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ELIZABETH:

A STORY WHICH DOES NOT END IN
MARRIAGE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF NATHUSIUS,

S. A. SMITH.

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ELIZABETH.

CHAPTER I.

THE GRANDFATHER'S BROTHER.

"I CERTAINLY do not exactly see why I should marry," said Herr Karl von Budmar, in a tone of vexation, as he hastily strode up and down the chamber. Frederick, his younger brother, sat upon the sofa, and drummed with his fingers on the back of it. "Why should I add this extra discomfort to a life already full of cares and sorrows?" So saying, he stood before his brother with a look of inquiry.

"The affair is simple enough," answered the latter, smiling. "You must marry, because you are betrothed."

"Yes, there was the error," said Karl, warmly. "It is incomprehensible how I fell into it. Dear Fritz, I am very unhappy;" and he heaved a deep sigh.

"What has happened, then?" asked his brother, now fully interested.

"Nothing has happened," replied the bridegroom.* There is merely the bare fact—the matter-of-fact—with all its unavoidable consequences. I went to-day—(I never neglect to inquire for the health of my bride and mother-in-law every morning)—and my mother-in-law came herself to meet me in the entrance-hall, and whispered, 'To-morrow is Charlotte's birth-day; you will like to know that.' I ask, Fritz, why I should like to know that?"

"You must be glad that your bride was born," answered Fritz, laughing.

"Glad! well, that is very true," sighed Karl; "but since this morning I have racked my brains to know what I am to do to-morrow."

"You must make her a present—that is easy enough," was the brother's answer.

"I know that," exclaimed Karl, sharply; "but I am tossed about in a sea of doubts. The question is, Shall I give her something useful or superfluous? The latter is against my principles; and though I may completely disregard what the coffee-drinking company may say in the afternoon of my lover's gift, whether

* In Germany the betrothal is quite a serious ceremony. It is usually made in the presence of the near relations of the bride, and from that hour till the marriage, the pair are "bride and bridegroom," after the marriage they are no longer so termed, but are at once "husband and wife." In most parts of Germany, it is the custom to send "cards of betrothal" to friends and acquaintances.—*Translator's Note.*

they may call me poetical or prosaic, liberal or stingy, the thing that keeps me in such unpleasant agitation——in short, setting everything else aside, I am this evening as much at a loss as I was this morning. I have no present! not even the faintest passing idea of one has occurred to me. I am confident to-morrow morning will be here, and I shall have thought of nothing. I assure you, since I have been betrothed, such occurrences throw me from one feverish agitation into another. Oh, that I had never been betrothed!"

"It will all cease when you are married," pleaded Fritz.

"No, Fritz, it will not cease," said Karl, decidedly. "I shall have still greater claims on me. When my mother-in-law talks of her blessed husband—of his endearing qualities—of the happy wedded life she had with him, I shall be anxious and wretched, for I am deficient in these same endearing and excellent qualities. I see my future visibly before my eyes—one terrible unending state of tension—the studying to act completely the 'excellent husband,' and that my nerves will not endure."

"But you are going to marry Charlotte, and not her mother," argued Fritz; "and she is the most simple, unexacting maiden I know."

"Yes, yes," interrupted Karl; "I know that: but I do not understand dealing with ladies: and, Fritz," he

continued, shaking his head, "you must own that they are extraordinary beings."

Fritz looked very mischievous; but he asked quite seriously, "How so?"

"For example," continued Karl, eagerly, "yesterday I was there the whole afternoon. We had at least a two hours' conversation; I talking, and they listening, as was becoming. The ladies saw clearly that I must shortly make my estate full twice it's present value; in the first place, if we break up the fallow ground, and by culture of herbage supply our want of fodder; and, in the second place, as is the natural consequence, provide for the stables.—Fritz, you are laughing," interrupted the speaker angrily, "you don't believe me?"

"I don't quite comprehend the doubling the worth of the property," replied the brother; "but you see Charlotte and her mamma are admirable women, and have more practical understanding than I. But you were about to say something more."

"Yes," said Karl, sighing, and resuming his discourse—"only think, after this rational conversation, during which Charlotte was netting, and I perpetually supplying her needle with thread—for, as I said before, if I take a duty upon myself I never neglect it—after this rational conversation, the twilight came on, and the Mamma went into the kitchen. Charlotte laid aside her work, and we stepped involuntarily to the

window, because the moon was rising. Then Charlotte laid her head on my shoulder and whispered—"Oh! Karl, see how golden the moon is rising over the green tree-tops." Imagine, Fritz, my condition! Not one mortal word occurred to me about the golden moon. I gazed at the luckless golden moon in silence, wondering when this painful state would end, and comforting myself with the thought that it must end some time, when, behold! the Mamma came to my other side, and both ladies, completely mistaking my silence and temperament, she began—

"Fair moon, so calmly sailing through the evening clouds!"

"I was obliged to listen to the whole song, after which we were all silent, until the Mamma began to talk of her dear departed husband—how he delighted in her singing—how they had but one heart and one soul, and what a marvellously refined tender soul his was. I was uncommonly glad to find myself at home again. Dear Fritz," continued he, after a pause, "do you like moon-light songs?"

"Why not?" replied Fritz, smiling; "but if you dislike them, say so to Charlotte, and I am certain from sheer kindness and affection to you, she will never sing them again in your presence."

"Yes, she is very kind and amiable," said the Bridegroom, thoughtfully.

"You could not in the whole world have found a more suitable maiden," asserted the brother.

"She is very reasonable, too," continued the Bridegroom.

"And extremely pretty," added the brother.

"I am quite sure she would make another man happy," said Karl, now, with spirit. "Dear Fritz, in this world men are very different. You like moonlight songs?"

"You must not misunderstand me," interrupted Fritz, quickly. "I like Charlotte; I wish to see her your wife; but my affection goes no farther."

"No farther," sighed Karl; "then I know not what will become of the poor child. It is hard to deceive any one's hopes; still I cannot do otherwise. I am no refined, tender soul; and, with the best will in the world, could make no Charlotte happy; that is so vexatious! If I marry, I must be an amiable, excellent husband."

"Do not brood so much on that," interrupted his brother.

"You have yet your experience to gain," continued the Bridegroom, peevishly. "My mother-in-law, for example, says—'We women are tender-strung souls; nothing is so much for our weal as that the chosen of our heart should be considerate, devoted, full of tender feeling for us; if this be not the case, our love is troubled, and with our love our life. Now, my dear Fritz, picture to yourself this vast amount of little attentions, for the most part so exceedingly min-

ute and tender, that one is all unconscious of having failed to observe them, till one's error is made known to one by the troubled glance of the tender-strung soul who walks by one's side. I cannot understand how it is, that a pattern husband is not looked upon as the greatest of all wonders.' "

"You consider the thing from a purely selfish point of view," resumed Fritz. "The task of our life is to make these tender-strung souls, as you call them—or, as we lords of the creation say, the weaker sex—happy; if that is not always easy, still it is our vocation—the problem of our life—marriage is our great training-school."

Karl listened to his brother in astonishment. "True," he interrupted, hastily, "you call marriage a school for training or trial. I quite agree with you, and I do not see without necessity why I should enter it."

"You do not see it because you are an egotist," continued Fritz; "but you have no trials to fear with the good Charlotte. I must plainly tell you, Charlotte would be too good for me, too yielding; she claims too little. If I ever take to myself a tender-strung soul, she must be somewhat more lively and determined, that my school of trial may not be too easy."

Karl looked in astonishment at his brother, who was altogether incomprehensible to him; but he desired no explanation, indeed just now he wished for some-

thing very different. Both brothers sat together on the sofa in deep consultation, Fritz maintaining that Charlotte ought to hear of the mood of her hapless Bridegroom without delay; he doubted not but that in her great kindness of heart she would at once set him free.

Certainly the poor maiden was much deceived in her expectations. She lived with her mother, a poor officer's widow, in somewhat needy circumstances, and the expectation of becoming Frau von Budmar; though a very modest one, was still an expectation. Therefore Fritz could not excuse his brother's thoughtlessness in having engaged himself, however surprised he might have been to find it had come to pass in so strange a manner. At the death of the old Herr von Budmar, a year ago, the eldest son Karl had inherited the estate, which had been in the patrician family von Budmar for centuries, and was situated near the small provincial town of Woltheim. The estate was inconsiderable; and though in the von Budmar family the manners and education of the nobility were maintained, they could scarcely afford more expensethan any prosperous small farmer dwelling in the town. For the last ten years the Budmar house had been very solitary. The mother, a most excellent and amiable woman, was dead; the father lingered in long sickness, and Karl, as eldest son, had undertaken the management of the property, plunged deeply into agricultural studies,

and fostered more and more his own peculiarities, which led him rather to labour and seclusion than to pleasure and intercourse with his fellows. The younger son, Fritz, was an officer in the Cuirassiers, in the neighbouring garrison at Braunhausen, and a very young sister was brought up by an aunt in Silesia. That after the death of the old master, the family should have wished the young one, Karl, to marry, was quite natural, as he himself thought. Conferences with his old house-keeper, and discussions about bedsteads and linen presses, were to him most vexing. A wife would free him from such annoyances. With as little consideration as he resolved to marry, did he choose his wife. Close to his estate—almost, indeed, at his very door—dwelt Frau von Lindeman and her daughter Charlotte. The latter was a sensible, pleasing girl, and the former a very clever woman. When Herr von Budmar came from the fields, and passed their garden hedge, he not unfrequently entered into conversation with the approaching lady, who took the greatest interest in his economical plans, had herself studied the work of Edlen on the cultivation of clover, and spoke of the improvement of the soil by the growth of clover and sanfoin like a book. So the intercourse commenced, and the betrothal with Charlotte was a very simple business, in which the mother played the chief part. After the betrothal, the Bridegroom was very happy and contented, and talked with his mother

in-law about the settlement and various arrangements, and of Charlotte's future duties as an active and careful housewife. He little foreboded that she would be not only a prudent woman, but likewise a tender-strung soul, and that from him, as the excellent husband, an infinity of small attentions would be due. The more this became clear, and the more the mother-in-law strove to cultivate within him a refined and tender soul, the greater became the feverish agitation of his nerves. He saw his vocation plainly before his eyes, namely, not to marry, but to become the good old bachelor Uncle, who would find his own joy in the happiness of his brothers and sisters, and furthermore by his distinguished farming double the value of the family property. As he this day imparted to his brother his prospects and plans, he became on the last point unusually eager, forgot his unhappiness, revelled in fields of clover and red sanfoin, and enchanted his own imagination with visions of herds of cattle in newly-built stalls. He earnestly implored his brother to marry, promised him a considerable sum of money, and the means wherewith to provide for his housekeeping as a lieutenant. Fritz smiled at these promises, and was not without justice somewhat mistrustful. Little had been gained as yet by the long farming of his good brother, though he was not the one to reproach him, for he understood naught of these matters himself, and cared less. That if his

brother abode by his resolution, his own condition would be better, and he could earlier think of matrimony, was clear, though he had long resolved that money should be no consideration in his choice. He did not withhold from his brother that he had already purposed entering the trial-and-suffering school of marriage, and that his heart was no longer his own.

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE GRANDFATHER BECAME A BRIDEGROOM.

ON the same evening—it was in the month of August—sat Fritz von Budmar with Charlotte and the clever Frau von Lindeman in the arbour, and informed both ladies of his brother's state of mind. Fritz had not deceived himself; Charlotte was instantly ready to give up her claims. She assured him she had foreseen all, and told him many of her forebodings and certain strange signs, and she was the first to comfort her mother, who could not withhold her lamentations and sighs. For these Fritz was fully prepared; he assured both ladies they would ever be regarded as members of their family; that the respect of his brother for Frau von Lindeman was indescribable; that he trusted time would efface the impressions of the last few weeks, and that he should soon, as a good neighbour, sit in the arbour with both ladies, and enjoy their rational conversation. As a matter of course, the neighbour would care for the

little household of the ladies, and after the death of the mother both brothers would regard Charlotte in every way as a sister. Charlotte melted into soft tears at these words, and Frau von Lindeman replied,

"Karl is a very singular and extraordinary being. What a shame it is that so really noble and good a man will not be happy!"

"Men differ greatly," answered Fritz.

"In one thing they are all alike," said Frau von Lindeman. "Each seeks his own happiness."

"Dear Herr von Budmar," she added, with all sincerity, "I trust from my heart you may find it."

Fritz pressed her hand and withdrew. Charlotte followed him with tearful eyes.

"Oh, thou poor young soul!" thought his sympathizing heart, "I have no power to help thee, but thou deservest a better fate than to go yearning and solitary through a life, twenty years of which only are past, and fifty perhaps still lying before thee. Fifty beautiful springs and summers, with their golden moonlight and nightingale's songs; fifty long winters that pass away heavily enough in solitude, but swiftly in the home-circle. Pass away!—yes, and when life itself is past, what follows then?"

From Charlotte and her young heart, his thoughts passed to his own life. Four-and-twenty years lie behind thee, and fifty perhaps before thee also. What

will a long life bring thee? What will be said of it? Will it have been rich and glad, or weary and full of care? Bright hopes will then perchance have faded, bodily strength have departed, all the charms of life have grown dull—and what will follow then?

Beyond this query the questioner could not pass. He was an excellent young man, a noble man, but that is not enough; it may satisfy us for a time, and add to the happiness of those about us, but it will not bring peace and happiness to our own heart.

“The world is fair, ah! wondrous fair,” he continued in his meditations; “what wouldst thou, my heart, with this longing and yearning, this striving and unrest? Yes, thou art foolish, poor heart! Thou askest not for sense or reason, but thou rushest with vehemence into a school of trial and suffering, into a state of constant solicitude; thou picturest to thyself joy and sorrow as alike tender and sweet; thou so constrainest the very spirit to be subject to thee, and to muse and dream so idly, that the whole man must be on his guard, lest through such a heart he become a fool, and lose at once all that is in him of height or dignity!”

During these reflections the young man had passed the town wall, and arrived at the opposite side, where a fine oak wood bounded the little town. Under the first lofty oak was the house of the ranger, an old friend of the Budmar family. The ranger Braumann

had been the military comrade of the deceased Herr von Budmar. He had a wife, and a niece eighteen years old—was an upright man who always upheld morality, but was neither a refined tender soul, nor a good Christian. That his wife was both he little appreciated, though he was wont to praise her. “She is an excellent woman,” he would say, “understands discipline, and knows who is master in the house.” To the praise of his wife he usually added complaints of his niece. “She is a head-strong maiden, whom no bit will keep in check—is full of antics, and will be the torment of some good man. That this desperate little Mary will wage war with her husband I do not doubt,” he added, sighing; “she is quite capable of it.”

If during such severe observations his pipe went out, and his foster-child ran to fetch a lighted match, that she might remedy the evil of which she had been the cause, and at the same time disrespectfully ventured to smile, he scarcely knew whether to be amused or angry; and had not the kind gentle Aunt come between them as mediatrix, there would have been endless contests—for Mary had a mind greatly superior to her uncle's, and singularly independent, and she found no motive in her soul that would compel her to submit to a strange and tyrannical government. By the time the young Herr von Budmar reached his goal, it was already twilight, the evening star shone golden in the

blue heavens, and the outer world was calm and beautiful. He passed through the gate into the Ranger's garden; the dogs did not bark at his approach, but after bounding to greet him, ran back to the house. Before the house stood the slim Mary with her white forehead and large bright eyes: she wore a plain white dress with short waist and long skirt, and over her light-brown curls a crimson handkerchief. She observed his approach; but she acted as though she had not, and went playing with the dogs to the other side of the house. The young man stood still, his heart foolishly throbbing. He was sorely disappointed, for on his way hither wonderful visions had passed before his soul. He had pictured to himself the joyful glance and kindly smile wherewith he should be greeted at his entrance; then he fancied himself alone with his old friend the ranger, telling him of the breaking off of his brother's betrothal, and furthermore of his earnest wish to see him, the younger brother, married; also of his hopes to double the value of the estate; and, finally, - passing from one thing to another, he had quite naturally ended with the demand for Mary's hand. How strangely things come to pass in this world! Possibly he might this very day be a happy bridegroom. After such images, this reception, though he thought he knew the reason of it, was a bitter disappointment to him. The day before, when he was at the Ranger's, the high-spirited maiden with much skill, and no small

pleasure, had mimicked the old Dominie; how he came in with her uncle from hunting, and had eaten a wild duck with him. It was most laughable and amusing to see and hear her; but the kindly heart of our noble young man was vexed nevertheless. Such a pastime was little to his taste; and in gentle and courteous, but still decided terms, he said as much to his beloved. She glanced at him with her large clear eyes, blushed, and was silent, and thus she remained till the end of his visit. She had taken the affair much to heart—that was quite clear, but in another fashion than he had hoped. As she now so timidly avoided his glance, his heart began to plead: “Thou hast pained her yester^e day; she is of a sportive nature, and meant no harm; throughout her mimicry, she was particularly child-like and kind-hearted, and it must be bitter to be blamed by one we love, and blamed so unjustly too! Hasten after her as swiftly as thou canst, and implore her pardon.” But the man was on his guard. “Hold, thou foolish heart!” he exclaimed, wrathfully; “where is thy dignity—thy honour? No, I was right and she^e wrong; if through such censure she cannot feel my love, our hearts would never draw or beat together, and neither joy nor sorrow could be gentle or sweet to us.”

With sad heart but firm step he entered the house and open room. The ranger's wife was sitting alone at the window, resting in the now dim light. “Do I disturb you?” inquired Herr von Budmar.

"Not at all," dear Fritz, answered the gentle lady, motioning him to the opposite seat.

"You have been reading?" he continued; an open Bible lay near her.

She merely looked assent, and both were silent. After a pause, she began,

"This rich inheritance is yours also;" and at these words she laid her white hand on the large Bible.

"Yes, mine," he replied, sighing; "and yet—"

"You are not in need of help?" she continued, smiling. "You are young, and brave, and proud, and expect much from yourself and the world."

"Yes, young and proud," he said, with a somewhat melancholy tone; "a king to all appearance; but one cannot always venture to look into one's kingdom. Such is its real poverty, and weakness, and depression, that one knows not whether to laugh or weep."

"There is nothing more beautiful than for a great and wise and gifted man to bow the knee before One greater and loftier than himself," remarked the lady.

"It would be well if our hopes and yearnings had some higher aim than this poor earth," observed the young man.

"Do not hesitate, dear Fritz," continued Frau Braumann; "only come with a child's heart, and a child's right, and stand not without, as a poor strange beggar."

Mary now entered and interrupted the conversation.

"Come here, dear Mary, I have a pleasant visitor," said her Aunt.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mary, slowly approaching.

"We have seen each other before," remarked Fritz, quite tranquilly.

The Aunt rose to fetch a light, and Mary, not a little embarrassed, walked to the other window. By the first glance at her lover's serious face, she saw how matters stood. She had tried to enact the queen to a submissive servant, and lo! a king sat there, and her love and reverence for him increased with his greatness. To gratify this love she would now willingly have been humble, but she knew not how to begin.

Fritz stepped to her and asked, "Did you not wish to see me just now?" To deny the truth never came into her mind; but the "No" would not pass her lips.

"I am going away to-morrow, and then I shall disturb you no more for a long time," he continued; but though he sought to speak tranquilly and coolly, he could not conceal his pain, in the tone of his voice.

She was still silent; yet she must speak soon, if at all, for already he had taken up his cap, and in another minute he would perhaps have departed.

"Pardon me first," she faltered. A beam of joy went to his heart, and flashed through his eyes. "I will never be satirical again," she added, more courageously.

He gave his hand to her and smiled. He might per-

haps have said, for his part, "that he would learn how to deal better with her;" but it was not necessary, they understood each other, and all was right. The Uncle's loud voice disturbed them. He was just returned from a journey on business, and he entered the room at the same time that his wife brought in a light.

"Ha! there is Fritz," said the Ranger; and he began to talk with his young friend in the most confidential manner, as he had done for years. "Would he not sit with him on the sofa, and smoke a pipe, while the ladies prepared the supper? Now, Mary, the pipes!" called her Uncle, in his usual tone of command. The maiden handed one to her Uncle and one to his guest, and then would have followed her Aunt to the kitchen. "Match!" exclaimed her Uncle, angrily.

Mary swiftly turned back. In her happy confusion she had forgotten the accustomed duty. She held the match to the candle, and then stood bending before her Uncle, till his pipe was lit. He now motioned her with commanding gesture to the guest. She did not delay to wait upon her friend; but his was one of those gentle natures that could not receive from another without pain a service so commanded. He sprang up, stood erect and lofty before her, and, taking the match from her hand with a bow, waited upon himself. The Uncle muttered, and shook his head. Mary hastened from the

room, and now both men sat near each other, and Fritz remembered with beating heart, that things had happened much as he had dreamed in the face of the evening star, and that "one word might lead to another." He related exactly his brother's struggles, resolutions, and wishes. The Uncle greatly found fault with the singular being, but quite approved of his matrimonial views for the younger brother. One word in reality did lead on to another, till the proposal was finally made for Mary's hand, without any special difficulty. The Uncle was greatly astonished, and would have persuaded his young friend that the maiden would never suit him, he was too yielding.

But Fritz was so judicious as to allow the old gentleman to discourse first. He then made his own representations, and the winding-up of the discussion was the Uncle's assurance, "that he would give his niece to no one so gladly as to him." But when the happy suitor, in order to expedite the matter as rapidly as possible, suggested that Mary must be asked, the old man angrily broke out—"The abominable custom of asking a maiden, he would never allow in his house. Whosoever might be asked, he alone had the right to answer, and Mary should know upon the spot what had been decided for her happiness."

The Aunt and niece were summoned, and the Uncle began his discourse, but it did not flow very readily; for, as the maiden stood before him, the doubt arose

whether she would allow him to force her happiness upon her. He breathed deeply, and a stone fell from his breast, when Fritz took her by the hand, and she looked at him so modest and happy. After a few measured and courteous speeches, the Aunt and niece withdrew, and the poor Bridegroom was obliged to sit upon the sofa, and listen to business affairs, in comparison with which women were as nought. At length the pipe fell from the old gentleman's hand, and he sat, according to his favourite custom, dozing by the side of his impatient guest. The latter swiftly left the chamber, and was lighted by the bright moon across the hall to the back room of the kind Aunt. The door was only ajar, and he awaited for a minute his yearned-for happiness, and mused on his new duties and honours.

"Yes, thou wilt act uprightly," he thought, much moved, "and thou wilt make her very happy. Thou wilt bear her in thine arms, and not stand too much upon thy supremacy. Women are tender beings; they ~~are~~ weak, and our strength consists in this, that we do not become weak also."

He entered softly; Aunt and niece were kneeling upon a seat in the window, and the moonlight rested peacefully on both forms.

"May I come in?" he gently asked. He knelt by them, and the motherly lady laid the hands of the young people together, and said—"Yes, so should you

begin your wedded life, with folded hands and upward glance. The Lord preserve you, and be your richest portion. If that sounds strange to you now, only believe it, and one day you will know it by experience."

Oh no! it did not sound strange to them. Mary, despite her gladsome nature, and her apparent lightness, had a warm love for her heavenly Father deep in her heart; and was it not this very thing, that so long had drawn the young man to the gentle, devout wife of the ranger, and to her foster-child?

The beginning of the peace that transcends all reason was already within him, a thread that had its starting-point in his past world. The Lord himself would spin out this thread still longer; and He began to do it in this hour. The three sat long together.

"The Lord draws His own through joy and sorrow to Himself," said the Aunt; "we would rather go to Him through joy; but it is a question whether that would be always the best for us. Where the Lord lays a heavy burden, He also gives more strength; yes, in the depressing and monotonous occurrences of our life, He often opens to us a wonder-world that makes us forget all besides. He fills us with an unspeakable peace, that far surpasses our ordinary human feelings; our afflictions vanish, our grief is healed, our solitude turns to bliss. Were I to speak of myself," added she, faltering, "I should say the Lord had led me only through happiness and joy."

"Oh, dear Aunt, you speak so, that we may not pity you," whispered Mary, with tearful eyes, as she leant her head upon her breast.

"You err, my child," replied her Aunt, smiling, "and I would have you understand me. I rejoice at your happiness: yes, it is another draught of joy which the Lord reaches to me; the heart is more sensitive for others than for itself, and I have greatly feared I might see you unhappy."

Her voice was much moved, and Mary clasped the hand of her beloved friend, and kissed it, with a sob that would not be repressed.

"Not so," said the lady, with recovered composure. "I would not make your heart weak; you are happy, and I am also; and now be patient, while I read to you some verses that will please you both, and are not unsuitable for you just now."

She rose and fetched a book of old songs, from which she began to read to the betrothed pair. That was more than pleasant; they sat hand in hand, listening to the words that echoed through their souls—

"He who knows a faithful heart,
Knows in truth the highest pleasure,
He who knows a faithful heart,
Hath indeed a costly treasure
'Tis well with me in woe's keen smart,
For I know one such faithful heart

"If the current of our life,
Flow not always to our will,
A true heart aids us in the strife,
With the hostile wrestles still.
'Tis well with me, &c

"In the worth and weal of others,
Stands its happiness alone,
From the dark hour shrinking never,
Making others' need its own
'Tis well with me, &c

"Naught is sweeter than when two,
Two such hearts in one combine,
Hence my constant happiness,
And she adds her 'yes' to mine.
'Tis well with me," &c

"Do you like that?" asked the Aunt, kindly. The two perfectly agreed, and nodded their assent. "It is a beautiful song," she continued, "but I will read a more beautiful one to you on your wedding-day—very good for to-day also."

Fritz stepped through the lattice-door and gazed once more upon the court that lay so peaceful and clear in the moonlight. The deep blue sky spread itself out above him, and high in the heavens glittered countless stars. Wherefore was his heart so full of bliss? Dear Reason, I cannot explain to thee; it is a mystery, and thou art ever a miserable wight at comprehending a mystery.

CHAPTER III.

THE GRANDPARENTS' MARRIAGE.

On the 12th of May 1805, the heavens were especially cloudless, the young wood fragrant, the blossoms silver-white, the auriculas glittering in their many-coloured velvet clothes, and from the fresh dewy turf glanced hundreds and thousands of bright clear eyes, shining like silken garments and precious stones. From the Budmar estate a small door in the garden wall led to a large common, through which wandered a sparkling brook, shaded by lofty maples, till, at a few miles' distance, it took another direction; this piece of common was bounded by fir-clad hills. To these hills the bridal pair strolled on their wedding-morn, in order to see thence the towers of Braunschweig, the garrison of the Bridegroom, and thence, as from the height of their happiness, on this their most festal day, to gaze on their future dwelling, and on that other future that lay so rich and far before them. In the whole time of their betrothal they had

never taken so solitary a walk. At that period far distant walking was unusual under the circumstances, still less such a "rambling about over hill and plain," as the Ranger called it. But he was constrained to give his consent, nor dared he scold at such unnecessary waste of time, as the aunts and female friends of the house assured him a bride must do nothing on her wedding-day, or she would pass the remainder of her life in sorrow and unrest. On the summit of the pine-clad hill the bridal pair rested. They did not merely say to each other—"I love thee!" or, "Oh, I love thee so tenderly!" and "How dear thou art to me!" No, they had both the strong conviction that this love would be their guiding-star to something better, and both could speak of it.

"The words are ever sounding in my soul to-day," began Mary, "'I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.' Yes, I feel so assured the Lord will draw me through kindness," she added.

"Are you so certain?" asked the Bridegroom,

She looked at him thoughtfully with her clear eyes. "Yes, Fritz, I know what I have in you," she replied, "and I know what God will give me with you. If I could not plainly recognize His will and doing in this, I should indeed be anxious."

"Why anxious?" asked the Bridegroom, astonished.

"Because I cannot understand why you love me now, or why you ever should have loved me."

"That would be most difficult to explain," replied Fritz, "as little could you tell why you are willing to follow me to the cottage down there, which is too small for beaming joy and bright pleasure, yet large enough for much care, or why you will to-day assent to the command, 'He shall be thy master.'"

"It is very strange," said Mary, her eyes brightening up with joy, "that nothing is dearer to me than this command."

"That is the beauty of love!" exclaimed Fritz; "she explains naught, she claims naught."

"You do not doubt our love?" interrupted Mary, eagerly.

"On the contrary, I know nothing more assured," was the Bridegroom's well-pleased answer.

"Nor do I doubt," continued Mary, "I have lately thought so much* about it. Our gifted poet knows so well how to paint the wonderful in love, and you must agree with him that the attraction that draws two hearts together is something altogether inexplicable; if these learned people can recognize that in two poor weak human hearts, even because they experience it in themselves, why will they not believe in the wonderful mystery of love in the heart of God and his children?"

The Bridegroom listened with a smile to the pupil

of the gentle, well-beloved Aunt, but he listened with pleasure, and he was conscious of a deep response to her words in his own heart.

"I know not; I think whoever carefully notes the errors in his own nature and life," continued the Bride, "must easily come to the conclusion, that the solution of all error is only to be found in a redemption of free love and grace. If these men say, 'I need no grace, I am an upright man, reasonable and discreet, I could easily by my own power and service have earned the love of God; what need then of so wonderful and mysterious a thing as a free redemption of grace and love without merit, and without desert?—it is just as if I should say to you, 'You must love me; I am a good and upright maiden; I have the best will, and I feel in myself a youthful strength for noble deeds and ceaseless activity. Certainly I have faults, but so have all mortals, and you would be unjust to lay them to my charge.' Would not so bold a demand justify you in withdrawing your love from me? The only reasonable plea that can be listened to, is 'Love me, because I love thee so well!'"

"A plea that is readily listened to," replied the Bridegroom; "this, moreover, I shall ever maintain, that our marriage was settled in heaven, and our love the will and doing of our Lord. I can never be anxious, then, about your love; and if the time comes, as it certainly will, when I shall be not altogether a con-

siderate and reasonable husband, you will still be contented, because you know our marriage was concluded in heaven, and it was God's will you should follow so strange a lord. And when those unwonted clouds are passed, I shall but love you the more tenderly. Only think, my sweet Mary, if our love is ever in creasing, what it will be when we celebrate our golden wedding-day?"

"Our golden wedding-day!" exclaimed the Bride in astonishment.

"Why not?" continued the Bridegroom, "it may be God's will."

"Fifty years," replied Mary, "that is so long, I shall not be"—she hesitated, and smiled.

"Pretty then?" asked he.

She nodded.

"Oh! we shall not expect that," was his consolatory answer, as they rose, and turned homewards.

They had promised an early visit to Karl, as he would have them see how he celebrated their wedding. The old grey house, with the escutcheon over the door, the high windows and large rooms, were tastefully adorned with flowers, and, strange enough, the good neighbours, Frau von Lindeman and Charlotte, had assisted in the work. Therefore a pyramid of cake was sent to them in a costly white napkin, for Herr von Budmar took it upon himself on this occasion, and all similar ones, to testify to them his un-

changed friendship. To-day he was particularly happy. All his people were treated in the court with roast meat, wine, and cake. He assured the bridal-pair with all seriousness, that he rejoiced to have his brother so far off, and was more than joyful that he was not celebrating his own marriage. With respect to the latter affair, he was not altogether wrong; it was no slight task for the bridal-pair to listen to the tragic congratulations of the old schoolmaster, and afterwards to those of a host of aunts, and cousins, and relations, male and female. The most perfect part of the day was the hour when the Bridegroom in his handsome uniform, with a bouquet of myrtle on his breast, came to the Aunt to fetch his blooming bride. For a few minutes before the ceremony, they were secured by the troop of relatives, in the little familiar parlour; and the parting words and blessing of their gentle Aunt were very dear to both. Finally, she gave them the wedding-poem she had promised on a former occasion. She did not read it aloud, but left them alone in the chamber, that the earnest words might sink deep in their hearts.

"Hail to that house ' all good befall,
Where Jesus Christ is Lord of all !
Ah ! if His presence were not there,
How empty and how lone it were !

' Well, if before the world arises
Such picture to its wondering eyes—
If home to it such proof be brought,
That without God all else is nought,—

" Well, if pure prayers as incense rise,
From that house daily to the skies,
And nought be heeded, nought be done,
But God's own word and work alone,—

" Well, if upon their common round,
They all be true and faithful found,
If each within his own small sphere
Proclaims, ' One spirit rules us here ',—

" Well, if the parents faithful be,
Living as for eternity,
If children's children in their track
Walk steadily, none drawing back,—

" This solemn pledge myself I take,
And with my house this covenant make,
Though all men from him go away,
We will be constant found for aye!"

• After the wedding, with all its joy and confusion, was over, the Ranger became sadly out of tune. He would not allow that he missed his niece; but in truth he did so. Eight months had passed away, when he entered the sitting room one morning, and stopped short, greatly astonished. Over the sofa two portraits hung in golden frames, and oh! so life-like! Fritz in his dark uniform, with his high forehead, well-chiselled nose, and expressive mouth, and Mary with her bright sparkling eyes, and light-brown locks, clad in her white silk bridal-dress, with a rose in her bosom. The Ranger stood before them in silence, and his wife, unseen, regarded his surprise in glad suspense. At last he turned, saw her, and at once guessed the secret. "Is that your contrivance?" he exclaimed, with broken voice.

She only nodded. He sank upon a chair, and struggled like a child with his tears.

"The greatest pleasure that could have been given me," he continued, at length giving his hand to his tender sympathizing wife. The portraits hung in their festal clothes, and in holiday rest, from one year to another; while the young couple were living beyond the hills, finding room for both joy and sorrow in their little home.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SILVER WEDDING-DAY.*

TWENTY-FIVE years are past. The old grey house, with the escutcheon over the door, is decorated again with flowers for a festival, the boundless sky is blue and cloudless above; the young wood sends forth its fragrance, the auriculas are dressed in new-coloured velvet, the nightingales sing by the silver stream, and in the fresh green of the turf a blooming company of fair young flowers may be found. Yea, the spring-tide was the same as twenty-five years ago, but the human world was greatly changed. In the house of the Ranger other tenants dwelt who had little intercourse with the old grey house. The beautiful portraits, in their gilt frames, were transported thither, and now hung in the family sitting-room over the artistically-carved walnut wood sofa, with its cover of cerise-

* The twenty-fifth anniversary of the wedding-day among all classes in Germany is termed the Silver Wedding Day, the fiftieth the Golden Wedding-Day. Both are observed with great festivities and rejoicings, though, of course, the manner of keeping them varies. The exquisite music of "*The Midsummer Night's Dream*," was written by Mendelssohn, and first performed in honour of his parent's Silver Wedding Day.—*Translator's Note*

damask. Upon this sofa sat two people very like the pictures, only ——— more beautiful by mutual consent. Does that sound absurd? No! thus it must ever be. The flesh must yield to the spirit. The features were indeed somewhat shrunk and sharper, but in them might be plainly read of five-and-twenty years' love and joy passed together, and of such sorrows and trials as God sends His children to draw and bind them to Himself which (as their beloved aunt had so well known how to describe), had opened to them a wonder-world, in which all human feelings were alike invested with magic hues. All this might be traced in their eyes and features, and was it then any marvel that beings with such true hearts found each other more beautiful than twenty-five years ago? and not only so, but the world itself, and the circle in which they moved, had become richer and dearer to them. Certainly the aunt was dead, and that had been a heavy loss to both, but the fifteen years she had lived with them had been most blessed, and now they gathered a large circle of children around them, and even two grandchildren laid claim to their hearts, and were loved almost more fondly than their own little ones had been. That the youthful grandfather was no longer an officer, but treasurer, and dwelt not in the cottage beyond the pine-clad hills, but here, in the spacious house of his fathers, had been brought to pass by the war. He had dwelt one year with his

young wife in undisturbed happiness, when came the ill-starred year 1806. He was obliged to join his regiment; and though the peace of the following year dismissed him to the garrison, the consequences both of the war and the peace weighed heavily upon him and his family. Karl, who had meant to do so much for his married brother, could scarcely keep himself above board in the great pressure. Fritz had only his lieutenant's pay to live on, and need and care often knocked loudly at his door. The good aunt, who, during her ten years' widowhood, had kept her own little establishment in Woltheim, brought one thing after another to fill up the gaps in the needy household, and relieved her niece from many heavy cares. She did still more, she took her share in the overflowing nursery troubles—troubles for which the world has little sympathy, but which can never be estimated too highly. "The child is ill," it is said; and a few weeks after, "The child is well again;" but what struggles these weeks have seen—how the mother's heart has wrestled in faith and patience—how it has been borne aloft on the waves of hope, and anon carried as deeply down—how it must have utterly despaired, if it had not seen before it a faithful hand it could grasp and implore—"Lord help me or I perish!" All this is known to the initiated only. To these little yet heavy cares, in the cottage beyond the hills, sadder ones were added. One lovely child

died in its infancy, and when the war of freedom broke out, the father was again summoned to the field, and need and poverty became ever more pressing. But through all God was their helper; comfort failed them not in their bitterest hours; the children bloomed and flourished at little cost, and the heavy season passed by almost unremarked, for the joy and happiness of the children made such claims on the little house that the cares and troubles of the parents were compelled to flee. In the battle of Leipzig a shot disabled the father's left arm, which rendered him incapable of service, and after the peace he was promoted to the office of Treasurer in his native town. The whole family removed now to the old grey house with its roomy apartments and chambers above, which, as Uncle Karl contentedly observed, now brought in their interest. Charlotte, too, resided with the family; her mother was dead; and it was only natural and desirable that so loving and ready a friend to the children should dwell under the same roof with them. Finally, there was a tutor, as it had been decided in a general family conference that it would be more economical to have one at home than to send so many young ones to a gymnasium. It was indeed a large circle, and a regular revolution in the old house, and there came occasionally wonderful perplexities, which demanded a brother, Fritz, who, to his excellence and dignity, added a gentle,

kindly nature—the woman of his heart, with her ready tact, the sympathizing Charlotte, the extremely kind-hearted Uncle Karl, and the whole troop of merry children—to unravel and set to rights again.

“Do you think, Charlotte, that Wilhelm really wants new trousers again already?” asked Uncle Karl once, thoughtfully, as he established himself in the nursery with his pipe. “I don’t know how it is; in my time, boys of his age could wear a patch upon their knees.”

“If it is of the same colour,” said Charlotte, good humouredly.

“Of course,” exclaimed Uncle Karl; “the same colour, of course. The great-aunt, with her dim sight, once put a patch of shot on new brown trousers. It looked hideous, and, I always maintain, we ought to keep up our position.”

“There you are quite right,” replied Charlotte.

“And to be properly circumspect, one must never give way in little things,” continued the Uncle. “I must acknowledge with pain, that my brother is sometimes forgetful of his peculiar duties as head of the family. For instance, he laughed at the patch which Karl positively wore; and yet, on the other hand, my sister-in-law may put her hand in his purse as often as she pleases to buy anything for the children. I am quite opposed to new trousers for Wilhelm, and it will vex me exceedingly if they are bought.”

“Oh, Herr von Budmar,” pleaded Charlotte, “it

will not be done then ; certainly it is a matter of importance."

"Yes, of great importance," said Uncle Karl, with emphasis ; for one little thing leads on to another, and the principle must be considered among so many children. "You would not think, Charlotte," he continued, with great solemnity, "how difficult it is to make anything of our property. You best know for how long a time it has occupied all my thoughts and labour."

"Ah, yes. I remember long ago, the cultivation of clover, and other fodder," chimed in Charlotte.

"Exactly," he continued, "now, I confine myself to the simplest farming ; but I assure you if so many new trousers are to be bought, and if the strictest economy is not practised in this large household, we shall come to ruin. Yes, Charlotte, you may believe there are times when it is pain and grief to me to think what is to be done with so many children."

"And such dear children!" replied Charlotte, "not one must degenerate."

Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, who had been named after her great-aunt, here interrupted the conversation by summoning them to dinner. Karl and Charlotte followed her. What a pleasant long table it was! Uncle Karl sat at the top; Fritz would have it so, and he had assented. On his right his sister-in-law, on the other side his brother; Charlotte's place was at the middle of the table among the children, and the

tutor sat opposite to her. It was plainly to be read in Uncle Karl's face that he had something upon his mind. Parents and children both remarked it, and the mother could scarcely repress an unpleasant foreboding. Her husband reached his hand to her across the table, smiling, as though he would say—"Don't be uneasy, dear Mamma; you may be sure it is nothing of importance." The father said grace, and then followed a sound, and movement, and clattering of plates, 'mid which the Uncle solemnly began—

"Fritz, do you think it is really necessary for Wilhelm to have new trousers again?"

"Really I don't know, brother," said the Treasurer, innocently. "Herr Formschneider can tell you better than I;" and he turned to that gentleman.

"Well, I should say yes," he replied, smiling.

"My very excellent Herr Formschneider," said Uncle Karl (he only made polite speeches when he was angry), "I thought the great advantage of a tutor at home was, that public schools might thus be avoided, and that the children might be clothed in the house, just as one pleased."

Herr Formschneider, who had thoroughly conformed to the spirit of the dear parents of his pupils, knew exactly how to demean himself.

"Of course," he replied earnestly, "it is a great advantage that we can live here in our own little kingdom just as we please; on serious consideration,

I am sure it will neither disturb our peace nor Wilhelm's if his Sunday trousers are once more repaired."

"We will give them to his great-aunt," said the father, sportively.

"No! I will undertake them myself," replied the mother pleasantly.

Uncle Karl raised his bushy eye-brows; he was fairly beaten. The great readiness on all sides to yield to his practical suggestions was almost unpleasant. But to-day another attack awaited his poor nerves. When the soup was removed, there appeared a dish of potatoes, another of roast mutton, and a large tureen of onion sauce. The twitchings on the Uncle's face suddenly disappeared, and he looked with great earnestness at the onion-sauce. It was a thing that Fritz could not eat; therefore his wife had never had it served, and the children had never seen it while they lived beyond the hills. As it appeared for the first time upon the table by the Uncle's order, the children looked at it, and, evidently disliking the smell, sniffed at each other in silence. Thereupon Uncle Karl became very angry, enlarged upon the value of German spice, and said, it was a great sin in the rearing of children, that their young stomachs were made so delicate by the constant use of fine foreign spices, that they had no relish for a plain German sauce of onions and carraways.

Fritz argued the point with him in the most sportive

fashion. The sauce had been quickly ordered back to the table by his obliging wife, and to set a good example, he took a fair portion himself, and this was the sign for a universal charge. Each child now took onion-sauce. But they had not reached the point of finding it palatable; to all appearance it was odious to them; and the shrinking, and evil grimaces were so distressing to Karl's nerves, that he argued for his onion-sauce more vehemently than ever, and blamed his brother's system of education aloud. It was incomprehensible to him how the children were to get through the world, if they could not eat onion-sauce. Certainly at a strange table, they would not venture to make so much fuss if they were obliged to eat of this excellent dish. Thereupon the father laughingly scolded the children for their grimaces, and the affair was at an end.

What is the meaning of this unusually large tureen of the strong-smelling sauce again to-day? There must have been some special reason for ordering it, as the children all smiled and whispered to each other. They were helped to meat and potatoes, and then the mysterious tureen was set in motion. The mother took some, then the uncle, then the father decidedly more, then the children in their order; it seemed as though no one could get the tureen quickly enough, and each one dived more deeply and boldly into it than the other. Uncle Karl scarcely ventured to breathe.

