IVAR:

OR,

THE SKJUTS-BOY.

By EMILIE CARLEN.



Translated from the Swedish,

BY PROFESSOR A. L. KRAUSE

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION.

THE romantic literature of the Scandinavian nations has, of late, been perused with the most lively interest by the reading public on both sides of the Atlantic. These "Northmen," whose ancient history is so replete with daring deeds of glory and romance, have, as they now lack the opportunity of displaying that chivalrous spirit, transferred it from the strife of battle to the more quiet and peaceful character of highly inspired domestic literature.

Bishop TEGNER, FREDERIKA BREMER, OEHLENSCHLAEGER, and ANDERSSEN, whose classical writings are known to nearly every civilized nation, maintain as high and dignified a position in the arena of literature as any of the most prominent authors of the day.

There is one branch of domestic literature, however, in which northern nations, particularly those of Teutonic extraction, excel. It is the literature of sociality; the graphic description of all those tender sentiments, of all those pleasures and sorrows encircled within the walls of "*home*," and displayed within the very bosom of the family circle, when they sit near their snug fireside, or when they tread the rougher paths of life.

Writings of this description furnish a true and genuine history of the human heart; for they unfold the secret thoughts and

actions of society in all its different grades, and are far more interesting and instructive than the high-flown traditions of heroes, or the record of warlike exploits and deeds of violence.

Goldsmith, Fielding, and Smollett, first struck this vein in English literature. They were followed, in modern times, with equal success, by Dickens and Bulwer, and in America by Irving, Cooper, and Paulding.

The Germans, compelled by natural and political circumstances to confine the outpourings of their romantic, but withal metaphysical spirit, to the narrow circle of domestic life, commenced cultivating this field of literature at an early period. Goethe, Tieck, Zschokke, Chamisso, and a legion of others of later times have unveiled the treasures of the romance of domestic life, to an almost boundless extent.

Sweden and Norway, stretching their iron-bound, sea-girt coast from the blue waves of the Baltic to the confines of the Polar Sea, are particularly fitted to call into life a species of domestic literature, upon every feature of which is imprinted the type of its origin. The grandeur of the natural scenery of these countries, the feudal institutions by which they have been governed for centuries, the simplicity and extreme sobriety of their strictly Protestant religious views, the monotony of their secluded life, which renders sociability and hospitality a necessary element for relief and recreation, all combined, serve to clothe their writings with a slight air of melancholy, but also with all the thrilling joys and tender sentiments only developed in domestic life. It is thus that the harp of Ossian, which once resounded through the glens and cliffs of Scotland, pervades these sketches of northern life as stirringly as did Sappho's lyre, when it sent its mournful cadences over the Hellespont, in despair for her absent lover.

None but a female soul—none but the soft receptive genius of woman—could have been able to trace these sketches of nature faithfully upon the canvas of real life. Frederika Bremer was

the first who undertook the difficult task, and gloriously, as we all know, did she perform it. Wherever a fireside sends forth its cheerful light—wherever a home, a real home, enlightened by the rays of intellect, may be found—the "Neighbours" and the "President's Daughters" have almost become a constituent part of the family circle; and on many a hearth of our own country the amiable Frederika herself has lately been an esteemed and warmly welcomed guest.

But every star, however bright it may send forth its rays, is seldom without a companion. Where Miss Bremer shines, the soft but no less brilliant light of EMILIE FLYGARE CARLEN, also throws out its lustre. Far from derogating in the least from the high merits of Frederika Bremer, we think that in justice we should say that the writings of Miss Carlen not only compare favourably with those of her distinguished contemporary, but are even superior to them, if not in all, at least in some respects. In the literary circles of her native country, she is considered far superior, and her works are sought for with the utmost avidity. She is not only known in the higher grades of society; but the peasant and cottager are also acquainted with her name. Her sketches of female character are exquisite; as chaste and true to nature, as the most perfect statue ever formed by the master chisel of Canova, or of her own distinguished countryman, the world-renowned Thorwaldsen.

Her masculine portraits are of that simple but finely delineated character which distinguishes the "true gentleman," of all northern nations; imbued with a cast of that iron firmness so prominent in their own king and hero, the lion-hearted Charles XII. But as true to nature as she describes the high-born, with as much faithfulness does she depict the lowly peasant; and the reader is carried from the palace to the cot, each being described so faithfully and graphically that he almost fancies himself to be a participant in the incidents of the story.

But there is one striking feature which distinguishes Miss

Carlen from her literary sister. She may in truth, be called "the republican, *par excellence*," among female authors. The shallowness of vain-glorious rank, and pride of birth, fall down like chaff before her cutting sarcasm, and the true dignity of man, the self-attained rank of labour, is vigorously portrayed. This is the cause of her popularity among the peasantry of her own country. They feel that she is labouring to alleviate their condition; and her name is only spoken by their lips with the utmost respect. She does not write merely for the didactic amusement of her readers; neither does she attempt to give instruction, although her works all convey a good moral. But she labours for a higher and far more noble object: the disenthralment of those she loves. She well knows the efficiency of the means she employs, and nobly does she use them. Pride, arrogance, cruelty, and tyranny, all call forth the keenest censure of her pen.

With these few introductory remarks this little work is submitted to the judgment of the public. The translation has been literal, almost *verbatim*, and as faithful as the idioms of the English language would permit.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE HERO	1
II.	THE COURIER	10
III.	THE PONY	16
IV.	THE JOURNEY—A LITTLE ADVENTURE	25
V.	GREAT CONFUSION CREATED BY MRS. BRUN'S CAT	37
VI.	THE TRAVELLERS ON THE STEAMER	45
VII.	SOMETHING ABOUT THE CAUSE OF THIS JOURNEY	54
VIII.	THE CONFESSIONAL CHAIR AT THE CLOISTER OF WRETA	61
IX.	THE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TAKES HIS MEASURES	71
X.	THE HEIGHTS OF SWARTEBORG—ARRIVAL AT STROEMSTAD	81
XI.	REVIEW OF IVAR'S FATE	88
XII.	ANOTHER PICTURE OF MARRIED LIFE	99
XIII.	THE MORNING VISIT	107
XIV.	VIRGINIA—THE CHAMBERLAIN	113
XV.	THE FISHING PARTY	122
XVI.	THE NEXT MORNING	131

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	STROEMSDAL—THE KEYHOLE	139
XVIII.	A HORRIBLE SUICIDE	149
XIX.	SEPARATION	160
XX.	TUNEFORS—A LETTER	166
XXI.	IN PAPA'S ROOM	177
XXII.	THE TWO VISITS	187
XXIII.	A LETTER FROM BORGENSTIERNA TO ASSESSOR WIRÉN	194
XXIV.	ASSESSOR WIRÉN'S REPLY	198
XXV.	BORGENSTIERNA AT HOME	206
XXVI.	THE DOOMED CALF	211
XXVII.	MISFORTUNE UPON MISFORTUNE	219
XXVIII.	NEW PLANS	229
XXIX.	A MAN WHO KNEW HOW TO BEAR HIS FATE	238
XXX.	THE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LOOKS UPON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE PICTURE	244
XXXI.	A SLIGHT CIRCUMSTANCE	255
XXXII.	NOOKS IN THE HUMAN HEART	262
XXXIII.	THE HUSBAND	271
XXXIV.	THE VESTRY-ROOM	277
XXXV.	MINA'S PARTING ADVICE	291
XXXVI.	HOMEWARD BOUND	300
XXXVII.	THE SKJUTS-BOY AND THE COURIER-OFFICER	306

NOTE.

THE title of this book, "The Skjuts-boy," may possibly sound strangely to many of our readers. We therefore deem it expedient to give a few explanatory remarks. It is customary in Sweden, for people of some standing in society to travel in conveyances furnished by the government. The peasants, or farmers, are obliged by law to furnish horses and carts. This description of public postal service is called *Skjut;* the driver of such a conveyance bears the name of *Skjuts-boy.* — TRANSLATOR.

THE SKJUTS-BOY.

CHAPTER I.

THE HERO.

SHARP and piercing blew the October blast through the creaking limbs of a dense forest, in the south-western part of Sweden. At times it seemed as though the storm was dying away with a long-drawn sigh; but suddenly it arose again and renewed its battle with the giant pines, and did not rest until these, like conquered enemies, bowed down to the ground. Surrounded with white clouds stood the nightly watch above, in her immovable grandeur, looking down upon the waging combat.

Upon one of the foot-paths which threaded their way through the forest, a being hurried along with quickened footsteps, who, as far as could be seen through the misty autumnal twilight, seemed to be congenial with the scene. A ragged jacket allowed the low branches of the pine and fir trees to sweep undisturbedly his brown, manly breast; and his wiry hair, upon which his bushy fur cap was retained with difficulty by his rough hand, fluttered undisturbed around his sun-burnt face.

The careless son of the forest was indifferent, however, to all these obstacles, humming a gay national song; with skilful hand he bent aside the intruding twigs, and, when the wind blew its most severe blast, he placed his fingers in his mouth, and responded with a like shrill whistle. The boy, who appeared to be fourteen or fifteen years of age, would at intervals throw his arms around

a pine, as though it was his dearest friend, and, with enthusiastic rapture, would suffer the storming wind to pass over him. It seemed to afford him far less joy when the storm was abating, than when it whirled over him, in all the vigour of its mighty blasts; then he would commence whistling merrily, and hurried, more flying than walking, along the dark path.

A clear ray of the moon, which suddenly burst through the dark veil of clouds, lighted up objects that had before been in the shade; and, in a valley, a small cottage became visible, from the chimney of which a cloud of smoke, mingled with sparks, was curling toward the heavens. With a joyful and almost speaking nod the boy hailed the humble-looking clay roof and the plain moss-covered walls of the cottage, that contained his world, and all which he required for his happiness and comfort after his day's labour in the forest.

When he arrived in front of the cottage, he halted; and, instead of entering it, took his path beside a hedge, formed of twisted willows, until he had arrived at a sort of dwelling, or rather, a barn-like shed, from which, at the sound of his footsteps, the clear neigh of a horse issued. A thrill of joy shot through the boy; with one hand he searched in his pocket for the small piece of bread that he had spared from his own lips, with the other he opened the door, and the next moment stood in the stable beside his favourite.

"Poor little pony," said he, "you have fared badly to-day; scarcely any straw in the manger. Yes, yes! If I am not at home, then——"

With these words the boy patted the hollow back of his pony. The pony relished the bread exceedingly, and showed his gratitude to his kind provider, by laying his head upon the boy's shoulder.

After the pony had received all the faithful nursing which his master was wont to bestow upon him, the boy left the stable, returning, however, in a moment with a blanket, which he care-

fully placed over the horse's back, and afterward hastened with hurried steps towards the cot, where he was welcomed with as much sincerity as at the place which he had just left.

"Where have you been so long, Ivar? Your mother felt deep anxiety concerning you; she was afraid you might have injured yourself with the axe. It is long since the night-bell has rung; and the gruel broth has been waiting long."

These words came from a tall, robust man, who was leaning with his arms against a rough-hewn table, bending over a large hymn book, the yellow leaves of which betokened frequent use.

"By no means, mother; that should not have entered your head. The storm howled so grandly, that I would hardly have come home at all," replied Ivar, saluting his father with a nod, and hastening uneasily towards the hearth, on which his mother was sitting, who had, upon the entrance of her son, stopped the buzzing of her time-stained spinning wheel.

"Surely thou art freezing, my poor boy?"

As well by the tone in which these words were spoken, as by the hasty manner in which she pushed aside her distaff, and grasped the pot that contained the oaten broth, which stood by the hearth, the most unmistakable motherly tenderness was to be recognised.

"Are you freezing, mother, as you sit near the fire and warm yourself? While I am cutting fuel for *you*, I never freeze. The forest is my hearth-fire; and I am never so warm as when I am out of doors, and the wind is blowing right heartily over my head."

"You are an odd boy," said his mother, thoughtfully; "and have always been the same from your earliest childhood; but, God be praised," she added, with pious simplicity, "our revered pastor was always well pleased with you, when he taught you your catechism."

During this short dialogue, Mother Ingierd had prepared the

table, and placed upon it the broth and three plates, and as many cleanly burnished cups, half filled with sour milk.

Father Christopher, the owner of the forest cot, closed his hymn book, took off his red nightcap, and clasped his hands. After a short prayer, mother and son sat down likewise. During the first few moments, nothing was to be heard save the monotonous sound of the spoon clinking against the pot; as soon, however, as our worst enemy had been beaten, the father turned to his son, and appeared as though he wished to say something.

The profiles of both were so turned that the light of the tallow lamp, which was placed in the centre of the table, fell strongly upon them; and an attentive observer, had such a one been present, would have been surprised to have read in them something noble, almost haughty, which strangely contrasted with the ragged peasant jacket worn by the owner of the cottage, as well as with Ivar's half naked, brown breast.

Nature sometimes presents such peculiarities, and they are apt to awaken our interest. It cannot be said that nobility and pride are the exclusive privileges of the high and well educated classes. Such characteristics are found in a like degree in the lower classes, although they are accustomed to show it differently; but it is rare indeed that we meet with country people and their offspring, oppressed by their daily labour, who possess the expression of free-born haughtiness, which is seldom displayed decidedly as it is in the true nobility.

"For the last two days we have been exempt from the *skjuts*," said Father Christopher, in a voice which would cause one to think that this exemption was of rare occurrence.

"The white pony wants rest also," said Ivar.

"Yes! many a person would want it," replied the man, gloomily. "But in the time of war none must think of it—all must suffer alike the pest; but if we should soon have peace, as they say we will, we may hope that the year 1815 will bring us

richer fruits than during the last year, when the French and Norwegians furnished the Swedes other employment than that of ploughing and sowing."

"That will do my white pony right well," said Ivar, joyfully.

"Yes, if he does not break down in the meantime," replied his father, morosely. "These overbearing gentlemen are driving on like fools, and consider a poor *skjuts*-peasant as no better than mere cattle. They think that those in the service of the crown are permitted to do everything."

"If that is so, I must also try and get in the service of the crown. Do you not think also, father, it would be queer if I should become such a noble gentleman? Then I would make as much noise as any of them; and, as you say that they think everything is permitted, I will repay them with interest all the strokes my poor white pony has received."

"As long as I live and command, you shall never become a soldier," said his father, abruptly.

"Why, was not you yourself a soldier in your youth, father?"

These words thrilled through the man's entire form like lightning. His nostrils distended, his brow knitted itself into a black frown, and his jet black eye glittered as sparkling as those of Ivar; but instead of the curious astonishment which was expressed in the boy's, a dark, wild hatred gleamed from the father's eyes, which was the more bitter, as it seemed to feed upon itself.

"You are angry," said Ivar, in a subdued tone, observing, with a strange look, the change that had taken place in his father's features.

Christopher did not answer; his eyes wandered around the dark apartment, when the mother pushed him with her foot, and gave him a signal to be silent.

After a few moments, the poverty-stricken family arose from the table, and while Ivar was assisting his mother in carrying the table utensils into the kitchen, she whispered to him—

"Never talk that way again, because you will put your father in bad spirits for a long time."

"What does it mean?" inquired Ivar, in a low tone.

"If your father wished that you should have known it, he would have told you so himself," replied his mother, in a reproachful manner.

"Hallo! hallo! open, in there!" a loud voice was suddenly heard exclaiming outside, and a couple of violent and hasty strokes were made upon the door.

"There we have it again," said Christopher, grumbling, and turned hastily round; "that is Swen, the wagon-master's voice. Open, boy; I knew that both horse and man would not enjoy rest for three successive nights."

"You need not drive, father; let me go," said Ivar, beseechingly, and approached the door.

"You have been in the woods the whole day," was the short reply.

"And you have been in Nilpersson's barn, thrashing, all the day," replied Ivar, almost savagely, and, without waiting for his father's answer, he opened the door. The wagon-master sprang through the door, with a cry,

"*Skjut*, in a moment, within half an hour, a gentleman will arrive who is going as a courier to Norway, and if everything is not ready at a moment's warning, may God save both you and me! Therefore, make haste, Father Christopher, it is your turn to-day. Here is your ticket."

"Well, I should not think there was so much need of haste," replied Christopher, and lighting his pipe, which lay on the window, told Ivar to be in haste, and asked his coat from his wife. But Ivar was not so easily silenced, and as his white pony had to go at any rate, he was inwardly rejoiced that the *skjut* had been announced in the night; he would now be allowed to ride out in the dark night, through the still darker forest, and hear the storm howl around him, like the roaring of a cataract;

this was his joy, and without being able to explain the reason, his breast always heaved higher. Amid the warring of the elements, he felt as though nothing was wanting but wings to elevate himself like the wild eagle into the wide air.

"Dear father, if you wish to confer a favour on me, let me drive," said Ivar, entreatingly.

"Let him have his way; he is a clever boy," said Mother Ingierd, stepping between them. "He is also right, when he wishes you to spare your swollen foot, which needs the bed far more than it does the cart."

"Well, he may go, then," replied his father, laying aside his pipe, and went into the stable, while Ivar was dressing himself.

Now his mother brought the warm woollen stockings and the stout boots, took the overcoat from the wall, and when Ivar, who had stood near the hearth, had washed himself, and in all haste had put on his Sunday jacket, to protect himself from the storm, this jacket being only used for the *skjut*-drive and for the church, his mother tied a large woollen comforter round his neck, and urgently exhorted him to drive carefully, that the white pony might not catch the cough again.

"There, one can hear easily that you have never driven a courier, Mother Ingierd," replied the wagon-master, with importance; "such people, you may depend upon it, care not a straw for the cough of a horse. They keep on, slashing and cursing the poor animal, that they may go as fast as possible. Yes, yes, it is as I tell you. By my soul I have often seen it, and the white pony, poor creature, will soon perceive that this is altogether another commission than to trudge slowly before the cart when you drive to church, Mother Ingierd."

"I am not aware, Swen, that you ever saw me drive to church; I walk there every Sunday," replied Mother Ingierd, with a slight sigh.

"Certainly, I believe it; but when you had house and land I have seen it. And at that time no body could have blamed you

for doing so; but since you have lost that, and nothing remains to you but your forest cot, you do not wish to have the people talk about you. You have always been a clever woman, Mother Ingierd, and just as much honoured by all as before."

"Bad crops and wicked people were the cause of our misfortune; but we are content with our lot, and feel assured that everything the Lord wills for us, will serve for our good. But you, wagon-master Swen, need not be so vain-glorious as to remind us of such matters; for it is not good to glory in the misfortunes of others."

"I have not done so either; I merely spoke of the pony, and in that way by accident I hit upon it. You must not take it so, for I certainly had no evil intention," said the wagon-master, almost begging her pardon.

