each give up heart and soul to Satan, only to hurt and pain or to get rid of the other. This, my young lad, is the true glory of mortal life : but more especially, if the two yokefellows have of yore gone stark mad with love, if they have done everything, even what is a little bit out of the way, for each other, if they have waded through much of what certain good pious folks would call crimes and sins, merely for the sake of getting at one another, merely for the sake of at last tying the knot, which they now so cordially abhor. Trust me, this is a grand feast for Satan and all his comrades ;

and it makes those below keep jubilee and sing psalms. And here now even ... but I'll hold my tongue ; I might easily say too much.

Crescentia lookt mournfully at the astonisht youth. Forgive her, she whispered : you see she has drunk too much ; pity her.

But in Antonio's soul there now rose up with fresh power the image of former times and all their dark scenes. The sorrowful day came back upon him, when he saw his stepmother on her deathbed, when his father was in despair and curst himself and the hour of his birth, and called upon the spirit of his first wife and prayed for forgiveness.

Have you nothing else to tell ? askt the old woman, and thereby awakened him from his dreamy amaze.

What shall I tell ? said Antonio, with the deepest anguish : do not you seem to know everything, or else to have learnt it by soothsay ? Need I tell you that an old servant, Roberto, poisoned her, having been persecuted by her hatred, and thus spurred on to revenge himself ? that this accursed villain attempted to throw the crime upon my father ? He escapes from prison, scales the garden-wall, and in the grotto thrusts his dagger into my father's breast.

What old Roberto ! Roberto ! cried the old woman almost with a shout of triumph : hey, only see how strangely some people will turn out ! Ay, ay, the sneak in his younger days was such a strait-laced hypocrite, such a holy-seeming dog ; afterward however he grew a fine spirited fellow, as they tell me. It was in the grotto then ? How cunningly things fit together, and shell off till one gets at the kernel ! In that grotto your father in earlier days sat time after time with his first wife ; there at their betrothal he first swore eternal love to her. In those times Roberto doubtless already wore that dagger ; but he knew not what an odd use he was to make of it some twenty years after. In that grotto too the second spouse would often slumber beside the cool fountain ; and again the husband would lie there at her feet. Well, Antonio, child, is not life a

right merry, right silly, right absurd, and right horrible hodgepodge? No man can say: that's a thing I never will do. The pangs and the feelings, the stings and the ravings, which the black crew forge in hell's smithy, all these keep coming on and coming on, slowly, wonderously, nearer and ever nearer: on a sudden Horror is in the house, and the frantic victim sits with it in the corner, and gnaws at it as a dog gnaws a bone. Drink, drink, my darling; this grape-juice sets all things to rights when its spirits once get into the soul...Now, and you? do tell me a little more.

I swore to revenge my father, said Antonio.

That's just right, returned the old woman. Look you, my child, when such a firebrand has been once hurled into a house, it must never, never go out again. From generation to generation down to grandchild and cousin the poison is entailed; the children rave already; the wound is always bleeding afresh; a new vein must be opened to save the disaster and set it upon its legs again, when but for that it might be in danger of breathing its last. O revenge, revenge is a goodly word!

But Roberto, said Antonio, had escaped, and was nowhere to be found.

A pity, a pity! exclaimed the old woman. Now of course thy revenge drives thee over the world?

Yes in truth; I wandered through Italy, searcht in every town, but could find no trace of the murderer. At last the fame of Pietro of Abano fixt me at Padua. I wisht to learn wisdom from him; but when I came into the house of the Podesta...

Well! speak out, child!

What shall I say? I know not whether I am raving or dreaming. There I saw his daughter, the sweet, the lovely Crescentia, and I here see her again before me... yes it is herself...that funeral procession was a wicked, unseemly jest...and this disguise, this flight hither into the desert, is again a most unseemly piece of mummery. Acknowledge thyself to me at length, at length, beloved, beautiful Crescentia. Thou knowest it well, my heart only lives within thy bosom. To what end these ago-

nizing trials? Are thy parents perchance in the next room there, and listening to all we are saying? Let them come in now at last, at last; let us have done with this cruel probation, which will soon drive me mad.

The pale Crescentia lookt at him with such an unutterable expression, such a weight of sadness over her face, that the tears gusht from his eyes. Faith, he is drunk already! howled the old woman. Speak, tell me, is the Podesta's daughter dead then? Dead is she? and when?

This evening, said the weeper, I met her corpse.

So she too! continued the old woman merrily, as she filled her glass again. Well, now will the family of Marconi in Venice be right glad.

Why so?

Because they are now the only heirs to their rich kinsman. This is what the long-sighted knaves have always wisht, but could never hope for.

Woman! exclaimed Antonio with new horror: why thou knowest everything!

Not everything, replied she, but some little. And then a good deal more may perhaps be guessed at. And I will not deny it, a little witchcraft now and then helps on the game. Only don't be too much frightened at it. Nor in truth was it altogether for nothing that their Florentine worships would have built me a throne of faggots: some petty trifling bits of reasons for this wish they might fairly enough have brought forward... Look me in the face boy! stroke away the curls from thy forehead: good! now give me thy left hand: the right: heyday! strange and marvellous! That's it: some near misfortune is hanging over thee; but if thou outlivest it, thou wilt see thy beloved again.

In the next world! sighed Antonio.

The next world? what is the next world? cried the old hag in her drunkenness: no, in this world, here, on what we call earth. What words the fools make use of! There is no next world, you silly ninnyhammer! he who does not skim off the fat from the broth while he is here, is a wretched gull. This however is what

they clack to their simple brood, that they may behave prettily, and keep within bounds, and go the way one would lead them : but whosoever believes none of their fabling, he is free on the strength of this, and can do what his heart lusteth after.

Antonio eyed her wrathfully, and was about to make an indignant reply ; but the pale Crescentia interposed such a humble beseeching look for her mother that his anger was disarmed. The old woman yawned and rubbed her eyes, and it was not long before, stupefied as she was by the repeated draughts of strong wine, she fell fast asleep. The fire on the hearth was gone out, and the lamp now only cast a faint glimmer. Antonio sank into a deep study, and Crescentia sat by the window on a low stool. Can I sleep anywhere ? the weary youth at length askt.

There is another room above, said Crescentia sobbing ; and he now first observed that she had been crying bitterly all the time. She trimmed the lamp, to make it burn brighter, and walkt silently before him. He followed her up a narrow staircase, and after they were above in the low dark loft, the damsel set the light on a little table, and was on the point of retiring. But when already at the door she turned back again, stared at the young man as with a look of death, stood tottering before him, and then fell sobbing aloud and with violent unintelligible lamentations as in a convulsion down at his feet. What is the matter with thee, my sweet girl ? he exclaimed, and tried to lift her up : hush thee ; tell me thy sorrow.

No, let me lie here ! cried the weeper. O that I might die here at your feet, might die this very instant. No, it is too horrible. And that I can do nothing, can hinder nothing, that I must behold the crime in silence and helplessly ! But you must hear it.

Compose thyself then, said Antonio comforting her, that thou mayst recover thy voice and thy words.

I look, she continued passionately and interrupted by her tears, so like your lost love, and it is I who am to lead you by the hand into the house of murder. My

mother may easily foretell that a near misfortune is hanging over you : she well knows the gang that assemble here nightly. No one has ever yet escaped alive from this hell. Every moment is bringing him nearer and nearer, the fierce Ildefonso, or the detestable Andrea, with their followers and comrades. Alas ! and I can only be the herald of your death, can offer you no help, no safety.

Antonio was horror-struck. Pale and trembling he grasped after his sword, tried his dagger, and summoned courage and resolution again. Much as he had but now wished for death, it was yet too frightful to be thus forced to end his life in a robber's den. And thou, he began, thou with this face, with this form, canst bring thyself to be a companion, a helpmate to the accursed ?

I cannot run away, she sighed despondingly : how joyfully would I fly from this house ! Alas ! and this night, to-morrow, I am to be taken from hence, and dragged over the sea ; I am to be made the wife of Andrea or Ildefonso. Is it not better to die now ?

Come, cried Antonio, the door is open ; escape with me ; the night, the forest will lend us their shelter.

Only look around you, said the girl ; only see how both here and in the room below all the windows are secured with strong iron bars ; the door of the house is fastened with a large key which my mother never parts with. Did you not perceive, sir, how she threw the door into the lock when you entered ?

Then let the old hag fall first, cried Antonio : we'll tear the keys from her...

What, kill my mother ! shrieked the pale maiden, and clambered forcibly round him, to hold him fast.

Antonio quieted her. He proposed to her that, as the old woman was drunk and sleeping soundly, they should take the large house-key gently from her side, then open the door, and escape. From this plan Crescentia seemed to catch some hope : they both went silently down into the room below, and found the old woman still fast asleep. Crescentia crept trembling up to her, sought for the key, found it, and succeeded after a

time in loosening it from the string at her girdle. She beckoned to the youth; they stept on tiptoe to the door; they cautiously fixt the iron key in the lock; Antonio was now straining his hand to draw back the bolt without noise; when he felt that some one else was working at the lock on the outside in the same noiseless manner. The door opened softly and in came face to face to Antonio a large wild-looking man. Ildefonso! screamed the damsel, and the youth at the first glance recognized the murderer Roberto.

What is this? said he with a hollow voice. Where got you that key? whither are you going?

Roberto! cried Antonio, and furiously seized the gigantic man by the throat. They wrestled violently; but the nimbler strength of the youth got the better and threw the villain upon the floor; he then knelt upon his breast and plunged his dagger into his heart. The old woman meanwhile had awaked with loud screams, had started up on seeing the battle, and howling and cursing had torn her daughter away; she dragged her up to the room overhead, and bolted the door from within. Antonio was now mounting to break into the loft, when several dark forms stalkt in, and were no little astounded at finding their leader dead on the ground. I am your captain now! cried a broad massy figure, fiercely drawing his sword. Provided Crescentia is mine! answered a young robber in a tone of defiance. Each persisting in having his own way, they began a murderous combat. The lamp was thrown over, and amid yells and imprecations the battle rolled in the darkness from corner to corner. Have you lost your senses? shouted another voice athwart them: you are letting the stranger get off; knock him down first, and then fight your quarrel out. But blind with fury they heard him not. Already the first grey uncertain gleam of early morning was dawning. Antonio now felt a murderer's fist at his breast; but quickly and strongly he struck the assailer down. I am slain! cried he, falling upon the floor: Madmen, blockade the doors; don't let him run away. Meanwhile Antonio had found the outlet; he sprang

through the little garden and over the fence ; the robbers, who by this time had come to their senses, hurried after him. He was only a few paces before them, and they tried to cut him off. One of them threw stones after him ; but they missed their mark. Amid hollowing and threatening they had reached the wood. Here the path split into sundry directions, and Antonio was at a loss which to choose. He looked back, and saw the robbers separated ; he attacked the nearest, and wounded him so that he let his sword drop. But at the same moment he heard shouts, and saw new forms along a by-path hastening thither ; his road would soon be blocked up. In this extremity of need he met with his horse again on a little plot of grass in the wood. It seemed to have recovered from yesterday's over-fatigue. He leapt upon it, after rapidly seizing and righting the bridle ; and with its utmost speed, as if the animal had felt his danger, it bore him along a foot-track out of the forest. By degrees the cries of his pursuers sounded more and more distant ; the wood grew lighter ; and when he had reason to trust that there was nothing more to be afraid of, he saw the city lying before him in the glory of the rising sun.