"What can it all mean?" thought he; "and," added

his kindly heart, "If the rule of the table is to be kept up, and all must clean their plates, it will be a terrible spectacle."

He had followed the tureen with his eyes to a little boy of five, who sat by his mamma, and he too plunged the spoon boldly and deeply in the dish.

"Max, Max, it is onion-sauce!" warned his Uncle, now quite startled. The little one pressed his lips together, glanced at his Uncle, and nodded, but spared himself the trouble of the words,

"I know that very well, Uncle."

"Attention, Uncle Karl," exclaimed the Treasurer, with assumed gravity. "Now, children—one—two—three." At the first word of command all spoons went down into the sauce, and in no longer time than it took to complete them, the work was done.

"Bravo, children!" said their father. "And now, brother," he continued, triumphantly turning to the astounded Uncle, do you still distrust our good education? Do you still fear that our young ones will not get through the world?"

The universal amusement and delight of the children could no longer be suppressed, so touching was it to their Uncle, that he was well nigh moved to tears, but fortunately his nervous agitation ended in laughter. He then summoned to his side the eldest boy, the slender Wilhelm, to whom (as he began to pay some attention to his appearance), considerations of dress were not totally indifferent.

"Wilhelm, I will give you, please God, a pair of new trousers."

So ended this and other such little difficulties ; and the more accustomed they were to them, and the older the children grew, the more invariably did they become a source of pleasure in the end. And now the time was come when the Treasurer's family were spoken of as "grown up," and in the winter of 1824 the last piece of news in Woltheim was, that the deputy-counsellor Herr Kuhneman wished to betrothe Elise von Budmar. The deputy was properly assessor, and only sent for a time to fill up the vacant post. He was a distinguished, brave, and highly cultivated man. His parents were living in Berlin, and from his childhood he had moved in a circle in which literature and art, and every educational advantage, had been freely afforded him for the æsthetic culture of his powers. He came most reluctantly to Woltheim, and seldom went to any other house than the Ranger's, whose wife, the daughter of a rich agriculturist, was ambitious of superior society, and was on intimate terms with many of the officers' families in the neighbouring garrison, and with some of the country gentry. Here the young counsellor heard it mentioned by chance at the card table, that they never played at the Budmars, not because Herr von Budmar condemned cards, but because, as he said, in his house they had something better to do. This was discussed, and generally

laughed at; but the aesthetically-cultivated Herr Kuhneman mused long upon it, and was so desirous to know the way of life in the Budmar family, that he began to find the card parties very tedious. He had no difficulty in becoming acquainted with the Treasurer, and he found him quite other than he had expected, nor was he less surprised at the family life in the Budmar house. The children were very well informed, extremely musical, studied various languages, and were introduced by their father to the best authors both in ancient and modern literature, not as a mere schoolmaster, but as one who found his own delight therein. It was the same with the mother, who had only properly began to study and find pleasure in so doing when she had growing-up children. That Elise, the eldest daughter, was more highly educated than any girl in the neighbourhood, was as evident to the young counsellor as that she was the most amiable and beautiful. The parents of Elise soon remarked his inclination, but the mother was little pleased with it.

"I would rather not see Elise the wife of that man," she remarked to her husband, thoughtfully.

"Why not?" asked the father.

"She will have to reside in the town," replied the mother, sighing; "and, what is more, in a circle where cultivation and art are everything, for Kuhneman's great desire is to return home, and he will undoubtedly succeed."

"And do you think that so great a misfortune?" asked the father, smiling.

"Not a misfortune, perhaps, but certainly a great peril, especially for Elise, who is so devoted to study and art."

"Kuhneman is a very good fellow, and feels quite at home with us; there is nothing in him opposed to the truth, and he assured me, a short time since, he was studying Luther's works with great interest. If he is only doing it at present with the understanding, so be it; God will help him further. And if Elise thinks too much of her understanding, let her find out, by experience, how far she can prosper with that alone. No, I like the man exceedingly, and have no reason to repulse him. We cannot shut our children out of the world; they must go through it, with the Lord's help. We must not imagine that by a Christian education, we can spare them all inner conflicts. We can but lay a good foundation, and pray for them, and then by God's help they must struggle on by themselves. To wish to keep them back from all conflict and struggle, to shut them entirely up, would be dangerous in a Christian training. Children have to work through Schiller, and Goethe, and Shakespeare, through the classic and romantic schools, through the whole host of fine and great authors, through the popular poetry, love-songs, sonatas, and overtures. The young mind must have nourishment,

and it is better that this nourishment should be given to it after due consideration, and wise rules, than that with little thought and over eagerness it should seek it for itself. The spirit will thrive amid all these things, and if it dwells in a wholesome atmosphere, as it expands it will shake off all that is little and narrow. Intrust your plants to the heavenly Gardener, pray to Him for dew and sunshine, and do not imagine that, with all your care, you can by yourself effect much."

"Little children, little cares; great children, great cares," said the mother, thoughtfully, but still much comforted, and in the main agreed with her wise partner.

"I would put from me all care, if I were in your place," remarked the latter, smiling.

"Put it from me!" replied she, sighing; "our whole life is a school for the heart of a mother, in which she should learn not to be anxious; but so little progress does she make in her lesson, that she is first anxious for herself, then for the little children, then for the elder ones."

"Then for her grand-children," interrupted her husband, facetiously.

"Well," she replied, quite seriously, "it is so in truth. Now I am anxious about Elise, lest her heart should deceive her, lest she should not demean herself to a husband as she should, though she is amiable enough to be happy."

"You think she will not have him under proper petticoat government?" he added, demurely.

At this she became almost angry; she could ill endure such jokes, was firmly assured that Elise would never attempt to govern, and wished this to be acknowledged; and although her husband finally granted her extreme docility, she was not altogether satisfied, and that point remained undetermined. However, despite all musing and anxiety, Elise was married to the Deputy. And the heart of the mother was comforted when she saw her daughter happy, and when her new son, with a child's love and reverence, came to her and claimed a share in her motherly tenderness. That their future son-in-law was not of the nobility,* was no matter of importance to the parents, but Uncle Karl could not be quite reconciled to it; and again, Charlotte was the confidante of his annoyance.

"I don't exactly know how it is," he remarked, "but he is not of noble birth, and I could have wished Elizabeth to remain in her own rank."

Charlotte was so obliging as to answer. "It is certainly a great pity that she has made a mesalliance."

But that was too much for the Uncle, and he

* At this time, the distinction between the noble and burgher class was far more strongly marked than now. The so-termed "universal progress" has done much to break down the broad barrier between the two. The prefix of "von," like the French "de" (the sign of gentle blood), is now commonly adopted, like the title of "esquire" in England, by those who have not the slightest claim to it; and people from the burgher class rise to high offices in the State.—*Translator's Note.*

could not allow it to pass. "You cannot call it a mesalliance," he exclaimed, warmly; "Kuhneman is so distinguished, so clever and superior."

"And of such polished manners," added Charlotte.

"And then, my dear Charlotte, you must recollect that it is very different now to what it was with the nobility in our time; now service really is valued more than rank, and the middle classes rise to the very highest position, even to the ministry."

"Our Elise is exactly adapted to be the wife of a minister," remarked Charlotte. "Madame Kuhneman, born von Budmar, wife of the Prime Minister!"

Uncle Karl and Charlotte were both comforted. For the present, however, Elise was merely the wife of an Assessor; but when his engagement at Woltheim came to an end, he returned again to his old post.

The season of the betrothal was for the whole Budmar family a time of great excitement: the mother especially had much to do and care for, but she had also hours rich in consolation. Those were the solitary ones that she passed with the betrothed couple, in which she had so much to impress upon them, so much they gladly listened to—when she gave them the beautiful betrothal and marriage songs she had received from her beloved Aunt. If she felt that the affectionate heart and softened mood of the Bridegroom were not uninterested in them, so neither could she distrust

the sincerity of his good will when he impressively repeated—

"This solemn pledge myself I take,
And with my house this covenant make,
Though all men from Him go away,
We will be constant found for aye "

The mother's cares were not over with the marriage; on the contrary, it seemed as though life had never been so full of trials as now. In the next year came on the chief examination of the eldest son, an anxious time for the heart of a mother. Before that, Julia, a maiden of sixteen, had been entangled in a love affair that was a mere self-deception, and had at once been forbidden; then followed anxieties for her grandchildren. She was summoned hither and thither, while she had still young children in her own nursery, certainly she had arrived at the highest point of a full and complete family life.

And at this time of great activity, before the Silver Wedding-day, the silver couple were fully agreed that the constant agitation in the family, the labour, the cares, the unrest, were their richest, fairest portion. They had only a heart for joy, and praise, and thanksgiving, and the anticipation of future cares and toils was in itself happiness. To-day was neither one for labour nor anxiety; it was as though they had risen from a billowy sea, and climbed to an island, where the sun of peace and happiness, and a whole flower-world of joy, surrounded them.

There was scarcely a room in the old grey house that was not needed. The former nursery was taken possession of by Fran Kuhneman, with her two little ones. The Counsellor himself was domiciled with the elder boys, and vied with them in youthful joy and sportiveness.

The elder sons were Wilhelm, twenty-three, a young lawyer; Adolph, twenty-one, a student; Karl, seventeen, a slim cadet. Julia, and her younger sister Mary, were the devoted Aunts of Elise's children. The unconfirmed boy was still under the rule of a tutor. Beside the children, the wife of Colonel von Reifenhagen, only sister of the brothers von Budnar, with her two little ones, was in the house. She had married much later than the Treasurer, so that her youngest daughter Emily was only two years older than the eldest granddaughter, little Elizabeth, the delight and admiration of the house. In addition to all these, a young man, who was only too anxious to become one of the family, was added to the party. This was the new Ranger, Herr von Schulz, who for a year had taken the post in Woltheim of his predecessor Fortmeister. Julia's blue eyes had completely robbed him of his heart, and she seemed very well pleased at this, especially as her parents were not opposed to it; to the mother, indeed, it was a subject of much joy. The Ranger was a sensible, upright, and God-fearing man, and nowhere could the mother see

her daughter settled more gladly than at her own dear old home with him. Without this future bridal pair the family circle would not have been complete. On the morning of the festal-day Uncle Karl came to Charlotte for the cosy hour's talk he had enjoyed so many years—it had become necessary to him. He was to-day somewhat upset—the bridal eve had lasted too long. It seemed as though the “travesties and declamations,” as Charlotte called them, with the singing and dancing for the pleasure of the young ones, would have never come to an end.

“The business is settled,” began the Uncle; “Julia accepts the Ranger, and I am very glad of it; for you know, Charlotte, a girl is best provided for when she is married.”

He said this without special meaning, and so Charlotte understood it.

“Much best,” she answered pleasantly; “and what an excellent match!”

“You can imagine,” continued the Uncle, “what a load falls from my heart when one of our many children is provided for.”

“Certainly, certainly,” was her answer.

“Really,” he exclaimed, “it is one perpetual ‘open your purse;’ and I own to you that this year will be a very heavy one. First, Julia’s dowry, then the outfit for Max. He must be an officer, and in the cavalry too. I can’t blame him, though,” he

added confidentially, "if I were to enter the army, it should be only in the cavalry; but the outfit costs as much again as for the infantry."

"You will manage everything, Herr von Budmar," replied Charlotte tranquilly; "the blessing of God rests visibly upon your farming."

"Yes," he answered, "and I trust we shall provide for all the children according to their rank."

"Such a fine family!—one may well be proud of them," ejaculated Charlotte.

"Very well brought up children," replied the Uncle; "they might, perhaps, be a little more economical, but Fritz is no hero in that way himself. My long-cherished idea of making the property something considerable I have quite given up, for if one is to be ever drawing upon it, ever giving and giving, how is one to save? I assure you I am as far from it now as I was thirty years ago. That Fritz knows nothing of agriculture, is clear."

"Hem, hem!" exclaimed Charlotte. She would not dissent from Karl, but at the same time she did not like a shadow of blame to fall on his brother.

"But Fritz never will see," continued Karl, "that the estate must of necessity improve, if I could only do as I would; that is so vexatious! Don't you see, my dear Charlotte, that with the really small means at my command, I am, so to speak, in a perpetual whirl and din; the constant perplexing demand for ready

money leaves me nothing for rational, profitable agriculture."

"I see," assented Charlotte.

"In a few years I trust to begin my improvements," continued he; "when Wilhelm is Assessor, and Adolf less expensive, Max an officer, and Julia no longer upon our hands, then will come a time of refreshing, and we shall be able to take our breath. I purpose to leave Wilhelm a very different property to that which it now is. He will probably be Counsellor here, and a worthy representative of the Budmar family.

"Capital! capital!" exclaimed Charlotte; and both were soon deep in agriculture and glorious visions of the future.

Uncle Karl launched forth upon improvement of the soil, and various kinds of fodder. Charlotte reminded him of the work of Edlen on clover, and was duly informed that this had long been out of date. Strengthened by this pleasant conversation, Uncle Karl now resigned himself to the excitement of the festival. And what a festival it was! Not only was the sky blue, and the whole outer spring full of happiness and joy: the hearts and eyes of the human beings were beaming with light and joy also.

"Dear Karl," said the Treasurer, "you would not believe how exquisitely happy a Silver Wedding-day is. However, I will not make your heart heavy."

"No, no," replied Karl, smiling (though his smile,

from his custom of drawing his bushy eyebrows together, made him look the least bit cross); "no, dear Fritz, I thank God that we are so far on our way. I thank *Him* that the most anxious and toilsome part of our life is past."

"Believe it not," said Fritz; "though we have done with the children, there are the grandchildren."

"The grandchildren!" exclaimed Uncle Karl, quite taken aback.

"Yes, naturally, the grandchildren."

"What are the grandchildren to us? The parents must care for them."

"I tell you, Fritz, once for all ——"

At that instant Elizabeth, the little girl of four, came bounding in.

"Uncle Karl, shall we go together to-morrow and look for lapwings' eggs?"

As she spoke, she shook her fair curls back, and looked inquiringly with her joy-beaming eyes at her old uncle.

"Yes, Lizzie, we will look for lapwings' eggs together," agreed her Uncle, as he took the sweet little child in his arms.

"But," continued Lizzie, "you must harness two goats to a little carriage, and then I will drive you."

"I have no goats, and no little carriage," said her Uncle in a compassionate tone.

"Then you must buy them with your money," returned Lizzie, boldly.

"Well, darling, we will see," said her Uncle, seriously, "when you come again."

"I am not going away from you," exclaimed the child; "I shall stay with grandpapa and grandmamma, and I will go with you every day to look for lapwings' eggs, and I will put Spitz to bed, and drink some of your coffee with sugar in it."

"So you shall, Lizzie," said her old Uncle, quite delighted; "you shall stay here this summer."

"Fritz," he continued, turning to his brother, "I really think the child must stay with us."

"Why not?" answered the Treasurer; "but," he added, with affected seriousness—"we had better not take on ourselves such a burden; let her parents take charge of her; we have enough to do with our own children. I am convinced we shall never thrive."

"We can very well take charge of such a little thing," said Karl, almost crossly.

"Really," replied Fritz, "such little things, if you observe, make great demands. A carriage and two goats!"

"Are not the whole world," added her Uncle. "Yes, Lizzie," turning to the child, "you shall stay here and have a little carriage."

The child smiled joyously at her Uncle, and ran away.

"Now, brother," said the Treasurer, resuming the conversation, well pleased; "if you like so to treat my grandchild, I have nothing to say against it. I merely remark that you have a grandmother-heart, and quite forget the ground-work of education with the rising generation."

"A grandmother-heart!" exclaimed the Silver-bride, as she approached them. She had heard the last words, and addressed herself to Karl: "Ah, dear brother, one cannot help loving that child; we have never had one so lovely and engaging."

"You are partial," observed her husband, "because she is so like yourself."

"So like me! certainly not; I was never so ardent, nor so amiable as Lizzie," replied the grandmamma.

"Your education was different," observed the grandpapa; "you were kept in the strictest order and discipline from your infancy."

Thereupon Lizzie came dancing in again. She embraced her grandmamma, and exclaimed—"Grandmamma, I love you so dearly!" the answer was a kiss upon the forehead. "And you, too, grandpapa!" exclaimed the child, embracing him.

"I am so glad," replied he.

"And you, too, Uncle Karl," she continued, "and the whole world—and the chairs—and the tables." She seized one thing after another, pressed it eagerly, and then sprang away again.

"Dear loving child!" exclaimed her grandmother, quite transported. "Fritz," she continued, addressing the young Silver-bridegroom, as she seated herself on the sofa by him, "I have been unlearning anxiety for our children more and more, and by God's help I shall yet unlearn it. And, certainly, I will not be over anxious for our grandchildren, but, for this little thing, you must permit it, you must have patience with me, or, still better, you must share my anxiety. Whenever I look at her, it seems to me as though it were God's will to lay it upon us."

"I permit whatever you wish, you dear grandmother-heart," said her husband; "it is just possible that I, too, share your anxiety in this instance. I scarcely know."

"The child will be little trouble," added her grandmamma; "a heart so full of love must be happy, and make others happy too."

"That is not so evident," observed her grandpapa, smiling; "a child who can take chairs and tables so warmly to her heart may love the world as readily."

"Not so," pleaded grandmamma; "Lizzie is so tender-hearted, she will easily be led, easily guided upon the right way."

"She has a tolerably strong will with her tender heart," replied her husband.

The attention of the grandparents was now directed to the child herself, who had commenced a lively

altercation with the somewhat older Emily von Reifenhagen.

"Please, Emily, let me have your garden hat," implored Lizzie.

"Where is your own?" asked Emily.

"I don't know," answered Lizzie, "but I want yours, because Uncle Karl is going to show me a lapwing's nest."

"You are such an untidy child," said Emily, with precocious wisdom, "I will not trust my hat to you."

"Pray, pray do, Emily. Uncle Karl will go perhaps, and I cannot find my own."

"No, if I give mine to you I shall have none for myself," maintained Emily.

"You can take mine, it is lying in the garden," said Lizzie, "and now I will take yours."

"No!" exclaimed Emily again: "you are so untidy, you will throw away my hat too."

Signs of anger and impatience flashed across Lizzie's little face. Once more she urged,

"But Uncle will go, and I want your hat."

"No, no, no," persisted Emily.

"Stupid old thing!" cried out Lizzie; then followed a box on the ear, and immediately upon that such a violent push that the astonished Emily lost her balance, and fell screaming to the ground.

At the beginning of the strife the grandmamma had risen, and would have interposed; but her hus-

band prevented her, and watched its progress attentively.

"There is the proof," said he now to his wife. "You were right, my Mary; decidedly you were never such a hot-headed child, and I cannot blame you if you are anxious about her."

The crying Emily was soon surrounded by a circle of authorities and non-authorities. Then followed a discipline scene, which was mild and short in consideration of the day. This little scene made no further impression, and the festival was celebrated in undisturbed joy, and closed with praise and thanks to God. After the holiday, they all left the Isle of Bliss. Each one took his own boat and went forth into the waves, with the hope of one day meeting again in some such tranquil resting-place.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRIVY-COUNSELLOR'S WIFE.

FOURTEEN years are passed. The world is greatly changed; good humour seems to be fairly banished, or it has assumed quite a different character. Every ~~one~~ is expected to be decided, and must range himself on the one side or the other.

There are changes, too, in the dear old house. The children are all dispersed and provided for; the parents are alone; births and deaths have brought joy and sorrow to the scattered family. The grand-parents have shared in the joy and sorrow, but from afar. Their hearts are become tranquil, even that of the grandmother; for the more she has lifted it upwards, the more she has learnt to be thankful, both for joy and sorrow: one thing has made both alike to overflow with gratitude and praise. Their whole family are seeking the only good, one member more earnestly than another, each one after his individuality and power; one more than another demanding, not the anxiety, but the intercession of the faithful pair.

It was a gloomy November day, the wind howled, gusts of snow and rain succeeded each other, and though it was scarcely four o'clock, twilight had set in. Frau Kuhneman, the wife of the privy-counsellor, stood at the window and looked thoughtfully at the gloomy sky, the grey houses and dirty streets. She was a fine stately woman; her dark hair was faultless, her colour still fresh, only her features as well as her figure had grown somewhat larger and coarser. She turned again from the window to her writing-table, on which lay a partly-finished letter and an open Bible. She had been writing and reading—reading, but with sighs—for she could neither collect her thoughts nor refresh her soul. Her conscience reproached her that she had not done it in the early morning, ere the labours and distractions of the day had laid hold upon her.

She had learnt the daily practice from her mother, had kept it up in her youth, and had endeavoured to fulfil the promise she had made never to neglect it. That she sometimes did this, made her heart heavy, though she found many excuses and reasons for it.

“A wife and mother is often interrupted for necessary exertions; she cannot avoid them, nay, she may not; and in many cases the fulfilling of her duty is a better service to God than the reading of the Bible. Besides, the devotion which the master of the house conducts before breakfast really suffices for the whole day.”

"But," pleaded conscience, "if you have not had time or thought for your own short devotions, you are usually distracted at the family prayers, and then no blessing rests upon the day, no tranquil season follows, and the real blessing of prayer is lost." So it had been with her to-day; her heart was sore, and life pressed upon her heavily.

She resumed her letter to her sister Julia:—"It is not always so, but at times I feel how heavily this town-life weighs upon me, and not on me alone but on our whole family. You can do as you will, you are a queen in your country-house, and can regulate your life as you please. I cannot do that; I live in a circle of small anxieties that seem to bind me in ever-narrowing limits. I see you smile; you fancy if we would ignore these cares they would no longer exist. But you are greatly mistaken, dear sister. Your husband's post is an independent one—no one overlooks him—he is a little king in his own kingdom. My husband, on the contrary, has relations with his colleagues; he is bound to have intercourse with them. This very obligation takes us more into the world than we wish; and, ah! there are a hundred little threads branching from this obligation that make the net ever narrower and more complicated. That these little threads should increase, with the growing up of the children, is natural. At this very moment I have a great conflict before me. Elizabeth is invited to her

first ball, and if we would not be uncourteous we must go ; my husband can neither ignore his position, nor the many obligations that devolve upon him in consequence of it. I do not wish the ball for Elizabeth, and yet I do not think I ought to refuse it, for, she is, with the best will, very unfinished. And do you not think something is due to my husband's family ? You would not believe how difficult it is to counteract the influence of both aunts with the children, especially with Elizabeth. They love her so fondly, she is really the pride and joy of their solitary lives, and I should be ungrateful if I were to deny that they have taken the greatest pains and thought for her education, and assisted us in many other ways. You think perhaps, again, it is not necessary for a girl to know so much ; but, dear Julia, we must to some extent yield to the demands of the times, and we owe it to our children to educate them according to their station. I own I feel to-day as though a wheel were turning in my head. It is only when I think of my youth—of our life at home—the pure, joyous atmosphere that pervaded our house, that I understand the full happiness of a mother. Does that sound like a reproach to my husband ? Ah, no ! He is kind and good, but he has no time to spend with me and the children ; and if, after the duties of his calling, and the necessary intercourse with his colleagues, a few hours remain, he is not always in the mood to deal in the wisest manner with the children.

And so it is with me, I must confess to my sorrow. I have ever to be planning and studying to keep the household in good style—the household of a man high in position without property. You cannot judge what that involves.”

Here the writer was interrupted. The front-door bell rang, a carriage stopped, and two ladies followed the announcement of the servant.

“We are come to pass an hour of the twilight with you, dear Elise,” said the elder lady.

Elise greeted her aunt Reifenhagen, and Emily, now a young lady of twenty, with great warmth. The general, her aunt’s husband, had within the last few weeks been ordered to Berlin, and Elise had rejoiced greatly at the tidings, for she hoped to find in her good and thoroughly consistent aunt a friend who would help her through the labyrinths of a town life. At the same time it was perfectly clear to her that her family relations would become more perplexing than ever, as there would henceforth be obligations on this side; and if her gentle, affectionate aunt, could never cause her annoyance, there was something in Emily’s finely-cut mouth, her dignified bearing, and her great decision of character, that inspired her with occasional dread.

“Where is Elizabeth?” asked Emily eagerly.

“She is taking her English lesson,” answered Elise.

"Elizabeth was confirmed at Easter. I thought all studies ceased then," remarked Emily laughingly.

"I would it were so," replied Elise, with a sigh.

"These lessons are terribly expensive; but Elizabeth would get quite out of practice if they were given up, as she has no other opportunity of speaking English."

"But why should she study English so zealously?" asked the kind Aunt innocently.

"It is necessary for a finished education," answered Elise quickly.

Emily would have replied, but her mother interrupted the conversation. She spoke of her present arrangements, of labours accomplished, and of her new abode, which already began to feel like home. Then, with great warmth, she expressed a wish for the most intimate and motherly intercourse with Elise; to which Emily added, with perfect sincerity, that she, too, was rejoiced to be so much nearer to her relations. Elise was touched at these kindly advances; and softened and depressed by her previous feelings, she was on the point of opening her heart to her Aunt, as she had done to her sister Julia, when the bell again rang, and immediately after two ladies entered the apartment. The guests who had arrived so malapropos were the sisters of the privy-counsellor, Aunt Paula and Aunt Wina, as they were called in the family. Elise introduced her sisters-in-law to her aunt. Emily

had previously made their acquaintance during a long summer visit at Woltheim ; it was clear, therefore, to both parties, that no insurmountable obstacles stood in the way of their friendship. The aunts, moreover, were too well-bred not to be perfectly polite and agreeable. Beyond this they were too much occupied with their own affairs to-day to pay much heed to these strange new-comers to their dear family circle.

"We are come on toilette affairs, dear Elise," began Aunt Wina; "this sudden invitation must have taken you somewhat aback, and we are come to offer our help."

~~"It is not quite certain that we shall go,"~~ replied Elise, drawing back.

"Do not surpass others in absurd crotchets, I implore you," exclaimed Wina. "What is to become of Elizabeth? You have treated her as a child quite long enough. Her appearance in the world is universally expected this winter."

"In the world!" said Elise, with slight irritation.

"I merely used the first expression that came," replied Wina. "I know very well that you do not live in the world, nor is it our wish to do so. We should be the last to drag our bright blooming Elizabeth into a whirl that would be alike dangerous for soul and body; but an occasional party—a family ball—what harm can they do her?"

"One must not be strict over-much," remarked

Aunt Paula; "here a young girl must have some pleasure, and Elizabeth is so fond of dancing."

"Dear innocent child!" chimed in Wina, "let her spring about, and be merry."

"One can be that without going to a ball," remarked Emily, somewhat satirically.

"Oh yes! tastes are different," replied Wina, with a certain sharpness; "it would never occur to us to decide how far this or that taste was natural or unnatural."

"The natural taste of most young girls would lead them to a ball," observed Emily, tranquilly; "we owe it to our education when we do not yield to our natural inclinations."

Wina flushed crimson; Madame Reifenhagen gave a warning glance to Emily, and Elise now took up the conversation.

"Dear Emily, you and my sisters-in-law would not quite understand each other. You know that I am quite of your opinion; and the dear Aunts," she added, playfully, "are come to teach me better. Learn, I certainly shall not," she continued, seriously, but with some embarrassment; "yet I see beforehand, that this once, after all our struggles, we must yield to the wishes of our friends. The consequences of any want of consideration, or unfriendliness to his colleagues, would be equally unpleasant to my husband and myself. I trust it may only happen this once. Having

shown this complaisance, we can better arrange for the future—from this time, Elizabeth shall go more frequently to her grand-parents."

"I suppose you will first ask the poor victim's consent?" remarked Wina, with bitterness.

"Elizabeth is only too happy at Woltheim," replied her mother, hastily; "she has been more there than here. You must know, too, dear Aunt," she continued, turning to the latter, "this is only a family-ball at Counsellor von Bauer's, my husband's nearest colleague."

"Is he an intimate acquaintance?" asked her Aunt, gently.

"Not exactly," said Elise, in slight confusion.

"And now we are come here," interrupted Wina, quickly, "to decide how the dear child is to be dressed, we cannot allow any one but ourselves to give Elizabeth her first ball-dress. We are both agreed upon the material—white crape. Nothing is so soft and flowing. But what colour will go best with it? I am for sky-blue. Despite her brown eyes and hair, Elizabeth is very fair, for *her* complexion that exquisite colour is the most becoming!"

"Ponceau would be more piquant!" exclaimed Paula.

"I leave all these toilette considerations to you," remarked Elise, smiling; "it is a matter of indifference to me whether you choose blue or ponceau."

"Not so, dear Elise," asserted Wina; "nothing can be a matter of indifference to a mother: it is Elizabeth's first entrance into the world, and that is often an important event for the whole life."

"Do you really think that the decision between red or blue will have any influence upon Elizabeth's fate?" asked Emily, who had been silent up to this time, not from ill-humour, as Aunt Wina believed, but from fear lest these ladies should provoke her into speaking hastily. "It cannot be of so much importance."

"My dear Emily, I speak from experience," replied Wina sharply; "and that at least you have n

"And I leave the choice of red or blue entirely to you," said Elise, in a conciliatory tone; "and so the affair is settled."

"Dear Elise," exclaimed Aunt Paula, turning good-naturedly to the wife of the general, "she has enough to do with her six children. We would willingly come often and help her, but she will not allow us."

Elise sighed and was silent; she could not well say, "Your presence would be more burdensome to me than my work." And Aunt Paula continued,

"Does she not look somewhat exhausted? But I know for the last three nights she has not been in bed before one; she has been making the little girls' jackets."

"Why do you do that?" asked Frau von Reifenhagen, in a slightly reproachful tone.

"Because, my dear Aunt," replied Elise, a dress-maker's charge is ten silver groschen a-day, and with her there would be additional expense, which I must avoid. But I must frankly own I am a little exhausted; my nerves will never bear late hours."

"It is sad to have weak nerves," said her Aunt, sympathisingly; "one is so easily depressed."

"Yes," replied Elise, "one cannot be so fresh and cheerful with the children as one might and ought to be."

"My dear Elise," began Emily, in a very lively but still kind manner, "I would discontinue Elisabeth's English lessons, and with the money thus saved you could pay the dress-maker."

"When you have a mother's duties to fulfil," observed Elise with a certain self-complacency, "you will think differently."

"Certainly not," continued Emily. "I should think it a sin to weaken my nerves, and make myself incapable of being fresh and gladsome."

"A few nights' watching will not injure the nerves," remarked Wina; "much depends on the constitution and other causes."

"My mother must have had excellent nerves," said Elise; "I cannot remember that she was ever otherwise than bright and cheerful with us, and it was the same with my father."

"I think Emily is right," observed Frau von Reifenhagen. "Your mother would not have sat up by night that she might be able to afford expensive English lessons; nor," she added, after a pause, "would your father have permitted it."

Elise was silent because Aunt Wina took on herself the reply. With glowing cheeks and great zeal she represented the difference of circumstances, and the whole life in Woltheim and Berlin. Happily, at this moment the front-door opened, and in a few minutes Elizabeth entered the room. She was certainly very pretty. Her clear hazel eyes beamed with joy and kindness. Her slight figure was full of life and motion, and her whole being was glad and innocent as that of a child. She embraced her great-aunt and Emily warmly, and then her aunts, but with less respect.

"We have chosen your ball-dress," began Aunt Wina.

"If you please," replied Elizabeth, "I will choose that myself."

"Gently, Elizabeth," reasoned her mother; "your aunts mean to make you a present of it."

"Oh, how kind!" exclaimed Elizabeth; and the aunts began a new discussion on the white crape.

"Sky-blue, or ponceau?"

"I consent to the white crape," said Elizabeth condescendingly; "but I shall wear corn-flowers with it, I like them so very much."

"The child is right," observed Aunt Wina, smiling; "sky-blue is rather sentimental, and ponceau too decided: this deep blue is just the right thing."

The conversation was in danger of again becoming prolix, when her mother sent Elizabeth to order tea, and her aunts, who did not feel quite at ease in the society of Frau von Reifenhagen and her daughter, rose to take leave. They had, in all haste, many little parting words to whisper to their favourite niece, and her mother warned her not to be too much bent on the ball, as her father had not yet decided. Thereupon Elise was alone with her aunt and Emily. Her ~~new~~es were not strengthened by the last visit; indeed, she was so depressed, that she could no longer refrain from opening her heart to her aunt.

The latter sat sorrowfully by, and said to herself— "Ah! that thou wert either cold or hot! Alas! for this fashionable Christianity; this hearing of faithful preachers, and Bible-reading, and family prayers—this fulness of Christian knowledge—these unceasing conflicts with the world, and unrest in house and heart!"

"I am very glad," said Elise, in a faltering voice, "that you have had some insight into our family life. I have had these conflicts ever since I have been married, but I think they were not so trying while my husband's parents were living as they are now, when both aunts lay claim to Elizabeth so warmly."

"I can imagine that," said her Aunt, with much interest.

"Although our views are so different," continued Elise, "family considerations compel me to associate with them."

"Of course," replied her Aunt. "But"——

"But what?" asked Elise, earnestly.

"You must hearken to God rather than man," replied her Aunt.

"If one could only decide always what one ought to do!" observed Elise, sighing. "But there are conflicts where one really cannot tell."

"If you love God sincerely and earnestly, ask for wisdom. He will never leave you in doubt," replied her Aunt, tenderly.

Elise was silent. Conscience told her that she often heard the voice of the Lord plainly, but had not the strength to follow it.

"So much depends upon truth," continued her Aunt; "we must be true in little things. Are we not commanded that our life and household should be guided by the Word of God only? Let us be faithful to what we are taught. You had pious parents, and a Christian training; you have knowledge of God's Word, and yearnings for something better than what the world can offer; what hinders you from living up to your knowledge, and following these yearnings? What hinders you? Family considerations? The duties

of your position? No; you cannot put them forward. Would you venture to come before your Lord with such excuses?"

Elise was silent, and her Aunt continued,

"Think, dear Elise: if you knew that you should die in three months, should you then decide to take your young daughter into a world full of perils, where you knew she could win nothing? I put it in the lightest way—the probability lies on the other side, that she would lose much. Yes, if you knew yourself to be so nigh death, would you work half through the night, robbing yourself thus of all energy and power to live with your family according to your own heart's wish and duty, merely to give Elizabeth the chance of learning English, and at the same time to dress your children well, which, investigated closely, you would perhaps find you were doing from mere worldly considerations?"

Elise looked steadily at her Aunt, while tears filled her eyes.

"This unhappy town-life burdens me," she said with emotion. "Oh! if I could live as Julia, how happy I should be!"

"What prevents you?"

"Our whole circle of acquaintance"

"In what respect?"

"I must clothe myself and my children in the style of their circle; my husband must associate with

his colleagues ; we must, if ever so seldom, return these parties. Some of our acquaintances have no difficulty in doing this, because they are rich, and others do it from the same considerations as ourselves."

"And you mutually make life a burden?" observed her Aunt. "Dear Elise," she continued, with unwonted earnestness, "life is exactly as we look upon it; our own idea gives it its colour and character. If you have brought up your children to be elegant and fashionable, you feel a certain satisfaction; you take pride in them, and think people will praise and admire them, and that is pleasant and flattering. If, on the contrary, you have brought up your children as simply as possible, not according to the fashion, but after your own good taste and right principles, you will find a public also to love and admire, and there is no question which public is the dearest to us."

Elise smiled and sighed.

"You must know, dear Elise," continued her Aunt, "I speak from experience. I once made for myself a world of trivial cares, that robbed me of my happiness and peace. In our first little garrison town, our only society was that of officers, and the nobility in the neighbourhood. That we had no property, was well known; but I was determined, both as regarded the education of the children and the arrangements of the household, to keep pace with the nobility. When we were alone, and with closed doors, I did the meanest

work, in order to economise. I was very frugal, and denied the children many innocent pleasures, always to economise. For instance, I never bought them fresh fruit in summer, the making of preserves and jellies cost so much; but that was necessary. I must vie with the ladies of my acquaintance. That I was regarded by the whole circle of our acquaintance as a wonderful manager, and most excellent wife and mother, was sufficient compensation. That I infringed on really good order in a hundred ways to keep up an outward appearance; that, exhausted with labour and anxiety, I gave unkind answers to the children's harmless questions, and was but too often an impatient and unwise mother, I could not hide from myself. I had knowledge enough, and really the best will to struggle against my faults. My poor children suffered the most. To be glad and innocent as a child with them, to care for their inner welfare, and the gladdening of their little world, I had really no time. The anxiety what we should eat and drink, and wherewithal we should be clothed, and, above all, the effort to keep up the good style of our establishment, laid claim to my whole thoughts. These cares I usually shook off in society; there I was bright and agreeable, and entertaining; but my children had nothing of this. The very counterpart of that which I describe to you, you will find in thousands of families in our cultivated class. They live for this world, and

earn the sorrow and unrest of this world. I tormented myself thus, till a severe illness brought me to my right mind. Oh! dear Elise," said her Aunt, deeply moved, "I felt myself on the brink of the grave. I saw my children forsaken, sorrowful, heavy-hearted, and the deception of my life weighed upon my soul. It pleased God to restore me to health again. With what overflowing love did I embrace my children! how clearly did I now see my vocation! how clearly the sin of my past life, which my acquaintances had flattered me was so excellent! With my convalescence began a new life in our house, with which my beloved husband was only too well pleased. Yes, I believe in these frivolous little cares women are chiefly entangled; how easily might they induce their husbands, who find so much constraint in the duties of their various vocations, to throw aside these heavy fetters in their own houses, if, instead of seeking the society of acquaintances mainly invited for appearance sake, they prepared for them the real enjoyment of a peaceful and joyous family life."

Though Elise was much moved by her Aunt's relation, she could not altogether yield to her. She believed she held the truth, and that her whole household would bear testimony to it.

"Dear Aunt, I assure you, all this presents no difficulty to me; we really live in a Christian circle."

Her Aunt nodded, but looked somewhat dubious.

"But family relations," continued Elise, eagerly; "these two Aunts—Oh! you cannot imagine the difficulties."

"Have the Aunts other intimate associates beside yourselves?" asked Emily, who up to this time had kept a modest silence.

"They have more acquaintances than we have," replied Elise; "but in some respects they belong to our circle."

"There are balls, then, in this circle?" asked Emily further.

"The Bauers are not our intimate friends," answered Elise; "we only invite each other to large parties; you cannot quite avoid large parties and balls. My Uncle must have been obliged, as head of his regiment, to give parties and balls."

"Parties, certainly," replied Emily, quickly, "but he was not obliged to take his daughters to balls."

"Dear Elise," said her Aunt, taking up the conversation more softly, "it would have been a mournful thought to me that my beloved child, whom I bore upon my soul, whom I would have shielded from the poisonous wind that has blighted so many fair flowers, must dance with men whose very character excluded them from our family circle. This cannot be avoided, if we dance in strange circles. I do not say that every girl must be injured who goes to a ball—experience tells us to the contrary. Nor will I say that

we can or must keep our children altogether excluded from such society. I would earnestly warn any one"—and here she glanced involuntarily at Emily—not to judge too harshly of all in this same society; but our life must manifest that we serve only one Master, and our chosen acquaintances must be of the same principles as ourselves. We must watch and pray that the world may not gain on us, and be true in the smallest things. We may not depart from this truth one single moment; for God himself blesses the faithfulness of such a mind; and with such a one, we can be more tranquil, both for ourselves and our children, if chance, or the duties of our calling, take us to a worldly circle against our will, though this latter will seldom happen to us. For the more decidedly we act, the more easily are all difficulties surmounted, even those connected with society. People will not stay long in a house where they do not feel themselves at ease, and there can be no true ease where there is the mutual effort to be interesting and amiable. The interest and love of friends does not depend on a day; and the lady of the house can talk of her preserved fruits, or dress, or other little details so long as it pleases her guests. The interest stretches far over these trivial matters; the true interest is the pleasure of being together—joy, peace, mutual gratification."

"I trust, dear Aunt, you will find all this in our circle," observed her niece, a little vexed.

"Elise," said her Aunt, now more solemnly, "a mother who takes her daughter to a ball, because she is still hesitating between God and the world, because she cannot break loose from the vanities, and cares, and considerations that belong to this world alone, —who, to speak plainly, ceases to pray for her" —

"Oh! Aunt," exclaimed Elise passionately, "how can you be so severe?"

"If a mother prays, 'Lord lead not my child into temptation!' is it not a mockery if she herself takes her there?"

"How many innocent young girls dance, and are not in the least injured by it?" replied Elise.

"You think, then, that intercession for innocent young girls is unnecessary, though the greatest temptations that innocent young girls can have are to be found at these balls?"

"Do you maintain that dancing is altogether forbidden?" interrupted Elise. "Yet Luther himself allowed it. I can show you passages where he speaks of it. Indeed, I can almost repeat them verbally."

Her Aunt would have spoken, but Elise eagerly continued,

"The same may be said of dancing as of dress; it brings much incitement to sin if indulged in without rule or moderation; but inasmuch as it is a custom among young people who aim at marriage, if it is maintained with modesty and only for joy, it is

not to be condemned. Haughty saints may not make sinners of others on this head, provided only it be not abused.' He says also: 'Where conducted with modesty, I leave to marriage its rights, and dance always. Faith and love will not be danced out. Young children dance without sin. Do thou likewise become a child, and dancing will not hurt thee.' "

Elise quoted this in a tone of triumph, and her Aunt listened quietly, not without a few glances at Emily, who seemed to grow uneasy. At length she remarked,

"I am quite of one mind with Luther. We do not condemn dancing itself; but think, whether Luther would have approved of joining people of the world and unbelievers! and dancing with them."

"Dear Aunt, we do not visit with worldly people and unbelievers!" exclaimed Elise quickly.

"Ask yourself with all sincerity," replied her Aunt tranquilly, "what induces you to go to this ball. You must acknowledge that you are taking your daughter into the world without any necessity, and counteracting entirely, by this very deed, the Christian education you pledged yourself with watching and prayer to grant her. When Luther speaks of dancing, he is thinking of weddings, and family festivals in little friendly circles. At your parents' Silver Wedding we all danced, it was the outward expression our joy took, and no one's conscience would

have reproached him for it. Just so in our own house, and among our immediate friends, we have been accustomed to dance on festive days. The young men whom we allowed to dance with our daughters were such as we liked and respected, and we elders looked with pleasure on the amusement of the young ones, who certainly danced gladly, and according to the mind of Luther. But even in this with difference—one with more pleasure than another. Emily here," she added, smilingly, "has never danced. We neither regard it as a matter of praise or reproach; it is the same as when one maiden shows more inclination to marriage, another to a cloistral life, or as among our evangelic maidens, a life of devotion to some earnest purpose. The apostle speaks quite plainly on this head; all depends on their inward call. One is serious from her childhood, another joyous; the main thing is, and always will be, that we give our whole souls to God; that we turn away from, and utterly abjure the world's aims and inclinations, customs and joys; that we resolve, not only in words, but in our whole life, to be the children of God and of His kingdom, and never barter our peace and happiness for this poor miserable world of shows. And oh!" continued her Aunt, more warmly, "where God has given children there should be no other joys or intercourse sought than with his people. I say sought, because there are many gentle souls who will be attracted by the warm rays of

light in such a family-life. If a family-life with little children is true and conscientious before God—if the children grow up in a house where the soul has light and life and joy, then the self-same life when they are older will naturally take a form quite different to that of the world around. Such children do not require the joys of the world; they find daily and hourly something better at home; they feel so contented and happy there, that the thought never occurs to them that they must be taken into a world of folly. The proposal would come before them as something strange, if not comic. All this does not prevent our teaching our children (and, of course, setting them first the good example) of caring for our neighbour who is in that world; of loving and helping him, yes, of helping him gladly and lovingly as a friend who is yet in the world."