"So much the better for you, but what you have said concerning the pony troubles me. May God preserve the poor animal, for it is the only thing left to us of our former wealth."

"Do not trouble yourself about that," said Ivar, consolingly. "Courier or not, I hope he will drive like a man; besides, you know that I understand driving, and how to deal with noblemen. Depend upon it, everything will go right."

Now Father Christopher was to be heard driving the pony and cart before the door. At the familiar neigh of the white pony, Ivar plucked his mother's sleeves, and drew her aside.

"Give me a cake or two, mother, if you can; I must give the pony a little something to-night."

Mother Ingierd hastily reached her hand above, and took from the barely provided pole which was suspended beneath the ceiling, a cake of bread.* "I can not well spare any more, dear Ivar; but hurry now, and put the bread in your jacket-pocket, that your father may not see it; for you know he does not like

* Flat black loaves of bread, with a hole in the centre, by which to suspend them. They are baked in large quantities, and kept for a long time. This bread is very common in Sweden.—TRANS.

that we should divide our hard-earned bread with the poor animal."

"Make haste! make haste, Ivar!" cried the impatient wagon-master. "I have already waited nearly a half hour for you," with these words, he nodded farewell, and departed.

As soon as Ivar had taken leave of his parents, he mounted the cart, and at the edge of the forest overtook the wagon-master, who requested him to let him ride also. But Ivar refused his prayer.

"Thank you, that will not do, I must spare my poor pony. But at any rate I do not want to be better off than you are," said he, springing from the cart, and walking beside it, at a slow pace, until they arrived in the neighbourhood of a tavern, where the noise of a carriage, which could be heard at a short distance, incited them to greater speed.

CHAPTER II.

THE COURIER.

As soon as Ivar had reached the court-yard, a cart came rumbling in from the other side, and a harsh, commanding voice was heard:

"Is the horse ready?"

An affirmative answer was given, and an officer, who seemed to be a very young man, stepped forth from the cart, and advanced to Ivar.

With a hearty curse he pointed to the horse, and said, "Is that the pony which is to take me to the next station?"

"Yes, certainly, that is the one. He has often trod the way," answered Ivar, politely, lifting his cap.

"Keep your mouth shut, you lout!" the gentleman rudely accosted him.

"Landlord! wagon-master! where are the rascals?"

"Here! here!" With these words, the landlord and the wagon-master advanced hurriedly, but with the utmost timidity, which is the natural consequence of daily ill-treatment, or even whippings, which they were in the custom of receiving.

"Listen, fellow." With these words the officer folded his arms over his breast, with an expression of high dignity, and, like a judge who wishes to force a poor criminal into confession, looked at the poor landlord: "How do you dare have such a horse hitched on for *my* use? Dost thou not know that I might have thrashed thee for this presumption, and hast thou never heard what a severe punishment awaits the landlord by whose negligence a courier, bearing important despatches, is hindered?"

The landlord's sad face exhibited everything else than the wish

to retain the gentleman any longer. He ventured, however, to suggest that all other *skjut* horses were on the road, and aside from this one, none other could be obtained.

"Foolish excuse," replied the officer, impatiently. "Give me one of your own horses."

"Yes, I should like to do so, sir; but there are none of them at home. Swen, here, the wagon-master, knows that they are all out on the *skjut*—the large, and the small black horse—and the cream, poor fellow, has trod a stone into his hoof, so that he cannot move."

"What do I care for your horses, great and small, or cream—whether the animals are able to walk or run. D—n it, peasant lout! off! get me another horse, in a moment, or——" With these words the officer uplifted his sword, and made a movement as if to make the landlord's back acquainted with its flat scabbard.

"The Lord's best blessings upon your grace!" exclaimed the frightened landlord, "if your grace should kill me, I am unable to get another horse within an hour and a half. But I assure you, by everything that is holy, that Christopher's pony is certain to take you to Stabbelshede."

"Well, it must be done upon your responsibility. If anything happens, you will have to answer for it," replied the officer, threateningly, and sprang into the cart. "Stop! Halloo! What's the name of this nest? Uggleborg, or——"

"Swarteborg, your grace."

"Swarteborg? a well-chosen name. How far is it to the next station?"

"Only five quarter miles," replied the landlord, bowing deeply, visibly pleased that the storm had passed over.

"But if the scarecrow does not go fast enough, and I be detained beyond my appointment, thou mayst depend upon it, that I will remember thee. And now drive on, rascal, and do not spare the whip, if thou thyself want to be spared." The last

words were addressed to Ivar, who was not in the least abashed by them, but mounted into the car in an indifferent manner, and applied a light switch over the haggard loins of his white pony.

"Do you call this driving, fellow?" asked the officer, after a few moments, giving his neighbour a rough poke in the ribs.

"We are going up a steep hill," replied Ivar, with renewed composure, which in contrast with such a fire-eater as the courier seemed to be, almost appeared like audacity. The officer, however, did not mind the boy's speech, but remained silent until when, about half-a-mile from Swarteborg, the white pony having exerted himself astonishingly at the accustomed treatment of his young owner, signified by a loud wheezing his resolution not to go any further. "The scarecrow is altogether fagged out," said the officer, thinking fit to accompany his opinion with a volley of curses at landlord, horse, and driver.

Ivar kept silence, not, however, from fear, but because he was convinced that an answer would avail him nothing.

"Dost thou not hear me, rascal? or art thou a rogue? Dost thou not see that the horse will break down?"

"By no means," replied Ivar, endeavouring to soothe his violent neighbour; "but if he does not do so before we reach the end of our journey," added he, in a low voice, "the gentleman must treat him more humanely."

"What, boy, wilt thou prescribe to me how I shall drive? Give me the reins, thou rascal."

And Ivar, unable to retain his right, was forced to submit, with bleeding heart and burning cheeks, while the officer lashed his pony continually, and kept him on a gallop. The emaciated animal wheezed and snorted, and made more than one fruitless endeavour to stand still, in spite of the whip.

Every sigh of the poor pony, who had been dear to Ivar's heart ever since he was able to reach up to him and pat his shaggy sides, cut like a dagger through the boy's heart. His heart was almost swollen within him, with bitter hatred against

the cruel man, whose tyrannical power was law here, and whom to defy was folly. When they had arrived within half a mile of their journey's end, the pony's strength gave out. He sank down on his fore-legs. Neither the whip of the officer, nor Ivar's persuasive and familiar voice, were of any avail in arousing him from his position, although his twitching skin under the cruel lashes of the whip, proved conclusively that the pain would have forced him to proceed if possible. Under these circumstances, the officer's rage became complete frenzy; and after he had fruitlessly spent his strength upon the animal, and wasted his breath in cursing the storm, which was continually blowing dirt and sand into his eyes, he spoke to Ivar in a tone which did not augur that he expected much good to arise from the question.

"What is your name, *canaille?* For this drive I will make you suffer."

"My name is Ivar Borgenstierna," replied the boy, his voice trembling with violent excitement. He would willingly have suffered hunger for days, could he only have been safe home with his pony; and as little as it was his custom to give way to his feelings in tears at other times, he could not prevent two hot drops from running down his cheeks, when he saw his beloved comrade lying on the ground, vainly striving to gather his exhausted strength, and endeavouring to raise himself under the weight of the cart.

"What is your name, *canaille?* I again ask," said the officer, in a surprised tone.

"I have told you I call myself Ivar Borgenstierna."

"Borgenstierna? Thou art a nobleman, thou rascal, and art thou not ashamed to soil thy escutcheon by such a vagrant life? and to suffer yourself to be used as a peasant lout, and be abused on the high road as a cart-driver? Upon my honour, such a thing never before happened to me. Is there a drop of blood which does not rise against such low, menial drudgery? if there is, I will try and awake it." With these words, the violent man

struck the boy with the flat of his hand severely on his cheek, soon following the blow with two cruel lashes with the whip.

Ivar's veins became swollen with hitherto unknown passion, which now violently burned within him. The strokes he had received gave him far less pain, than the shame at being treated in this manner wounded his pride, which had hitherto slumbered concealed in his bosom, but which was now awakened into powerful vitality. This feeling, however, was now a dark enigma to him, and it was reserved for time to disclose it more fully.

"Has the gentleman a right to strike me?" replied Ivar, with suppressed anger, "because my father's ancestor, who served under King Charles the Twelfth, and was as distinguished as yourself; and because, in spite of his pride, was stricken with poverty, so that one of his sons was glad to marry a peasant's daughter at Swarteborg, and became a peasant himself? Is it my fault, because my father's ancestor was a noble? and dare you therefore scold *me*, a nobleman?"

"Scold!" repeated the other, with a sneer; "dost thou not comprehend what thou hast lost, slave?"

"I am neither a slave nor a nobleman," replied Ivar, with increasing bitterness; "my father is a free peasant, and I shall be one also; and to judge by what I have just seen, it is better to be an honest peasant than a noble persecutor of both man and beast."

"Do not anger me more, rascal, that I may not give you more plagues to taste than thou hast, until now, experienced," replied the officer, flourishing his sword over Ivar. "None the less thou art a blot of shame on the class from which thou hast degenerated, because thy ancestors did not give up the nobility which they had forfeited by their degradation."

"Well, if I am going to be a nobleman at last," replied Ivar, whose courage increased in proportion as the anger of the other arose, "then I will be your equal, and have the right of testing my fist on you, as you did on me."

"Art thou mad? wouldst thou like to go to a lunatic asylum?" was the contemptuous reply of the officer, who now turned his entire attention toward the horse. By the united exertions of both, they finally succeeded in raising the animal, which moved off three or four paces, and again fell upon its knees on the ground. Aside from this difficulty, the road was so very bad, in consequence of rain of several days' duration, that it would have been a hard task, even for a more powerful horse than the pony, to make five quarters of a mile without becoming fatigued. The officer, Ivar, and his pony as well, were at length released by a fortunate accident. The noise of a distant carriage was heard approaching from the other side of the forest, and soon afterward an empty wagon, drawn by two powerful horses, arrived at the scene of the accident. The officer immediately called on the new comer, and commanded him to unharness one of his horses, without any hesitation, and fasten him to the cart. A peasant's objection does not amount to much during a war, as is well known, and for this reason the other immediately obeyed the officer's command in silence. As soon as everything was prepared, the officer mounted the cart, and a second time cried out to Ivar,—

"Hear thee, lout, if thy pony should ever regain his feet, thou canst obtain thy cart at the next tavern, and mayst be thankful to God and my forbearance if I do not enter my complaint in the service-book at the next station."

With these words, he lashed his new horse, and Ivar's cart soon disappeared, with his tormentor.

CHAPTER III.

THE PONY.

THUS our hero now remained, on a dark night, upon the open high road, with his worn-out companion, a good mile distant from his house. Still were his glowing cheeks burning with the buffets he had received, and the scene through which he had just passed drove all other thoughts from his mind, that some time passed by before Ivar felt that the pony was rubbing his head against his shoulder, as if he meant to remind him that he had an older and better friend than his new and rough acquaintance.

"You are right, my poor pony," said Ivar, intuitively understanding the pony's mute appeal. "I would be a fool indeed if I should cause you to suffer by the ignominious treatment which the wicked nobleman has inflicted upon us both. Console yourself, dear pony; here is something for you." With these words, Ivar took the cake from his pocket, and allowed his favourite to eat, bite by bite from his hand, afterward conducted him to a small brooklet in the vicinity, and saw with pleasure how greatly the refreshing element seemed to revive the weary animal.

After he had bestowed, for half an hour longer, all the assistance which the time and place allowed, Ivar grasped the bridle, and walking beside the animal they both proceeded on their way home at a slow pace, while the boy with his old friend carried on the conversation.

"Now, pony, we have passed through quite a task to-day. Don't you think that many more such drives would displease you? It would me, too. You would soon be gone. But what do you think my father will say, because we come home so slowly

and have left our cart behind? Yes, yes; at first he will scold a little, but as soon as he knows what has happened, I'll bet you he will say, 'That was right, my dear Ivar; thou hast acted like a brave boy. Thou hast also done well, not to follow behind the cart; I can bring it home when I go there next week with Nilpersson's team, and it did the pony no harm that he walked home free and without the *skjut*.' Yes, thus will my father say; but what consolation I shall find from my mother. I am sure she would lose an eye to comfort me; but of the buffet she need not hear a word, for if she did she would not let me go again. Is it not your opinion also, dear pony, that we had better keep silent concerning it?"

Ever and anon the pony would manifest his assent by a slight neigh. Thus they continued their way for some time in silence, but soon Ivar again halted, and with strained attention listened to the storm, which was rushing howlingly through a dried heap of dry rustling branches, to which heap every traveller added willingly his share, as, according to tradition, the body of a murdered man was buried under it. With a slight thrill of terror Ivar approached the heap, and speaking in reference to the strange story of the murder, said, "When this happened there were certainly different times than to-night. If I had returned the officer's blow," said he, thinking of his own affairs, "God only knows how it would have fared with me. It was certainly ruffianly treatment, and I here vow"—with these words Ivar placed his hand on the dry rustling branches—"I will never, never become a nobleman, and should I ever happen to meet *him* again, when I become a man, he shall make good these blows to me, for I shall never forget them. Not that I have not often received blows before, but he struck me, because I bore a noble name, and because I dare do menial service with my father's pony. He believes, I think, that it would be better that I should starve, because my father's ancestor was a nobleman, than to earn my bread as a peasant by honest labour."

The bitter and insulting injustice of the officer's treatment was what particularly rankled in Ivar's frank and honest heart. Of his future life generally, he had not, of course, any clear idea as yet, neither how he was to live, or what he was going to do; but a fresh train of ideas had arisen in his innermost soul, and it appeared to him that this night had opened a new epoch in his existence.

It was not until, by accident, that his hand touched the pony, trembling with cold, that he awoke from his meditations. He threw a branch upon the heap, and, slowly advancing, muttered, "For that which I have vowed here, by word and thought, Ivar always keeps his word, says my mother."

It was about four o'clock in the morning when the boy, after a five-hours' wandering, arrived with his fatigued companion at the stable which belonged to his father's cottage. After he had conducted his horse into the stable, he threw over him his large woollen blanket, cleared from the manger the pieces of cut-straw, and after having given the horse a bundle of fresh hay, he ascended into the hay loft to repose himself for a few hours.

There was no light in the house, and for this reason he did not enter it, that he might not disturb his mother; he would also be nearer his horse, and would willingly miss the warm hearth-fire to be near at hand should the pony require his care.

Exhausted with the fatigues of a day's labour in the forest and a night on the road, Ivar soon fell into profound slumber, dreaming now of his trusty pony, now of the coarse-mannered courier, against whom he *now* used his fists right heartily; and at a peculiarly well-directed blow, he broke forth in a joyful cry, and in the midst of his great triumph, the deceitful vision vanished. Ivar awoke, rubbed his eyes with the skirts of his coat, and discovered that it only had been a dream. His bed in the hay-loft, in the meantime, reminded him of his pony, and at the first thought of his favourite he sprang to his feet, and hastily descended to repair his involuntary neglect. But think

of the mute, deep sorrow of the boy, when he found his beloved, his faithful, dear companion, lying on the ground, near the manger, unable to return, even with one sound, Ivar's endearing words. Ivar shook his mane, and, in plaintive tones, called him by his familiar name. All for naught—the pony was dead!

"It is over with thee; and with thee my joy is gone also!" said Ivar, sadly, seating himself on the floor, and suffering his head to sink and rest on the pony; and tears of more bitterness streamed down on his dead friend than are often wasted on many a splendid funeral. Ivar's sorrow was simple and artless, like himself; but it was, nevertheless, deeply felt within the innermost mine of his heart, and flickered there like a miner's lamp, at the light of which many precious metals are glistening. Sadly and silently he remained in this position, until his father, who had long before arisen, and looked forth from the window to watch the approach of the wagon, entered the stable, and here found, to his no small astonishment and grief, his poor Ivar sunk down beside the body of his dead friend.

"What is the matter with you, for heaven's sake? I think the horse is dead! Arise, Ivar, and relate, has the rascal driven the animal to death?"

"Yes, he has killed him, with his driving and whipping," replied Ivar; and arose with an expression of rekindling anger for the ignominy which he was forced to suffer from the officer; and the memory of the death of the pony, his best friend, of which the officer had been the cause, was recalled to his mind with vividness. "But, believe me, father, you would not have fared better even if you had been present yourself. You cannot think how hastily he drove; and if you will promise not to say anything else to my mother, you shall have the whole story."

And now Ivar reported his whole nightly adventure: he remembered every word that the officer had spoken, and even every stroke that his poor white pony had received; but when he commenced talking about himself, and was about relating to

his father how he had received lashes of the whip, and buffets from the officer, his voice trembled so greatly, that his words were difficult to be understood; for the sight of the pony, who laid there motionless and stiff, and the thought that the only means of his father's livelihood had gone to the grave, seized hold of Ivar's soul, mingled with natural thought concerning his own future life.

When his story, to which his father had listened attentively, had come to an end, his father said, "You have spoken and acted as a man should;" but Ivar's heart was joyless at the praise bestowed upon him, for his pony was dead, and his father was poorer than ever.

"I shall bury him deeply in the forest, close to the old oak-tree," said he, after a pause; "and often, when I am weary of my work, I shall sit down on the mound, and will talk with the dead, as I have been wont to do. He will neigh no more; but I shall imagine that I hear his dear neigh replying to my words!"

His father shook his head mournfully; he understood well the feelings of his dear son.

"Will you help me bear him off? But I think it will be best that I should go in advance, and dig a grave for him."

"Well, do so, Ivar; but in the meantime, go in the house and get something to eat; to night I will talk to Olaves, that

"For what purpose, father?" interrupted Ivar, and a cold shudder passed over him. "I hope you will not. No! you will not be so cruel to the poor pony, who has served you so faithfully."

"We are poor people," said Christopher, with the immovableness of a wild savage; "it must be."

"I have never felt before how bad it was to be poor," replied Ivar, sadly, suffering his tears to fall upon the body of his dead pony. During the first few days, after this sad event, the lonely inhabitants of the forest-cot walked around singly, in a melan-

choly state of mind. Although Christopher read each evening in his large hymn book, or in his Bible, or Mother Ingierd sung, with a clear voice:

> "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away;
> Blessed be the name of the Lord!"

their hearts were, nevertheless, deeply grieved; and Ivar remained longer than usual in the forest, often not returning until late at night; for he sat, and gave free vent to his sad thoughts, upon his pony's grave.

"What have you on your mind?" said Father Christopher, one morning, when Ivar took his axe and was about to depart. "It seems as though something else than grief at the death of the pony was weighing on your mind."

