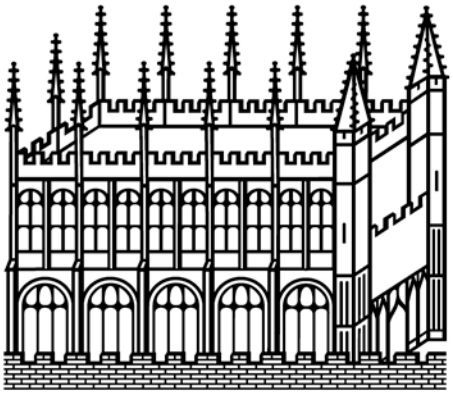
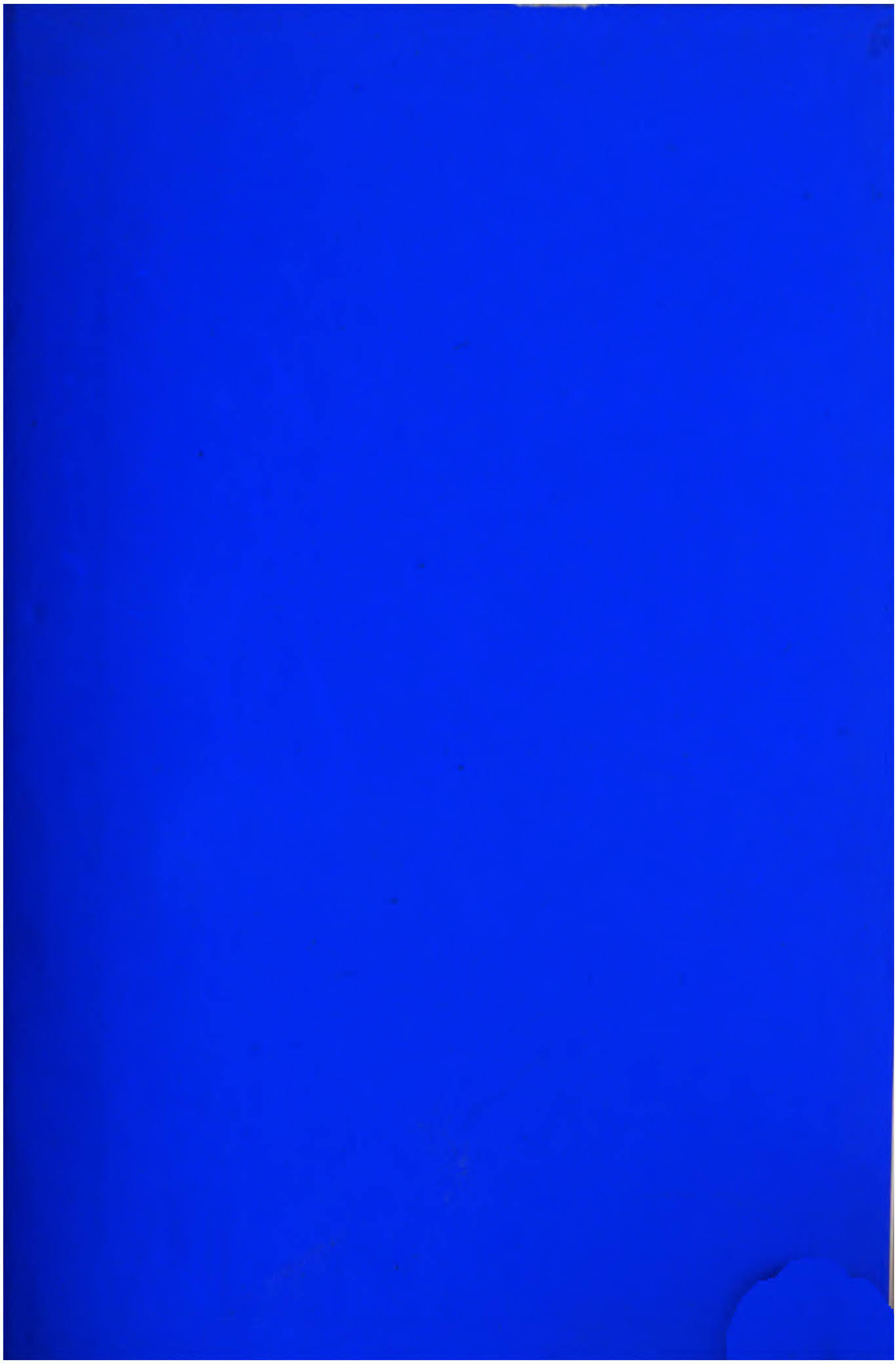


THE ROSE OF JERICHO

EDITED BY

THE HON. MRS. NORTON



THE

ROSE OF JERICHO.

THE

ROSE OF JERICHO:

(TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,)

CALLED BY THE GERMANS,

"Weinachts-Rose;" or, Christmas Rose.

EDITED BY

THE HON. MRS. NORTON,

AUTHOR OF

"Lost and Saved," "Old Sir Douglas," &c., &c.

LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE STREET, STRAND.

1870

pleasant superstition of the renewed freshness of a plant called "The Rose of Jericho," the leaves of which, when withered and desiccated, could nevertheless be gradually restored to their original form, by the simple process of steeping the flower in water; a revival which in old times was considered as implying a miraculous interference, and as conferring all sorts of good luck on its owner.

Some of those who were present during our laughing discussion of this fact, were well acquainted with the traditional superstition, but to some it was unknown. To me it has been familiar from childhood, on account of the impression made by the story I now dedicate to you, in its English form, as then translated by my mother.

In later life, especially during my sojourn in Italy, I have found it a confirmed belief among the lower classes; so much so, that I have known the simpler sort of peasant women, when about to produce human "olive branches," *borrow* a Rose of Jericho from some fortunate possessor of such a rare treasure, in order to ensure a safe termination to their anxieties, together with a prosperous recovery.

I hope the little old-fashioned romance, founded on a superstition once so popular, will not be without a certain charm for you; and that, as you yourself have been an officer in the army, you will accord a double sympathy to the young soldier who sought with so much pertinacity, and with such varying success, for the plant in question.

That so you may be encouraged to persevere, from one Christmas Eve to another, in perennially reviving, to their great contentment as well as your own, all the Roses of Jericho that may happily frequent your Studio, is the sincere wish of,

Dear Mr. BUCKNER,

Yours very truly,

CAROLINE NORTON.

3 *Chesterfield Street, Mayfair.*
December, 1869.

THE

ROSE OF JERICHO.

CHAPTER I.

NEAR the City of Zurich, in the charming village of Riesbach, lived a widow named Madame Meyer. Her husband had been receiver or treasurer of the revenues of that corporation, and by courtesy his widow was still called Mrs. Treasurer Meyer, a title of which she was very proud. Besides this title, she was mistress of a comfortable house, which was well furnished, and for her rank, which was between that of a citizen and a peasant, possessed a pretty fortune.

But the real treasure of Madame Meyer

was her only daughter, who was twenty years of age at the beginning of this history.

Gentle, modest, and industrious, she added a pretty face to these good qualities. Her smile, her look, expressed the kindness of her heart, the intelligence of her understanding ; her blue eyes sometimes sparkled with the gaiety of her age, and sometimes beamed with sensibility. The name of this young girl was Elizabeth, which her mother abridged to Bessy ; and truly the good lady repeated that name so often in the course of the day that this economy of syllables enabled her to recite five or six verses more of the Bible, and as many proverbs. Unhappily, the "Wisdom of Solomon" was at her tongue's end, and she never failed to apply his observations to every circumstance of her own and her daughter's life.

Elizabeth listened with patience and docility ; though sometimes a little weary she suppressed all external signs of such rebellious feelings, and contented herself with

thinking less of the King of Judah than of him who reigned in her heart—the gentle Henry Sigfrid, who was clerk to a great house in the silk manufactures of Zurich.

Elizabeth, as well as the greater number of the young girls in the villages near Zurich, was employed at this manufactory of silk stuffs; she wove them at home, and passed for one of the most active of the workwomen. It was when bringing her work to Mr. Escher, the director of the establishment, that she first became acquainted with Henry Sigfrid; a handsome young man, who bore a very good character. His father, an honest, though very violent man, had once possessed a farm in the village of Riesbach; a series of bad harvests, a law-suit, and some other misfortunes, completely ruined him. His wife died. Henry was his only child. An unmarried sister, who lived at Wiedskau, took charge of the little boy, and the father, who did not want abilities, obtained the situation of clerk to Mr. Escher.

He educated his son for business, and so soon as the youth could write, and understand arithmetic, he was received as an apprentice into the same establishment.

During the first years, though very young, he distinguished himself by his assiduity, good sense, and fidelity, and consequently obtained the confidence and friendship of his masters, who, at the death of his father, did not hesitate to bestow his situation upon Henry, with a good salary, to be augmented every successive year; so that the father died in peace, contented to leave his only and beloved son with so fair a prospect of competence. It was some time afterwards that, being employed to distribute the silk to the different workwomen, Henry had become acquainted with Elizabeth Meyer, whom he had not before seen, though an inhabitant of the same village, having quitted Riesbach soon after her birth.

No other girl worked so skilfully, mingled the shades with so much art, had so much taste

in the fantastic variety of handkerchiefs. The pieces woven by her were always preferred; no other restored the remainder of the silk confided to her with such exact probity, and it was not with indifference that he remarked her skill and honesty; the fair face and fine blue eyes of Elizabeth inflamed his heart, her virtues justified his love, and his reason applauded it; he did not seek to combat or conceal it, and soon had the happiness of perceiving that this love did not displease Elizabeth. Every fortnight, when she came to restore her work and receive fresh materials, the eyes of the young lover sparkled with pleasure at her entrance; he besought her to rest herself; dismissed with haste, though with his usual exactitude, the other young women; and detained Elizabeth to the last, that he might accompany her part of the way.

Sunday sometimes afforded other opportunities of meeting, of speaking—opportunities sought by each with equal eagerness, but with

more restraint on the part of Elizabeth, whose feelings for a long time were only expressed by the animation of her eyes and the modest blush which coloured her cheek when she met Henry. His words, at first merely courteous, became tender, and at last so clear, positive, and ardent, that Elizabeth could no longer refuse an answer. Thus by degrees their reciprocal love escaped their lips, and they mutually pledged their troth for marriage.

Elizabeth had not confided to her mother this secret but innocent connection; from a fear, natural to her age, of the strict old lady, who no longer recollected that she had once been young herself, and was now the vowed enemy of love and lovers. Her ill humour was very much augmented since the French army entered the Canton of Zurich; she foresaw nothing but ruin and destruction. A tall sapeur,* with a long moustache, who was billeted at her house, made

* Pioneer.

her tremble from head to foot when he asked for anything; which he did more by signs than words, as he did not know a word of German, and Mrs. Meyer was equally ignorant of French.

Thus they were enabled to abuse each other with a safe conscience; and, to do them justice, they availed themselves of the privilege to its full extent; but the lady's displeasure being cloaked in the words of Solomon was not very terrible, and the sapeur softened while Elizabeth was present. To find favour in her eyes he showed some respect for her mother, and was recompensed by the excellent dinner which she presented with very good grace to this surly guest; while Mrs. Treasurer muttered between her teeth over her open Bible as it lay on the table before her, and applied the indistinct denunciations mentally to her guest. He answered with a sonorous "Amen," as he filled a bumper; for, Mrs. Meyer's hands being clasped, he concluded she was saying grace, and thought

his "Amen" would be very agreeable to Elizabeth.

After having supped, he received his candle from her hand, and as he went to bed exclaimed, "Good night, and many thanks, my pretty girl."

"Good night, sir," replied the soft voice of Elizabeth.

"Good night, good night," groaned Mrs. Meyer, "as if the wicked could sleep! Well, well, Solomon says in the same chapter—and must one's bread, meat, and wine, and cheese go to these Philistines? Ah! it breaks my heart!"

"But this sapeur is not wicked, mother," said Elizabeth; "on the contrary, he is very gentle and civil."

"What! are you going to speak well of the French? Come, hold your tongue, and fall to work, 'go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise,'—as Solomon says."

Elizabeth desired no better than to forward

her labours in order to obtain the opportunity of taking her work to Zurich to see her dear Henry. She sat down to her loom and made the shuttle fly with rapidity while thinking of her friend, and her wish to confess all to her mother.

"Perhaps," said she to herself, "mamma would be glad to have me married now, that we might have a protector. Ah! if I dared speak of Henry Sigfrid—if I dared tell her how we love each other!"

The thought alone made her heart palpitate, and covered her cheeks with a deep blush; but at length she resolved to take courage and reveal to her mother the secret which had long weighed heavily on her heart.

CHAPTER II.

ELIZABETH was resolved to speak, but she knew not how to begin. Mrs. Meyer, her spectacles on her nose, her arms crossed, was reading the Proverbs, and did not like to be interrupted when so engaged. Twice had Elizabeth, with a low and faltering voice, said, "Dear mother—I must tell you——" and twice had her studious parent replied in the words of Solomon.

Elizabeth was silent, but the agitation of her heart communicated itself to her fingers; the shuttle flew like lightning between the threads of the web, the hand which received it trembled—let it fall. Mrs. Meyer began to scold.

"Why, Bessy, what are you doing there?

How can you be so giddy? You work too quick; don't you know the proverb, 'Make haste slowly'?"

"Yes, mother; I must make haste—that I may have some money to buy my wedding clothes."

It was said—this fearful exordium! Elizabeth's heart beat; she hoped the conversation would not end there.

"Your wedding clothes, indeed! Why, little girl, your head is turned; remember, you are only twenty, and that is a great deal too young to think of marriage; don't you remember the proverb, 'Marry in haste and repent at leisure'? Put such things out of your head: besides, pray who would have you, as times go? where's the man mad enough to marry while there are French troops in the country? Bessy, Bessy, turn your thoughts from such temptations! The world is lost; and so are all the people in it who think of marrying; don't think of your wedding clothes till you have found a

husband—it will be long before you have an offer; wait patiently till then."

"Ah, mother," said Elizabeth smiling, but without raising her eyes, "I need not wait, if that is all; I know a very good-looking —a very good young man, I mean—who would desire nothing better than to be my husband and your son."

"Ah, you know him! I am glad to hear it; and pray what is the name of this good-looking and worthy young man of your acquaintance?"

"Henry Sigfrid, mother; you know him too, and all his family; he is from this village, and——"

"Yes, yes, I know all those cursed Sigfrids," said Madame Meyer in a fury; "and I declare to you that, were we all at peace, he should never have you for a wife. Escape 'like a bird from the snare of the fowler,' and don't talk of the Sigfrids unless you want to kill me."

So saying, she rose, put her knitting and

spectacles in the drawer, lit another candle, and was retiring to her room to pray.

But the heart of Elizabeth was breaking; she could not restrain herself; a torrent of tears fell from her fine eyes.