People met him ; countrymen were going the same road toward the city ; travellers joined company with him ; and in this way he came back to Padua, making little answer to the manifold questions and inquiries, why his dress was in such disorder, and why he had no hat. The citizens stared in wonder at him as he dismounted before the great house of the Podesta.

In the city on that same night strange things had been going on, which as yet were a secret to everybody. Scarcely had the darkness spread thickly abroad, when Pietro, whom people commonly called by the name of his birthplace, Apone or Abano, retiring into his secret study at the back of his house, set all his apparatus, all the instruments of his art, in due order, for some mysterious and extraordinary undertaking. He himself was

clad in a long robe charactered with strange hieroglyphs; he had described the magical circles in the hall, and he arranged everything with his utmost skill, to be certain of the result. He had searcht diligently into the configuration of the stars, and was now awaiting the auspicious moment.

His companion, the hideous Beresynth, was also drest in magical garments. He fetcht everything at his master's bidding, and set it down just as Pietro thought needful. Painted hangings were unrolled over the walls; the floor of the room was covered over; the great magical mirror was placed upright; and nearer and nearer came the moment which the magician deemed the most fortunate.

Hast thou put the crystals within the circles? demanded Pietro.

Yes, returned his busy mate, whose ugliness kept bustling to and fro merrily and unweariably amid the vials, mirrors, human skeletons, and all the other strange implements. The incense was now brought; a flame blazed upon the altar; and the magician cautiously, almost with trembling, took the great volume out of his most secret cabinet.

Do we start now? cried Beresynth.

Silence! answered the old man solemnly: interrupt not these holy proceedings by any profane or any useless words. He read, at first in a low voice, then louder and more earnestly as he paced with measured steps to and fro, and then again round in a circle. After a while he paused and said: Look out, how the heavens are shaping themselves.

Thick darkness, replied the servant on his return has enwrapt the sky; the clouds are driving along; rain is beginning to drip.

They favour me! exclaimed the old man: it must succeed. He now knelt down, and murmuring his incantations often toucht the ground with his forehead. His face was heated; his eyes sparkled. He was heard to pronounce the holy names which it is forbidden to utter; and after a long time he sent his servant out

again to look at the firmament. Meanwhile the onrush of the storm was heard; lightning and thunder chased each other; and the house seemed to tremble to its lowest foundations.

Hearken to the tempest! shouted Beresynth, coming back hastily: Hell has risen up from below, and is raging with fire and fierce cracking crashes of thunder; a whirlwind is raving through the midst of it; and the earth is quaking with fear. Hold with your conjuring, lest the spokes of the world splinter, and the rim that holds it together burst.

Fool! simpleton! cried the magician: have done with thy useless prating! Tear back all the doors; throw the house-door wide open.

The dwarf withdrew to perform his master's orders. Meanwhile Pietro lighted the consecrated tapers; with a shudder he walkt up to the great torch that stood upon the high candlestick; this too at last was burning; then he threw himself on the ground, and conjured louder and louder. His eyes flasht; all his limbs shook and shrunk as in convulsions; and a cold sweat of agony trickled from his brow. With wild gestures, as if scared out of his senses, the dwarf rusht in again, and leapt for safety within the circles. The world is at the last gasp, he shriekt, pale and with chattering teeth: the storms are rolling onward; but all beneath the voiceless night is dismay and horror; every living thing has fled into its closet, or crept beneath the pillows of its bed to skulk away from its fears.

The old man lifted up a face of ghastly paleness from the floor, and with wrencht and indistinguishable features screamed in sounds not his own: Be silent, wretch, and disturb not the work. Give heed, and keep a fast hold on thy senses. The greatest things are still behind.

With a voice as if he would split his breast, he read and conjured again: his breath seemed often to fail him; it was as though the gigantic effort must kill him.

Hereupon a medley of voices were suddenly heard as in a quarrel, then again as in talk: they whispered;

they shouted and laught ; songs darted from among them, together with the jumbled notes of strange instruments. All the vessels grew alive, and strode forward, and went back again ; and out of the walls in every room gusht creatures of every kind, vermin and monsters and hideous abortions, in the richest confusion.

Master ! screamed Beresynt : the house is growing too tight. What shall we do with all these ghosts ? they must eat one another. O woe ! O woe ! they are all with cub, and are come here to whelp : new brutes keep sprouting out of the old ones, and the child is always wilder and frightfuller than its dam. My wits are leaving me in the lurch. And then this music into the bargain, this ringing and piping, and laughter athwart it, and funeral hymns enough to make one cry ! Look, master ! look ! the walls, the rooms are stretching themselves, and spreading out into vast halls ; the ceilings are running away out of sight ; and the creatures are still shooting forth, and thicken as fast as the space grows. Have you no counsel ? have you no help ?

In complete exhaustion Pietro now raised himself ; his whole form was changed, and he seemed to be dying. Look out once more, he said faintly : turn thine eyes toward the dome, and bring me tidings of what thou seest.

I am treading the rabble here on the head, roared Beresynt, totally bewildered ; they are disporting themselves in twining about me like serpents, and are laughing me to scorn. Are they ghosts ? are they demons, or empty phantoms ? Get away ! Well, if you won't move out of my path, I'll stamp downright upon your green and blue snouts. Everybody must take care of number one, even if a devil is to be the sufferer. He stumbled out muttering.

Things now grew tranquil, and Pietro stood up. He waved his arm, and all those strange forms which had been crawling about the floor and twisting around each other in the air, vanisht. He wiped off the sweat and tears, and drew his breath more freely. His ser-

vant came back and said : Master, all is quiet and well ; but sundry light forms flitted by me and lost themselves in the dark sky. Thereupon, while I kept staring immovably toward the dome, a mighty crash sounded, as if all the strings of a harp were breaking at once, and a clap came that made the streets and the houses all tremble. The great door of the church burst open ; flutes warbled sweetly and lovelily ; and a soft light brightness streamed forth from the heart of the church. Immediately after the form of a woman stept into the radiance, pale, but glancing, bedeckt with crowns of flowers ; she glided through the door, and gleams of light strewed a path for her to tread along. Her head upright, her hands folded, she is floating hither toward our dwelling. Is this she for whom you have been waiting ?

Take the golden key, answered Pietro, and unlock the innermost richest chamber of my house. See that the purple tapestries are spread out, that the perfumes are scattering their sweetness. Then away, and get thee to bed. Make no further inquiry into what happens. Be obedient and silent, as thou valuest thy life.

I know you too well, returned the dwarf, and walkt off with the key, casting back another look of something like mischievous delight.

Meanwhile a lovely murmur approacht. Pietro went into the entrance-hall, and in glided the pale body of Crescentia, in her robe of death, still holding the crucifix in her folded hands. He stood still before her ; she drew up the lids from her large eyes, and shrank back from him with such a quick start that the wreaths of flowers dropt down from her shaking head. Without speaking a word he wrested her fast claspt hands asunder ; but in the left she kept the crucifix tightly clencht. By the right hand he led her through room after room, and she moved by his side stiffly and with indifference, never looking around.

They reacht the furthest chamber. Purple and gold, silk and velvet, were its costly garniture. The light only glimmered in faintly by day through the heavy curtains. He pointed to the couch ; and the unconscious

holder of a charmed life stooped and bent down like a lily that the wind shakes ; she sank upon the red coverlet and breathed painfully. From a golden vial the old man poured a precious essence into a little crystal cup, and set it before her mouth. Her pale lips sipt the wondrous draught ; she again unfolded her eyes, fixt them on her former friend, turned away from him with an expression of loathing, and fell into a deep sleep.

The old man carefully closed the chamber again. Everything in the house was quiet. He betook himself to his own room, there in the midst of his books and magical instruments to await the rising of the sun and the business of the day.

When the unhappy youth, Antonio, had rested, the Podesta rode forth on the following day with him and with a large train of armed followers, to seek for the hut with the hideous old woman and the robbers, and to take them prisoners. On hearing Antonio's story, the disconsolate father became very eager to see the damsel who was said to be so like his lost daughter. Can it be, said the old man on their way, that a dream to which I have only too often abandoned myself, is about to become true ?

The father was in such haste that he gave the youth no further explanation. They came to the neighbouring wood ; and here Antonio thought he recollected himself and had found his track again. But that night had so bewildered him, and excited such a turmoil throughout his whole frame, that he could not make out the way further on, which he had taken during the storm, half stunned by the roaring of the thunder, on foot, wandering over ploughed land and meadow. They crost the large plain in every quarter ; wherever trees or bushes were to be seen, thither Antonio spurred his horse, in the hope of meeting with that den of robbers and the marvellous apparition within it ; or at least, should the inhabitants have absconded, as he might well expect, of gaining some sort of tidings about them. At

length the Podesta, after they had been roaming about thus for a great part of the day, began to fancy that the youth's heated imagination had merely beheld these phantoms in the wild ravings of his grief. Such happiness, he exclaimed, would be too great ; and I am born only for misfortune.

On reaching a village they were forced to let their horses and servants bait. The inhabitants said they knew nothing of any such suspicious neighbours, nor had the bodies of the slain been found anywhere round about. After a short pause Antonio again set off, but the Podesta now followed him more mistrustingly. Inquiries were made of every peasant they fell in with ; but none could give them any certain information. Toward evening they got to a building that appeared to have been destroyed ; ashes and rubbish lay around ; some charred beams peered out from among the stones ; the trees that stood near were scorcht. Here the youth seemed to recognize what he saw. This, he affirmed confidently, had been the abode of the murderers and of that wondrous Crescentia. They made halt. Far and wide through the waste country there was no house to be seen, no human being to call to. A servant rode to the next hamlet, and returned an hour after, bringing an old man on horseback. This old man said he knew that a good year since a hut had been burnt down there, having been set fire to by some soldiers ; that the owner of the estate had already been ten years at Rome waiting for an office promist him in the church ; and that his bailiff had taken a journey to Ravenna for the sake of getting in an old debt.

Vext and wearied the travellers rode back to the city. The Podesta Ambrosio determined to give up his office, to withdraw from public life, and to leave Padua, where everything reminded him only of his misfortunes. Antonio resolved to learn in the school of the renowned Apone how to bear his wretchedness, and perchance to forget it. He removed into the house of that great man, who had long treated him with much kindness.

So you too, said the little priest some time after to the melancholy Antonio, have given yourself up to this ill-starred school, to this pernicious man who will ensnare your soul to its destruction.