"I cannot tear the poor animal from my thoughts, for a better friend I shall never have again: he was much more dear to me than you think," replied Ivar, with a slight degree of violence. "But," he added, hesitatingly, "there are other thoughts also that overcome me when I am sitting alone out there in the woods, the like of which I have never had before."

"I should think so; but what is it that troubles you?"

"Has it never struck your mind, father, that we are noblemen, and, at the same time, peasants?"

"No; God be praised, such thoughts have not, as yet, entered my head," replied Father Christopher, in a tone which proved clearly that he was in earnest. "It is a long time since we were people of high rank. Are your thoughts longing for that, Ivar?"

A deeper glow than was usual suffused Ivar's countenance, as he slowly and modestly answered, "Take it as you choose, a nobleman I never wish to become: this I say frankly; but I feel the desire to leave the plough."

"What dost thou wish to become? a soldier, perhaps! Art thou desirous for more lashes still?" inquired his father, moodily, for he believed that his son felt an inclination to become a soldier.

"More lashes!" cried Ivar, and a shudder passed through his form, as though he saw a viper, of whose approach he was afraid. "I certainly do not long for more lashes. Why do you ask me?"

"Because when I was young like you, I had the same folly in my brain, and thought that the plough was far more difficult to handle than the musket. But I paid dearly for my foolishness. I left the farm, which I had inherited from my father, to my brother-in-law, and entered the service. In the beginning, every thing went right. New brooms sweep clean, as the old adage says. It is so with everything. In the commencement all was joy and mirth. But patience; as soon as one becomes warm in his fine clothing he will soon have other thoughts. For a trivial offence, I drew the ill-will of an officer upon me, and he well remembered it. I at one time committed an unimportant mistake during drill, and the Satan, who was the commandant of a company, ordered that I should receive fifty lashes in presence of the entire company. I was proud also, you may believe, and for that reason felt the bodily pain much less than the shame I was forced to undergo. But that was not enough—I received, into the bargain, a disgraceful discharge, and when I returned home, and found the girl whom I long had loved, she turned her face from me, and said that she would never marry such a wicked wretch as I."

Here Christopher stopped. It could be perceived by his words that the remembrance of those times still affected him violently, and some time elapsed before he was enabled to continue, in a firmer tone, "I did not wish to communicate these facts to you at an earlier hour, but it would be a sin to be silent longer, for it appears that it is your desire to bear a musket, and wear a uniform. But you shall hear further, as my sad experience had not ended. No, at my return, I found my farm entirely ruined by my brother-in-law's mismanagement, and not a sheaf in the barn. I was forced to throw myself into debt to be enabled to cultivate it again, and as the Lord punished me

for my foolish wish to gain glory in foreign countries—which, however, I never achieved—first by bad crops, and then by one distemper after another my cattle died, I was, therefore, unable to pay my debts, and after I had worked for nought eleven years, I saw my property transferred into the hands of another, for the debts had overpowered me, and I was no longer able to help myself, although both your mother and myself, for I was married in the meantime, worked like slaves."

When Christopher stopped speaking, Ivar advanced toward him, his whole countenance evincing the utmost interest in the words he had just heard. "Father," said he, solemnly, "I understand you. I shall not deny that I have occasionally had an idea of becoming a soldier, when I should be enabled to rise in life as well as many another. But here is my hand, I shall never think of it any more. You have both suffered grief enough in your life, than that I should give you cause for sorrow. But one thing you ought not refuse me. I should like to go into the city, and see the fine sights. While one is out in the free air, wandering through fields and forests, he finds plenty of time for meditation, and I shall certainly find out something for myself."

"Well thought and well spoken, my son," replied Christopher, joyfully. "I was thinking myself that I should take such a walk to sell the skin of the poor pony. Our whole hope of support is now resting on the sale of that."

"Father!" exclaimed Ivar, in a supplicating tone, "could you not spare me that grief?"

"Then I shall be forced to go myself, with my swollen foot, and at the same time lose three days of labour. Do you desire that, Ivar?"

"We are poor people," replied Ivar, in a low voice, "and are therefore obliged to torture our own hearts. I will take the hide along."

"And sell it for as much as you can."

"I will do my best, but now I must hurry and bring in some fuel for mother, that she will not have to go after it while I am gone."

After Ivar had gone into the forest, Mother Ingierd returned home with a small pot of milk, for which she had exchanged at a neighbour's with some spun flax, and was informed of Ivar's intended journey. The following morning, after she had placed in his pocket his scant supply of food for his journey, which consisted of three cakes, one herring, and a piece of dried mutton, Ivar left his paternal home, accompanied with the blessings of his parents, and bearing the remains of his faithful pony, rolled up in the form of a knapsack, on his back, and took the road for Uddevalla.

Until the last glimpse of his grey jacket had disappeared into the forest, Mother Ingierd looked with tender eyes after the departing boy.

"Come in, mother," cried Christopher from within. "Has not the boy been away from home more than once before?"

"The Lord bless him; although he has an odd mind, I have never seen in him from his earliest youth, anything but joy," said Mother Ingierd, with a pious sigh, and returning to the house sat down to her distaff in silence.

CHAPTER IV.

THE JOURNEY.—A LITTLE ADVENTURE.

On a bright sunny day in October, Ivar began his wanderings, and towards noon had arrived at the spot where the heights of Quistrum slope down gradually into the bewitching valley, which, divided by a river, offers to the eye a rich, varied, and gay picture of one of the most magnificent works of nature. Ivar descended, and at each step his bosom swelled with glowing feelings, which he could scarcely describe himself. It was the sight of the magnificent works of the Creator, which had such an effect upon the yet unpolished mind of the boy. This could be perceived by the eagerness with which his drinking eye rested upon every object.

Arriving at the bridge which spanned the river, he rested a moment, leaning over the railing so that he might better watch the tall birchen trees, which were mirrored on the surface of the quiet water near the shore, while in the centre of the stream the water rushed with foaming violence; and when he upraised his eyes, he suffered them to glide along the shadowy mountain tops, which, like protecting bulwarks, were towering beside the meandering road, which in itsturn, added gaiety to the picture, by the continual walking and driving of men and horses.

To the left of the side by which Ivar came, the excellent and cleanly tavern of Quistrum stood, and still stands, the often much longed-for place of repose for the weary traveller. To that place Ivar looked with wistful eye, after he had gazed sufficiently at the beautiful scenery with which he was surrounded, which, the more he gazed upon it, seemed to gain new beauties.

"This must be a comfortable place to live," thought Ivar; and

stepping to the left, he passed through the court-yard and entered the kitchen. Here, however, he stayed his progress, mute with astonishment, for a scene here presented itself, that made a deep impression on his already excited imagination, and which, even after the most manifold adventures of many future years, never vanished from his memory.

Near the hearth stood a slender woman, with a child in her arms, and stirred the contents of a milk-pot with a spoon. On her small hand, the skin of which seemed to Ivar to be whiter even than the silver foam of the river, glittered precious rings, the bright many-coloured gems of which reflected the light of the crackling fire with redoubled splendour. When the fire streamed up, it threw its reddish glare upon a pale countenance, that was overshadowed by a pale blueness beneath her mild-appearing eyes. The stranger was clothed in a black velvet dress, the shape of which appeared even to Ivar, who was but little acquainted with the fashion of ladies' clothing, to be a pattern made in foreign taste. Its cape was bordered with a silver-grey fringe, and fastened in front with a golden clasp, from which a golden chain was suspended, which the child held in his little hand, and mechanically played with it. The other extremity of the chain was attached to her girdle by a large hook, and retained the watch in its position. But what lent a peculiar charm to the whole scene, in Ivar's eyes, was a little shaggy yellow dog that was lying at the lady's feet, playing with the fringe of her velvet dress.

Our hero could not decide whether the lady was beautiful or not, although he looked long and earnestly at her pale face, which seemed wet with tears. But this much he knew certainly, and felt in his innermost heart, that, although she was entirely unknown to him, he would have risked his life to render her a service. For in her deep eyes there was something that exerted a much more powerful influence over him than a black stormy night, the delight of his heart.

Of the child, that was scarcely a year and a half old, he saw nothing but the little white neck, over which its silken curls were falling from under the blue silk bonnet. The charming picture, however, soon vanished, as the child was crying with pain, and when its mother turned round to unlock the door, the face of the infant became visible, and Ivar observed that the cause of its complaint was an inflamed and swollen eye, from which the protecting bandage had partly fallen.

"Do you not recover your vision, Ivar?" said a young, red-cheeked servant-girl to him, who was tinkling gaily a mortar and pestle, and teased Ivar, because he was still looking at the door through which the strange lady had disappeared with her child.

"Ah! yes—I should have said good-day. How do you do, Liesgreta? Your house is as full of travellers as ever I before saw."

"Yes, and we are not sorry for it. But how are all the folks at Swarteborg? They say here, that next Sunday the banns of Britte and Skagn, John and Gertrude, will be proclaimed. Do you know anything about it?"

"But who was the lady that was standing near the fire here? Do you know her?"

"Alas! that is a German lady, who is travelling after an officer, who is said to have married her in foreign countries. She is now desirous of searching for him in Norway. But I think she has been deceived, as many others have been before her. Yes, yes, our people could not stay always in that country."

"The poor, poor woman!" said Ivar, with unmistakable emotion. "I am very sorry about her."

"I would not say so myself," said Liesgreta, throwing back her little head. "What have the nasty German girls to do with our soldiers anyhow? It serves them right if they have been fooled. Why did they seduce our boys? as if there were not enough young ladies, mademoiselles, maidens, and lasses in Sweden. Yes, God be praised, we are still as pretty as others,

and I would not advise Nicholas Kron, my lover, to meddle with those pale-nosed Germans, who may have cast sheep's-eyes at him." With these words Greta pounded the pestle in the mortar with such force that the cinnamon flew in every direction.

"Have you not yet spoken to Nicholas since he has returned?" inquired Ivar.

"No; don't you know that they had to march all together, to Norway; but now we shall have peace, as I have been informed to a certainty by a courier officer who passed through here a few days ago, and then it will become otherwise with Nicholas, that I will promise. If I marry him next spring, as we agreed last spring, and he is not obliged to the wars again, he must leave off gazing at other women. But do you not wish to eat something? Our lady has gone to the city, and for that reason I have the keys to-day."

Ivar accepted her invitation, advanced to the kitchen-table, and took hold of what Liesgreta's hospitality had placed before him. He had not so much of an appetite as he thought he had during his walk from the bridge to the house, for it was utterly impossible for him to cease thinking of the strange lady, and the child with the swollen eyebrow and black bandage: even the little dog he could not forget. He would have worked, God knows how much, to have owned such a treasure. In the meantime Ivar was obliged, after a short consultation with Liesgreta, to continue his journey. When he arrived in the neighbourhood of Uddevalla it was quite dark; but, without searching for a tavern, he went, without delay, to the house of the tanner, Brun, which was located at the other extremity of the town.

Ivar was fortunate enough to find the tanner at home, and after he had waited a short time, he was admitted into the room, where Master Brun was in the custom of smoking his evening pipe.

Not without a slightly-beating heart, our hero undertook to

open the first business with which he had ever been intrusted, but everything he saw upon his entrance filled him with courage and confidence, as it was almost impossible for him to be otherwise, as he was by nature a courageous youth.

In the corner of a massive brown-covered sofa, sat Master Brun, with a pipe in his mouth, taking now and then a draught from a pewter mug filled with beer, that stood on a table by his side.

Directly opposite him stood a large bedstead, with yellow checkered curtains, from the interior of which was suspended a strong rope striped with red and yellow, with a huge tassel attached, for the better convenience of those who occupied it, to raise themselves. The wall near the bed was ornamented with a blue velvet cushion, upon which hung Master Brun's great silver watch, with a huge chain ornamented with enormous seals. and on both sides, conspicuously placed, hung two *silhouettes* of himself and wife, cut out in prepared black silk, and pasted on sheepskin, which might have been white in former times. On the top of the high bed, richly filled with feathers, a fat grey cat was lying, stretched out on the green camelet quilt, in harmless slumber, and on the other side Mrs. Brun's half-finished stocking of the same colour as the cat. If one will imagine, in addition to the above, a cupboard, through the half-open door of which, a row of shining silver spoons, and a mass of linen were visible, little tables placed in each corner, with china of all colours arranged upon them, and besides these, a shelf in one corner, whose mysterious curtain of grey canvas gave reason for the supposition that it was a hidden sanctuary, then one will have the complete room before him.

There were, in fact, neither new nor peculiarly neat things in the above room. But everything looked so homely and comfortable, that it is difficult to describe them by words, and this comfort was still heightened by a bright, crackling fire, which illumined objects animate and inanimate with its cheering rays.

The whole belonged, as a matter of course, to Master Brun himself, who did not cut a poor figure, in his brown, every-day jacket, his red cap, cocked on one ear, and looking very gay and friendly. That he was a very kind and cheerful man one could easily perceive in the tone with which he addressed Ivar, as he fixed his little twinkling grey eyes upon him.

"What is your desire, my boy?"

"I came only to inquire whether the gentleman will buy a horse-hide?"

"Ahem! I am not just now in want of one; I am sufficiently supplied with them. It depends, merely, however, on how much the price is."

"Alas! should I ask as much for my white pony's hide as it is dear to me, it might come very high; but I will take whatever I can get for it."

"As to that, you are perfectly right, because it makes no difference to me whether it is the hide of a white or a black horse."

"Yes, yes. that may be so, but I certainly shall have *something* for it, I loved the pony so dearly, and if father had not wanted the money so bad, I would have worked myself to death to prevent the pony's hide from being taken off."

"Well, that is noble of you that you are so careful of your father's interest. You say you are very poor?"

"Oh, yes, very poor," replied Ivar, with a half suppressed sigh.

"Listen, step closer to me, my son," said the tanner now, in a still milder tone, which seemed to indicate that a new light had flashed through his beer-laden head, "step nearer—where have you come from?"

"From the forest of Swarteborg."

"And your name?"

"Ivar Borgenstierna."

! I know,—I know you now; first nobleman, afterward

peasant, and lastly cottager. You have the appearance, however, that you are a noble and clever boy; perhaps I can do something for you, if you are willing to learn the trade of a tanner. I am just in want of an honest, faithful boy, because the boy that I have had until now has served his time, and become a journeyman. Several others have already called upon me, but I have not found any yet that I liked."

Ivar was astonished at this proposal, but said he would reflect concerning the matter.

"Yes, do so; but have you a resting-place for to-night?" inquired the tanner.

"I have no acquaintances upon whom I can call, but I shall endeavour to find some place."

"That is not necessary; you may remain here with us; step into the work-room, and tell the boys to prepare a place for you, and as to your supper, that shall not be forgotten." Heartily grateful for the unexpected luck which had happened to him, Ivar went to the designated place, and found his companions there such gay and clever boys, that he would have considered himself happy to remain all his life with them; and aside from that, he might calculate upon good board, and upon a small but nevertheless to him valuable salary, by which he could support his parents, after his term of apprenticeship had expired. His heart beat more joyously, and the thought of the majestic storms in the dark forest of Swarteborg retreated more and more into the background, especially as his faithful friend and comrade was no longer living, and with him all hope of earnings by *skjut*, and upon hand-money had vanished. In short, after he had weighed the matter in his mind over and over, the scales fell decidedly in favour of the tanner, and when Ivar was asked in the morning for his decision, he asked for eight days' grace, to talk the matter over with his parents, and to have his clothes put in proper order.

Master Brun thought that the boy's desire was a proper

one, and willingly consented to it, as he had taken a fancy to him. He paid him for his hide, and promised him that for the future, Ivar should be satisfied, if he would only conduct himself properly.

With a lighter heart and gayer feelings than he had had for a long time. Ivar left Uddevalla in the afternoon; but as he had an acquaintance in Herrstod he remained there over night, and did not arrive at Quistrum until the next morning, between nine and ten o'clock. During the last quarter of an hour, the thought of the strange lady, her child, and her little long-haired yellow dog, came into his mind.

"I should like to know where they are now," he thought, and almost jumped with joy, when, upon his entrance into the court-yard of the tavern at Quistrum, he saw her before him, as she was just about ascending into a cart with her child, which cart did not seem fit to accommodate such a tender lady. But when a little boy, to all appearance, not over seven or eight years old, stepped up to take the reins from the hands of the wagon-master, Ivar had the pleasure of hearing her sweet voice, as she inquired in broken, but easily to be understood Swedish, whether a more reliable driver could be obtained. "Pshaw! with that boy you will have no trouble; he has driven a great deal," replied the wagon-master, with an arrogance which he thought he had a right to use against every unattended female.

"O God!" sighed the lady, and wrapped the cloak around the crying infant. "What shall I do? Have compassion, and let some one else drive. I dare not trust myself and child with such an inexperienced boy."

The wagon-master laughed, in that stupid and rough manner which is often the case with people of his class in society, put his slouched cap over his ear, and said, that she might as well submit, as it could not be otherwise at any rate.

"Where are you going?" inquired Ivar, advancing nearer the little skjuts-boy.

"To Swarteborg," replied the boy, endeavouring to incase his big hands in his gloves, to enable him to grasp the reins more firmly. At this moment Ivar advanced modestly, but with the assurance of a man who is about offering consolation, to the strange lady, and said, more devoutly than he had ever before done to any person, "I am going to Swarteborg; it is my home; if you will permit me to drive you, I am good for any accident that might happen, which depends upon the driver."

"Accept my thanks, noble boy, I will remunerate your kindness as much as I am able," said she, with friendly emotion, and the look with which she accompanied the words was more valuable to Ivar than all.

Ivar advised the lady to walk up the hill on foot; and with the child in her arms, preceded by her dog, she began the difficult ascent. But before she had half completed the distance, she felt that her powers would not uphold her farther. As soon as Ivar saw this, he bade the boy to lead the horse up the hill, and offered to carry the child. Without objection the lady confided the little innocent to his care. While he pressed the child tenderly to his bosom, all kind of singular thoughts arose within him. It appeared to him something so consoling, so secretly sweet, to have such an innocent being under his protection, he could not refrain from pressing his lips on the child's white cheeks, yet there could not be found in the whole world two beings so utterly dissimilar as the white pony and the little angel he bore in his arms. Nevertheless his present feelings were much similar to those which he had formerly entertained for his favourite.

Ivar's heart was actually made for love. He felt the want of taking care of some one. It was for these reasons that he was now so happy, and wished that his way to Swarteborg was twice as long as it really was.

When he had reached the summit of the hill, the lady entered the cart, took her child in her arms, wrapped the cloak carefully

around it, and closed her eyes, either for protection from the wind, which drove up dense clouds of dust, or to suppress her tears.