"Mother," said she sobbing, "do not leave me thus; listen to your child: it is exactly because the times are so bad, and beause a modest girl and an aged widow are not safe from the soldiers, and have need of protection, that I thought you would be glad to have an honest brave man for your son-in-law. What have you to object against Henry Sigfrid? is he not a worthy and brave young man? If the father has been unlucky in business once, all the world knows that the son is industrious, and a good economist. Messrs. Escher prefer him to all their other clerks. Who knows that he may not one day have a share in their house? Since the Revolution, merchants are not near so proud, and are willing to associate with country people, and Henry is as clever and

well-educated as if he was a gentleman; and now that there is liberty and equality——"

"Why, how her tongue runs! A good box on the ear shall you have if you will not hold your tongue," said Mrs. Treasurer, advancing. "If I hear only once more those cursed French words, and the name of Henry Sigfrid come out of your mouth, you shall see. Don't you know the proverb, 'Evil communications corrupt good manners'? and here is my own daughter running after evil communications and her ruin! Don't you know the proverb, 'Look before you leap'?"

The tears of Elizabeth fell in abundance. "He does not deserve to be cursed," said she, without daring to pronounce the name of Henry; "and I am not a girl to wish the whole country turned upside down. Don't you remember, mother, how I hid myself that I might not be obliged to dance round the tree of liberty, and how I wept when it was planted? But since at last all is changed,

and I cannot help it, I sometimes think that from this evil some good may arise to Henry. He does not like what is passing; he knows very well what we may expect from these strangers. If he had not accompanied me the last time after carrying my work home, who knows whether those soldiers would not have insulted me? they never let a young girl pass without offering to stop her."

"Really, Elizabeth! he walks home with you, does he? Now I know why you are always in such a hurry to finish your work and carry it to town! It is to find a lover then, and begin an intrigue unknown to your mother! A fine young man this Henry! An attentive clerk! His masters will soon have done with him, if he quits his counter to walk with a giddy coquettish girl, who runs after him. In future you shall stay at home; infirm as I am, I would rather carry your work myself, than bear such conduct any longer, and have it

said that my daughter runs after a young man."

".O mother, dear mother," sobbed poor Elizabeth in deep affliction, "for what do you take me? I am a good and modest girl, who never loved to run about, and never wished to see anybody in the world but Henry Sigfrid. I have given him my heart, it is true, but honestly, as you gave yours to my late father."

"Your father! your father was not a heathen, an unbeliever, an impious wretch, like that wicked old Sigfrid, my greatest enemy, who trampled under foot everything that is most sacred, and took from me the precious jewel which was left me by my ancestors, and which raised me above all women. Should I give my daughter, the only jewel that remains, to his son, who, I dare say, is no better than himself? Don't you know the proverb, 'The apple does not fall far from the tree'? I say, and say it again, a Sigfrid shall never be

your husband. How can you forget the dreadful affliction his father brought upon me?"

"Was it when he threw those withered flowers out of the window?" said Elizabeth timidly. "I hardly—I was such a child—remember it, but I have often heard you speak to my father about it, and he used to laugh, and say that it was no great loss. I thought you no longer grieved for that; it's a long time since, and we ought to forgive our enemies."

"Yes, yes, but King Solomon does not say so; in 22nd chapter, 53rd verse, he says positively, 'Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his ways and set a snare for thy soul.' You see you ought not to marry Henry Sigfrid. This passage seems written on purpose for you."

"But it was not Henry who took your flower; it is not he who is violent, he is as quiet as a lamb."

"But 'inwardly he is a ravenous wolf;' did he not take my blessed flower, this wicked Sigfrid?"

"But what was that dried flower? and why did you think it so valuable?"

"Ignorant girl! don't you know it was the blessed Rose of Jericho, which will only grow in the Holy Land? Without doubt it is generally withered and dry, because it is above a hundred years since one of my ancestors brought it from Palestine; it is dry in appearance, but it revives when it pleases. When on Christmas night a pure hand steeps it in water, and a pious person prays beside it, you see those dried fibres stretch out by degrees, and the plant recovers life and freshness as if in its spring! According as it opened, quickly or otherwise, I could foretell good or bad weather, good or bad harvests for the following year. Not only my neighbours, but people from distant countries came to me, respectfully begging leave to contemplate this miracle.

On a Christmas night the flower blossomed at the sweet sound of my hymns, and the neighbours heard from my lips whether they were to have wet or dry weather. I was listened to as an oracle, far and near I was reckoned a prophetess."

"But, mother," said Elizabeth, who had listened with attention, "why did Henry's father take your flower?"

"Why? because he was a violent, passionate wretch; like all impious men, he wanted to have two strings to his bow, to fill his cellars and barns; but all his wealth has vanished like my flower. During two successive summers there had been a great deal of rain, his ground was damp, and his crops failed. He came to me at Christmas, in order to hear whether my flower foretold dry weather for the following year. Never had my flower blossomed so well or so quickly. I promised him the finest weather in the world; but at the same time I expected him to work: the hand

of the diligent, said I, produceth abundance; 'sow betimes in the morning, and you will reap in the evening,' says King Solomon. He went, he sowed, and planted in the same soil where he had succeeded so ill during the damp years, counting upon the dry weather my flower had prophesied; but neither the flower nor I could foresee that his grounds would be flooded by streams from the mountains near which his farm was situated, and which he might have prevented by digging ditches, and draining the water in another direction. He thought he need not take all those pains, and that year also his crops failed. The following Christmas night he came again, at the very moment I was taking the flower from the chest where I always kept it locked up, and that evening I expected many pious friends.

"'What! are you still deceiving people,' said he in a fury, 'and making fools of them by your false prophecies? It is time all this should end. This flower, the cause of my ruin, shall be ruined in its turn.'

"Saying this, he tore it by force from my weak hand,—broke it in a thousand pieces, which he scattered out of the window, and then departed like a madman, calling me witch and magician. I remained petrified like a pillar of salt, but trembling from head to foot with anger and vexation. The strangers and neighbours who came to consult me, found my house deserted; I was hid in the cellar, ashamed of having lost my gift of prophecy.

"Many persons who envied my previous possession smiled maliciously, and everybody retired. My faithful cousin Dorothy, who had the honour of the family at heart, alone remained with me to sigh, and seek by the light of the lantern the smallest relics of my flower; but a great wind had arisen and dispersed all. I could only find a few small twigs which had lost their virtue, and which I laid by as a memorial.

"I proposed to go to law with Sigfrid; my case was taken into consideration, but

who could restore what I had lost? That wicked man! Since that time the poor farmers have no guide, they are obliged to sow and plant by chance, like blind men or unbelievers; for the faith of the good old times grows more and more rare among the sons of men. Ah! what times have we lived to behold! the misfortunes of my poor country—with the loss of my rose! Sigfrid's bad action was long talked of; the punishment soon fell upon him, he was completely ruined, forced to give up his farm into the hands of his creditors, and to retire to his sister at Wiedskau. Then people began to pity him, and forget by degrees this dreadful story. 'The fire goes out when nobody puts on fuel.' I alone can never forget it, but, from fear of adding affliction to the afflicted, abstained from speaking of it even to you, my child. But now it is my duty as a mother to open your eyes to the risk you run by loving the son of such a man, who resembles him in face like two drops of

water, and without doubt in character also, for the face is the mirror of the soul! I had at last grown dumb with regard to my cruel enemy, and when he died six months since I could even say, 'Peace be with him, he will do no more evil on the face of the earth.' But when I see the son of this wicked man trying to take my child from me, all my hatred returns. Bessy! Bessy! will you be the cause of your own mother's death?"

The poor lady, exhausted with having talked so much, sank on a bench behind the stove, covered her head with her apron, and wept.

What could Elizabeth dare to say to her mother? Desponding, trembling, she twisted the end of her handkerchief, and wept without raising her eyes; after some moments she timidly said, "I did not know all this story. Without doubt it was a wicked action and an unreasonable proceeding on the part of old Sigfrid; but Henry is quite innocent of it. I beg, mother, you would be so good as to

show me the leaves which remain of this plant."

"Leaves!" said the mother; "alas, I am not so happy as to have any. They were reduced to dust by the wicked hands of that abominable man; I have only some ends of the branches, which I will show you, and which I am sure will draw bitter tears from your eyes."

That was not difficult; Elizabeth's eyes already flowed at the thought of renouncing her beloved Henry; and she would have felt as much pleasure as her mother in seeing the flower restored. Mrs. Meyer opened the press and drew a small box covered with gilt paper from a drawer; from this she produced two or three bits of the stalks, the only relics of her precious treasure, which were wrapped up in cotton with the utmost care. Elizabeth contemplated them a long time with attention and in silence, but said at last,—

"Would it be impossible to procure another

plant of this kind? Henry would, I am sure, give a large sum of money to repair the injury you have received from his father."

"Money!" said the old lady contemptuously; "it is not with silver and gold such treasures are to be acquired, but with courage, patience, and piety."

"And love," thought Elizabeth, though she dared not utter it. "My Henry has all those virtues, if he only knew which way to direct his steps; could you not tell where it grows, mother—is it only in the Holy Land?"

"I do not know, my dear child; but such flowers, unless they come from the Holy Land and near Jericho, will not have any virtue. My grandfather, who brought home this rose, which he found in the course of his long travels, said that it did not grow in the valleys, but in dry and sandy places among stones and rocks, in distant countries, and that he had encountered great dangers to find it."

Elizabeth sighed and shuddered.

"That is all I know," said the mother; "never more talk to me about it; you will only renew my grief, and it will not be of any use; repress your curiosity, renounce your love, go to bed, and pray that the seducer may be banished from you! Above all, do not say a word of Sigfrid, and take care not to think of him."

She shut the box, and put it carefully in the chest. The mother and daughter separated discontented with each other, and it was long before either could compose herself to sleep; the one bewailed her flower anew, the other thought of the danger to which Henry would be exposed in its search, and thought that perhaps it would be better not to speak of it to him; but then it was equally difficult to renounce their mutual affection.

Thus passed the night, and never was command less obeyed than that "to think no more of Henry Sigfrid."

CHAPTER III.

THE next day Elizabeth having risen early entered softly for fear of awaking her mother; her heart was too heavy to finish her web of handkerchiefs, when she reflected that she was not to have the pleasure of restoring it to Henry. She sat by her loom without uncovering it or taking her shuttle in her hand.

"What will he say," thought she, "when he sees my mother enter instead of me? How is it possible to let him know all that has happened, and the story of that flower?"

All at once, looking listlessly round, she perceived a fragment of the miraculous plant, which the preceding evening had fallen unobserved from the hands of her mother. Elizabeth seized her prize, and hid it carefully

in her bosom; she still hoped that the smallest fragment would enable Henry to seek for the traces of the flower; but, alas! many days passed before she was able to see him. Her mother never lost sight of her, and, under the pretext of the troubles caused by the continual marches and countermarches of troops of French soldiers, would never allow her to go ten steps from the door.

When Friday came, Mrs. Meyer would go to Zurich with the piece of silk. Elizabeth proposed to accompany her; doubtless she would not be permitted to speak to Henry, but at least she would see him, and love has no need of language: a sign, a look, even silence says so much! Probably Mrs. Treasurer Meyer was aware of this, and would not permit the son of her enemy to enjoy even this slight consolation.

"No, no," said she; "do you keep house, and, for fear the soldiers should be tempted to enter it, I will take away the key. Work and pray; think no more of Henry, whom

you will never see again ; be wise and prudent, my daughter, and remember that 'as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman without discretion ;' so says King Solomon. Read the Proverbs ; they were written for our instruction."

She departed and locked the door. Elizabeth beheld her limping along the road.

"Poor mother," said she ; "how she will fatigue herself! Poor Henry, how afflicted he will be ! Poor Elizabeth, you will never see him more !" Tears fell from her eyes. "At least," thought she, "my mother cannot prevent his seeing the silk I have woven with my hands ; every thread, every flower, will remind him of me ; he will say to himself, she thought of Henry as she worked."

This idea consoled her at first better than the Proverbs of King Solomon, which, however, she at intervals endeavoured to read. She found there good advice and useful exhortation, and met with some passages so consolatory that she read them two or three

times over. "Yes, my mother is right," said she; "this book is excellent, and I feel that Henry will find the flower; for he deserves to be happy, and my mother's anger will abate."

During this time Henry was far from hope; his heart had throbbed all the week with the expectation of the Friday which would bring his betrothed. What did he suffer when, instead of the lovely and blooming Elizabeth, he beheld her mother,—still more wrinkled and bent by care and ill-humour than by age,—hiding her forbidding countenance beneath a large black hood, and taking from beneath a cloak of the same colour the piece of silk woven by her daughter, and a paper containing the remainder of the silks.

"Here," said she, rudely, "weigh this, and give me the price of the web; my daughter shall not weave any more. In these times we are not sure of our own goods, and should not undertake the care of other

people's. You know the proverb—'Let every one take care of himself, and then every body will be taken care of.'"

Henry, sighing, produced the money he owed, and timidly asked Mrs. Meyer why a person so feeble and delicate as she was should come to town herself? He hoped Miss Elizabeth was not indisposed.

The old lady murmured some ungracious words, which had no relation to his question, and which, besides, were lost beneath her hood, and departed.

Henry was alarmed at the too visible ill-will of her whose son-in-law he so passionately desired to be. Every day increased his love for Elizabeth. He was equally secure of hers, and ardently wished they might pass their lives together. He had often expressed his wish to be received at her mother's house, and it was this that had given Elizabeth sufficient courage to own her love. How great, then, was her consternation at learning that the violent

action of old Sigfrid placed an insurmountable obstacle in the way of her happiness!

The credulity of her mother rendered this obstacle insurmountable. She was wounded in her superstition and her vanity, where an old woman's feelings are most vulnerable.

Elizabeth was persuaded that the only means of effecting a reconciliation was to procure a flower exactly similar to that which her mother had lost. To attain this object, she engraved upon her memory the few words her mother had spoken on that subject. She awaited with the most lively impatience the moment which would enable her to speak of it with Henry.

An opportunity of seeing him was not, however, found till one fine morning in the month of March.

Mrs. Treasurer Meyer, seeing her daughter always gentle, docile, and assiduous in her duties, (and frequently engaged in reading the Proverbs,) began to hope that Henry was forgotten. That day several neighbours came

to visit them. After having emptied an enormous coffee-pot, and praised the talent for preparing that delicious drink which Elizabeth always displayed, they gathered round the table to deplore the misfortunes of the times. One of these good women having a tale to relate which was unfit for a young girl to hear, asked the mamma by a private signal to allow Elizabeth to walk half an hour with her daughter. It was granted. Mrs. Treasurer wished to hear the promised scandal, and sought already in her memory the proverbs that should crown her comments.

"Go, then," said she, "with Annely Scherer as far as Turchuhorn, but no farther, and beware of these unruly Frenchmen. Walk with your eyes cast down, your hands before you, without looking to the left or right; and if one of them has the impudence, in spite of all, to speak to you, turn your back and fly homewards; for you know King Solomon says——"

"Yes, yes, mother, I know," said Elizabeth, running; "rely upon me."