Why are you angry, answered Antonio courteously, my pious friend? May not religion and knowledge shake hands in amity, as they do in this admirable teacher? in him whom the whole world admires, whom princes esteem and cherish, whom our holy father himself means to raise to a spiritual dignity. Why are you incensed against him who comes forward to meet you and all mankind with his love? Did you know how his doctrine comforts me, how he lifts up my soul and guides it heaven-ward, how in his mouth piety and religion find the words and images of inspiration, which bear his scholars as with the wings of the spirit into the regions above the earth, you would not think and speak thus harshly of him. Learn to know him more nearly; seek his intercourse; and you will soon be moved by penitence and love to abjure your dislike and your over-hasty judgment against him.

Love him! cried the priest: no, never! Keep yourself safe, young man, from his clutches and those of his servant with hell's stamp upon him, who cannot gull any one with the same fair seeming as his master.

True, rejoined Antonio, little Beresynt is a queer figure, and a hideous one too. I wonder myself that our noble Pietro can endure to have him perpetually at his side, wherever he is and whatever he is doing. But ought a hump or any other such ugly mark to render us cruel toward a poor wretch whom nature has neglected?

Fine words! grand phrases! exclaimed the priest impatiently: such are the very sentiments to make conjurors and quacks thrive apace. See, there comes the abomination! I cannot even bear to look upon him, much less to have any dealings with him. A creature whom the Lord has markt in this wise is knowable enough; and let everybody in whom all human feeling is not yet quencht get out of his way.

Beresynt, who had caught the last words, came up

to them with divers ungainly jumps. My very reverend sir, he exclaimed, do you then yourself happen to be of such mightily exquisite beauty, that you have a right to judge thus intolerantly? My master from his youth up has been a majestic and stately man; and yet he thinks far otherwise of me and my fellows. What! you little stunted, stunted, stumpy, bile-faced animal, whose nose is for ever running crimson with spite! You with the crooked corners of your seesaw mouth, with the broken ridges and ditches in your shrivelled half-inch forehead, you would make an outcry about my ugliness! Why the bit of a dwarf can hardly peer out of its pulpit when it is hubbubbing there, and is so gossamer-shankt it durst not walk across the great square if the wind chance to be blowing strong; the congregation are hard put to find him out when he is grimacing and gesticulating before the altar, and need all their christian faith and hope to believe him actually corporeally present; and such a hop-o'-my-thumb, such a ghostly ne'er-to-be-seen, would take the tone of a Goliath here. With thy leave, thou most invisible man of godliness, one might cut out of my nose alone as stout a pillar of the faith as thou art; and I won't reckon in the brace of humps which my backbone and breastbone have built up in rivalry of each other.

The priest Theodore had already left them in anger before the end of this speech; and the melancholy Antonio chid the little dwarf for his wantonness. But the latter cried, Now pray don't you also begin to preach. Once for all I will bear that from no one else than my master; for he came into the world on special purpose to teach morality and philosophy and their kin. But this weathercock of a priest here, that is driven round with such a creaking merely by his envy and malice, because he fancies that my noble master is lowering both his authority and his purse, he shall not unkennel his tongue from his toothless jaws, where I can but thrust in my unwasht mouth. And from a young student too I will brook no contradiction; for I used to have my beard shaved, while your father was

still carried about in his chrisom-cloth ; I was earning stripes at school and getting the fool's cap hung round my ears, when they put your worshipful grandfather into his first pair of breeches : so shew respect where it is due, and never forget whom you have before you.

Don't be angry, little man, said Antonio : I meant it well with thee.

Mean it just as you please, returned the other. My master is to be a prelate ; do you know that yet ? and lord rector of the university. And he has received a new gold chain as a token of royal favour from Paris. And you must come to him ; for he is going away from Padua, and wants to speak to you once more before he sets off. And don't crawl about so among the parsons, if you mean to be a philosopher.

Hopping and jumping to and fro from side to side he ran down the street again ; and Antonio said to Alfonso, who now came up to him, and who for some time past had been forming a friendship with him : I never know, when talking to that little abortion, whether it means its words in earnest or only in jest. He seems always to be scoffing at himself and at everything else in the world.

This, answered Alfonso, is a kind of necessary amends to him, a way of comforting himself for his deformity : by his sneers he to his own fancy makes all other creatures just like himself. But have you heard of the new honours that have been bestowed on our illustrious teacher and master ?

The world, replied Antonio, acknowledges his high worth ; and now that even our holy father, the pope, is making him a prelate, this will at length silence the envious priests and monks who are for ever trying to charge the virtuous and pious man with heresy.

They parted ; and Antonio hurried home, to take leave of his teacher for some days. The little dwarf Beresynth was awaiting him in the doorway with a friendly grin.

It was already growing dark within the house ; and as Beresynt left the youth to himself, he walkt, on not finding his teacher in the hall, or even in the library, through a number of rooms, and thus advanced even to the innermost, which he had never yet entered. Here beside a dim lamp Pietro was sitting, and was no little surpris'd to see the Florentine come in ; who on his part was astonisht at the skeletons, the strange instruments, and extraordinary machinery around the old man. Not without confusion the latter came up to him. I did not expect you here, said he, but thought to find you without, or to look for you up in your own room. I must set off to meet the legate of our holy father the pope, that with due humility and gratitude I may receive the letter and the new dignity which his grace and paternal kindness have vouchsafed to confer upon me.

Antonio was embarrass'd, and seem'd to be examining the instruments, having never seen anything like them. You are wondering, said the old man after a while, at all these things, which are necessary for my studies. When you have attended a course of my lectures on natural philosophy, I shall be able hereafter to explain everything which now perhaps you may deem incomprehensible.

But at this moment something happened that drew away Antonio's attention from all these objects. A door that seem'd shut was only ajar ; it opened, and he saw into a room filled with a red purplish light ; and at the door in the midst of this roseate glow was standing a pale ghost that winkt and smil'd. With the speed of lightning the old man turned round, dasht the door thunderingly to, and fastened it with a gold key. Trembling and pale as a corpse he then threw himself into a chair, while large drops of sweat ran down from his forehead. When he was somewhat recovered, he beckoned to Antonio, still trembling and said with a faltering voice, This mystery also, my young friend, will hereafter become clear to you ; think, my dearest son, the best of me. Thee above all, thou child of many sorrows and of my love, will I lead into the lowest depths of my know-

ledge; thou shalt be my true scholar, my heir. But leave me at present; go up to thy lonely chamber, and call in fervent prayer upon heaven and its holy powers to support thee.

Antonio could make no answer, so amazed and horror-struck was he by the apparition, so perplexed by his honoured teacher's speech; for it seemed to him as though Pietro was struggling to check a burst of anger, as if repressed rage were flashing from his fiery eyes, which after their sudden dimness rapidly shot forth fiercer glances.

He went away: and in the antechamber he found Beresynth, who with grinning mouth was catching flies and then tossing them to a monkey. Both seemed engaged in a match which could make the most portentous faces. His master now called aloud for the servant, and the monster hopt in. Antonio heard a loud squabble, and Pietro appeared to be violently angry. Whining and yelling Beresynth came out of the room; a stream of blood was rushing down from his enormous nose. Can't he keep his doors shut himself, howled the abortion, allsapient and allpotent as he is? When the master is a blockhead the servant must bear the blame. Betake you yourself, most honorablest sir, up to your most attic study, and leave me with my good friend, my dear Pavian, here, in peace. He has still a human heart, the dear faithful creature Merry comrade as he is, in his tender moments he is the most exquisite fellow. Come, march! Pylades would feast on some more flies, which his Orestes must catch for him.

Antonio left the room almost stupefied.

The Florentine youth had taken up his abode in his teacher's house, for the sake of giving himself up without any interruption to his sorrows and his studies. He had chosen the most retired and highest room in the whole building, to be quite alone and unvisited by anybody. When he lookt from hence over the beautiful and fruitful fields about the city, and followed the course of the

river with his eyes, he thought the more intensely of his lost love. He had got her picture from her parents, as well as some toys she had played with in her childhood ; above all he delighted in a nightingale, that in its moving plaints seemed to him to be only pouring forth the woes of his own heart. This bird had been fostered by Crescentia with the utmost care and fondness ; and Antonio preserved it like something holy, as the last relic of his earthly happiness.

With other young men of his own age he never mingled, excepting the Spaniard Alfonso, to whom he was united by their equally enthusiastic admiration of Pietro Abano. The Podesta Ambrosio had resigned his office and left the city : he meant to spend the rest of his life at Rome, for the sake of getting beyond the reach of his relations at Venice. He had given up the thought of ever again finding the twin daughter who had been stolen from him in her infancy ; and his grief had been embittered by Antonio's calling back this hope with such a shock into his soul.

In the morning Pietro set off with his trusty servant. Antonio was left alone in the large house, the rooms of which were all lockt up. The night had past over him in sleeplessness. That terrific figure was evermore standing before his eyes, which, greatly as it had appalled him, had yet reawakened all his most delightful feelings. It was as though all power of thinking had died away within him ; visions which he could not hold fast kept moving in ever-rolling circles before his imagination. It was a frightful feeling to him, that he knew not what to think of his venerated teacher, that he had a boding of lawless mysteries, and of a horror which since that look into the chamber seemed to be awaiting him, to strip him of everything like hope, and to deliver him up to madness and despair.

The nightingale began singing before his window, and he saw that it was blowing hard and raining. His fondness for the bird made him take it in and set it atop of a high old wardrobe. He clambered up and was leaning over to place the cage steadily, when the

chain from which the portrait of his beloved was hanging broke, and the picture slid to the wall and down behind the old chest. The unhappy are terrified by the veriest trifles. He got down hastily to seek for his darling treasure. He stooped down to the ground, but his search was vain; it was not to be seen beneath the large heavy cabinet. Everything, whether of great or little moment, in his life seemed to be persecuting him as it were under some spell. He shoved at the old piece of furniture and tried to push it out of its place; but it was fastened to the wall. His impatience grew more vehement with every hinderance. He seized an old iron bar which he found in the anteroom, and laboured with all his strength to move the wardrobe; and at last, after much heaving and wrenching and a hundred fruitless efforts, it gave way with a loud cracking as if an iron cramp or chain had snapt. The cabinet now by degrees came forward, and Antonio was at length able to squeeze himself in between it and the wall. He immediately saw his beloved portrait. It was lying upon the broad knob of a door, which jutted out of the wall. He kist it, and turned the handle, which yielded. A door opened; and he resolved to push the great wardrobe somewhat further away, and to explore this strange matter; for he thought the owner of the house himself could hardly be acquainted with this secret passage, which had been concealed with so much care, and, as it appeared, for so long a time. When he had gained a little more room, he saw that behind the door there was a narrow winding staircase. He went down a few steps; the thickest darkness came round him. He descended lower and still lower; the stairs seemed to lead down almost to the bottom of the house. He was on the point of returning, when he struck against a stoppage; for the flight of steps was now at an end. As he groped up and down in the darkness, his hand hit on a brass ring, which he pulled, and instantly the wall opened, and a red glow streamed into his face. Before he passed through, he examined the door, and found that a spring which the ring had set in motion, had driven it back.