As the cart was too small for all of them, the skjuts-boy was prevailed upon, for a small sum of money, to walk, and Ivar conducted the carriage. That he might not crowd the tender lady, he squeezed himself as closely as possible to the side of the cart, and as soon as everything was arranged, and the dog stowed away under Ivar's feet, they continued their journey.

During the whole ride, the lady did not speak, except once, when Ivar praised the beautiful dog, she said that it had been offered for sale, by some one who was in great want, and was obliged to sell it.

"Alas! that was too bad," said Ivar, and felt the utmost compassion for the one, although unknown to him, who had shared the same fate with him. He thought of his pony, and kept a continued silence, yet could not refrain from bending down occasionally and patting the little dog.

When the cart stopped at the dirty and disgusting-looking tavern at Swarteborg, a visible tremor affected the young lady. Her look met Ivar's eyes, with that same unspeakable expression of gratitude that she had given him when he offered his services.

"Are you now obliged to leave me?" said she, sorrowfully. Ivar was transported with inward joy at the kind words, and when he heard that it was the landlord's turn to furnish the horses, he offered to drive instead of the servant. He would only run home quickly, and inform his parents, and return in a moment.

"Do not stay away too long," said the stranger, entreatingly, and with a look of disgust entered the smoky and dirty room.

Ivar almost flew over the well-known forest path, hardly taking time to bestow a friendly look upon his pony's grave. He did not remain longer in the house than was necessary to hand over the money which he had received for the hide, and to

give a short account of the success of his mission. Brun's proposition he submitted to the consideration of his parents during his absence, and entreated them not to be uneasy even should he be absent a little longer, for it would be a never-to-be-forgiven sin if he should desert the lady, and it might be possible that she would ask him to go farther with her than Rabbalshede.

And it happened so, at every new change of the horses, the strange lady fixed her uneasy eye with an entreating expression upon him, so that he had not the heart to say no, when she asked him if he would not have the kindness to accompany her somewhat farther.

The nearer they approached the Norwegian frontier, the higher rose the soft flame upon her cheeks, and so much brighter shone the glance of her eye.

At Hodel, Ivar was about taking leave of her, but with a few words, she persuaded him to accompany her to Svinesund, and thus Ivar accompanied her faithfully to the Norwegian frontier, where she hoped to find the end of her wearisome journey. But now they had to take leave of each other, for if Ivar remained longer absent, he lost his place in Mr. Brun's tannery. Aside from this, it was only a few miles to Friedrikshall—and, in consequence of the convention of Moss, that fortress was now in the hands of the Swedes, and the lady hoped, at least, if she did not meet her husband, she would find some one who would give her certain information of him.

"But how shall I reward you for your trouble?" said the lady, with emotion, when they took leave of each other.

"I have accompanied you for my own pleasure only, not for money," said Ivar, and the tone in which he spoke left no room for one to mistake his opinion.

"What! you will not accept any pay?" said she, mournfully, and the tears stole through her long eyelashes. "How shall I reward you, then, for what you have done?"

"You do not owe me the least," answered Ivar; "I followed

you of my own free accord; but if you——" he here abruptly ceased, and blushed deeply.

"If I what? Speak it out, if you wish anything."

"Yes, I have one wish, but——"

"Well, say it," said she, impatiently.

"I should like to have that pretty little dog, I have taken such a fancy for him."

"Very well, I like him also, although I have not owned him long; but you deserve that I should give you something that I also value. Take him, and sometimes remember the stranger to whom you have rendered so great a service."

With a shout of joy, Ivar accepted the kind gift, and when he offered his hand in farewell to the lady, she reached the child to him, and let fall from her tiny hand a knit purse, containing several pieces of gold, into Ivar's hand, and said: "This is given from my daughter, for the purpose of supporting her companion, Diana, whom she now presents to you."

A natural tender feeling caused Ivar to accept the gift which was thus presented him. With deep sadness, but nevertheless with a sense of pride, that he had acted more nobly to the lady than the courier had acted toward him, with a hesitating step he left those whom he had protected. Long after he arrived at the Swedish side, he directed his eyes once more towards Norway, and prayed silently for the deeply-grieved woman.

At last he took his travelling companion, Diana, under his arm, and continued his way toward his home.

CHAPTER V.

GREAT CONFUSION CREATED BY MRS. BRUN'S CAT.

On the evening of the fourth day of his journey, Ivar stepped through the door of his paternal home, and the many questions which were asked him, seemed as though they would have no end. But Ivar was weary, and begged them to allow him to sleep first. His mother prepared a bed of straw, and covered it with a coarse but warm blanket, obtained a new pillow case, and satisfied with these preparations, Ivar laid himself down, and was soon sound asleep, dreaming of the beautiful pale lady, and her child with its bandaged eye. As he saw them now in his dreams, so he saw them after a lapse of many years, and little Diana remained a pledge to him, that accompanied him everywhere. It was a chain of connexion which served to prove to him that his memory had not been a dream.

After Ivar had related the particulars of his journey to the Norwegian frontier, and had patiently suffered his mother's reproaches, that he had brought along with him another hungry mouth to fill, the most important subject, the proposal of Master Brun, was discussed.

"What is your opinion, Ivar?" said his father, who sat on the table, twirling his thumbs. "What do you think? you shall not be forced to do it; but I think it as good as anything else."

"If you do go, you can come over and see us on Sundays, and other holidays," said his mother, drawing her chair nearer to his father, so as to participate in this important conversation, and in her husband's authority.

Ivar, who had been sitting on the hearth stone, playing with

his Diana, had remained silent until now. He was desirous of knowing what his parents would say concerning the proposition. But when he heard that they were in favour of it, he broke the silence, and walking toward the table, he extended his hand to his father, saying—

"Strike hands! I shall become a tanner. If I do not return on the eighth day you need not expect me at all."

Christopher and his wife were not prepared for such a quick decision, and therefore now made, as all other people do, the most foolish objections. But Ivar was not willing to take back his words, and therefore refuted all their objections with, "It is now decided, I shall become a tanner."

And by this resolution he steadfastly remained. Previous to his leaving his home, he divided the contents of his purse with his parents. One half, which he had retained as his part, he determined to apply to the purpose of buying himself a new jacket as soon as he arrived at the city, so as to be enabled to commence his new condition in life with becoming dignity. His parents accompanied him quite a distance through the forest, and for eight days after his departure, Mother Ingierd's eyes remained red and swollen by her excessive weeping.

If we should follow our hero's life, pace by pace, through his entire apprenticeship at Mr. Brun's, it would not be very interesting; but we cannot forego saying that Ivar gradually acquired a taste for reading, by means of which his mind, naturally powerful, assumed a firmer and more decided tendency. All his leisure hours he employed in reading books, whenever he could obtain them; but with the exception of a Bible, a biblical history and a short extract from Swedish history were all the literary treasures he possessed, for neither the journeymen nor the other two apprentices were inclined to spend their time in such a seemingly unprofitable and tedious manner.

But when the master found his apprentice every Sunday

afternoon with a book in his hand, instead of roving through the streets, as his fellows did, his sentiments turned still more strongly in Ivar's favour, especially as he always attended to his day's labour with peculiar diligence and activity. To reward him properly, and to encourage him to still greater diligence, his master took him one pleasant Sabbath afternoon into his room, led him to the before-mentioned concealed shelf, and withdrew the curtain with as much haste as the surgeon at Rosenberg used, when he brought to the traveller Bystroem's sleeping Juno.

And lo! before Ivar's enraptured gaze a field of unbounded joy was opened. Two long rows of books, yellow with age, sometimes a half, and sometimes the third only of a volume, and occasionally a whole one; fragments from all the book-auctions that Mr. Brun had attended for the last twenty years. "That is my library," said honest Brun, joyfully. "I have never allowed either my journeymen or apprentices to look upon them; but you, Ivar, are a promising and clever boy, diligent and active in your business, as in your conduct also, and for these reasons I shall honour you, so that you will remember your master all the days of your life."

"I shall certainly do so," said Ivar, his eyes glistening with pleasure, as he stood enchained by rapture to the spot, as his master drew one volume after another from the library, and gave him his choice. Not to occupy too much time in selecting, he took, in God's name, the first that came to his hand, and left all to fortune, until the treasure he had chosen would become exhausted. Master Brun was glad he did so, as he was not able to advise Ivar in the choice of the books, and being convinced that they were all of equal value.

The first great catch was "Peter Wilkins, or the Flying People," bound together with "Gulliver's Travels," both forming a volume the size of a prayer-book. Ivar conveyed the treasure to his room, and from that hour, after he had opened the sturdy leather cover, there was displayed to his astonished senses such

a new and miraculous world, that his brain was completely bewildered by the mass of strange adventures. Day and night, during his work in the shop, and when in his silent bed, he dreamed of nothing but giants, dwarfs, flying men and women, and bewitched princesses. He became a perfect wandering edition of the "Arabian Nights," and at length gave way so much to these unwonted enjoyments, that his dearest recollections, the journey with the German lady and her baby, and even the remembrance of the old pony, were gradually driven from his mind.

Under such circumstances, Ivar was very happy in the position of a tanner's apprentice, and the only disagreeable thing that clouded his stay in Master Brun's house was the continual fights between Mrs. Brun's cat and Ivar's favourite and constant companion, the golden-haired Diana.

Mrs. Brun was a very good-natured, honest old woman, but she had transferred all that tenderness to her cat which she would have probably bestowed on her own children, if she had had any. For this reason she would never allow the horrible dog to put even his nose within the door, for as soon as this happened, the cat, disturbed from her slumber, sprang from the bed, tearing down with her Mrs. Brun's stocking and ball of yarn, with which the cat and Diana used to tangle themselves into the utmost confusion, and when Mrs. Brun heard the well-known spitting and howling, she would jump into the room where they were, and knitting-needles flew around briskly, and the yarn was broken to pieces; she usually ran after her uncompleted stocking, and generally found it torn open down to the heel.

And was she not right? and did not Diana come devoutly to her call, holding the tangled yarn in her mouth, and attempt to sneak off through the open door, when she knew certainly that a storm was brewing? But Mrs. Brun was too quick for Diana, and always shut the door before the dog could escape, and she

was forced to suffer many a buffet and threat, for having induced the cat into such mischievous pranks. The cat was then obliged to seek safety under the stove; but this did not terminate the matter. Master Brun was called upon, and seriously admonished to give Ivar a severe lecture, the rogue, for it was a pure scandal to conduct himself thus.

"Well, what is the matter now?" inquired the tanner, with the utmost composure.

"What is the matter? How dare you ask such a question? You see on the floor there the cause; but if you do not wish to hear or see anything, you may know that that wretch of a dog is seducing my cat, who never before cut such indecent capers with stocking-yarn and knitting-needles. Look here—is that nothing? and to stop this, I have to walk here from the kitchen, and let my bacon burn—is that nothing? But if you do not wish to inform the boy yourself, that he must either drown his dog, or must take him from the house, with himself also, I shall throw the wretch into the water myself, if he does not do so."

"You will not do it, my child," replied the tanner, quietly. "Diana is Ivar's favourite, and Ivar is a good boy. He cannot help it, that the dog and cat cannot agree; all you must do, is to keep the door shut."

But Mrs. Brun was not satisfied with this, by no means. As soon as her husband had walked out after his noon's nap, she stepped without hesitation to the tannery, and lectured Ivar so impressively, that he became very sad, and, looking at his Diana, he said, "Before I shall drown you, I would rather pack up my bundle, and go myself. As dear as the library is to me, you are much dearer. There is nobody in the whole world that I love so much as I do you."

Mrs. Brun's threats, however, were not carried into force, although she repeated them daily, for in spite of her loquaciousness and high-sounding ways, she, nevertheless, held her husband in the greatest respect, and was very careful not to make him

angry in earnest. Master Brun was a plain sensible man in his daily life, but if he once became angry, it would not do to joke with him.

Mrs. Brun's constant scolding and grumbling, however, caused Ivar to resolve that as soon as he had completed his apprenticeship he would seek a place in another tannery. He esteemed his old master very highly, and the treasure behind the grey curtain no less; but there was something else, which was of still greater value to him — peace, within and without. It can hardly be imagined how much Mrs. Brun's constant scolding pained him. He was a gay, clever boy, and did not care for reproach more than was necessary, but there are characters which can never endure such shrews, while others bear with them as with their daily bread. Ivar longed, with all his heart, for a place where there was no cat, or a scolding woman to be found.

In the meantime his intellectual developments, as well as his desire for information, had taken a better direction after his confirmation, which took place in his sixteenth year. During this time, he had entered into a closer acquaintance with one of his schoolmates, who was soon to be promoted from the lower school into the college. This young man often lent Ivar some of his books, who, amid the throng of better ideas he received from them, cast out the mass of the confused ideas which were the consequence of his former readings. With as much zeal as he had devoured the myths of the traditional world, he now studied history and geography, and even scribbled with chalk rough maps on a piece of leather, by the aid of which he made journeys, in his chamber, through foreign countries.

Assisted by the first friend whom he had gained, he advanced at a rapid pace. The young and fashionable Leopold Wirén, himself a stranger in the place, where he had been sent by his guardian at the death of his parents, attached himself with warm interest and real friendship to Ivar, who, on his part, hung with infinite tenderness on him to whom he owed so much.

An equally sad fate rendered their connexion still closer. After three years had passed, Ivar lost both his parents; and as he now stood alone in the wide world, with his warm heart, that had so often appeared to him like an enigma, he sometimes felt a voidness and a longing, which neither Diana's friendly caresses could dispel, nor could be decreased by the most assiduous application to his books. But when he visited his friend, and, after his day's labour had closed, took a walk with him out upon the forest-covered mountains of Gustavsburg, he began to feel better, for Leopold stood as isolated in the world as himself, and in spite of the difference in their temperaments and degrees of education, they understood each other well.

They soon, however, became more equal, for Ivar's good head and natural pride would not suffer him to remain long behind his friend. Concerning the mark of true politeness, the modesty of Borgenstierna, as he was now called, taught him the path as well as Leopold's more careful education.

Thus Ivar's apprenticeship gradually passed away. Leopold had long since left Uddevalla, and entered the gymnasium at Gothenborg, and often wrote to his friend from there, whose highest joy was to hear from the absent one.

But it was not yet time to take a new and firm resolution for his future life, and although Master Brun endeavoured to persuade him, in all possible ways, to remain with him as a journeyman tanner, and even gave hope that he would accept him, at some future time, as his partner, Ivar's long-entertained dislike to the domestic quarrels strengthened him in the conviction that a longer stay would not be beneficial to his gloomy and mournful disposition.

He therefore communicated to his master his unalterable purpose of commencing the usual time of travelling, and after that to settle down in another place. Mrs. Brun's virulent disposition had caused him to dislike Uddevalla, of which city, however,

he did not know much more than his master's place of business, and the road to Gustavsburg.

"The boy will be an irretrievable loss to me," said Master Brun to his wife; and at this moment unluckily caught the cat's tail between the door, and gave it a terrible squeeze.

"Are you mad?" cried his wife, jumping up as though she was crazy; "must you squeeze my unfortunate cat to death because the boy is trampling his own fortunes under his feet?"

"It was the cat's own fault," replied Brun, angrily; and did not cease to use threatening gestures at his wife, neither did he loose the unfortunate member from its painful position, until he thought that their united cries would deafen him.

A few weeks after this little conjugal dispute, Ivar took his knapsack upon his back, and placed the certificate of good conduct in his pocket, and left the house of his late master. He had just arrived at the age of twenty-one, and might justly be considered a handsome, well-formed young man. Without giving a more minute history of our hero's outward appearance, and his wanderings, we will conclude this section of his life, not to see him again until many years have elapsed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAVELLERS ON THE STEAMER.

It was on a beautiful July afternoon, in the year 1833, that the steamer *Thor* lay near the shore of Soederkoeping,* to take on fuel. While a part of the passengers were promenading on the beautiful piazza which was placed around the large assembly-room, a party of three persons were to be seen, followed by two porters, approaching the boat. A tall well-formed man, in a blue undress uniform, led the van. He wore a large moustache, which, with his erect and firm walk, would cause one to recognise an old military man in him. He was followed over the gang-plank by a lady, whose appearance furnished evidence that the summer of her life had not entirely vanished. The last person was a young lady, of about eighteen or nineteen years, of rather small, but neat form, and pleasing exterior. In her every motion the lively fire of youth was displayed.

With a proud and aristocratic mien, our acquaintance (we mean the gentleman) overlooked the almost empty quarter-deck, saluted the captain with a slight bow and a few words, and afterward called to a chattering female servant.

"Show us the state-room which has been ordered by the Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain de Dressen and family."

"There it is," said Miss Christine. When the gentlefolks had entered the dressing-room, and unlocked the door of Number 2, "Pshaw! I do not wish to have that room," grumbled the colonel; "we shall be roasted there! Tell the captain I must have another state-room."

* A bathing place in the southern part of Sweden.

"There are no more vacant, except one, and that has already been spoken for by another gentleman," replied Christine.

"Never mind, go; there must be a change made." With these words, the colonel gestured to her that she should go, and then threw himself upon a sofa, and, without troubling himself how the ladies should arrange their matters, he threw his hat, gloves, pipe, and carpet-bag upon the table.

"We shall have close quarters here," said the elder lady, the wife of the lieutenant-colonel; and gave her daughter, Amelia, who had just put her little head through the door, a signal to arrange her things on the left-hand side of the state-room.

"One must know how to accustom themselves to a small room; I have been obliged to do so for the last twenty years," replied the colonel.

At that moment the servant-girl returned with the answer from the captain, that it was impossible to have another room.

"That would be a pretty story, indeed, if I should not be allowed to make a change! Go, once more, and tell the captain that he may have the kindness to come here for a moment. Tell him that the Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain de Dressen wishes to see him."

After the girl had closed the door, which she did with a dubious, almost pointed smile, Madame de Dressen turned toward her husband, and ventured timidly to observe, that the captain would probably not heed the request, but would expect that the passenger would come to him.

"I expect, nevertheless, that he will do so." With these words, the lieutenant-colonel stopped further conversation, and gazed eagerly at the door.

Suddenly, Christine again entered, saying—"The captain sends his compliments to the lieutenant-colonel, and says, if he wishes to speak to him, he may be found on the after-deck."

A lengthened "Indeed," lingered on the lips of the haughty man. "If the mountain will not come to Mohammed, Mo-

hammed will be obliged to go to the mountain," he added, contemptuously, rising and ascending the staircase, with becoming dignity.

The captain was standing on the wheel-house, with a telescope applied to his eye, looking at another steamer.