Elise was silent. She felt the truth of the representation only too forcibly. It was the true picture of her youth, of her own life in her parent's house. The remembrance of it was the thorn that ever pierced her heart, and allowed her to find no satisfaction, no peace, in spite of her household activity from morning to night. She sought the ground of her unrest and constant anxiety, of the little blessing that rested on her family life, so willingly in the town residence. Once, when she had mourned over its necessity in the last autumn to her mother, the latter had answered, "Do

you think, then, that the peace of God, and the way to happiness and joy, and sweet communion with Him, is denied to the poor citizen ? Oh, no ! ”

“ Wait not some future hour, some change within thy lot,
It had been other now, if God had seen it well,
Dream not of what might be, if *this* or *that* befell,
But raise thy heart to heav’n, for here true rest is not
Seek in the hope of that bright joy thy only rest !
Be sparing in thy pleasures, though thou sow in tears
Till that eternity, the greater now thy fears,
Thy stern self-discipline, the more thou wilt be blest,
The greater then thy joy Ah ! strive with soul and might,
Pray ever, ‘ Draw me from the world, my Guide, my Light
Let not my footsteps from that heav’nward path e’er stray,
Nor let me for one moment linger on my way ’ ”

“ If this appears severe and bitter to you,” her mother had said, “ be sure that your heart belongs not to the Lord, but to the world. The unrest, the sting in your heart, is the answer to my supplication for my poor dear child.” The mother had ended with tears.

Elise had wept with her, and had made a covenant with her of mutual prayer, that was to be offered in the early morning hour. Despite these prayers, her words were very different. Sometimes she thought,

“ My mother was right, and a blessing rests upon her earthly life.” Then again : “ If my mother had been obliged to live in a large city, it would have been very different with her. She cannot judge ; it certainly must be possible to keep the same standard in many and different ways of life.”

Her Aunt had now opposed that view in her whole conversation, and Elise could no longer bring forward

her town-life as an excuse, because her Aunt lived in similar, perhaps more difficult circumstances than her own.

Dissatisfied and embarrassed, she remarked with agitated voice, "the ball that led to our question has already cost my husband as well as myself conflicts, but we have tranquillized ourselves with Luther's opinion."

"You cannot so misunderstand Luther," urged her Aunt once more. "If you had his writings at hand, I would show you with what severity he speaks of 'public dancing,' and to such your ball belongs—what he says of the innumerable sins that have their origin in this—and how particularly he is opposed to the practices of the world. I remember one passage perfectly—'The world is ever the world,' he says. 'An evil world the enemy of God. We must not seek to live in the world, and to please God too; that is adding one sin to another. We see the wrath of God—still we laugh and sport—are merry and of good cheer, as if we were in no peril, and all our deeds were good and costly things.' Dear Elise, I warn you to-day all the more earnestly, because if you once allow Elizabeth to begin, you will have great difficulty in drawing her back; this occasion will bring on a multitude of others, and if you have not the courage to make a stand now, you will never have it."

"Would not Elizabeth, too, err if she thought it

consistent with her Christian training?" added Emily gently.

At that moment Elizabeth entered, carrying some most delicately cut bread-and-butter and cake, and a servant followed with the tea-kettle and other accessories.

"Now, I must entertain you, dear ones," said she, smiling. "It is so delicious to drink tea at this time, that I would always have it if it depended on me. I usually go for a walk before twilight sets in, but I like it so much to be stormy and dreary as it is now; it makes the warm room so enjoyable."

"The pleasure of the tea you can always have," said her mother, smiling. "It would not be difficult for you to manage that."

"It would not do, Mamma," answered Elizabeth; "the little ones seldom leave me in peace; and in our house we are rarely quiet."

"Come and see me very often," said Emily. "We shall have tea together, and reading and music. I have my kingdom to myself, because I am the youngest child."

"Delightful, dear Emily! I will come," exclaimed Elizabeth, embracing her cousin as heartily as she had once clasped the chairs and tables. "I cannot come for a few days," added she thoughtfully. "To-morrow and the next day I shall be at school with my Aunts dress-making, and then comes the ball."

Elizabeth was too observant not to remark the expression of her mother, to whom this last sentence was not pleasant.

"Dear Aunt," she began, with comic seriousness, "pray do not dissuade Mamma from going to the ball. I am so much delighted with it."

"I have already spoken against it," replied her Aunt gently.

"And I promise you," interposed Emily, "glorious tea-drinkings the whole winter through, if you will give it up."

"Oh! darling Emily," laughed Elizabeth, "let me have the ball first, and the glorious tea-drinkings after. Dear Aunt," said she, audaciously turning to the latter, "perhaps you are not aware that in Berlin it is the fashion for the faithful to frequent balls, concerts, and theatres?"

"You are a silly child, Elizabeth," said her mother angrily, and the aunt plainly saw that it would do no good to begin the conversation again. She inquired for the younger children, and asked to see them. Elizabeth instantly left the room with Emily, and both returned bringing in a boy of five, and two little girls somewhat older. A few minutes after, Fritz and Karl entered, both gymnasiasts, who studied in their father's room, and their kind Aunt and Emily soon engaged them in a pleasant and lively conversation.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE BALL.

THERE was great excitement at the Kuhnemans the afternoon before the ball, especially in the children's room. To go to a ball was something so wonderful, little Charlotte could not comprehend it.

"Is Elizabeth going to a ball?" said she, shaking her head; "it must be a very large ball?"

"Oh, no!" replied the somewhat older Mary, "it is only a family-ball."

"A family-ball! but does it roll about?"

A universal shout of laughter was Charlotte's answer.

"A ball is a very large party," said Mary, anxious to enlighten her.

"And because the people dance and spring about among each other topsy-turvy, it is called a ball?" continued Fritz.

Wonderful images seemed to pass before the eyes of little Charlotte; she gazed very earnestly at her elder sister.

"I cannot imagine why Elizabeth should have had dancing lessons, and we not," began Karl, a merry, clever boy, with whom his parents were not always quite satisfied.

"Because you are stupid boys," replied Elizabeth sportively.

"You will dance with gentlemen to-night, who were stupid boys once, if they are not so still," replied Karl.

"Hush!" said Elizabeth, "you heard from Papa that Herr von Bauer has invited some of grandpapa's cuirassiers from Braunhausen?"

"Cuirassiers!" asked Charlotte, more astonished than ever.

"Yes, a whole regiment," answered Karl.

"But, Elizabeth," began Charlotte in a warning tone, "why do you go where there is a ball, and soldiers too?"

"Charlotte is afraid they will take Elizabeth prisoner," exclaimed Karl.

Charlotte nodded, and again Mary explained. "They are friends, and Papa and Mamma are going, and will bring Elizabeth back with them."

Fritz, the eldest brother, a very sensible and good boy, much resembling his grandfather, whose name he bore, approached his sister and said: "I cannot think, Elizabeth, how you can go so willingly to this ball. Would you have believed it at Easter?"

He reminded her of Easter, because they had then

been confirmed together; they had been previously instructed by a most earnest minister, and Elizabeth, with her warm feelings, had been greatly touched. But whatever she had gained from that promising confirmation, and a long residence with her grandparents, she was in great peril of losing, with her self-indulgent æsthetic aunts, and her wavering mother.

"My parents are going with me," said Elizabeth in an under tone.

"They would be very glad if you said you could not go," continued Fritz.

Elizabeth looked at him thoughtfully.

"Even if you said it now," he urged, quickly.

"Yes, yes," cried Karl, "and with the money the carriage would cost, and the servants' fees, I will fetch a heap of ginger-bread nuts and sweets, and we will all play together."

"Yes, yes," shouted the children, "that would be much nicer."

"Don't be so foolish, children," said Elizabeth, crossly; "just think of the aunts, and my white crape dress with the blue trimmings."

The uproar was calmed, and Elizabeth slipped away to the sitting-room, where she was alone. She sat down to the piano, without playing, for her heart was heavy. This ball, that had been represented to her by the aunts as something so suitable and innocent, had given her many anxious thoughts already,

though she had not allowed them to be perceived; but now, Fritz's allusion to Easter had brought them out of all equilibrium. What, had she not vowed at Easter! had she not then given her whole heart to her Saviour! and that was so happy, so exquisitely happy, she had never been able to speak of it to any one but to her grandmamma. To her who understood so well how to move the heart, she had talked of it; and her grandmamma had felt such deep interest.

"Oh! if grandmamma knew that I was going to a ball," she thought, "to dance about with officers, as Mary said, she would be so grieved, so sorrowful."

She took a music-book, sat before it again in silence; then striking a few chords, sang—

"Lord, I love Thee! Lord, I love Thee!
Saviour, from my heart I love Thee!
Let me ne'er, by false love blinded,
Stray from Thee; but, constant minded,
From all false and vain love sever.
This shall be my plea for ever,
Lord, I love Thee! Lord, I love Thee!
Saviour, from my heart I love Thee!"

No, she could sing no more. She felt too deeply, the Lord would not hearken to her. How could she sing—

"From all false and vain love sever,"

when she was even now unfaithful in purpose? "Dear Lord," she added, sighing, I will never again yield. This once I must wear my Aunt's present, but keep me still, and pardon me. Oh! let me be finally blessed!"

Tears dropped upon her hands; she scarcely ventured to pray, scarcely knew what to pray for; but she still longed to give her heart to God, and she sat weeping, and swaying to and fro as the slight reed. At that moment she would have given up the ball, if any one had helped her. While the daughter with yearning heart was weeping above, her mother was shedding the bitterest tears in the cabinet below. She did not exactly know what was passing in the heart of her child, but she had prayed so often, and so earnestly, for her children, and for this fast growing-up one especially; and now, like a flash of lightning, passed through her soul the meaning of her song—

“Lord, I love Thee! Lord, I love Thee!”

She would love the Lord, would willingly renounce all vain love; and an unfaithful mother was her hindrance! How can a praying mother's heart cherish so much vanity? Thy daughter is so beautiful, it whispers; must she blossom in concealment? She may gain earthly happiness, without neglecting the heavenly. There are so many excellent people in society; why should not thy beloved child be chosen by one such? Of course an estimable one—one would not consent to any other. Where can a girl learn to know men, but in society? If a mother's heart is ashamed of such thoughts, and will not give them room, the temptation approaches on another side. How is a

daughter to be cultivated, but by intercourse with others? how else can she learn to be firm and independent? Narrowness and self-will are faults that are best conquered by intercourse with others—strangers and superior men more especially. In our position, too, it is only right to introduce a daughter to the world; it would be sad indeed if she were not stable enough to overcome its perils. Such worldly wisdom will avenge itself. No! mother-heart, thou canst not even pray for thy daughter, if thou dost not believe—if thou art not happy in the full assurance that the Lord, who has numbered each hair of her head, will lead her to her chosen husband (if it be for her weal), without thy foresight and human thought; and that thy child will be self-possessed, reasonable and cultivated, without the means to which mere worldly wisdom would prompt. God can devise means, if only thou art true to Him. With so much folly and motherly vanity in thy heart, thou dardest not pray to Him for help. Dost thou not believe that the faults thou art hiding in thy heart, so carefully hiding, will be punished by thy children? Yes, it is very wonderful and mysterious, thou mayest by thy conversation and teaching jealousy and skilfully conceal thy secret faults, but they will be manifest to thy children. That is the curse upon the worldly spirit; it is never cast out by fair words. The children know not how it is in the heart of their mother, their knowledge and understand-

ing may lead them to judge favourably, and yet they feel something presses upon their own spiritual life. And so with the godly spirit, if it dwells calmly and secretly in the heart, and has deep root there, it will manifest itself without many words or dogmas, and will bring down mysterious blessings on those around it. If a mother's heart can pray right earnestly against this hidden vanity, that so often assumes a fair appearance; if it can cheerfully say—'I do not ask for my children the advantages of this world—I care not that they should be clever, or beautiful, excellent or superior in its eyes—that my sons should have distinguished careers, or that my daughters should marry; I only ask that Thou, O Lord! wouldst look upon them, that Thou wouldst give them Thy peace and favour here, and one day everlasting bliss'—so meek and lowly a mother-heart will be to her children the best defence against vanity and worldly pleasure. It will have, moreover, the full experience of that truth: 'Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you'—that is, all that is necessary, will be given you, and children whose tastes have never been excited for worldly pleasures, will estimate them by quite another measure than the children of this world."

Elizabeth's mother was familiar with all these thoughts; they were the most deeply-rooted opinions, the heart's desires of her own dear mother; and it was

the mysterious influence of a true mother's heart that would not let her be tranquil amid the temptations of her town life and family circle.

She wept now—she wept for herself and her children ; for before she heard Elizabeth's song, attracted by the merry laughter of the children, she had also heard the conversation about the soldiers, Karl's proposal to buy sweetmeats, and Elizabeth's answer to Fritz' warning—"My parents are going with me."

Her parents! The mother might take that entirely upon herself; for if she had wished it, her husband would readily have dispensed with Elizabeth's company, and her own too. In whatever concerned their family life, he assented most readily to the wishes of his wife, for he was quite devoted to her and to his children. This very evening he would far rather have had a merry game of play with them than have gone to the ball.

He had never felt that such society was injurious, because for him there was no danger in it.

That he somewhat overlooked his duties in his house, as head of his family, was the consequence of a certain ease and tranquillity in his nature, and of the manner in which he had regarded life from his youth. The interior conflicts that robbed his wife of her peace and happiness were unknown to him.

"Is it, then, so very difficult to be a conscientious

mother?" she asked herself sorrowfully. "I feel myself in a labyrinth from which I cannot escape, and I dare not betake myself to God."

At that moment the door-bell rang. She rose quickly, dried her eyes, and went into the sitting-room. Elizabeth had done the same, and both went into the hall together to receive the Aunts. Strange to say, before they had long talked with them, each felt as though her previous depression had been but a dream, the Aunts were so pleasant, and what they said sounded so simple and reasonable. Such is the power of the worldly spirit; it can make everything appear so smooth, and sensible, and agreeable, to the old Adam.

"I have been working at Elizabeth's dress till just now," said Aunt Wina. "Among other things, I have taken off all the trimmings, the dress is so much lighter, and more child-like without them. Our dress-maker is sadly deficient in taste. She makes a dress for a girl of eighteen as stiff and close-fitting as though she were forty, in spite of my lectures."

"Look," said Aunt Paula, enchanted, as her sister drew the white aerial-looking dress from the large basket, "is it not exquisite? is it not celestial?"

"It is at least very tasteful and simple, and exactly the style for Elizabeth," added Wina.

Elizabeth's eyes sparkled at the fascinating sight, but the mother looked with little interest on the Aunts' present.

Wina with her piercing dark eyes noticed this, and interpreted her silence in her own fashion. "How can any one be so changeable," she thought. "So absurd! She does not herself know what she wishes." And with the conviction of her own right and superiority, she took the opportunity of bringing forward, very decidedly, her own excellent principles. Finally she turned to her niece,

"And now, dear Elizabeth, I present you with your first ball-dress; enjoy it to your heart's content; for who should enjoy such things but the young? who but the young should be glad and free from care? Still, dear Elizabeth, you must be religious, and walk in God's ways; you must have your serious, thoughtful hours, but all in their proper season; and, as St Paul says, 'not out of season.'"

During this speech the mother stood upon burning coals, but she had no right to contradict it. "Walk sometimes in God's ways, and sometimes not," seemed to be her own motto. But she could bear this style of talking no longer; and, to Wina's great displeasure, she suddenly interrupted her by saying, "I have a violent headache to-day." It was no untruth; she had been suffering for the last hour.

"Poor Elise!" exclaimed the sympathizing Paula, "I saw that you were not quite yourself."

"Would you not rather stay at home?" asked Wina.

"Ah, no!" said Elise, with a slightly ironical smile, "for then the elegant ball-dress would have to stay too."

"You would not trust your daughter with us?" demanded Wina, sharply.

"I don't know," replied Elise; "you must think it natural that a mother should like to take her daughter to her first ball."

Both Aunts misunderstood their sister-in-law in the same way; they thought she wished to see the impression Elizabeth made on her first appearance.

"Quite!" replied Wina, with an expressive smile.

"Such a daughter, too!" added Paula, nodding.

The mother went to order the children's evening meal, the others to the nursery, where the dressing was to take place. To simplify the proceedings, the Aunts had come in their ordinary attire, and were to put on their state-dresses here. Wina, who was fully persuaded that this first ball ought to be a weighty occurrence in the life of her niece, an excellent opportunity for admonition and cultivation, resumed the interrupted conversation with the greatest zeal and dignity, and added to Paula's last words,

"I think this dear little daughter might be in some respects altered for the better."

Elizabeth looked at her steadily.

"Yes, Elizabeth," continued her Aunt, "I do not

like to see you look as you do now ; that steadfast gaze is too confident for a young girl."

" You should stand like a violet—modestly, with drooping head," added Paula.

" Yes, dear Elizabeth," continued Wina, solemnly, " remember that to-day you are making your first appearance in the world ; that many eyes will be directed towards you ; therefore I implore you to be reserved in words and appearance. A certain sparseness in words is more attractive than a great readiness to talk. You must be more composed, also, in your movements. I do not advocate stiffness ; but your liveliness must be restrained by a fine delicate bridle—liveliness should be graceful."

" I like to see a very young girl just a shade embarrassed," remarked Paula.

" You should send her to an actor," humourously but not ill-humouredly counselled Karl, who had sat till now silent in a corner.

" I beg your pardon, sir," said Wina, sharply. " I do not mean that she should *act* humility and modesty, but that she should have them in her heart. If she begins to practise them to-day, and puts some restraint upon herself, it will do her no harm."

Elizabeth held her head something higher, pouted, and said shortly, " I am what I am, and I shall be no other to-night."

" Indeed," exclaimed Wina, sharply ; " and is the opinion of the world nothing to you ? "

"Nothing at all!" replied Elizabeth, proudly.

"An excellent education, truly!" continued Wina, angrily. "In my time people would have been shocked at such a speech. Where will be the end of such folly, if the very children are taught to care nothing for the opinion of the world? On the contrary, children must learn from their infancy to put some restraint upon themselves; they must have their attention directed to those who are grown up, and must lay to heart their blame or commendation."

"What utter confusion of ideas!" thought Elizabeth and Fritz, and this time the latter came to his sister's aid, and said, very seriously, yet pleasantly,

"Dear Aunt, we are not taught to be indifferent to the opinion of good and pious people, but only to that of the world, which is a very different thing. One cannot learn too early to disregard the latter, and this has always been impressed upon us very earnestly in our religious instruction. Custom, and the fear of man, and respect for the world's judgment, have marred the happiness of thousands. Think, Aunt, how many thousands of men love the Lord Jesus, and would willingly serve Him, but for the fear of man, and such miserable considerations. Is it not the power of the devil that keeps up such considerations, that entices thousands to their eternal loss? So to yield to the opinion of the world, is to walk directly on the road to hell."

"Fritz, do not exaggerate," said Wina, crossly.

"I am not exaggerating, really," said the simple-hearted Fritz; "for we should not pay too much regard to the opinions even of pious men."

"Does your pastor teach you that?" asked Wina, scornfully.

"Certainly," continued Fritz. "So long as we regard the judgment of men, we shall have no true peace; for the best men are changeable in their opinions, and liable to err. We must take counsel with the Lord, whether a thing be right or wrong, and He will give the clearest answer to our prayers. And the result will be, if we regard only the judgment of the Lord, we shall enjoy not only peace, but the love of the good, as a necessary consequence."

Wina could say nothing against this; it was all too clear, and she had too much tact; moreover, she occasionally had moods in which she asserted something similar. She had a few phrases at command, very noble and high-sounding, but savouring of the very spirit of the world.

"Of course, Fritz," she began, "the consciousness of one's own well-doing, always brings peace."

"Aunt!" exclaimed Fritz. "Aunt! no Christian soul can have this consciousness—it would lead straight to hell."

"Don't be so absurd, Fritz," said his Aunt, crossly.

"I will clearly prove it to you," continued Fritz, in

all his school-boy zeal. "I will take the example our pastor gave us. Picture to yourself an upright child: he is diligent, he plays no foolish tricks, he is neat, does not cheat, does not lie."

"Is modest and polite?" added Wina.

"Yes, modest and polite," continued Fritz, "of very good manners, but only to strangers; to his parents, in spite of all his virtues, he is cold and ungrateful. To their love, of which he is the daily object, by which alone he lives, he is indifferent; he thinks more of learning and cleverness, and the attention of the guests who come to the house, than how to love his parents with his whole heart, and to repay them for all the kindness he receives from them. Think how detestable such a cold-hearted, thankless child would be, in spite of his virtues; and would it not be an unending sorrow for his parents to have such a child in the house? Would they not learn to dislike the very virtues that had so estranged the heart of their child from them? Would they not prefer a child who was less clever and polished, less diligent, and less particular about his dress, and therefore less admired by guests? If, on the other hand, he was one who dearly loved his parents—tried in every way to show his love for them—was thankful for every kindness—whose word would be—'Dearest parents, I do not deserve all your kindness, I can never return your favours, but I will always love you dearly, and for your sakes I will try to correct all my

faults;—now, just say, Aunt, would not such a child be much dearer than a self-righteous fellow, who would think, ‘People admire me, and say—I am a superior boy, why should not my parents be content?—I do not want their love and favour. The feeling that I am superior, gives me satisfaction and peace’—don’t you think such a fellow ought to be turned out of the house, till he comes to a better mind? And if, in his pride, his blindness to the love and tenderness of his parents (blindness is but the consequence of pride), he cannot bring himself to humility and repentance, and prayers for pardon, he must remain shut out. The father’s house is the kingdom of heaven, to which we were admitted in baptism, without any merit of our own, and in which we are kept by the love and grace of our Father alone. A child who feels this truth cannot say, ‘The feeling of my integrity contents me, but rather I must be dissatisfied and vexed with myself, because I am not as I would be. The good that I would do I leave undone, through idleness and carelessness, and the evil that I would not, I am often easily led into. Yet I am not unhappy, because my heavenly Father, of His grace, will make me happy eternally.’ Of His grace and pity He sent His only Son into the world, because there was no other way to redeem us from sin and death. This counsel of love is a mystery. As between parents and children there is a mystery of love which we never can grasp

or explain by our understanding, so there is a mighty mystery of love between the children of God and their Saviour, who has lived and died for them, and prepared for them a more gloriously ordered world than this visible one—even the life of everlasting bliss in His heavenly kingdom.”

Aunt Wina was utterly astonished at her learned nephew, but she did not allow it to be perceived—the less as her own wisdom had now come to an end.

“Of course,” she said, drily, “children must love their parents, but that does not exclude their being polite and attentive to their friends and relations. And now I must request the young gentlemen to leave the room, as we are going to dress.”

The request was promptly attended to; the work was begun, and with due ceremony ended. Of course, the carriage came too early. Papa knocked several times impatiently at the door. Elise was obliged, very decidedly, to bring the toilet to an end, and the ladies in their thin shoes rushed to take their places. The profound silence was unbroken during the ride. The mother had a headache; Aunt Wina was out of all patience at the absurd education of the youth of the present day; Aunt Paula was thinking how she could best break the unpleasant silence; and Elizabeth's heart had never beaten so fast as under her crape dress. The road led through the Zoological Gardens. She gazed thoughtfully on the tall trees that stretched

their grey leafless branches overhead, and made strange weird forms in the flickering lamp-light. "A few more minutes and I shall be in the ball-room," she thought, and a light feverish agitation ran through her nerves. It was natural that she should feel more excited than many other girls, as she had ever heard of a ball as something unusual and remote. Whether it were right or wrong, she was now completely in doubt. It was in no way consistent with her education and the principles that up to this time had been instilled into her; but her parents were going with her, so she tranquilized the heavy feelings in her soul, and held fast to the assertion of her Aunt: "Youth is the time to be merry; it can be serious, all the same, but everything in its season."

CHAPTER VII.

A DANGEROUS MAN.

THE doors of the ball-room were thrown open. The Mother entered first, Elizabeth behind her—the Aunts followed. What an enchanted land of light, and fragrance, and fluttering, and sound! Yes, an enchanted land, in which Elizabeth was so fairly bewildered, that, to Wina's great delight, her eyes were timidly cast down, while those of all present were fastened upon her. She was introduced to several older ladies, and curtsied as became a young maiden on her first appearance, till at last she found herself happily seated by the side of her mother. She now ventured to look around her, raised her head somewhat higher, greeted an acquaintance here and there, and finally glanced to the lower end of the room, where the gentlemen were collected together. There were, indeed, her grandfather's cuirassiers from Braunhausen, at least three or four. Their uniforms looked splendid; and one of them towered a head above his comrades.

"Who is that beautiful vision?" whispered Aunt Wina to the lady of the house.

"A perfect Mars!" simpered Paula.

Elizabeth did not catch the answer. The instruments were being tuned. There was a movement among the gentlemen. The hearts of the young girls, and even of their mothers, began to beat violently. Who will be asked? who will remain sitting?

"Dear Frau Kuhneman," began the neighbour of Elise, a good-natured but very superficial person, the wife of a doctor, "you will now find out what it is to take a daughter to a ball. It cannot be a matter of indifference whether one's child is to sit still or not; nay, I assure you, one cannot be quite at ease till she is engaged for at least four or five dances."

Elise smiled somewhat loftily, and replied: "It is a matter of perfect indifference to me. If Elizabeth dances little, so much the better for her health."

She was not so perfectly indifferent, nevertheless, but like her open-hearted neighbour felt a certain uneasiness and suspense, however earnestly she struggled against it. The music began, the gentlemen crossed the saloon. The doctor's wife nervously grasped the hand of Elise, and whispered, "Ah! see, dear friend, our children are still sitting." The two pretty girls sat by their mothers with downcast eyes. That moment of decision was an anxious one.

"This is insupportable," thought Elizabeth sud-

denly. "Such a humiliation! Such downright madness! Sitting as though one were on a salver to be presented! Not that I want one of those absurd stupid men to ask me! I only wish I were at home playing with the children."

In the midst of her wrath she saw two dark forms before her; she heard "Herr von Kadden" pronounced by one who speedily withdrew, while the former requested permission to dance with her. When she looked up she only saw a pair of very dark blue eyes fastened upon her; but at the second glance she perceived that these eyes belonged to the tall cuirassier who had been so greatly admired by her Aunt. For a few minutes she walked quietly by the side of the stranger, and then they were both whirling through the mazes of the dance. Presently they rested, and now the conversation began. The dancer was very young; he did not appear apt at such conversation, and opened with the simple question, "Do you like dancing?"

He was so pleasant and good-natured that Elizabeth could look at him quite composedly.

"I don't exactly know," she replied, smiling; "this is my first ball."

"Your first ball!" he exclaimed, astonished; "and I am so fortunate as to be your first partner! You will have many opportunities of dancing in Berlin," he added, shortly.

"I don't know whether I shall use them," answered Elizabeth.

He looked at her in some surprise.

"I must first see," she continued, "how this bal pleases me."

"Does it not please you?" he again inquired.

"That young girl, near Mamma, dances so little, because she is not asked; if I were in her place I certainly would not go again to a ball."

"I see," said he frankly, "it must be very unpleasant for young ladies to be presented in that fashion, and not to be chosen."

"Yes, indeed!" exclaimed Elizabeth, a shade of scorn curling her lip. "As I sat there before the dance, I was very angry with myself for coming, and wished myself at home playing with the children and their gingerbread nuts."

Her partner laughed, and assured her she would never have any occasion to be angry again on that score.

"Why not?" she asked, slyly; "it will happen before every dance."

"Certainly not," he replied, hastily; "for instance, if you permit me to engage you for every dance now."

"That would be tiresome," answered she, quite as quickly.

"True," he replied, his dark face becoming a shade darker. "It was too much to ask."

"I meant for my partner," explained Elizabeth, somewhat embarrassed; for it suddenly occurred to her that she had forgotten Aunt Wina's advice, and had been talking much too frankly.

Her partner was silent. She had certainly vexed him, and that she had not intended.

"As I am come here," she continued, "I ought to have some of the unpleasant as well as the pleasant; that is but fair."

She looked at him so entreatingly with her clear eyes at these words, that their magic seemed to penetrate his heart. The little vexation was forgotten.

"May I then ask for one more dance?" said he fervently.

Elizabeth smiled and assented.

He now implored for an extra tour, but she refused, because her Mamma had strictly forbidden her to engage herself to the same gentleman for several dances in succession.

"The next dance, then, is provided for?" said Herr von Kadden with interest.

"It will vex me very much," replied Elizabeth smiling, "if my neighbour there, Laura, is not asked again. That poor girl has been to balls for the last ten years. She goes to each one with the hope of dancing, and is almost always disappointed. Is not that a terribly 'fixed idea?' It is quite painful to sit near mother or daughter."

"I will ask the young lady for all the dances that I am free from," said Herr von Kadden, quite seriously.

"That would be a tax," she observed, dubiously.

"On the contrary, it will give me great pleasure," he replied.

The places for the next dance were now filled up, and Elizabeth returned to her seat.

Aunt Wina stood before her like a bird of prey, eying and admonishing her at once.

"My dear Elizabeth, how could you talk so much to a perfect stranger? you must never stay through a whole dance."

Elizabeth felt that her Aunt was right. She pleaded in some confusion, "He was not like a stranger."

"Then you should have been the more reserved," remarked her Aunt; but she smiled upon her very kindly, stroked her hair from her forehead, and strove through this tenderness to soften her reproof. Indeed, she was not a little delighted with her beautiful niece, and the admiration she had evidently won.

But Elizabeth's mother was far from delighted; her heart was very heavy, she felt but too plainly that Elizabeth's fresh natural manners would be little fashioned by her Aunt's instructions; in fact these very instructions were altogether opposed to the training Elizabeth had received from her grandparents or from herself. For as far as instruction went, Elise had not failed. And yet the Aunt was right. At a

ball one can rarely be as one is; one must assume a demeanour that will be proper and becoming there. If Elizabeth had talked frankly to an unknown, strange gentleman, she was not to blame. She had been perfectly natural; yet what might not be the result of this innocent openness to a perfect stranger? The mother had watched the pair during the dance with emotion; had she not herself led her engaging sweet child to a scene of the greatest enchantment the world can offer? Must she not take it all upon herself? That is a mournful question for the heart of a mother.

Foolish mother! why didst thou lead her into such peril? Ah—why?

When she looked at the eyes of the young man, sometimes so softly veiled by his long dark lashes, and anon so flashing with ardour, she felt as though these eyes were to have some influence on her family happiness and peace. She comforted herself with the thought that to-night she saw spectres everywhere, and that really hundreds of young girls go to balls uninjured. Ah! How many go, in whom the secret worm that gnaws at their souls is unperceived? They make some hasty or unhappy marriage, and no more is asked of the consequences of their balls. Daughters are often taken out by such mothers, because a ball is a bright prominent event in their poor miserable family-life.

Elizabeth had not been seated many minutes, when she was invited for the second dance. The doctor's wife again grasped the hand of Elise ; Laura bowed her golden curls, and gazed with beating heart on her white glacé glove, when the slim war-god stood before her, and requested the honour for the quadrille. He placed himself with his partner, exactly opposite to Elizabeth, and looked at her with such a meaning smile, that the mother's heart beat fast again. Now the couples changed places ; Elizabeth was turned towards the mother, and she too glanced with the same meaning smile at her *vis-à-vis*. The dance came to an end ; Elizabeth returned to her place ; and again, like a bird of prey, Wina stood before her ; her sharp black eyes had not failed to remark the significant smiles.

"What was the understanding between you and Herr von Kadden?" she demanded ; and her mother listened for her answer.

"He is such a strange being," said Elizabeth, smiling ; "he told me he would ask Laura for all his disengaged dances ; I did not believe him, so he smiled as he brought her for my *vis-à-vis*."

"How very thoughtless of him to dance so often with one lady!" exclaimed Wina, wrathfully.

"Why?" asked Elizabeth. "He may put some fancy into her head ; a gentleman does not dance with a young girl so often without some special interest."

Elizabeth blushed, and eagerly assured her Aunt

that he simply did it to give the poor girl a little pleasure.

The Aunts—for Paula had now joined them—maintained that this was highly improper and inconsiderate, till Elizabeth, somewhat irritated, replied,

“It will still be a matter of doubt, then, for whom his attentions are meant, as he will dance alternately with Laura and me.”

“How terrible!” continued Wina. “With no one else? How disrespectful to the ladies of the house! And what comments will be made upon it! He is making both you and Laura perfectly ridiculous! You are playing the most absurd part! It is exceedingly ill-natured of him to make a young girl, on her first appearance, the topic of general conversation. You owe it all to your own most improper frankness, thoughtless child!” And with this Aunt Wina ended her sharp whispered reprimand.

“The man does not look so very terrible,” sighed Paula, as the dreadful individual suddenly approached Elizabeth; and in high spirits, and with the same significant smile, took her hand.

Elise was now obliged to tranquillize the excited Aunts. Their fears were really preposterous. If Charlotte and Laura played their part in this little drama together, what did it matter? She suspected no malice in the young man, but secretly feared something far worse. Wina and her sister went to the lady of the

house, opened their hearts to her, and made many inquiries about the dreaded man.

"That is so like him," said Frau von Bauer, smiling. "You must not take it amiss, there is no malice intended; he is a remarkably kind-hearted, amiable, and clever young man, but terribly impetuous. His comrades call him Hot-head, because in all affrays, duels, battles, he is bold to madness, and from his rash nature is easily led into quarrels."

"What a fearful man!" sighed Paula.

"If this be the case," observed Wina, sagely, "I shall seriously warn Elizabeth to be circumspect, and she may tranquilly fulfil her engagements with him."

"One has so often heard of duels," interrupted Paula, "that have been caused by the imprudence of young ladies!"

Madame von Bauer re-assured them, as well as she could, and they resigned themselves to their fate. yet waited in feverish suspense for the end of the dance. At last they had Elizabeth between them; they imparted to her some of the information they had obtained, and overwhelmed the poor child with a host of injunctions and warnings against this insanelly bold, this so ready-to-fight Hot-head."

Elizabeth was quite startled. She might perhaps be the cause of a duel! She was to be circumspect, but extremely polite; silent, yet not too sparing of remark. She must not make too great a change in

her present and former behaviour, or she would excite suspicion ! In fact, she was bewildered with their many words ; she felt as though a mill-wheel were turning in her head ; and it was well for her that she was engaged to another gentleman for the next dance, as she had time to grow somewhat composed. Meanwhile, Herr von Kadden danced again with Laura, and then stood before Elizabeth radiant with happiness. But now her manner was quite different to him.

“ Capital,” whispered Wina to her sister.

“ Excellent,” replied Paula.

“ So elegant and so reserved ! ” said Wina triumphantly. But lo ! Suddenly she laughed without the least restraint, while he was bending over her as though making some inquiry. And, indeed, it was so. Elizabeth endeavoured to be serious and reserved ; in his first vivacity he did not remark it, but at last it was too evident.

“ Have I annoyed you in any way ? ” he asked gently, looking at her so trustfully, with so deprecating a smile, that an involuntary “ No ” passed her lips.

“ What is it, then ? ” he inquired further.

She only smiled, but he repeated his question, and she could not resist telling him sportively why she had been warned to be circumspect.

“ Some one has been speaking of me then ? ” he exclaimed, hastily, and his brow grew dark.

Elizabeth was perplexed for an answer, and blamed her own precipitation.

"My comrades, perhaps?" he inquired again.

"Now he is ready for a duel," thought Elizabeth, and she instantly exclaimed—"Oh, no! only my old Aunts are so terribly afraid of duels."

"I could not challenge them," said he, playfully; and Elizabeth laughed heartily.

They began now a very interesting discussion. Elizabeth could not imagine how people could engage in duels. He acknowledged that for the most part they owed their origin to the slightest causes, often to an ungoverned impetuosity. She spoke with great wisdom, and he appeared to respect it, for he listened attentively.

Then he began: "Do you know what it is to have a burning and uneasy sensation in the breast? It heaves and swells, and rises higher and higher, till it seems to take the very breath."

"Oh, yes! I have known it very well from my childhood," replied Elizabeth; "this feeling always came before I had a quarrel with my brothers. As one grows older, naturally one struggles against it."

"Struggles against it!" he exclaimed, astonished. "Then the feeling is unknown to you; you could not struggle against it; it would only become worse. With me, the only good plan is, to rage furiously for a few minutes; then all is right."

"But are not the consequences of this violence very unpleasant to you?" inquired Elizabeth, sagely.

"I have found an excellent remedy just now," he answered, complacently. "If one has only some one person on whom to vent occasionally their anger, one can be very forbearing with other people; in fact, one acquires the habit. I have now a most excellent servant, with whom I have arranged that he shall tranquilly bear my vehemence. The box on the ear that he gets on such occasions he is richly paid for, and we live together in the most contented, affectionate way."

"I think that dreadful," observed Elizabeth, shaking her head; "you ought to struggle against it; certainly you could not in your own strength——" She stopped short, for she felt that she must not venture on such serious ground.

"Not in my own strength! In whose, then?"

"In that of a higher power," replied Elizabeth, in some confusion.

"Young ladies struggle with a higher power!" he continued, laughing, "as I most fully believed in my childhood. An angel then watched over my bed, and accompanied me in my walks, that no evil might happen to me."

Elizabeth looked at him earnestly. "Here is a man who has no faith—a scoffer! And yet so weak a being that he pays his servant to allow himself to be struck."

"Do you think no higher power can move us than the might of our own will?" she eagerly asked.

"The peculiar strength of a man's will is shown on his neighbour," he observed, with decision; but the next moment he added, smiling, "yet I am quite willing to become acquainted with a better."

"I first struggled against my vehemence from love to my grandparents," continued Elizabeth, zealously; "still when I had ceased to be a little child, I could stamp with my foot, and strike at any thing; but my love for *them* was a stronger power than my own will."

"I have neither parents nor grandparents. I have only one sister, and she thought my remedy very good, and advised me to continue it."

"She might have given you better counsel," observed Elizabeth, shortly.

"She does not hold with the angel-theory," he remarked, with the same light, scornful smile.

This made Elizabeth extremely indignant. She felt her heart throbbing; and as she could not stamp with her foot, she observed, proudly: "To me it seems most cowardly, that a soldier should keep a servant to cudgel, instead of fighting with his own passions."

"Have you ever read of anything like it in the biographies of great men?"

She did not observe how unpleasant it was to him to hear this, and she went on in her zeal: "I should advise

you, if you found it really impossible to overcome your fury, for a beginning, to go somewhere alone, and rage against yourself."

Her partner did not answer—a very dark cloud overshadowed his glowing face.

Elizabeth was half frightened at her own words, and she was very glad when the music ceased, and she could return to her seat by her mother.

"You have missed one dance," said the latter, tranquilly.

"Yes, Mamma," began Elizabeth in the greatest excitement (both Aunts, impelled by the same curiosity, had drawn nigh to the speaker), "we were in a very earnest conversation. That is a dreadful man! an actual scoffer!"

"It is incomprehensible how the Bauers could invite such a person," sighed Wina.

"Do you suppose many of the dancers think otherwise of religion?" asked Elise.

"At any rate they don't allow it to be observed," remarked Paula. "They have some consideration and propriety. What a delightful person is Herr von Stottenheim!"

The latter was a lieutenant (somewhat older and far more adroit than Herr von Kadden) who, in half-an-hour's conversation had quite won Paula's favour.

"I know him very well through my brother-in-law the Ranger: he is a very worldly, shallow man," ob-

served Elise ; " I do not think the worse of Herr von Kadden for his frankness and candour."

" Mamma, he is most open-hearted and good-natured," said Elizabeth. " He would have been very different had he been better taught."

Wina was about to reply, when the subject of their conversation passed before them, and requested Laura to dance with him.

" He persists in it," whispered Wina ; " such an absurd thing, it has already been remarked. A gentleman just now was openly laughing at his selection of these two partners only. If I knew how Elizabeth could refuse him next time, that would put a stop to it."

" Wina, I implore you," interrupted Paula, in the utmost terror ; " have nothing to do with that man ! "

" Yes," sighed Wina, " we are now fairly entangled, but I cannot understand the Bauers."

Neither of the Aunts suspected how heavy the heart of their sister-in-law became through their chattering. However, there was nothing to be done ; Elizabeth danced the next time with Herr von Stottenheim."

" How strange it is ! " she thought to herself. " It is not at all difficult to be reserved and silent with this gentleman ; for all his speeches one seems to have a neat little smooth answer ready."

At last they spoke of her grandfather, the excellent old Herr von Budmar, in whose neighbourhood he dwelt.

"I suppose you know," observed Elizabeth, "that he was a cuirassier in your regiment?"

"And its greatest pride and honour," he observed, courteously.

"A brave and pious soldier," replied Elizabeth involuntarily, in the same words an old friend had used in speaking of him.

"Both these qualities necessarily go together," observed Herr von Stottenheim, in a tone of extreme pathos.

Elizabeth regarded him in great astonishment.

"Dear lady," he continued, "do you imagine that, under the rough exterior of a soldier, no tender noble feelings are slumbering?"

She smiled, and he continued to make such remarks as he fancied would be agreeable to a granddaughter of Herr von Budmar, whose inclinations were well known to him, till another dance began, and the conversation came to an end.

"Oh, Mamma!" began Elizabeth, "you should hear Herr von Stottenheim speak of grandpapa, and of all noble and religious feelings."

"He is a man of the world, and knows how to speak on all subjects," replied Elise, quietly.

"Yes! he is a hypocrite," continued Elizabeth, "and that is much worse."

"You see now in what company we are," said her mother; "if you could examine all the dancers, you would not find much to rejoice at."

Elizabeth nodded, and whispered smiling, "Mamma, I do not find my ideal here."

The mother smiled in answer, for these words were a comfort, though she could not build much on the assurances of her lively daughter.

The instruments were again tuned, but Elizabeth, with the best will, could not reason her heart into tranquillity.

"Will my angry partner ask me or not?" she thought. "How intolerable it would be if he stood by me in utter silence!"

The music began; one by one, those who were sitting near her, were led away to the dance.

Herr von Kadden remained in conversation with an old gentleman unmoved. A few more minutes, and three gentlemen approached and sought to engage her.

The Aunts held a weighty council together as to whether Elizabeth might dance with them or not.

"Herr von Kadden seems to have forgotten his engagement," said Wina.

"But I entreat you to wait a little while," implored Paula, in consternation; "enter into no strife with that man."

"It is extremely inconsiderate of him!" exclaimed one of the candidates, angrily (a son of the house.) "I shall go and remind him."

Elizabeth decidedly forbade this. She wished to rest this dance; and her mother was just about to express a wish to the same purpose, when Herr von Kadden

joined their circle seriously, and without one word of politeness, claimed his right, and took away his partner.

The young Herr von Bauer thought his rival's conduct unbearable. Aunt Wina shrugged her shoulders, and Aunt Paula implored them all round to have patience with this dangerous man. Meanwhile the pair who had caused their remarks were whirling through the figures. At length Elizabeth stood in silence by her partner, who, with firmly closed mouth and moody glance, was silent also.

"He is, in truth, a vehement man," thought Elizabeth, and well deserves his soubriquet. "How can any one act so at a ball? how can he allow himself to be so vexed by a young girl?"