He put it to and stept cautiously into the room. It was covered with costly red tapestry; purple curtains of heavy silk hung down before the windows: a bed of brilliant scarlet embroidered with gold rose in the middle of the room. Everything was still; no sound was heard from the street; the windows lookt into a small garden. A painful anxiety came over the youth as he stood in the midst of the chamber; he listened attentively, and at length seemed to hear the low whisper of a breath, as from a sleeper. With throbbing heart he turned round, and went forward, to spy whether any one was upon the bed; he spread open the silken hangings, and...he thought he must be in a dream; for before him lay, pale as a corpse, but in a sweet slumber, the form of his beloved Crescentia. Her bosom heaved visibly; something like a slight blush had tinged her pale lips, which were softly closed, quivering imperceptibly as a gentle smile ever and anon flitted over them. Her hair was loose and lay in its dark heavy locks upon her shoulders. Her dress was white, with a golden clasp at her girdle. For a long time Antonio stood lost in gazing; at last, as if driven by a supernatural power, he snatcht the lovely white hand, and began to pull up the sleeper by force. She darted a plaintive cry forth; and frightened by it he let go the arm again, which dropt languidly upon the pillow. But the dream, so seemed it, had flown away; the net of sleep which had held the wonderous form inclosed, was rent asunder: and as clouds and mists move along the side of the hills on the gentle morning breeze in wavy forms, and now rise and now sink again, so the slumberer began to stir, stretcht herself as if powerless, and in slow and graceful motions seemed striving to emerge from her sleep. Her arms raised themselves, so that the broad sleeves fell back and displayed their full beauteous roundness; her hands folded themselves, and then dropt down again; the head arose, and the bright neck lifted itself freely up; but the eyes were still fast closed; the black tresses fell over the face, but the long taper fingers stroked them back: now the fair one was sitting quite upright; she crost

her arms over her breast, heaved a hard sigh, and on a sudden her large eyes stood wide open and glancing.

She gazed at the youth; but it was as though she saw him not; she shook her head; then she graspt the gold tassel which was fastened to the top of the bed, lifted herself strongly up, and the tall slender form was now standing on its feet raised up on high in the midst of the scarlet drapery. She then stept safely and firmly down from the couch, walkt a few paces up to Antonio who had drawn back, and with a childish exclamation of surprise, as when children are suddenly gladdened by a new plaything, she laid her hand upon his shoulder, smiled lovelily upon him, and cried with a soft voice: Antonio!

But he, pierced through and through with fear and horror and joy and amazement and the deepest pity, knew not whether to fly from her, to embrace her, to cast himself at her feet, or to melt away in tears and die. That was the selfsame sound which of yore he had heard so often and with such delight, at which his whole heart had turned round. Thou livest? he cried with a voice which the swell of his feelings stifled.

The sweet smile that had mounted from her pale lips over her cheeks even into her radiant eyes, suddenly split, and froze into a stiff expression of the deepest most unutterable woe. Antonio could not endure the glance of those eyes; he covered his face with his hands, and shriekt: Art thou a ghost?

The figure came still closer, prest down his arms with her hands, so that his face lay bare, and said with a gently fluttering voice: No, look at me; I am not dead; and yet I live not. Give me that cup there.

A fragrant liquid was floating in the crystal vessel; he held it out to her trembling; she set it to her mouth and sipt the drink by slow draughts. Alas! my poor Antonio! she then said: I will only borrow these earthly powers that I may disclose the most monstrous of crimes to thee, that I may beseech thy aid; that I may prevail on thee to help me to that rest after which all my feelings so fervently yearn.

She had sunk back into the arm-chair, and Antonio was sitting at her feet. Hellish arts, she again began, have seemingly awakened me from death. The same man whom my inexperienced youth honoured as an apostle, is a spirit of darkness. He gave me this shadow of life. He loves me, as he says. How my heart shrank back from him when my awakening eye beheld him. I sleep, I breathe; I may, if I choose, be restored to life altogether, so that wicked man has promised me, if I will give myself up to him with my whole heart, if in secret concealment I will let him become my husband. ... O Antonio, how hard is every word to me, every thought! All his art crumbles before my longing for death. It was frightful, when my spirit, already at rest, with new visions already unfolding before it, was summoned back so cruelly out of its calm peace. My body was already a stranger to me, a hostile and hateful thing. I came back like the freed slave to chains and a dungeon. Help me, my true lover; save me.

How! said Antonio: Oh God in Heaven! what have I lived to! in what a state do I find thee again! And thou canst not, mayst not return to life altogether? thou canst not again be mine, again be thy parents' dear child?

Impossible! cried Crescentia with a tone of anguish, and her paleness became yet whiter from dismay. Alas! Life! How can any one seek it again, who has once been set free from it? Thou, my poor Antonio, conceivest not the deep longing, the love, the rapture, wherewith I think upon death and pant for it. Even more intensely than of yore I loved thee, even more fervently than my lips at the Easter festival pined for the holy wafer, do I now yearn for death. Then I shall love thee more freely and more wholly in God; then I shall be given back to my parents. Then I shall live; formerly I was dead; now I am a cloud and a shadow, a riddle to myself and to thee. Alas! when thy love and our youth have gleamed in upon me in my present state, when I have heard my well-known nightingale from above pouring her song into my loneliness, what

a sweet shuddering, what a dark joy and pain have then rippled through the dusk of my being! O help me to get loose from this chain.

What can I do for thee? askt Antonio.

Her talking had again broken the strength of the apparition: she paused awhile with closed eyelids; then she spake faintly: Alas! if I could go into a church, if I could be present when the Lord is lifted up and appears to the congregation in the sacrament, then in that blessed moment I should die of rapture.

What should hinder me, said Antonio, from informing against the villain, and delivering him up to the tribunals and to the inquisition?

No! no! no! groaned the figure in the greatest terrour: thou dost not know him; he is too mighty; he would make his escape, and again tear me to him within the circle of his wickedness. Quietly and by silence alone can we succeed; he must feel secure. A chance has brought thee to me. Thou must make him believe himself quite safe, and keep everything secret.

The youth collected his senses; he talkt much with his former betrothed; but speaking became more and more difficult to her; her eyelids dropt down; she drank once more of the wonderous potion; then she made him lead her to the couch. Farewell! she said, as if already in a dream: do not forget me. She mounted upon the bed, laid herself gently down; her hands searcht for the crucifix, which she kist with her eyes closed; then she held out her hand to her lover, and beckoned him away as she stretcht herself out to sleep. Antonio gazed at her awhile; then with the spring he shut the invisible door again, crept back up the narrow winding stairs to his chamber, fixt the wardrobe in its old place, and burst into hot tears as the song of the nightingale welcomed him with the swell of its mournful notes. He too longed for death, and only wisht beforehand to release her, who but a few days since was to have been his earthly bride, from her marvellous and awful state.

In order to be out of the way when his teacher returned from his journey, Antonio had bent his steps toward the loneliest part of the wood. It was an annoyance to him to meet his friend, the Spaniard, here; for he was in no mood to carry on a conversation. However, as there was no avoiding his comrade, he resigned himself in silent sadness to the society which at other times had been a pleasure to him and a comfort. He only half listened to what his friend said, and answered but sparingly. As was almost always the case, Pietro was again the theme of Alfonso's boundless admiration. Why are you thus stingy of your words to-day? he at length began, somewhat vext: is my company troublesome to you? or are you no longer as capable as you used to be of honouring our great teacher and giving him the glory he deserves?

Antonio was forced to collect himself, not to sink away entirely into his dreamy state. What is the matter with you? askt Alfonso again: it seems I have offended you.

No, you have not; cried the Florentine; but if you have any regard for me, if you would not excite my anger, if you would not have the bitterest feelings rend my heart, do give over chanting the praises of your idolized Pietro for to-day. Let us talk on some other subject.

Ha! by Heaven! exclaimed Alfonso: so the parsons have twisted your feeble senses round at last. Go your own way henceforward, young man; wisdom, I now well see, is too lofty a prize for you. Your head is too weak for this fare; and you are longing again for the pap you were wont to get from the former fathers of your soul. You will do better to stay with them, at least till your milk-teeth have dropt out.

You are talking overweeningly, cried Antonio in wrath; or rather you are utterly ignorant of what you are saying, and I deserve not this language from you.

How has our teacher deserved, said the Spaniard hastily, he who has taken you in like a father, he who favours you so highly above all the young men of our

university, who allows you to dwell in his house, who entrusts you with all the thoughts of his heart, by what offence has he deserved, that you should thus mean-spiritedly deny him?

If I were to answer now, returned Antonio angrily, that you do not know him, that I have reasons, and the fullest, to think otherwise of him, again you would not understand me.

Verily, said Alfonso with a sneer, you have already scaled so high into the most secret places of his philosophy, that the common unfavoured child of earth is unable to follow you. Here again one sees that half-merit and quarter-merit puff themselves up the most. Pietro Abano is more lowly-minded than you, his feeble mimic.

You are unmannerly! exclaimed the young Florentine, irritated to the utmost. If I were now to assure you by my honour, by my faith, by heaven, and by everything which must needs be holy and venerable to you and me, that in all Italy, in all Europe, there is no such wicked villain, no so atrocious hypocrite as this...

Who? shouted Alfonso.

Pietro Abano, said Antonio now grown calm: what would you say then?

Nothing! furiously cried the other, who had not allowed him to finish: save that you, and everybody else who dares to speak in that way, are the paltriest knaves that ever had the audacity to blaspheme holy things. Draw, if you would not be called a mean coward as well as a base slanderer.

Antonio's drawn sword met the challenger with the same speed; and it was in vain that a hoarse anxious voice cried out to them: Hold! Alfonso was wounded in the breast; and the blood at the same time ran from Antonio's arm. The old priest, who had wisht to separate the quarrellers, now hastened forward; bound up their wounds and stancht the blood; then he called to some students that he had seen a little way off, and told them to carry the wounded Alfonso to the city. Before he was removed, Antonio went up to him and whispered in his ear: If you are a man of honour, not a word about

the cause of our fray will pass over your lips. In four days' time we will meet again: and if you are not of my way of thinking then, I am ready to give you any satisfaction.

Alfonso pledged his solemn promise; all the bystanders too assured Antonio that the wound as well as the whole affair should be kept a secret, not to expose him to any danger. When they were all gone Antonio walkt with the priest Theodore deeper into the wood. Why, began the latter, will you, for a fiend's sake, make over your own soul to hell? I see, you are now of a different opinion; but is the sword the spokesman that should preach truth to a brother?

Antonio felt in doubt how much he should disclose to the monk; however he said nothing about the wonderful event that had befallen him, and only entreated that, at the approaching festival of Easter, he might be allowed to enter the great church during high mass through the sacristy, near the altar. After some objections Theodore complied, though he could not conceive what was the youth's purpose in asking for this permission. All Antonio said further was: I wish to bring a friend into the church that way, whose entrance at the great door might perhaps be stopt.

All the bells in the city were ringing, that the holy feast of Easter might be kept with gladness and devotion. The people flockt toward the dome, to celebrate the most joyous of Christian festivals, and also to behold the renowned Apone in his new dignity. The students escorted their illustrious teacher, who walkt along amid the reverent salutations of the nobles, the council, and the citizens, in seeming piety and humility, an example to all, the pride of the city, the inspiring model of the youth. At the door of the cathedral the crowd shrank back in timid respect, to make way for their honoured bishop, who, in the garb of a prelate, with the golden chain round his neck, with his white beard and the white locks on his head, might be compared to an em-

peror or an ancient doctor of the church in his majestic demeanour.