"Hear ye!" commenced the lieutenant-colonel, in a loud voice, that the captain, who feigned that he was not aware of his presence, might render to him due deference. "Hear ye, captain: you must know that I must have another state-room for myself and family; the one that has been shown me is placed too near the engine; we shall be completely roasted!"

"That would not be pleasant, certainly," said the captain without removing the telescope from his eye.

"Not very pleasant? d—d unpleasant!" replied the lieutenant-colonel, in great wrath. "But I should think it was the duty of a captain of a steamer to respond to the wishes of his passengers with politeness!"

"Yes, certainly, as long as they are moderate."

"Now, if you admit that, procure another state-room for me; for you certainly cannot find anything more reasonable than my unwillingness to become an inmate of the leaden chambers of Venice."

"There are no other state-rooms to be had; the rest are all occupied," replied the captain, shortly.

"I have been told, notwithstanding, that there is one yet unoccupied."

"But will be taken by a person who has ordered Number 6."

"But listen! Can there not one be found among the passengers to whom the heat would be less troublesome than to me? You will certainly be so gallant; and consider that——"

"I beg your pardon!" interrupted the captain; "I can consider nothing but my orders, and that is the same to all. As soon as a state room is engaged by its number, it is handed over if it is not yet occupied. The lieutenant-colonel was not pleased

to order a distinct number, and for that reason. . . . Excuse me! but my time will not permit me to delay longer."

With these words, the captain descended the stairs, with the bearing of a man who knows the meaning of the four words, "Here *I* am master!" The lieutenant.colonel walked back to his room, trembling with rage and excitement, and found his wife and daughter had, in the meantime, endeavoured to arrange the state-room as comfortably as possible.

Without speaking, the lieutenant-colonel flung himself on a sofa, and with the flat of his hand rubbed his knitted brow until it became as red as the cherries which Amelia extended to him in a neat little basket, with the innocent words—

"Will you not refresh yourself, papa? they are *so* juicy!"

"To refresh me! why?"

"It is so warm," replied Amelia; and, taking the finest cherries, made them into a little bunch, to show how truly she spoke.

"Thank you, my child," said the lieutenant-colonel, taking a couple of them; but did so more to comply with the will of his lovely daughter, than because he was very fond of them. Then, moving Amelia a little to one side, he turned toward his wife. "That bear has not a spark of good-breeding in him; I shall be obliged now to take a berth in the saloon."

"Here it will certainly be too close for us," replied his wife; and in her tone there lay—still more than in her words—applause for her husband's determination.

"Yes, convenience is near your heart; but what my purse will say to it is quite another thing: but about that you care very little."

"You do me injustice! Only recollect how much I was against this journey to the bathing-place."

"This only shows your dulness. Whoever wants to fish, does not remain at home and angle in the goose-pond, if he is not a goose himself."

"Don't say so!" whispered Amelia, entreatingly, and looking toward the door. "I thought that somebody was listening outside." Hardly had she uttered these words, when they heard a loud noise, which neared them more and more—state-room doors were suddenly opened, and then flapped back again, and on the quarter-deck it became more lively. Every thing signified that the passengers had arrived, and that the *Thor* was about continuing its voyage.

"Keep quiet down here!" said the lieutenant-colonel, arising. "I shall walk up-stairs, and see what kind of folks there are above, and whether I can find society fit for us among them. Do not make your toilet until I bring you news."

The lieutenant-colonel walked off, carefully locking the door behind him. With the exclamation, "Yes, yes; all right!" Amelia placed her hat on her trunk, laid her fingers over her lips, nodded to her mother, and suddenly moved the table, laying papa's things one side, so as to make room for her mirror.

"How warm it is in here, dear mother!—my curls are entirely loosened; I must do them up a little. Whoever there may be up there, I must, at any-rate, look a little Christian-like."

"Yes, arrange your locks, dear child. Papa does not call that making toilet."

"But dear mamma, I must also put on a new cape—the one I have on is not clean."

"Wait until to-morrow; for you will be obliged to open the chest, which will cause everything to appear in confusion when papa returns."

"Yes, yes, I will have to wait until to-morrow; but *then* I will dress most magnificently. I shall put on the new veil, and hang over my shoulders the green mantilla. Lord, how kind it was of papa, that he took a state-room in the saloon. I could almost have cried out with joy when he said so."

"Dear Amelia, you were before afraid that some one on the outside would hear what papa said," interrupted her mother,

bestowing a slightly reproachful look at the child of her heart.

"Pardon me, kind mother." With these words she laid aside her comb, and bending down to her mother's hand, kissed it heartily, and, with a roguish smile, whispered: "He is often odd and excited, is he not? but I have learned to know his ways so well, that he scarcely ever gets angry with me."

"You learn in time, to conceal with smiling lips your pain. I have already studied him for years—but you are happy that nature has granted you a light and gay heart, which does not trouble itself much about such things. If this was not the case, I would be obliged to bear still more sorrow; for then you would feel such unpleasant domestic affairs more deeply, and to your own harm, while they now vanish into the air before your gay and almost childish disposition."

"No, mamma, do not believe that I am so insensible toward them; but I have found out how to work myself, if I can use such an expression, into papa's eccentricities. And I have found out particularly, that he especially dislikes tears. For these reasons I never show a wet eye in his presence, even if I am obliged to hear ever so much that grieves me. When I am alone, I am often scarcely able to repress my tears."

"And should Amelia keep them concealed from me?" inquired her mother, patting her daughter's chin.

"Has not my mother enough already to bear herself with her tears?" With these words Amelia looked into her mother's face with an indescribable expression of tenderness, but soon walked up to the mirror, as though it was wrong to give way to such sad thoughts, and began, not without a small touch of vanity, to arrange her beautiful hair, and place her curls in order. Madame de Dressen arose also, and with her accustomed love of order, examined her apparel, and arranged the furniture, that the state-room might not look like a pawnbroker's shop, while her eyes ever and anon reposed with the utmost pleasure upon the innocent, youthful face of her daughter.

More beautiful eyebrows than Amelia's could not easily be found—auburn, like her hair, soft as silk, and finely penciled, they arched themselves in beautiful bows over her eyelashes, which, when somewhat downcast, allowed one to guess of that soft and speaking expression, that belonged to the bright stars which they concealed. But it is a pity that soft skin, beautiful eyebrows, and speaking eyes do not alone constitute everything. They are merely single parts, that are not able of themselves to unite the whole in harmonious beauty; and to be faithful to truth we must confess, that we cannot assume the responsibility of calling our heroine really beautiful. Perfect beauty with the female sex is rarely to be met with: for was not her nose too small, and far from being of the Grecian or Roman mould? Was not her forehead too low, and her chin not sufficiently rounded? and the mouth?—yes, that might do; and her lips also were pretty red, but certainly too thin; and her teeth? one certainly could have seen others of a more ivory white, and to pearls they could not be compared. Aside from this, Amelia was of a small figure: for the rest, fine and neat in all her motions, and, in spite of form, which could justly be called voluptuous, still she lacked that perfection and majesty in her whole bearing which are more frequently found in more stately figures. But as far as grace, life, and soul in all her movements were concerned, Amelia did not lack. And, finally, if one looked into her gray, bright eyes, one was uncertain whether it was a warm, deep feeling which was glowing within them, or whether artless naiveté smiled forth from them. In short, her eyes changed their expression so rapidly, that before one could fully understand one expression, they assumed quickly another, which misled the ungrateful endeavour of unriddling them.

While Amelia was busy in curling and arranging her locks, the lieutenant-colonel walked to and fro on the upper-deck, with a cigar in his mouth. Sometimes, especially at every turn, he gave a searching glance upon those who were seated upon

the green benches, at the same time assuming an air of indifference. But he was obliged to give up the hope of finding a decent person among the passengers. This was the case, at least, with the groups which met his eye. Here, for instance, were a couple of fat gentlemen deeply incased in great frieze coats, earnestly engaged in conversing concerning the prices of grain. There, a young man was to be seen who, with great care of his comfort, occupied an entire bench, so as to be able to read with ease, comfortably stretched out under a huge umbrella, which completely protected him from the flies, the rays of the sun, and the wind. A little on one side stood a card-table, the occupants of which were deeply engaged in their game, seeming to be anxious to make up the time they had lost, when they took a stroll on shore. Near the staircase stood a tall, yellow-visaged, haggard man, dressed in a faded brown overcoat, and wearing green spectacles. He fixed his natural eyes straight before him upon the floor, at times looking up, scratching his head, and was also so polite as to spit overboard, so as not to soil the clean deck, or the ladies' slippers. The owners of those slippers, three in number, were clothed in Scottish plaid-cloaks, hoods made of grey stuff, and seemed, on account of the continued moving of their parasols, to be the perpetual motion. Nothing further was there to be seen on the quarter-deck. After walking a few rounds on the deck, the lieutenant-colonel had come to the conclusion that it was not worth the trouble to form the acquaintance of any of the assemblage.

He gravely descended into the saloon, to look over the list of passengers, and for the purpose of ordering a place for himself on the sofa.

But it seemed as though no star was to shine for him that day. Except the hammocks there was no vacant place to be found; and to fill up the glass of his misfortune, there stood on the passenger-list many people of distinction, who thought, however, too much of their rank to expose themselves to the scorching

rays of the sun above. There was Count B——, Baron H——, Private-secretary U——, Councillor X——, and several others of like note.

Heaven knows what these people would think, if they should see the Lieutenant-colonel Chamberlain de Dressen lying in a hammock, surrounded with students, merchants' clerks, and all other kinds of low people.

"No, that would be impossible," muttered the lieutenant-colonel between his teeth. "Necessity knows no law. I shall be obliged, at any rate, to roost down there, for one must suffer something for the purpose of sustaining his name, rank, and dignity. I might, perhaps, have lain on a sofa, but in a hammock —no, that will not do; that is a perfect impossibility."

CHAPTER VII.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE CAUSE OF THIS JOURNEY.

"WELL, there is papa again," said Amelia. "Let us see what news he brings from the deck."

That was, as we already know, not very consoling, and the pretty eyes assumed a decided peevish expression when she was informed that the hopes of a visit to the saloon had vanished, which at the same time deprived the ladies of the prospect of a more comfortable existence.

The lieutenant-colonel was ill-humoured, and sat down on the sofa grumbling again.

"Is it not shocking that we are obliged to sit here in this miserable close room, during such a beautiful afternoon?" said Amelia. "As often as we pass through a lock, it seems as though we were in a dark prison; and I shall become sick indeed, if I cannot walk on deck, and enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful scenery."

"Towards evening," replied her father, "when the sun does not shine so hot, the more aristocratic portion of the passengers will walk on deck. Up to that time, it would be scarcely decent for my lady-wife and my daughter to appear above."

"But, dear father, we are not so very aristocratic, and if those who are so in reality knew how tight it was with us at home, they would not wonder that we do not appear quite equal in rank to those who are the reverse."

"Do not trouble yourself about things you do not understand." replied the lieutenant-colonel, sharply. "I have often told you before, that it is not otherwise in the world, than that a person is considered to be what he appears; and, although we

are not so very rich, I shall, nevertheless, think so much of the honour of my name and rank, that I shall never suffer you to conduct yourself as a peasant girl who does not understand good manners."

"Ay! papa, you need not fear that I will not conduct myself properly. At Aunt Sederfeld's and Uncle Udter's, they carry on their affairs in a very aristocratic manner, and you have, yourself, told me that I conducted myself well."

"Yes, Aunt Sederfield's and Uncle Udter's—Yes, I believe so. They know there who we are. Aside from that, the society that is met there is not very numerous or select, in comparison to that which one meets at a bathing-place. At a strange place, and among strangers, people should know how to make something of themselves. One ought not to forget who he is, and conduct himself accordingly."

"But it is certainly hard," replied Amelia, with a smile which was not altogether free from bitterness, "for one who, only for the sake of appearing aristocratic, has to submit to the pain of sweating all day on the steamboat, as though he were in a steam-bath."

"In this world, my child, one has often to submit to many inconveniences," replied the lieutenant-colonel, in the tone of a man who is accustomed to make his experience in life, and wisdom, weigh down the objections of others, and who wishes to show, at the same time, that *the world*, *rank*, and *name* are worth more to him than anything else, and such was also the case with the lieutenant-colonel.

After this gentleman of honour had spent the most part of his life in seeking after advancement and titles, he had, nevertheless, been forced at length to retreat from the great scene of his action, with the commission of lieutenant-colonel, and the patent of chamberlain in his pocket, and retire into the country. But there was something else connected with the subject, and that was, he was obliged to live as retired as possible, for his

materiel was not great. But as commissions of discharge cannot be eaten, the lieutenant-colonel was obliged to cultivate his little estate himself, that he might earn bread for himself and family. And as he had bestowed upon these long-sought-for titles so much time and trouble, he thought that he must transfer them to his domestic affairs; and he was especially occupied with the question, how he could marry his daughter happily, that is to say, according to the rank of her husband.

For the purpose of fostering these plans, and principally that Amelia might improve in the customs of the nobility—which she could not possibly learn in any other path than in the higher circles—the lieutenant-colonel had already made, for several summers, journeys to friends and relatives, on whose estates, aside from obtaining a living gratuitously, one had also the opportunity of becoming acquainted with many people of rank and fortune. At all these places the lieutenant-colonel was usually a welcome guest, for toward people who ranked above him, Mr. de Dressen was politeness itself, the most genteel and entertaining companion in the world, and a man of as fine a tone as could be found anywhere. Even toward his wife and daughter his conduct was so exquisitely polite, that it would be impossible to find it in a higher degree. Nay! it even was so great, that it excited the utmost astonishment, and not rarely envy in ladies who enjoyed a much less degree of attention from their husbands.

The Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen's wife was a lady of such fine education, and so much dignity in her conduct, that she enjoyed in this respect her husband's full satisfaction, who did not hesitate, as opportunities were offered, to make a display with her. But in her whole conduct was a reservedness, a kind of assumed gentleness, which indicated that she was accustomed to suppress her feelings and thoughts, although a natural plainness of manner was extended, like a fine veil, over all her actions, by which those signs of character appeared less prominent. In

short, Madame de Dressen was considered, wherever she appeared, as an agreeable, lovely lady, although, as stated before, her conduct was not altogether free from dissimulation; but the world always judges from appearances, although not often without good reasons.

Madame de Dressen had a heart which had beaten, in former times, as well as any one; but during her long season of marriage it had accustomed itself to reservedness, until it had finally frozen, within the never perfectly-melting ice of her cold domestic life.

In the commencement of the summer of 1833, the Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen had seen fit to borrow a sum of money upon his small estate in Tunefors, in Sudermanland. As the father of a daughter, nineteen years of age, he considered it his duty to take further and more decisive steps than he had hitherto done. At Tunefors there could be no expectation of guests; for means were lacking to keep an open table so as to entertain strangers in an appropriate manner. There, neighbours were common, low people, with whom a family connexion could not be entertained. Aside from that, the short journey, which had been commenced earlier than usual this time, had not met with the slightest success. Everything coincided to spur on the lieutenant-colonel to a decided resolution, and after considerable reflection, his choice finally fell on a bathing-place.

"Dear wife," said he one day, "your health has not been very good for some time past. It strikes me that you should make use of mineral waters. I have consulted with my physician, and obtained the necessary money. We must travel."

Highly surprised at the great politeness of her husband—for they were alone—and the tone in which he spoke left no doubt but that he was in earnest, she remained almost petrified. It is true that she had suffered a lingering sickness, several years before, which had rendered her cheeks pale, and gnawed at her heart-strings; but now her health was entirely restored, and she

could not understand why he wished her to use the water at so late a season.

"Dear husband," replied she, "you know that I am now, God be praised, healthy as a fish in the water, and do not require, at all, that for my sake you should incur a heavy expense."

"No, dear Sophia, you have never become perfectly well since that severe sickness," replied the lieutenant-colonel, exasperated, "and if one neglects an old evil it is very probable it will return again. Make your calculations, therefore, how much money you require to prepare your and Amelia's wardrobe, in such a manner as our rank requires."

"If the journey must be made at all hazards," replied Madame de Dressen, submissively, for she was accustomed to give way before all his whims, "we do not need, at least, much expense for dresses. I think we might live in a retired manner, and keep away from all expensive amusements."

"But the hangman take you, for your stupidity, that is what we must, and will do," shouted the lieutenant-colonel, violently; "are you so totally dumb, that you do not wish to understand that people belonging to the higher circles are obliged to treat their domestic affairs with a certain degree of elegance? There are things which of themselves are very plain and natural, but notwithstanding cannot always be called by their right names, or else the affair would appear in an equivocal light? As soon as circumstances of this kind occur, an appropriate and plausible pretext must be found. Do you understand me now?"

Madame de Dressen's countenance became overspread with a deep flush, and she replied, with a painful feeling of shame—

"I understand, but I hope that Amelia's ear will be spared from hearing what you intend for her."

"How can you entertain such foolish ideas, dear Sophia? Am I such a stupid fellow, that you imagine that I should make my child acquainted with my God-forsaken and critical position; for the rest, I would have believed it should have become my

wife to pay due regard to her husband's confidence, even if that which I communicated to her did not coincide with her own wishes."

Madame de Dressen did not reply to this, but sat down to the table, took out paper and pencil, and began to calculate, so that she had concluded in a short time, and was able to present to her husband, a statement which, although made out with the utmost economy, did, nevertheless, amount to no inconsiderable sum.

"Well, that is orderly; that is the way I like it," said the lieutenant-colonel. "Married people must understand each other without much chatter and circumflexions, and you see now, that according to this method everything is arranged much better and far easier. Let me see what you have on your paper. What the devil do you mean? Are you mad? Three hundred and twenty-five rix-dollars! May the hangman take me, I have only seven hundred dollars for the whole journey myself. No, if such is the case, we cannot think of the journey."

"But for an enlargement of our wardrobe altogether, this sum is not too large, indeed," said Madame de Dressen, assuringly. "But let me see what you are about, we must endeavour to refit the old garments as well as we can."

"You shall have two hundred dollars,"—with these words he laid the money upon the table, recommending her to counsel her eyes and her reason concerning the outlay of the money, and especially to consult Amelia's opinion in the choice of the dresses.

Eight days after this consultation a tearing, a sewing, and dyeing of clothes, took place from morning until night, and at all these important affairs of state Amelia's trusty friend, the daughter of a neighbouring pastor, of whom we shall speak more hereafter, assisted both by her counsel and her hands. We have further to chronicle how Madame de Dressen, inspired with a certain pardonable vanity, managed to save so much by the closest economy in butter, milk, and eggs, that she was able to

buy a new cloak for Amelia. Knowing which, the lieutenant-colonel praised in earnest the domestic talents of his wife; *he*, of course, had not fared the worse by it. Madame de Dressen blushed deeply at his praise, and, as she had done for a long time before, contented herself with the servant's fare, namely, mush, a herring, or a bowl of milk, of which simple food Amelia also partook.