He seemed now as though he would say something, but could not master himself.

Elizabeth plainly felt that his hand trembled as he again took hers. She could not possibly stand by him again in silence, nor could she dance with him longer. She curtsied when this dance was over, a sign that she wished to be taken back to her place.

"I wish we could go home now," urged Elizabeth. "I have had quite enough."

"You must dance next time with Herr von Bauer," observed Wina, "and then we can leave before the cotillon."

"Certainly," assented Paula, "it is anything but enjoyable this evening."

Wina punished her with a sharp glance. She was far from pleased herself, but she had too much tact to let it be remarked. Other balls would follow, and, it was to be hoped, more pleasant ones.

The next was a country dance. Herr von Bauer claimed Elizabeth, and actually Laura and Herr von Kadden were opposite to them.

"What malice!" whispered Wina, biting her lips in anger.

The lady of the house approached them smiling. "Herr von Kadden is as peculiar as ever; he is trying to conceal his interest in your lovely niece by his attention to Laura; it gives the thing an appearance of sport."

"Then do you not think it is malice?" asked Paula.

"Malice! and Herr von Kadden! the two could not go together," exclaimed Frau von Bauer! "He is, as I said to you, somewhat hasty in his conclusions, somewhat peculiar——"

"Not very agreeable properties," interrupted Wina; and she went on to make a few delicate reproaches to their amiable hostess for inviting so strange a gentleman.

While this was going on, Elizabeth was dancing, but as in a dream, without looking up. She felt the dark-blue eyes were resting upon her, and she earnestly strove to resist their influence. "Why, can I not

look at him? I will look quite composedly," she firmly resolved. The ladies had exchanged places; he had to offer her his hand. She looked up, and saw only those deprecating eyes, mournfully fixed upon her. She could not look at him again tranquilly, for her heart was heavy; and she longed for the whole affair to be at an end. "At last the dance is over," she thought, well pleased, as she sat down by her mother and Aunts to grow cool. The father now joined them. They would all willingly have left, but the carriage was not yet come. They resolved to go into a neighbouring cabinet, that Elizabeth might not again be asked, as the violins were being tuned. At that very moment Herr von Kadden approached, no longer serious or uncourteous, and modestly requested the promised cotillon.

Elizabeth's mother answered pleasantly, that Elizabeth had not had permission to engage herself for that, as they had arranged from the beginning not to wait for this dance.

He implored, in such an earnest, childlike manner, for only two rounds, that the father, who thought it very harmless, and knew nothing of the Aunts' vexation, consented.

The pair went away; Elizabeth, too, with joyful heart, though she would not confess it to herself.

"I must dance with you once more," he whispered, softly; "I must beg your pardon."

She was silent.

"As a proof that you pardon me," he implored earnestly, "say that I have been very foolish."

She could not help laughing.

"I will beware of doing that," was her reply.

"Now it is all right!" he exclaimed, quite satisfied; "you own there is something to pardon; thus you have acknowledged that I have been foolish."

"No! not foolish," she interrupted, "but fearful!"

"Fearful!" he exclaimed, in astonishment; "but it only lasted a few minutes," continued he, good-naturedly.

"Oh! yes, longer," she replied, reprovingly.

"Well, this once, because I could not speak out; but I have quite resolved that my servant shall never have another box in the ear from me; so," he continued, drolly, "if the poor fellow mourns over this unlucky change, it rests upon your conscience."

"For a suppressed box in the ear, I would always give him double," counselled Elizabeth, her bright eyes sparkling with innocent pleasure.

"I will do so," promised Herr von Kadden, "and then I shall not rejoice alone over the victory won. I shall not struggle alone henceforth with my strong will," he continued, lightly; "I shall have another power to help me."

Elizabeth blushed and looked down. She would not know what he meant, and thought no more about

it. But she was again subdued by some mysterious power. She went through the dance as in a dream, and was dreaming still when her father announced the carriage. She followed him, and was closely escorted by her Aunts through the saloon, lest the bold young man should again draw nigh her, perhaps even wrap her cloak around her. But he stood quietly at the door as she passed, and merely bowed with the accustomed courtesy.

In the carriage the conversation was kept up by the two Aunts. The mother and daughter sat opposite to each other in silence, and looked out into the night. A watchful mother's heart has an especially tender feeling, a mysterious union with that of her daughter.

Was it a fault in Elizabeth if she had fallen in love with a man to whom she had been brought so nigh by the consent of her parents? Elise remembered her mother saying on one occasion, "the young men who dance with my daughters must be such as I would receive for sons-in-law." What a fearful thought that one of these men should seek Elizabeth for his own! Elizabeth, a woman of the world!—she is beautiful, animated, amiable, and joyous—adapted for it in every way. This miserable ball, that had not even satisfied the Aunts, might have been a matter of total indifference had she but declined. She felt it more and more; why had she not plainly said, "I do not take my daughter into this so-called society?" That would have

been simple and candid, and consistent with the motives she professed. The circle of her acquaintance might have wondered a little, talked a little, though not long, and that would have been of no consequence. Those even who knew more of her would not have wondered at all. The gay world is very superficial; it takes everything as it is first presented to it; praises or blames indiscriminately, or as some leader of the fashion dictates!

"This shall be a lesson for my whole life," thought Elise. What vows did she not make to God in this dark journey through the gardens!

The mother and Elizabeth were alone in the chamber of the latter. She threw off her veil, and stepped to the mirror, but instantly started back.

"Mamma, did I look so at the ball?" she hastily demanded. Her mother assented in some confusion. Elizabeth took her by the hand, returned to the mirror, and exclaimed.—"Only look!" It was no refreshing sight that met her gaze. Dress, trimmings, and flowers alike in disorder; her hair dishevelled, her features pale and wan.

"No! my child," said her mother hastily, "it is the cold journey that has made you so pale: in the ball-room you were flushed, and now to bed quickly: to-morrow my dear child will be her old fresh and bright self again." Elizabeth threw her arms round her mother, and suddenly burst into a flood of tears.

"My dearest child," said her mother, tenderly, but

her own heart was unspeakably sad. "You are now excited, wan, and weary; you cannot bear dancing and late hours."

"I will never go to another ball," sobbed Elizabeth.

"I will never again take you to one," added her mother, deeply touched. Elizabeth went to bed soothed by her mother's caresses, and soon fell asleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER THE BALL.

LATE in the next morning Elizabeth arose, but not refreshed. The day after a ball is not particularly pleasant; one is wearied, and finds pleasure in nothing. The Aunts came to inquire for their darling niece, and, much against the wish of the mother, the ball was carefully discussed. Elizabeth laughed at the singular Herr von Kadden and Laura, and asked Aunt Paula, with a little nod, if she had heard any thing of a duel. Aunt Wina was anxious to impart such excellent advice as might be useful to her niece for the future, and began: "When you go to another ball——"

"Dear Aunt, don't trouble yourself," interrupted Elizabeth, "I shall never go to another ball."

At that moment two gentlemen were announced, Herr von Bauer and his cousin Herr von Stottenheim. Frau Kuhneman could very well have dispensed with their visit; but as the daughter had appeared at a ball, the mother must concede something on her side, and

the dancers had called merely to inquire for the health of the ladies. Elise hastened to her husband, and begged of him to come to her assistance. She had already opened her heart to him on the previous evening, and now did it again with heavy sighs.

"My dear child," said the Privy-Counsellor, smiling, "to the first steps others always follow, and we must bear them with resolution and patience. It will all pass over, and, for the future, we must take more heed to the first step. If the affair vexes you so much, I will certainly never take you to another ball."

They entered the sitting-room together.

Paula was just asking Herr von Stottenheim about his return to the garrison.

He answered, "that though their leave of absence only lasted till evening, they occasionally exceeded it." To this he added a highly-coloured sketch of his comrade Herr von Kadden, how for four hours after the ball he had roamed about in the Zoological Gardens, and was now as fast asleep as a bear. "If he purposes sleeping after noon," he continued, "I shall leave him to his fate. I have no fancy to go by the evening train, and after that to take an hour's ride in this bitterly cold weather."

Paula and Wina began to express their opinions freely of this extraordinary young man, and Herr von Stottenheim declared that he could not have fulfilled his uncle's commission, "to bring a few good

dancers with him," better than by asking Von Kadden. Laura, for instance, but for this excellent dancer, would scarcely have been asked at all.

The Counsellor now heard the little story of Laura, which the Aunts persisted in regarding as decided malice.

Herr von Stottenheim zealously took up his comrade's defence. "It was downright good nature," he observed, "partly generosity, partly harmless fun. I only wondered why he confined himself to Miss Laura. It was at a ball once before that the absurd idea came to him, only to dance with the ladies who were left sitting; and in spite of all our raillery, he carried it out."

The Counsellor thought this very amusing and amiable of him, and listened further with great interest.

"He is not only an elegant dancer," continued Herr von Stottenheim, "but a skilful swordsman, and a mad rider. No horse is so wild but that he will tame it. He is braye to rashness, and the only wonder is that he has not been 'smashed' long before this."

The mother and daughter made no remark, but the former listened in some suspense for her husband's reply. He, quite unconscious, merely observed that these were good qualities for a soldier; and turned the conversation to other subjects till the gentlemen withdrew.

When Elizabeth was alone, she tried hard to fix

her attention on something, but could not succeed. Whether she took her work, or a book, or sat down to the piano, one image was ever before her eyes. After dinner her mother left her in the cabinet that she might rest; but she was unaccustomed to sleep in the day, and whether she lay with open or closed eyes, it was still the same, the image was there. At last she started suddenly up, raised her head, and resolved decidedly. "I will not think of him. Are these temptations to unsettle my mind? I will overcome them. I will not indulge such foolish thoughts and fancies." She rose, took a piece of work in her hand, went into the nursery, and strove to be diligent and cheerful; and, finally, the image vanished, and Elise was refreshed by her daughter's gladness.

Girls who have been accustomed from their childhood to a worldly circle, hear of balls and the circumstances connected with them—of falling in love and betrothal from an early period—as matters of course. At last they go to balls themselves, and naturally expect to fall in love and be engaged. Rarely does such a maiden return from her first ball without her heart, or at least her fancy, being occupied with one image. That it is not right to dwell upon such fancies, is never told her; it is the way of the world; and it is, moreover, pleasant to have one's heart occupied. Sometimes, indeed, this first inclination will be cherished so sacredly, so earnestly, one may regard it as a thing

for eternity. But usually there are new balls, fresh faces ; the heart grows accustomed to constant changes, and learns to love very superficially, and makes no claim to any special properties in the object of its love. It chooses if a choice is offered, and loves much as it is described in romances, till this love ends in some poor, shallow, miserable marriage. Then either custom and mutual good nature make life endurable, or discontent and anger change it to a hell. That two people after five and twenty years' married life should think each other fairer, that their love should have become more deep, and mysterious, and glorious, sounds to the world the veriest enthusiasm. Ah, yes ! a love that is of the earth fades with the earthly form. A love that is of the soul, ever grows and mounts with it heavenwards.

Elizabeth had certainly heard much nonsense from her Aunts and it had found some nourishment in her impressible nature ; but her mother's serious principles, and her frequent intercourse with her beloved and still youthful-feeling grandmamma, had worked against it. The latter, who found more time to converse with her granddaughter than the poor town mother, had but a little while before said to her : " If your heart ever feels as though it could not be tranquil, dear Elizabeth, strive earnestly to make it so ; count it a sin to entertain such thoughts and fancies. The power that you are able to exercise over yourself will be a

test whether the inclination be a mere folly or of God."

The remembrance of this warning enabled Elizabeth now to quiet her throbbing heart. "I will not even think of so frivolous a being, a mere scoffer;" she said to herself in all earnestness. "It is only our strange meeting at the ball that has disturbed me. It is a just penance. Why did I go there? If I cannot soon be master of myself, I will go to grandmamma and tell her the whole. After all, it is mere nonsense," she added boldly. True to her purpose that forbade her sitting alone and dreaming, she went at four o'clock for her English lesson. As she had some distance to go, and the twilight came on early, Fritz was to fetch her at five. She went briskly through the streets to a quarter where the houses were shabby and the shops small, where few stylish people or carriages were to be seen, but swarms of children playing in the streets, despite the dirt. She passed through a door-way, then along a dark narrow passage up a small staircase that was lit by a little oil-lamp, till she stopped at the door of her English teacher. "If I were obliged to live in this close gloomy place, my heart would break outright," she thought. Suddenly she felt so warm at heart, as though she had some glorious treasure concealed there.

"What is this?" she asked herself, held her hand for a moment thoughtfully and sadly to her brow, and then entered.

The English teacher was a lady, no longer young, who had lived in several families as governess, and now rejoiced in the possession of a little home of her own, and her long yearned-for rest. She dwelt in a part of the city where lodgings were reasonable, and where there were many respectable inhabitants, whom neither business nor inclination led into the more crowded streets. Her little abode was very comfortably furnished with carpets, beautiful plants, pictures, and books that were chiefly presents from former pupils. She (the soul of the dwelling) was refined, amiable, and a sincere Christian.

The other pupils were not yet arrived, for Elizabeth, in her pre-occupation, had come rather too early. She was very glad of this, for she had a warm affection for this lady, which was as warmly responded to, so that when Elizabeth had given up her lessons on account of the expense, she still went to see her instructress as a friend.

"I have found such a glorious chorale," said the English lady after the usual greeting, when Elizabeth was happily seated at her side. "It was quite unknown to me before."

She took up a book that was open before her, and, with eyes lit up with joy, read aloud--

"Oh ! Saviour on this barren earth
Thou art my jewel of priceless worth,
From thee I will not sever,
In love and pain
Do thou remain
My heart's dear guest for ever

' Thy love is more than all beside,
Thy truth stands fast whate'er betide
Ah! who can this gainsay?
In woe and need,
To death indeed,
Thy love shall be my stay!"

Elizabeth was silent.

"You are very thoughtful to-day, and do not speak," said her friend. "What is the matter? Do you not think it beautiful?"

"Oh, yes," replied Elizabeth, smiling now. "It pleases me very much; but shall I tell you what I was thinking of?"

The lady bowed assent.

"As I came here along that gloomy way, I mused on your solitary life till I felt quite depressed; and now I see you so bright and happy, I am ashamed of myself."

"Dearest Elizabeth," returned the lady, "you will think me enthusiastic when I tell you that I cannot describe my happiness and joy. I would not exchange with any young girl whose life was outspread fair before her, for I have floated into a calm haven where no storm can shatter me more. I only ask my Saviour now for a tranquil death, whenever it may please Him to call me to his glorious heaven."

"Yes! you are very happy. I know that well," replied Elizabeth. "God has not marked out so lonely a course for you," continued the teacher; "but

whatever the way may be, He will be with you. I know right well you will never forsake Him."

Elizabeth looked at the book, and read—

" 'Thy love is more than all bonds.'"

Do you know that I was yesterday at a ball?" she continued, "so I have an uneasy conscience."

"To go to a ball," remarked the English lady, "is not in all cases sinful; it was certainly most praiseworthy in my dear Countess Adelheid, she disliked them so much, yet went cheerfully and without opposition at her father's command."

"Then they would never have hurt her," interrupted Elizabeth, quickly; "but I went from my own love of pleasure. Sometimes home is too confined for me; I long to see something more of life; then I had pictured to myself dancing in a Cinderella-dress with a prince, to the sound of glorious music."

"And was it not beautiful?"

"No," said Elizabeth. "It was rather enchanting at first, then tiresome and dreary. I scarcely know how. Oh! I will never go to another ball."

The arrival of the other pupils put a stop to their *tête-à-tête*, and the English conversation began. It was of purely indifferent matters, and Elizabeth soon grew tired of it. Had she been alone a little longer with her friend, she might, without hinting at her

peculiar difficulty, have opened her heart; it was sad to her that she could not overcome the feelings she had had on her arrival. She gazed upon the solitary streets, the gloomy sky, and then upon a little pale girl, in a worn-out black velvet jacket, who was standing at a house-door with a doll in her arms, and her freezing hands wrapped up in an apron.

"Poor little child," she thought, "thou art not joyous; life is not full of marvels to thee. There is more sorrow in the world than joy, and to-day all alike seems mournful."

She breathed freely again when Fritz came, and quickly prepared to leave with her companions. The brother and sister passed through a few little streets, before they came into the long carriage road, which in the tumult, and gloom, and dirt, looked anything but inviting.

"See, Fritz!" said Elizabeth, "how dreary such a street looks, the houses all so dead and forlorn. In a city there should at least be life and light. I know not why, but in these streets I always feel sad and homesick."

"It is because you have no acquaintances here," replied Fritz, quietly. They were going on hastily and silently, when a tall figure approached them, wrapped in a military cloak, with a white cap drawn low on his forehead.

Elizabeth started, but instantly thought, "How

foolish I am! Under every military cap I shall now expect to see the face of that fearful man."

He approached nearer and nearer—it was Herr von Kadden. He looked up, started, and a gleam as of sunshine lit up his features. They gazed at each other a moment, without thinking how they ought to meet—he not suspecting what was concealed behind Elizabeth's confusion and embarrassment. She would have bowed and passed on, but that was impossible; in his unlooked-for happiness he would not have dreamt of such a thing.

"Where are you come from, and why here?" he asked in astonishment.

"From my English lesson," was Elizabeth's answer.

He turned and walked slowly by her side. "I have been seeking out an ancient aunt in this wretched city," he began; "the hotel was unendurable; I longed for a human soul on whose interest I had some claim. But can you imagine," he continued, indignantly, "when I spoke of my yearning to the old lady, she said, 'Yes, I have often felt very solitary, but one grows accustomed to it by degrees; I have no one who really loves me, though I have plenty of society, for without that, life would be very monotonous. But though I have so much society, I doubt whether any of my acquaintances really care for me. They are so intolerable; the only beings who really love me (and here her voice was quite faltering), are these dear

creatures, the dogs. Come, my Diana——look, that is my nephew Otto! you must love him very much! Come here, my sweet Joli, you little think who is standing before you. Ah! dear Otto,' she said to me, 'whenever I die, I must bespeak your love for this darling, or he will pine himself to death, in this cold unloving world. I trust I may outlive Diana and Bella.' She went on in this style till I had no longer any patience to listen; it fairly drove me away; and as I came through these streets, I thought, 'It would be quite impossible to me to live here; there is nothing for one's ideas to fasten on; one house is just as strange and dreary looking as the other.'" As he spoke thus, his expression was serious, almost sorrowful.

"Elizabeth had just remarked the same thing," began Fritz, thoughtfully; "the reason is simply that few of our acquaintances dwell here; the cause is not in the houses, but in ourselves."

Herr von Kadden agreed with him. "He did not think it lonely here now; and how singular it was that Elizabeth should have had the same feelings."

Elizabeth was embarrassed, and began hastily,

"The fault is certainly not in the houses, and other people inhabit them besides old ladies who console themselves with their dogs. My English teacher who lives here is so cheerful, so happy, she would not exchange lots with any one; but," she added, with some hesitation, "she is religious."

"She is religious!" he repeated after her, half aloud.

She gave him a searching glance; he looked quite serious. His eyes were cast down; his long dark eyelashes rested like deep shadows upon his cheek. She observed, now for the first time, that he was very pale. "Are you ill?" She asked hastily, without a moment's consideration.

"Not in the least," he replied tranquilly, and his large eyes were fixed on her with interest, but with the same sorrowful expression. "Are you going this evening?" she inquired as abruptly.

"I must!" was his answer.

"Herr von Stottenheim told us this morning," she continued, "that you would not care for a dangerous night's ride, because you were bold to rashness."

"I fear nothing on a horse," he replied quietly.

"He said it was a wonder you had never been 'smashed,'" continued Elizabeth.

"I hope that that may never happen," he answered smiling.

"You trust to your skill?"

"I certainly do," was his answer; "but I have experienced also that a merciful God has cared for me."

Elizabeth looked surprised.

"I am no atheist," he observed, gently.

"Are soldiers obliged to go to church?" she demanded, eagerly.

"Certainly, we must take our men there," he an-

swered, "and we should go with pleasure if we had another pastor."

"What is he, then?" asked Elizabeth, further.

"He has a taste for the marvellous, and always preaches of hell and damnation."

"And you would rather not hear that," observed she thoughtfully.

"Each one makes his own heaven or hell within; each one has only to keep himself from wickedness; and I can do that by my own strong will," said Herr von Kadden, seriously.

Elizabeth made no answer. How could she speak to a stranger of her faith? But Fritz thought he must take this opportunity of saying something.

"With such opinions you gain little by being no atheist," he remarked boldly.

Elizabeth was half-frightened; she feared Herr von Kadden might be offended, and she hastily added,

"With such opinions I believe you may be happy, so long as you are young, and healthy, and gay; but when you are old and feeble, and death ever draws nigher and nigher——"

"These are mournful thoughts," he replied, frankly; "one must not indulge them."

"Then I prefer a faith," she interrupted, "that will be a consolation to me in all events; yes, more than a consolation."

He looked at her with a smile of unbelief, and suddenly asked, "Do you like fairy tales?"

"Very much."

"Tales of golden castles, and lovely princesses, and magic wands, and enchanted gardens; as a child one believed them all, and it was delightful."

Elizabeth was silent; she knew very well what he meant.

They had now turned into a more crowded street, and could no longer walk three abreast. Fritz innocently went forwards, and left his sister with her tall companion. As they walked by each other in silence, Elizabeth suddenly thought,

"Now I know why I am so depressed, as though some calamity were weighing on my soul; he will be careless in the darkness, and meet with some accident, and that will grieve me terribly, for I shall recollect how profane he was. But there are so many unbelieving men. Herr von Bauer and Herr von Stottenheim are just the same, and I cannot convert them. Still, they are not in danger of meeting with some accident to-night. I will just warn him not to be rash."

It was strange; as though he guessed her thoughts, he remarked,

"How rapidly the clouds have drawn together in the last few minutes; one can scarcely see the solitary lights."

She forced herself to a joke and said, "The night will be gloriously dark, a good opportunity for a 'smash!'"

"Ah! I will take care," said he, in the same tone. "I will ride so carefully that my good horse will not know who he is carrying, and my servant will not be sure that he has fetched his own master. He will really take another master home. I feel to-day as though I believed again in fairy tales; sometimes it is a very happy one, and then again a very sad one."

Elizabeth, somewhat confused, hastily observed—"Yes, it will be very dark, and now I must stop to buy some pencils here."

"You will wish me first a prosperous journey?" he asked, as he stood before her with the simple confidence of an old acquaintance.

"Yes, I do," she answered, and would have added something sportive, but nothing occurred to her.

Without knowing what he did, he stretched out his hand, but directly he saw how timidly she took the tips of his fingers, he started back and hastened away.

"I must buy some pencils here," said Elizabeth to her brother, "or I shall have told a story. I did not know how to get away from him."

"Why should you?" asked Fritz.

"I believe it was not proper," replied the sister.

"This very morning I saw Herr von Bauer walk a whole mile by the side of Fraulein von Wedell," said Fritz.

"Think if the Aunts had seen me walking by the dreadful man!" exclaimed Elizabeth, playfully.

"I don't think him so dreadful," observed Fritz.
"It is a great pity that he is so poor, and has really no belief. That often results from the education, though," he added, very sagely; "so to speak, the time has been neglected."

Elizabeth was quite agreed with him, and the two (who since their confirmation had drawn very closely together) went deeper into the subject till they reached the house.

CHAPTER IX.

A JOURNEY PROPOSED.

It was in the month of January, and a most beautiful winter's day. The sun sank in a bed of rosy light; the summits of the snow-clad trees, and the roofs of the far-reaching Berlin, gave back the crimson glow. The Counsellor Kuhneman, with his wife and children, had enjoyed a most pleasant winter's walk. And now they were all going, great and small, to one of the streets near the Potsdam gate, where their uncle, General von Reifenhagen, lived. The Shakespeare evening, which came every Thursday, was, as little Mary declared, always fine, because the children were of the party. Their good Aunt knew well that the poor little ones are often very lonely when their parents are in society, and they are left at home with the servants; therefore she thought it ought not to happen too often. If on these evenings much was read aloud, that was beyond the children; there were always plenty of nuts in the room below, and they could play at Post or Coach; and before and after the reading, or at in-

tervals, the grown people were so kind as to laugh and play, and be merry with them. On these reading evenings, besides the two families, the young pastor Schlosser, Lieutenant von Reifenhagen, a cousin of the General's, and Madame von Warmholtz, with her daughter Clara, were regular guests. They were alike in their faith in one common Lord: otherwise they were very different. It shows great narrowness of mind in worldly people, that they will believe religious persons to be all exactly alike, all equally serious, solemn, and tiresome. That among them there are joyous and grave, clever and droll, one-sided, narrow, and spirited, they cannot imagine. While they awaited the arrival of the remaining guests, Elise and her Aunt were alone in the sitting-room, while Emily and Elizabeth played with the children in the drawing-room.

"You would not think, dear Aunt, how very much we look forward to these evenings," said Elise, while she settled herself comfortably in a corner of the sofa. To me they are especially pleasant, because I feel the children, big and little, are cared for and amused; till now that has seldom been the case, and it reminds me so much of our life in my father's house."

"Yes," replied her Aunt pleasantly; "it sounds somewhat strange perhaps, but I always wish parents would adapt their society to the children. If they are quite little, the parents should be children too, and invite people who can enter into such feelings."

"Could you carry that out in a town life?" asked Elise timidly.

"We will grant the exceptional cases," answered her Aunt, smiling; "but you will find by experience how easily all is arranged, if only the principle is maintained in a house, that the children claim the most love, the most time, the most consideration. This time expended on the children is a capital that bears the best interest."

"You see that I strive to act upon this," replied Elise, "and I think, dear Aunt, I have learnt something in the last few months. I am far more fresh and cheerful with the children."

"You had a good example in your own mother," observed her Aunt.

"I must acknowledge," continued Elise, "that I have erred with regard to Elizabeth. I have left her too much to herself, and have not sufficiently cared for her pleasure. It is certainly some excuse that I have so much to do for the younger children; our circumstances will not allow me to have much extra help, and we have frequent company, for which the necessary preparations demand time and thought."

"Elizabeth is very bright and engaging," observed the Aunt.

"Yes," sighed Elise, "but so capricious and changeable. In Advent she studied church history diligently with Fritz, sang regularly, and even learnt her songs

at her work and found time to play a great deal with the children. After Christmas all was changed ; she sighed, she was dull, everything was tiresome ; nothing would content her but going to concerts with her Aunts ; and lately, when my husband's sister was here from Konigsberg, I could in no way prevent her going with her and her papa to the theatre."

"I heard of it," said her Aunt quietly ; "you see that you must provide amusement for Elizabeth, or she will provide it for herself."

"At that time," resumed Elise thoughtfully, "I often discussed with my husband, whether the frequenting of theatres and concerts was consistent with our way of life ? About all such things my husband is so tranquil he can easily dispense with them, and advises me to do the same if they make me uneasy ; he does not look upon them as wrong. If I held the same opinion, I know no reason why I should not use all these things as means of cultivation."

"If any one asked me," began her Aunt, "I should answer, Go to them so long as you cannot avoid it."

Elise looked at her inquiringly, and she continued,

"It is thus with all the doubts about things that are not sinful in themselves, which yet perplex Christians—really perplex them—because, with the best will, they do not always know what they ought to do, and the advice of their friends is so different. My answer al-

ways is—‘Do it so long as you cannot avoid it.’ I would not always oppress the conscience, but rather draw the yearning for things of this world to those of the world above. I could add to this: ‘One rule is not good for all.’ He to whom the Lord has intrusted much should be especially circumspect. I would never say—Show to the world that you are religious people by never going to these worldly concerts, and theatres, and balls; we should manifest that in a far different manner, even by living in the love and fear of God; by striving with a new heart to lead a new life, then all these questions will be solved as naturally as the faded autumn leaves must give way to the fresh young buds in spring. I never venture to debate or decide how deeply this new life has sunk in any heart, or how far the usual events of life are injurious to it or harmless. The circumstances in which people live are so different, and it is the same with their perils and temptations, that I would only watch and pray for myself and for all over whom I have any influence, that a new young life should joyfully and gladly be turned to the sun, and all that would restrain its growth and upward striving should be carefully withdrawn.”

“For myself I should ask nothing more,” replied Elise, “and it would be the same with my husband; but how will it be with the children if they always live in a great city? May not art and music be neces-

nary for them? and if they have the yearning for them, can we forcibly withhold them?"

"I valued art and poetry as means of cultivation for my children," replied her Aunt; "but the harm they would have received in theatres and the usual concerts, would have completely neutralised the advantages, even in this respect. Do you think the Berlin young ladies who frequent theatres and concerts find much profit there for their inner life? I maintain quite the contrary, and I can only advise all parents who dwell in a town to give their children, as far as they can, a country training; for a solid country education is far preferable to a town one. You know it, dear Elise, from your own experience, when you first came to Berlin," added her Aunt, smiling. "Your beautiful popular songs, your sonatas of Beethoven, which you had studied so carefully with the chanter, and played so skilfully, were particularly admired, because your education and feelings were simple, not artificial. You could converse freely, and had your own opinions of Shakespeare, Schiller, Goethe, and others. You had become familiar with them in your home-circle, where you had been able to give your whole mind to them undisturbed. Think, on the other hand, of a Berlin maiden in the theatre — of the wandering thoughts that interfere with the enjoyment of the art."

"It would be argued," said Elise, "that a drama

upon the stage, with all the means for its representation, must make a deeper impression than it could do were it merely read."

"I disagree entirely," said her Aunt, with much warmth. "A fresh young fancy needs no such means and helps; and I maintain that the cultivation gained at theatres and concerts is more superficial than real. In my youth I frequented both; in the theatres plays were rarely acted that aided my mental culture, and in the various opera or harmonic concerts (or whatever names they had), I venture to maintain most of those present, who were not learned in musical art, thought the musical portion, especially the symphonies and graver pieces, very tedious. The lighter melodies and songs were more agreeable; but the social part of the concert was always the chief thing."

"You are quite right," said Elise. "I do not think theatres or concerts necessary for Elizabeth's cultivation. I am not quite so foolish. But what shall I do if she longs for them? Must I keep her from them with authority?"

Her Aunt mused for a minute in silence, and then replied, "With authority? No! I think, with God's help, that can be avoided. I repeat: Children should be happy in their parents' house from their infancy; one cannot be joyous enough with them. One should ever be ready to promote such games and amuse-

ments as are suited to their age, and as the diverse peculiarities of children require. By these means the child-like youthful life in the house will expel mere worldly ways and doings. But if the former be banished from the house where children are, those who are naturally merry will seek food for their mirth away from their home and parents, or if they are serious and must accommodate themselves to the latter, they are distorted in their growth, precocious and unnatural. But children who grow up in a happy home, can have no earnest desire for things that have no adaptation to their home-life and their natural pleasures. To such children there may come times and circumstances (if they do not so much the better) when they may wish to know such things. They may do it; they may know the world and estimate it aright: they may struggle through the different periods of life, but only to stand more firmly and independently upon those principles on which their early life and education were grounded. Because there were reasons for so doing, we took our older children ourselves to the theatre; they saw it, admired it, or quarrelled with it, according to their different peculiarities. But inasmuch as this pleasure had no place in our regular arrangements, they did not yearn for it further. Do not let yourself be troubled about solitary cases; live yourself in that kingdom of God, to which its Sovereign, our Lord and Saviour, is ever so earnestly inviting us; live in it with

ever-growing love and truth ; rise with your prayers ever higher and higher ; the more you live now where you desire to be eternally, the more you will see the world and what is sinful therein in its right light. The slihter the hold these things have upon you, the more entirely you will live with God."

Frau von Warmholz and Clara now arrived, and Emily, Elizabeth, and Fritz, entered with them. Soon after the General and Privy-Counsellor joined the party.

"Dear Uncle," began Elizabeth, coaxingly, to the General, "do order, as master of the house, that 'Romeo and Juliet' shall be begun this evening."

"My child," said her Uncle playfully, "I have no voice in the matter ; I am a favoured guest who has the right to steal away when the conversation becomes too learned. Emily is master, I believe."

"And she does not like Romeo?" exclaimed Elizabeth, somewhat petulantly.

"You read it but a short time since," observed Emily.

"For that very reason I wish to hear it again," urged Elizabeth.

"It is not one of my favourites," was Emily's answer.

"Oh ! but it is very beautiful," observed Frau von Warmholz, glancing around her with her beaming blue eyes and shaking her clustering brown ringlets.

"The beginning seems to me too unnatural," replied Emily.

Clara, a very decided little blonde, laid her plump white hands before her on the table, and remarked very discreetly—"Yes, the love part of the story certainly goes on with unheard-of swiftness." A universal laugh followed. Clara was quite accustomed to this, and asked, with her usual composure, "Whether she had said anything wrong?" They all replied, "Certainly not;" and her mother added, "The materials for a Juliet are certainly not in you my Clara." Then turning to the others, she continued: "Shakespeare was right, nevertheless; every deep, true passion, with few exceptions, takes root at first sight; only we children of the north suppress, weigh, and consider, where an Italian would speak out at once."

"How could you love any one at first sight? You must know why you should love him," argued Emily, a little out of season.

"There you are quite in error!" exclaimed the Counsellor. "One does not love for the sake of the good qualities; the mystery in love is, that it does not wait for reason and knowledge."

Emily shook her head.

"We risk nothing in that," said Frau von Warmholz, "our heart guides us more safely than our knowledge."

"True," observed Clara, "my heart would never

fall in love with an impetuous, violent, ill-tempered man."

"With one who has liver complaint," said the General, drolly.

"That would be horrible," replied Clara, "though the poor man's temper in such a case would be excusable."

"My dear Clara, the case stands thus," said her mother, taking up the conversation with vivacity: "Your understanding and knowledge would perhaps never choose a man who was hasty and ill-tempered, but your heart might fall in love with him in the mysterious foreboding, that a vivacious husband might be far better for you than a phlegmatic one; for if I myself sometimes tease you by being a little quick," she added, playfully, "I do so from motives of duty, and for your good."

"Dear Mamma, you are always quick," answered Clara, good-humouredly, "and you could not be otherwise; but I adapt myself to it quite easily, because you are my mother."

"And by and by you would say, because he is my husband," continued her mother, "and for love's sake you would bear his faults."

Clara shook her head.

"I should not think it so bad to quarrel now and then," exclaimed Elizabeth, gaily.

"And afterwards to make it up," added the General.

Elizabeth nodded.

"No, no," said the prudent Clara, "that may be very well in imagination—in reality it would be most painful if the object of our love and esteem were rude or unkind to us."

"We should alter," replied Elizabeth, with the most perfect confidence.

"That is the greatest of all maiden follies," remarked Emily, earnestly taking up the argument, "to imagine that a man will change for love."

"I quite agree with you," observed Clara, "it is far better that a girl should resolve beforehand to bear his faults for affection's sake. She is certainly on firmer ground, as the amendment is very doubtful."

Now Elizabeth shook her head.

During this discussion the door was softly opened, and the Pastor Schlosser, and Lieutenant von Reifenhagen, entered.

"Are they speaking of a man with liver complaint?" asked Herr von Reifenhagen, mischievously.

"But not of you, dear Theodore," answered the General, in the same tone.

"I cannot see why a man should not alter for love," said her cousin to Emily. "What do you think, Schlosser?"

"I think," he replied, in some confusion, "the very end and aim of love is a mutual ennobling."

The cousin would have inquired farther, but a

glance from his aunt restrained him. It was known to all that Schlosser's and Emily's hearts were in unison. Emily had now what she had long wished for—a man she could revere, in whom there was no cause for blame or reproach.

The General's wife now took up the conversation rather quickly. "Properly, the debate is not of love, so many deceptions of the heart lay claim to that title." She then explained to the newly-arrived gentlemen the subject of the debate.

"I can add from my own experience," observed Herr von Steifenhagen, "that I, as a dancing young man, have very often fallen in love; I never knew why, and was never sure about it till it had ceased."

"In the merely outward and artificial worldly life, there can rarely be a deep and earnest love," remarked Elise.

"But," observed her Aunt, gently, "God is then often the tender, compassionate Guardian to His thoughtless children."

"There is an allusion in that," observed the General. "We first met at a ball, and mutually fell in love."

"It must not be given as an example to the young people," said his wife, smiling; "the issue is not always so happy. I did not deserve that the Lord should have led me so tenderly; it was not for merit of mine that I obtained so good a husband; most of my acquaintances who were not more thoughtless than

myself have been unfortunate, and are quite sunk in this world."

"We can equally well oppose Emily's assertion," said the General. "I altered greatly from love to my wife; I soon felt that so——"

His wife kissed the hand of the old General, and laid her own upon his mouth.

"A plain proof that I am under petticoat government," was his answer to this interruption.

Emily now proposed to begin the reading. Schlosser and her cousin decided for Hamlet. It was stipulated they should read by turns, while the ladies worked, and the General and Counsellor were allowed their cigar. After a portion had been read, and a discussion was going on, Clara said in an undertone to Elizabeth,

"I have watched you with such astonishment; you embroider and then pick out; work again, and pick out."

Elizabeth blushed deeply.

"Are you so completely absorbed in Hamlet?"

Elizabeth was very truthful; she shook her head, and had almost replied, "I was thinking of Romeo," but involuntarily she laid her finger on her lip, which sign Clara conscientiously took to herself, and said no more. During the greater part of the reading the General had been absent. When it was over he appeared with a letter in his hand.

"I have here a letter from brother Fritz," he observed.

"From grandpapa!" exclaimed Elizabeth, eagerly.

Elise and her husband inquired after the welfare of their dear ones in Woltheim, and the General related that Uncle Karl was unwell, and then, as it was the universal desire, he opened the letter and read—"Since Karl has been able to leave his room, his good humour has been returning. Yesterday, I found him with Charlotte, whom he was instructing in the principles of rational agriculture. He assured her his only trouble that he could not materially improve the property, was that he dared not found a distillery."

"Say rather would not, dear Herr von Budmar," interrupted Charlotte.

"Well, would not," repeated Karl; "I can see that it would be a sin."

"Wherefore should we burden our consciences with a distillery?" continued Charlotte. "Think how hundreds of drunkards in hell might accuse us!"

"You are quite right, Charlotte; but do you know there are men who would laugh at such an idea. I believe that when we are above we shall think very differently of the management of an estate than we do now," he added thoughtfully.

"Certainly, certainly," assented Charlotte.

"Would our children be any happier if they had each a few more thousand crowns?" he asked further.

"No," answered she; "exactly because we have never speculated much for money, has our good God so blessed the children. Such excellent children!—and so many dear grand-children!"

"Ah! Charlotte, I have had my cares, as no one knows better than you."

"But you must confess that God's blessing has especially rested upon your farming," continued Charlotte; and then went on in her simple manner to draw him from his business-anxieties by her little suggestion, "How will it be when we are above?"

Her beautiful moonshine and nightingale moods, that annoyed him so in his youth, are in a more serious and noble form, not unpleasant to him. Yes, Charlotte is a treasure, if a very hidden one; in her lowliness and humility she will one day stand at the gates of heaven, but the Lord will move her up to a higher place."

The letter closed with some tidings of the Ranger's family, and the usual greetings and remembrances; and the hearers began in seriousness or sport to talk of Uncle Karl and Charlotte.

"Do you know, Mamma," began Elizabeth, with sudden zeal, "I ought to go and entertain Uncle Karl?"

Her mother smiled in answer; but the thought was not a bad one, just as the dissipation and temptations of the winter were beginning. Elizabeth would be much better placed with her grandparents.

"If only this one winter were happily over," thought Elise; "by future ones I shall have gained a greater influence over her."

That the proposal should have come from Elizabeth herself was quite unexpected, not only to her mother but to all present.

"You, Elizabeth! The whole winter with your grandparents?" exclaimed Emily. "You would not be able to endure it long!"

"Not endure it!" said Elizabeth. "If I can only gain permission."

"But in winter?" urged Clara. "Your grandparents and uncle, and Charlotte, live as in a cloister."

"And so happily!" exclaimed Elizabeth. "Then the Ranger's house is just by, and among so many children there is always something going on; and Aunt Julia and Uncle are so merry. Besides, at grandpapa's I have the whole estate to amuse myself on; and are there not five hundred acres of land, papa?"

"At the very least," answered the Privy-Counsellor.

"But remember, Miss Elizabeth, you are no longer a child. You are confirmed," suggested Herr von Reifenhagen. "You cannot go with old Friedrich to fetch wood, nor with Uncle Karl to measure out the corn."

"But I shall find something else to do," said Elizabeth triumphantly, "if Mamma consents to my going."

Her parents had no objection, and her uncle and aunt were rejoiced at her rural tastes. The former suggested the most charming projects; he proposed, that as she could no longer ride with old Friedrich in the waggon, he should ride out with her; the heavy old grey horse might be brushed up, and grandmamma must have somewhere among her stores her own steel-green riding-habit.

"Capital! capital!" exclaimed Elizabeth, clapping her hands. "Every April, Charlotte packs up a large chest of things to keep them from the moths. I have often helped her to wet the papers with turpentine, and lay them between; and I have seen the green habit there, and a leather-coloured frock-coat with silver facings. Friedrich must have outgrown that in his youth, but now it would fit him very well."

Elise now entered into their interesting discussion, and related how often the habit and coat had been in peril of falling under the ever-ready scissors of her mother when some little garment had been needed for the children, and had only been spared at the intercession of her father. The conclusion of the conversation was that Elise should herself take her daughter to Woltheim. A letter must first be sent to announce their arrival, that the carriage might meet them at the railway station. Towards the evening of the following day, the aunts, Wina, and Paula, entered the nursery with their sister-in-law.

"Here is the poor victim," said Elise playfully.
"Ask her for yourself."

"You really wish to go to Woltheim?" said Wina, looking hard at Elizabeth. "I am delighted," she exclaimed, as she embraced her aunts with transports of joy.

"Labour and pains are thrown away upon you," said Wina wrathfully. "Only yesterday I wrote to my sister at Königsberg, and I told her how much you were delighted with Romeo," added Paula.

"And so I was," said Elizabeth, somewhat astonished.

"And now she is going to ride on grandpapa's grey horses," related Karl with much importance.

"Madness!" exclaimed Aunt Wina angrily, "a sensible well-brought up girl would not think of such a thing."

"But I shall," said Elizabeth, in great glee.

"And your grandpapa will allow it?" asked Wina, scornfully.

"I hope so," was the reply.

"But you will endanger your life!" warned Paula.

"Oh, no," said Karl, compassionately, "the old horses are not dangerous."

"The old horses will not approve so readily of Elizabeth's wish," said the mother in sport.

"How long do you think of remaining there?" asked Wina.

"My leave of absence extends till Lent," replied Elizabeth.

Wina understood the purport of this.

In Lent, Elise had always (so far she had been true to her parents) banished all exciting, dissipating pleasures (with the full consent of her husband) from her household.

"You are a fickle child," said Wina, still angry. "One day you are wild for the town, and the next for a country life."

"I am really only wild for a country life," answered Elizabeth; "I liked a town life only to please you; at least, I am not quite sure."

"To please us! I think you might have consulted us about your travelling plans," said Wina.

"But I knew beforehand you would not like them," replied Elizabeth, frankly.

Elise had left the room. Emboldened by her absence, Wina remarked hastily, "because we do not wish you to become a perfect rustic."