A seat had been raised up on high for the great man near the altar, that the students and the people might see him ; and when the multitude of the devout had poured into the church, the service began. Theodore, the little priest, read mass on this day ; and young and old, gentle and simple, all rejoiced to keep the festival of their Lord's resurrection in a worthy manner, and to behold the pomp of worship returning, glad that after the days of severe fasting, after the saddening representations of suffering and sorrow, they might now comfort themselves with the feeling of a new life springing forth from the grave.

The first part of the divine service was already over, when people were astonished to see Antonio Cavalcanti stepping into the church by the side of the altar, leading a thickly veiled figure in his hand. He placed the figure on the raised pavement just in face of Pietro, and then threw himself down before the altar praying. The muffled form remained standing stiff and high, and beneath the covering one saw the fiery black eyes. Pietro lifted himself from his seat, and sank back into it pale and trembling. The music of the mass now gusht and rolled in fuller symphonies ; the muffled form disentangled itself slowly from its veils ; the face became free ; and those who were nearest with horror recognized the dead Crescentia. A shudder passed through the whole church ; even over those who were furthest off a secret shivering crept, to see the image pale as death standing so tall there, and praying so fervently, and never turning her large burning eyes from the priest at the altar. Even the great mighty Pietro himself seemed changed into a corpse ; from his distorted features one might have held him to be dead, but that his life betrayed itself in his violent trembling. Now the priest turned round and lifted up the consecrated host ; trumpets announced the renewed presence of the Lord ; and with a voice of triumph, with a face of high transport, her arms widely outspread, as she cried aloud Hosannah ! so that the

church resounded with it, the pale apparition dropt down, and lay dead, stiff, and motionless, before Pietro's feet. The people rusht forward; the music stopt; curiosity, astonishment, horror, and affright, spake from every asking countenance; the nobles and students went up to comfort and support the venerable old man, who appeared so deeply shockt; when Antonio with a yelling sound shouted: Murder! Murder! and began the most fearful charge, the most appalling tale, unfolded the hellish arts, the accursed magic of the dismayed sinner, spake of himself and of Crescentia and of their awful meeting again, until anger and rage and imprecations and loathing and curses raved like a stormy sea around the criminal, and threatened to annihilate him, to tear him to pieces in the madness of their fury. They talkt of gaolers and chains; the inquisitors drew near; when Pietro started up as in a frenzy, thrust and struck about him with clencht fists, and seemed to spread himself out to a gigantic size. He walkt up to Crescentia's body that lay smiling like the picture of a saint, gazed at her once more, and then passed roaring and with flashing eyes through the crowd. A new horror seized the people; they made room for the huge form; all moved out of his way. Thus Pietro came to the open street: but the mob now bethought themselves, and with cries and curses and revilings pursued the fugitive, who ran hastily onward, while his long robes flew far behind him, and the gold chain beat and rattled upon his breast and shoulders. The rabble, as they could not catch him, tore up the stones from the pavement, and threw them after him; and wounded, bleeding, dripping with sweat, his teeth chattering from fear, Pietro at last reacht the threshold of his house.

He hid himself in the innermost apartments; and Beresynt came forward inquisitively, asking all sorts of questions, to meet the mob and the rush of the people. Fall upon the maskt devil! the familiar! they all shouted: tear in pieces the profane creature who never yet set foot in a church! He was dragged and pusht into the street; no answer was made to his inquiries and in-

treaties, to his howls and shrieks; nor indeed was anything heard through the stormy tumult except curses and threats of death. Bring me before the magistrate! at length screamed the dwarf; there my innocence will be made clear as day. The constables were summoned, and seizing him led him toward the prison. All the people prest after him. In here with him! cried the chief of the officers: chains and faggots are waiting for thee. He tried to tear himself away from them; the constables laid hold on him and shoved him to and fro: one seized him by the collar, another by the arm, the next clung round his leg to hold him fast, a fourth caught his head to make quite sure of him. While they were pulling him backward and forward in this way amid shouts and curses and laughter, on the sudden they all started off from one another; for each had got nothing but a piece of clothing, a sleeve, cap, or shoe of the monster; he himself was nowhere to be seen. He could not have run away; he seemed to have vanished; but nobody could tell how.

When they had broken into Apone's chamber, those who rushed in found him lying on his bed, lifeless, having bled to death. They plundered the house; the magical implements, the books, the strange furniture, were all made over to the flames; and throughout the whole city nothing resounded except curses on the man whom but this morning all had honoured as a messenger from Heaven. This only embittered the loathing with which they now revolted from the impostor.

When the turmoil by which the people were agitated was somewhat allayed, the body of Pietro was silently buried at night, without the consecrated churchyard. Antonio and Alfonso renewed their friendship, and attached themselves to the pious Theodore, who, after going through the solemn rites and pronouncing a devout oration, had the body of the beautiful Crescentia laid a second time in the vault designed for her.

Antonio however could not bear to stay any longer at Padua; he resolved to revisit his native city, that he might settle his affairs, and then perhaps get admitted into a convent. Alfonso on the other hand determined to make a pilgrimage to Rome, where the holy Father had just been proclaiming a year of jubilee with a plenary indulgence for sins. Not only throughout Italy was every one in motion; but from France too, and Germany, and Spain, came numerous trains of pilgrims, to celebrate this till then unheard-of solemnity, this great festival of the church, in the holy city.

After the friends had parted, Antonio pursued his lonely path, shunning the great road, partly for the sake of brooding uninterruptedly over his sorrows, and partly to avoid the swarms that were flocking along the highway, and were often troublesome at the nightly resting-places

Thus following his own mood, he roamed through the plains and through the valleys of the Apennines. One evening the sun set and no inn was to be seen. As the shades were deepening, he heard a hermit's little bell tinkling in a wood on one side. He bent his steps toward the sound, and when the darkness of night was already closing, he arrived at a small hut, to which a narrow plank led across a brook, surrounded by bushes. He found an aged infirm man praying with the deepest devotion before a crucifix. The hermit received the youth, who greeted him courteously, with kindness made up a couch of moss for him in a recess of the rock which was separated by a door from his cell, and placed some of his fruit, some water, and a little wine before him. When Antonio was refresht, he was greatly pleased with the conversation of the monk, who in earlier times had lived in the world, and served as a soldier in many campaigns. In this way it had grown late in the night, and the youth betook himself to his bed, just as another weak and sickly monk entered, who meant to pass the night with the hermit in prayer.

When Antonio had rested about an hour he started suddenly out of his sleep. It seemed to him as though

loud voices were disputing. He sat up; and all doubt about the quarrelling and squabbling was removed. The tones too struck him as if he knew them; and he asked himself whether he was not dreaming. He went to the door, and found a crevice through which he could pry into the front room. How was he amazed at beholding Pietro Abano, whom he could not but deem dead, speaking loudly, with eyes of rage and a red face, and striding about with violent gestures! Over against him stood little Beresynth's hideous carcase. So you have got your persecutor, cried the latter with a croaking voice, who has made you thus wretched, the love-sick godly fool, here under your roof! he has run of his own accord like a silly rabbit into the snare: and you are shillishallying about cutting his throat.—Silence! cried the large figure: I have already taken counsel with my spirits; they will not consent; I have no hold upon him; for he is imprisoned in no sin.—Smite him dead then, said the little one, without your spirits, with your own gracious hands: so his youth and his sinlessness will not avail him much; and I should be a sorry servant if I were not to stand by you in so praiseworthy an exploit. Well then! said Pietro: let us go to work; take thou the hammer; I'll carry the axe; he is fast asleep now.—They advanced toward the door; but Antonio tore it back, to meet the villains boldly in the face. He had drawn his sword; but he remained like a statue, standing with uplifted arm, when he saw two sickly decrepit hermits lying on their knees before the cross, mumbling their prayers. Do you want anything? asked his host, rising toilsomely from the floor. Antonio was so astounded, he could make no answer. Why that drawn sword? asked the weak stooping hermit; and wherefore these menacing looks? Antonio drew back with the excuse that a frightful dream had scared and worried him. He could not fall asleep again; his senses were in such a tumult. Ere long he again plainly heard Beresynth's croaking voice; and Pietro said with a full clear tone, Have done; thou seest he is armed and warned; he will not trust himself to sleep again. We must overpower

him then, screamed the little one: now that he has recognized us, we are quite undone every way. The pious slave will go and give us up to the inquisition to-morrow; and the pious rabble will then be at hand in a trice with their faggots and flames.

Through the chink in the door he perceived the two magicians. He again rusht in with his sword drawn, and again found two decrepit old men lying on the ground and whining their prayers. Enraged at the cheating forms, he seized them in his arms and wrestled violently with them; they defended themselves desperately; it was now Pietro, now the hermit, one moment the imp Beresynth, the next a crippled old monk. After much screaming and raving, cursing and wailing, he at last succeeded in thrusting them out of the cell, which he then carefully fastened. He now heard a whining without and entreaties and groans, mixt up with the whispering of many voices, and with songs and yells; afterward rain and wind seemed to be stirring, and a storm afar off rolled athwart the multitudinous sound. Stunned at length by all this, Antonio fell asleep, leaning on his sword as he sat before the crucifix; and when the cold morning breeze awakened him, he found himself on the highest peak of a narrow ridge in the midst of a thick forest, and thought he heard bursts of scornful laughter behind him. It was at the peril of his life that he climbed down the steep precipice, tearing his clothes, and wounding his face and hands and feet. He had then to wander wearisomely through the forest: there was not a soul to call to, not a hut to be discovered far around, often as he mounted the heights to explore. When it was almost night, faint with fatigue, hunger, and exhaustion, he fell in with an old collier who refresht him in his little hut. He learnt that he must be some fifty miles and upward from the hermitage he had met with the evening before. It was only late on the following day that, somewhat strengthened and cheered, he could pursue his journey toward Florence.

Antonio had returned to Florence for the sake of visiting his kindred and his paternal house again. He could not make up his mind on what course of life to enter, since all the happiness of existence had proved so treacherous, and even realities had shewn themselves to him under the aspect of a mad dream. He settled his affairs, and gave himself up to his sorrow in the great palace of his fathers; where that fatal grotto and every well-known room only harast his mind with the liveliest images of his own and his parents' misfortunes. He thought too of that hateful witch who was so entangled in his fate, and of that Crescentia who had appeared to him and then vanisht again in a way scarcely less marvellous than his bride. If he could have caught the slightest glimmering of hope, he might in time have grown reconciled to life again. At last there rose up within his soul, like a pale star, the wish of making a pilgrimage to Rome, which he had never yet seen, there to partake in the graces bestowed upon the faithful, to visit the famous churches and holy relics, to divert his thoughts from himself in the midst of the streaming multitude, the throng of numberless strangers who had journeyed thither from all quarters of the earth, and to seek out his friend Alfonso. He also expected that he should find old Ambrosio in the great city, should receive comfort from this mourner who had meant to become his father, and might perhaps afford him too some comfort in his affliction. With these feelings and views he set out on his way, and after some time arrived at Rome.