She escaped like a bird, and sought her friend Annely, whom she loved with her whole heart, and who was her confidante.

"Oh! how hard it is to look after a young girl in time of war!" said Mrs. Meyer; "happily mine is prudent and pious. Now that she cannot hear, tell your story, neighbour."

As their story will not interest you, dear reader, allow them to describe and chat, and let us walk with Elizabeth.

She walked, as she had promised her mother, without looking to the right or left. The two young girls were still far from the banks of the lake, when Elizabeth had already discovered Henry, and he also recognized his beloved, and advanced with hasty steps. He had fruitlessly traversed the environs of Zurich for many Sundays, hoping to meet Elizabeth. This time he is lucky. It is she, she whom he so fervently loves, whom his good genius leads thither!

Enchanted he rather flew than walked to meet his blessed fortune.

If the feet of Elizabeth did not betray equal haste, her heart at least beat in unison. Blushing like the opening rose, she received him with a smile though her eyes filled with tears, and putting her arm through his on one side, while her friend Annely took the other, she began to relate all that had passed at her mother's; the history of his father, and the miraculous flower, of which he was completely ignorant, and which explained the wrathful air of the old lady and the absence of Elizabeth.

"It is fortunate," said he, "that I am not personally the object of her dislike. I will, dear Elizabeth, do all that depends upon me to repair the fault of my father, and to give your mother a better opinion of me."

He allowed that Mrs. Meyer had reason to be angry, but thought she might pardon the second generation.

"This flower," continued he, "cannot be the

only one of its species, and if you could give me an exact description of it, perhaps I might procure one which I might offer her, and thus obtain my pardon and my Elizabeth."

"Alas!" said she, "I never saw the flower, and my mother will not allow me to talk of it. The little fragment that she let fall, and which I have carefully preserved, has very little resemblance to a flower. There it is; take great care of it, though I do not think it will be of any use, it is so small. All my mother told me was, that it grows far from our country; on mountains, and in uncultivated and sandy lands, where it exhales its perfumes; and that it cannot be found without danger."

While saying this it seemed that she had the air of an inspired person, and that she stretched forth her arm towards Mount Albis.

"But, my dear Henry," she added, "however happy it would make us to find this flower, do not, I beseech you, expose yourself to danger."

Henry, on the other hand, swore to brave all perils, and declared he could know no peace till the flower was found, were he to traverse the world in pursuit of it. He knew, he said, who to apply to for directions. He was very intimately acquainted with the inspector of the botanical garden at Zurich, and certainly this person would tell him where to go, the moment he saw the little branch.

It was agreed that as all intercourse was suspended between Mrs. Meyer's house and the Eschers, their friend Annely Scherer, who still worked for that establishment, should inform Elizabeth of the result of Henry's researches.

Elizabeth hesitated at first, like an obedient and religious daughter. She knew it was a crime to deceive her mother.

"I have read," said she, "in the Proverbs of King Solomon, that Heaven has promised happiness to those whose conduct deserves it. Should I deserve its protection if I deceive

my mother? Shall I not rather forfeit this hope by deceiving my mother, and by the crime of disobedience?"

But her lover and her friend represented to her that Mrs. Meyer sinned also, in cherishing an unjust hatred against an innocent young man; that it was laudable to cure her of it, and to procure for her so great a pleasure as the possession of another Rose of Jericho could not fail to produce.

This was bad reasoning, but Elizabeth was too much in love to remember that the *means* must be good as well as the *end*. I hope it was the only instance in which she lost sight of that rule. She at length consented that Henry should write to her through Annely, when he should have any good news to communicate. At the same time she earnestly begged that he would not come into the neighbourhood of Riesbach, that scandal might not bring their future hopes to her mother's ears, and cause new sorrows to all.

"I shall never more come here," said he, "unless I carry that flower in my hand as the olive-branch of peace; and yet I hope to see you soon again."

The sun's latest beams were gilding the side of the mountain. Elizabeth pressed the hand of her lover, and her eyes followed him, while he slowly and sadly withdrew.

"Heaven grant he be not in danger among those rocks!" said she to her friend. The latter reminded her how agile and courageous Henry was universally reckoned.

Elizabeth returned to her mother, whom she found in very good humour; having gossipped to her heart's content; and who asked no questions respecting their walk.

CHAPTER IV.

As soon as Henry had quitted Elizabeth, he ran with the utmost haste towards the town; and so much absorbed was he in his own reflections, that, quite regardless of external objects, he ran violently against a French soldier who was standing on the bridge, and whose hat fell into the water.

No person can be less patient than a French soldier; and this one, after having exhausted the most energetic imprecations his language affords, wished to fall upon the offender, who continued to run with increased speed, while the soldier, having picked up his hat, shouted out to him to stop. But Henry fled, till, out of breath, he reached the other gate of the city, near which the botanical garden was situated.

The head gardener was placing some pots in the greenhouse as he entered. Henry saluted him in a friendly manner, and hastily began his inquiries; but the gardener neither knew the flower by name, nor found the relic, a little dry branch, likely to assist their researches. He said that many plants did not grow in valleys, but on high mountains, and in foreign countries; that all he could discover from the bit of stalk was, that the plant was of the kind called *ligneous* by botanists, and he had no other intelligence to give.

Henry was in consternation. He dared not own all he knew of this plant, that on Christmas Eve it possessed a miraculous and prophetic virtue. He feared the gardener would laugh at him and his plant, or that he should revive some remembrance of the predictions of Mrs. Meyer, and excite suspicions of the intimacy which existed between Elizabeth and himself.

Lovers, always occupied with one idea,

imagine it is equally present to every other mind, and that every word they utter will betray them.

He therefore only manifested some surprise that so clever a man as the inspector of the botanical garden should have no idea of the *Rose of Jericho*, and he added that he had some reason to believe that it flourished on Mount Albis.

"The *Rose of Jericho!*" said the gardener with a knowing look; "are you sure it is not the *Rose of the Alps*, or the *Rhododendron?* Pray let me see that stalk again."

He turned and examined it in every direction, and at last said, "'Tis the same, my good friend, the *Rose of the Alps*, the famous *Rhododendron*. This flower does not grow in our valleys, or even on our secondary mountains; it is found far from hence on the Higher Alps —for example, on Mount Righi, which is behind Mount Albis. It grows in the clefts of the most sterile rocks, or on the sandy banks which surround the glaciers."

"Yes," said Henry, transported with joy, "that is precisely what they told me. They even added that it would not be found without danger."

"Why, not so much of that," said the gardener, "if one can climb like a chamois. Yes, it is the same—ligneous stalk, desert places, and the name of rose, for 'twas by mistake they told you *Jericho.* Ignorant people often fall into these errors. I now see clearly that it is the Rose of the Alps, a handsome flower, very much esteemed by florists, and still more so from the difficulty of rearing it in low grounds."

"Ah! it is just that description," said Henry, clasping his hands. "How fortunate I am! You have put me in the way; it is, then, the Rose of the Alps, it grows upon Mount Righi: to-morrow I go, and I shall search till I find it."

"Softly, softly, young man; you have time enough before you; the rhododendron does not flower till July, and this is the month

of March; you would find nothing up there but snow and withered plants in the clefts of the rocks. When I told you that the Rose of the Alps did not flourish on the plain, I spoke in general, and according to the laws of nature; but we skilful gardeners know how to command nature, and to make the plants of distant countries grow and flourish in our greenhouses. I can show you the rhododendron, and satisfy your curiosity with regard to that shrub."

He then produced a pot containing a plant whose brown and ligneous branches did in fact bear some resemblance to the pattern of the dried plant; and Henry then began to hope he might by the offer of money possess himself of this identical plant, and be spared his mountain wanderings; he named a high price, but the gardener, with rare probity, assured him that it was not possible to sell or embezzle the least thing from the garden which was entrusted to him; that every flower-pot was numbered,

and inscribed in the catalogue by its name and number, and that the rhododendron in particular had been recommended to his care as one of the most rare and precions in his collection.

Henry was obliged to renounce his hope of obtaining it in this manner.

"But," said the gardener, laughing, "I should like to know, Mr. Sigfrid, why you are so very anxious to have this plant. Come, I suppose some pretty girl has promised her heart in exchange for a branch of rhododendron."

Henry blushed deeply; but, fearing to commit Elizabeth, replied that his old aunt, with whom he lived, was subject to the asthma, and had been advised to wear a bag of the roots of this plant applied to her chest.

It is thus that love will sometimes suggest falsehoods to hearts naturally sincere.

The gardener laughed, said he was the best of nephews, but that for his part he

would rather give the Rose of the Alps as a nosegay for a pretty girl, than to cure an old woman of the asthma; adding that, though he knew a good deal of the properties of plants, he had never before heard that the roots of rhododendron were good for that disease.

Henry took leave, for fear of betraying himself. Upon returning home, he resolved to set off without delay for Mount Righi, since it was not the rose in flower he wished to obtain, but a dried plant, that Mrs. Meyer might have the pleasure of restoring it to life. Easter was near, the counting-house would be shut for a week, and he might then begin his journey without neglecting his duties.

On Good Friday Annely Scherer came to bring her web and take fresh materials. He wrote a few words to his beloved Elizabeth, and rolled it round one of the parcels of silk; a glance informed her zealous friend, who the same evening conveyed

it to Elizabeth, and the latter, with violent palpitation, read what follows :—

"BELOVED ELIZABETH,

"I have been happy enough to learn where the flower, so much valued by us all, is to be procured. If heaven permits, I shall set out on Easter Monday; these holidays will be lucky for us; pure true love will meet with protection; I shall seek by sea and land for the dry rose, which will appear to me the fairest that ever bloomed; it will revive under the hand of your mother, and we shall all be happy. Do not fear that I shall be otherwise than careful of a life which I hope to spend with you. Besides, there is nothing to undergo but a little fatigue, which I cannot feel if I succeed.

"I hope to return by Tuesday week; do not be alarmed if you should unexpectedly hear a knocking at the door of your house; it will be your friend.

I have the sweet hope of being well received. If I bring your mother the treasure she regrets, I shall claim one more precious. May it be granted to your faithful

"HENRY SIGFRID."

It is easy to conceive with what pleasure this letter was read by Elizabeth; it was the first she had ever received. After having read it about fifteen times, she placed it in a little bag of green silk woven by herself, on which was embroidered a rose-bud and a sprig of forget-me-not, and she wore it next her heart.

CHAPTER V.

On Easter Eve Henry's old aunt was very much surprised when he asked her blessing upon a little journey he was going to begin the next day at sunrise.

"But it is Easter, my dear nephew, would it not be much better to go to church?"

"My heart will be there with you, my good aunt, and I shall pray all the way that I may find you in good health when I come back; pray that I may have a successful journey."

"I suppose Messrs. Escher have sent you. Shall you be long absent?"

"Only a few days—it is, in fact, a very important commission."

"May you do well! I hope you will

execute it to their satisfaction, dear child; though I am really afraid of your travelling in these bad times. If something was to happen! The roads are full of soldiers—wicked wretches! Suppose you were to be enlisted—that they were to force you to wear a tri-coloured cockade?"

"Heaven will be with me, dear aunt, and as I shall not do any harm, so I do not expect to meet with any. I do not mean to enlist, I assure you."

The aunt, a little comforted, allowed him to depart, having given him a good breakfast and slipped a small loaf into his bundle. He took the road to Mount Albis. As he had never been farther he had enquired the road to Zug. But not supposing that a young man travelling without arms, and whose only object was to scale the rocks of Mount Righi in search of a flower, could be liable to suspicion, he had not thought of providing himself with a passport, signed by the French authorities. This negligence soon

placed · him in an embarrassing situation. Thinking only of Elizabeth and the Rose of the Alps, and not often observing the objects which surrounded him, he missed the road by Cappell, which leads to Zug, and arrived at Knonan, upon the road to Lucerne. When the sentinel enquired from whence he came and whither he was going, he replied, "I come from Zurich, and I am going to Zug."

"You lie," said the sentinel; "this is not the road to Zug, it is the way to Lucerne; show your passport."

As Henry had none to show, it was decided that he should be arrested, as an insurrection had just taken place at Russwyll, in the Canton of Lucerne. A traveller found on the road to Lucerne, under pretext of a journey to Zug, could not but be deemed a suspicious character.

A delay of some days was a real misfortune to a young lover who counted the hours, and even the minutes, with inexpressible impatience; he entreated they would

conduct him to the Mayor; and then, with the eloquence that love and truth inspires, he succeeded, though not without difficulty, in convincing him that he had lost the road to his own hindrance. He was forced to assign a reason for his journey to Zug; he therefore avowed that he wished to ascend Mount Righi, to seek a plant which he understood grew there; but in vain did he swear that was the only object of his journey; he could not succeed in convincing the Mayor that in the depth of winter, when Mount Righi was covered with snow, he could think of climbing its rugged sides for the sake of botanizing; such an assertion again excited suspicion; all agreed that he was a conspirator in disguise, sent by the rebels of Zurich on a secret mission.

"Luckily," said the Mayor, "you are not very cunning: you might easily have found a better excuse for your journey than botanizing in the snow."

He was searched from head to foot; but

nothing was found that could warrant his detention, and his physiognomy was so much in his favour that the Mayor contented himself with sending him back to Cappell under escort of a French Corporal, that he might from thence begin his journey to Zug.

Henry, furious at heart, thought himself happy when he got rid of the Corporal by paying him half-a-crown.

He had yet a rigorous scrutiny to sustain at Cappell; but having at length received his liberty, he arrived at Zug, where he had a similar examination to endure, and still greater difficulty in escaping detention. When free to continue his road, feeling rather fatigued, he wished to take a boat to cross the lake; but the boatmen, or rather the boat*women*—for in that country the office is performed by women—will not cross the lake upon a holiday, and would not undertake to convey a passenger unprovided with a passport; he was, therefore, obliged to proceed on foot. It was night

when he reached Arth, and he could go no farther that evening.

It was Sunday, and, according to the custom of the country, he found the citizens all assembled about the inn.

They questioned him. The people of the smaller Cantons do not like the Zurichians; and as he came from that city his reception was rather cold. At Knonan they had taken him for an emissary of the Canton against the French; here they suspected him to be a French spy, come to examine the passes of the mountains; and no sooner had he begun his enquiries relative to the road which led to Mount Righi, than they felt convinced it was his intention to take a plan of the whole country, which may be distinctly seen from its summit, for the use of the enemy. He protested that nothing could be further from his design, which was merely to botanize; he opened his bundle, to satisfy them he possessed neither pencil nor paper. But the Swiss are obstinate.

Heated by wine, his audience began to abuse him, and would have soon proceeded to more violent expressions of their indignation had not the hostess felt some pity for the young and handsome traveller.

She made a sign, and placing some wine on the table, pushed him out of the door, feigning to share the displeasure of the other guests, and having led him to the barn, "Rest here for some hours," said she, "and depart at break of day; I do not believe you are a spy—you do not look like it; but here you would have the worst of it."