Elizabeth looked haughtily at her aunt. An answer was already on her lips, when the good-natured Paula exclaimed, "Child, do not be angry, just as you are going away; you must know, dear Elizabeth, that we shall be very lonely when you are gone."

"When I return, I shall come to see you very often," said Elizabeth, rather touched, and fully convinced of the truth of her aunt's words. "I can

spend to-morrow evening with you, too," she added ;
" Aunt Wina, you will give me a farewell *fête* ? "

" You are a rogue," laughed Wina, already inclined to reconciliation, and there needed only a few of Elizabeth's amusing speeches to restore the aunts to perfect equanimity.

CHAPTER X.

AN UNEHOPED-FOR RENCONTRE.

ON the morning after the parting *fête*, the Privy-Counsellor, with his wife and children, went to the railway; Karl, as the practical genius, took the luggage and carpet bags in a droschky. The children had an infinite number of messages to send to their favourites, young and old, in Woltheim, and it was a tolerable trial of Elizabeth's patience to hear them all; but she was very amiable, and had for each commission some pleasant answer, till she was sitting with her mother in the carriage, and could only give friendly nods and smiles. The mother and daughter were alike silent on the journey. What with household arrangements, packing up, and the whole busy morning, the former was tired, but she had very pleasant thoughts. She mused with joy on Elizabeth's easy departure from the gay winter-life in Berlin, and she felt sure that her precious child was as yet uninjured. She began to weave the most charming plans for their household life the next and many following winters.

Elizabeth, too, had pleasant thoughts. The life with her grandparents was spread out in glowing colours before her, but one image was blended with it that sent a warm ray through her soul, an image that she had tried so earnestly through all the last Advent to banish, but which ever rose up again, and, since the Romeo evening, had filled her whole heart. At this same time the old Friedrich, with the old grey horses and the old carriage, was also on his way. Both horses and carriage were nearly thirty years old. As they were still in good condition, there had been no inducement to change them. Moreover, there was something particularly venerable in their appearance, so that they were respected by the whole country round. When the horses with their measured tread or trot came by, the people in the little towns and villages, young and old, exclaimed, "Ah! the good Herr von Woltheim!" and at the little railway station this equipage was treated with far more respect than the elegant modern carriages of the gentry in the neighbourhood.

As Friedrich, at a very slow pace—naturally, for the carriage was empty—drove past Braunhausen, a horseman, a young officer, came galloping along. "Are you going to the railway?" asked he.

"At your service, Lieutenant," replied Friedrich, touching his hat. The horses stopped of their own accord.

"For whom are you going?" asked the Lieutenant, further.

"Frau Kuhnemann and the young lady," was Friedrich's answer.

The young officer looked at his watch; in half an hour the train would arrive. "You will be too late," he observed.

"Yes, yes, that is true," assented Friedrich; and away flew the rider, while the gray horses trotted leisurely on.

"An active young fellow," said Friedrich, smiling. "It does one's heart good to see him. Ah! when we were young, we could ride too, my gracious master always, and Friedrich Kaseman not far behind. Yes; a soldier's calling is a glorious one, but it does not do when one is old. I and my horses will not be in time at the railway; but nothing in the world likes to be hurried; and if we are slow we are sure."

Sure they were, but in time they were not. Elisabeth and her mother had looked out for the gray horses from some distance.

"They are not there," was the mutual remark. The train stopped. At the same time a horseman rode past; as the shrill whistle of the locomotive rang through the air, the horse reared, but was speedily mastered. Its rider sprang from the saddle, and throw- the reins to a labourer, hastened to the platform. Both travellers had observed all this; a weight came upon

the soul of the mother. She felt as though she had been dazzled, and now for the first time saw clearly.

"Herr von Kadden here? Had that any connection with Elizabeth's joyful departure? and how strange! Was there not every appearance of their being formally expected?"

A terrible suspicion entered her soul. She looked at Elizabeth, but there was no trace of an evil conscience in the delighted surprise that lit up her large bright eyes.

"It is wonderful that he should be here," she too thought.

When the porter opened the doors, he was already close to them; his fresh, youthful features, looking so frank and happy, that the mother's heart warmed towards him, and she could do no other than pleasantly return his greeting.

"I come to tell you that your carriage cannot be here for half an hour," said he, stepping forward.

"How do you know?" asked Elise.

"I passed it as I was riding," replied Herr von Kadden. "I know the carriage very well, it is so often among the spectators at our exercise."

"Yes, the coachman was formerly a cuirassier, and takes great delight in all military affairs."

She stopped short; she scarcely knew whether to leave wraps and carriage-bags to the care of Herr von Kadden or not, and was far more embarrassed

than her daughter, who had quietly accepted the services of the knight. After her first joyful surprise, Elizabeth had behaved with perfect self-control; and when she met his searching glance, with its blended expression of joy and pain, she quickly turned to his horse and asked,

"Whether the wild animal had taken him safely home that night?"

He replied in the affirmative, and added, "Since then, I have been three times in Berlin. Do you still take your English lessons on Friday?"

"I have not for some time," answered she, without looking at him; "but I go to see my English teacher sometimes."

They had both entered the refreshment-room. Elise greeted the well-known waiting woman, and ordered, as usual, some coffee. A few peasants had entered this the only warm room at the same time with them; the hostess arranged the best corner for her distinguished guests. Herr von Kadden followed the natural feeling. "He who will have the daughter must stand well with the mother." While Elizabeth stood in one window, he placed himself opposite to the very keen and observant Madame Kuhneman. The heavy foreboding she had felt at his first appearance, the night of the ball, pressed upon her heart, but she was wise enough to adapt herself to the present circumstances, and took this opportunity of examining him in some

wise. She began with a few inquiries for different well-known families in Braunhausen. He was not at all reserved in his judgment, but he spoke good-naturedly, and for the most part very much to the point. "He had not been long in Braunhausen; he wished very much to see more of family-life. Some families seemed to him very commonplace; others tiresome, and the Counsellor——" He stopped short and blushed. Elise smiled.

"The Counsellor was 'a pietist,' and so utterly devoid of 'tact,' " said Herr von Kadden, finishing his sentence more calmly.

Madame Kuhneman could not contradict this. He went on rapidly to tell her that he had quite lately, with some other friends, visited Herr von Budmar, as a former comrade.

"This, too!" thought Elise.

"I was delighted with that old patriarchal house," he added, with great warmth. "I have never known one like it before, for I am a homeless man, a true soldier's child."

Elise asked after his parents and his family, and he related that his parents had died when he was a child. His grandfather, also an old soldier, had taken charge of him for a few years till he went to a military school; his only sister had been educated at a boarding school, and was now married to an officer, and settled on the Rhine. "I could envy my servant," he

added earnestly, "when he talks so proudly of his native village and all his relations."

"Ah! yes; home, with a large family circle, is a rich blessing," said Elise, kindly. She began to look upon the speaker with interest.

"One thing gladdened me so much," continued Herr von Kadden, with great vivacity. "Last year, when I obtained my majority, my guardian sent me an old walnut-tree chest; my grandfather had expressly ordered in his will that it should not be sold, in spite of my guardians' representations that the carriage here* from the Rhine, where my grandfather then lived, would be more than its value. This chest was an heirloom from my great-grandfather, and contained some almost unused table-linen of my great-grandmother's spinning, a few old books, and a large old Bible with pictures, with a little family chronicle and letters of my parents, especially my mother."

Elise listened with great interest, and Elizabeth had gradually drawn nearer.

"The chest is the greatest treasure in my room," he continued. "Despite the raillery of my comrades, if I sometimes feel more than usually homeless, I place myself before the coffer, and think how often my great-grandmother and grandmother have stood beside it, and I wonder what their life was, whether joyful or sorrowful; and if my servant is sometimes very grand about his many relations, I show him the things

in the old chest. He admires the linen as one who is qualified to judge, and when I have company we always use the napkins from it."

"A family chronicle in a Bible is to me a beautiful thing," said Elizabeth.

"Yes, for a hundred years every member of the family has been entered," continued the young man, "my name is the last. My grandfather wrote a verse from the Bible by the side of it."

"Which?" asked Elizabeth, quickly.

"I don't exactly know," was his embarrassed answer.

At that moment the gray horses approached the doors, and Elizabeth left the room to greet them.

"Here we are at last, by good luck," said Friedrich, taking off his military cap.

Elizabeth inquired for her grandpapa and grand mamma, uncle and aunt, and received the wished-for answers to all her questions.

"If the ladies give permission, my horses shall have some bread before they trot back."

"And you must first have some coffee," replied Elizabeth.

Friedrich smiled, and the hostess, who was standing in the doorway, went to bring him some immediately.

Elizabeth took some white bread to feed the horses, just as the workman with Herr von Kadden's beautiful nut brown horse approached.

"He got here before I did," said Friedrich.

The man laughed.

"Will he eat white bread?" asked Elizabeth, and held him a piece.

"Yes, indeed!" she exclaimed merrily, for he seemed to like it very well.

At the same moment Herr von Kadden came out, and, leaning against his horse, watched Elizabeth's delight as she fed the three animals.

At the window stood another looker-on, with a very heavy heart. Her sorrowful foreboding was fast becoming a certainty. Was this young, unsettled man to be the guide and master of her Elizabeth, child in all respects as she was, as little to be relied on as he? She looked thoughtfully on the handsome pair. Elizabeth wore a large blue *crêpe de chine* shawl over her dark woollen dress; she had wrapped it round her, and loosely tied the ends behind. She looked happy as a little child; he, on the contrary, was serious, nay almost mournful; and in his plain, dark surtout, certainly looked much more manly and imposing than in his ball-room dress.

As he stood leaning against his horse, it occurred to him that he had been over bold in joining the ladies, and had no right to press into this unknown family circle, he a stranger here as everywhere.

Elizabeth had scarcely looked at him to-day. "Which

is the gentlest of your horses?" said she to Friedrich, who just then approached with his black bread.

Friedrich assured her they were both very gentle; but after a moment's consideration, added, "Ypsilanti is perhaps the quieter of the two."

"For a lady's horse?" continued Elizabeth.

"For a lady's horse—well—yes; he has an easier trot."

"He is quite past galloping?" said Elizabeth, somewhat timidly.

"Ah! yes; his galloping days are over."

"And he would do much better for a lady's saddle?"

"A lady's saddle!" exclaimed Friedrich, in astonishment. "Oh, no."

"Oh, yes, Friedrich," said Elizabeth, very decidedly. "I mean to ride sometimes."

"Ride! Heigh!" exclaimed Friedrich, with increasing astonishment.

"You know," continued Elizabeth, "that grand-mamma has a steel-green habit."

"Yes, yes," interrupted Friedrich, eagerly, "our gracious lady was a beautiful horsewoman."

"And your riding-coat is there, too."

"Indeed!" said Friedrich, laughing heartily. "Ah, I was a slim youth then; but after I became a cuirassier, I grew in breadth only."

"But, Friedrich, it would fit you very well now," observed Elizabeth, quite seriously.

"No, no," answered Friedrich, shaking his gray head.

"But, Friedrich, I have reckoned upon it so much," pleaded Elizabeth.

"Hem—hem!" said Friedrich, "my dear young lady, it would be a pleasure neither for me nor for the horse."

Elizabeth, in her zeal, now looked up for the first time at Herr von Kadden, who, in listening to this conversation, had forgotten his trouble, and was biting his lips to conceal his laughter. She remarked it, and said almost angrily,

"I cannot see why it should not be done."

"What a shame that my horse has never been trained for a lady!" he remarked politely.

"I would not ride on such a *hot-head*," answered Elizabeth hastily, and turned to the door where her mother had just appeared.

The latter began a short discussion with Friedrich—in ten minutes the horses would be ready—his old friend, the waiting woman, was beckoning him with a cup of coffee.

"As the day is so beautiful we will stroll quietly on," proposed the mother to Elizabeth.

She was only too willing, and would have started at once.

"Not without your hat and cloak," said her mother, with a smile.

In an instant Herr von Kadden sprang in, and returned with both. He helped Elizabeth to put them on, and hoped for one glance; but she thanked him without looking up. He grew impatient.

"I am a fool," he thought. "The only reasonable course would be to ride away and give up the affair. My old chest takes as much interest in me as she does."

Elizabeth plainly guessed his mood, as he quite involuntarily grasped the bridle with unsteady hand. She looked up, saw how earnestly his large dark blue eyes were fixed on her, and asked with timid smile, "Whether it really would not do for the gray horse?"

"I think not," said he, looking no longer angry, but a little mournful. "Why did you reject my proposal so hastily?" he added.

Elise had now ended her conversation with the woman, and turned to Herr von Kadden. She wished he would take leave, and that he would not wait for her to speak. But he breathed again freely, drew his hand from the bridle, and asked permission to accompany them a little way. She could not refuse, and all three had soon entered a very pretty coppice of young fir-trees.

"How exquisitely beautiful it is here!" said Elise. "This perfect repose and the glow of the sun—very different to the Zoological Gardens."

"To me it is like a dream!" remarked Elizabeth

suddenly. "I am away from the noisy Berlin in a solitary wood; and oh! what beautiful moss is growing under these firs," she exclaimed with delight, stooping to gather some.

Herr von Kadden bent at the same time to help her. They had both gathered a small bouquet ere long; he offered his to her, and held out his hand for hers with a beseeching glance. She lingered, but gave it him, after having first picked a few fir-tree sprays, and then hastened to her mother, who was a few paces in advance of them. Herr von Kadden picked a few sprays from the fir also, and carefully placed the bouquet in the breast pocket of his uniform. Elizabeth's mother saw this, thought nothing of it, but was a little surprised that he suddenly became very merry, returned to the subject of Ypsilanti with Elizabeth, and expatiated on the bright ideas with much humour. Elizabeth turned, and would fain have been angry, but he had the bouquet in his pocket, and feared naught. The gray horse came at last. The ladies entered the carriage, and he hastened back that he might give them one more greeting as he galloped past.

CHAPTER XI.

LIFE WITH THE GRANDPARENTS.

ELISE remained four days with Elizabeth, and then departed. She left her anxieties with her child behind her. Her parents were both so perfectly tranquil: and they had much experience of the world. Their daughter Julia had once had in her youth a foolish love affair, and had afterwards married an excellent man. Elizabeth's warm heart might beat a little more quickly, and Herr von Kadden might be attentive to so pretty a girl, without any serious purpose. The grand-parents would investigate the affair cautiously; it would not be difficult for the grandmamma. She was her child's best beloved friend. Elise was obliged to acknowledge it; though she could not overcome the bitter feeling it gave her. She pleaded in self-justification: "Elizabeth has been so much with her grandmamma, it is quite natural. But it must ever be very painful, when a grown-up daughter is strange to the heart of her mother; when she never comes to repose there, never seeks the sweet glance of

mutual confidence." There was nought of this between Elizabeth and her mother; the latter was the faithful teacher and adviser, but never the confidante of her childish pleasures and fancies—never the bright cheerful friend of her youth. How should this perfect union, this thirst for sympathy, come all at once? While Elise was continually reflecting on the same subject, and tormenting herself therewith, Elizabeth was perfectly happy with her grandparents; her dancing feet and singing voice were heard up and down the house; she talked of farming with Charlotte, and Uncle Karl, and old Friedrich; gave orders occasionally, and felt and owned, but only to her tenderly-loved and revered grandparents, that she was still imperfect, and meant to alter. The lieutenant in the cuirassiers was soon forgotten by the grandparents; Elizabeth seemed to be better occupied than in brooding over a secret in inclination. The day after the departure of Elise was very cold and cloudy. The sun was veiled till noon, then came a few solitary beams. By degrees it broke forth ever more and more gloriously, till the mass of clouds was conquered, and the earth was lit up with unwonted splendour. Stars and blossoms were scattered around, and the magic glow not only bathed the mightiest trees, but the tiniest flowers and grasses with golden light. The grandparents had taken their mid-day rest, and now they went to the window and gazed with heartfelt delight on the beautiful scene before them.

"One need not take a long journey," said the grandmamma, "to see the beauties of the world."

"No, dear Mary," replied the grandpapa, "one has only to look out of the window, here is a work of the Creator that must move any human soul to wonder and praise."

He opened the window, and their eyes wandered far over this spring-like, winter landscape. The little garden that lay behind the house was no longer separated from the meadow by the old wall, the whole was thrown together, planted with groups of beautiful trees, and enclosed with a hedge. It had been grandmamma's first wish when she came to the house. Brother Karl had found great difficulty in carrying it out, because the paths that were to wind through the turf would cause much loss of hay, however, at last, he good-naturedly yielded. From the window of their sitting-room they now saw the fir-clad hills, and, winter and summer alike, this open view of the beautiful landscape was a constant pleasure. At the opening of the window a whole troop of crested larks and yellow-hammers appeared, fluttering and hopping about on the white snow, pecking here and there at the crystal blossoms, but evidently expecting something better. The grandmamma, smiling, fetched a little box of grain, scattered a portion down, and watched the little hungry creatures with childlike joy, while her husband stood beside her, looking into the clear sweet eyes that had once charmed his youth, and

were still his heart's joy and bliss. The tinkling of sledge bells came nearer and nearer.

"Ah!" said grandpapa, laughing; "Elizabeth has set Friedrich to haul out the old sledge."

"If it only makes her happy," said the kind-hearted grandmamma.

There was a sound of hoofs on the road that led from the court to the garden, and the next moment Ypsilanti appeared, a red velvet bell-harness on his broad white shoulders; and behind, Elizabeth in a sledge which glittered with a whole heaven of stars; while she herself was clad in her gayest costume. Evidently she wished to make an imposing appearance. And now the grandparents fairly laughed aloud. Behind sat Friedrich's slim stable boy, in top-boots, military cap, and the leather-coloured riding-coat; an immense whip in his hand, which he cracked in the most approved fashion; while Elizabeth held the reins, and guided the steady trot of Ypsilanti. Her grandmamma assured her the whole turn-out was perfect. Elizabeth drove past with triumphant glance, in order that they might decide whether the equipage was beautiful enough to take the Ranger's children into the town. Grandpapa most readily chimed in with the proposal; he assured her the whole had a princely appearance, and would astonish all Woltheim. He gave her a few directions about driving, lest she should run against the wheels of passing carriages; and Elizabeth, who

was not holding the reins for the first time, drove through the garden-door into the court, that she might be duly admired by Uncle Karl and Charlotte, before she went on to the Ranger's. On her appearance there the whole household came out together to admire the elegant equipage, and the children took their places by their beautiful Berlin cousin, in astonishment and transport. Their mother shook her head somewhat doubtfully at the completely juvenile party in the sledge, but her husband assured her Ypsilanti had age and thoughtfulness enough for the whole party, and would take care of all turnings for himself. They drove in great style through the town. The little and great houses, the church, the ancient senate-house, with its stately lindens before it, looked alike glorious in their winter dress.

"Oh, how marvellously beautiful is the country! You good old Aunts do not yet know, that one needs no other joys than those God has given us. Ah! I will never ask for others. If I were now in Berlin, I would take the children beyond the gates, and run about with them on the ice and snow, and I would think no more of 'Romeo and Juliet;' it only perplexes me. I don't know how it took possession of me so wonderfully; but Mamma was right; it does no one any good." Such were Elizabeth's thoughts. But ever and anon she had something merry to say to the children, till at length they turned again to the Ranger's house.

and she safely delivered up her young charges. After this she went round the town and then home. As she drew nigh her grandfather's, it occurred to her that she must drive once up the cherry-tree avenue. The trees stood out against the blue sky almost as though they were in blossom.

"We will then cross the sheep-bridge to the meadow, and come back through the garden," she observed, turning to her little groom.

"Very well, my lady," was his answer, as he snapt his whip. The bells rang, and they went merrily up the cherry-tree walk. They halted at the 'sheep-bridge, while Elizabeth looked at it carefully.

"The bridge is rather narrower than the sledge," she remarked.

"To all appearance," answered the little coachman.

"Then we will get out and hold the sledge upon one side," proposed Elizabeth. He made no objection. They had just alighted, when two horsemen galloped over the common.

"For Heaven's sake, my dear young lady, be careful!" exclaimed Herr von Stottenheim. He and his comrade, Herr von Kadden, were both on their way to call on her grandpapa. The younger rider was little occupied with the peril of the transit; he had no eyes save for the sledge, and groom, and the lady. Still, he had already dismounted, that he might be of use in the passage of the former.

Elizabeth summoned all her dignity, and said with much spirit, "I particularly request you not to give yourself any trouble I need no help and will not come under the suspicion that I have undertaken more than I can accomplish."

Herr von Stottenheim, with many words, had sprung down from his horse, while his comrade fastened the bridle of his to a willow, and walked up the frozen stream to watch the proceedings. Elizabeth was perfectly composed, she led Ypsilanti across herself, and with the help of the strong lad, held up one side of the sledge. A few more steps and they were over. Herr von Kadden assisted her to get in and was quite of her opinion that there had been nothing to fear, while his friend proposed to ride on and inform the grandparents of the danger so happily surmounted.

"No more than the truth if you please," said Elizabeth, proudly, and then drove on.

"Now, Kadden, I implore you to decide quickly," said Herr von Stottenheim, as his friend mounted his horse.

"I confess to you no girl has ever so moved my heart, but I act as a friend."

The other made no answer, he only smiled, set spurs to his horse, and bounded on.

"Don't ride so madly," cried out Stottenheim, angrily.

Both horsemen reached their goal long before Ypsa

lanti; and while Herr von Stottenheim was describing, in very glowing colours, the dangerous passage of the Beresina, his younger friend hastened through the hall to receive the approaching sledge. Elizabeth alighted, they made a few ordinary remarks to each other, for when two hearts love, they are little disposed to ask for the clever or the witty. Elizabeth entered the room blooming as ever, and spoke with pleasure of her journey. Uncle Karl and Charlotte were there, and joined the circle of her adoring listeners. They had all now taken seats, and were quite at ease. A large painted coffee-biggins, and some plates of well-kept Christmas cakes were brought in. Elizabeth arranged the cups, while Charlotte sat in peace in her arm chair with her everlasting knitting. The two elder gentlemen took their pipes, and cigars were handed to the younger ones. When the grand-mamma, as she had been taught by her uncle the old Ranger, would have held the alumette for her husband, he approached her with the same tenderness as on the day of their betrothal, and waited upon himself. A mutual smile was the only explanation.

"A charming old pair!" thought Herr von Stottenheim, while his friend's warm heart was perfectly overflowing with good resolutions.

But however pleasant the grandparents might be, one subject was never out of their thoughts, they would test him, without any appearance of purpose

The grandpapa addressed himself chiefly to Herr von Kadden, and it was peculiarly vexatious that his comrade would ever take upon himself the answer with marvellous fluency. At last the grandpapa made a decided hit—"Do tell me, Herr von Kadden, how you earned the name of 'Hot-head?' you look so very quiet."

"That is just the dangerous part of the thing," again interrupted Herr von Stottenheim, quickly. "He always looks as though he could not count five, as though he were the most reasonable creature in the world; in his company you are always on a slumbering volcano."

"Very good!" observed Herr von Kadden, smiling; "but if I am a true volcano, the fire must be smouldering within, and I really feel no traces of it."

"True, upon my honour," continued Herr von Stottenheim, "for some time he has been wonderfully changed; at least his servant relates with astonishment that the piquant little scenes which used to enliven their life have quite come to an end."

Herr von Kadden turned, smiling to Elizabeth, who was sitting near him, and said lightly, "I have always given him double."

No one noticed the observation, because the universal attention was directed to Herr von Stottenheim, whose remarks at this moment were unheeded by Elizabeth and her neighbour.

"Only yesterday his servant, poor fellow, was regaled with a violent box on the ear; and why? His extraordinary master had placed a little glass of moss and fir-sprays upon his treasure—his old chest—and——"

"Stottenheim!" exclaimed Herr von Kadden angrily, while his face glowed with indignation.

"Pardon! a mere joke," said his comrade; "but I am silent."

"Herr von Kadden will tell us himself," said the grandpapa, pleasantly.

"My friend understands it better than I," was the very curt answer.

A short pause followed.

"Did the servant upset the glass?" asked the grandmamma kindly.

"No; it was a stupid thing of him," replied Herr von Stottenheim, "but when he set the room to rights he threw the treasure away. No doubt, he could have brought his master a whole waggon-load of moss and sprays, but that would not have repaired the loss."

Herr von Stottenheim had resumed his relation again so courageously, because he remarked, "that the peril with his friend was quickly over."

The latter smiled with perfect composure—smiled because he thought, "At least she will see that the nosegay was very dear to me."

Meanwhile the grandmamma had her own thoughts. Elizabeth had a cluster of moss and fir-sprays standing upon her drawers.

"Was it a principle in his training that the servant should have his ears boxed?" asked the grandpapa with more seriousness.

"Certainly not," answered Herr von Kadden; and after a moment's pause, he added frankly, "I cannot understand how people can be tranquil in such cases."

"That I can believe," observed the grandpapa, thoughtfully.

"I must say," began Herr von Stottenheim again, "Kadden did not earn his title from these little private occurrences. There are other reasons—reasons that do him infinite honour; he is a compound of bravery, valour, and skill, that help him out of the greatest dangers; in fact, dangers do not exist for him."

Stottenheim, willing to make his peace entirely with his friend, went on to relate, with wonderful eloquence, a few incredible anecdotes, which Herr von Kadden so completely upset by a series of comic objections, that no one could exactly make them out, and the conversation was changed. Herr von Stottenheim then plunged into agricultural subjects with Uncle Karl, and spoke much of a fine estate of his brother's; while the grandmamma made many friendly inquiries about Herr von Kadden's family.

"Kadden!" said the grandpapa suddenly, with vivacity, "it has just occurred to me that after the battle of Leipzig, I lay for some days in the house of a peasant where there also was an officer of that name. I had been shot in the left arm, but my comrade was severely wounded."

"My grandfather, perhaps," said Herr von Kadden, eagerly.

"Was your grandfather in that campaign?"

"I know that he was wounded at Leipzig," replied the young officer.

"At that time we related our histories to each other," continued the grandpapa; "I told him of my wife and little children at home. He was a widower, and commended to me his only son, who was then at a military school."

"That was my father," exclaimed Herr von Kadden, very joyously.

"But when we were obliged to part there was every probability of his recovery, and I have never heard of him since," ended the grandpapa.

"It must have been my grandfather," repeated Herr von Kadden. He then described the old gentleman, and proved that his father must have been at the military school exactly at that time.

"How wonderfully people come together in the world," said Herr von Budmar thoughtfully; "that is the grandfather who left you the chest and the Bible?"

Kadden assented, and spoke with affection of his residence with the old gentleman, his one brief home.

"What was the verse that he wrote for you on your birthday?" asked the grandmamma.

"I have forgotten," he answered, in slight confusion.

They now spoke further of the time of the war. Charlotte related that her mamma had once been in despair, because the Russians had taken their whole little flock of geese, chopped off their heads, strewed the feathers all about, and then roasted the birds.

"Yes, roasted them here," interrupted Uncle Karl. "I remember the day but too well. They made me provide the sour kraut. It was a terrible time; anything like regular farming was quite impossible, one's very head was perfectly bewildered. Once I wanted to ascertain the width of the marl-pit, and——"

"Yes, yes," said the grandpapa, cutting short the story. "it was an evil time; but God helped us through it."

The grandmamma and Charlotte assented with fervour, and Herr von Stottenheim brought the visit to an end.

As the last streaks of crimson were glowing in the heavens, the grandparents and Elizabeth stood at the window and watched the two horsemen riding over the snowy common. All three were silent. Elizabeth was leaning upon her grandmamma. After a time,

the grandpapa began seriously—"It is very melancholy to see how many men live in the world without a home, or even the longing for one. If after this life nothing more followed, it would not be worth the trouble to live."

The grandmamma took his hand, and gazed thoughtfully on his fine, expressive face.

"In youth," he continued, "most men have decided yearnings in their hearts, but they seek to satisfy them in the world; and if the world blunts this yearning, and hoping, and happy looking to the future, they think they have enjoyed their youth, and now must endure a wearisome old age. It is the course of the world, and cannot be altered; yes, it is the course of the world—the treacherous, unworthy world, that ever deceives and dazzles the youthful heart, promising it enjoyment and bliss, and leaving it poor and miserable. The world is full of the most hateful ingratitude; she rewards the love of her children with ruin and misery—with terrible, almost indescribable misery, which they carefully strive to conceal from each other. They meet together, outwardly very pleasant and contented; they mutually strive to pass away the time and enjoy themselves, but their empty, solitary hours, when the feeling of old age draws nigh, the loss of strength and power to enjoy the pleasures and dissipations of the world, the loss of friends, their terror at the approach of death, each one carefully

conceals from the other. They play the hypocrite; they keep their misery carefully in the background, for the much-admired world has no comfort to give. He who lives with the world passes away and perishes with the world: he who would one day live in the kingdom of heaven, must begin to live in it now; for it is not only above; it is here among us, a mighty, wonderful kingdom, in which the faithful live now and are blest. There is no more fear for them but the fear of sin, no more peril, no more loss. Their blessings are secured to them, even their very dearest; for death cannot rob them of their friends, though he may compel them to walk without them a little while, until he comes for them himself—no dreaded enemy, but a welcome guide from a world of imperfection and unrest to one of perfect bliss. If the children of the world hear aught of this, they deem it mere enthusiasm—play of the imagination. ‘Fools!’ they say in their heart, ‘there is no God;’—for the God whom they reverence and worship is a terrible God, who leaves his unhappy children poor and miserable, without hope, or faith, or consolation. Yes, they have ears, and hear not; they have eyes, and see not; they are blinded by pride. All through the Holy Scriptures we see that pride is the sin most severely punished, and pride leads the children of this world to ruin. They admire their own cleverness, for their very pride has confounded their sight. In their self-admired littleness they go through

the world well satisfied with their own industry and ability, and ready to use the spark of reason their Lord has given them to oppose and deny Him. They cannot imagine that the Lord who has created and now invisibly governs this present order of things, can one day establish a freer, richer, more glorious state; nay, at all such declarations and hopes they sneer in their childish conceit."

"But, grandpapa," began Elizabeth, "many men have no opportunity of hearing of the kingdom of God; they have been differently brought up."

"Here, in our Christian land," answered the grandpapa, "all hear of the Lord Jesus Christ; and if they do not reject Him, He is the Saviour for all. These young officers," he continued (it was on their account he had thus spoken), "have no need of a Saviour. Could you find anywhere a more self-satisfied man than Herr von Stottenheim? and his young friend scarcely looks at his old Bible, and knows not what verse his grandfather left him as the best treasure to take with him on the journey of life."

Elizabeth was silent. Had not Herr von Kadden said to her himself, "'The preacher speaks so strangely of heaven and hell. I make them for myself by my own good conscience -- a heaven from the consciousness of one's own uprightness!' If he should once raise his eyes above his own state; if he should ever see what it must be in the sight of a holy

God, what will become of his heaven? This self-righteousness, this phantom of virtue, is the self-created God of which grandpapa spoke, that so insidiously offers a heaven of its own to the young, and conceals the eternal hell behind. But he is unjust in one thing," she thought further. "Many men know not what they are doing when they reject Christ; and he who relies so much upon his virtue, if he only knew Him, would not do it. Aspirations and yearnings for heaven are incomprehensible to him; but when he stands before his old chest that contains his Bible, and thinks his solitary heart is yearning for a home, it is in reality yearning for peace and eternal happiness. Yes, if any one would show him the way, he would gladly walk in it. If he were only taught, and if from love to me——"

Elizabeth stopped short in her thoughts.

"Oh! fool that I am! would he become faithful to his Lord for love of me? Oh! no, I am myself so weak. Should I not rather fall back to the world for love of him? To the world? and then be poor and miserable with him. Oh! no, my Saviour, I can never reject Thee. I will never forget that I am poor and weak, and that Thou, in Thy free love and grace, art my Redeemer. Hold Thou me fast if I falter! But, oh! Christ, hold him also," she added, with beating heart, "for I must ever bear him upon my soul."

The gathering shades of night had darkened the room. The grandparents sat in silence upon the sofa; Elizabeth stood alone. Her thoughts became more and more untr tranquil, and boding, and heavy; she went to the piano, struck a few chords, and sang softly, her grandparent's joining:

' In deep distress to Thee I call,
Oh! hear me from on high,
And let Thy gracious ear, Oh Lord!
Be open to my cry
If thou shouldst be extreme to view,
The sin, the evil that we do,
Ah! who dare meet Thine eye?

' We have no goodness of our own
Pardon to win from Thee
The very holiest life is naught
Our right oneness no plea
Before Thy presence who could boast
Without Thy grace we were but lost
That grace so full and free!"

"Dear Elizabeth," said her grandpapa kindly, "if you never forget this song, if you can utter it from your heart with true humility, you may fall into the deepest distress but the Lord will save you."

Elizabeth rose from the piano and seated herself at her grandparents' feet—"If I joined a Moravian community, it would be better for me," she said.

"Would you do it?" asked her grandpapa smiling. She shook her head.

"Yes," observed her Grandmamma, "in a Moravian community there would perhaps be fewer outward temptations for you; but your own heart, and conflicts with sin you would find there too; and Christ, the true Shepherd, who seeks and carries you in His

arms you have here as much as there Where there is danger He helps the most, the lost and wandering sheep He ever seeks for the most tenderly I know well," she added, "you will overcome, but, dearest Elizabeth, I would save you also from unhappiness, from severe conflicts, therefore be watchful and true

Elizabeth was silent

"It is not difficult for us to overcome the world," continued her grandmamma affectionately, "for us, who stand above it, its bands are but as the spider's web, if it would weave them around us, we smile and crush them in our hands But to those who have not courage to break with the world, who flatter themselves they can lead a Christian life within it, to them the slight web becomes a net, and if they would gladly disentangle themselves, and have partly set themselves free, they feel constantly bound again on all sides, and their life is a never ending struggle,—sighing, they say, 'How hard it is to be a Christian!' Healthy minds can scarcely comprehend it, but in truth the devil is a mighty lord, and a good philosopher"

"I only wish my life to be like yours," said Elizabeth, "no other would be so beautiful to me"

"Then I wish you may win as good a husband as I have," replied her grandmamma

"But my husband will like to live as I live," said Elizabeth, with an attempt to be playful.

"Therefore he must be very good," concluded the grandmamma

CHAPTER XII.

THE QUIRASSIER AT THE RIGHT TIME.

ONE beautiful winter's day followed another, to Elizabeth's joy; she was not weary of the sledge. She took her grandparents into the beautiful cherry-tree avenue, and Charlotte and the Ranger's family into the town. Besides that, she took long walks, accompanied the Ranger to the felling of the trees, or inspected the court and farm for the benefit of Uncle Karl. She was perfectly content with her country life.

"The child does not look as though she had a secret inclination," said her grandfather to his beloved wife.

"I know it may be, though," she answered, smiling, "however good-humoured and happy one may appear."

"True," said he, thoughtfully, "Once I scarcely knew how it stood with your heart."

"Yes," continued the grandmamma, "it is a wonderful thing; sometimes it is as though one were dreaming, and it could not be true; then one casts

away all pining and heaviness; one is bright and joyous as of old, and then, again, it seems to be really true, and the heart is burdened; at least it is so with maidens," she added earnestly.

"And with young men," said the grandpapa, well pleased; "but we will not make ourselves anxious about other maidens and young men."

"Will not? Nay," said she; "but ——"

At that moment came an invitation from the Ranger's. Mary, a little girl of twelve, entered in high glee. "Papa shot such a beautiful stag this morning!"

"Ah! then you are going to have the liver this evening?" interrupted her grandpapa; "mamma is a good manager."

"Oh no!" said Mary, quite excited, "we have already eaten the liver at dinner; we are going to have a shoulder this evening, and, you know, grandpapa, the shoulder is as tender as the loin; it was such a beautiful young stag. Mamma will have the neck roasted, too, that there may be plenty, for Uncle Karl and Charlotte must come. The doctor has been to our house, and he said Uncle could come in the carriage, and it would be much better for him than being so much shut up in his own room."

The invitation was accepted, but Mary did not go. She took Elizabeth into a recess of the window, for she had a delightful secret to impart to her. "I have thought of an artistic representation for this evening,"

she began, with great eagerness. "We will perform Tell—Schiller's 'William Tell,' you know?"

Elizabeth nodded.

"You shall be Bertha," continued Mary, "that is the most striking character in the play. Herr Rennieke (her papa's book-keeper) has undertaken Gessler. I am Tell's wife. Max has already acted Tell beautifully. The little ones also play with us, and mamma has given us the large apple."

"Have you the costume?" asked Elizabeth, with great interest.

"Almost all ready," replied Mary. "I have a dark velvet jacket over a white skirt, and a little apron with rose-coloured trimmings. Tell has a hunting-cap with a feather, but we have nothing yet for Gessler, and you must look quite like a noble lady."

"Slim as the wife of a knight," chimed in Elizabeth; "yes, I will undertake that."

Her eyes beamed with childlike joy and kindness. "And I will make a mantle worthy of a knight for Gessler, with my boa and grandmamma's velvet cloak."

"Oh, that will do beautifully," exclaimed Mary, clapping her hands; and as grandpapa's curiosity was excited, and he came nearer, he was earnestly entreated not to spoil, through his curiosity, a most unusual enjoyment that was being prepared for him this evening. At last Mary left her favourite cousin quite possessed with the beauty and importance of her pros-

pects, and Elizabeth began to think with equal seriousness how she should dress herself for Bertha.

"Dear grandmamma," she began, as they were taking their coffee in the afternoon, after she had completed the Gessler mantle in Charlotte's room to her perfect satisfaction, "will you let me have the key of your old clothes-chest? There is a beautiful white dress there with a short waist."

"But not my wedding-dress?" interposed the grandmamma.

"Oh, no!" replied Elizabeth, "I mean one with a great deal of embroidery—I particularly want it."

Her grandmamma always understood these necessities, and was accustomed to help her children and grandchildren with their artistic representations; so she immediately gave the key, and Elizabeth quickly ran across the great entrance-hall, and disappeared with her treasures into Charlotte's room. Charlotte was only too happy with her dear child, helping her with the putting off and on, for naturally, the dress must first be tried here ere she could appear as Bertha. Even while Charlotte was standing before her, lost in admiration, she stepped to the mirror.

"Dear Elizabeth!" she exclaimed, "it is quite touching, heart-moving. You are now the very image of your grandmamma."

"I must alter my hair," said Elizabeth thoughtfully; she had seen the likeness herself, and was perfectly

enchanted. She fastened her bright brown curls back with Charlotte's side-combs, took her long plaits from behind, drew them up and fastened them tight on the top of her head.

"Now!" she exclaimed, "grandpapa must see me; there is no help for it, he will be so pleased. I shall seat myself under grandmamma's picture."

Charlotte ran on to entreat the grandparents to leave the sitting-room for one minute. Elizabeth implored Uncle Karl with all earnestness to come; and now began the sport. She seated herself on the sofa, exactly under her grandmamma's portrait; Uncle Karl and Charlotte stood opposite admiring; the crimson light from the evening sky streamed into the room, and filled it with its magic glow, as Elizabeth called out,

"Now, dear spectators, enter."

Her grandpapa stood as one enchanted; there was his youthful bride, the same form, the same spirited yet sweet expression, in the clear eyes.

"Yes," said Uncle Karl, rubbing his hands with glee, "the portrait as it lived and lives still; we only want the Cuirassier, and then the scene would be complete."

There was a knock at door; it opened, and in stepped Herr von Kadden. The little company were quite startled, and the grandpapa had the greatest difficulty in keeping Uncle Karl from repeating his last words.

The pretty scene was explained to the guest, who

felt like Karl that only the Cuirassier was wanting to make it complete. Elizabeth rose, and he went to her. There stood the pair in their youthful beauty, all irradiated with the evening light, and little in a state to conceal their feelings as they exchanged a few embarrassed words. The Uncle cleared his throat, and rubbed his hands; it was so difficult to refrain from saying. "Here is the Cuirassier, and a very handsome one." Charlotte handed to him the snuff-box that she had accustomed herself to carry and use for his pleasure, and looked at him with quiet tears. She had the same feeling when she looked on this scene as formerly when she had exclaimed: "Oh, Karl! how golden the moon is rising." Even the grandmamma, with all her experience of the world, and self-control, had lost her balance. Herr von Kadden had not only startled her by his sudden appearance, his look moved her heart. And the grandpapa thought, "It seems as though the thing were to go on before our old eyes. But we will intrust our darling to Him, without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground."

Elizabeth speedily withdrew to unrobe, and Herr von Kadden related to the grandparents that he and Stottenheim were availing themselves of a long-granted permission of the Ranger's, and were going to visit him to-day. But he had first come here to bring a letter of his grandfather's that he had found in the old chest among some papers of his father's. "I rejoiced,

over it like a child," said he warmly, "my grandfather speaks in it of his lying at Brachnitz."

"Yes, that was the name of the village," exclaimed Herr von Budmar.

"And he speaks of you with so much affection, you must read it."

Herr von Budmar took the letter, and went with it to the window.

"I have looked at the verse, and learnt it by heart," said the young officer, addressing the grandmamma.

She looked at him inquiringly.

"It is from Jeremiah, xxxi. 30. 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.'"

"That is a beautiful verse," said the grandmamma, thoughtfully; "and one very dear to my heart. I earnestly trust that God will fulfil it to you, in its whole signification."

"Yes," said Herr von Kadden, "the verse has much pleased me; it sounds like a prophecy for the future."

The grandmamma, with much tenderness and consideration, probed him a little deeper, and soon found that the young man looked upon this prophecy for the future, not as regarding his soul's salvation, but his happiness in this life. That God would make him happy, was his hope and wish; and how closely Elizabeth was bound up in this wish, was plainly to be read

in his agitation and whole discourse. Herr von Budmar gave the letter to his wife; and while he talked of it further with Herr von Kadden, she read as follows :

“BRACHNITZ, *Nov.* 1813.

“DEAR JOHN,—Through God's grace it seems as though my life would once more be given me. I am well content, for I feel that you, my poor boy, are still in need of me; though God is a truer Father to you than I can be. I have lain here eight days with a most kind, excellent man, one Herr von Budmar. I cannot say how great a comfort his presence has been to me, when I found myself on the brink of the grave. If you are ever left alone in the world, you may turn to him, for he has promised me that he will be your friend and adviser. I still feel very weak—God knows how it will be with me—but I am content.”

Then followed some few directions, and finally the exact address of Herr von Budmar. The grand-mamma held the letter thoughtfully in her hand. How strange that the grandson should bring this letter! Did he not bring with it a kind of claim upon Herr von Budmar's friendship? Was he not as much forsaken as the son John? From the time that Herr von Stottenheim had described his friend on his first visit, how in his favourite old chest he really loved his home; how lately he had shown his linen to his

landlady (an excellent citizen's wife), as if to impress upon her that he too had once had a grand and a great grandmother. All this had touched her heart, and she looked upon the young man with great interest. Of what good now were all her reflections? The actual thing was going on very naturally and innocently under her very eyes, without any notice being taken of it. Elizabeth entered again in her usual attire, and the great close carriage was announced. Charlotte and Uncle Karl prepared for the ride. The grandparents decided to go on foot, in the first place, as it was a very pretty walk; secondly, some one must go with the young people, as Herr von Kadden had naturally asked permission to accompany them. They went through the hall into the garden, and then passed through a little gate into the cherry-tree walk. Herr von Kadden walked with Elizabeth; the grandparents followed, but somewhat slowly; so that the young pair had occasionally to wait for them. In the cherry avenue Elizabeth carefully broke off a long spray that was glittering with the most beautiful crystal stars and blossoms. Herr von Kadden took it somewhat eagerly from her hand, and the stars fell off.