In this manner the family had fortunately arrived on board of the *Thor*, for the purpose of sailing to Wenersburg, where they intended to hire a conveyance for their further journey, under the appropriate pretext, that one is always exposed to many inconveniences on the steamer, when he travels in his own conveyance. Whither that journey was tending, and how long it was to last, was not yet determined upon. The choice was equally balanced between Gustavsborg and Stroemstad. They were previously to inform themselves on this point, as to which was the most frequented, and at the same time the cheapest.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CONFESSIONAL CHAIR AT THE CLOISTER OF WRETA.

"ARE we not going up soon, papa?" inquired Amelia, who was looking, with longing eyes, through the window at the shore, as it glided past.

"I think it is time now," said her father, who had taken a little nap. After he had yawned, and stretched himself several times, and Amelia had brushed his coat, he ascended the stairway to resume his examination of the passengers on the deck. After the lapse of a few moments, he announced to the ladies that they should come up.

"Well, God be praised, I am finally released from this irksome confinement," exclaimed Amelia, gaily, and arranged, as well as she was able, her shawl before the small mirror; then putting on her bonnet, threw over it her new veil, which she had taken from her trunk during her father's nap, and with her parasol in one hand, and a book in the other (for her father had expressly recommended her doing do), she mincingly ascended the stairway after her mother, where they were received by the lieutenant-colonel with the gallantry of a polite man of the world, who conducted them to the after part of the deck, where two ladies from the capital were seated.

After the chevalier had entertained the ladies for a short time by naming the places which they were passing, he walked to the other side of the deck, for the purpose of entering into conversation with a gentleman, whose name had particularly attracted his attention when he had looked over the list of passengers. His endeavours were completely successful, the four gentlemen, who had passed the middle age, met the lieutenant-colonel with the

same politeness. The latter, on his part, was not particularly edified with the rather slothful conversation of these gentlemen; but to one who had once moved in the *haute volée*, it is an easy thing to keep the wheel of conversation moving, even should it turn ever so heavily.

After their arrival at Berg, the attention of the society was drawn to three new passengers who came on board. They were conducted by a gentleman, whose mere outward appearance was calculated to inspire interest. His companions were a pale and sickly looking little boy of about five or six years, and a small dog, who continually kept a watchful eye upon his youthful master.

The stranger appeared to be quite a distance beyond those bounds which separate the dreams of youth from the experience of the more mature man. He was apparently about thirty, or perhaps more. His brow was not unwrinkled, and a mournful expression, combined with a look of resignation, lay upon his countenance, and caused the sharp points of the same to stand out more prominent. What added still more to his melancholy expression were his jet black eyes, and his piercing glance, together with his long black hair, which, separated in the centre in front, falling down on both sides of his head, fluttered like a pair of mourning badges over his robust shoulders. The dress of the man, as well as that of the boy, was black, and gave room to the conclusion that they were probably mourning for a dear relative.

"That is certainly an Italian," whispered a group of chattering friends. "One can perceive it, by the colour of his skin and his black whiskers." This presumption, however, was contradicted by another, who was of opinion that his eyes lacked that vivid fire, or that bright sparkle which distinguishes the inhabitants of the South.

During all this time the stranger remained leaning against one of the wheelhouses. He had taken his boy in his arms, to point object to him, and the dog sat faithfully by their side,

upon his haunches, busily engaged in scratching his ear. This group appeared to create much interest among the rest of the passengers. The traveller, however, soon disappeared, with his companions, down the staircase into the cabin.

Further conversation concerning the stranger was terminated by the arrival of the captain, who inquired of the gentlefolks, if they would not visit the cloister of Wreta, while the ship was passing through the locks, as there was plenty of time to spare.

The proposal was almost universally accepted, and after one or two of the most timid passengers had properly satisfied themselves that the excursion could be made while the *Thor* was making its slothful trip through the locks, all feet were put in motion, and the path to the landing was crowded with fluttering neckerchiefs, and waving veils. Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen, and the four other notables composed one party by themselves, and were among the first at the landing-place. "The old gentlemen are not peculiarly entertaining," thought Amelia, and suffered her gaze to fall, with much more enjoyment, on the beauties of nature, with which the environs of Ostgoetha canal abound.

The assembly now marched in various groups up the green hill, that rose slightly above the banks of the river. They passed the powerful lock gates, which, like Cyclops of the lower world, creakingly extended their black arms to receive the approaching boat. From the red-coloured building on the summit of the mountain, the eye enjoyed a splendid view, either by directing the gaze backward over the level silent plain, or looking along the smiling borders of the canal. Mutely enraptured at the extreme beauty of the surrounding scenery, one or two of the passengers remained rapt in meditation; while the majority of the assemblage continued their way through the waving fields of corn, which surrounded the ancient church.

Amelia experienced a depression of spirits when she left God's beautiful creation, and entered into the high arched and gloomy

church, and beheld before her the antiquated ornaments and holy pictures, suffused with the magic dimness of the twilight. She thought that she heard deep sighs coming forth from the graves, over the tablets of which she was walking. But soon her young senses were fascinated with the most lively interest, upon the conversation of the old sexton, who was relating all kinds of queer stories concerning the history of the inmates of the vaults.

Bones fallen to dust, silence, oblivion, and decayed greatness repose in these still beds; and perhaps many a heart, which has battled out the terrible strife of human passions, has now found here its peaceful resting-place.

Among all the things which Amelia saw, she was most attracted by the cell of a monk; she could not rid herself of the thought that this little narrow and gloomy room, its small round window blinds, gilded by the rays of the setting sun, had perhaps been the witness, in former times, of the many yearly contentions of a slowly fading heart. What an isolated life, and self-denial! It appeared to her active powers of imagination that some one was moving in the dark corner where the confessional chair was standing; and she imagined a monk in it, and a person kneeling before him for the purpose of confessing.

The assemblage passed on; Amelia wrapped in her dreams followed them, no other object having the power to blot out the impression which this cell had made upon her; and when the rest of the company had walked through the extensive aisles, and finally stood before the altar to hear the sexton relate another of his remarkable stories, Amelia walked back to contemplate the cell more minutely.

But when she entered the cell, she almost sank to the ground in astonishment and fright, for did she not behold the phantom of her excited fancy before her in reality? No, it was no deception, caused by the rays of the setting sun, which shone upon the misty outlines in the dark corner, dimly and doubtfully. A

pale yellow face, with a hood almost drawn down to its eyes, looked forth from the confessional chair; and did not two large black eyes stare at her? and did not sounds linger through the pale lips, although fright prevented her distinctly hearing the words? Shivering with an icy coldness, Amelia supported herself against one of the door-posts, and if she had not been exempt from all new fashioned nervous weaknesses, which cause young girls to faint, and have the hysterics if only a bat passes, or anything as little dangerous, she could not be blamed for doing the like, for the monk gradually grew higher and higher, until at last, in Amelia's imagination, he became of gigantic stature.

But now suddenly the phantom, which had deceived the eyes of our heroine, vanished. She now distinctly recognised the passenger who had last appeared on the steamer, and the deceiving hood which before had appeared so natural, was nothing else than the stranger's long black hair, that as he sat there, bending forward, had covered his countenance almost like a net, so that she could not have taken it for anything else, at a distance, especially as it was so dark.

"If I have been so unfortunate as to frighten you, I beg your pardon, a thousand times," said the stranger, who now stepped into the light.

"No, it was not you that frightened me, it was my own excited fancy," said the maiden, stepping back, as she added as a passing remark, "I did not know that you were one of the party also."

"Well, I have just followed them," he replied, taking leave of her with a passing bow, and stepped into the aisle.

"He looks like a shadow flitting about among the graves," said Amelia to herself. In fact, there was something in the stranger which, in this place, with its dubious light, gave him a ghastly and strange appearance.

"Where have you been so long? Why do you walk alone?"

inquired her mother, who had missed her, and had gone to seek for her, and bring her back to the rest of the party.

"Alas, mother, I have behaved like a downright goose," said Amelia, taking her mother's arm: "Did you see the gentleman clothed in a black dress, who came on board this afternoon?"

"Yes, I saw him just now, bowing over the railing which is around the old kings' vaults. He seems to be melancholy, but is nevertheless of an interesting appearance."

"Certainly melancholy, and awfully gloomy, dear mamma I must confess. But he was certainly not interesting a short time ago, when he took it into his head to crouch into a confessional box, where he almost frightened me to death, for I thought one of the old monks had risen from his grave, to hear the confession of a poor sinner in his last moments."

"How can you be so childish?" said her mother, laughing. "You might easily have thought it was one of the passengers, who wished to examine the interior of one of the confessional boxes. I should like to know where he left his boy in the meantime."

"Ah, he is certainly asleep somewhere," said Amelia, turning around to look again at the once-imagined monk.

As soon as the party had returned to the *Thor*, Amelia hastened down the staircase to sew on her shoe-string, which had been loosened on her way home. As she was about opening the cabin door, to obtain needle and thread, her attention was attracted by a sound, which resembled the suppressed weeping of a sleeping child.

"Alas! that is certainly the little boy," thought Amelia, and without reflection she opened the door through which the wailing issued.

There indeed lay the new comer, with a flushed and feverish countenance, seeming to contend with an evil dream. He lay in a state between sleep and wakefulness, and alternately exclaiming "Papa! papa! Diana! Diana!" and uneasily rolled to and

fro. The dog sat in a listening position by the boy's feet, and his whole conduct showed he was uneasy concerning his favourite.

When Amelia entered and approached the bedside, the dog looked so wise and knowing, that she could not do otherwise than reward him, by kindly stroking his back. After that, she sat down on the edge of the sofa, and taking the boy's arm, began to lull him into slumber.

"I have had such a bad dream, papa," said the boy, and as he believed himself secure in his father's arms, he went to sleep again.

Amelia remained awhile, to lull him into deeper sleep, completely occupied with the pleasing aspect of the boy's features, which had resumed in his sleep a bloom that at other times was not there. His hair was of a jet black, divided on his forehead, and falling in natural ringlets over his white neck, the same as his father's.

"You sweet little boy!" whispered Amelia, and bended over him to take her leave with a kiss, but it was not an easy matter for her to go; the little fellow had grasped with his hand the ribbon of Amelia's bonnet so strongly, that it was only after several endeavours that she was enabled to loosen his little fingers. Finally she was able to rise, and turned to go back to her own state-room, when all at once her eye met the stranger, who stood on the threshold, suffering his looks to rest with the utmost gratitude upon her. Deeply blushing, Amelia arose. "I heard the little one cry," said she, as if to excuse herself, and went toward the door.

"And you were so kind toward the stranger?" He said no more, but his eyes evinced a deeper emotion than she had thought any eyes could express. When Amelia returned to her father's state-room, she found her mother engaged in preparing some slight refreshments.

"Where have you put the cake, my child!" said Madame de Dressen, busily searching for it.

"The cake!" replied Amelia, growing pale with fright, at the

thought that she might have left the basket at home. "Is it not here?" With these words she began to seek anxiously for it in all corners.

"No, I do not find it, although I have searched everywhere for it. Come up stairs, my child, and talk to the first mate. He received the things which were taken to the baggage-room, and it may have been left there."

"O! yes, that will probably be the case." Thus saying, Amelia hastened up to the deck, accosted the first mate, and was about going down with him, when two sunburnt children from the shore offered her some elegant bouquets of flowers, entreating her to buy some.

Amelia loved flowers, almost to a passion; but unfortunately she had not a farthing in her pocket. She stretched forth her hand for one of the bouquets, and searched with anxious eyes for her father, who not seldom—and especially in the presence of strangers—bestowed such little attentions upon her, which of course were not thought of when they were at home. Unfortunately her father was not above, and with blushing cheeks, and not without a mournful look at the flowers, as well as the children who sold them, Amelia returned the bouquet. She stammered a bashful "Thank you, my child, I do not want any," and hastened with her mother down stairs.

The basket of cakes was soon found, but did not console her mind, from thinking that some of the passengers had not seen her anxiety to own the flowers.

At length the hour of retirement arrived. Madame de Dressen and Amelia threw themselves into one corner of the sofa. On the other the lieutenant-colonel stretched himself out, full-length, as comfortably as possible. After they had yawned, stretched themselves, and complained of the heat, they became silent. When Amelia's regular breathing betokened that she was asleep, the lieutenant-colonel tapped his wife's shoulder with his lead pencil.

"Are you yet awake, Sophia?"

"Yes, my dear; the flies and the heat——"

"Yes, the hangman take them!" interrupted the lieutenant-colonel. "But what do you think of our journey—of the people, I mean?"

"What can I say about it, after such a short time? You seem to be much pleased with the gentlemen you have presented to us."

"Pleased! the hangman take it. They are four old worn-out fellows, who only come out to warm themselves! Annoying people, upon whom I am lavishing my conversation with perfect disgust."

"Why do you not spare yourself this disagreeable matter?"

"Because they belong to noble families; and, nevertheless, aside from their tedious awkwardness, are desirable company. You ought to become accustomed to such society at last, and should not forget, that one is often obliged to injure his own feelings, to cut a figure in the world."

"You have already done much for your system," replied his wife, with a slight sneer, which could not be seen on account of the reigning darkness.

"Yes; I flatter myself to have never missed an occasion," said the lieutenant-colonel, with a self-laudatory tone. "But you may depend upon it, dear Sophia, that without this my talent, we should long ago have *sunk* to the *lower* class of nobility. Instead of that, we have thus far kept upon the *surface*. But to return to the commencement of our conversation —Have you observed the black-haired stranger, whom nobody knows. The fellow does not look very bad, and knows how to behave, as though he had something to support him. He has such a noble bearing, that there must be noble blood flowing in his veins. He is certainly a nobleman; but the only thing that I am surprised at is, that he has no servant with him."

"You have none either, my dear."

"Of course I have not; but I have my wife and my daughter with me, while he is dragging along a child with him which requires nursing. He is assuredly a widower."

"He looks so. Have you not heard what his name is—or is his name not on the passenger-list?"

"Unfortunately I have not had, as yet, a chance to look at it; but to-morrow I will examine the matter thoroughly. We must find out whether he is a man of rank, for that is a principal condition that he can be allowed to remain in our company during the trip."

"Alas! I wish to-morrow had already come," sighed the good woman, fanning herself with her neckerchief.

"This cooling off is very pleasant," said the lieutenant-colonel; "I shall now try to sleep: you may fan me until you see that I have fallen asleep, for these flies and gnats—the beasts, almost devour one."

Without making a reply, his wife arose, and while her thoughts were afar, her hand, like a machine, moved the handkerchief up and down, until the loud snoring of the lieutenant-colonel announced that her lord and husband had fallen asleep. After that Madame de Dressen squeezed herself into her corner of the sofa, to reflect undisturbedly whether she had not met the features of the stranger before.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL TAKES HIS MEASURES.

On the following morning about six o'clock, the chambermaid entered, bringing in the coffee which had been ordered. She brought at the same time a glass filled with the most beautiful flowers. A joyful "Ah!" slipped from Amelia's lips, and she hurriedly threw her hair braids over her comb, grasped the vessel with both hands, and inhaled their fresh odour into her little nostrils. "Are these flowers also for us?" inquired the lieutenant-colonel, and yawningly extended his hand toward the coffee cup.

"They are for the young lady," replied the girl, the gentleman in number six sends his compliments, and says they are sent by little Alfred."

"Chivalry has not yet gone to the grave in Sweden," declaimed the lieutenant-colonel solemnly, at the same time with the greatest appetite helping himself to all the cakes which had been brought for the ladies. When the chambermaid had gone, Mrs. de Dressen took from her little bag some home-made cake, which tasted excellently.

After a short time the lieutenant-colonel, carefully shaved and well-dressed, went upon deck. He pretended to walk up for the purpose of enjoying the beautiful morning. But the truth was, he was desirous of an opportunity of finding out something concerning the gentleman in number six, and therefore took his way directly to the saloon, where he was so fortunate as to find the passenger-list, upon which, at the very end, was placed the name.

"I. Borgenstierna."

"Borgenstierna, simply —" muttered the lieutenant-colonel

between his teeth. "No title—ahem! what kind of man can that be? even his name is so little known, that I hardly know whether his name is entered into the matricle of nobility, and even if that were the case, he at least does not enjoy much distinction at present. But where the devil have I heard that name before? It is in my head—but it is hardly possible. I have never known any body with that name."

Oppressed with these thoughts, the lieutenant-colonel went to consult his wife's memory. But Amelia's voice, "O, God, there comes father again—shall we not have a moment to ourselves to put the state-room in order?" caused him to go back, and wait for the ladies on deck. There sat the man without "title," on a sofa in the corner. On one side his son, and upon the other his dog. upon his lap lay a book.

"Well, that is excellent—just as though it had been ordered," thought the lieutenant-colonel, and approached him with a polite good-morning. "It seems to me that we may be sure of a fine day to-day."

"It looks so," replied the stranger, in whom our reader has undoubtedly recognised our old acquaintance the *skjuts-boy* of Swarteborg, of whose adventures during the interval we will speak at a more appropriate season. We will confine ourself for the present to the fact, that he returned the salute of the lieutenant-colonel politely, and that he did not appear to wish the further continuance of the conversation.

But our lieutenant-colonel was of another opinion. He seated himself upon the sofa, and endeavoured to play with the boy. The latter, however, did not appear much inclined to reciprocate these familiarities, but clung close to his father's side.

"I should think it would be a source of trouble to have such a tender travelling companion with you. He is undoubtedly your son?"

"So he is."

"He is probably not more than four years old?"

"He has passed his fifth already."

"Indeed! one would not think so; the little fellow looks sickly."

"Unfortunately, he is so."

"You are, no doubt, making a journey to a bathing-place?"

"Yes, I intend to make the trial, with the hope that it will be good for him."

"Ah! sea-bathing is very healthy. I am also, with my family, on my way toward one of those salutary institutions, which offer so many advantages—I mean concerning health. My lady wife, unfortunately, sometimes suffers hysterics, and although they are not so violent now, we will not, nevertheless, neglect this excellent remedy for her perfect restoration. You probably go to—"

Here the lieutenant-colonel paused, in hopes to attain his object, which was, of being informed of the place to which the gentleman was going.

"I have not yet made up my mind. I first expect, on the way, a letter from a physician."