Henry thanked this good woman, and proved his innocence by his generosity. He threw himself on the straw, slept profoundly, and with the dawn of day, his persecutors having departed, he took the road to Mount Righi.

CHAPTER VI.

His eyes always fixed on the summit of the mountain which concealed his treasure, he would in all probability have lost his way at the foot of it, had not he accidentally met with a young shepherd, who, upon being promised two florins for his trouble, consented to become his guide.

Henry began, then, like a devout pilgrim, to climb with his little guide through rough and rugged paths, amid a thick fog, undaunted by the snow and ice which still covered these high regions and weighed down the branches of the firs.

A profound silence reigned in this solitary world of threatening Alps, only interrupted by the noise of torrents which dashed from

rock to rock in their course to the valley. The morning breeze, which blew with violence, was piercing cold. The hair of either traveller was covered with hoar-frost, and the vapour of their breath was congealed on their lips.

Every moment the paths grew more steep and difficult. The shepherd, who was accustomed to them, climbed like a chamois, and Henry courageously followed, thinking of Elizabeth and the miraculous flower. The little goatherd was well acquainted with the Rose of the Alps, and promised to show the rocks which produced the greatest quantity of these shrubs—"where I climb," said he, "every Saturday to gather the branches, which I sell to girls of Arth to put in their Sunday hats. Ah! if you saw what a fine red those roses are! Just now you will see nothing of that—they are all withered; only come back here in the month of July, when they come *alive* again."

This expression pleased Henry. "I hope,"

thought he, "they will revive before that time, through the care of Mrs. Meyer!"

For he imagined that if this plant had the faculty of reviving in water, it might do so before Christmas Eve, and he hoped to engage Mrs. Treasurer to make the experiment.

Animated by the idea, he redoubled his speed, but, meeting with a spot where the ice was entirely concealed by a layer of snow, his feet slid forwards, and he fell two or three fathoms against the point of a rock, which, though it was the means of preventing his fall over the precipice, gave him a deep cut on his forehead. His right hand, by which he had endeavoured to save himself, was sprained and very much scratched, and the shock deprived him of his senses.

By good luck his companion was active and intelligent, and exerted himself to stop the blood by placing a piece of ice on the wound. The cold restored Henry; he recovered by degrees. His face and hands,

which were covered with blood, he washed in the snow, and tied his black cravat round his head; and, having bound his hand with his garter, proceeded with fresh courage. Love and hope lent him extraordinary strength. It pleased him to reflect that he suffered for Elizabeth.

"A scar will remain on my forehead, perhaps," thought he, "which will remind her of this journey, even if she should ever be able to forget it!"

It gave him pleasure, too, to reflect that he should now reconcile Mrs. Meyer to the soul of his father, whose memory she would no longer curse.

They arrived at the hospital belonging to the Capuchin Convent. The lower part was locked. He could not obtain an asylum there, and the upper story, though open, appeared also uninhabited. Heavy clouds prevented his seeing the Lake of Lawerts and the "Paradise Lost" of Goldan. But at length the little bell belonging to the Chapel of St. Marie-

aux-Neiges was heard; the Convent door opened; and Henry, covered with frost, made his appearance in the small lower chamber.

The good Capuchins were extremely surprised to see a traveller on these mountains so early in the year; they received him in a most friendly manner, examined his wounds with solicitude, and wished to dress them. They entreated him to relate every detail of what had passed in the valley during these disastrous times, as he was the first person who had ventured to climb to the hospital during the winter.

Henry thanked them for their kind intentions, assured them that his wounds were slight, and in a few words informed them that it was reported that the Austrians were in full march, and all the country would speedily be evacuated by the French.

In recompence for such agreeable news, the reverend Fathers offered some hot soup; but it was necessary to wait an hour for it, and Henry declared he could not resolve

to take any nourishment till he had found the miraculous Rose of the Alps, for which he had undertaken this adventurous expedition.

The Capuchins began to think the poor young man was insane, and it was not till he had earnestly entreated them to point out the spot where these flowers, though withered, might be found beneath the snow, that they supposed him an eager botanist, who wished to have the plant before its leaves came forth. The little shepherd had promised to conduct him where it grew; but he feared this child might not perfectly understand what he wanted, and he accepted with gratitude the offer of one of the servants of the Convent to accompany him. This man was called, and ordered to equip himself in his iron shoes for walking on the ice; another pair was produced for the use of the stranger, whom he was to conduct up the heights to those places where the rhododendron grew in the greatest profusion.

The servant led him first to the path between the Schild and the First, which leads to a glacier. Henry was not accustomed to the iron shoes, and found great difficulty in climbing over heaps of hardened snow, which had been drifted by the storms. After inexpressible labour he arrived at a spot where, being exposed to the noonday sun, the first rays of spring had already acquired strength to melt a part of the wintry covering of the mountain.

Here his conductor pointed out a number of the Roses of Alps. All were dry and withered. The new branches had not yet budded, and the old ones hung down frozen over the slope of the mountain.

Henry darted forward with eagerness, and filled his bloody handkerchief with as many as it would contain. While he plucked them the fog suddenly cleared away, and he beheld towering in its cold splendour this mountain, which surpasses all others; the low country; and the lakes glittering

like diamonds. Henry, struck with this sublime spectacle, raised his hands to heaven in thankfulness; he accepted his feelings as a happy omen of the accomplishment of his prayers.

Enchanted with his success, he returned to the Convent, and readily availed himself of the officious cares of the good Fathers, who washed the wounds on his forehead with salt water. He then devoured the soup they had prepared, swallowed a glass of old wine, and, entirely revived, took leave of the Capuchins, gratefully acknowledging their kind offices, and descended with his young guide. He could not rest a moment; he wished to arrive the day he had desired Elizabeth to expect him; and to bring what would secure a favourable reception from her mother.

At Arth he found a boat, which brought him the same evening to Zug. There he rested for some hours, but he rose before day. He flew across the Braarerboden, and

in all the places where he had been stopped by the French the preceding day, he carefully exhibited his package of roses to prove he had spoken the truth. Albis compared to Righi appeared a small hill, which was gaily traversed as the last step between him and happiness, and thus he reached Wiederken in the evening, but could not stop there above a minute.

It was *Tuesday*, and he wished to keep his promise to Elizabeth by arriving at Riesbach soon enough to see Mrs. Meyer.

CHAPTER VII.

WHILE Henry gaily proceeded to Riesbach, Mrs. Treasurer Meyer, seated opposite to an antique table, read by the gloomy light of a lamp a sermon of considerable length.

Elizabeth appeared to listen with attention, but we are compelled to own she thought more of him whom she expected than of what she heard. More than once she had drawn Henry's letter and the little green silk bag from her bosom. He had promised to return on *Tuesday;* the day was already past,—and Henry had not come!

Anxious, agitated, trembling over the accidents that might have befallen him, she listened to all that passed without, and the least noise made her start. All at once she heard a step, a cough, and soon after

a knock at the door. "Go then, see who wants to come in at this hour," said her mother, closing her book.

Elizabeth blushed, advanced with emotion to the door, opened it, and recognized her Henry. But in what a state! His head and hand bound up, pale with excessive fatigue and loss of blood, and bearing under his arm a large bundle in a bloody handkerchief.

"Heavens! Mr. Sigfrid! What has happened to you?" said Elizabeth, hardly able to support herself.

"What do you want?" said Mrs. Meyer, hastily. She rose, seized the lamp, and made some steps forward, but at the sight of Henry she almost fainted. This young man was very like his father; his paleness, the black bandage which hid his fine hair, the shade of the lamp, the imagination of the old lady, all conspired to persuade her that the spirit of the elder Sigfrid was come to torment her.

If Elizabeth, who perceived that she staggered, had not hastened to support her, and take the lamp, she must have sunk on the floor.

"Kneel, kneel," exclaimed she; "let us banish this evil spirit by prayer. Was it not enough, Mr. Sigfrid, to torment me in your lifetime, that you cannot let me be in peace after your death? I forgive you. I will pray for your soul. Begone, then, evil spirit!"

She closed her eyes in terror, and did not observe that the spirit had advanced to assist Elizabeth by placing her in the great arm-chair.

"Do not be frightened, mother," said she; "it is not, as you suppose, the spirit of old Mr. Sigfrid; it is—his son Henry, wounded and sick, it seems, who is come doubtless to ask for assistance. O, Mr. Henry, what has happened?"

Mrs. Meyer having opened her eyes, and convinced herself that he who supported her

was not a ghost, pushed him away, saying, "What do you want here at this time of night? To kill me with fright, I suppose."

"No, no, Madam," said Henry; "on the contrary, I come, I hope—to give you pleasure—excuse so late a visit, I would not delay—a fall on the ice, a slight accident detained me some hours—but it was nothing, it did not signify, and I think myself most happy in having brought you——"

"What, pray? *You* give me pleasure! I defy you to do so. Come, tell me in two words what you want."

Yet she felt some compassion for the young and handsome Henry, as he stood trembling and wounded before her.

"I have heard with deep regret, Madam," said he in a humble tone, "that my father gave you some vexation. He was a little quick-tempered, though the best-hearted of all men; certainly on that occasion he went too far. So rare, so valuable a flower! But I can repair this wrong. I bring you

here a handkerchief full of the Roses of the Alps; I have brought them from Mount Righi at the risk of my life."

Saying this, Henry untied the parcel and spread his supposed treasure on the table.

"Why, this is worse than all the rest!" said Mrs. Treasurer. "You dare to remind me of the wrong your wicked father did to me and all the village, and you think to appease me by bringing a heap of old brambles that I do not know what to do with! What does that mean, pray? But the proverb is right, 'Like father like son,' —one destroys my flower and the other comes to laugh at me."

"Ah, no, Madam, I bring you the same kind of flower my father so unhappily destroyed. These are the real Roses of the Alps, which I gathered myself yesterday upon the top of Mount Righi."

"Roses of the Alps!" said the lady, with the utmost contempt, "and you think that simple common mountain shrubs, which any

fool may gather, will do as well for me as the holy flower of Sharon and Jericho, which did not resemble these in any way! Its withered branches folded round the dried leaves hid the life it still contained. Roses of the Alps, indeed! The proverb is right which says——"

"O, mother, dear mother, do not find fault with Mr. Sigfrid," said Elizabeth, sobbing; "he meant well. It is not his fault if they have deceived him. If he has not found what he sought, he has risked his life to oblige you. See, he is covered with cuts and wounds!"

"Hold your tongue," replied her mother; "do not interfere in what does not concern you. But as to you, Mr. Sigfrid, who vainly imagine that by taking a walk on Mount Righi you can make me amends for the injuries I have received, do not think to get off so easily. Put on the dress of a pilgrim, put peas in your sandals, take a white stick in your hand, and go a pilgrimage to the East.

Traverse Syria till you come to the banks of the river Jordan, which empties itself into the Black Sea; there you will learn the place where Jericho once stood; there you may seek for a long time the miraculous flower, it does not grow anywhere else; if you find it you may bring it to me, and I will see if it is the right sort. Vain man, who thought to find the holy Rose of Jericho growing on Mount Righi!"

While making this harangue the eyes of Mrs. Meyer sparkled with rage. She placed the roses in the handkerchief, knotted it several times contemptuously, and pushing the parcel under the arm of Henry, who was stupified by his disappointment, she conducted him to the door, pushed him out, crying, "Go, and never more appear before me;" and no sooner had he disappeared than she shut the door with a violence that loosened the hinges.

Elizabeth was ready to faint; all hope was at an end; she would never see Henry more;

and every day she was obliged to endure the reproaches of her mother for conspiring with the *seducer*, which was the only name she would give him.

Having easily guessed that the voyage to Righi was arranged between the lovers, she addressed a long remonstrance to Elizabeth, which was only interrupted by the return of their military guest, who came to sup and go to bed; and at this juncture his presence was extremely agreeable to the poor girl.

The next day she saw the bundle of roses, which was lying behind a gooseberry bush. Henry had thrown it over the hedge as he quitted Mrs. Meyer in despair. Elizabeth hastily seized this relic of his love, carried it to her little chamber, and wrapping the dry roses in the finest handkerchief she possessed locked them in her chest. The handkerchief, stained with Henry's blood, she folded in four and placed on her heart.

Had he known this circumstance, it is probable he would neither have regretted his

trouble nor his wounds, and the rhododendrons he had gathered would have appeared as precious in his eyes as the Rose of Jericho did in those of Mrs. Treasurer.

CHAPTER VIII.

Poor Henry was in despair. He saw no means of appeasing the terrible Mrs. Meyer. It was now against him she was so irritated; and his situation was become worse than it was before his journey.

Sorrowful and discouraged, he wandered about like a ghost; his business no longer inspired any interest; his customary activity appeared to have no aim, now that he no longer hoped to share his earnings one day with Elizabeth. When he went out it was only to wander to Riesbach, where they no longer met; nor could he even obtain any accounts of her. Their friend Annely was detained at home by illness, and did not come for silk as usual.

All hope was annihilated in his heart; he was weary of life; he longed to die.

Sometimes he wished to follow the cruel advice of Mrs. Meyer—to set out on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in search of the Rose of Jericho.

But to go so far from Elizabeth, to find her dead, or married, when he returned! Who could assure him that Mrs. Treasurer had not invented the whole story to divide him from her daughter? or whether she herself was not ill-informed about this flower, which nobody else seemed to know? He had questioned several gardeners, and was sometimes shown honeysuckle as the Rose of Jericho, sometimes mignionette, which is called Rose of Egypt by many gardeners.

They all exhibited hundreds of different roses; but there was not one which answered to the description of the flower; and his disgust to life, since he was not to spend it with Elizabeth, increased every hour.

At length an occasion offered for putting an

end to his torments. It had already been in agitation to enlist him among the Helvetic troops. The Government had formed a chosen band, and caused many young persons to take arms; but his principals (Messrs. Escher and Co.), by their influence, obtained that their first clerk, whose assistance they could not dispense with, should be exempted from this service. He had yet a hope of obtaining Elizabeth Meyer, and was very well pleased to remain; but as the Austrian troops continued to advance, and had even passed the frontiers in some places, there had been a strong alarm from the beginning of the month of May, which caused a rigorous levy of all the young men able to bear arms.

No excuse was admitted; and, in spite of Mr. Escher, Henry was obliged to change his pen for a musket. He would have preferred to go with a pilgrim's staff into Palestine to seek the Rose of Jericho; but no choice was allowed him.

Since he was to renounce the hope of

obtaining the hand of her he loved, he was not sorry to leave Zurich, where every object reminded him of his love, and excited his regrets. He wished, however, to have seen Elizabeth once more, if only to bid her an eternal adieu. The eve of his departure he walked in the evening to Riesbach. His new uniform, his military hat shading the right eye, made a sufficient disguise to prevent his being known to Mrs. Meyer. He passed two or three times by her house; coughed, and even sang, although more disposed to weep, in order to draw Elizabeth to the window; but this consolation was denied. She had heard by accident that they were raising troops, and that Henry was among them. She thought him already far off, and nothing could attract her looks or thoughts for the future.