"Oh!" said he, ruefully, "but I do not like such flowers—they are too fleeting."

"The flowers that are hidden under these little brown buds are far dearer to me," replied Elizabeth;

"but one rejoices in this winter-spring, because it takes one's thoughts on to the true one."

In the avenue and thence to the Ranger's house, the walk was broad enough for the young people to go with the grandparents. All alike enjoyed the prospect of the beautiful white earth, and the glowing evening sky. On their arrival at the house their hostess, who had been informed by Herr von Stottenheim of his friend's visit to her parents, at once took her mother aside to converse with her a little on this interesting subject. The grandmamma could not deny that an inclination on his side was greatly to be feared.

"And Elisabeth's warm heart!" added Julia thoughtfully. "Do you know that the Burgomaster's daughter Anna was secretly betrothed? The parents have just found it out, and now it has been done openly."

The grandmamma was evidently startled.

"Elisabeth would never do that, but what is not possible in this world? and the child had been intrusted to them. They must not shut their eyes to such a matter any longer; they must seriously consider what was best to be done: she must take Elisabeth back to Berlin without delay, and speak to her mamma."

While Elisabeth and the children were very busy in the dining-room making curtains, with cloths and carpets, and washing-lines, the elder guests were sit-

ting in the same room in which the grandfather had once confided his love to the old uncle. The conversation fell upon the betrothal of the Burgomaster's daughter.

"I cannot comprehend," said Herr von Budmar seriously, "how the Burgomaster could trust his child to a man who has acted so shamefully!"

"As how?" asked Herr von Stotthenheim, eagerly. "He has secretly betrothed himself to a girl without saying a word to her parents," was Herr von Budmar's answer.

"And do you think that so great a crime?" asked the other, in much astonishment.

"To tempt a maiden to deceit and lying, and the breach of the fifth commandment!" exclaimed Herr von Budmar in still greater astonishment: "only in our evil days, where all the ordinances of God are so boldly spurned, could such a thing be regarded as though it were merely the innocent deed of two loving hearts. Believe me," he added, with great warmth. "God's blessing can never rest where his commandments have been broken. The maiden will too soon lead a very modern wedded life with her unprincipled lover."

Herr von Stotthenheim was silent, though he nodded in assent. He afterwards informed the Ranger that the bridegroom was not good for much, and that little happiness could be expected for Anna.

Herr von Kadden was silent. Even while the children were performing, and really with great taste and skill, he stood with folded arms at the window, lost in thought. Their hostess became visibly uneasy; she tried repeatedly, in her pleasing and affable manner, to draw him out, and then his blue eyes brightened, and he talked with interest; but it did not last.

"Are you musical?" she asked at length.

"He sings divinely," was Stottenheim's answer.

That was pleasant news to Frau von Schulz; she speedily opened the piano, and Herr von Kadden delayed no more. He first played a few chords, and then began the *lorelei* :

"What it may bode I know not,
But I am sad and drear,
A legend of the olden time
Is ringing in mine ear"

This once Herr von Stottenheim had not exaggerated; the hearers were all delighted with his friend's voice. Julia, in quite youthful zeal, hunted out Arion; he must sing a duet with her.

"It will give you the greatest pleasure to hear this glorious duet," said she to her guests.

"The affair becomes more and more critical," thought the grandmamma; looking at Elizabeth, "he is really very prepossessing and handsome." She then gazed upon her husband, and recalled her own youthful feelings. "He is not to be named with my Fritz," she thought;

"but by the side of Herr von Stottenheim, and a hundred other young men, he is a most accomplished and delightful creature." And again she pondered and weighed it all over in her motherly heart. Meanwhile the event, with light and steady step, was ever approaching. The duet was sung, and now the children came forward. They were a very musical family, and the grandparents were hardly less so. During the child-concert, the grandpapa stepped to the piano, and by chance rather nearer to Herr von Kadden, who was again standing at a window listening and reflecting.

"Will you listen to me for one minute?" said the latter, suddenly fetching a deep breath.

The old gentleman started; he expected what was coming, but he could not refuse, and he courteously approached him.

"I am so afraid lest I should act rashly," began the young man, timidly, "that I will tell you, before I speak to your granddaughter. You must advise me."

"Dear Herr von Kadden," answered the grandpapa quickly, "you are perhaps deceiving yourself; you know how often an inclination changes."

"Is my love not comprehensible to you?" interrupted Herr von Kadden, very modestly.

"Comprehensible? Oh, yes; but——"

The concert came to an end.

"You promise me to be very prudent."

Herr von Kadden quickly gave him his hand. "May I come again?" he whispered.

"I will come in a few days, and return the visits of both gentlemen," said the grandpapa, aloud, because the cessation of the music made a private conversation impossible.

Herr von Stottenheim, who was included in the proposal, overflowed with polite expressions at the unexpected honour, and for a short time kept up the conversation till the moment arrived for departure. Herr von Kadden conscientiously kept his word; he spoke no more with Elizabeth that evening, and took leave of her with the same courtesy and tranquillity as the others.

CHAPTER XIII.

A CRITICAL PROPOSAL.

A few days later the venerable carriage with the grandparents and Elizabeth was on its way to Braunhausen. In the previous autumn a new commander of the regiment had called on Herr von Budmar, and the Ranger with his wife and daughters. The visit might, perhaps, have never been returned; but on this occasion, when Herr von Budmar had promised to call on the younger officers, he could not well pass over the commander. The grandmamma and Elizabeth went with him. At the door Herr von Budmar left them, meaning to visit the other gentlemen first, and then to join them. Colonel von Bousack, his wife, and four daughters, were much pleased at so agreeable a visit. The master of the house remained with the elder ladies, waiting for Herr von Budmar, while the young ones seated themselves in a cosy little recess that was half concealed by a trellis covered with ivy. The two elder sisters were somewhat faded, though not old; the third was decidedly plain, but

Adolfine, the youngest, a girl of sixteen, was a very handsome brunette.

Elizabeth must tell them about Berlin,—the balls and theatres. She did so as well as she could, but became more and more silent as the talkativeness of the sisters increased.

"Braunhausen is a miserable little hole," said Adolfine, and it is so unfortunate that we are ordered here just as I am beginning to have a little pleasure."

"Silly child," said the eldest sister, playfully. "There will be plenty of amusement here for you."

"Really!" said Adolfine, gracefully shaking her dark locks.

"There are but four unmarried lieutenants in existence here; the balls are fearfully tedious; and the only good dancer always chooses one of the ladies who are left sitting," laughed another sister.

"Ah! I would be left sitting always, then," exclaimed Adolfine, in affected *naïveté*, that was accepted by the other sisters as current coin.

Elizabeth tried hard not to blush at a certain name; and when another sister asked if she knew the Lieutenants Stottenheim and Kadden? she answered, with tolerable composure, "Yes. I have met them both."

"Kadden is rather nice," said the elder sister, indifferently. "He always has his joke with Adolfine."

"Ha!" interrupted the latter, "Stottenheim de-

clares his friend is suffering very much from headache, and that is why he has grown so serious."

"Yes, papa thinks that he does not ride quite so madly just now," chimed in another.

"I like his spirited nature," said Adolfine boldly; "I mean to ride with papa and them in a steeple chase, with the other officers."

The sisters laughed, and declared she was a true soldier's child, and Elizabeth thought, "If I were to tell of my project with Ypsilanti, how they would laugh!" And her heart became heavy. She could not be fresh and joyous here; she had never been used to this kind of conversation; for from riding they returned to balls, and from balls to tableaux, and so forth. The next week they were going to have a large soiree; they meant to have tableaux first, and then dancing.

"Herr von Kadden must be Egmont and I Clara," said Adolfine in the same *naïve* fashion.

"Clara should be a blonde," observed the eldest sister: "you are too Italian, you and Cecilia can represent the two Eleanors."

Adolfine shook her curls.

"That would be too slow for her," laughed Cecilia; "she is a terrible child."

"Dear Fraulein Kuhneman, you must come to us next week," pleaded the eldest sister, for she looked on this fair lovely girl who must lead such a miserable

dull life with her grandparents, the well known pietists, with motherly interest.

"Oh, no!" said Elizabeth.

"You and Herr von Stottenheim must represent the mournful royal pair!" exclaimed Adolfine.

The sisters laughed aloud, and Elizabeth somewhat more boldly answered, "No! I could not."

"Why?" asked Adolfine.

"With a strange gentleman?" she began, and shook her head.

Adolfine opened her eyes in astonishment, but was silent.

"How you must long for Berlin!" exclaimed Cecilia, "it must be so very dull with your ~~grand~~ parents."

Elizabeth wished to prove that it was not dull, and that she was never weary there. She spoke of their delightful representations of 'William Tell,' and of her sledge expeditions.

The sisters thought this very charming, but Adolfine's *naïveté* provoked her to say boldly, "Can you really amuse yourself with children?"

Elizabeth looked astonished.

But the sisters again laughed heartily, and the oldest said, "She is a sad maiden since she has been confirmed; she can only amuse herself with young gentlemen."

The young ladies were now summoned to the tea-

table, where Herr von Budmar appeared, and in the genial conversation which ensued the daughters of the Colonel sustained their part with much grace and affability. After a short time Herr von Stottenheim was announced. He was much vexed that he had missed the honour of Herr von Budmar's visit.

"We must have missed each other in the street," he exclaimed. "I just went to Kadden's to see how the poor fellow was, and you had but that minute left him."

"What is the matter with Herr von Kadden?" asked Frau von Bonsack, with interest.

"He is dull and absent," was Stottenheim's answer. "I asked him to come out, for the conversation of his good landlady and servant must only make his head more stupid; but he decidedly declined."

"I did not find him unwell," said Herr von Budmar, quietly.

"He has been changed, though, for some time," observed the Colonel.

"His spirits are not so high," interrupted Stottenheim.

"Not so immoderate perhaps," said Herr von Budmar, smiling; "and from all one hears that may be very desirable."

"Well if he becomes a little quieter he will be none the worse for it," said the Colonel, laughing. "And yet it is a pleasure to see him ride. Last week he

dashed down a hollow where all his comrades thought it better to rein in, and when he was over, he looked round quite astonished to find that no one followed him. I scolded him, as in duty bound, for risking his beautiful horse and his own neck so wantonly, and proposed to him that he should ride some distance on, and then turn back. Accordingly, he went over a long tract quite tranquilly, turned, flew like a whirlwind, and joined us again."

"He has promised that I shall ride upon his horse in the spring," exclaimed Adolfine, gaily.

Frau von Budmar cast a searching glance upon the handsome young girl.

"She is always treated as a child," pleaded Frau von Bonsack; "the young people make a plaything of her."

Herr von Stottenheim nodded to Adolfine; and at this moment a young lady entered, who was introduced as Fraulein Amalie Keller, daughter of Frau Keller the President's widow. While the elder guests were speaking to each other, Herr von Stottenheim turned to the young ladies, who had commenced a very lively conversation with their friend.

"Also at your house next week," said Amalie. "That will be easily managed; but we must arrange the tableaux: Herr von Kadden and Cecilia as Egmont and Clara."

"Adolfine wishes to be Clara," remarked Cecilia.

"Oh, no!" said Amalie, very decidedly. "Adeline cannot be Clara—she would make a very striking, noble lady," added she thoughtfully.

"I propose," said Stottenheim, speaking with the air of a connoisseur, "that we should make Kadden a page, because he is so youthful, and I will take the more dignified part of Count Egmont."

The young ladies gave a smiling assent, and continued the discussion about the tableaux.

"The week after," began Amalie, with much importance, "Mamma will have a party, and as we have not room for dancing, there is nothing left for us but to act a comedy."

"A French one?" asked the oldest sister.

"For Heaven's sake not!" exclaimed Stottenheim.

"Do not torment us and the public so far!"

"It is so difficult to find a German one," urged Cecilia. "Mamma thinks there are none suitable but Kotzebue's."

"He has written some very charming pieces," argued Stottenheim; and the young ladies proposed to choose one this evening.

Herr von Stottenheim had frequently bestowed a very searching glance upon Elizabeth, and Amalie's keen blue eyes had been still more frequently fastened upon her.

"You are surprised to see a silent young lady," said the former to the latter; "but I assure you this same young lady can be very animated."

"I have been expecting so much that you would help us with some good suggestions from town," said Amalie with a face that expressed quite plainly, "I do not need your advice."

"I understand nothing about it," was Elizabeth's answer.

"Certainly you are very young," continued Amalie, and a certain amount of practice is necessary; but you will learn quickly enough."

Elizabeth smiled somewhat satirically.

"Take care, Fraulein Keller," warned Herr von Stottenheim, "or you will have to listen to a lecture from the Berlin young lady."

"And why, pray?" demanded Amalie boldly. Then suddenly remembering the well-known leaning of the Budmar family, she added, smiling, "You do not think it a sin?"

Elizabeth was silent.

"A sin!" exclaimed Adolfine, laughing aloud.

Elizabeth was annoyed, but that she might not appear stupid, she hastily remarked, "If not sinful, certainly unsuitable."

"Unsuitable!" exclaimed the young lady in utter astonishment, and Elizabeth, to atone for the remark, added, "My parents and grandparents think so."

"But confess," said Adolfine, still laughing, "you would do it very gladly if you dared."

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Elizabeth instantly.

"My dear young ladies, we will not dispute about

it," said Herr von Stottenheim quite paternally, "the subject has too many sides."

The young ladies seemed to agree, and Elizabeth was very glad that the discussion was not resumed. She was herself too confused and undecided about such things, though her feelings rose up against the whole tone of conversation of these ladies; it showed but too plainly that their souls were quite absorbed in trifles. They now turned to the elder part of the company. After discussing the weather, the roads, the country, and the neighbourhood, the Colonel was just observing "that Braunhausen was a very pleasant place, and that he was quite as well contented to be quartered here as in a larger town."

"Only think," he continued, addressing Herr von Budmar, "the day before yesterday my wife opened a ball."

"And papa danced, too!" added Adolfine.

"Yes! but not with my old wife," joked the Colonel, "only with young pretty women."

"How odious that sounds," thought Elizabeth. "grandpapa would never joke in that way."

At last the horses appeared, and Elizabeth was happy again so soon as she was seated in the carriage. She could not exactly account for it, but she had felt so lonely, almost sad among the talkative young ladies, and Adolfine's handsome features, and her whole extraordinary nature, were quite unpleasant to her.

"Well! Elizabeth, how have you been pleased?" inquired her grandpapa, as they left the town behind them.

"The young ladies were very unlike any of my acquaintances," answered Elizabeth, thoughtfully.

"I hope your mother has found very different friends for you," said her grandmamma, kindly.

"Do you know I felt quite depressed and sad there?" continued Elizabeth.

"It is well that you should have seen such a circle, is it not?" said her grandmamma; "one feels like a stranger amongst them. Dear Fritz," she continued, turning to her husband, "it seemed to me to-day as though I were a young maiden, and I was so glad to have you as a protector at my side. You must take me occasionally among such people, that I may feel ever more and more thankfully how happy a lot has been granted me in the world."

"You have had time enough now to find that out," observed the grandpapa, sportively.

"Oh, no!" continued the grandmamma, "it comes at times like a flash through my soul, and I am amazed when I reflect upon the course of my life; it is as though I had forgotten to thank God, and must retrieve the past."

"Was it not hateful of Herr von Bonsack," exclaimed Elizabeth, indignantly, "to say he would rather dance with pretty young women than with his wife?"

"I should not have ventured to say such a thing," said her grandpapa, humourously.

"No," said the grandmamma, "that would have given me a regular heart-ache."

"You see," continued the grandpapa, more seriously, "your feelings have grown delicate, so that the fashions of the world can no longer please you."

"In the world," continued the grandmamma, "what should be an eternal love, seldom lasts much longer than the honey-moon; then follows, if fortune be favourable, a friendship that is perhaps true, but needs not be too tender; and it is only that in good fortune."

"The women are so reasonable, they desire nothing more," replied the grandpapa, "and therefore there are plenty of tolerable marriages."

"But grandpapa, listen," said Elizabeth, with emphasis, "I shall require much more."

"Ah! so I feared," was his answer, and all then were silent.

After a pause, the grandpapa began, almost as though he were taking a run,

"Listen to me, dear Elizabeth; it is now time that I should tell you of a proposal."

Elizabeth's heart began to beat fast. She knew where he had been in the afternoon; and still, he could have had no proposal there.

"You must know very well, that you are rather pretty," he continued.

Her heart was lighter ; only a joke, she thought, and added, smiling,

“ If you say that, I am like grandmamma.”

“ Yes ! ” exclaimed her grandpapa, “ you will not be surprised if other people think you pretty, especially after to-day’s experience, as you must have gathered some knowledge of the world, and you will know how to estimate aright the proposal I have myself promised to submit to you.”

Elizabeth was again perplexed.

“ In short,” continued her grandfather, “ a young man has assured me, that he thinks you fairer and more amiable than any lady of his acquaintance ; and he believes his feelings are unchangeable.”

He paused ; Elizabeth scarcely ventured to breathe.

“ Of that I have my doubts, and he has promised me, that until May at least, he will leave us in peace ; to prove whether some other young lady will please him better or no. I have no doubt that when he gives Adolfine riding-lessons in the spring, his unchangeable feelings will be in peril, and we will not think the worse of him. I gave him the double promise, to tell you at the same time of his feelings, and of my wishes, that you may not be surprised, nor misunderstand him if he leaves us in peace. So you can remain quite tranquilly the proposed time with us, and decide at your leisure how to regard such a Lieutenant’s love.”

It was well that her grandfather said all this in the dark carriage. She was so surprised and startled, she knew not whether to be glad or sorry. That he loved her, and had declared it, wonderfully touched her heart. But was he serious? she could not believe it. Her grandpapa was not surprised at her silence, and continued,

"Do not be surprised if you think some one very handsome and amiable; young hearts are easily moved. If such thoughts pass through your head, and you cannot ward them off entirely, at least do not entertain and cherish them."

"And then," added the grandmamma, warmly, "trust all to God, our good and faithful God, who orders all things well; if you resign to Him these affairs of the heart, what was at first a heart-sorrow, may later become a true heart-joy."

Elizabeth leant upon her grandmamma, and laid her burning cheeks in her beloved hands. The same evening, when the grandparents were alone, the grandmamma was very desirous to know all particulars of the conference, and her husband related to her circumstantially all that had passed, the result of which he had alone told Elizabeth.

"Yes," said he then, "he is just the young man to be the hero of a romance, handsome and openhearted, generous and impetuous. A romance writer would make this noble creature become a perfect angel,

through a deep true love. It is a pity the reality does not bear out the theory."

"And I greatly fear Elizabeth hopes the same thing," said the grandmamma, anxiously.

"He expects it, at any rate," continued the grandfather. "He assures me his love for Elizabeth has already made another man of him. I assured him there was nothing to be expected of a love that was not grounded upon the Word and fear of God. Such a one is a mere fire of straw; many a marriage that has begun with the most impetuous and wonderful love has ended in a separation. He heard all in silence; but I saw that his very inmost being was moved: he bit his lips, clenched his hands, and I could easily picture to myself certain scenes with him that are wont to precede a separation."

"Dear Fritz," exclaimed the grandmamma, shocked.

"Yes, my child," he continued, "it bodes ill when so vigorous and impassioned a young man has nothing to help him to the right but good purposes. I endeavoured to soothe him, for, I must confess to you, despite his fiery glances, I felt the greatest interest in him. Then he suddenly reached his hand to me and said, with a sigh, 'Pardon me; but if you knew how you have tortured me.' I thought I had said enough, and that I would now cease; but he begged me, like a child, to say all I thought necessary, and he promised to be patient and tranquil. I represented

to him that Elizabeth was quite a child, and could be imperious and self-willed. He thought these faults very charming."

"You once thought so yourself," said the grandmamma, seriously.

"I did," answered he. "I went to see the old Ranger for love of you; I talked seriously with your aunt, and made good resolutions for love of you; but my good will and my conscience were not my God; I felt myself little enough before a Greater, and never thought His help unnecessary; and then I never clenched my hands and stamped my feet," he added, smiling.

"That was certainly very bad," the grandmamma admitted.

"When I said to him, further, the heart must be ready, even if the mood was not right, to honour, and love, and support the woman, because God, who ordained the holy marriage bond, has commanded it, he assured me openly and warmly, that the principle would never be necessary for him, as his conscience would never permit him to treat his wife otherwise. It is impossible to convince him of the powerlessness of good purposes and mere conscientiousness," concluded the grandfather; "for I could not reason with him of a new heart."

Another week passed. The next day was fixed for Elizabeth's departure, when the Ranger came in the

afternoon, at grandmamma's request, to take Elizabeth for a long walk. She had scarcely been out of the parlour the last few days. The beautiful frosty weather had suddenly changed, and rain and wind had made all walking impossible. But to-day it was finer, and her Uncle proposed to take Elizabeth into the wood, where the walks were passable. That they started straight for the fir-hills was not quite pleasant to the grandmamma; but she could not say so to her son-in-law; and she stood at the window watching the pair across the gray common in deep thought. "Poor child!" she said to herself, "her freedom is gone; and she is so young—she might have enjoyed her innocent youth a little longer ere she undertook the cares of marriage. Had it only been a man of our own circle, I should not have been so anxious; with a firm prop she would have grown firmer. Why have I always so especially cared for her? It must be the Lord's will. Why did Elise go to that ball? Why did he come here, and to our very garrison? How is it now with her heart? Ah! I remember my own youth—it was a golden time."

The grandmamma carefully avoided questioning Elizabeth. Affairs of the heart often first take a decisive character, by speaking about them, and she still hoped amid her anxieties, that all would be happily settled at last. Julia had gone through the same thing; but in her case the young man had openly declared his love to the warm-hearted girl, and that was

far worse. She comforted herself besides with thinking how often one hears of such things in the world, and she could scarcely hope to save Elizabeth entirely from little affairs of the heart. While the kind-hearted grandmamma was thus struggling against her anxiety, Elizabeth was walking to the fir-hills. Her heart was very glad; if they had taken the other road to the oak-wood she would have been mournful. "God has permitted it," she thought, "and perhaps it is a reward, for having struggled so hard against the thoughts that will come into my head."

When they had gained the highest point, they looked down upon Braunhausen. Its towers lay under heavy clouds, and the wind howled over the colourless wintry region. Elizabeth's uncle did not allow her to stand long here, but led her into the sheltered wood, just where the hill sloped on the right side to a damp piece of low ground. The wood-cutting, which the Ranger had come to inspect, was going on. It was a little copse of alders. From some distance they had seen the fallen red trunks and the heaped-up billets of wood; Elizabeth greatly admired the pretty scene, and assured her uncle she liked much to see the felling of alders, and was greatly obliged to him for bringing her just here. As they came nigher they found a fire kindled; gray columns of smoke curled upwards through the solitary dark fir-trees, and lost themselves in the heavy gray clouds. The Uncle went

to speak to the wood-cutters, while Elizabeth sat upon a block by the fire. She leant back against one of the stacks of wood, and stretched out her damp boots to the warm glow. As she sat here quite alone, her conflicts began again. "How beautiful it is here!" she thought, "how will it be to me when I am again at home? It will all look like a dream—perhaps it is well that happiness for me is not to be found in the town with its dark towers. They get up tableaux, and dance, and ride, and talk so much, I feel lonely amongst them; and he would not feel at ease with us—he would be dull; or he would smile and say—'I do not want your faith, I make my heaven or hell for myself.' This evening there will be a soiree at the Bonsaks', and he will re-represent the page. Yes, he must feel it too; he will be happy there, but he would not be so with us. But my heart!" her eyes rested on the glowing embers, and she struggled with her thoughts. She now heard steps approaching on the greensward; but as there were many wood-cutters and workmen around, she did not look up, till at length the snorting of a horse startled her. She looked up, and just at the edge of the wood stood a young man with his beautiful bay horse, who was well known to her. He did not linger, but leading his horse very carefully over the fallen wood, in another minute was at her side. They neither of them thought whether they might rejoice over this meeting or not. She rose, and to conceal her agitation stroked the neck

of the handsome animal. He related that, from the forest-road, he had seen the felling of the timber, and, on coming nearer, to his astonishment—in a lower tone he uttered a tender expression—he had seen her figure between the curling wreaths of smoke. She asked how old the horse was; he answered, five years. Then she said it looked so polished in the sun, it must be almost black; but he declared it was decidedly bay. The Ranger, who, during this time, had been speaking to some wood-cutters close by, now approached. He was astonished to see the officer here, and listened to his explanation; after which he invited him to take a seat by the romantic fire. Herr von Kadden thanked him, and complied.

"Ah! you have grand doings at your Colonel's to-day?" said the Ranger.

"It does not concern me," was his reply.

"But you are a chief actor," continued the Ranger.

"No," he answered, "I am quite superfluous."

The Ranger was very busy lighting a cigar; Elizabeth stooped to the fire, and, smiling, held out to him a glowing firebrand.

"Will you not avail yourself of such a capital opportunity?" asked the Ranger good-naturedly, pointing to the extinct cigar Herr von Kadden was holding.

He was ready; Elizabeth handed him the brand; he thanked her, and said adieu. He led his horse cautiously over the wood, mounted it on the edge of the forest,

looked back once without greeting, and then slowly disappeared among the dark trunks of the trees. The Ranger watched him for a short time in silence, and then with his niece started homewards.

"Here I give up my fair niece," said the Uncle, as he took in Elizabeth to her grandparents; "she is an excellent walker. And was it not enjoyable?" he added, turning to her.

"Wonderfully beautiful," replied Elizabeth; and her grandmamma looked with delight upon her youthful face, which, glowing from the fresh air, and partly shaded by her disordered curls, looked especially bright and child-like.

"We have had an adventure," continued the Uncle quietly; "a young cuirassier wandered to our wood-cutting."

"Herr von Kadden?" asked the grandmamma, involuntarily.

"Yes, it was Herr von Kadden," continued the Ranger; "he was in great haste. I have never seen so serious a young man. Was he not, Elizabeth? he scarcely bid us adieu."

"Yes, quite true," replied Elizabeth, and left the room to take off her things; upon which her Uncle departed.

"It is strange," said the grandmother to her husband, "how they always meet."

He nodded; "but it was very good of him to

keep his promise so scrupulously. He knows that she is going to-morrow, and certainly he must have longed to speak to her."

"Yes," said the grandfather, "the affair becomes critical, especially critical, because the grandmother's heart has already such sympathy with him; if it cannot be otherwise, we will do our best to love him heartily, and to win his young heart by our affection."

The grandmamma was perfectly agreed, and added, "That she would herself take Elizabeth to Berlin, and talk it over quietly with her parents." They decided not to speak of it to Julia if the affair could happily be kept quiet.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HEIGHT OF HAPPINESS.

It was the first of May, the heavens were cloudy, and light showers from time to time fell upon the tender grass. The grandparents were deep in a packet of letters they had just received from their absent children.

"Thank God! there are no great sorrows," said the grandmamma; "if only Wilhelm and Max could come to us again, I should rejoice."

"We will send them the travelling money," said the grandpapa; "they shall come this summer, and in the autumn we will go to Mary and see our youngest grandchild."

She smiled, and leant back in the corner of the sofa. She could undertake little to day, for she had a severe headache, and only wished to be quiet and undisturbed. Suddenly there was a knock at the door, and immediately after entered Herr von Kadden.

"Ah," said the grandpapa, courteously, advancing to the young man.

"It is the first of May," began Herr von Kadden, drawing a deep breath, as though he had left some heavy labour behind him. Herr von Budmar glanced at his wife inquiringly, and made as though he would have left the room with his guest; but she implored him to remain. She thought not of her headache in the interest which the young officer's appearance had awakened in her.

"I need not ask why you are come," said Herr von Budmar; "your coming explains itself."

"Yes, I hope you require no farther proof," said Herr von Kadden, with some vivacity; "I long for certainty."

"Have you not seen my granddaughter since?" asked Herr von Budmar.

"Once, in the Behrenstrasse, at Berlin," was the answer.

"But you have not spoken to her?"

"In your sense, not," answered Herr von Kadden; "I only gave her a bouquet of violets I had in my hand."

"Oh!" said Herr von Budmar, gravely, and became silent.

"You do not consider that a breach of my promise!" exclaimed the young man, hastily, as a slight blush mantled on his cheek.

Herr von Budmar collected himself, turned to his wife, and replied, smiling, "I refer you to another tribunal."

"I had not purposed doing it," added Herr von Kadden, quietly; "I was myself surprised."

The grandmamma smiled so kindly, there was evidently nothing to be feared from this judge.

"The meeting was a great pleasure," continued the young man; "it was very difficult to keep away—I promised too rashly."

"A brave soldier must be able to govern himself," said the grandpapa; "and if the matter really stands thus, I advise you, before all things, not to look upon us as enemies." He gave his hand to Herr von Kadden with a benevolent glance.

Then the constraint on the young man's features suddenly vanished, and with confiding look and tone, he exclaimed, "Oh! then it is all right."

"I only fear my friendship may be very unpleasant to you," resumed Herr von Budmar.

The other looked at him inquiringly. "If you had remained at a distance from us, I might only have regarded you as an agreeable man; but if you will belong to us, you give me a friend's rights and a friend's duties, and I cannot ignore them. Yes, I assure you, it demands on your side no slight courage if you would belong to our family."

"I fear nought," replied Herr von Kadden, smiling. "Because you do not know the perils," was the reply, "I will claim at once the right of a friend, and trouble you with a serious discourse, which you will probably deem very unnecessary."

"I shall hear it with pleasure," observed Herr von Kadden.

"I begin with our conversation in the winter," resumed the grandpapa. "You then openly confessed to me you could not share our faith; you did not think it necessary for happiness."

"If Elizabeth loves me as I love her, I think we must be happy," said Herr von Kadden, modestly.

"One point you conceded to me then," continued Herr von Budmar, "that your faith and your happiness reached not beyond this world; you could not imagine what would follow after death; and you thought it best not to moot such questions. They were to you uncomfortable and annoying. Elizabeth, from her earliest childhood, has been brought up in the faith of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the faith that there is no happiness, no salvation out of Him; that this life is miserably poor, but that the sufferings of this time present are not worthy to be compared with the glory and bliss of Heaven. She would, if with meek heart, yet with perfect confidence, say, 'I would gladly be unhappy in this short life, if I may be blessed there, with all whom my heart holds dear.'"

"Among whom you would be the foremost," said the grandmamma, tenderly.

"I am not afraid of such a faith," interrupted Herr von Kadden. "I can fancy even how happy it makes you, but I cannot comprehend how any one can hold it."

"I will go on," said the grandpapa. "If Elizabeth, despite the great gulf that lies between your present world and her heavenly hopes, can give you her heart, it will be with the cherished hope that you one day will share her faith, her happiness here and there. And this is not only her hope; it is ours, too. Whoever becomes a member of our family can neither resist our love nor the extraordinary influence that the Holy Spirit grants to a family-life that draws its strength and vitality from Him. I would particularly warn you of this peril; we shall not argue or dispute, but our affection will disturb you; our prayers will weary you, and the more we feel that you are a weak and needy child, the more tenderly shall we love you, the more fervently shall we pray for you. Have you courage to bring all this upon yourself? will you, in your love for Elizabeth, never lead her astray? never purposely assault or disturb her young Christian life? never purposely propose or discourse to her of any thing opposed to her faith? This promise I must require of you."

The young man instantly grasped his hand. What power lay in the words of the grandfather that made his heart so tender? You will take me up and love me as your child—that sounded to him so sweet. As he reached his hand to the grandfather, and saw how touched and shaken the old gentleman was with his own discourse, his lips quivered, an unwonted mist came over his eyes, and he said, softly,

"I shall be only too glad to be loved."

The grandmamma rose, and looked on him with interest; he took her hand with emotion, and pressed it to his lips. She bent over him, kissed him on the forehead, and stroked his hair caressingly aside. He could not rise, he could only weep; he was not accustomed to the touch of such soft, loving hands.

The grandpapa first recollected himself and said, "To-morrow week we expect my son-in-law, and his whole family."

"I'm going to Berlin," interrupted Herr von Kadden.

"Pray do not," said the grandmamma, "we would so much rather have our dear Elizabeth here."

"I will wait, then," replied Herr von Kadden, quickly, but with a deep sigh.

It was now arranged that Herr von Kadden should come twice this week, but with as little observation as possible. The grandfather then promised that he would speak to his children the very first evening, and acquaint him with the result. He mentioned that his daughter and son-in-law knew what had already passed, and added, "Elizabeth, too, must be asked."

Herr von Kadden nodded and smiled.

He was pretty well assured in that quarter; and as he had the grandparents on his side, he did not much fear the father and mother, and rode away greatly comforted. The same afternoon Stottenheim came to him.

"Kadden," he exclaimed, smiling on his entrance, "what in the world was the matter with you this forenoon? In the heaviest shower you rode step by step through the High Street, without looking up. I and the young ladies watched you from the Bonsacks' window, and laughed till we were half dead. Adolfine thought as it was the first of May, you stayed in the rain, hoping to grow taller. Kadden glanced at him, but seemed to be in deep thought.

"Where had you been?" asked his friend.

"With the grandparents," was the absent reply.

"The grandparents!" exclaimed Stottenheim in astonishment. "Where then are your grandparents!"

"I thought," said Kadden, laughing now, "there was but one type of grandparents, and that you would have guessed."

"Ah yes! in Woltheim," remarked Stottenheim.

"What! has anything come into your head again?"

"Nothing has come into my head *again*," repeated Kadden.

"I hope not," continued the other, "or you would bring a certain young tender heart to despair."

Kadden looked at him inquiringly.

"I mean Adolfine; she follows all your pursuits and deeds with the greatest interest. She inquired just now whether Fraulein Kuhneman was again at Woltheim, and if any officers called there."

"Unendurable creature!" exclaimed Kadden.

"Ungallant man!" laughed Stottenheim. "If I might only make use of that speech, and prove to her how cold your heart is!"

"You are quite at liberty," was Kadden's answer; and the conversation was broken off. The eight days did not pass quite so quickly to the yearning, hoping heart, beyond the dark fir-hills, as to the grandparents, but at last they came to an end. The good old horses were sent to the station to fetch Frau Kuhneman and the children; the Privy-Counsellor, Fritz, and Karl, preferred walking. On that same evening parents and grandparents had a long conference, the result was simple. According to all accounts Herr von Kadden was a man of probity and honour, of a tender and noble nature, and with sufficient property to keep a household in moderate style. The Counsellor remembered his own youth, and trusted that God would again be their helper. So far Elise shared his hope, and yet her heart was heavy; she felt as though all the consequences of this step would rest on her conscience alone. Certainly it was some consolation to remember, that not she only had led the young people together, God had so ordered it. How strange were her forebodings, when she first saw this young man. How singular it was that he should so constantly have met her daughter. No! it was God's will; whether for her joy, or her cross, she must now patiently abide. That the anxiety which had so long been gnawing at her

heart was come to a crisis this winter, was already a great blessing. Need drives us to God—need makes us watchful. The grandmother ended the conversation with the advice, that they should unite more earnestly in prayer for their children, and strive to be themselves more devout and true, because God has promised to bless the children of his saints. Elise quickly left the room; she could no longer restrain her tears. Up-stairs, in her own little chamber, she stood at the window, and looked up to the blue heavens and the glittering stars.

“ Oh, Lord, punish not my children with my weakness, my indecision, my self-made discontent!” pleaded her fluttering heart. “ I am as the servant that knew the right and did it not, because he would be wiser than his Lord. God has said, ‘ Thou canst not serve two masters—God and the World;’ and the servant says, ‘ I will first try ere I believe.’ Have I tried enough? Oh, yes. Have compassion, oh Lord! on my weak heart; make me finally strong; let me not seek for the world’s honour and the world’s applause. I will no longer desire to be clever or esteemed; I will be a humble and faithful mother. Oh! Father, bless me and my children.”

She now read two hymns that had lately much moved her soul—hymns that were written by a child of God in his hour of need, for his own soul’s comfort :—

" It is no easy task to be

A Christian, in the Spirit walking steadily,
 Ever the Christ, the Crucified to see,
 Comes to the natural man not readily,
 But, in a conflict, he who wrestles best
 Thinks not of rest

' On deadly snakes full oft we go,

Their fangs our heedless feet are ever stinging.
 We must be eye on guard, or to our woe
 We feel the poison to our souls up springing,
 Who striveth most best knoweth his deep need,
 And most takes heed

" Yet is it worth all toil, all pain.

Think on the bliss, the glory to be given '
 The joy that every faithful soul will gain,
 Who here has had his converse most in heaven !
 Grace lightens so the burden of his lot,
 He heeds it not !

" Onward, my spirit ! onward press

Although the darkness round thee grow more dreary,
 One day thou shalt be strong thy happiness
 Is pledged by God Himself, if thou art weary,
 Bethink thee, when thy toil is past, how blest
 Will be thy rest ! "

And the counterpart .

" It is not difficult to be

A Christian in the Spirit walking steadily,
 Ever the Christ, the Crucified to see,
 Comes to the natural man not readily,
 Yet grace will aid us in the Christian strife,
 Throughout our life

" Only be thou a little child ,

Grow in the grace of love , there needs no other
 Oh ! timid soul, be tender is and mild
 The smallest, weakest child, can love its mother
 Fear not, and stand not thus so far apart,
 Oh, fainting heart !

" Thy Father only make thy heart
To make it pure, His promise aye fulfilling ,
Thy gracious God sends thee no bitter smart,
Thy misery is all of thine own willing ,
If only thou renounce thy own self will
Thou wilt be still

" Thy heart in childlike faith may rest
Though night come on, and darkness dire surround thee ,
Thy Father means it well, He knoweth best
Fear not, though wind and tempest rage around thee ,
Yea, if no sign thy drooping soul receive,
Only believe !

" So will thy light beam forth anew,
Thou shalt behold it, in its perfect splendour ,
What thou didst once believe, thou now shalt see ,
Well may'st thou trust the Friend so true and tender
Oh, soul ! what joy it were for thee
In Christ to be !

" Onward, my spirit ! onward press
Unto thy Father's home, without delaying ,
Go on, my heart, such peace thy soul will bless,
Straight onwards thou wilt go—no halt, no staying .
Then cast the burden that has made thee moan
On Him alone !"

The next day was genial and lovely as a May-day should be. The Counsellor and his wife strolled up and down a little coppice ; the children played on the green-turf under the blossoming trees ; and Elizabeth sat with her grandparents in the garden-hall. She knew all, and it was so wonderful to her ! To no gracious princess in the most charming fairy-tale could it have been more delightful. It was to her very like a fairy-tale, or a dream ; when she strove to realize, that he whose image had been ever at her side since the first time she saw him, despite all her

struggles to banish him thence, that *he* was to be indeed her own; it was an idea she could scarcely grasp. The grandparents saw from her glowing face what was passing within; they saw, too, her emotion and unrest, and strange suspense. Herr von Kadden had permission to come at eleven o'clock; it was not quite that hour; and her grandparents wishing to while away the time, talked much to her; the grandpapa, in strange fashion, but half in sport, as was his wont.

"Only, he is so serious to-day, like an old man," thought Elizabeth, "who has forgotten his youth."

"Do not imagine, dear child, that because he loves you, he must be your obedient servant," said her grandpapa; "that is a mistake that has wrecked many a happy lot. He may love you very dearly, and yet often have a different will from yours; in such cases, you must always be the one to give up."

Elizabeth looked incredulous. "If I am kind to him," she thought, "he will be only too happy to anticipate my wishes."

"And if at times he will have his own way, even as bridegroom, be not surprised, but rather rejoice. He is frank and lively; he will be the same now as afterwards; you must begin to learn to be gentle and compliant."

Elizabeth smiled. "Her grandfather must be joking; he will never be hasty for love of me," she thought, "he has already struggled against it."

"Your grandmamma was a loving, humble soul," continued her grandfather; "she told me on her wedding-day she accepted nothing more joyfully than the command, 'And he shall be thy master.'"

"Thy master!" repeated Elizabeth in utter astonishment. "But, grandpapa, that is no longer the fashion," she added hastily.

"No longer the fashion!" continued he, almost starting up. "Elizabeth, never attempt, even in sport or folly, to set aside an ordinance of God; the only hope of your happiness rests upon your accepting these words with a lowly heart. Then you will bear his faults, and be always kind and affectionate, and that is the only way to deal wisely with men. We cannot endure it, when the dear gentle soul at our side quarrels and sulks, and must needs set us to rights. Can we, dearest? you would not have gained much from me by that, should you?"

The grandmamma smiled. She had from the beginning had the greatest reverence for him; any slight attempts she had made to oppose his will, had so entirely failed, that she had soon given them up. Elizabeth thought, "What madness of grandpapa! He is to be cross to me, and I am to be affectionate and humble, and wait till he is kind again. I have scarcely been that to my parents and grandparents. No, indeed! if he should ever be hasty with me, I shall be very angry; he will not be able to bear that, so all

will be right again." Her grandpapa understood her silence quite well. She had often, on many little occasions, spoken her mind on this subject. Her silence, with her half-daring, half-contemptuous expression, induced him to say more.

"If your grandmamma had to be cautious with me, recollect that I was not hasty and impetuous, like a certain young man."

"Grandpapa, he is already changed," said Elizabeth, gently.

"I would warn you of the madness," he continued, "of expecting all from love, of demanding all; no, you must be especially gentle. Despite the most tender and ardent love, he will sometimes be passionate, and then—will you reproach him?"

She nodded.

"Very well!" said her grandfather, eagerly, "then he will be more violent, then you more cross, and suddenly you will get a box on the ear, you know not how."

"Grandpapa!" exclaimed Elizabeth, wrathfully, with burning cheeks.

"That you will restrain yourself further, I do not doubt," he added.

Her grandmamma smiled, and said, "She would never do that."

"I would die first," whispered Elizabeth. "Grandpapa," she added, angrily, "how can you speak so of cultivated people?"

"My child, there are many marriages in high life where such things occur," warned her grandpapa. "Sin is not banished by cultivation."

Elizabeth tried to smile, but her grandpapa had vexed her so much she was ready to weep. As he now stepped to the window, she laid her burning cheeks in the hands of her grandmamma, at whose feet she was sitting.

The latter whispered softly: "Dearest Elizabeth, your grandpapa is right; you can never be too gentle and yielding. If you should ever both be angry, recollect yourself, go away and say the Lord's Prayer; that is a very good plan."

Elizabeth nodded. "But," thought she, comforting herself, "they neither of them know him; they will be quite astonished if we are very happy. I will not be unamiable and cross; I have certainly been so here sometimes, but only with Aunt Julia, who interferes about things that do not concern her. He will never be unkind to me, or, if he should, he will soon enough be sorry. She tried to picture to herself how he would look if he were angry, but she could not; she could only fancy him as he looked when he gave her the violets. That had happened in one of those spring days that make the heart so full of longing. The children in the streets were playing joyously in the bright sunshine; most of the windows were opened to admit the soft spring gales, and above them the white fleecy clouds floated in the pure blue heavens.