He was astonisht when he entered the great city. He had framed no conception of her grandeur, her ancient monuments, or of such a concourse of innumerable strangers. It might well be deemed matter of wonder if one found out any friend or acquaintance, without being able beforehand to give an accurate account of where he lived. And yet this wonderful chance befell him in his suddenly meeting Ambrosio, as he was going up to the Capitol from which the old man was coming down. The Podesta carried him to his house, where

Antonio greeted the sorrowing mother. The rumour of Pietro's strange end, of Crescentia's return to life and second departure from it, had already been bruited as far as Rome: this marvellous story was in the mouth of every pilgrim, disfigured with confused additions and contradictions, and drest out by frequent repeating into the very reverse of the truth. The parents listened with alternations of joy and woe to the story as Antonio told it, awe-struck as they both were, especially the mother, who gave vent to her loathing in execrations against the old hypocritical magician, and in her rage more than half believed that he had himself been the cause of her daughter's death, having perhaps taken a bribe for that purpose from the family of Marconi, that he had poisoned her for the sake of awakening her corpse again to gratify his frantic abominations.

Let us leave all this to heaven, said the old man. What happened and was notorious to the whole city and country, was quite horrible enough, without involving others, who may perhaps have been innocent, in this enormous wickedness. However, let the matter with regard to the Marconis stand as it may, I am perfectly resolved that they shall never be the better off for my fortune. By the help of my patrons here I shall obtain leave to make over my property to some convents or charitable foundations; and perhaps my weariness of life may lead me to end my own days as a monk or hermit.

But what, threw in the mother weeping, if it were possible after all to find out that second Crescentia again, of whom Antonio has told us! The child was stolen from me during your absence in a most incomprehensible manner; the witch who named the Marconis on that night, the likeness, all, all agrees so wonderfully, that surely we ought not to cast away hope, that first and chief good of life, too early, not too hastily, in our despair.

Good Eudoxia, said the father, have done, have done with all these dreams and stories and wild fancies: for us there remains in this world nothing that is certain, except death; and that ours may be pious and easy, is what we must wish and pray to heaven for.

And if hereafter, when it is already too late, exclaimed the mother, our poor orphan child should be found again, may not the unhappy girl justly reproach us for not relying on the bounty and mercy of Heaven, and waiting for her return with a little more calmness and patience?

Ambrosio cast a dark frown on the youth, and then said: This too has come in over and above all the rest to deepen our wretchedness: you have infected my poor wife with your sick fancies, and have thereby robbed her of her peace, the only, the last blessing of life.

What mean you by these words? askt Antonio.

Young man, answered the father, ever since that ride of yours through field and forest, when you pinned that wild tale upon me about the events which you said had befallen you the night before...

Signor Ambrosio! cried Antonio, and his hand fell involuntarily on his sword.

Leave that alone, continued the old man calmly: far be from me the wish to accuse you of a falsehood; I have too long known your noble character, and your love for truth. But has it never struck you, my poor young friend, without my putting it into your head, that ever since the night when you met my daughter's coffin, having come with the thought to carry her home with you the next day as your bride, your senses have got into disorder, your reason has been much weakened? During that lonely night, beneath that storm, in the strongly excited state of your passions, you fancied you saw my lost child again; and the recollections of your unfortunate father, of your long-lost mother, connected themselves with her image. In this way were those visions bred, and fixt themselves firmly in your brain. Did we find a single trace of the hut? Was a human creature in the neighbourhood able to tell us a word about the robbers you killed? That awful meeting again with my real daughter, in which I perforce must believe, is of itself enough to fever the very coldest feelings into madness; and need one marvel then at your talking of having encountered another impossibility, at your story

about finding the dead Pietro come to life among the mountains, and not knowing him again, and about those almost farcical tricks of jugglery that were played you; all which you have related to us with the very same assurance? No, my good Antonio, pain and grief have distracted your sounder senses, so that you see and believe in things which have no real existence.

Antonio was perplexed, and knew not what to reply. Greatly as the loss of his beloved had shaken all the faculties of his soul, he still was too clearly conscious of the events he had past through, to bring their reality thus in question. He now felt a new motive to activity: he wisht at least to prove that the story of that night was no dreamy phantom, that his second Crescentia was an actual being; and thus it became his liveliest desire to find her again, and to restore her to her afflicted parents, or at least make Ambrosio acknowledge that he had misjudged him. In this mood he left his old friend, and wandered about the city to and fro, prest by the concourse of people, and half stunned by shouts, and questions, and stories, in all the languages of the earth. Thus, shoved and pusht about, he had been driven on as far as the Lateran, when he fancied that, as the crowd now and then opened a little, he distinctly perceived, though some way off, that selfsame hideous old woman, the mother of the beautiful maiden, who bore the name of his Crescentia. He endeavoured to get up to her, and seemed to be succeeding, when a train of pilgrims came pouring from a cross street, who cut him off entirely, and made all further advance impossible. While he was struggling with all his might, and working his way up the steps of St John's Church, that he might be able to overlook the multitude, he felt a friendly slap on his shoulder, and a well-known voice pronounced his name. It was the Spaniard Alfonso. So I find you exactly in the place, said he joyfully, where I lookt for you.

What do you mean by that? askt Antonio.

First let us get out of the way of this torrent of human flesh, cried the other: in this place, from the

myriads of tongues that are wagging, from the ceaseless buz of this monstrous Babylonian beehive; one can't hear a single word.

They took a walk out into the country; and here Alfonso confest to his friend that, since he had been at Rome, he had devoted himself to the science of astrology, divination, and other like things, which he had formerly held in abhorrence, having been of opinion that they could only be acquired by accursed means and by the help of evil spirits. But since the day, he continued, when I made acquaintance with the incomparable Castalio, this knowledge appears to me in a far higher and purer light.

And is it possible, exclaimed Antonio, that after all those fearful events at Padua, you can again expose your soul to such perils? Do you not clearly see that whatsoever is to be attained in a natural way and by means of our own reason does not repay the trouble, being nothing more than a set of petty tricks that can only excite merriment and laughter! that everything beyond, on the other hand, which does not turn upon empty delusion, cannot possibly be called into being, unless by evil and damnable powers?

Declaiming, said the Spaniard, is not proving. We are far too young to understand the whole of our own nature; much less can we comprehend the rest of the world and all its unexplored mysteries. When you once see the man whom I have so much to thank for, all your doubts will vanish. Pious, simplehearted, nay, childlike, as he is, every look of his eye pours the light of confidence into you.

And how was it with Apone? Antonio threw in.

He, replied his friend, always wanted to be coming forward in the light of a supernatural being: he was evermore labouring, consciously and purposely, to appear as a messenger from Heaven, and with counterfeit splendour, to dazzle the ordinary sons of men. He delighted in pomp; he would indeed be condescending at times, but it was only to make the enormous distance between him and us more palpably felt. Did he not revel in the

admiration which the nobles and citizens, the young and old were all forced to pay him? But my present friend, (for such he is, because he renders himself altogether my equal) has no wish to seem great and sublime: he smiles at the endeavours of so many men to do so, and considers this of itself as an assurance that there is something spurious and hollow to be concealed; since a clear consciousness of worth would only wish to pass for what it feels itself to be, and the wisest of mortals must after all acknowledge that he too, as well as the most ignorant vagabond, is merely a child of the dust.

You make me curious, said Antonio: so he knows both what is past and what is to come? the destinies of men? and could tell me how happy or unhappy the cast of my future life is to be? whether certain secret wishes can be accomplisht? Would he then be able to decipher and divine such parts of my history as are obscure even to myself?

It is in this very thing that his wisdom lies, answered Alfonso with enthusiasm; by means of letters and numbers, in the simplest and most harmless way, he finds out everything for which those wretches have to employ conjurations and charms and yells and screams and the agonies of death. Hence too you will find none of that odious magical apparatus about him, no crystals with spirits blockt up in them, no mirrors and skeletons, no smoke-work, and no nauseous imps: he has all his stores in himself. I told him about you; and he found out by his calculations that I was quite sure of meeting you to-day at this hour on the steps of the Lateran church. And so it has turned out at the very instant he foretold.

Antonio was desirous of becoming acquainted with this wonderfully gifted old man, in the hope of learning his destiny from him. They dined in a garden, and toward evening went back to the city. The streets had grown somewhat quieter; they could pursue their way with less hinderance. At dusk they came into the alleys which pass close behind the tomb of Augustus. They walkt through a little garden; a friendly light glimmered upon them from the windows of a small house. They

pulled the bell; the door opened; and full of the strangest and highest expectations Antonio entered with his friend into the hall.

Antonio was surprised at seeing before him a simple-mannered, middle-sized young man, who from his appearance could not be much above thirty years old. With an unaffected air he greeted the youth on his entrance like an old acquaintance. Welcome to me! said he with a pleasing voice: your Spanish friend has told me much good of you, so that I have long lookt forward with pleasure to becoming acquainted with you. Only you must by no means fancy that you are come to one of the sages, to an adept, or forsooth to a man before whom hell trembles in its foundations: you will find me a mere mortal, such as you yourself are and may become, as may every man whom such graver studies, and retirement from the vain tumult of the world, do not scare away.

Antonio felt comfortable and at ease, greatly as he was astonisht: he cast his eyes round the room, which beside a few books and a lute displayed nothing out of the way. In his own mind he compared this little house and its straightforward inmate with the palace and the pomp, the instruments and the mysteries, of his former teacher, and said: In truth, one sees no traces here of that high and hidden knowledge which my friend has been extolling to me, and in which you are said to be infallible.

Castalio laught heartily, and then replied: No, my young friend, not infallible; no mortal can go so far as that. Only look around you; this is my sitting-room; there in that little chamber stands my bed: I have neither space nor means for hiding any instruments of fraud, or setting any artificial machinery in action. All those circles and glasses, those celestial globes and maps of the stars, which your conjurers need for their tricks, would find no room here: and those poor creatures after all are only deluded by the spirit of falsehood, because they will not labour to learn the powers of their own

minds. He however who descends into the depths of his own soul, with humility and a pious disposition to guide him, he who is in earnest in wishing to know himself, will at the same time find everything here which he would vainly strive by desperate means and devices to extort from Heaven and Hell. *Become like children.* In this exhortation the whole mystery lies hidden. Only let our feelings be pure, and we may again, even though it be but for hours or moments, cast off all that our first parents drew down upon themselves by their wanton disobedience; we walk again as in paradise; and Nature with all her powers comes forward as she did then, in the youthful bridal age of the world, to meet the transfigured man. Is not this the very thing which proves our spirit to be a spirit, that bodily hinderances, space and time, with the confusion they breed, cannot confine it? It soars even now on the wings of yearning and devotion far above all the circles of the stars: nothing checks its flight, save that earthly power which, when sin entered, pounced upon it and enslaved it. This however we can and ought to subdue, by prayer, by self-abasement before the Lord, by confessing our vast guilt, and by boundless gratitude to him for his unfathomable love; and then we see and hear the things that are curtained from us by space and time; we are here and there; the future comes forward, and, like the past, pours out its secrets before us; the whole realm of knowledge, of comprehension, lies open to us; the powers of heaven become our willing servants: and yet to the truly wise man one glimpse into the mysteries of the Godhead, one emotion of his own heart when toucht by God's love, is far higher, and far more precious knowledge, than all the treasures which do homage to the inquiring mind, than the revealed soul of history or of the present time, than the bending knees of a thousand angels who are ready to call him their master.