Seated before her work in a corner of her chamber, she wept, and prayed that her friend might be protected from the sword of the enemy and the wrath of her mother; who

abused her *seducer* unceasingly, often repeating that he would meet with punishment for the wrong his father had done to her.

Henry departed next morning, and found himself all at once transported out of the narrow circle of his counting-house into the tumult of a camp.

For the first ten days he was amused, in spite of his sorrow; but very soon grew weary of the unsettled life of the soldiers, of their oaths, of their inebriety. There was neither order nor regularity among troops assembled in haste. He withdrew himself as much as he could, executed mechanically the different military evolutions, thought of Elizabeth and the Rose of Jericho, forgetting even the dangers with which he and his country were menaced.

His good conduct and fine handwriting procured him great approbation from his superiors, and before the end of the month he was made a corporal.

The corps to which he belonged entered a

village where there happened to be some of the French, irritated against the inhabitants, whom they detested. They pillaged every house, and the Parsonage was particularly ill-used, as being that in which they expected to find most plunder. The Helvetians followed the example of their allies, and destroyed everything that fell in their way, tore down all the wood-work, doors and windows, chairs and tables, that they might have dry wood to keep up their fires during the bivouacs.

Already at the Curate's they had pulled up the palissades which surrounded the fore-court and garden, and carried off the outside shutters; already they began to seize upon the moveables of the venerable pastor, who defended them with all his feeble power, led thither by the noise. Henry wished to restore order and oppose the violence they were going to commit. He found the old clergyman in the vestibule, endeavouring to hold some article of his wooden furniture which the soldiers were trying to wrench from

him. Partly by force and partly by persuasion, Henry succeeded in calming the tumultuous horde, and persuaded them to retire. All was again quiet, and the pastor thanked him with all his heart for having saved a press, which he should have regretted very much had the soldiers succeeded in carrying it off.

In the course of the conversation Henry learnt why this piece of furniture was so much valued by his host. He was informed that the pastor was a great botanist; that for many years past he had collected all sorts of plants and flowers, which he dried in that press previous to their forming part of his *hortus siccus.*

The favourite thought recurred; and Henry, starting, besought the botanical pastor to tell him if he was acquainted with the Rose of Jericho, and if he could describe this plant, of which very extraordinary things were related?

"Certainly," said the pastor, smiling; "that

Eastern plant is known to us; and if it would amuse you to see a drawing of it, pray come into my study. Thanks to you, Mr. Corporal, the soldiers are gone, and it is to be hoped they will leave us in peace for a little time."

Henry's heart throbbed violently. After so many perverse accidents, only to see the flower appeared to him one step nearer to happiness; he joyfully followed the Curate to his study. After having shut the door, the latter took a large folio from the shelf, blew the dust away from the cover, and placed it upon the table; and while Henry looked with eager eyes, the pastor opened a smaller book and read what follows.

CHAPTER IX.

"THE plant called the Rose of Jericho, which has, however, no resemblance to a rose, is also known by other names. Linnæus places it in the first order *Silunlosa* of the 15th class of *Tetradynamia*, and names it *Anastatica*, which signifies *reviving*, on account of a virtue it is supposed to possess, of which we shall speak hereafter. It has been sometimes called *Hierosolymitana*, or *Sancta Maria;* by the French, *Ilapsi*, *Rose of Jericho*, or *Jerose;* by the Germans, *Weihnachts-rose*, or Christmas Rose. Its stalk, which is ligneous, is from six to eight inches high, and divides into several stiff branches, furnished with long obtuse leaves. The bunches of the flower appear at the joints

of the leaves, are very short; the flowers, small and cruciform, and of a yellowish green, leave after them angular and thorny husks, which yield seed even in our climate."

All this was Greek to Henry, though he listened with great attention.

The pastor, having stopped a moment to show him the different parts of the flower on the paper, continued thus:—"When this annual plant has finished its growth, it dries and contracts; but if after a number of years, and even of centuries, it is placed in warm water, it swells and extends itself, like the mosses and some other kinds of plants —for example, the head of the *Medusa Euphorbia*. It was, on account of this property, formerly reckoned a wonder, and was sown on hotbeds in our greenhouses and well-sheltered botanical gardens, where, however, it never grows so strong as in its native country, the shores of the Red Sea, and some of the sandy plains of Palestine. Since it has ceased to be valued for its

prophetic virtue, it is less cultivated, because it possesses no other attraction for the florist. Thevenot pretends to have met with it at the foot of Mount Sinai."

Henry interrupted the pastor to inquire how this prophetic virtue happened to be ascribed to this plant?

"In ancient times," said the pastor, "when piety wished to attribute some singular property to everything which came from the Holy Land, the pilgrims and Crusaders sought to bring back something curious as a memorial of their journey. This flower struck them; and the natives of those countries took advantage of their credulity, and sold them plants which they said if placed in water on Christmas Eve would predict the future, and if the harvest should be fertile or otherwise, according as the plant expanded more or less quickly; a fact which in reality depends upon the heat of the water in which it is placed. They pretended also by means of this plant to promise safety in child-birth.

"It is long since the world has been convinced of the folly of this popular error. However, among the simple country people, there are still some deceitful or ignorant old women, who announce themselves as fortune-tellers or diviners, and thus abuse the credulity of those who are silly enough to consult them.

"It is above two hundred years since different authors have tried to destroy this superstition; for example, here in the 'Universal Cosmography' printed in 1550, you may see that Jericho signifies *fragrant odour*, and that the plant which bears this name grows upon the banks of Jordan in Arabia; and here (showing another thick folio), in the Herbal of Dr. Jacobus Theodorus Tabernæ Montanus, printed in 1558, you see a wood engraving of the plant in its contracted state."

Henry leaned over the engraving, which he devoured with his eyes; he was as little weary of contemplating the flower, as the good pastor was of describing it, and dis-

playing his botanical acquirements; he continued to quote from various authors who spoke of it in the same manner; he then inveighed against the superstition to which it had given rise; the old women who propagated it, and the young women who consulted them.

"I hope, Mr. Corporal," concluded the pastor, "it is nothing of this sort which induces you to inquire concerning the plant. I can assure you there is nothing extraordinary in it, and that at all times you will see its branches extend, in hot or cold water, quite as well as on a Christmas Eve; I wish we had one of them now, we would try the experiment."

"Ah, Sir," said Henry, clasping his hands, "if you had one, I would ask still more. I would conjure you on my knees, to sell it at any price you pleased to demand. Particular reasons make me wish passionately for one of these plants, and I would give anything in the world for it."

"Is that possible?" replied the pastor; "but I hope you would not make a bad use of it, to keep up an impious and lying delusion?"

"No, no, Sir; I know that is nonsense. But I have other motives; the whole happiness of my life depends upon getting a Rose of Jericho, and, since I must own it, I can only obtain the woman I love at that price."

"Oh ho! young man, I guessed there was something like that in it. Well, love is a less evil than superstition, though each partakes in some degree of the nature of idolatry; and since it is only with a view to marry, why there would be no harm, and if I possessed a Rose of Jericho, believe me you should have it. They used to sell them formerly at the fair of Beaucaire, but now one never sees them; I know also that there are some at Zurich and in the environs, and even how they came there."

"From Zurich!" exclaimed Henry. "I came from Zurich, it is my native place;

for pity's sake, Sir, tell me who I must apply to."

"My dear friend, you are very hasty; one may easily see you are young and in love. I know such plants have been at Zurich, but I don't know if they are still there; for example, there was a certain Peter Fussli, who, in concert with another man, named Henry Jeigler, undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1523; I have read an account of it in manuscript. This Peter Fussli brought home a Rose of Jericho, which he must have left to his descendants, but I know not if they still exist. Another, named John James Ahman, went in 1612 as physician to an Ambassador at Constantinople; he made a journey to Palestine, from whence he brought one of these flowers. By-the-bye, he must have left it to his grand-daughter, whose husband, named John Meyer, was Receiver in the village of Riesbach; suppose you were to apply to that gentlewoman if she is still alive, or to

her children, perhaps they would let you have it."

Henry blushed crimson. "I know," said he, stammering, "that that family no longer possesses the flower—it was—lost by an accident."

"That's a pity; but, stop, I remember a celebrated botanist at Zurich who has one, if I could only think of his name; that is the only one besides those I have mentioned. Mr.—Mr.—how odd that I should forget his name! I have it at my tongue's end."

"Oh, Sir, try to remember it, try to recollect even the part of the town in which he lives."

"Yes, yes, — stop — it is the street—but I think I am mad. We write to each other so often about our favourite study, I need only find one of his letters."

He slowly put on his spectacles, opened a deep drawer full of letters, and sought for a long time the much-desired packet of the

botanist among several parcels. At last he untied the ribbon which bound one of them, exclaiming, "I have found it!"

At that moment, "To arms, to arms, the Imperial troops!" resounded through the streets; several shots were fired, the alarm was beat, hussars galloped by, and cannons rattled through the town; the pastor, much alarmed, ran from the window to his precious folios, which he carefully hid; Henry, summoned to his post, flew down stairs; the Swiss assembled; the Austrians advanced; the French were repulsed; and Henry, forced into the retreat, was constrained to leave the village without learning the name of the possessor of the Rose of Jericho!

It remained at the tongue's end of the venerable pastor.

CHAPTER X.

The French recovered their posts where their situation permitted it ; but the Germans were superior in numbers, and often obliged them to abandon their position.

The Swiss, who were for the greater part vexed to be in their ranks, and who would have preferred allowing the enemy to advance rather than oppose them, deserted whenever an opportunity offered. Their little troop diminished every day ; and if Henry did not follow their example, it was from a feeling of honour.

At length, finding himself almost alone at the gates of Zurich, which the Austrians were preparing to enter, he thought the circumstances left him free to depart ; and having

no wish to be taken prisoner, he slipped into the town in the dusk, went to his good aunt's, where he put off his uniform, and remained hid until the departure of the French, which took place the 6th of June, and the same day the Austrians took possession of Zurich and Schifeld.

In the evening Henry quitted his retreat and hastened to Riesbach before he had visited the counting-house of Messrs. Eschers.

The enemy had preceded him, and there was a report that a house had been completely burned down by the explosion of a howitzer. Could it be that of Mrs. Meyer? He was soon tranquillized by finding the house was at the entrance of the village, and distant from the abode of Elizabeth. He was thankful, and bent his steps thither. Not far from that beloved mansion there was a fountain which supplied it with water. "Ah!" thought Henry, "if, like the patriarch Jacob, I had the happiness of finding my Rachel drawing water from this fountain!"

The innocent wish was granted.

He saw a young girl there, waiting till a pitcher she held was filled. He only saw her back; but love improves the sight!—such bright brown hair—a form so graceful could only belong to Elizabeth—it was she herself; and this opportunity, the last time, perhaps, he might be able to speak to her, was nearly lost!

The pitcher was full. Elizabeth placed it on her head, and, gracefully supporting it with one hand, was going to take it into the house, which was but a step from the fountain; but she walked slowly, not to shake the water. Henry flew, rather than ran to meet her. Before she descended the two steps which led to the road, he was with her.

"Elizabeth, dear Elizabeth, stay!" said he, as softly as he could, that he might neither be overheard, nor frighten her.

She recognized his voice, and, though she was not frightened, she trembled so much that the pitcher escaped her hand. It was made of wood, and did not break as it rolled down the

steps; but the water was spilt, and Henry did not regret it. While it was replenishing, he might speak to his beloved, who sat silent and breathless, while he raised the vessel and placed it beneath the spout.

Elizabeth, with clasped hands, and eyes rsised to heaven, returned thanks that Henry yet lived. For a long time she had not heard of him. She thought he had been killed, and her paleness, and eyes swelled with weeping, told her lover all she had suffered.

Seated beside her, one arm round her waist and one hand pressing hers, he told how miserable he had been while absent from her, and how happy he was to see her once more.

"Alas!" said Elizabeth, "that happiness will be short. I must go home. What would become of me if my mother, wondering at my stay, were to come here to seek me? She still hates you, and says that all misfortunes fall upon her because she has lost the Rose of Jericho. She is vexed at what we have suffered latterly, as much from the allies as the

enemy. They both plunder everything they can find. She told me just now that she could not bear the horrors they commit in time of war, and that she hated the sight of a soldier. She wants to hide her money, papers, and our best furniture in the cellar, and to fly from our house at the first alarm—to go I know not where. It was all the same to me while I thought you were dead; but now, ah! Mr. Sigfrid—now it would grieve me to go from hence! But wherever I am, I shall be happy now that I know you are alive, and that you are not a soldier—that is a great consolation. We will hope for better times. We can love without seeing each other. Depend upon my constancy, as I do upon yours. We shall meet again on earth, or, at least, above," said she, raising her fine eyes to heaven. He had not time to reply.

"Betsy! Betsy! what are you about all this time?" said the shrill voice of Mrs. Treasurer, whose head now appeared at the window of her kitchen. But without spectacles she

could not see distinctly, and she did not discover Henry.

"I am coming, mother; but I was so unlucky as to throw down my pitcher."

"How awkward! And I dare say you are all wet. Come, come in and dry yourself."

Elizabeth was obliged to go, and placed the pitcher on her head with Henry's assistance, for she still trembled from head to foot.

Henry's eyes and heart followed till the closing door shut her from his view. He then departed, happy to have seen her for a moment, and to know that she still loved him, but grieved that he had not time to disclose all he had learned respecting the Rose of Jericho.

The subsequent days he spent in endeavouring to obtain information relative to the learned botanist who possessed one of these plants, and whose name and abode the sudden arrival of the Austrians had prevented the pastor from imparting.

Not being able to point out either the one

or the other, he did not succeed; and his attempts to discover the descendants of Peter Fussli, who had formerly been in Palestine, proved equally vain. He was laughed at.

And really, they had something else to think of then, at Zurich, than of pilgrimages to the Holy Land which were made three centuries before. Everybody was in commotion; some were sorrowing, some rejoicing at the changes which had taken place owing to the arrival of the Austrians; but young and old, men and women, whichever side they might be on, issued continually from the gates to see the troops under arms. Fresh parties of soldiers arrived and departed every hour. Each day there were skirmishes at the outposts which the inhabitants beheld from their garrets, or from the ramparts, as if it were a theatrical exhibition given for their amusement; and certainly Henry was the only being in Zurich who could find time to think of Peter Fussli's pilgrimage to Judea and the Rose of Jericho.

But he, poor lad, thought of nothing else, and at length resolved to write to the botanical pastor to inquire the name of his friend at Zurich, and to send his letter by a messenger, though the village was rather distant.

Destined to be disappointed, the letter was brought back unopened!

The poor clergyman was dead of the consequences of his fright soon after the invasion of his village.