"That is about the same case with us, we have not made a choice either. But I beg your pardon. I have made use of a liberty, which certainly one ought not to assume, unless on a journey, that is, to enter into a conversation, without an introduction. Allow me to supply this neglect. My name is de Dressen, Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain. And I have the honour of speaking to Mr. ——?"

"My name is Borgenstierna."

"It gives me much joy of becoming acquainted with Mr. — Mr.—I have not the pleasure of being informed of your title."

"I have none."

After this declaration a slight pause was made; but with one of his customary fine turns, the lieutenant-colonel understood how to renew the thread of the conversation, and with peculiar smartness, to turn it upon literature. "A nobleman without a

title—ahem!—one ought at least find out to what political colour my neighbour belonged," thought he.

Borgenstierna's answers were brief, but quite open and frank. "Aha!" thought the lieutenant-colonel, "he belongs to the heroes of liberty, probably there still remains in him some of the old leaven which he has not digested since he was a student. That is a pity—great pity—but if he has money, and perceives the necessity of procuring a title for himself, then—"

At that moment the ladies came up, and the lieutenant-colonel profited by the opportunity to introduce them to Mr. Borgenstierna. The latter saluted them in a cold and dignified manner; but as soon as Amelia patted the boy on his cheek and said, "Thank you for the beautiful flowers, my little Alfred," then the stiff expression which had lain upon his countenance during the whole conversation vanished, and a ray of joy glittered in his eyes, as he replied, in a voice moved with emotion,

"Alfred cannot express his thanks, as he should do, for he knows not, that he has the happiness of possessing another protector, besides his father, and old Diana."

Amelia turned round to her parents, and told them frankly the import of these words. She had heard the boy weeping in his sleep, and had entered the apartment to quiet him.

"He usually sleeps very quietly and soundly during the first hours," said Borgenstierna, "but the uneasiness which came over me, even after my short absence, made me think that he might be awake, and that was also the cause why I returned so soon."

The arrival of the remainder of the company gave the lieutenant-colonel an opportunity to apply his time in a proper manner also, and he began to show his social powers with them, but Madame de Dressen took her seat beside Borgenstierna, and kindly patted Diana's old wrinkled head.

"I am very fond of dogs," said she; "I once owned one, although it was long ago, who resembled this one both in name

and colour. I made a gift, out of gratitude, of him, and since that time have not been able to obtain one similar to him."

At these words the eyes of the good lady reposed upon Borgenstierna. He had turned aside to chatter with his child; but when his looks met those of Madame de Dressen, the eyes of both became resplendent with the liveliest expressions of their innermost feelings. Their lips were silent, and Madame de Dressen was a little confused; but all kinds of thoughts were busy in her heart, and from that moment, she felt an interest for the stranger and his child, which seemed to increase in tenderness the longer they remained together.

In the afternoon Matala was visited, and during this walk Amelia became so familiar with the little Alfred, that he would not leave her, and called her his little "Ammy."

Of course Bladen's grave was also visited, and the lieutenant-colonel, who never let an opportunity slip of displaying his importance, gave an extended story of the merits of this nobleman. Fortunately this theme at that time was not worn out, as it is now; for these reasons the lieutenant-colonel had the pleasant satisfaction of perceiving that the majority of the passengers listened to him with the closest attention.

"But Alfred troubles you too much; you are too kind to him, my young lady," said Borgenstierna, and was about calling the boy away.

"O no, he is so good, let him; I like children so much," replied Amelia, allowing the boy to play with the chain, which she had received from her mother on the day of her confirmation, and therefore esteemed it more than all the rest of her jewellery.

They sat down together on the green sward. Alfred would not leave Amelia's lap at all, and when his father was about disengaging his little hands from the chain, the little fellow clung to it tighter. Suddenly a link was broken, and Amelia looked rather distressed at the accident.

Borgenstierna blushed, whether from anger, or from another cause, we do not know. He hastily picked up the chain, and said—

"I hope you will be so kind, young lady, as to allow me to restore the damage which Alfred has done, at Wenersborg?"

"I do not know whether I can do so," for she did not hardly know how to conduct herself under present circumstances. "I would part with that chain very unwillingly, for I have worn it for the last three years constantly. It was formerly the property of my mother, who brought it with her from Germany; and when I was as young as Alfred, and even still younger, I was accustomed to play with it."

"I know — can imagine it — " interrupted Borgenstierna. "The jewels of the mother willingly become the playthings of her favourite. Were you born in Germany, my lady?"

"Born, yes; but came to Sweden when very young indeed— Ah! there comes my mother, I shall ask her what I dare and shall do."

Borgenstierna prevented Amelia's intentions, and appealed himself to Madame de Dressen, whose decision terminated, to his great joy, as he wished it.

Heated and weary from the heat of the day, and the long walks they had taken, the passengers retired to their state-rooms for the rest of the day; and only in the evening, when there was a cool breeze, which paid so much regard to the ladies that it did not injure them at all, the party again assembled on deck. Soon they arrived in the neighbourhood of the magnificent castle of Wadstena; Borgenstierna adjusted his telescope to the proper focus for Amelia's eye, so that the latter was able to distinguish its noble architectural beauties, as well as those of a neighbouring monastery, very distinctly.

"Ah! how beautiful the old castle is, even now," said Amelia, in raptures; "yet it must be in great decay. Is it true, that it is now used as a magazine for grain?"

"It is so, indeed," replied Borgenstierna. "In its saloons, where once Gustavus the First celebrated his nuptials with Catherine Stenbork, are now stored the abundance of Ostgothland's rich harvest."

"Yes, those ancient walls have seen and heard many things," interrupted the lieutenant-colonel, who could not omit mingling with everything. "And among them Count Johannes of Osfriesland's well-known adventure with the Princess Cecilia, is, perhaps, not one of the least piquant of these recollections." But suddenly it struck his mind that such kind of conversation was not altogether fit for his daughter, and he added, "O, my daughter, Castle Wadstena is a remarkable one, an exceedingly remarkable one. It was here that Charles the Twelfth, after his return from Turkey, first met his sister, Ulrica Eleonora."

Amelia thought that was not a very remarkable event; but she was aware that her father's store of recollections was exhausted, and therefore made no other questions, as one would undoubtedly throw him into confusion.

We do not intend to follow the progress of the steamer step by step; but shall only mention that they enjoyed the beauties of West Gothland, and after they had looked in astonishment at the blue outlines of the Kinnekulle, the celebrated giant crown of Sweden, which in spite of its great distance was to be seen distinctly, and after they had slightly become acquainted with sea-sickness upon the deceitful waves of Lake Warner, they at length happily arrived at Wenersborg, where De Dressen intended to remain a day with his family.

On the morning of their arrival, Borgenstierna called at their residence. The lieutenant-colonel was already in activity, running through the city to obtain a conveyance. The ladies were, therefore, alone.

As soon as little Alfred had presented the chain, according to his father's instructions, and had begged Miss "Ammy's" pardon, he climbed up to the side of his friend, threw his arms around

her neck, and said, sobbingly, "Farewell, my dear Ammy, I must leave you now."

"He's right," said Borgenstierna; "the carriage waits for us."

"Whither does your journey tend?" inquired Madame de Dressen, while Amelia was playing with the boy.

"At first to Uddevalla; but whether I shall stay there, or travel further, depends upon a letter which I expect from a physician, whose advice concerning Alfred's health I could not obtain before I left home, as I started in such a hurry."

Madame de Dressen could not, with politeness, ask any further questions, although she would have liked to have made several other inquiries. Borgenstierna took advantage of the pause thus caused, and taking his son by the hand, although the latter left very reluctantly his pleasant occupation with Amelia's cheek, he had nevertheless to comply with his father's request at last, and they both left together, after making a few common-place remarks concerning their travelling companions, and Borgenstierna had requested the ladies to present his compliments to the lieutenant-colonel, leaving the ladies in a position in which they did not feel desirous of continuing the conversation.

At length Amelia, who could not understand why they were so still, broke the silence, and inquired—

"What are you thinking about, dear mother?"

"I do not know, myself," answered her mother; "perhaps about the new acquaintance."

"He has something so peculiar and reserved in his manner which I do not exactly like," observed Amelia

"Sorrow and grief always cause reservedness," replied Madame de Dressen. "No one need wonder at that."

At this moment Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen returned, and reported that for twenty rix-dollars he had hired a conveyance for Stroemstad, which was to take them there at a certain time.

"To Stroemstad?" said his wife. "Why make a journey of

twelve or thirteen miles, when you might have done it in three? I thought we were to go to Gustavsborg."

"Yes, dear wife; but you believe too much which you ought not to believe until I have told you my opinion about it. In short, we shall go to Stroemstad; that place is for the present the most fashionable. It was only last night that three carriages went there, all filled with people of ton."

"Well, I should think there would be no want of such people at Gustavsborg, and for that reason I thought—"

"Hear, dear Sophia, and spare me your opinions; we shall go to Stroemstad, at all events. Have you not yet seen anything of Borgenstierna?"

"He has just been here, and taken his leave," said Amelia; "and presented his compliments to you."

"What! taken leave! he must have been in a hurry. Where is he going?"

"He did not say where."

"Ahem! I almost think that I should have made him a visit in return. It is true he has no title, and I do not know even who he is; but we are here in a public-house, where such condescension does not amount to much, with a man of my rank—"

"Yes, my dear," interrupted his wife, "I believe that he was a nobleman as well as you."

"A nobleman!" replied the lieutenant-colonel, with a contemptuous smile. "Yes, inasmuch as he bears the name of one who has something noble in him; and may be so, in fact. But where is his family? where are his connexions? Nobody knows them. Where are his estates? No one knows where they are—at least, *I* do not. In short, we would not have been able to cultivate his acquaintance at the bath any longer, unless he should come out by the side of his friends, whose intercourse with him would guarantee him; and if he should prove himself a wealthy man, with whom a name would be of no account, if it only sounds well, then—"

Madame de Dressen blushed, as she often did. At that moment, Amelia, who stood leaning through the window which overlooked the courtyard, cried out, "Yes, it is too late now; he is just getting into the carriage with Alfred."

"Well, then, he may go to the d—l!" exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel, throwing a peevish look at the handsome little travelling-carriage.

CHAPTER X.

THE HEIGHTS OF SWARTEBORG.—ARRIVAL AT STROEMSTAD.

At the hotel in Uddevalla, De Dressen inquired whether a traveller, accompanied by a boy, stayed there over night, or whether he was there yet. But nobody pretended to have seen anything of such a person.

"If I only knew what direction he was gone," said the lieutenant-colonel to himself; but was soon interrupted by a waiter, who inquired with great humbleness, "Whether his grace did not wish his horses ordered for the whole distance. This might be easily done, as a carriage was just departing, if his grace would only write a post-ticket, and give it to the servant who was travelling with the carriage."

This proposition obtained great praise from the lieutenant-colonel. He knew that it would cost him a little money for the servants, but it gave him a certain kind of authority, if he travelled with horses ordered in advance; and nothing was to be neglected which might foster his great ambition. He therefore wrote a post-ticket in large, distinct letters: "Two horses for the Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain de Dressen, *Mpp!*" But at none of the foolish things which he had committed in his life was he so angry as at this; for he was detained upon the heights of Swarteborg by the insignificant circumstance, that the splendid carriage which he had obtained for twenty dollars, rix-money, suddenly lost one of its fore-wheels, and upset the whole family, to their amazement and great anger, upon the high road, by which occurrence they might have easily broken both their bones and necks into the bargain.

Fortunately, the summerset was not very severe; so that they

escaped with a few knocks, and black and blue spots. The lieutenant-colonel had hardly gathered himself up, when he unloaded himself of a whole litany of the choicest expressions against the cursed Swarteborg and its confounded jolting roads, poor horses, and loutish skjuts-boys, such as was never heard before by human ear.

"I have been in this dog's nest before——" But here the lieutenant-colonel suddenly stopped: all at once his mind was struck about the night he had before spent in the forests of Swarteborg. The skjuts-boy—his name—the lashes—the buffets—everything came clear to him; but immediately he soothed his mind by the powerful assurance, by which he strove to persuade himself, "A thousand devils catch me! it is not possible that the skjuts-boy should become such a fine fellow! It was certainly his name, but that may be owned by many" And it became plain that his new acquaintance did not belong to those who are picked up on the high-road; and, in the main, it was very ridiculous to retain even for a moment such a foolish idea. Nevertheless, he was rather fearful, although why he could scarcely explain to himself, of obtaining information on this point from the driver, although the latter could have given him correct information, as he was from the same village as the boy with the confounded name. The lieutenant-colonel, therefore, thought it better to let the matter remain in obscurity; and then, after all, it was only a hasty piece of folly, he thought to himself.

The consequence of this unhappy accident was that, for the first thing, the wagon must be repaired, for which purpose aid must be obtained to take it back to the tavern. This had already made quite a hole in his pocket; but, heaven! what a second mishap, when he remembered that his evil star had caused him to order the horses in advance! He would certainly not arrive at Swarteborg before dark, and would have to pay then for four horses, instead of two, on account of the long delay.

That was, indeed, a hard trial for a man of such a violent temper and so ill-filled purse as the lieutenant-colonel.

"Yes, it is awful to fare so badly with a hired conveyance and to be cheated out of twenty rix-dollars, into the bargain."

Madame de Dressen did not appear to be much troubled, but was, nevertheless, angry. It seemed to her as though this journey, unnecessary of itself, began with too much mischief that it should come to a good end. Amelia did not know whether to laugh or to weep; for, as many obstacles as she saw in her way, it was impossible to look at the wry faces and the ridiculous anger of her father without feeling inclined to laugh.

The driver had already been sent to obtain help, when, all at once, to the unspeakable joy of the travellers, another carriage appeared on the road. "God be thanked!" exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel, joyfully; "now I shall be enabled, at least, to give counter-orders, and discharge the horses which I have ordered; so that I shall get off at a cheaper rate, anyhow." His joy, however, became still greater, when the carriage approached, and a familiar voice shouted, "Stop!" to the driver.

"Your very obedient servant, Mr. Borgenstierna! What a good fortune that we meet you here in our sad state; we are in a fine fix!"

The lieutenant-colonel was so polite, that he extended his hand to Borgenstierna in the most unconcerned manner. The latter descended from his carriage immediately, inquired in the most friendly way about their position, and offered his services.

The lieutenant-colonel's first prayer was that, as Mr. Borgenstierna had probably not ordered horses in advance, he would do him the favour, and use his own, which he now, unfortunately, could not use himself.

Borgenstierna had also ordered his horses in advance, but was immediately ready to assume the duty of discharging the horses for the lieutenant-colonel.

"Well, you are going to Stroemstad, I see," said De Dressen, after the most important matters had been attended to.

"Yes, I follow my physician's advice. He recommends Stroemstad as the most beneficial bathing-place for my son. But where is the boy? Ah! he has already renewed his acquaintance with your lady daughter. Oh! how happy he will be to continue it in Stroemstad!"

"Oh, certainly, with much pleasure to myself also," replied Amelia; but her father, who did not know whether this could be done, until he had seen Borgenstierna in certain circles, replied, as if accidentally, and as though he had not overheard the last words:

"We have not heard of you in Uddevalla, in spite of our most urgent inquiries."

"I only remained at Uddevalla a short time; rested for some time at Quistrum on account of Alfred's health; and, a few hours ago, caused a post-ticket to be sent from there in advance. But I see people coming to your assistance, and hope that the accident will soon be remedied."

Borgenstierna now took leave of them, after the lieutenant-colonel had commissioned him, if time would permit, to order a couple of neat rooms for him at Stroemstad.

Borgenstierna promised, of course, to attend to everything in the best manner. Alfred cried, because Amelia would not go along with him; but was soon quieted, however, by the promise that he should soon see her again. "I do not see how I could have remained so composed," thought Borgenstierna, "but my blood, nevertheless, boiled in my veins, the same as it did the night he struck me. The fool is still as high-strung as he was at that time. I recognised him in a moment. The anger to renew an acquaintance with the skjuts-boy, I shall have to spare him until a more favourable and appropriate time. If that once comes, then shall his cursed pride of nobility receive a severe blow."

"Ammy will soon come after us, wont she?" cried Alfred, endeavouring to look around after her.

This name called up in Borgenstierna's breast a more friendly feeling, but he did not forget the lieutenant-colonel.

When the family De Dressen arrived at Stroemstad on the following forenoon, they found that Borgenstierna had taken care to find suitable rooms for them, but had not engaged them for certain; for, on account of their nearness to the bathing rooms, the price was rather high. The lieutenant-colonel consulted with his wife concerning them, who did not find them very pleasant, having first received from him a concealed wink. They appeared to be damp, and not altogether to their taste, as was almost always the case with all rooms of a very high price; and for these reasons our guest hired a room on the other side of the bridge, where lodgings were cheaper, and where, aside from that, according to the pretension of the lieutenant-colonel, the sea air blew fresher and not so sharp; which would be much better for the state of his wife's health.

"The first thing we now have to do," said he, after the family had taken possession of their new lodging, and he had sat himself down to the table, counting over the expense he had been to heretofore, as well as the present state of his purse—"the first, as I have said, is—330—that one—340—should have inscribed himself in the—350—soirée—list—388 rix-dollars, 35 shillings; that was a cursed dear trip; the journey here has already cost us 111 rix-dollars and 36 shillings. If we add to that the journey home and the *voiteur*, not much will remain to live here in the bathing-place and create a noise; but, I hope to God, that in a future course of affairs, something will occur to fill up the vacancy, which has been caused by our début. I shall have to be on the look-out. I am now going to the assembly house, and will insert my name in the list, and be informed whether the bathing party dines at *table d'hote*, or whether the single families are to be served in their own rooms."

"Both will be rather dear," observed his wife. "Can't we have our own mess?"

"By no means. Our own mess! Do you believe that people of fashion should trouble themselves thus? No, I say, that will not do!"

"But the waiter told me, when I inquired for the table prices, that it was very dear at the hotel; and, therefore, people of the highest rank kept their own kitchen."

"Oh! that changes the question; if that is the fashion, then I have no objection. Fashion must not be thrown aside altogether; by it I can save at least one rix-dollar *Banco*, perhaps two rix-dollars rix-money, which would be very agreeable to my pocket."

When the lieutenant-colonel entered the assembly saloon, half an hour afterward, his first look fell upon Borgenstierna, who was walking up and down the room, arm-in-arm with a gentleman, not only of prepossessing, but even fine appearance.

Mr. De Dressen was too cautious, however, to manifest his acquaintance with Borgenstierna before he had obtained for himself what is called firm footing in society, or had become convinced that the gentleman with whom the other was conversing in such a familiar manner, was, at least, a man of some distinction. He changed his mind, however, when an old officer, whom he heard styled as Baron Lindenskoeld, approached the two gentlemen in a familiar manner.