Alfonso cast a look of enthusiasm upon his friend; and Antonio could not refrain from acknowledging to himself that here in the garb of lowly simplicity he found

more than had ever delighted him from Apone's mouth, even at the time of his greatest admiration for that ostentatious philosopher. Indeed, he was already become fully convinced that the knowledge which people call supernatural may be easily united with piety and a thorough resignation to the Lord.

Do you know now what my fate has been ? askt the youth with emotion : can you tell me anything about the events that are hereafter to befall me ?

If I learn the year, the day, and the hour of your birth, answered Castalio, compare the horoscope I shall then draw with the lines of your face and the marks on your hands, and afterward give free range to my mind in contemplating the results, I hardly doubt my being able to tell you something about your destinies.

Antonio gave him a pocket-book, in which his father had himself noted down the hour of his birth. Castalio placed some wine before the young men, himself partaking a little of it, turned over a few books, and then sat down to calculate, without however entirely breaking off his conversation with his guests. It only seemed as if the cheerful young man had some common business in hand, which was far from requiring the whole of his attention. Thus amid laughing and lively talk an hour may have past away, when Castalio stood up and beckoned to Antonio to go with him to the window. I know not, he began, how far you trust your friend there, or what you may wish to keep secret from him. Hereupon he examined Antonio's face and hands very minutely, and then in regular connexion told him the story of his parents and their misfortunes, the early violent death of his mother, and his father's sinful passion, together with his murder by the hand of his wicked complice. Afterward he came to Antonio's own affairs, how he had sought for the murderer and pursued him, and had been detained at Padua by love. So you, he concluded, as not without astonishment I have learnt, are the very young man who a short time since detected the wickedness of the abominable Apone in such a wonderful way, and who delivered the shame-

less villain over to his punishment, although you yourself only became still unhappier than before, from having to lose your beloved a second time in so horrible a manner.

Antonio confirmed all that the friendly man said, and had gained such confidence in him, that he felt just as if he was talking to himself. He then went on to tell him about the adventures of that night, about the second Crescentia, and the odious witch, who, he could not help fancying, had appeared to him a second time on that day. Can you inform me now, he asked eagerly, whether this is all true, who that Crescentia is, and whether I shall ever see her again and carry her back to her parents?

Castalio became more thoughtful than before. Unless that mischievous Beresynt, he answered, the imp that used to be at the magician's side, has been disguising himself as a woman, to escape from his pursuers, I feel assured that I shall find the hag out. Only have patience till to-morrow, and I will then give you your answer. Meanwhile you may be satisfied that the occurrences of that night were no phantoms of your mind, but realities; thus far you may set yourself and your elderly friend at rest.

The young people were lost in thought as they left the wonderful man, and Antonio thanked the Spaniard heartily for having procured him this acquaintance.

Antonio had not been mistaken. It was in fact the old woman that he had caught sight of in the crowd. She was living in a little hut, behind some ruinous houses, not far from the Lateran. Persecuted, destitute, deserted and hated and dreaded by all the world, she was here, in the abode of wretchedness, reduced to the brink of despair. She seldom ventured to shew herself abroad, and on this day too had only gone out from necessity, to bring her Crescentia, who had run away from her, back again. As everybody shrank out of her path, as it was hard work for her even to obtain here and there an alms, and as her former arts found few

lovers, she was no little astonisht that evening to hear a knock at her door, while cries and shouts were tossing without. She took her lamp, and, opening the door, saw a swarm of street-boys and of the lowest rabble at the heels of a little crooked figure fantastically clad in red velvet and gold. Does not the worthy Pancrazia live here? screamed the deformed dwarf.

Ay, to be sure! said the old woman, as she forcibly banged the door to, and tried to drive away the people on the outside by abuse. Who are you, worthy sir? what do you seek from an old forlorn lady?

Set yourself down, said the little stranger, and kinde some more light, that we may spy and look at one another; and whereas you call yourself poor, take these gold pieces, and we will sip a glass of wine together to our better acquaintance.

The old woman smirkt, lighted some wax-candles which she kept lockt up in a drawer, and said: I have still a flask of good Florence, worshipful sir, that shall warm our insides. She opened a little cupboard and placed the red comforter upon the table, pouring out the first glass for her unknown guest.

Why do you call me worshipful? askt he.

Don't the pieces of gold declare it? answered she: and your doublet, and the lace upon it, and the feather in your hat? Are you not a prince, not a magnate?

No! howled the little one: what, odds bodikins! cousin, don't you know me in the least? and yet in my younger days people wanted to flatter me by assuring me that we in some degree resembled each other: and faith! when I come to look thus closely at your figure, your physiognomy, your expression, your sweet smile, and those twinkling stars in your eyes there, and when I weigh all this with scrupulous impartiality, why, cousin Pancrazia of the house of Posaterrena in Florence, and little Beresynt of the family of Iuocosterrestro in Milan, are for such degrees of kin, as cousinhood, like each other enough.

O gemini! screamed the old woman in delight: so you are the Beresynt of Milan about whom I heard

so much talk in my childhood. Hey! Hey! so am I at this late hour in the day, in the depth of old age, to become acquainted with such a lovely cousin face to face!

Ay! said the dwarf: just nose to nose; for that great bastion thrown up there is certainly the biggest piece of bone-work in our faces. For curiosity's sake, dear coz, let us make an experiment for once, whether we can manage to give each other a cousinly kiss... No, purely impossible! the far outjutting promontories immediately begin rattling against each other, and foreclose our lowly lips from everything like a soft meeting. We must force our noble Roman noses aside with our two fists. So! Don't let it fly, my lady cousin! I might come by a box on the ears that would make my last teeth tumble out.

With a hearty laugh the hag cried, Hey! I have not been so merry this long time. But what did they want with you before the door there, cousin?

What! screamed the little one: to look at me, to delight their eyes with me, nothing more. Is not man, my highly esteemed cousin gossip, a thoroughly silly animal? Here in Rome now have hundreds of thousands been assembled whole months, for their Redeemer's honour, as they give out, and to do penance for their sins and get rid of them; and the moment I peep out of the window (I only arrived here the day before yesterday) be it merely in my night-cap, and still more when I come forth at full length and in my Sunday suit into the market-place, one can't help swearing that the whole gang of them have started out of every hole and corner in Europe merely for my sake: they so leer, and ogle me, and whisper, and ask questions, and laugh, and are in ecstasies. I might grow rich, meseems, were I to let myself be stared at for money while I stay here; and if I chance to give them all this pleasure gratis, forthwith a pack of block-heads begin barking and hallooing at my tail. To see a porpoise, a baboon, or an otter, the dogs must put themselves to some expense; yet instead of enjoying

my magnanimity quietly and like sensible people, they rave and revile me all round, and hunt for every filthy name they can root out of the animal creation, for the sake of forcing the sun to look on their gross ignorance.

Very true! very true! sighed the old woman: it fares no better with me. Are the beasts such sheer fools then? Only let a body have a regular, average, commonplace nose, eyes, and chin, and all goes on quietly.

Look at the fish, continued Beresynth, who are dunces in many things. What philosophical tolerance! and yet among them many a fellow is all snout, and confronts the learned physiognomists of the ocean with a countenance, grave, cold, calm in the consciousness of its originality: nay, the whole deep brims and swims with one can't count how many eccentric faces, and gills, and teeth, and eyes astart from their sockets, and every other kind of striking contour: but every monster there floats his own way quietly and peaceably, without having his sleeve twitcht or any other annoyance. Man alone is so absurd as to laugh and sneer at his fellow-creatures.

And on what, said the beldam, after all, does this mighty difference turn? I am sure I never yet saw a nose that was but a single yard long: an inch, at most two, hardly ever three, make the vast distinction between what they call monsters, and what they are pleased in their modesty to style beauty. And now to come to a hump. If it were not in one's way sometimes in bed, as you know, coz, it is in itself far more agreeable to the eye than those dull flats by way of backs, where in many a lank lathy booby the tiresome straight line stretches up as far as one can see without a single twist, or curl, or flourish.

You are in the right, my dame cousin! cried Beresynth, already drunk, to his drunken hostess. What can Nature be about when she turns off the things they christen beauties from her pottery-wheel? Why, they are hardly worth the trouble of setting to work at them. But such cabinet-pieces as you and I! there the creative

power, or the principle of nature, or the soul of the world, or the mundane animal, or whatever title one chooses to give the thing, can look at its product with a certain degree of complacency and satisfaction. For it has your curved lines: it starts off into noticeable angles; it is jagged like corals; it darts forward like crystals; it agglomerates like basalt; nay, there is no conceivable line that does not hop, skip, and jump about our bodies. We, coz, are the spoilt, the cockered children of the formation: and this is why the common rabble of nature are so malicious and envious toward us. Their slim wretched fashion is next door to the slimy eel: there is nothing edifying in such an edifice. From that piece of monotony to the prawn is already a good step; and how far above that is the seal! how do we surpass them both, as well as the sea-star, the crab, and the lobster, my trustiest cousin, in our excursive irregularities, which defy all the mathematicians in the world to find an expression for their law. But, coz, pray where did you get those two gorgeous teeth? the incomparable couple cut a grand and gloomy figure there across the chasm...of your unfathomable mouth, and form a capital bridge over the gulf that gapes between the dark cliffs of your gums.

O you rogue! O you flatterer! laught the old woman: but your darling chin that comes forward so complaisantly, and is so ready to wait upon you and spread itself out like a table. Don't you think you could put a good-sized platter upon it comfortably, where your mouth might then quietly nibble away, while your hands were seeking work elsewhere. This I call economical body-keeping.

We won't spoil ourselves by too much praise, said the dwarf: we are already, it seems, vain enough of our advantages; and after all we did not give them to ourselves.

You are right, said she. But what profession are you of, cousin? where do you live?

Oddly enough; answered Beresynt: sometimes here, sometimes there, like a vagabond: however, I now

mean to settle quietly ; and as I heard there was still a near kinswoman of mine living, I resolved to seek her out and beg her to come and live with me. This is what brought me hither. In my youth I was an apothecary in Calabria ; there they drove me away, because they fancied I manufactured love-powders. O dear, as if there was any need of 'em now-a-days. Then once upon a time I was a tailor ; the outcry was, I thieved too much : a pastrycook ; all accused me of thinning the cat- and dog-population. I wanted to put on a monk's cowl ; but no convent would let me in. Then came my doctoring days, and I was to be burnt ; for they muttered about, what think you ? witchcraft. I became a scholar, wrote essays, systems of philosophy, poems : those who could not read were sure I was blaspheming God and Christianity, and that was too bad. After many long years I betook myself to the man who was making such a pother in the world, Pietro Apone, and became his familiar, next a hermit, and what not ? The best is, that in every state of life I have made money and hoarded it up ; so that I can now lay down my grey head free from want and care. And now, coz, for your history.