Henry was once more obliged to arm himself with patience; but his heart was too full of care to allow him to take any part in the general joy. The stagnation of business gave him little to do in the counting-house, and all his time was spent bewailing his ill-starred love.

Thus passed a part of the summer. His old aunt had quitted Zurich, to spend the fine season at her country house in the village of Wiedecken, and there, sad and heart-broken, he lived with her.

CHAPTER XI.

THE village of Wiedicken, being an Austrian outpost, was occupied by some light troops, and old Miss Sigfrid was obliged to lodge a Hungarian quartermaster with three hussars.

In spite of a weather-beaten visage and a pair of tremendous grey whiskers, this aged warrior was one of the best-natured men in the world. A good Catholic, he maintained severe discipline among the young hussars, and had acquired by his civility the affection of the aunt and nephew; but Henry seldom took any part in the conversation.

One evening the latter was sitting sorrowfully on a bench behind the house, buried in painful thought, and almost decided to make a pilgrimage to Judea. He was only with-

held by the regret of leaving his aunt, now very old, and who tenderly loved him. Uncertain as to what he ought to do, he leant his head on his arm. In vain did the orchard display its rich verdure and load of golden apples; he did not see them, nor did he at first perceive the old quartermaster, who came to sit beside him, and seized his arm, saying,—

"What is the matter, young man? you are as sad as a prison-door: that is not natural at your age; come, where does the shoe pinch? Tell me, my son! Though my beard is grey, and I am near sixty, I also have been young, and know that youth may have heavy sorrows. *Bassa manilka!** I remember my heart was not always sixty, and I would wager that there is a girl under all this sorrow. Ah, my friend, you blush; I have guessed right. Is it not so? Well, join the hussars, Mr. Sigfrid. Nothing like that for

* A favourite Hungarian oath.

curing love. To gallop over a flat country —your sabre shining in your hand—flying like the wind—why, there's no love would stand that! It is the true remedy. And then, if you are neither killed nor cured, you will come back; and the uniform of a hussar helps a man, let me tell you. A feather in your cap, a fur cloak on your shoulder, and perhaps, if you have the luck to get it, a good slash from the corner of your eye to your mouth—where's the girl that can resist you? Take courage. Be a hussar, if it is only for eight or nine years, and all will go well. Jacob served seven years for his Rachel, and obtained her at last. You will be as happy, I promise you; and I never break my word!"

Henry could not help smiling; a ray of pleasure shone in his eyes. The comparison with Jacob and Rachel recalled the interview with Elizabeth at the fountain—those last short minutes of happiness. He cast down his eyes, a tear stood on the dark lashes.

"I thank you, Sir, for your kindness and your predictions; but never, never more can I be happy!"

"Ah! who has told you that, young man? At your age one ought not to despair. Bassa manilka! I choose you should be happy one day, and you will be so if I can do anything towards it. If it was not summer I could have told you so more positively; but just now that cannot be."

"And why not in summer as well as in winter?" inquired Henry, with some surprise.

"Yes, yes, if this was Christmas Eve," said the hussar mysteriously, "I could foretell your fate with some degree of certainty. The present generation do not believe in it; but they are a pack of fools, who believe nothing. I, who am an old man, can tell you by experience that there are signs——"

"Signs! at Christmas?" said Henry, thinking of the miraculous flower. "I think I have heard. Tell me what they can be, I conjure you."

"Yes, yes, I tell you there is a flower——"

"A flower!" cried Henry, impetuously; "the Rose of Jericho, perhaps?"

"Where the devil did you hear anything of the Rose of Jericho?" asked the old soldier, amazed in his turn. "Yes, it has a prophetic virtue at Christmas. Ah, then I could tell you——"

"Is it possible? Is it really by means of the Rose of Jericho that you could foretell the future? Ah, that flower would indeed predict my future; but where is it to be founnd?"

"Here, in my breast, Mr. Sigfrid," said the old Hungarian. "Bassa manilka! I never stir without it."

"Oh!" said the transported Henry, passionately embracing the quartermaster; "show it to me directly, the happiness of my whole life depends upon the Rose of Jericho."

"Now, that's strange," said the old soldier; "who would expect to find in a heretic a devout person who believes in miracles? But

your aunt and you are both well-meaning creatures, though you are not Christians."

"As good as you," said Henry. "Not Christians!"

"Come, come, do not be angry; it is possible, after all, since you believe in the flower. I'll show it to you."

Thus saying, he opened his waistcoat, and drawing forth a Turkish handkerchief, which he unfolded, produced from it a withered plant, that resembled in all respects the drawing which the pastor had shown to him in the Herbal of "*Tabernæ Montanus.*"

Henry, enchanted, seized it, held it up, and contemplated it with delight. Beside himself with excessive joy, he exclaimed, with enthusiasm, "At length I see and touch the flower more precious to me than all the treasures of the new world! But tell me, dear Sir, how did you obtain this jewel that I have been seeking so long, and find when I least expected it?"

"In a way, young man, you would not

wish to try. It was got when I was a prisoner in Turkey. You see it cost me dear. Come, do not crush my rose, I beg. Sit down quietly by me, and I will tell you all about it."

Henry obeyed, but without parting with the flower, at which he was not yet weary of gazing.

The hussar continued:—

"In the last war against the Turks I was made prisoner in the environs of Belgrade, and dragged as far as Constantinople. There I was forced to work very hard in the gardens of the Grand Signor, one hand and foot chained, and at night shut up like a dog, in a tower with the other slaves. Bassa manilka! a Christian hussar to be treated thus by Mahometans! One evening when I was lying near the tower (being ill, they allowed me a little rest), I happened to make acquaintance with a German Jew, who carried on his trade about the country. Very glad to find some one who could speak his native

language, he talked to me of his travels in distant countries, said he had been in Judea, that he had seen the spot where the palace of King David, and the temple of King Solomon, &c., &c., had once stood. He carried with him things equally valued by Jews and Christians, such as the stones from the shores of the Black Sea, which burn like sulphur; rods of *agnus castus*, from the banks of the Jordan; and flowers gathered from the site of Jericho, that proud city whose walls fell at the sound of the trumpets of the children of Israel. In my youth I had heard my mother recount many stories of the Rose of Jericho and its miraculous virtues. I knew that it opened on Christmas night and foretold the future to pious persons. Many times has the poor woman fretted because she had not one to show her what would be my fate. Now I was provoked to see a dirty Jew, who did not believe in it, have such a precious flower in his possession. He showed me several. I believe

he had a dozen of them. A charitable Frenchman had given me some *paras* to buy tobacco ; I resolved to go without smoking for some time. Was not that well? Though I had no consolation except my pipe, I made the sacrifice. I offered my *paras* to the Jew for one of his flowers. He accepted them, because he happened to be in want of money, and gave me, besides, this handkerchief to wrap it in, and neither one nor the other have I ever gone without since that time."

"Ah! why was I not with you there?" said Henry. "Had I been a slave some years I might have bought all his roses."

"So would I," said the sergeant, "if I had had more paras. I should have made a good profit upon them, for all the world envied me mine."

"And I more than all the world," thought Henry. "But he is so kind, he will give it up to me." He said nothing, but pressed the rose to his heart.

"Softly! softly! you will break it," said the hussar; "after I have preserved it so many years! As soon as it was mine I put it in my bosom, and returned gaily to work. Christmas night I placed it in water; it spread out directly, and prophesied truly, for very soon afterwards I was ransomed. I returned to my regiment, and from that time I have always kept clear of falling into the hands of the Turks or the French. Every Christmas night I consult my flower, and can predict from thence pretty exactly what turn the war will take during the following campaign. For the last six years it has opened very slowly, and one branch even remained closed. I thought that the water had not been hot enough; but it was not that, it was a misfortune which was soon to befall me. Being in Flanders some months after, I received a musket ball in the right knee, and was cured as slowly as the flower had opened: there even now remains a little stiffness in the joint, which is what the little

closed branch meant. Last Christmas I was prevented from putting my flower in water by a long and fatiguing march, so that just now I really do not know what is to happen either to me or to the Emperor."

During this long recital Henry had held the dry plant, with his eyes fixed upon it. The entire faith which the hussar seemed to have in its virtue, made him fear that he would not part with it. Yet he saw no other means of appeasing Mrs. Meyer, and obtaining Elizabeth. In short, it was worth trying to melt the heart of the old Hungarian, at whom he looked with beseeching eyes, and said:

"My good, dear quartermaster, you say you wish me well, and all the happiness of my life depends upon that flower, as I have already told you. Could you not make up your mind to give it to me for money? Were you to ask all I have in the world I would give it, and my gratitude would be eternal."

"Passa malelged daremtété!" exclaimed the hussar, in a voice of thunder.

This was his great oath, which he only permitted himself to use when completely furious. "Does the young fool imagine that for miserable money I would part with this holy talisman, which has kept me safe and sound through so many battles? No, no, Mr. Sigfrid, do not think of asking that again, or I will answer for nothing."

Saying these words, he seized the withered flower, replaced it in the Turkish handkerchief, and thrust it under his waistcoat.

Henry's look of consternation moved the pity of the aged warrior. As soon as the rose was safe, he took his hand, and said in a more gentle tone:—

"All that I can do for you is, that if we are here at Christmas, which seems to me very possible, as the French will not yield, and the Archduke will not attack, you shall be present when the flower is put in water, a favour I have never yet granted to

any heretic; and then I will tell you the fate of your love. In the meanwhile behave well, and, if you are wise, enlist among us. At present I must go the rounds. Farewell till we meet again. No offence on either side."

Poor Henry! he has seen, he has touched the flower so ardently desired; but he is none the happier. However, it was something to know that it was near him, and that it was in the hands of a feeling and generous man.

The next morning he opened his whole heart to the Hungarian, and thought he had proved incontestibly that to obtain his beloved he must present a Rose of Jericho to her mother.

The hussar laughed, and said he might very well persuade the old lady to give him her daughter without a Rose of Jericho.

"Would it not be better for her to have a fine young fellow for her son-in-law than a dry rose in her chest? And what can she

want the flower to tell on Christmas Eve, except that her daughter will be happy? A good mother cannot wish for more, and you can answer for that. The first day I have leisure I shall gallop to Riesbach. I shall say all this to Mrs. Meyer, and many other things in your favour, and will make her understand that she had better have a husband for her daughter than a lover. What can she say to that? Nothing. And the girl is yours."

An opportunity for performing this friendly service did not, however, offer; there was too much to do at the outposts to allow the quartermaster to absent himself. But it may be imagined how much the attention and kindness of the Sigfrids increased. How Henry's aunt, who was as anxious for his happiness as he could be himself, superintended the meals of the Hungarian; how Henry attended to his horse, his saddle, his harness; how he himself coaxed the hussar. He smoked with him; made him repeat the

story of all his campaigns; and, while seeking to gain the friendship of this honest soldier, he conceived a filial affection for him.

When he mounted his horse and rode away, if Henry heard distant firing he trembled lest they should hit his dear hussar, who might never return.

He would have saved him at the risk of his own life.

CHAPTER XII.

EARLY on the 14th of August there was some skirmishing. The French had made attacks all along the line. The combat became warm and general, particularly near the Sihl. Henry, instead of attending to his business, ran towards the scene of action; he went from one hill to the other, trying to discover his friend the quartermaster through the smoke and underwood. He asked every hussar who galloped by, if he had not been seen. Not receiving any intelligence, and thinking only of the dangers with which his old friend was menaced, he advanced inconsiderately as far as the tile-kiln, and there saw ——— ah! who can describe his sorrow and consternation! He saw two men of the artillery bearing a

wounded person, whom he soon recognised to be him he sought.

The poor old quartermaster had been wounded by several shots, and had fallen from his horse. He remained stretched on the ground till these two men had raised him, and they were now seeking some solitary place where he might be taken care of.

"Oh! my friend. Oh! my father! In what a state do I find you!" cried Henry, advancing to assist in removing him.

The Hungarian had received his death-wound, yet he showed pleasure at seeing his young friend.

"It is all over with me," said he, "but I rejoice to die in the field of honour and in your arms; do not carry me any further, it pains me, and is useless; lay me on the ground; come nearer, Henry; nearer yet."

Henry, bathed in tears, bent over the veteran, who was now hardly able to speak; but with some difficulty he said:—

"I die; but I will make one man happy.

Take this rose, my son, it is yours; I leave it to you, and may you . . . " A torrent of blood issued from his mouth, and prevented his continuing.

He put his feeble hand beneath his waistcoat, took out the Turkish handkerchief, and, giving it to Henry, expired!

Who could at such a moment decide whether sorrow or joy were the predominant feeling in the heart of the young man? He could not himself tell. He was almost senseless. Mechanically he placed the precious gift in his bosom, and then, throwing himself upon the corpse of his old friend, shed a flood of bitter tears; regardless of the cry of "Forward, forward!" which resounded through the French troops, but was scarcely heard amid the sound of the guns and the beat of the drums.

Some French soldiers advanced and surrounded Henry and the two Austrians, whom they ordered to surrender; dragged Henry from the body of the Hungarian, which they

plundered; and then, with the butt-end of their fire-locks, pushed their prisoners towards the wood, where the three were searched.

The watch, purse, and pocket-book were taken from Henry, and one of the soldiers, feeling something still beneath his shirt, put his hand in his bosom, and drew forth the Turkish handkerchief which enfolded the rose!

From the paleness of Henry, the deep groan he could not repress, and his involuntary attempt to detain it, the soldier thought he had made a valuable prize. He opened the handkerchief, and finding nothing but a withered flower, threw it away with a hearty curse, and put the handkerchief in his pocket.

Suddenly recovering his presence of mind, Henry darted like lightning after the sacred flower, and hid it in the sleeve of his coat; then quietly suffered them to lead him on.

The soldiers laughed at him.

"The poor devil," said they, "took this flower from his mistress's bosom; we must

let him keep it to console him for her absence."

Thus, with many other Austrian and Swiss prisoners, Henry was detained till noon, when the firing ceased. The French had gained their object, which was to take possession of a height called the Gibbet-hill. Transported with his companions in misfortune to Sprestenbach, which was the French head-quarters, he was questioned by an old adjutant of General Lorge. This man, who was very cunning, soon observed that the young Swiss whom he ought to have liberated understood French, knew the country, and might be useful; he therefore resolved to keep him to serve as a guide and interpreter. All his prayers for liberty were vain. They affected to consider him as a suspected person, and fearing a worse fate than captivity, he resolved to remain a prisoner, as did many other citizens. The love of life had returned with the rose; he insisted no longer, expecting every hour to accompany some of the des-

patches expedited on all sides. Henry's writing was so good, that the adjutant made him his secretary; without, indeed, giving him any salary, only when he had laboured very hard, he sometimes made him a small present.

The first use the young lover made of his money was to buy a new handkerchief to wrap round the Rose of Jericho, that he might always carry it about him.

"Never more will I part with it," said he, "till the happy day when I can present it to the mother of Elizabeth, in exchange for the hand of that beloved girl! Since the quartermaster was able to preserve it from all danger in the midst of camps and battles, surely I, whose life is more tranquil, may be equally fortunate."