"Over the fir-hills the light spring clouds are fleeting, and the sunshine rests upon them, and he is perhaps looking into the distance." Such were her thoughts as she passed through the Behrenstrasse. She was just making her way through a group of merry children, when he stood before her and gave her the violets—and thus in her mind's eye she saw him now. With this image before her, she forgot the strange words of her strange grandfather. The feeling of the wonderful pressed upon her: she was the fairy-tale princess who had come to the end of her story. "The handsome prince had arrived, the marriage was celebrated with great festivities, and they lived happily together, like two woodlarks, in perfect bliss, so long as God pleased." The grandpapa had walked to the garden door. The grandmamma from time to time looked at her watch; it was already more than half-past eleven.

"There he comes! on foot! I am surprised," exclaimed the grandpapa.

Elizabeth sprang up.

"You are not going?" asked her grandmamma.

"Only into this room," she answered, hastily. As she passed through the open door of the sitting-room, Herr von Kadden entered.

"On foot! in the heat!" was the grandpapa's friendly greeting.

"I must confess, to my shame," said he, sighing,

"I have done a most stupid thing to-day."

The grandparents looked at him in surprise.

"The drill kept me longer to-day than I expected. I wanted, by riding, to make up the lost time, and my horse fell."

"Oh!" said they, compassionately. "But what is become of the poor horse?" inquired the grandpapa.

"I stood by him till my servant came; he was soon on his legs again, and the man led him limping home."

The grandpapa smiled, made no remark, but merely proposed to fetch his son-in-law and daughter.

When he left the garden hall the young man took a seat by the grandmamma, kissed her hand, and said, beseechingly: "You must not scold me to-day, you must comfort me. I had trusted to my riding as I might have done to an oracle. When I mounted my horse, I felt as though the whole world belonged to me; to avoid all round-about ways, I galloped across the large meadow near the gates, leapt the broad stream, that nothing might be a hindrance to me; and at the little ditch before the forest, which is not even worth speaking of, my horse stumbled, and I have had to stand by the poor animal in a most impatient mood."

"Let us take it as an omen," said the grandmamma, kindly. "All your bold fancies will fail, and by humility you will reach the goal that God has pointed out for you."

"And be happy," he added, like a little child.

“ And be happy,” repeated the grandmamma.

Herr von Budmar now entered, with Elizabeth's parents; the latter was also called; and there followed one of those solemn scenes, the course of which no one can afterwards exactly recollect. The grandparents had previously spoken to bride and bridegroom, and they now said little. The Counsellor especially disliked a scene, and shortened this as much as possible. Elise, the mother, the chief person, had no courage to show what was in her heart; all joy was lacking there. The others had left the room. She was alone with the betrothed, and might now have said to them a few edifying words, and have given them the beautiful song of betrothal; but she could not make up her mind to do this, and she speedily left them to dry her tears in her solitary chamber; and to console herself with the thought that by-and-by her new son and beloved daughter would be with her. Why could she not decide to bring out all from the fulness of her heart, now when the souls of the young pair were touched, and ready to listen to anything holy? But ah! she had not courage to believe that. She feared the young man would not understand her—that he would laugh at her proceeding; she would first accustom him to their family life, and then decidedly not refrain from speaking. Elizabeth found herself suddenly alone in the sitting-room with her bridegroom, timid yet happy. She stood by his side. It

was to her as though something had failed at her betrothal—she knew what had been at her grandmother's and her mother's—yet her heart was so thankful and happy; had she been alone, she would now first have fervently thanked God. The bridegroom had taken both her hands; that he might do so seemed to him, too, a dream.

"Do you recollect, Elizabeth," he began softly, "the evening in the winter when we both stood under these pictures?"

She nodded. He continued almost in a whisper,

"That evening I really prayed to the good God that He would give you to me."

Elizabeth's large eyes grew lighter, and full of joy. She replied,

"And therefore He has done it. We will always pray to Him," she added hesitatingly.

"I shall learn how to do it better from you," said he, tenderly.

"If we do not know much," she continued, timidly, "we can always say the Lord's Prayer together."

"If I still can," he exclaimed, with a sigh.

With their hands clasped, they looked at each other in silence. He tried to say the Lord's Prayer to himself. She spoke it in her heart; and looked with emotion on his lips and features. They became bright with joy.

"I can do it quite well!" he exclaimed; but his voice faltered and his eyes grew dim.

He claspt Elizabeth for the first time to his heart, and that was the real betrothal.

"If we should ever," whispered she—"but how unlikely that is)—if I ever am unkind!"

"You mean me?" he interrupted, smiling.

She shook her head, seriously, and continued,

"If I am cross, and we both become so, and can no longer help ourselves, we will go and say the Lord's Prayer for each other—that is so good a plan. Shall we promise to do it?" And she looked at him almost humbly.

I will do everything that you wish," said he, with true heart, "but certainly that will never be necessary." The day was wonderfully beautiful; the afternoon and evening were naturally kept as a family festival; the Ranger's family were there, and the company was almost innumerable with great and little people. Charlotte declared she had been quite sure of it all. Since the evening when Uncle Karl had wished for the cuirassier officer, she had six times seen her blessed mother lying in her coffin quite plainly, and that was always a sure sign of an approaching wedding. Uncle Karl rubbed his hands well pleased, and told Elizabeth in confidence, he had an especial affection for cuirassiers, and he should take care that a continual little stream should flow to the Lieutenant's

household over the hills. The Ranger's little Mary told her new cousin very adroitly that she should like him very much if he would take Herr Rennieke's place at their performances, for that the latter always acted so awkwardly—he spoilt everything. The mischievous young Karl greatly teased his poor little sister Charlotte, by declaring the tall cuirassier had really seized upon Elizabeth, and meant to take her away with him, so that the elder sister Mary was obliged to set it all right, and explain that he was Elizabeth's dear friend, and loved her very much. On that evening when Elizabeth wished her grandmamma good night, she left word for her grandpapa that she had been thinking about it very much, and meant to be as gentle and amiable as her grandmamma. The betrothal had taken place on a Saturday, and as the Privy-Counsellor, with his gymnasiasts, had properly no holiday, he returned with them to Berlin on the Sunday, leaving Elise and the other children to spend a fortnight with her parents. These fourteen days were for the whole family undisturbed blossoming May-days. Elizabeth was a lovely and very happy bride, and the bridegroom, who had been obliged hitherto to content his home-yearnings with the old family chest, could scarcely believe that he was the centre of so much love and happiness. Not the slightest shadow of a cloud disturbed the heaven of his mood and temper ; and he was not only attentive, and loving, and

tender to his bride, but to all the members of her family. Elise was soon agreed with her mother that he was a most amiable person ; she only wished him more independence, especially with Elizabeth, who governed him like a little queen. Elise gave him many little friendly injunctions not to spoil her daughter, but he always begged her to allow it, it made him so happy. The spoiling was not so bad as it appeared, and was at least mutual. In truth it was so, only that it gave him more pleasure to serve his little queen than to govern her, and she was clever and quite ready to rule in her little kingdom. They both repeatedly declared nothing more than their wonderfully fervent love was needed to make them perfectly happy, good, and amiable.

CHAPTER XV.

FAMILY AGITATIONS.

AFTER the fortnight was passed, the bridegroom returned with them to Berlin that he might be presented to the remaining members of the family. The surprise at this unexpected betrothal had been great there. Indeed, among some few it had caused great agitation. As soon as the Aunt, Wina and Paula had heard the announcement from their brother, and had openly expressed their disapprobation, they hastened to the General's to pour out their hearts, and for the first time they found a sympathizing listener in Emily.

"To accept the first young man who offered!" complained Wina.

"Yes, the first young man," repeated Emily, "of whom one may say beforehand that he will take her into the world, and that he will be no prop or stay for her."

"And he will take her from Berlin, just as we had begun to hope we should live very much together," continued Wina.

"She might have made a far superior and more distinguished choice," said Paula, openly, "she is so exceedingly beautiful; and then she would have remained in Berlin, and we should have shared her happiness."

"At least she might have waited," observed Wina, "she is so young. I cannot understand Elise."

"No! I cannot understand Elise," repeated Emily, "to consent to Elizabeth's first childish inclination!"

"Elizabeth is in her nineteenth year," said her mother, smiling; she is therefore quite entitled to have an inclination; and from all that we can hear, Herr von Kadden is a very brave and amiable man."

Emily would have answered, but a warning glance from her mother kept her silent. The latter was unwilling to enter on a discussion with the aunts, where there was no chance of unanimity of sentiment. As the two ladies took their departure, but poorly comforted, the Pastor Schlosser, who had been betrothed to Emily at Easter, arrived, and, in a few minutes after, Clara Warmholz. Elizabeth's betrothal was naturally the topic of conversation. After the mere fact had been mentioned, on which Clara and Schlosser could not say much, because the bridegroom was unknown to them, Emily began very seriously,

"How could you, mother, say to the aunts that Herr von Kadden was an excellent, amiable man?"

"Why not?" asked her mother gently.

"Because in our sense he is not," replied Emily, zealously; "in the sense of the world he may be, but we ought not to deny our own views to the world."

"Nay," said her mother; "after all that we have heard of the bridegroom from Elizabeth's father, we must be cautious with our judgment; according to the universal opinion, he is an excellent young man. He has been duly informed of the religious principles by which their life is governed; he has assured them that though he does not share them, he will not oppose them; and that he willingly trusts himself to the guidance of so much love. We must now wish and pray that this love will be to him a true guide."

"Ah, mother!" exclaimed Emily indignantly, "you cannot believe that such a love will lead him on to faith?"

"No! Christ must be the leader," was the tranquil answer; "but He may use such love as a means."

"You heard in the winter from Fritz," continued Emily hastily, "that this Herr von Kadden was a self-righteous and virtuous man; if you exalt his integrity so much, I can only say that this very thing will be a hindrance to his faith."

"There is the Saviour Jesus Christ for virtuous people also;" observed Schlosser, smiling.

It was to Emily particularly vexations that her bridegroom was not on her side, and she exclaimed angrily: "We are not permitted, then, to have any

opinion about worldly people, we are to excuse them, and merely to say, 'Christ is their Saviour too?'"

Schlosser looked at her gravely, but was silent. A pause ensued. Then Clara, in her natural inclination to peace and quiet, sought to mediate.

'Dear Emily,' she began considerably, "we must, of course have an opinion, it follows from the judgment that is already formed in our hearts. Because Herr von Kadden is a man who deems our faith unnecessary, I believe our loving Father has led him into a religious family. His understanding pleads,

You might have been more rational than to enter a family who have in some respects so little sense, but his heart whispers, 'They please me well, and ah! how sweet it is to see so many happy people, and to receive so much true affection! Therefore we must heartily rejoice that the rational, virtuous man, has been drawn to us, and it must be our fervent desire that he may feel it good to be among us, and not listen to what his foolish reason may have to urge.

'Yes, Clara, observed Frau von Ruseuhagen, 'if he says that he feels happy with us, we will give him a hearty welcome.'

Clara now brought her short morning visit to an end, and the bridal pair were left alone with the mother. Emily was too much irritated not to renew the discussion.

'I see no objection to our being friendly to him,

she began anew, "but we cannot deny that we should have wished Elizabeth a very different husband; and if Elise has a conscience, she cannot possibly get over the fact that she was the one who took Elizabeth to the ball."

"She must, of course, take upon herself the consequences of that ball," replied her mother, "although Elizabeth might have had other opportunities of falling in love. One is the more sorry for Elise, because she struggles so earnestly to set herself free from the world."

"Struggles earnestly!" exclaimed Emily, "is it not sad that a Christian who has experienced the nothingness, the worthlessness of the world, should be unable to set herself free from it—ever struggling, ever halting, ever dallying with it? It is only consistent with God's justice that He should chastise in such a case; yes, if one reflects upon it, one must almost wish that the consequences of this betrothal may be very painful—or will not parents and daughter be strengthened in the belief that there is no danger in sometimes loving and walking with the world?" Schlosser now took up the conversation.

"God is just, and must punish His backsliding children; but He is also compassionate, and in His love may do what He will. Children who openly acknowledge Him are not on that account without sin; our course until our death is one never-ending conflict with sin. The

one struggles with his lukewarmness, his weakness, which (though he would entirely belong to his Lord) is ever leading him to make friends with the world ; the other struggles with his pride, his censoriousness, his unconsciousness of the beam that is in his own eye. Both must bear the consequences of their sin, the unrest that results from it ; for both we must desire, not that God's justice, but that His mercy may judge them. We are all members of one body ; each one endures, and suffers, and prays for the other ; no one may be so presumptuous or so loveless as to desire to help his ever-falling, ever-rising brother, by severe chastisement. So long as he calls upon his Father, he has trust in His mercy, and our Lord has often thoughts of peace, where our loveless hearts say, ' There is no peace.' "

Emily had listened to these considerate and calmly-spoken words in great agitation ; her face glowed, and with trembling voice she replied,

" I cannot think how you can so completely misunderstand me ; the thing is so simple, you cannot wish, if I see a thing to be blue, from a mere weak desire for peace, I should say, ' It is white.' "

The mother gave her a warning look, but she went on the more vehemently. " We are not loveless if we wish help for our weak brother, though it should come as chastisement, in the inevitable consequences that must follow our sinful deeds."

" Dear Emily," said her bridegroom, with a mourn-

ful smile, "it is well that Christ is more compassionate to us than we are to each other. When the disciples in their wrath would have called down fire from heaven, He did not permit it; and I hope poor Elizabeth may not experience such severity, as you, the loving physician, would prescribe for her."

"Wilhelm!" she exclaimed, with choking voice.

"Yes," he continued, gently and kindly, "I am going now, and you can reflect upon it."

He gave her his hand, and as he withdrew, she held her handkerchief to her eyes. Her mother would have left the room, but Emily begged her to remain.

"I cannot understand, dear mother," she said, with tears, "how you, too, can misunderstand me! Did you not warn Elise yourself before the ball? Did you not tell her that a mother who took her daughter to such a place could not pray for her? Did you not represent to her the style of person to whom her daughter would be introduced? And now, when all our fears are realised, are we suddenly to say that our fears were illusions; that the silly old aunt's opinions of the world and such things are the right ones; that they are right and we are wrong;—and thus make them cling to the world more closely than ever?"

"No, dear Emily," replied her mother, "we do not desire that; we wish that, despite their weakness, they may ever cleave more closely and more decidedly to their Lord. You know, Elise, enough to own that

she fears the judgment of the Lord, and longs for His grace. Think what patience and long-suffering God Himself has with the sinful ways of the world; how, in His great mercy, He even calls and allures, and makes His sun to shine on the just and the unjust. How can we desire the justice of God only for our fellow-servant, when our own heavy hearts must cry, 'Out of the depths I call to Thee;' and 'If thou art extreme to mark what is done amiss, Lord, who shall abide it?' And again, 'What can we offer to win Thy grace and favour, and the forgiveness of our sins; in the best life our deeds are nought?' And, dearest, we would have you reflect that we all, whether we owe the Lord a thousand talents or ten, must dread His justice, and earnestly implore His grace. We are all like the wicked servant who owed his Lord a thousand talents, and yet would seize upon his neighbour that he might pay him the little that was due; he who denies this is blinded by pride. As our own happiness so entirely depends on the mercy of our Lord, we must ever show mercy to others; and if we are called upon to give judgment or compassion, with fear even, and trembling, let it be compassion."

"You think, then, that I do it not?" asked Emily, in the same irritated mood.

"In this case you have not. I fear lest Elizabeth's loving and childlike heart should put you to shame. You know that Christ has said, 'The last shall be first?'"

"Oh, dear mother," said Emily, "do you even give me Elizabeth as an example? God knows how much I wish that she would follow Him steadily; but where has she bestowed her warm love hitherto? Have we not both complained of her and mourned over her? Am I to conceal all that from myself, only that I may be indulgent?"

"I pity her still," resumed the mother with some reluctance; "I pity her if she gives her affections to the world, and thereby grieves her Lord; but I pity you doubly, if, through your want of tenderness, you grieve your Saviour, and bring sorrow to all around you."

The mother left the room, and Emily hastened forth and shut herself up in her own little chamber. Her mother had never so spoken to her before; she had often exhorted her to humility and tenderness, but the fear that she should bring sorrow to those around her was something new. She recalled to herself how much she was honoured, and admired, and beloved by her friends; how, too, her bridegroom, from the time he had really known her, had been foremost among those who revered her; how he had openly said that many young girls would do well to follow her example in the service and love of their Lord. Only the common desire to serve and love their Master had drawn their hearts together; he had thought with pride and joy of possessing so earnest a wife. Certainly, after the betrothal, when she had naturally spoken out her

thoughts more freely, he had often exalted the simplicity and love of woman far above all her works and all her knowledge; that such were his sentiments gave her pain, and yet it was only a slight hint; and she had soon been able to prove to her bridegroom that she did not overrate works and knowledge. To-day, great injustice had been done her; was Elizabeth, who was regarded by all as an unfinished child, to be held up to her as a pattern? Was it loveless to wish for her conversion to God, even through a cross? Her reason perpetually sought one excuse more available than the other, but the root of her sin 'she would not pluck out; she would not be led by her mother and bridegroom from the heights that becomed her so well, into the valley of humiliation; she would not through their words be so seriously warned.

"If thou, Lord, shouldst be extreme to mark what we have done amiss, who can abide it?"

She was herself no ordinary Christian, and could use such exhortations to humility for herself. She was in a cheerless condition; she could not appear at table. When her mother came to ask her, she begged to be excused, and her mother took her with tears to her heart, but could not speak. She had long been very anxious about the development of Emily's character. Here, in Berlin, where she received so much notice from a large religious circle, her confidence had increased; and the love of a highly-gifted

to pride. That her bridegroom mourned over it, Emily would have never confessed to herself; but the mother felt it with great sorrow, and had often expected a scene like that of to-day.

"God will help her," thought the mourning mother. "We must all bear the burden of our sins. He alone can teach her how to pray for tenderness."

Towards evening some one knocked at Emily's door; she guessed who it was, and her heart had not deceived her. Her bridegroom entered, and it was plainly to be read on his face that the last few hours had been anything but pleasant to him. He held out his hand to her. She leant her head upon his breast, and said, weeping,

"Ah! how miserable you have made me to-day."

"Forgive me that I have," he answered, very tenderly.

"You quite misunderstood me," she continued.

"No, dear Emily," he replied very earnestly, "I did not misunderstand you!"

"You have certainly done me great injustice," she observed warmly.

"Neither have I done you injustice," was his tranquil answer.

"Do you think, then ——" she began.

"My dear Emily," interrupted he, "we will not begin the discussion again; your understanding might only lead you further in error and grieve your Lord. and distinguished man had not led her to humility, but

If we are to have peace, there is only one way—yield to your mother's judgment and to mine, that you have been wrong."

"What a demand!" thought Emily, startled. "How can a truth-loving being make an assertion against conviction? But if my heart cannot yield, how will it then be? Can I not be humble? Can I not for once bear injustice? A perfect Christian can do more than this—he can deny himself; he can be set at naught—he can be naught. Yes, from an enemy a Christian can endure all; he can be misunderstood and unjustly treated. What comes from the tongue of an enemy is not bitter, but when a friend misjudges you, your humility would only lead him farther wrong. Is it so difficult, then, to be humble?"

Ah! she could have discoursed wonderfully well on that head—"Is it impossible to bear injustice patiently?" For the love of Christ, she had ever had so much desire to bear injustice, and to yield. And where was this inclination now—now when she was required to yield? Such a conflict is very terrible for a heart in which pride is so strong, humility so weak. It may confess its sins to God, but not to man. Emily stood leaning on her bridegroom's shoulder, and he patiently gave her time for consideration. It was so long that his heart grew more and more sad; he gently raised her head and looked into her eyes, with an expression of blended love, and sorrow, and entreaty. Then her soul was moved.

"Why is he unhappy on my account? Am I worthy of so much love?"

She clasped his hand, and faltered with tears—"Pardon me, Wilhelm, I have been wrong."

A weight fell from the hearts of both. She was like a little child—never, never had she felt this happiness before.

"Oh! I thank you now," she exclaimed, but could say nothing more.

He understood her quite well; he knew that nothing is so blessed as to be humble, nothing so good for the heart as to cast out its pride and self-righteousness. She would have opened her heart to him now, but he would not allow it."

"We will let it sink into our souls," he said. "He took her to her mother, and as she heard them coming, she knew that her prayers were answered.

Emily's present humility was very perceptible. "Will it be a lasting change," thought the yearning mother. "Ah! no. The contest with the bosom-sin, though it may ever become weaker, lasts till the end."

For some time Emily was free from temptation, but when she first met Elise with the youthful happy betrothed pair, she became uneasy. Was it possible? Even Elise looked with pride on her new son. That Elizabeth could not withstand so fascinating a person was natural; but that the mother should allow herself to be so blinded, was to her quite incomprehensible. Meanwhile, Elizabeth longed to pour out her full heart

to her cousin in private. She drew her aside, embraced her warmly, and, all radiant with joy, exclaimed, "Darling Emily, is it not exquisite to be a bride?"

"Certainly," replied she, smiling, but in some confusion. "I never dreamt of such happiness," continued Elizabeth; "but I am so very thankful to our gracious God for it."

"It is, indeed, a happiness, if one has found a true heart," was Emily's answer.

"And then the glad, beautiful life before one!" exclaimed Elizabeth, joyously.

"The glad, beautiful life, will bring^d its sorrowful hours," Emily could not now help saying.

"Yes, well—but with a true heart, you know, dear Emily," said Elizabeth, again seizing the hand of the serious bride, and fervently pressing it.

Emily had the greatest desire to add, "Trust not to such love and truth, for it is not founded upon a rock, but on sand."

But Elizabeth's bridegroom, who had been impatiently watching her, now met her glance, and secretly held out his hand to her. She quickly hastened back to his side, and there sat with him hand in hand.

When Emily was again alone with her parents, she could make few objections, as both of them were so much pleased with the bridegroom.

"That frank, open expression in his eyes is most prepossessing," said the General. "Besides, there

is something very knightly and tender about him. Little Elizabeth is floating in bliss!"

"Here, again, it seems as though God would be the merciful guardian to His thoughtless children!" added his wife, tenderly.

"I wish it from my heart," Emily could now add.

Yes, she had come so far, but she could not yet "believe." The victory was won with the Aunts Paula and Wina much more easily than at the General's. A promenade with them in the Zoological Gardens was almost enough to tranquillize their minds.

The extremely handsome pair who attracted universal admiration were their nephew and niece. The former was very attentive to the aunts, and when, among other light topics of conversation, the betrothed pair proposed that a room should be furnished in the new household, and set apart as "The Aunts' Room," they were perfectly contented and happy.

CHAPTER XVI.

BLUE HEAVENS AND CLOUDS IN THE PERIOD OF BETROTHAL.

THE summer passed in undisturbed happiness. Mutual visits were constantly made. Herr von Kadden came to Berlin, or Elizabeth went to her grandparents; the latter not quite so often as the betrothed would have liked. The mother was unwilling that Elizabeth's remaining time with her should be shortened. Besides, Elizabeth had to be initiated into the mysteries of housekeeping; to learn all about cooking, and washing, and ironing, for which her graver studies hitherto had left her little time. She was exceedingly busy and eager for knowledge, and from time to time it was most amusing to hear her imparting her newly-acquired information to her bridegroom, endeavouring to prove to him that she understood the art of economical housekeeping to an incredible degree.

"Everything depends on the art of preparing food," she one day observed; "the ingredients are a very secondary matter; fifteen good coffee berries to three cups."

"Five berries, then, for one cup," observed her bridegroom.

"Falsely reckoned," exclaimed she triumphantly ; "one cup from five berries is far weaker than three cups from fifteen."

She explained to him the reason, and the thing was incontestable.

"It is very economical to eat stale bread," she observed.

"New bread is much nicer," he replied.

"But stale is very good," she continued ; "and then one never ought to buy the best butter : in the first place it is much dearer ; in the second, every one eats more of it."

"So," concluded the bridegroom, very seriously, "I have the prospect of weak coffee, stale bread, and bad butter."

Elizabeth was indignant ; the pleasure of having a pattern household should certainly rise above new bread and best butter.

Herr von Kadden turned to his father-in-law to inquire of him how far, in this respect, the government of the woman extended.

"We are entirely dependent on them," asserted the latter ; "nothing but petitions are allowed us."

Elizabeth laughed, and thought with perfect confidence, "I should like to know where the limits of my government begin."

When Elizabeth was at Woltheim, and occasionally presumed, her grandparents would now and then drop a word that was displeasing to her.

"My grandparents are decidedly mistaken; where there is such deep mutual love, happiness is certain;" this was always her secret triumph.

"Do you sometimes read and speak together of serious things," asked the grandmamma once when Elizabeth was very confiding.

"We have not exactly come to that yet, dear grandmamma," was her answer; "but I thank God daily for my happiness; and when this untr tranquil period of betrothal is once over, I shall arrange my time beautifully, and we will daily read together."

"Have you spoken of it?" asked her grandmamma.

"No," replied Elizabeth, "but I fully purpose doing so; we are so short a time together always, and the summer has passed so quickly. In winter we shall do better; one does not walk so much then."

"Do you still study English together?" asked her grandmamma.

"No, we have given it up," answered she, smiling; "only fancy, we always quarrelled over it. His pronunciation was so different to mine, and he thought he was right; but I must know best—my English teacher had always been in distinguished families. As we observed that we never got over it without a

little fracas, we gave it up—you would not think how reasonable we are.”

“If you could have borne with each other,” remarked her grandmamma, “it would have been far more reasonable. Better to give up the strife than the cause thereof; occasions for contest you will ever find; thus, if you were practising together and did not keep accurate time, would you give that up? or if you were walking together and quarrelled, would you be so very reasonable as to give up walking?”

“Grandmamma,” pleaded Elizabeth, “it was never very bad, it was in mere sport. It has never been necessary to say the Lord’s Prayer,” she added, smiling.

“Do not defer it too long,” was her grandmamma’s warning. “Dearest Elizabeth, the next time you have a little dispute, do try to give up. It is far better that you should learn to do so now. You do not know how sweet it is.”

Elizabeth nodded, pleasantly.

“He is always so good-natured, if I oppose him in anything.”

In October, Elizabeth’s nineteenth birthday was celebrated at her grandparents’; her parents, brothers and sisters, were all there. It was a happy day. As the grandfather conducted the morning devotions, looked back upon the past year and exhorted the betrothed pair to lift up their hearts in love and thanksgiving to God, Elizabeth’s bridegroom pressed her

hand, and his thoughts appeared to be soaring upwards in earnest gratitude. On the birth-day the wedding-day was fixed; in the spring, when the violets were in blossom, it was to be. The house was already taken; they had considered what part of the town was the best—what amount of room they should require—what furniture would be necessary. Now, in truth the affair had assumed a serious appearance. Elizabeth was very desirous to accustom herself to the dignity of a housewife, and could at times talk in the most reasonable way. She had permission to stay a fortnight after her parents, brothers, and sisters, had departed, and this was to be her farewell visit to her grandparents. She was to spend the winter in activity and quiet with her mother. These autumn days were very beautiful; the bridegroom came regularly at noon, and stayed till evening. Each day brought a lovely walk or a ride, or some family pleasure at the Ranger's. They made a few calls in Braunhausen, but did not establish any intimacy with any one. Society in general was not quite satisfied therewith, at least it claimed the right of making many criticisms on the betrothed pair.

"Just listen to me, Kadden," began Herr von Stottenheim, very solemnly, one day. "I must speak to you as a friend; you are neglecting all your acquaintances here to such an extent, that it will be very difficult for you to join our circle again, when you return to it with your young wife."

"I neglect them!" exclaimed Kadden, astonished.

"Certainly, since you have been betrothed, you have altogether neglected us. You let yourself be too much absorbed, too much governed by her family. A man ought to keep his independence."

"I assure you," replied Kadden, smiling, "that it is my own independent desire to be so much with the family, because I am particularly happy among them."

"You are a good youth," said Stottenheim, paternally, "but you are gradually getting ensnared without any suspicion how; some day you will be glad to appear again in our society with your charming bride."

"She has not the slightest desire," observed Kadden, quickly.

"But we have!" exclaimed Stottenheim, and I must say, if she has no desire, she must have some consideration for you and your friends. She wishes that you should adapt yourself entirely to their way of life—a desire, by the way, which of course comes from them; but you must not let yourself be quite governed by them; you must also remember what you owe to yourself."

Kadden had no such feelings. The representations of his friend were unfortunately somewhat true; he had once or twice expressed a wish to take Elizabeth to parties which his town friends had given, but he had always been dissuaded from it; and as he was so perfectly happy with her, he had readily given up his

wish. To be spoken of by his friends in the way Stottenheim described, was anything but pleasant to him; but he repressed his feelings, and said lightly,

"If it is my pleasure to be with my bride rather than in your society, you must own that I have a fair share in the decision."

"I repeat once more, you are deceived," continued Stottenheim eagerly; "and I say to you again, do not let these people quite get the ascendancy over you. I do not dispute their amiability; I always feel myself great pleasure in their company; still you ought not, on that account, so entirely to forsake your friends; and if they persuade you to do so, you must be a man, and consider that it is right to act according to your own judgment."

"Have you done?" asked Kadden, shortly.

Stottenheim would have made some further representation.

"I am exceedingly obliged to you," continued Kadden; "make yourself perfectly tranquil, I will solve the problem quite to your satisfaction."

"I was prepared for your anger," resumed Stottenheim kindly, but with perfect calmness; "and I am not the least offended. I considered it my duty to warn you. You have still to dwell among us: you are wise enough to know that the kind of intoxication in which you now live must and will cease. Then you will naturally strive to resume again the intercourse you have

broken off, and you must not be astonished if you meet with cold looks. Besides, there is something very inconsiderate and capricious in this change."

"I have not intentionally broken off my intercourse with my friends," Kadden interrupted, in a tone of annoyance; "it has happened quite naturally, and when I am once married, will be as naturally resumed."

"With that answer I am fully satisfied," said Stottenheim, giving his hand to his friend. "And now do me the pleasure to join us in the hunt to-morrow. The Colonel will give you a seat in his carriage home, the dinner will be late, and the ride at night is not exactly pleasant."

Kadden was thoughtful for a moment. He really felt that he had no longer a free choice in such cases. "Elizabeth would be only two days more in Woltheim; how would she like him to devote one of those two to a wild-beast chase? In the first place, she would little like the hunt, because she dreaded his bold riding, and then to remain a whole day from her, to pass it in such foolish company as she would call it, would be unendurable."

"My bride will be only two more days in Woltheim," he observed at length, with forced tranquillity; "that I would rather be with her than join the hunt, you will think only natural."

"We are again on the old ground," replied Stottenheim, "you must do it as a matter of policy; you

must prove to your friends that you are not entirely under petticoat government, and can do as you will."

"Madness!" exclaimed Kadden wrathfully.

"Do it to please me," Stottenheim entreated, who really meant quite kindly in his fashion. "I have undertaken, and certainly do hope that you will accept this invitation."

"Very well," said Kadden, hastily. "I will come; of course I shall not stay for the dinner, but after the hunt ride at once to Woltheim."

His friend was quite agreed; but he went on to urge that every one, with due caution, should keep his own place in the world, should know how, with skill and tact, to avoid giving offence on all sides, and should himself be a pleasant member of the great human family. Kadden said very little in answer, but inwardly digested it; and he was very glad when his talkative friend withdrew, and he could take the road to Woltheim. He had already learned so much from his intercourse with Herr von Budmar, that he could feel the emptiness and poverty of Stottenheim's views of life, but he had neither courage nor knowledge enough to oppose them. Moreover, his mother-in-law's conclusion of all earnest conversations, was ever that she could speak from experience; and she always besought him not to sacrifice his own happiness to vain worldly considerations. He had always been perfectly agreed with her, and had declared, that

if he were only once blest with Elizabeth he should not care for the whole world, and he had ever pictured to himself his household-life as something very peaceful and lovely. That the waves of the outer world might rise against such a life and shake it to its base—that the most trifling things might disturb it, if it was founded upon the sand of mere good humour, the kindly emotions of a weak human heart, he never anticipated. He rode very slowly to Woltheim; he could not hide from himself that he was rather afraid of imparting to his little spoilt queen a decision that was of course somewhat foolish.

"Foolish!" he asked himself; "yet why? am I to give up the hunting that has always been so great a pleasure? No, not give it up," was the answer; "but to-morrow I would certainly rather have been with my sweet bride than with those gentlemen, setting aside that one might give up a real pleasure for love of one's bride. But now from weakness, from fear of the foolish opinions of men, he had made the promise. He had often heard in the family whose perilous atmosphere he now breathed, that the word of God in all things is the only safe guide, even in the little things that seem of no importance, but in reality are so, because our whole life is made up of little things. A man who takes the word of God as his rule of conduct would have been quite above such contemptible pride and fear of man on such an occasion. Such a

man would have said quite tranquilly and good-humouredly, "Whether men think I am under petticoat government or not, is to me perfectly indifferent. I will now do what is right and pleasant to myself and my bride. Your interest for my happiness or unhappiness I refer to the future, which I await in perfect tranquillity." By such decision he would best have proved his independence. For if we take the Word of God as the rule for our conduct, it is wonderful how all things are ordered, not only in the most prudent, but in the most pleasant way. Such reflections came to the thoughtful Bridegroom, almost against his will. He was too sensible not to feel now that his good purposes and strength of will were being tested. He argued the subject almost angrily with himself, then excused himself, and said,

"The whole thing was mere nonsense, and not worth consideration."

But he could not be entirely comforted by this, as a saying of the grandfather's occurred to him perpetually—"As a man acts in the little things of life, so will he act in the greater." In this mood he arrived at Woltheim. Elizabeth was lovely and joyous as ever. She had always new ideas to impart, and new proposals to make. To-day it was a window for flowers in the new dwelling—on the south side of course—and a little hen-house for the English fowls Uncle Karl had promised her. They were of a supe-

rior breed, and would be much in the stable, so that not a grain of corn would be wasted. Herr von Kadden was charmed with her, and entirely forgot the fatal hunt. She inquired about the measure of the windows in the new house, which he daily promised to bring her, and which she really must have for the curtains and blinds. He had forgotten them again.

"You will bring them to-morrow, at all events," she earnestly entreated.

"To-morrow, I fear, it cannot be;" he now began, thinking to himself. "Courage! She must know now; but I will speak very gently and kindly."

"Why not?" she hastily demanded.

"To-morrow I must go early to Breitenfeld to the hunt."

She looked at him in astonishment.

"I go very unwillingly," he added, kindly; "but I cannot avoid it."

"What compels you?" she demanded.

"My friends wish it very much."

"But you might have known that I should have wished it just as little," she exclaimed, angrily. "I cannot understand how you could promise without first speaking to me."

"It would have been very unpleasant to me to have refused; and I hoped, for my sake, you would have permitted it," he continued, smiling, though he felt already that he did not so far stand above the thing as

on many previous little disputes, and that he could now think Elizabeth's cross imperious tone amusing.

"Permit? No! But as far as I am concerned, you can do what you will," she exclaimed, most ill-humouredly.

He felt his breast heave. "She is anything but pleasing now," he thought. He looked very serious, but said nothing.

"Only, do not say that you go very unwillingly," she continued, with great vehemence. "A man does not allow himself to be compelled to do such stupid things."

"I promised reluctantly," he replied, still more gravely; "but now it will be much easier to me to go."

"How can you say that to me?" she asked, with trembling voice.

"Recollect what you have said," was his short answer, as he left the garden-hall and went to the grandparents in the sitting-room.

"Here are the limits of my government," thought Elizabeth, "to please his friends he is unkind to me."

She walked to the window. The many-coloured autumn leaves were lying on the path and on the turf, so still in the sunshine. The trees with their scant foliage stood out gloriously against the deep blue sky; but all looked very silent and melancholy. A few faded flowers hung their heads mournfully, and a few

bees were humming around them, seeking but finding little. Elizabeth thought on the lovely May days, and the overflowing glories and blossoms of spring—it was as though the flowers and blossoms of her love-world had faded also.

“If he is unkind to me, I cannot be happy,” she added to her reflections. “Certainly, I was rather hasty—and why? Would my father have asked mamma if he were to accept an invitation or not? or would uncle first ask Aunt Julia? No.” But she had looked upon her love as something far more sunny and beautiful than theirs. “What would the grandparents say if they had heard the quarrel?” She blushed in surprise as she reflected on her words. “But,” she added, “I have often been angry before, and he has laughed and made me happy again; he was in an ill temper to-day.” That a change could take place in his mood was the first sad experience she made. Her final conclusion was, that she would wait and see whether he would not first be friendly again.

It was mid-day. They sat down to dinner. Uncle Karl, Charlotte, and the grandparents were affable and pleasant as ever. Herr von Kadden took a lively share in the conversation; but the grandparents both remarked that all was not quite right between the betrothed pair.

On some occasion when the following day was men-

tioned, Herr von Kadden observed, "That he was invited to a hunt the next morning at Breitenfeld, and must go."

"That is the reason!" thought the penetrating grandpapa; and he rejoiced that Elizabeth should know by experience she was not always to have her own way.

"I am very glad of that," he said, turning to the young man, "it is such beautiful hunting weather."

"I have no intention of remaining to the dinner," he replied.

"And why not?" interrupted the grandpapa, in some surprise. "The hunt dinners are not very enjoyable in all houses," he continued, smiling; "but at Breitenstein one can endure them.

"Endure them! Well, perhaps so; but I have never much cared for such company," said the young man, with equal truth and simplicity.

"So much the better," observed the grandmamma, pleasantly; "we ladies do not much like these gentlemen-dinners."

Elizabeth had turned to Charlotte in the greatest agitation, and listened to her various little remarks till the conversation between her grandparents and bridegroom had taken another direction, and they rose from table. The grandparents now went to take their afternoon rest, and the betrothed pair as usual went to the garden-hall, where Elizabeth worked very

diligently, while her bridegroom read aloud to her. He took the book quite composedly, and merely said, " Shall I read ? "

She only nodded.

They had just begun at this time, " The Word of the Woman "—it was beautiful and romantic, Elizabeth had chosen it herself. The story was given with wonderful power, and in a charming style. When she now saw herself mirrored in the tale she could not help feeling sad, and after she had sat thus for a time near him, and he had never once looked up to glance at her tenderly, she became still more miserable. She felt quite sure that he would not make the first approaches to affability again—that she must yield ; she would rather do it than see him sitting near her so cold and strange. Suddenly she laid her hand gently upon the book, and said,

" Ah ! pray, dear Otto, do not read any more."

He looked at her searchingly, but he was himself very glad that this painful scene had come to an end, and had little inclination to withstand her imploring looks. It was very difficult to him to listen tranquilly while she acknowledged she had behaved very ill, and that to punish her he must remain to the dinner. However, he heard her out calmly. The grandfather had strengthened him greatly by the unimportant conversation at the dinner table. He did not touch on the little disagreement again, but Eliza-

beth saw by his happy eyes that he was fully reconciled. As they both again joined the grandparents, the latter at once saw how matters stood between them; they saw by Elizabeth's child-like and ready compliance, and his certainly very affectionate but dignified ease, that this time she had been obliged to yield. When the young pair, late in the evening, were taking leave of each other at the hall door, he said to her tenderly,

"If you are so very amiable, I shall not be able to ride away to-morrow."

"Oh, but you must," she pleaded; "I particularly wish you, that I may the sooner forgive myself for having behaved so ill."

"I don't know yet," said he, smiling.

When he had mounted his horse, and she once more stretched out her hand to him, she earnestly implored,

"You must not come before to-morrow evening."

On the following morning quite early Stottenheim came to his friend.

"Are you going?" he hastily demanded.

"I am not sure yet," replied the other smiling.

"Could you not gain permission?" asked Stottenheim, shaking his head very sagely.

"On the contrary," replied Kadden, merrily, "if I go with you, I shall only do it at the command of my bride."

Stottenheim looked greatly surprised.

"And the grandpapa," continued Kadden, "begged in the most pressing manner that I would stay to the dinner."

"Really!" exclaimed his astonished friend, "that is quite charming; and now you will go?"

"My bride," replied Herr von Kadden, "despite her command, will be very happy if I surprise her."

"You can be happy to-morrow," laughed Stottenheim.

And after the bridegroom had inwardly vacillated for a short time, he resolved to go with his comrade, and ordered his servant to saddle his horse. On the same morning quite early Elizabeth went for a walk; it was so fresh and dewy, the sun was shining brightly, and she was so happy. She took her little Bible with her, and meant to go to the beginning of the fir-wood, and find some sunny nook to sit in and read. Latterly she had seldom done this; her communings with God had been very short; she had merely brought to Him her overflowing happy heart, filled with gratitude and prayers for the continuance of her bliss. She had always flattered herself that, by-and-by, she should find more time and regular hours for serious things. When she was once married, she would be no longer so dissipated and so engrossed with other things. She sat before the fir-wood with her Bible in her hand, but she did not open it. Why had she seated herself just here, where she could see the cherry-tree

avenue, and the road from Braunhausen? Foolish child! in her heart was the secret hope, that in spite of her earnest desire, he would give up the hunting and come, and that he would even come earlier, as on account of it he had leave of absence. Therefore she sat here looking towards the cherry-tree walk, and forgot the precious volume on her lap. She sat some time and mused, then rose and walked to and fro, and again sat down, but he came not. At last she was obliged to give up her foolish hope, and take her way home without reading; she was to-day so untr tranquil, she could not collect her thoughts; but on her way she opened her Bible, meaning to take the first verse that came for her consolation. She opened at the Psalms, and her eye fell upon the words, "From the ends of the earth will I call upon Thee, when my heart is in heaviness. O set me up upon the rock that is higher than I; for Thou hast been my hope, and a strong tower for me against the enemy."

"Ah! yes, I have many enemies in myself," she said, with a sigh. "I know not how it will be with me. Dear Lord, pardon me, that I act as though I could be happy without Thee; I know well that this could not be, but I am now very weak. I am tormented with the thought how it stands with our love, whether he loves me still so much as he did at the beginning, and whether I love him as much to-day as I did yesterday. After what happened yester-

day, he should have come to-day purposely to reward me. If he understands my heart, he must know that he would have made me so very happy if he had come, and then all would have been right again. But I am very doubtful whether grandpapa is not right, that a mutual love neither suffices for happiness or comfort in all cases. There is nothing left for me now but to be loving and affectionate to him or the matter will be worse, for grandpapa seems to be quite right—men cannot endure that one should reproach them, and that is certainly very bad. I always thought one might bear anything for love; but if one is a little cross and angry, the love that is underneath is not remarked, and the very love in such a case is no help to one. It would be better at once to say the Lord's Prayer, and beg the dear Lord to help—better to do willingly what one must do. But it is all very different to what I had thought and dreamed; and oh! it is very sad."