Just like yours, answered she : the innocent are always persecuted. I have had a few times to stand in the pillory ; have been banisht out of half a dozen countries ; among other things they even wanted to burn me ; they would have it I conjured, I stole children, I bewicht people, I fabricated poisons.

And, coz, said Beresynt in the openness of his heart, there was some truth in all this, was not there ? innocent as you are. I at least must confess it as to myself, and perhaps it may lie in the family, that I have given in to more than one of the aforesaid practices. My amiable gossip, he who has once swallowed a titbit of dear witchcraft, can never keep his fingers from it afterward as long as he lives. The thing is just like dram-drinking : once get the taste for it, and tongue, and throat, and gums, and marry ! even lungs and liver, will never let it go.

You know human nature, I see, my dear cousin ; said the hag, with a grin that tried to be a simper. Such trifles as a little murder and witchcraft, poisoning and stealing, run in the blood even of the innocentest. Bawding was a thing in which I could never hit the mark. And what shall one say when one has to endure thanklessness and woe from one's own children ? My daughter, though she has seen how I suffer hunger and trouble, and how I have stinted and starved my old mouth, merely to put her into fine clothes, the graceless wench would never let me coax her into earning but a single half-crown. Some time since she might have made a good match of it ! there was Ildefonso and Andrea, and many other brave fellows besides, who supported our whole house, herself among the rest ; but she set up the paltry pretence that the gentry were robbers and murderers, and that she could not let them into her heart. The gallants were such generous spirits, they meant to have the baggage actually tied to them in church ; but silly youth has neither sense nor truth. Now they are lying in their graves, poor perishable mortals, and have been turned out of life's doors in a most scandalous way. But this does not move her a whit more than my sorrow and distress ; so that I can't make her consent to live with a rich young noble cavalier, the nephew of a cardinal, who could floor this whole room with gold. The silly jade has run away, and they absolutely won't give her up to me again. Such is the respect shewn to a mother in these days.

Let her go, the worthless trumpery ! cried Beresynth : we shall live happily together without her, I warrant ; our ways of thinking and feeling are so well paired.

But why should she run away, continued the old woman, like a faithless cat after a flogging ? We might have parted as if we loved each other, and like two rational beings. I might have discharged a mother's duty, and settled her where she should be in no danger of starving. Surely some occasion would have turned up before long of selling the greensick minx advan-

tageously to an old lover or a young one; and this might have succeeded too, why should not it? if she had not lockt up a silly young fellow in her heart, whom she loves, as she tells me.

O have done, gammer! screamed Beresynt, reeling and already half asleep. If you begin to talk about love, coz, I shall tumble into such a laughing convulsion that I shall not recover from it for this next three days. Love! that stupid word broke the neck of my famous master, Pietro. But for this tarantula-dance the great hawknose would still be sitting as professor at his lecturing desk, and tickling the young goslings with philosophy and wisdom as they perkt up their yellow beaks to catch the crumbs he dropt into them. Marry! old beldam, this monkey-trick of love, this Platonic drunkenness of the soul, was the only thing wanting to us, to me as well as you, and then the miracle of our heroic existence would have been quite perfect... Well, good bye, old dame; to-morrow night about this time I'll come to fetch you, and then we never part more.

Cousin, said Pancrazia, good bye, till we meet again. Since you came through my door I have grown quite a different creature. We will make a royal housekeeping of it hereafter.

So we too have had our jubilee now! stammered Beresynt, who was already standing in the street, and who reeled through the dark night to his lodging.

Antonio meanwhile had already been to prepare old Ambrosio and his wife, telling them he was now sure of finding out the hideous old woman again, and no doubt her daughter Crescentia also. The mother readily believed him; but the father persisted in his doubts. Even before the sun had set, the youth was again with his friend at the door of the wise Castalio. The latter met them smiling, and said: Here, Antonio, take this paper: you will find noted down on it in what street, in what house, you may meet with the old crone. When you

have discovered her, you will no longer entertain any doubts about my science.

I am already convinced, replied Antonio: I was so even yesterday: you are the wisest of mortals, and by the help of your art will make me the happiest. I will go to seek for the old woman; and if Crescentia is not dead or lost, I shall carry her to the arms of her parents.

Powerfully excited and full of expectation, he was about to depart in haste; his hand was already on the lock of the door; when a low timid knock was heard on the outside, accompanied by a hoarse coughing and a scraping of feet. Who's there? cried Castalio; and, when the friends opened the door, in came Beresynt, who immediately stationed himself in the middle of the room, and with sundry antick bows and writhings of his features, offered his services to the wise man.

Who are you? exclaimed Castalio, who had changed colour, and pale and trembling had shrunk back a few steps.

A villain he is, the fiend! cried Antonio: a magician, whom we must put into the inquisition's hands. It is the accursed Beresynt himself, whose name, my honoured friend, you have already heard, and of whom I have told you.

Think you so, young jackanapes? said Beresynt with a sneer of the deepest contempt. With you, children, I have no business. Do you not know me? cried he turning to Castalio: perhaps you have nothing for me to do.

How should I? said Castalio with a faltering voice: I never saw you before. Leave me; I must decline your services. In this little house of mine I have no room for any stranger.

Beresynt paced with his biggest strides up and down. So, you don't know me? It may be; folks alter a good deal sometimes; for no man is always in his bloom. But, it strikes me, people ought not to forget me, or to mistake me for any one else, quite so soon as

they might many of your smooth nicely painted ninnies... And you, too, as he turned round to the youths, you perchance don't know that wisdom-monger there.

O yes! said Antonio: he is our best friend, the excellent Castalio.

Here the dwarf raised such an enormous shout of laughter, that the walls and windows of the room clattered and echoed it back. Castalio! Castalio! screamed he as if possessed: why not Aganippe too, or Hippocrene? So, you have got spectacles before your eyes, and your souls stare stupidly with a calf's look out of your round pumpkins of heads! Rub your noses, and see, and recognize, I pray you, your honoured Pietro of Abano, the great jack-of-all-trades from Padua!

He who called himself Castalio had sunk as if fainting into a chair: his trembling was so violent that all his limbs fluttered; the muscles of his face quivered with such force that no feature in it could be distinguished: and after the young men had gazed on it for some time amazedly, they thought with horror they perceived that from this distortion of all the lineaments came forth the well-known countenance of the aged Apone. With a loud scream the magician started from his seat, clenched his fists, and foamed at the mouth; he seemed in his fury of a gigantic size. Well, yes! he roared in a tone of thunder: it is I, I, Pietro! and thou slave, thou art spoiling my game, as I was destroying those young brats after a new fashion. What wouldst thou, worm, of me, who am thy master, and who have cast thee off? Tremblest thou not through all thy bones at the thought of my vengeance and punishment?

Beresynth again raised the same pealing horrid laugh. Vengeance! Punishment! he repeated grinning. Fool! matchless fool! art thou now for the first time to find out that such language toward me does not beseem thee? that thou, juggler, must crawl in the dust before me? that a glance of my eye, a grasp of my iron arm, will dash thee to pieces, thou earthborn mummery, with thy wretched tricks, which only prospered through my countenance.

A spectre stood in the hall. His eyes shot forth sparks of fire; his arms spread themselves out like an eagle's wings; his head toucht the ceiling: Pietro lay whining and howling at his feet. It was I, so the demon spake on, who furthered thy paltry tricks; who deluded the people; who made thee sin and thrive in thy sins. Thou troddest me under foot; I was thy scorn; thy highminded wisdom triumpht over my silliness. Now I am thy master. Now thou shalt follow me as my bond-slave into my kingdom... Depart hence, ye poor wretches! he cried to the youths: what more we have still to settle, it befits not you to behold! and a tremendous clap of thunder shook the house to the bottom. Dazzled, horror-struck, Antonio and Alfonso rusht out; their knees tottered; their teeth chattered. Without knowing how, they found themselves again in the street; they fled into a neighbouring church; for a howling whirlwind now arose, with thunder and lightning; and the house, when they lookt behind them, was burning and had fallen in ruins. Two dark shadows hovered over the flame, fighting, as it seemed, and twining round each other, and wrestling and dashing each other to and fro: yells of despair and peals of scornful laughter resounded alternately between the pauses of the loudly raving storm.

It was a long time before Antonio could collect calmness enough to go and seek for the house of the old woman according to the directions he had received. He found her drest out; and she cried to him merrily: What! Florentine! are you too come to see me again at last?

Where is your daughter? askt Antonio, trembling with anxiety.

If you wish to have her now, replied the old woman, I won't keep her from you, But you must pay honestly for her, you or the Podesta of Padua; for she is his child, whom I stole from him long since, because the Marconis vouchsafed me a round sum of money for doing so.

If you can prove it, said the youth, you shall have whatever you ask.

Proofs as many as you please, cried the beldam: trinkets with arms on them, clothes she had on at the time, a mole on her right shoulder, which of course her mother must know best. But you shall also have letters from the Marconis, writings which I carried off with her from Padua in my hurry, every thing...only money must be forthcoming.

Antonio paid her all that he had about him, and then gave her the jewels from his hat and clothes, some pearls, and a gold chain. She swept it all in laughing, while she said: Don't be surprised that I am in such haste, and so easily satisfied. The wench has run away from me, because she was determined not to have any lover, and has stuck herself into the nunnery beside Trajan's column: the abbess would not give her up to me; but only send in your name, and the young chit will jump into your arms; for she dreams and thinks of nothing but you; you have so bewicht her silly heart, that ever since that night, which you will probably remember, she has not spoken a single word of sense, and can't bear to hear the mention of a lover or a husband. I am glad to be quit of her in this way; I am going with my noble cousin, Signor Beresynth, who came of his own accord to invite me, this very night to his villa. Fare thee well, young man! good luck attend you with your Crescentia!

Antonio took all the letters, the baby-clothes, and every proof of Crescentia's birth. At the door he was met by the terrible being that called itself Beresynth. He hastened on, and was so light of heart, so winged on his way, that he did not notice the storm behind him, which threatened to lay the country waste, and to heave the houses from their foundations.

During the night the overhappy parents examined the letters; and these, as well as the clothes convinced them that this second Crescentia was their child, the twin sister of her that died, whom at her christening they had named Cecilia. In the morning the father

fetcht the lovely pale girl from the convent ; and she felt as though in heaven at belonging to such noble parents, and at having again found a youth who adored her, and to whom on that perilous night she could not help giving up her whole heart for ever.

Rome talkt for some time of the two unfortunate persons whom the storm had slain : and Ambrosio lived thenceforward with his wife, his recovered daughter, and his son-in-law, Antonio, in the neighbourhood of Naples. The youth amid the bliss of love ceast to mourn over the sorrows of his younger days ; and the parents were comforted by their children and grandchildren for the loss of their beautiful and most dearly loved Crescentia.

THE END.

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