He did not foresee that he was upon the point of losing it.

The adjutant, who sometimes made use of him as a guide, often sent him with an orderly sergeant and two soldiers, either to

distant villages or the district of Baden. In one of these journeys they were pursued by an Austrian detachment, and very nearly taken.

The orderly ran into a thick wood, the soldiers following him. The Sihl was flowing rapidly on the other side of the road. Henry, who could swim like a fish, preferred this means of escaping, thinking that an opportunity of returning home might perhaps offer could he reach the other side. The Austrians had entered the wood in pursuit of the fugitives. Henry hastened to undress, tied his clothes in a bundle, which he fastened on his head, tied the handkerchief which contained the sacred plant as tight as he could, and threw himself into the river, which, though both deep and wide at that part, he very soon crossed, and having reached the opposite bank began to dress.

But what was his consternation! Either by the efforts he had made while swimming or by the action of the water, the hand-

kerchief which girt his body had become unfastened. The precious rose was lost.

In despair he again threw himself into the Sihl, and, looking along the current, thought he perceived a handkerchief hanging on a branch; he hastily followed the course of the water, and soon had reached his object, but it was open, floating on the river, and no longer enclosed the sacred plant.

The distraction of his mind was such that he had some thoughts of putting an end to it, by remaining at the bottom of the river; but, besides that it is difficult to drown yourself when you know how to swim —another idea, which may perhaps readily suggest itself to my readers, suddenly struck his mind—viz., though he had lost the flower, he had not yet lost Elizabeth; Mrs. Meyer was not immortal; and who could say whether at that very moment Elizabeth might not be free to give her hand, as she had already given her heart?

Though he no longer possessed the Rose

of Jericho, these thoughts revived his drooping spirits. He was going to swim up the river to seek the clothes he had left on the bank, when an object at no great distance caught his eye. Something double the size of his dry plant floated down the current; he resolved to follow, and very soon contrived to seize it.

Oh miracle! it was—it was the Rose of Jericho, which the water had restored to life. The branches were extended; every bud had swelled; and Henry had the triple blessing of finding his treasure, of being convinced of its virtue, and of seeing that neither hot water nor Christmas Eve was necessary to its revival!

By dint of conversing with the old soldier upon its properties, he had ended by believing that the Rose would only open upon that day, which had always prevented his trying the experiment.

Proud of his success, he supported the flower with one hand, while he swam with

the other; and resolved directly to take the road to Riesbach. But he was not as yet to enjoy that happiness; he saw a man preparing to carry off his clothes; he called out, the man in reply named him; it was one of the guards who had accompanied him, and who now informed him that the orderly and the other soldier had been taken, that being a little behind them he was fortunate enough to escape, and that he had also thrown himself into the water.

"I found your clothes there," said he coolly, "and thinking you were drowned, thought I had a good right to be your heir; but since you are alive, pray make haste, dress quickly, and let us get back to our quarters."

Henry was obliged to follow him, he dried his plant and placed it in his bosom, at which the soldier laughed heartily, and they took the road to Spristenbach together.

Poor Henry sighed to think it did not lead to Riesbach; but the event of the

Rose blown and found, appeared to him a good omen: he took courage, and recalled to his mind the prediction of the poor Hungarian, "Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and obtained her at last."

Seven years!—that would be a long time. The flower of youth would have passed, but not the flower of love, thought he; he hoped that the seven years of the patriarch might be seven months for him, perhaps seven weeks, perhaps seven days, perhaps seven hours; for hope and imagination in a young lover know no bounds.

CHAPTER XIII.

At the end of August, the Austrian troops stationed at Zurich were relieved by the arrival of the Russians commanded by Korsakow. The French redoubled their activity along the whole line, and Henry was more frequently employed on journeys into the country. He was lightly clothed, and his clothes began to wear out, and hardly saved him from the wind and rain; his food was sparingly dealt to him, and of a bad quality; he became weak and sickly. A thousand times he was upon the verge of sinking under the fate that seemed to pursue him so obstinately; but in these moments of despondency, the thought of Elizabeth, and the certainty that he had the means of ob-

taining her in his possession, still sustained his courage.

The adjutant would have been very sorry to part with a person he found so useful; he abused his complaisance and gentle disposition, employed him in every way he could devise, and treated him most tyrannically.

One day he chose to ascend Mount Furca, in order, as he said, to examine from thence the Russian camp. Henry, loaded with telescopes and maps, was obliged to march beside the horse of his tyrant. Thus, towards evening, they reached the top of the mountain, where the French Chasseurs, who were posted there, spent their time in loudly abusing the enemy in the valley; in swearing at the city of Zurich, which they said was bought by the Austrian Emperor; in singing satirical songs, &c., &c.; while in the plains beneath, the Russian Grenadiers performed movements of attack in close columns, raising with all their might their war-cry *Hurra! Hurra!* and the Uralian

Cossacks passed and repassed on their agile coursers, brandishing their long lances, and trampling without mercy the last hopes of the farmer.

What a sight for the feelings of Henry! He saw from afar that magnificent country, once so peaceful and happy, now abandoned to its ravagers, and covered with the warlike troops of three nations.

The city where he had laboured all his youth to obtain an honest independence; the lake where he used to bathe of an evening when his work was done, and with so much pleasure; the Alps covered with snow in the distance, so long the respected rampart of that lovely land, but now a weak barrier against soldiers accustomed to overcome all obstacles; alternately attracted his eager gaze, and pierced him to the heart.

His eyes, though full of tears, soon discovered the village of Wiedicken, the asylum of his peaceful infancy, the home of the good aunt who had so long supplied the

place of his mother; and who, perhaps ere this, had sunk under the sorrow his absence occasioned.

How much might she not have suffered from the rude soldiers who despise old age! and he not there to protect her!

He distinguished the spot where her house stood, and the shady orchard where he used to converse with the old Hungarian, more distant beneath the rays of the setting sun. He could distinguish Riesbach, the abode of his Elizabeth. So near was he to all he loved, yet separated as by a wall of brass!

The plant which was to ensure the success of his love had fallen miraculously into his hands, yet he could not offer it to her for whom he had wished to obtain it.

These Cossacks, whom the French described as the most inhuman savages,—who killed every person who resisted them, and pierced little children with their lances,—what might not Mrs. Meyer and her daughter have suffered from them!

He trembled at the thought.

Just then he heard six o'clock strike from the ancient tower of Zurich, and very soon after, the bells of the gilded cupolas of the cathedral gave the signal to retire. At these well known sounds, which revived so many recollections, he could no longer repress a torrent of tears, which burst from his eyes. Involuntarily he stretched out his arms to the valley, exclaiming:

"Why have not I wings to cleave the air like the ringdoves, that I might return to the place of my birth?"

The sounds of immoderate laughter drew him out of his patriotic enthusiasm; the expression of his regrets had very much amused the volatile Frenchmen.

"This poor Swiss," said they, "wishes to be a wood-pigeon, of course."

"He has a turtle below there, which will be game to the Cossacks," answered one of them, and again they laughed.

Henry, concealing his anger, quietly retired

to the western side of the hill, and sat down on a rock surrounded by bushes; there he could give way to his grief without being exposed to insulting raillery.

He drew from his breast the Rose of Jericho; had he wished it to expand, his eyes might have supplied the want of a rivulet; but he contented himself with pressing it to his lips, and beseeching it, mentally, to bring him good luck. A ray of hope revisited his heart; but he had scarce replaced it in his bosom, when a piercing voice was heard to call, "Sigfrid, Sigfrid! can he really have found wings? where the devil is the fool? Come here, solitary dove, come away!"

Henry approached in silence, took the telescopes and maps; held the stirrup for the adjutant, and returned with him to Birmensdorf.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ah! how slowly did the time pass with poor Henry, in the midst of turbulent and half-famished troops, who could scarcely procure the necessaries of life!

In the night, between the 24th and 25th of September, there was a great deal of movement among the troops, but with great appearance of mystery. When the dawn began to pierce through a thick fog, a bridge of boats had been finished near Dieliken, and the passage of the French army on the right of the Summa was announced. A general attack, which took place in the plain and lasted two days, spread terror and devastation everywhere.

As soon as Henry perceived that nobody

took any notice of him, he passed quietly through the crowd; gained a wood to the right of Mount Albis, where he remained concealed, perishing with cold, dying of hunger and thirst, till the evening of the next day; and then ventured to approach the town through bye-ways. On all sides he saw pieces of carts, of harness, broken muskets, and lifeless horses; and what inspired a deeper horror, a crowd of bloody and mutilated dead bodies.

Half of that fine regiment called Likoschin's Yellow Hussars, was lying on the Sihlfield like heaps of new-mown hay. Dreadful sight! Happy are those who have not beheld a field of battle the day after the action; they may yet love their fellow-creatures!

Henry at last, by walking carefully in the dusk, and gliding through the orchards, reached in safety the house which belonged to his old aunt.

Pale as a ghost,—exhausted with fatigue

and hunger,—and trembling lest he should have lost his kind relation,—he entered the lower room, where poor Miss Sigfrid was as usual occupied with her spinning-wheel.

When on raising her head she beheld before her that beloved Henry whom she had thought lost for ever, and whom she now could hardly recognise, so much was he altered, the wheel was soon abandoned; she clasped him in her trembling arms, and, thankful for his return, related how he had been calumniated by wicked tongues, who said he had deserted to the French, among whom he was now serving.

"I never could believe it," added she, "although some said they had met you here and there with French soldiers; but whoever looks at you, my poor child, may see that you did not follow them willingly. As to me, foreseeing what would happen, I have packed up everything of value, and left my goods safe with Messrs. Escher, at Zurich; they are very uneasy about you, and will be

glad to have you back. I remained to take care of the house, which those mischievous soldiers would soon have shut up if it had been left empty, instead of which, by keeping quietly here, receiving them civilly, and above all never making them want for meat or drink, I have prevented them from doing me any injury. War is a terrible thing, but it must be of some use, or it would not be permitted; one ought to submit, and do one's best; it is often the citizen's fault that the soldier maltreats him; people seldom return evil for good."

Henry trembled while he asked if she had heard any news of the inhabitants of the villages near the city.

"I heard," replied she, "that the Cossacks retreated through Hirslanden and Riesbach."

"O mercy! through Riesbach! Aunt, my dear aunt, for pity's sake a glass of wine and a morsel to eat, that I may have strength enough to see what is become of Elizabeth and her mother!"

Though vexed to see her nephew prepare to meet fresh dangers, Miss Sigfrid, who knew his love for the fair Elizabeth, understood his feelings, and did not tease him with vain solicitations to stay at home; only, as it was night, he consented to lie down for a few hours on a bed.

At daybreak he was on the road, traversed the town (which was full of the French soldiers), and soon reached Riesbach, and the house of Mrs. Meyer. Hardly could he spare time to give a look and a sigh to the fountain where he had seen Elizabeth for the last time.

Alas! nothing now prevented his entering that deserted abode. The door was open, everything within was displaced and in confusion, the floors were covered with feathers and down; one would have supposed that birds of prey had been feasting there upon the spoil of a whole flight of pigeons. In the other rooms, all the furniture seemed to have suffered violence: the only trace of

Elizabeth was her broken frame, to which a small piece of silk was still hanging. This he seized as a relic; it was woven by her hand!

He placed it on his heart, near his now useless rose, and stood immovable in the midst of the devastation, as if thunderstruck; but, soon recovering himself, he flew to question the neighbours if they had heard anything of Mrs. Meyer. He assailed them with a thousand questions. All he could learn amounted to no more than this: that when the cannon began to be fired in Zurich, Madame Meyer had gone out with her daughter; each bore a basket on her head, and no one knew what had become of them; but if they had been met on the road by the Russians and Cossacks it was impossible they could have escaped; as many fugitives, women as well as men, had been plundered and killed by those sanguinary troops.

Henry almost expired at this recital.

"It is too much," he exclaimed. "Ah! why

was I not killed with my brave Hungarian? why was I not buried beside him, with our Rose of Jericho, which will never more expand to promise me happy days? Oh, my Elizabeth! you for whom I know not even where to seek, and who perhaps are no longer of this world; your last sigh I know was for your Henry, as his will be for you!"

He wished to see their friend Annely again.

"Perhaps," said he to himself, "she saw Elizabeth at the moment of her departure; perhaps she may know whither they meant to fly."

He went to her house, and found Annely sad at the absence of her friend, but not without hope. Mrs. Meyer had relations who lived at Rapperswyl; she promised to make enquiries there. He quitted her a little less miserable, but still like a shipwrecked mariner who finds himself on a desert coast.

He returned to Zurich, and called upon

Messrs. Escher, who received him in the most friendly manner, and engaged him to come back to their counting-house. Though their trade had not regained its former activity, there was business enough to occupy one clerk, and they preferred Henry to all others. He consented, not choosing to be a burthen on his good aunt, to whose house he returned every evening to sleep.

He resumed the labours to which he had so long been accustomed; he paid the workmen, weighed and arranged the skeins of silk, received the webs, but like a sleep-walker, and scarcely conscious of what he was doing.

He returned not to Riesbach; that deserted and plundered house filled him with consternation.

Annely, who still wove for Messrs. Escher, came every Friday to bring home her work. His heart used to beat at her entrance, but very soon he read in her countenance that she brought no news for him, and his face expressed the deepest despair.

Thus joylessly passed the cheerful season of the vintage, and a mournful winter succeeded; the days of distress and terror, it is true, were over, but citizens and peasants yet sighed at the recollection of their losses, and the saddest of all was Henry Sigfrid.

On the Friday before Christmas Day, Annely appeared in the counting-house of Messrs. Escher.

Even as she entered Henry perceived that she had joyful tidings to impart, and flew towards her with smiling salutations. She asked if he knew that Elizabeth had returned with her mother two days since?

Henry, beside himself, seized the young girl's hands, and was hardly able to exclaim, "O heavens, can it be true? Elizabeth lives! Elizabeth at Riesbach! O, say so again, dear, good Miss Annely! You have seen her! You are sure it is not a dream?"

"No, no," said she, laughing; "no dream, I assure you. Elizabeth is well; no harm has befallen her. Her mother is recovering

from sickness; but the pleasure of being at home will soon restore her to health. During the summer they had hidden money, beds, linen, furniture, and only left out what was absolutely necessary for their immediate use; therefore they have lost very little. When the alarm was given, they set off at the sound of the first cannon-ball to go to Hussnacht, to the Sun inn. The owner was an old friend of Mr. Meyer's, and he furnished them with a cart to take them to Rapperswyl; there they were shocked to find that the bridge was thrown down, and they would be unable to enter the town. They went back to Meilen, and it was not till towards evening that they found a boatman who for a great deal of money risked taking them across the lake to Horgen, where their cousin lived. Mrs. Meyer fell sick there, and kept her bed several weeks; but at length recovered under the care of that good Elizabeth. Both on their return set to work to arrange their house; and Mrs. Meyer is already sitting at

the table with her spectacles on, reading the Proverbs of Solomon. I think you will be more welcome now than you used to be; she is much softened by two months of exile and illness. I saw Elizabeth yesterday evening; and, under pretext of asking if she wished to resume her weaving, offered to execute her commissions with Messrs. Escher. She replied, 'Certainly if my mother approves.' Mrs. Meyer held up her finger, but smiled. 'We shall see about that,' said she, 'when your frame has been mended. We must work to repair all this war has cost us.' Elizabeth, as she bade me farewell, whispered, 'Tell all this to Henry.'"