Elizabeth was occupied with such thoughts the whole long day. She continually reminded herself that she must receive her bridegroom in the most affectionate, tender way, and strengthened herself in this reasonable resolution with the most gentle and loving reflections. When the sun was softly sinking in the west, she wandered forth alone to meet him. She had scarcely gone a few hundred paces in the avenue, than she saw him in the distance galloping

towards her. Why was she then startled instead of glad? Alas! the painful thoughts she had been struggling against the whole day again rose up in her heart. "If he loved me as much as he did formerly, he would not have stayed away the whole day, just as we are about to be separated for the long winter; and if he loved me very dearly, he must have shared my longings." As she thus reflected, her heart became sorer and heavier. "No, it is terrible, I can not be affectionate to him for love's sake. I do not love him to-day so much as yesterday." She spoke with the clearest conviction. But he was ever coming nearer, she must decide. She could fain have greeted him with tears, and have said—"I am unspeakably sad, because I cannot love you so well to day as heretofore. And then, how would it be? Affairs would be even worse, and my misery greater." She stood still, with her hands convulsively pressed together. "Oh! dear Lord, can I then no longer for love of Thee yield and be gentle; help me, that I may not think whether he has been unkind to me or not. Let me only think of Thee, only remember it is Thy will that I should be kind and loving from my very heart. I have not yet quite lost the power of doing a thing for the love of God," she thought, and suddenly her soul was lightened. "Yes, for the love of God—that God who is ever nigh me with equal love and truth, and for whose sake I have lately done nothing. I can to-day do one little thing."

As the dreaded one stopped before her, vaulted from the saddle, and greeted her joyously, she was able to look into his eyes with perfect love and openness.

He walked by her side, leading his horse by the bridle. "You would not believe, dear Elizabeth, how I have longed for you," said he warmly.

"And I for you!" was her whispered answer.

"Do you know, that this morning I was on the very point of coming to you?" he continued.

She leant on his shoulder for answer.

He bent over her, and looked inquiringly into her face. Yes, she had tears in her eyes, but she looked up so lovely and tender, she seemed to be neither angry nor sorrowful; she was quite incomprehensible to him. He broke a slender branch from a young tree, and said, "Do you remember, Elizabeth, when the ice-blossoms covered this, and these leaves were folded up in the little brown buds?"

Elizabeth nodded.

"Now these leaves are falling off, but underneath are the delicate brown buds."

"And the lovely blue heavens and the sun are always there to entice them out;" replied Elizabeth. "Oh! I have looked to-day on the deep blue heavens. I sought to gaze into their depths, and the deeper I looked, the more calm and peaceful I felt it in my heart. Blue is so exceedingly lovely, like peace itself."

"Therefore blue is the colour of truth," said he.

"And truth is more beautiful than love," she replied hastily, for she feared she might betray the conflicts of the morning, and involuntarily she looked at him with some timidity.

He walked thoughtfully beside her; it was evident to him that she was quite changed to-day—he was accustomed to see her always bright and sportive. They came past a chesnut-tree, whose beautiful coloured leaves strewed the turf and the path; the warm slanting rays of the sun fell so golden and serene on the bank of young birches underneath, that Herr von Kadden stopped involuntarily before the inviting seat. In another moment he had fastened his horse's bridle to a branch, and led Elizabeth to the bank. She sat down; he took both her hands, gave her a searching glance, and said, "Now, dearest Elizabeth, tell what you have upon your heart?"

The attack was unexpected: tears started from her eyes. He begged her to speak, but it was not so easy.

"Do I cause your tears?" he asked.

She assured him she did not weep because she was sad; but she would tell him all, if he would promise not to be angry.

He gave the promise with his whole heart.

She told him of her expectations in the morning, of her conflicts during the day, and her good resolutions; and also that when she saw him coming from the distance, she could not quite love him.

"It was not really so," she explained hastily; "but with so much resentment in my heart I could not feel the love. With all my efforts, I could not overcome myself, my heart was so exhausted. But when I resolved to yield and be affectionate for the love of God, I found I could do it."

Her bridegroom looked at her thoughtfully, and with the greatest interest.

"And now I am so very happy," she continued with great vivacity, "because I have found that I can bring all which would hinder me from loving you, to God. I am not sad now, as I have been the whole day. I shall no longer fear, come what may."

"Dear Elizabeth, I too will bring all to God, which would prevent my loving you," he replied much moved. "I have for the first time clearly experienced that good will and firm resolutions are weak. You must pardon me, and love me still. I shall grow better," he added in a low voice.

"We will not believe that we are perfect," she replied gently, "and then we shall not be so surprised or grieved at each together."

He kissed her fair forehead in silence, then hastily arose and took her to the house, where the grand-mamma had already walked to the hall-door in some impatience. It was singular, but as if the grandparents sympathised in the mood of the young pair, they were calm, and thoughtful, and serious. They sat upon the

sofa, the grandmamama leaning her head upon her husband's shoulder. Elizabeth sat by the side of her bridegroom, listening silently while he conversed with her grandpapa on serious subjects; they did not speak of doctrines, but the grandfather understood well how to say exactly the thing needful without one offensive word. To-day he spoke again of the soul's need; because he trusted that now the young people had experienced somewhat of this they would seek for help.

Herr von Kadden for the first time was attentive and desirous to be taught. Elizabeth looked up at times as if to convince herself that she was really so happy as to have him there. She remembered so distinctly that evening in the past winter when her grandfather had spoken so seriously of the might of the world, how it led so many young souls into distress and ruin. Formerly she had thought with fluttering heart of her own happiness, and had not ventured to dwell on his; to-day from her full heart she could unite his happiness with her own. The song was echoing in her soul, "In deep distress to Thee I call;" and as soon as her grandfather had made a pause, she rose up lightly and went into the garden-hall, where the piano was still standing. The song could no longer be kept down—she must sing it. And she had only sung a few lines, when her bridegroom was at her side, blending his beautiful tenor voice with hers:—

" If Thou shouldst be extreme to view,
The sin, the evil, that we do ;
Ah ! who dare meet Thine eye ?

" We have no goodness of our own,
Pardon to win from Thee,
The very holiest life is naught,
Our righteousness no plea.
Before Thy presence who could boast,
Without Thy grace we were but lost,
That grace so full and free."

When Elizabeth ceased, he took the book in his hand and read the song through to himself. The grandparents had listened, and the grandfather said in a low tone,

" We must not be sorrowful if clouds and little storms overshadow their love's life—need sends us to God. Could they only learn their soul's needs ere they go forth into the world, for it will never cease to perplex their ideas and feelings ! Your motherly heart must not yearn to see our betrothed ones always in overflowing spirits."

That evening Herr von Kadden sat up late, musing on the occurrences of the past day. Never had the image of Elizabeth so moved his soul as to-day. Yes, there is a mysterious inner life, and a mysterious world above us, and the threads that connect them alone give charm to life, and impulse to the soul. The very sweetest draught the world can offer had been given to him in overflowing measure—a love that made him perfectly happy ; but in the midst of his happiness he could not always drive away the thought

—can such joy be lasting? The world laughs at such honeymoon bliss; experience has taught it that such an exquisite bridal-love fades before the power of habit and of time—would it be any better with his love? His understanding had often led him through such thoughts in strange paths before. “Elizabeth cannot always charm me as she charms me now—and why, on the other hand, should she love me always? When time and custom have cooled our love, may not another appear worthier of her affection than I am, for am I not a weak man, in spite of all my good resolutions?” Elizabeth had never yet given him the slightest cause for jealousy; all exterior opportunities had been lacking; but for his sake she had forsaken all that had been hitherto dear to her, and she asked for nothing more than to love him without any rival in her heart. She wishes it, but will she be able to resist external influence? She is still little more than a lovely child. When with the grandparents, he had always felt, though he could not explain it to himself, that neither time nor custom could diminish their love. To-day the grandfather had said again, “To love and sorrow together, to share the needs of the soul together, that is the blessed and imperishable in love; but the joy of a love that belongs only to this world must be abandoned with this world.” He had often heard something like this before, and it had been incomprehensible to him. Now, after the occur-

rences of the last two days, the meaning was clear—he had glanced into the mysterious world above him. Elizabeth, in the necessity of her soul, in her conflict and victory, had first now become his own; she was not a mere weak lovely child, she was stronger than he, stronger through her child-like humility. How had it been with him, the man with the firm will, and the good conscience, in the first and lightest temptation, when for the first time he had thought that she was unpleasing, his love had shown him no way of escape, because he felt anger only; and although he had outwardly commanded himself, inwardly he was in need, and knew no other way to help himself, save to rise up and go away in anger. How would it have been if Elizabeth had not been the first to yield? Yesterday, he argued, she was decidedly wrong, and ought to have yielded; but to-day when her heart was really right, if she could not have brought to the Lord whatever hindered her love, if she had been cross and sulky, how would it have been? He felt himself in a labyrinth, out of which he must find his way. Elizabeth, with her tender conscience and world of sensitive feelings, even in these little occurrences felt her soul's need, and sought the right help; he could not picture to himself how it could have been otherwise with her. He thought of a maiden like Adolfine, and certainly not without blushing. At his first coming she had enchanted him; he thought her interesting, fascinating; at times he felt

a slight repugnance to her *naïveté*. His healthy, upright nature, kept him from hastily following up his foolish inclination; and it was fortunate that this very *naïveté* gave him the right to treat Adolfine as a child, and to draw back at the right time. Adolfine compared with Elizabeth—he drew breath. The difference between them was now first intelligible—both beautiful, child-like, and good-natured—the one was entirely engrossed with the beauty and pleasures of this world; the other looked upwards with love and yearning.

“We will give up to God whatever will hinder our mutual love.”

That should be now his word of consolation, if his reason should lead him into strange paths. Mutual souls’ need binds two hearts tenderly together; good fortune and the pleasures of the world draw them apart.

These were not mere reflections to-day. No; his understanding would have risen up to oppose them—they were the life of his soul, the warm pulsations of his heart. He felt that Elizabeth’s heart could never again turn away from him; a mighty power bound her to him, and this power would hold her fast in all the distress that he, or the world, or her own heart, could cause her. And how was it with him? Involuntarily he held out his arms.

“At Easter she will be mine own; I will guard her as my heart’s best treasure. I will be a child with

her; I will be humble, and let her lead me into a world that I cannot comprehend, but after which I yearn, that my happiness may be complete and imperishable."

During these reflections the melody was ever in his soul that he had sung that evening with Elizabeth; it was blended with his present feelings, and it was in itself very moving. He tried to recall it on the piano, but he would willingly have known the words. He had no hymn-book of his own; though he had long meant to buy one, he had always forgotten it. His servant was not at home, and as he could not ask him, he resolved to apply to his landlady. The good-natured Frau Friedrichs ran to fetch her best, with its gilt edges and gold cross on the cover; and as the Lieutenant took it from her, a slight feeling of shame and embarrassment came over him. He had some trouble in finding the song, as he did not know the beginning. At last he remembered that it must stand among the penitential ones, and there he found it. He played and sang it through without real faith or repentance; it seemed good to his soul to impress this song upon it, and he laid the book aside with the decided resolution to send for one in the morning. Elisabeth was again in Berlin, and Herr von Kadden quietly settled at Braunhausen. The approaching wet and stormy weather constrained both to lead a very monotonous life. He was obliged to content himself with the circle he

had learnt to regard as tedious. He could not ride to Wolfheim on account of the bad weather and roads, and he had permission to go to Berlin only once before Christmas. Thus it happened quite naturally that he was again led into the same society he had forsaken in the summer. He joined the mess at noon with his unmarried comrades, and listened to the usual conversation in such company—young ladies, promotions in the different regiments, horses, dogs, and hunts. After dinner Herr von Stottenheim often sat with him for hours, talking to him very good-humouredly without much meaning, or his younger comrades came to his room and were merry. So long as he was in Braunschweig, his room was the regular rendezvous; for, though not prodigal, he was very generous. Scarcely a day passed, that his servant did not fetch table-linen from the old chest to serve up something or other. Besides this private company, he again visited a few married comrades; and at the Bonsaks' especially, contrary to Stottenheim's expectations, was welcomed in the most friendly way. Frau von Bonsak and her elder daughters, who were always ready for entertainments, rejoiced already at the approaching intercourse with the pleasing, youthful wife of the Lieutenant, and Adolfine was so engrossed with a new love affair, that she had long forgotten the rude Herr von Kadden. The Colonel's wife was even so benevolent as to take great interest in the arrangements of

the new household, to give him good counsel, and take some trouble on his account.

Our every-day life, with its invisible power, exercises a great influence over the human mind. Herr von Kadden soon looked upon this manner of living, speaking, thinking, and acting, as something quite natural and customary. The life with his bride, their ideas and discourses, he had never spoken of to anyone; it now came to his mind again as something exquisite, but so strange and peculiar. The occurrences of the last few days in the autumn now seemed to him almost enthusiastic. The song-book which, true to his purpose, he had bought, lay unused on the piano. It was much the same with Elizabeth—her light fancy had soon floated over the little significant scenes with her bridegroom. She was fully convinced she had been a simpleton, and had needlessly tormented herself; all was now so full of delight and marvel. Her letters became very charming and bridelike; she never introduced any serious topic. "He is not accustomed to it," she thought, "and when one is not used to speak of those things, it is very difficult to do so; one rather keeps them to oneself." His letters were tender and beautiful, and so earnest and manly, that a feeling of respect ever mingled more and more with her love. While reading them, she felt again all that he had said to her in moments of seriousness or emotion. And so it was with her letters; if they never spoke of religious

feelings, they were penetrated with its spirit; for at least she yearned for a guide, and the lovely child-like world that she opened to him without any reserve, moved his heart more than his understanding would confess.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAST WINTER IN BERLIN.

At length the weeks before Christmas were passed. The bridegroom went to Berlin, and remained there till the New Year. The days were very beautiful, and the whole Kuhneman family became fonder than ever of Elizabeth's beloved Otto. Elise remarked with joy that he had gained a certain ascendancy over Elizabeth, and in the little disputes and teasings that sometimes took place, he was now considerate and reasonable ; so that Elizabeth much more quickly became good-humoured and amiable. How far a certain scene in the past autumn had contributed to this, was not clear even to the betrothed pair. If he often permitted her, to Emily's regular horror, to play the queen, and be especially exigeante, there needed only one rapid, searching glance to make her cautious. If she then immediately yielded, and he was the same attentive bridegroom, only one person present remarked that he had anything to do with her compliance. This one person was Schlosser, and it was

strange that two men so entirely different should feel themselves so drawn to each other. It was not exactly a friendship that was established between them, but rather on all occasions a mutual sympathy.

To Emily, on the contrary, Herr von Kadden was insufferable; and the good reports for gentleness and consideration he had won in the first half of his visit, were very nearly lost on two or three occasions when he was in her society. The last time he was on the verge of being impetuous and disrespectful to her; but Schlosser kindly held his hand to him, and said,

"Dear cousin, we must be indulgent with young ladies." That acted as a charm.

"Pardon me, dear Schlosser, that I never can agree with Fraulein Emily," he replied, with a sigh. Then turning to Emily, he added playfully, "I almost fear we never shall learn to do so."

"I fear as much," she replied, coldly, and the affair was ended.

As soon as Kadden was alone with his mother-in-law, he opened his heart very freely to her.

"Poor Schlosser!" he exclaimed, warmly, "he cannot be happy with her; that girl would drive me to despair. I do not know—however, I will say no more."

"Dear Otto," said Elise, gently, "we must all have patience with each other."

"No one can have patience with *her*," he hastily exclaimed.

"Schlosser can," said Elise, quietly.

"Now, may the dear God help him!" added Kadden, with a sigh.

Elise could not help laughing, but she took this opportunity of entering somewhat fully into Emily's peculiarities, her faults, and her excellencies. She granted that her reason often misled her; but, on the other hand, she could not but extol her self-denying charity on all sides; she shrank from no exertion, devoted herself entirely to the service of the Lord, to the care of His poor, to children, and the sick. She went on besides to say that Emily knew the sharpness and hardness of her nature, that she never failed in love and reverence to her parents, and struggled with all earnestness against her faults to her bridegroom."

Kadden listened with interest, and seemed even inclined to believe it. "Perhaps I do Emily injustice," he said; "I might even be ready to own it to her; but I am afraid of her strong character. Despite her vexation with me, she would probably graciously condescend to pardon me instead of honestly quarrelling."

Elise blamed this new censure, and assured him she only wished Elizabeth would learn to overcome her faults as Emily did, and would take her conscientiousness as an example.

"Dear mother, you are mistaken in Elizabeth," began Herr von Kadden.

"Will you not have more need of patience with her than Schlosser with Emily?" asked Elise, smiling.

"Oh! if I had only an eighth part of Schlosser's calmness!" he replied, hastily.

"Have you not?" asked she again.

He shook his head, smiling.

"You see, then, my dear Otto, that we all have our faults, and that we must bear each other's with patience."

At that moment Elizabeth entered, and the pair stood hand in hand before the mother, as she said,

"You will both have need of it with each other."

"That we certainly shall; but do not be anxious about us," exclaimed the bridegroom, warmly, "we shall settle our little affairs very well."

"With God's help," she observed, kindly; and the pair nodded in assent.

On the morning following New Year's Day, Herr von Kadden went to pay a few farewell visits, and Elizabeth went with him. After they had been to Frau von Warmholz, they went to the old aunt's, the dogs' great friend. Elizabeth had made this acquaintance since her betrothal, and had most dutifully paid her regular visits as niece, much to the delight of the old lady who had once seriously asserted that she was not quite sure which of the two she loved best, her pleasing niece, or her dear Diana.

As the betrothed pair returned through the wintry, gloomy streets, they reminded each other of a similar day when they had met here so unexpectedly. Elizabeth told him of her fears, that he would meet with some accident that night, and what anxiety she had been in about his faith. She spoke so confidently and joyously, it was the best proof to him she was now easy on that head. Assured that he had exchanged his poor conscience-heaven for one full of grace and love; he was rejoiced to hear her, and thanked her with a tender look. The beautiful Christmas festival which he had passed for the first time in a family among a circle of Christ's children, of whom Elizabeth was the sweetest child of all, had given him a new glimpse of the mysterious world above him. The threads from above that had again entwined his soul he would gladly have tightened around him that they might be never torn away, leaving him without support. He took Elizabeth back to the house, and then went alone to call on Schlosser. He was kindly received, but both were slightly embarrassed, because the friendship of their hearts was too tender to venture out into the daylight.

"I am afraid I disturb you," said Herr von Kadden, modestly; "you have business of greater importance."

"But none more pleasant," replied Schlosser, with warmth.

"Ere I depart, I must beg a favour of you," began Kadden.

Schlosser looked at him inquiringly.

"You must undertake our marriage discourse at Easter," continued Kadden, pressingly.

"I!" exclaimed the other in some astonishment; but he immediately added, with a smile, "I should certainly not make the kind of one you would like."

"Trust in me," said the petitioner, again, "I would so willingly agree to all you will say."

Schlosser assured him that he would trust in him, and would undertake it.

"I am sorry that I cannot be with you more," resumed Herr von Kadden, with some timidity.

Schlosser gave him his hand, and said, "I will tell you quite in confidence, that I shall probably be the pastor of Wendstadt, the second railway station from you, and that I greatly rejoice at the prospect of seeing you and Elizabeth frequently."

This probable event was discussed by both with interest. Wendstadt could be reached by the railway in half an hour, and lay on the road to Berlin; thus there would be constant opportunities for intercourse. Schlosser hoped, if he succeeded in gaining this post, to be married himself in the summer.

"I must then learn how to agree better with Emily," said Herr von Kadden, playfully. "I must

really beg your pardon, that I have so often been impolite to your bride."

"In your place I should have been the same," answered Schlosser, laughing.

"Yes; only if you had been in my place," said Kadden, with a faint sigh.

"God only knows how hearts are drawn together," observed Schlosser; "but it is well that Elizabeth is not like Emily."

"One of the very things that vexes me with her," continued Herr von Kadden, with great vivacity, "is, that she always treats Elizabeth as a mere child."

"Emily is wrong," replied Schlosser, earnestly; "she will one day be convinced of it herself."

Kadden was content with this assurance, and the visit ended shortly afterwards in perfect amity.

At the end of January, on a beautiful winter's day, Counsellor Kuhneman went again with his family to the General's for the Shakespeare reading.

Elizabeth had received a letter from her bridegroom this day, in which he commissioned her to remind Schlosser of his promise about the marriage discourse, a commission she willingly undertook, as she particularly liked Schlosser.

When they arrived, they found all the party assembled but Emily, who was at a Society meeting.

"Is she not a little too much taken up by these

Christian societies?" asked the General, shaking his head.

"Emily's work has certainly accumulated very much lately," replied his wife.

"Yes, that is because we could not exist without your daughter," began Frau von Warmholz; "she is the very soul of all, unwearied in work, and so discreet and practical in all business, that she at once lights on the right course."

"One of her best qualities," began Clara, "is, that she knows how to keep such excellent order, and can make head against the various opinions of so many ladies."

"Most admirably does she that," laughed Frau von Warmholz; and, turning to the General's wife, she added,

"Dear friend, you should have seen how your daughter opposed the little Superintendent Frau Max. Of course she was right; we were all on her side, and Frau Max was obliged to yield."

"Yes," said Elise, warmly, "she is admirably adapted for such affairs."

Her aunt and Schlosser were silent, while Frau von Warmholz was voluble in praise and admiration of Emily. Elizabeth had listened to the conversation with great attention; and turning now to Schlosser, from whom she had received the promise with regard to the marriage discourse, she observed,

"Emily has advised me to start a little missionary society in Braunhausen, but I cannot."

Schlosser smiled.

"If the elder ladies begin one, and I may quietly take an interest in it," she continued.

"Yes, quietly," repeated Schlosser.

"And then I must first ask Otto's permission. Emily says he must give me leave."

"Must!" exclaimed he, in some surprise.

"I must not be treated as a child," pleaded Elizabeth. "I must not let myself be led astray in matters of faith; Christ must ever be the first Master in my life."

"He must," replied Schlosser calmly, "but Christ has nowhere commanded that a woman should join a missionary society against the will of her husband. He says, 'Obedience is better than sacrifice;' and," he added with a smile, "I shall take care to impress that upon you in your marriage discourse, 'He shall be your master.'"

Elizabeth looked at him affectionately with her clear glad eyes.

"I will ask Otto first," she replied; "and if I wish it very much, after a time he will give me leave."

"Yes, begin your young household in all quietness with God," said Schlosser; "live with your own family, with those nearest to you in the mind of the Lord; then you will be serving Him"

"If I can only do that," interrupted she, doubtfully.

"Without God we are weak, with Him we are strong," was Schlosser's reassuring answer.

He was the only one in this circle who was not perpetually warning, blaming, and making her heart heavy; he always encouraged her.

"Dear Herr von Schlosser," said Frau von Warmholz, turning to him with great vivacity, while all her ringlets danced on her little head, "you must tell out your thoughts; you are so very silent this winter whenever we speak of our meetings. That is so strange of you. Have you any objection to them?"

"To societies, certainly not," replied Schlosser quietly; "but whether they are good for the lady members is in my opinion somewhat doubtful."

"For us!" exclaimed Frau von Warmholz in astonishment.

"Not for all alike," was Schlosser's answer.

"The pastor means," began Clara thoughtfully, "when they take up too much time, too much exertion, as with poor Emily, who scarcely gets any rest."

Schlosser nodded, and looked straight before him.

"It is delightful to me," began the young Reifenhagen, "that a man whose judgment one respects, should be opposed to this society-zeal. I know a lady whom I will not name, who, for the sake of those Christian duties, considers her little commonplace household ones beneath her dignity. She even re-

quires that her husband and children should rejoice to be neglected, and reverence her lofty vocation. Her husband is actually so stupid as to do it."

"Herr von Reifenhagen, you are a dreadful man!" exclaimed Frau von Warmholz. "If a woman has especial gifts for working in a larger circle, it would be wrong to keep her back."

"I would never permit a woman to work in a large circle," he replied, "till she had discharged the insignificant duties that devolve upon her as wife and mother; and a woman who has husband and children has quite sufficient vocation. If she is benevolent, and desires to serve the Lord beyond her own house, life will afford her sufficient opportunities of doing it in all quietness. Unions take up too much time; they are, for ladies who have no vocation, very excellent; and it is very proper that Miss Emily, the future young pastor's wife, should exercise her gifts so admirably."

Just then Emily entered breathless and weary. After greeting the company, she observed,

"I must have kept you waiting."

"Yes, my dear," replied Frau von Warmholz, "we may well, with our Shakspeare, wait for you."

Emily, sighing, sat down by her bridegroom, and replied, "To-day I am quite unstrung."

"Now, just relate all your proceedings," began her cousin Theodore.

"It would be little entertaining," replied Emily, with a somewhat dignified smile.

"Dear Emily, could I not sometimes take your place?" asked Elizabeth hastily; "I should like to see something of the life of poor people."

"No, child, you could not do as I should," answered Emily smiling.

Elizabeth blushed, and added in some confusion,

"But I could go with you?"

"That might be, perhaps," was Emily's indifferent answer.

"Dear Emily," began Frau von Warmholz zealously, "I am glad you are come; you can help me to defend our societies against these gentlemen."

"What gentlemen?" asked Emily, surprised.

"These young gentlemen," said Frau Warmholz, pointing to Schlosser and Reifenhagen; "but our chief enemy is Herr von Reifenhagen."

"I doubt that," interrupted Schlosser.

"Were you against our societies?" said Emily sharply, turning to her bridegroom.

"Not against the societies," declared Schlosser once more; "I only fear that certain members cannot bear this activity."

"How so?" demanded Frau von Warmholz impatiently.

"Since you constrain me to speak," began Schlosser with all seriousness, "I will plainly say out what I

think. Very few female minds can bear to be continually drawn out and busied, or to be the central-point of some conspicuous working-association, as their proper vocation is to rule in all humility and simplicity. It is almost impossible for men to be ever giving out, unless they are in stillness collecting and gathering in; it is much more difficult for women. Amid these unusual demands that are so constantly made upon them: there must be inner loss; and when I have the right to decide for Emily, I shall prescribe a year's rest from all such things, that she may recover her strength."

"Wilhelm!" exclaimed Emily, almost alarmed.

"Very good, my son, very good;" chimed in the General, and immediately there began so animated a discussion between him, his nephew, and the Privy-Counsellor, that the others were necessarily silent. The result was undecided; the Counsellor could not properly complain, because his wife had never taken too great an interest in this Christian lady's work; the nephew had only the outer neglect in his eye, and the General could not exactly explain the reason of his dislike.

"This is the sum of all," said Emily at length, very tranquilly; "the gentlemen think we are unfitted for working in a large sphere; we are made for the house alone, and for their convenience."

"I was not thinking of myself," answered Schlosser, gently, "when I prescribed a year's rest from such work, but of you alone, dear Emily."

"Do not tease me, Wilhelm," interrupted his bride ; "you know how accustomed I am to my favourite work."

"My good friend," began Frau von Warmholz eagerly, "we are not to put our light under a bushel ; and Emily is especially called upon to be a light to all. I see in her already the ideal of a pastor's wife."

"And I, too," interrupted Schlosser, "a quiet, lowly pastor's wife, who will be neither a manager of young ladies' societies, children's schools, or soup-kitchens."

Emily's lips quivered ; but she was silent. After her unusual exertions in labours of love to-day, she had expected her bridegroom's approbation, but he was sadly inconsiderate.

"But, my dear Schlosser," asked Frau von Warmholz, "is it not a great merit to devote one's life to such things ? And Emily does it so gladly."

"I could not live without this activity," exclaimed Emily warmly ; "all else in the world appears to me as nought in comparison."

"That you cannot live without such things should make you seriously reflect whether they are good for you," observed her bridegroom. "It would be more difficult, at all events, to be the quiet simple pastor's wife, than to be the admired leader in these excellent works."

"There are simple people enough in the world !" exclaimed Emily.

She did not mean to be so sharp, but she was vexed ;

and suddenly a light flashed into the minds of the listeners; they saw what was Schlosser's especial meaning. This activity was no sacrifice to Emily, though she wished to serve the Lord with all sincerity, but the exact nourishment to her besetting sins. Schlosser was totally unmoved by Emily's vehemence; he knew that she was vexed, and thought no worse of her than before. He gave her his hand in token of amity, and she speedily mastered her anger and tried to smile. To avoid an awkward pause, Frau von Warmholz exclaimed,

"Now I understand you—there is danger for the zealous in this activity, but none for me and my Clara; we can work tranquilly enough."

"Till Clara's future husband, if he should belong to our confederacy, enters his protest," said the General, mischievously.

Clara looked upon her work to hide her confusion, and Elise made some playful remark for her.

Young Reifenhagen, with his fine eyes, but somewhat passive features, had long fixed his eyes upon Clara; and the little circle had few doubts but that poor little Clara, in spite of her struggling reason, had given her heart to a man with liver complaint; and the mildness of her gentle nature was to equalize the impetuosity and temper of a beloved and very estimable object.

The reading was now begun, and the conversation took another direction.

Emily, with great self-command, had soon overcome her anger, and spoke of the reading with her usual composure and discretion, until the guests, and at last her father, had left the room, and she was alone with her mother and Schlosser.

"Let us return once more to our discussion of this evening," said the latter, quite kindly.

The mother appeared to have no objection to this proposal, and it was plainly to be seen by Emily's expression, that she was preparing for a battle.

Schlosser's searching glance perceived it at once. "Not so, dear Emily," he exclaimed, "I have not the least intention of arguing with you; you know I am no friend to argument."

"But at least you will allow me to defend myself," said she quickly.

"It is unnecessary," was his answer. "I can defend you far better than you can do it yourself."

"Not always," said Emily, sighing; "you blamed me to-day as though all I did was for my own honour, and not for God's."

"No, no," answered Schlosser, earnestly, "that would not be true; but I am still convinced that it would be better for you to seek to lead a more calm and simple life. I cannot prove it to you; you must experience the blessing of such stillness and humility. I have never thought of interrupting you in your present activity, which is a blessing to so many. I only advise you to begin the new starting-point in your life

in self-collected calmness. What will shape itself from this quiet, hidden life, by-and-by will be quite activity enough."

"And, dear Emily," said her mother, now taking up the subject, "I would advise you then not to take the lead in societies and such things; you will ever find cases for personal influence, where you can work unnoticed, and find the profit of your past experience."

"You are exceedingly careful for me," said Emily, rather ironically; but"—and she now spoke with great emphasis—"I will renounce all these things; I will live in all stillness with God; I will show you that, as regards myself, this activity is nothing."

"That is the thing," observed Schlosser, smiling; "you must always show something; you should be willing to show nothing, and to be nothing."

Emily was startled. "You seem always to mistake me!" she exclaimed. "I am to be nothing; I am quite suddenly to give up all thought, and to put my inner life to sleep. To my acquaintances I am all at once to be totally different; for example, I am to say to Elizabeth, 'I was quite wrong when I counselled you to some kind of activity and better expenditure of your time; it is far better to be unthinking and childlike as you are.'"

"Say the latter to yourself, and not to Elizabeth," interrupted her bridegroom; "she is childlike and innocent enough, and can bear counselling to something more earnest."

"And I warn you not to speak quite so slightly of Elisabeth," observed her mother.

"Do you again wish me to take her as an example?" asked Emily, with a slight shake of the head, as though this were something too incredible.

"You know very well what we wish, my dear Emily," said her mother, gently; "do not let your reason mislead you."

"That is difficult, when one is so clever," said Schlosser, playfully; and he looked into the eyes of his bride with mingled penetration and sympathy.

"Yes, it is very difficult," she whispered, as he took his leave.

"But, with God's help," said he, in a low tone, and then went forth.

As he left the house, Herr von Reifenhagen came towards him.

"I have been waiting for you," he exclaimed, hastily; "I have something to tell you."

"But nothing new?" replied Schlosser.

He smiled, and related, that after due consideration, he had ventured to propose on the way home, and had received from Mother and Clara a provisional consent. At first Clara thought she was more fitted to labour quietly in their societies, but he implored her to exercise her Christian love and patience on him. He ended his account by saying—"Only to so modest a soul durst I have applied: no other would have endured me."

"Without the Lord's help we are all weak," replied Schlosser, "and it is well if we can own this in our first rosy dawn of bliss."

They now separated. Both thought on their future this night with mingled hope and foreboding; and both, amid all their reflections, had the words echoing in their souls—"Without God's help we are all weak."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE WEDDING.

It was a lovely morning fourteen days after Easter. The heavens were blue and the air soft; the larks sang and the violets blossomed; the children played before the doors, and the sparrows under the windows; the doves walked to and fro upon the roofs, or flew around in the golden sunshine with their silvery wings; and in the old gray house at Woltheim all was joy and animation. Elizabeth's marriage was to be celebrated. The more confined house in Berlin was unsuited for a large family gathering; therefore the grandparents' and the Ranger's proposal to celebrate the marriage in Woltheim was gladly accepted; and as fortunately there was neither measles, nor hooping-cough, nor inflammation in the Counsellor's or the Ranger's nursery, but all were perfectly well, the wedding was a festival for great and little. On the eve of the marriage there was of course much acting of charades, and to the great sorrow of the children, Elizabeth could not perform with them; but, on the other hand, they had the assis-

tance of Frau von Warmholz, who, with her own betrothed pair, had been much gratified by receiving an invitation to the wedding, Aunt Wina, and the Ranger's wife were particularly ingenious in aiding them. Verses poured forth from the lips of the young ones, touching, comic, or solemn, as the occasion required. But uninvited guests, as well as the expected ones, arrived. To these belonged Herr von Stottenheim with his younger comrades; and Elizabeth, the queen of the banquet, received the homage that was offered to her on all sides, and which reached its climax in her bridegroom, with undisguised transport. On the morning of the wedding there was little stillness in the house, and Elizabeth stole into the quiet garden and the sunny cherry tree avenue, the dear old well-known path. She soon saw the expected one approaching, and very speedily he was before her. As usual, he vaulted from the saddle and greeted her.

"For the last time you are come to meet me thus," said he, in a tone of emotion. "Now we shall never more be separated."

She looked at him with her large eyes in such perfect confidence and such exquisite loveliness, that he again thought, "I will guard her as my heart's best treasure."

He now left his horse to the servant, who was in attendance; for Elizabeth proposed, to escape the bustle in the house, that they should go for a walk. They

went the same way the grandparents had chosen on their wedding-morn. They sat on the top of the fir-hill in the bright spring sunshine, and looked down upon the peaceful towers of Braunhausen; but their conversation was not so serious as that of their predecessors. They were both too confident that they needed nothing more than their love to make them perfectly happy. The little sad experience during the time of betrothal was naturally forgotten now. The bridegroom was ever more assuredly convinced that he now, for the first time, knew his Elizabeth aright, was more resolved to support her, to show her tenderness and consideration, and to be at least as patient with her faults as Schlosser was with Emily's. On the other hand Elizabeth did not doubt but that her bridegroom would ever become more amiable. It was only natural. How should he know how to treat ladies? From his childhood up he had only been with men; she must first teach him, and she hoped that he would be a docile scholar and continually improve; she was quite confident beforehand. The bridegroom now reminded her sportively that here formerly her grandmamma had assured her bridegroom she should hear nothing more gladly than the command, "And he shall be thy master." He said it in mere sport, for the very possibility of such rule lay far from him just now.

"From grandmamma that was very natural," said Elizabeth, sagely; "she had seen my great-uncle treat

his wife tyrannically, while she was always compliant and gentle. In former times that was often the custom, therefore grandmamma was very fortunate in obtaining so amiable a master, and might well say that; but I have already told her that the times are altered, and all that is no longer the fashion."

The bridegroom smiled, but appeared to be perfectly agreed.

"In those reasonable marriages, or in cases where the daughter was obliged to say 'Yea,' because the parents said yes, that was all very well," continued Elizabeth; "but where people love each other it is quite otherwise—it would not be endurable for one to be superior to the other."

The bridegroom nodded again, and at any rate listened as attentively as that former bridegroom, when his bride was telling him in all humility, that she could not comprehend how he would always love her; that she looked upon his love as an especial blessing from God; and that she would trust to Him for its continuance. That the humility with which she so cheerfully saw a master in her bridegroom, resulted partly from his being of a very tender nature that would certainly never exercise undue authority over her was unknown even to herself. Her granddaughter saw the thing in a different light.

"Look here, dear Otto," she continued, in the most instructive manner, "if I am wrong, I will see it; if you are wrong, you must see it."

"Of course," observed the happy bridegroom, "but if we should both be wrong?" he added, laughing.

"Then we must both see it," said she briefly, and the affair was settled.

When they returned to the house, it was time to dress. Elizabeth had chosen to be arrayed by her mother and grandmother, and much to Aunt Wina's indignation had decidedly declined all other help. The three now passed one sweet happy hour together in the room that had once belonged to Elise. To Elizabeth it was all a dream. She allowed herself to be adorned like a child, listened to all the gentle, loving, and serious words of her mamma and grandmamma with pleasure, and assented to every thing; from first to last it was a dream. She was now ready, and the bridegroom entered. Elise was so moved, she could say little to her deeply-touched children, and to her inner sorrow she was obliged to confess to herself that she had never spoken out her deepest thoughts so openly and heartily to her son as she had intended. She had always considered too much how she should treat the subject, that is, how she should speak of religious matters in the cleverest way, and cleverness in such cases avails but little; simplicity is ever securer and firmer on the ground of faith. She had certainly often talked with him in a serious and motherly way; but any well meaning and conscientious mother, who had little religion, might have spoken the same. The grandmamma, on the contrary,

had from the beginning acted quite differently with the new son. Simply and openly, she had ever allowed him to look upon the richness of her devout life, leaving it to the Holy Spirit to work therewith as He would. Such a course is better than all human scheming, and the young man loved the grandmamma with a childlike devotion, that made himself quite happy. How willingly did he now listen to her gentle words and fervent wishes for their happiness, which all pointed to Christ as the only way !

" You may certainly expect a better marriage discourse than I and my dear Fritz had," she concluded ; " but the minutes before the marriage, when we can collect ourselves alone, are very precious ; you must now have them, and read together my beautiful marriage-song."

She left the chamber with Elise, and the bridal-pair stood alone at the window. He took the paper and read the poem ; Elizabeth did not look on. She knew it before, and she read it now in his features and in his eyes, as she leant against him, so entirely confiding in his love and goodness, and in his guardianship, as though there were now nothing more in the world for her to fear. He had read—

" Heal to that house, all good befall,
Where Jesus Christ is Lord of all !
Ah ! if His presence were not there,
How empty and how lone it were !"

He could not exactly comprehend it, but his heart

was softened and filled with gratitude and joy; that he was about to begin a household life caused him deep emotion. To God, who had called him from his empty solitary life to this fullness of life and joy, his life should certainly belong; that was as much a matter of course as the certainty of his happiness that lay outspread so rich and fair before him.

"The poem is for you, too, dear Elizabeth," said he, to his bride.

"I know it by heart," she answered, softly.

They read the last verse once more, together—

"This solemn pledge myself I take,
And with my house this covenant make,
Though all men from Him go away,
We will be constant found for aye."

Elizabeth had no especial thoughts during the reading, still less any serious purposes—all came to her as a matter of course; nothing could to-day be more natural and easy than to be religious, amiable, and happy. In this mood the bridal-pair stood before their friend Schlosser; both heard that his discourse was very earnest and quite after the old fashion, and both were quite agreed therewith. After the marriage they knew very little about it, especially Elizabeth; the novel and wonderful in the day's proceedings had taken so great hold upon her;—from the taking her place in the carriage, the eager crowd in the little town, the festival-clad relations, her husband at her

side ;—all, all passed before her as a dream. Even the stately dinner she could not quite comprehend, and not till the company separated, some to the different rooms, some to the garden-hall, or out into the warm bright sunshine, did she come to herself. She was then most affectionate to all ; she embraced her grand-mamma again and again with the utmost fervour, kissed her grandpapa's hand, explained in all seriousness to her mother how she should keep her house-keeping books, and could scarcely wait to teach her new maid to cook after her own fashion and not after Aunt Julia's. (This same maiden was an old servant who had already been instructed by her aunt.) She made many friendly assurances to her Aunt Julia, thanked her heartily for all the trouble she had taken about her wedding, and promised her in all sincerity she would never quarrel with her again, but keep good friends. She especially rejoiced at the prospect of the delightful musical evenings at the Ranger's ; she could walk quite well from Braunhausen to Woltheim ; and her uncle had promised to drive her in the winter and in the evenings. Uncle Karl had woven some particular speculations on to Elizabeth's wedding. She was to obtain regular information for him from the ladies of her acquaintance of the prices of butter, milk, and eggs, that he might not be compelled to rely on the honesty of his messenger. He had explained to Charlotte, if he could save a

penny in each pound of the weekly sixty pounds of butter, there would be a crown a week, fifty-two crowns the year. This money, in the shape of hams, potatoes, cabbages and turnips, should pass into Elizabeth's housekeeping; thus it would remain in the family, and be a pure saving!

Charlotte was struck with this excellent idea, and admired much the prudent foresight and notable management of the good Herr von Budmar. Naturally, Elizabeth made no objection to this proposal; and in her Uncle's presence she told her beloved Otto, who laughed in every feature of his face, and still more in his heart, that he might renounce his fear of having bad butter, as he would only eat her Uncle's, which was the best and most esteemed in all the country, and very moderate in price.

Shortly after this she stood again by her bridegroom, most lovely in her humility, as Schlosser gave them the copy of their marriage discourse. They promised him to read it together on the next Sunday afternoon, and to take it to heart.

Schlosser was so brotherly and affectionate, and joyous with Elizabeth, that Emily, with the best will, could not refrain from wondering at it.

"No one, not a creature exhorts her to seriousness!" she thought. "That those dreadful aunts, Wina and Paula, should flatter and adore her, is unavoidable; but we should act better by her, and not encour-

rage her so entirely in her foolish hopes and expectations."

Elizabeth now approached her and Clara at the same time. More than mere kindness and joy beamed in her eyes to-day, as she said to her friends—

"I hope that at last you feel great respect for me as I am a wife, and you are still only brides."

"That does not avail you much," replied Emily, with perfect composure; "if you can give us a glimpse into your future life, and let us see that you will be really a pattern, I will have great respect for you."

"Dear Emily," pleaded Elizabeth, still playfully, yet with some constraint, "you would not make me sad on my most joyful day?"

"I know not what day in your whole life could be more suitable to make you reflect upon the one thing needful," was Emily's severe answer.

"You give me credit for very little," observed Elizabeth more seriously, "which is unjust, as you certainly cannot know what I feel in my heart."

"You deceive yourself even about your heart," began Emily now, with great zeal; "if you continue in this light mood, looking on every thing with such perfect joy and confidence, you cannot be really happy."

Elizabeth reddened, and looked angrily upon the speaker; and as she could no longer exclaim as in her childhood, "Stupid old thing!" nor give her a box on the ear, and push her down, she turned hastily

away from her. The tender grandmamma had been a spectator of this scene also. Although she had not caught all the words, she guessed their meaning; she soon dried Elizabeth's tears, and counselled her with the utmost affection and fervour not to hearken to the judgment of men, but in all her necessities to cleave to the Lord. Elizabeth smiled through her tears, and resolved to bid Emily a friendly adieu, when the time came for departure. Aunt Wina was permitted, after Elizabeth had exchanged her bridal for her travelling dress, to place the first little cap on the youthful head. The bridegroom was standing by; and Wina gladly availed herself of this excellent opportunity for saying something important. She had just begun a solemn discourse on the excellence of noble womanly dignity, when Herr von Kadden's faithful servant most unluckily opened the door and asked Elizabeth for the first time,

"Gracious lady, shall I put the things in the carriage?"

Elizabeth smiled, looked up to her young husband with pleasure, and gave her orders with due precision. That any serious impression had been made by Wina's studied discourse, was, alas! little to be expected