"And it makes him the happiest of men!" exclaimed he. "Miss Annely, remember me a thousand times to Elizabeth; say she will soon see me. Christmas Eve," added he, running after her, and struck by a sudden thought, "Christmas Eve I shall go ——"

He stopped, not willing to speak of the rose till he should be able to produce it. As

a child makes its glass of sweet wine last till the biscuit is all steeped in it, so Henry wished to economise his happiness by delaying to present his rose till the most favourable moment.

CHAPTER XV.

THE following Tuesday afternoon all the bells in the city of Zurich solemnly announced the approaching festival. At five o'clock their last sounds had ceased; and Henry, on quitting the church, took the road to Riesbach. While he traversed the road with the sweetest emotion, Elizabeth was not without anxiety. Seated by her mother near the stove, round the old table, upon which a lamp was burning, near which lay some pious books, Elizabeth repeated in her heart, "It is Christmas Eve, and he is not yet come."

Mrs. Meyer reflected on the wonderful works of Heaven, and thanked Providence which had saved them in the general peril.

In a more gentle and affectionate tone than

usual she said to her daughter:—"Many evils have passed over us, my dear child; we have seen the times that King David speaks of in the 107th Psalm, 'We went astray in the wilderness out of the way, and found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty their souls fainted within them.' That Psalm seems to describe us. I am so happy, my dear child, now that we have returned to our own home, that I weep for joy, and wish to be reconciled to all those who have injured me."

"Ah! if Henry would come now," thought Elizabeth.

"Yes, even old Sigfrid, I could pardon him if he was to return to this world. Who knows if it was not for my good that he took my rose? On a day like this when I found people come from all parts to consult me, my heart swelled with pride. I thought myself a prophetess. Besides, what should I have had to foretell in these last years? Nothing but misfortunes. The Rose of Jericho would

not have blown; and what should I not have suffered beforehand? though now, perhaps, it might have promised some happier days."

Hardly had she concluded the sentence, when a knock was heard at the door. She opened it, and Henry entered, without the slightest trembling, and bowed to mother and daughter. Upon Elizabeth his salutation had the same effect as if in the midst of a gloomy night in December she had seen the sun rise with all the splendour he wears on a bright May morning.

"I am very happy, Mrs. Meyer, to see that you and Miss Elizabeth are safe at home, and that no misfortune befell you in the late disturbed times."

"Thank you, Mr. Sigfrid," said the old lady, with a gracious air. "I hope I may say the same to you."

"Alas! madam, we have all endured severe trials and changes; but in the midst of all there are gleams of hope. Those I have felt have served to compensate for many sorrows!

What I had so passionately wished to find has miraculously fallen into my hands. I can repair my father's fault. I can restore ——"

At these words Henry drew a pretty little box from his pocket, opened and placed it on the table by Mrs. Meyer, who no sooner beheld the contents than she uttered a scream of joy, and, clasping her hands above her head, said, weeping with joy :—

"O yes, it is, — my old eyes do not deceive me,—it is my flower, my lost Rose of Jericho!'"

"But that no doubt may remain, madam," said Henry, "we will (since this is the proper time, Christmas Eve) place it in water to revive it, and if it blows we shall all have good hopes of the future."

The good lady was in ecstacy ; she could only pronounce incoherent words.

"O, miracle!" she exclaimed. "On Christmas Eve it was taken ; on Christmas Eve it is restored! A singular thing ; I cannot comprehend it!"

Suddenly she rose, and, without considering that she left the lovers alone in the dark, she took the lamp and retired into her chamber.

As Elizabeth and Henry never have recounted their conversation during this interval, we do not know it; but when the good mother returned with the lamp, they were sitting hand in hand, with eyes full of tears.

"Here it is, here it is," said Mrs. Meyer. "I have it still; it has not been missed—the box in which I kept the other. Here it is, with a holy sentence on the lid, which is nicely varnished. It is that which my ancestors kept for the same use a hundred years since; here is the branch, too, which remained, exactly the same. Now, my dear child, bring a basin of water."

The impatient Henry entreated it might be hot. Elizabeth flew to obey. Henry placed the plant in the cup between two little sticks he had procured to support it. The three then seated themselves round the

table to watch the moment the flower should revive.

Mrs. Meyer sat with clasped hands, which she only separated occasionally to arrange her spectacles. The silence was uninterrupted, except by the noise of the wooden clock, which struck eight.

Immediately the little hollow branches eagerly began to imbibe the warm water. They filled by degrees, and extended gradually, till the edge of the cup was covered by them, and the shrivelled mass had taken the circular flat form of a bunch of elder-flowers. The capsules at each of the ends of the branches successively opened their mysterious chalices; and in less than one hour the Rose of Jericho was in full blow; such as Henry had seen it in the drawings shown to him by the pastor, and when it floated on the river.

During this transformation the lips of Mrs. Meyer had been in constant motion, as if in prayer. When the expansion was com-

plete, she arose, and in a solemn manner said :—

"All my doubts are satisfied. This time, Mr. Sigfrid, you have not imposed upon me. It is the Rose of Jericho ; it could come from no other place. It is exactly the same as that which my grandfather Ahmann brought home. You are a good young man, or it would not have opened for you. It does not flower for the wicked, and would not blow near a sinner. Formerly I misjudged you ; and I ask your pardon with all my heart."

She put forth her wrinkled hand, which Henry kissed with tenderness and respect.

After this the old lady advanced nearer, and looking at him with a friendly expression, said, smiling :—

"I have lost a great deal in the hour of trial ; but a good part of my fortune remains, and I am still able to make a sacrifice to obtain an object so useful and so valuable. At what price would you consent to part with this rose ?"

"Ah! madam," said Henry, "it does not belong to me; it is yours. It was for you alone that I sought this flower for more than six months; and if I had not obtained it at last by the death of a very dear friend, at the risk of my own life I should have gone to gather it on the shores of the Red Sea! I should have done anything, have risked anything, to restore what my father had unfortunately deprived you of. Have the goodness to accept it as a mark of my respect for you—of my attachment to Miss Elizabeth—and give me your friendship in return."

"I ought to be ashamed, Mr. Sigfrid, to accept so valuable a gift; but perhaps I may find means to recompense you," added she, looking at Elizabeth, who blushed deeply. "I suspect, Mr. Henry, you would not have been so anxious about this rose if I had not another to give in exchange."

Henry, transported, stammered some reply, while he pressed Elizabeth to his heart;

and while the Rose of Jericho still expanded its branches and promised happy days, the marriage was agreed upon.

The mother placed the hand of Elizabeth in that of Henry, and blessed the happy couple; quoting, at the same time, such proverbs as she thought adapted to the circumstances.

During the first week of the year the wedding of Henry Sigfrid to Elizabeth Meyer was celebrated, and all the neighbourhood approved of the union.

Annely, as might be expected, was bridesmaid, and accompanied Elizabeth to church. Henry settled in his mother-in-law's house; and as it was very large, he persuaded his good aunt to live there also. Mrs. Meyer was enchanted to have a companion of her own age to whom she might quote proverbs and talk of old times.

The whole family lived together, happy and contented. Messrs. Escher, finding their clerk still more attentive since his marriage,

thought it right to increase his salary, and gave him reason to expect that he would soon obtain a share in their business.

When, towards the close of the following autumn, the moment approached that Elizabeth was to become a mother, Mrs. Meyer hastened to put the Rose of Jericho into her hand; and whether owing to its miraculous virtues, or other favourable circumstances, it is certain she gave birth to a pretty little boy, which completed their happiness.

Meanwhile Henry (who had no wish that his mother should resume her prophecies, now that she was assisted by the Rose of Jericho), made so many enquiries that he succeeded in discovering the learned botanist who possessed one at Zurich.

He waited upon him, and they conversed much on the subject of this singular flower, its various peculiarities, and the remarkable property it possesses of reviving in water—a property common to many other plants, but

which is more obvious in this one from its form.

He wished to engage Mrs. Meyer to make the experiment by which she might see that it would revive any day as well as Christmas Eve; but she regarded the proposal with horror. She promised herself the pleasure of collecting all the neighbours around her upon that day; but it was otherwise ordained.

When autumn came, the old lady grew more quiet and feeble. She no longer wished to see anybody but her children and grandchildren, and remained constantly in bed. On Christmas Eve, she begged that the Rose of Jericho might be steeped in water, and placed before her; she watched the development of the flower with an attentive and smiling eye, rejoiced to see the cups dilate completely, raised her eyes to Heaven, and the same night expired in the arms of her beloved daughter, and almost equally beloved son-in-law.

Her soul took its flight to that region

where all earthly illusions vanish before the rays of celestial truth; and where we may hope that a good Father, in His benevolence, pardons those errors which dwell in pure and simple hearts.

Henry carefully locked up the Rose of Jericho in the drawer of his bureau; as the keepsake of the poor Hungarian, and in memory of those disastrous days in which he had obtained it and of the perfect happiness it had procured for him. He did not take it out until his son and two lovely girls that his Elizabeth had given him began to grow beyond childhood. He showed it to them as a curiosity which might amuse, and took occasion to instruct them from it.

"My children," said he, "everything in nature is miraculous. Each faded flower conceals the principle of a new life, and constantly reminds us of the immortality of the soul; our better part cannot perish. But beware, dear children, of indulging a vain wish to know the future of our mortal

existence; be content with knowing that it must end, and that on the manner in which it shall be spent, will depend your eternal happiness. Cherish your sensibility as one of the most precious organs of the happiness which is reserved for us; shut not your heart to the sufferings of others; let it dilate at the tears of the unfortunate, as the Rose of Jericho expands in water!"

THE END.

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APPENDIX.

As some of the readers of this little tale may wish to have the real botanical description of the nature and properties of the plant referred to, I subjoin, as an Appendix, extracts from various authorities. And first, in Lindley's *Treasury of Botany* they will find the following:—

"*Anastatica.*—A genus of *Cruciferæ*, consisting of a single species, the Rose of Jericho (*A. Hierochuntina*), a small annual, growing in the arid wastes of the extra-European Mediterranean region, from Syria to Algeria. The stem is short, branched in a corymbose manner at the top, the leaves obovate, with stellate

hairs, the lower ones entire, the upper remotely toothed; the flowers are small and white, forming spikes along the branches; the fruit is a short pouch, with two ear-like projections at the top, and divided by a transverse partition within into two cells, in each of which there is a seed. This plant is interesting on account of its hygroscopic properties. When the plant is in flower, the branches spread rigidly, but when the seed ripens, the leaves wither and drop, and the whole plant becomes dry; each branch curls inwards, until the plant presents the appearance of a little ball of wicker-work at the top of the unbranched parts of the stem. In this state it is soon loosened from the soil and carried about by the wind, and often blown into the sea; when this happens, or the plant is otherwise wetted, the branches unbend, and the pods begin to open by splitting longitudinally, so that when thrown on shore by the waves, the circumstances are favourable for the production of fresh individuals in a locality remote from the original place of growth. The plant retains

its property of expanding when moistened, and again curling up when dry for a long time. Specimens collected ten years ago exhibit the phenomenon as perfectly as ever. In Palestine it is called '*Kaf Maryan,*' or Mary's flower, and there is a tradition that the plant expanded at the birth of the Saviour."

In Johnson's "Gardener's Dictionary," a nearly similar account is given, as follows :—

"*Rose of Jericho* (*Anastatica*).—(From *anastasis*, resurrection, in reference to its hygrometrical property. Nat. ord. *Crussifers* [*Brassicaceæ*]. Linn., 15. *Tetradynamia*).

"An annual plant, indigenous to the Egyptian deserts, and called the Rose of Jericho. When full-grown it contracts its rigid branches into a round ball, and is then tossed about by the wind. When it alights in water or on damp ground, the branches relax and open out as if its life was renewed, hence its name of Resurrection Plant. Among the superstitious tales told of it is, that 'it first bloomed on Christmas Eve, to salute the birth of the Redeemer, and

paid homage to His resurrection by remaining expanded till Easter.' This curious annual requires frame protection during the colder months. Increased by seeds in any common soil."

"*A. Hierochuntina* (Rose of Jericho). The blossoms are white. It flowers in July. It is a native of the Levant, and was first introduced into this country in 1597."

In the "Scripture Garden Walk," an interesting little book, published by Hatchard in 1832, there is the following brief notice, quoted apparently from some Dutch authority :—

"The Rose of Jericho is," says Van Egmont, "properly speaking, no flower, but a plant about six inches in height, the root included. It has the appearance of a shrub, and is composed of hard ligneous fibres. When dry it closes together so as to form a kind of bud. But the appellation of the 'Rose of Jericho' is very improperly given it, for instead of growing in the plains of Jericho, it is a native of the deserts of Arabia. It always opens in moist weather, or on being put into water, so that it might serve for

a hygrometer, for showing the moisture or dryness of the weather."

Finally, in a very old-fashioned, but valuable work, Hill's "British Herbal," 1756, we find the following description, together with a most rare and curious engraving of the plant in its collapsed or dry state, "rudely resembling the form of a rose :"—

"*Thlaspi fruticosum, parvum floribus, albo virentibus* (Rose of Jericho). The root is long, slender, and woody, and is hung with a few straggling fibres. The first leaves are few, and they very quickly wither. They are oblong, somewhat broad, and of a faint green, obtuse at the ends, and indented bluntly and slightly at the edges. The stalks are numerous, thick, woody, and divided into many branches; they spread themselves circularly on the ground, and rise only a little from it at the points of the branches; they are two or three inches in length, so that when they lie expanded, the plant forms a circular tuft of about half-a-foot. The leaves stand irregularly on these, and those

toward the lower part of the stalk are like the first from the root, broad, oblong, and indented at the edges. The flowers are small, and of a greenish white; they stand on short footstalks in the divisions of the branches. The seed-vessels are small and short; the seeds are small and brown. It is a native of the East, and flowers in July. After this the leaves fall off, and the stalks bend inwards till their tops meet, and the whole plant then forms a round lump, of the bigness of a man's fist, and of a woody substance. In this state it is brought over frequently as a curiosity, and if laid into a basin of warm water it will expand the branches, and spread itself out as it grew at first. C. Bauhine calls it *Thlaspi rosa Hierachuntea, vulgo dicta*, others, *Rosa Hierachontea.* The reason of its being called a rose, is its being of the size and rudely resembling the form of one in its dry state."

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