"I shall have to leave you now," said the gentleman, and left Borgenstierna's arm. "When shall I meet you at home, brother?"

"This evening, if convenient," replied the other; and, with a hearty shake of the hand, the friends separated. It was nearly noon, and the society in the assembly-rooms had mostly disappeared. The lieutenant-colonel had no further fear that he would expose himself; and therefore walked up to Borgenstierna, who sat near the window with Baron Lindenskoeld, and thanked him for the trouble he had had in obtaining for him rooms, which he had not, however, found entirely as he wished them. In the

meantime, the baron took his leave; and the lieutenant-colonel inquired of our hero, where he had taken up his residence.

"My residence is here on the market," replied Borgenstierna, "in the house directly opposite."

"A residence—ahem!" thought De Dressen; "that is something. He has also connexions of distinction, I see; perhaps rich also. Yes, yes; a single man would not under other circumstances take a whole suite of rooms." Speaking loudly and politely: "In that case we are not quite neighbours; but I hope Mr. Borgenstierna will not find the walk over the bridge any farther than the distance to the market will be for me?"

Borgenstierna bowed, and the lieutenant-colonel took the opportunity to inquire who the gentleman was that had before spoken to him.

"The youngest is my old friend Assessor Wirén, and the name of the oldest is Baron Lindenskoeld, the companion of my friend."

"Ah! indeed; but now, be so kind as not to forget us also. I must now go and look around in the restaurants. How is your little boy?"

"Not very well; the journey has fatigued him. We have not yet tried the bath."

"Send him to Amelia—she loves the boy very much; and he seems to like to be with her, also. Please, do so—without any ceremony. Are we not old acquaintances?"

"The lieutenant-colonel is too kind," replied Borgenstierna, with a slight smile; and, bowing, left the lieutenant-colonel to prosecute his discoveries alone.

CHAPTER XI.

REVIEW OF IVAR'S FATE.

WHILE we, until now, have been on a kind of strange footing, so to speak, with our hero, we have altogether omitted to call him by his old name, Ivar; and have adhered to his noble name Borgenstierna only. But as we now represent him in his old form, and return to his former adventures, we again lay claim to our old familiarity. An extended narration of his adventures, from the time he left Master Brun's house, would be of no great interest, however, and would also be perfectly superfluous for the continuance of our story. We, therefore, consider it more to the purpose to conduct our readers to the cabinet where Ivar and Wirén made their first familiar interview, and where we shall receive all necessary explanations.

The room was very elegant. Through the curtained windows broke a smooth, dim light, which grew lighter by times, when a slight draft of air lifted the curtains, and played with a fresh breath around the two friends, who were sitting together on the sofa, looking alternately at little Alfred, who was slumbering in two arm-chairs placed together, beneath which Diana was lying comfortably.

"I cannot yet recover from my joyful surprise," said Wirén, shaking Ivar's hand heartily. "It was, indeed, as though I was dreaming when I met you in the street this morning."

"I felt so, also," replied Borgenstierna, "but it was a happy dream, which will certainly help in filling up the dreamy solitude which has been with me almost during my whole life, and which began so early that it is almost as old as myself."

"You are yet the same as you always were. Nevertheless, I should have believed, that as your circumstances have become more pleasant, your state of mind would have taken a lighter and more gay turn. Upon my honour, Master Brun's apprentice-boy is not to be recognised in you any longer."

Ivar interrupted him with a smile, and said, "Ay! concerning this, the brown, tawny hides are still my dear cousins; that means to say, that I might live without carrying on that business; but I have considered it better not to do so. That trade is as good as any other."

"True, indeed; but only as far as nothing better presents itself for you, at this time. It seems to me that you are not able to carry on any trade."

"I am not doing so, either. The matter stands thus. There belongs a tannery to my estate in Nerika, which I have inherited, together with the whole estate, from my father-in-law. Therefore I am not exactly a master-tanner, for I do not belong to a tanner's association; but at the same time I am one, nevertheless, although they call me in my own country, a round about, the patroon, as they called my deceased father-in-law."

"It is a very nice thing to fall heir to an estate and a tannery at the same time. It is truly very agreeable: the title of patroon follows as a matter of course; but why not rather be called the proprietor of a manufactory—that sounds better still."

"That may be so; but there belongs to my tannery no manufacturing privileges. You see, therefore, that I might as well be called by my people the patroon, although that title is not due to me here in a strange place. As little as I am called a tanner, which I really am, so little do I wish to be called the proprietor of a manufactory. I do not wish to be considered anything else than what I really am—a free man."

"All right, dear brother. I hope that as far as that is concerned we are both of the same opinion. You know that my

appointment as an officer of the crown obtained for me the title of assessor, but why should we dispute about such trifles, when we have more important subjects to discuss. I am very anxious to hear of your adventures since we last met. About the difference in our opinions we shall talk at a future time."

"Very well; my adventures are neither very extensive nor remarkable; but I shall relate so much of them as will be fit to excite not only your interest, but which have also the most influence on my own mind.

"You know I left Master Brun's house to commence the customary wanderings. During that time I fared very ill; but I learned to understand mankind much better than from books, and for that reason the journey was undoubtedly very useful to me. After travelling three years, the majority of which time I spent in foreign tanneries, I considered myself, as an experienced journeyman tanner, to be able to find employment at home, and for that reason returned to Sweden.

"At Orebro I received employment, but had not been there six months when a merchant, who did much business with our tannery, and therefore knew me well, made a proposition to me to enter into the service of a landed proprietor, who had a tannery on his estate, and required a skilful tanner to oversee it. You can well imagine that I accepted this proposal with joy, as I expected to enjoy a more pleasant life, as well as higher wages than I did at my former place.

"I have always considered country life as preferable, and the shade of the forest I always loved. From the time when this proposal was made, to the time when I should enjoy this beloved freedom, I felt like a bird in the cage. At length the hour of relief arrived, but how little did I think, when I first entered the pretty estate of Roestorp, near the shores of the Hjelmar Lake, that I should once become the master of this beautiful estate, with its tanneries, and its share in some very rich mines."

"You are rich, therefore—what the devil!" interrupted Wirén.

"Such a thing never happened to one like me. Fortune never seeks one who is obliged to sit behind piles of dusty packages of paper, and we, poor fellows, are always slighted by the roasted birds."

"Rich!" replied Borgenstierna, in a melancholy voice, and nodding his head toward the sleeping Alfred, "I will soon be poorer than any one; my son, and my dog, the only ones that ever loved me, will soon leave me, and lonely—lonely, in the whole bitter meaning of the word—will Roestorp be to me. Yes, as lonely as the dark and dreary grave."

"Well, do not be gloomy before this all happens," said Wirén, with forced gaiety; but soon exclaimed, in an altered voice, "You are right, verily, you are right. It is a good thing to have plenty of this world's goods, but we are only able then to appreciate their entire value, if we do not lack, at the same time, a heart beating for us—domestic happiness. By my soul, there are moments when even such a gay fellow as I esteem the whole world as dust and ashes."

"You are married," said Ivar.

"And you *were* so. Your wife is dead, and mine——But let us first talk of you."

"As you please. At Roestorp I gained the entire confidence of my noble old master, taking all pains, at the same time, to remunerate this confidence by untiring industry and due zeal. Before a year had passed, I for ever parted with the name of a journeyman tanner, which, to speak the truth, had long been contrary to my pride, and assumed the title of a factor, by which my master honoured me. I had the charge of the greater part of that important business, and did no more work in the tannery, but made journeys to dispose of metal, leather, and timber. By the assistance of my kind patron, I became experienced in keeping books. In short, I was soon a skilful business man, and was rewarded for it by my old master's confidence, who finally placed the entire business in my own hands.

"Our mutual position was rather that of a father and a son, than that of a master and a servant. I loved the old man, because he acted toward me more than a father would have done, and because he was noble in all his doings, and withal strictly honest. Roestorp became dearer and more valuable to me every day. I now knew what it was to have a home, which, nevertheless, did not contain everything that should and ought to complete my happiness.

"Matilda, the only daughter and sole child of my patron, was about twelve years of age when I came to the house. The girl had the best heart and the kindest disposition with which nature can ever endow a human being; but her mother's unfortunate vanity, which looked upon her child as containing nothing but perfection, implanted in her mind a visible inclination to vanity, which was much more disgusting as Matilda was homely, and possessed not sufficient talents to acquire those perfections which her mother meant almost to force upon her. Neither can I exempt my late father-in-law from a slight touch of a like weakness. But Matilda was his only child, and upright man as he was, for the rest, I have never heard him express himself so energetically as I could have wished, against the perverted teachings of his wife. The girl was sent to Stockholm, that she might obtain a more polite education than the residence in the country could afford, but returned, at least according to my views, still more corrupt; for the lonely life in her father's house was clearly against her own feelings. Her sole occupation was singing and playing on the piano, and her taste and ear were so much below all criticism, that the harsh cawing of crows was heavenly music beside her performance. When she did not make music, she reclined upon the sofa with a French novel in her hand, chattered French more than she did Swedish, which gained for her throughout the whole neighbourhood the reputation of being an exceedingly well-educated lady.

"Her mother was enchanted with her, and entertained the

most perfect conviction that her Matilda was a true miracle. I secretly pitied her, when I saw her real talents suppressed in such a sad way, and found nothing more in her than an unfortunate, miseducated person, and since that time, it has always created a bitter and compassionate feeling within me when I saw mothers, from pure vanity and self-deception, destroy their daughters' happiness of mind, and totally corrupt them for their future lives as wives and mothers. Girls, who without this searching after a hollow fashionable exterior, would have become excellent housekeepers, reasonable mothers, and useful, economical women, who in the sphere appointed to them by nature would have been able to develop the most useful activity, as industrious, home-loving, or, in one word, the most fitting beings for the duties of the isolated but happy domestic life—they change their nature all at once, although daily experience proves how little such undertakings are rewarded, and become puppets who are moved about on wires, whose soul itself is nothing more than a mere machine, and all this by no other means than the education which is forced upon them, and which their powers are not able to digest."

"You judge harshly," said Wirén.

"No, I am only a friend of truth," replied Ivar, warmly; "far be it from my mind to refuse to young ladies the loveliness and amiability which a finished education is able to give them. But I should desire, before parents introduce their child upon its path of future education, they should first prove its talents and faculties, that they might not become blind through vanity to its wants, which would undoubtedly destroy all their endeavours. In relation to music, for instance, I can hardly imagine anything more pleasing than the soft metallic voice of a girl, united with the lovely tones which a musical instrument not only produces, but which are especially allured from it by the performer's expression of soul. How disgusting, on the contrary, is it, when art has to perform her part *alone*, where nature has refused its

assistance; and the most disgusting of all is to listen to a lady's drumming and crowing, which reminds us of a duet between a goose and a turkey."

"You are a sharp critic. Our ladies have to count on but little compassion from you."

"I judge only from my feelings," replied Ivar. "With an innermost, I might almost say a passionate, love of music, I am, nevertheless, not in the least a connoisseur; I do not understand a note, but blow, however, my bugle in the forest of Roestorp, and enjoy the beautiful echo. But we are departing altogether from the true subject of our conversation.

"When Matilda had attained her eighteenth year, my patron made it appear to me rather distinctly that he would not be averse to a connexion between his daughter and myself; but as much as I had formerly thought of the girl, she did not agree with me now, for the good and innocent girl had become a counterfeit of a flirt. I nevertheless reflected whether I could not balance my great obligations to the old gentleman by doing so, and my natural feelings of gratitude soon convinced me that I was not permitted to refuse such a hearty and well-meant proposal without any grounds. I consoled myself with the thought, that Matilda might be brought to the right path again, by reasonable persuasions on my part; and as I had not yet found a being, in spite of the longing of my heart toward more tender feelings, who had imbued me with such sentiments, I was of the opinion that it would be sufficient if one felt only esteem and friendship towards his spouse.

"I spoke frankly to my old patron concerning the matter, and thought it would be better to wait a little longer. We were first to observe whether Matilda and I would be able to agree in our dispositions, and if our hearts, at a later period, should feel inclined to approach each other nearer, I was to accept the last and strongest expression of his confidence, with gratitude.

"Old Loefoe plainly saw that I did not like Matilda's want of love for home; and as she, as I mentioned before, was kind and submissive, she gave way, as well as she was able, to the well-meaning exhortations of her father, although the contemptible interference of her mother always prevented the carrying out of this happy design. Whether Matilda's sentiments were as serious towards me then, as I afterwards discovered, at a future time, they were, I cannot tell, for she always avoided my presence, like a bashful child, who knows that it is pursued by stern eyes. But this is certainly true, that if Madame Loefoe had not died, which occurrence changed Matilda's position altogether, and imposed upon her the whole weight of domestic duties, we would have never approached each other.

"As soon as the girl was withdrawn from the influence of a weak-minded mother, who could have destroyed her better judgment, she became more natural. During the mourning season she was still more soft-hearted; and often when I saw her weep, and observed, by her bashful appearance, that she wished to conceal her tears from me, I approached her in a manner which would inspire her with confidence in me. As soon as she discovered that I cared for her, one could easily see how much more she desired to render herself agreeable to me than formerly. The excessive singing and playing on the piano soon ceased, and the French romances gave way to more fitting reading which I had selected for her. In this way the year of mourning passed over. Although Matilda was always somewhat ill-looking, and rather dull of comprehension, nevertheless she always seemed good and devout to me, and was zealous in the performance of her domestic duties. Aside from that, a spark of warmer feelings glowed within her, and this finally moved me to ask her father for her hand in marriage.

"Matilda soon afterward became my wife, and with her I became the proprietor of the estate of Roestorp, for my aged father-in-law was anxious to retire from business."

"But if you did not love her, Roestorp was but a small recompence," observed Wirén.

"I never considered it so; for I never married her for the sake of her wealth. I had at that time been eight years with my father-in-law, and my position was such, that I had the best expectation of an independent future, without being obliged to give away my liberty for a fortune. Calculating selfishness had never been the measure of my actions; but accustomed to treat Matilda as a sister, even at the time when she dreamed it the least, and moved by the old man's confidence, to which I was indebted for my rising in the world, it required no other reason than to prepare that joy for him, which was his only wish in this world; and even if my marriage with Matilda was not that which, in a higher sense of the word, is called happy, because our views, or perhaps our feelings also, did not precisely agree, it could by no means be called an unhappy connexion; and I am of the firm conviction that if Matilda had remained as nature had created her, simple, plain, and unable to comprehend anything except what her senses and her reason taught her, she would have filled in a higher degree the room which she occupied within my heart. But that unfortunate half-education was the cause of her halfness in everything, and the cause of her uncouth actions, doings, and behaviour in life, which is not seldom the unavoidable and injurious consequence of undigested knowledge. After the death of my father-in-law—which sad occurrence happened about a year after my wedding—I engaged an overseer, partly for the purpose of being able to indulge in my studies in an easier and more free manner, which studies were in accordance with my position and inclination, and partly for the purpose of carrying out Matilda's long-entertained desire of making a journey into foreign countries. She much needed, after her father's death, something to distract her from her grief; for his death had caused her much sadness; and aside from that, I entertained the hope that a journey into foreign

lands would also render her more apt to catch up other ideas than those that she hitherto had."

"Well, how did you succeed?" inquired Wirén, anxiously.

"Very imperfectly. The greatest beauties of nature remained not understood, while her eyes rested with rapture upon a splendid carriage or a modern-built house, or in the evening, at the opera, she looked only at the decorations, while her ear was deaf to the sound of the most harmonious music."

"Well, in that case, she had, at least, some sense. I would give a great deal if I—whatever the cause of it might be—could perceive the least signs of life in her. But first conclude your own story," said Wirén; "then my turn will come to repay your confidence."

"Yes, my story will soon be at an end. A few months after our return to Roestorp, Alfred was born; from that time my wife was always sickly, and the child likewise, which she wished by all means to nurse herself. I now bitterly repented that I had allowed her to have her own will, but I felt so happy when I saw her performing the duties of a mother, that it did not strike my mind at that time that the little fellow was receiving unhealthy nourishment.

"Little Alfred remained our only child. But the manner in which his mother treated her favourite made him peevish and self-willed, as had been the case of her mother toward her. We often disputed about it, but her increasing weakness often forced me to forbearance. Consumption had taken its deadly seat, and gradually wore her down; and after long suffering, during which time I made it my only task to render life easy to the sufferer, she died, eleven months afterward, in my arms.

"I have missed Matilda," added Borgenstierna, after a pause of several minutes; "yes, I have missed her *very* much. She was good, loved me, and I must ascribe the dark sides of her mind to her perverted education alone; and aside from that, what an indescribable force does habit exercise over us. After

her death, when Alfred and I were sitting alone upon the sofa, opposite the bed where she had lain so long in patience and endurance, I thanked God that he had relieved her from her misery, but, at the same time, felt deeply, in the innermost recesses of my heart, how lonely my life was now, and was still to be more lonely."

"You must not speak so: you must not look at everything in so dark a light," said Wirén, deeply participating in the feelings of his friend. "I think that life might smile upon you again in a new and nobler shape. Your trials have not been so severe that they may not leave room for the desire to see also its brighter sides; but its depth you have not as yet sounded—you have not yet loved."

"No, truly, not yet; but now allow me to look also into your inner life, as you have done into mine."

Wirén looked at his watch: "It is already late, my wife is waiting for me. I am to take her home from a party. To-morrow morning I will return, then I shall communicate to you my *only* grief, and shall present you to my Virginia afterward."

CHAPTER XII.

ANOTHER PICTURE OF MARRIED LIFE.

WIRÉN had scarcely departed when Alfred awoke. Ivar placed the little fellow on his lap, and sat down near the open window to look at the passing crowd of foot passengers. The bathing-guests were slowly issuing from the assembly-house directly opposite; among them he saw the family of De Dressen. The lieutenant-colonel had been so fortunate, at noon, as to meet some of his most brilliant acquaintances, and had hardly given his ladies time to recover from the fatigues of their journey, having dragged them head-over-heels into the bath, and from thence into the *soirée*, where Amelia's neat little figure, and graceful, youthful appearance, as well as the dignified bearing and the pleasant mien of her mother, had met with a deserved acknowledgment.

The lieutenant-colonel proudly marched with his ladies over the piazza. Alfred, who was leaning out of the window, had hardly recognised Amelia, when he cried out unceasingly: "Ammy, dear Ammy, I want to go to my Ammy!" His father strove to silence him: "Be quiet, my dear boy. It can't be this evening, but to-morrow, if you will be good." They saluted each other, on both sides, with politeness and familiarity. But Alfred was not to be quieted. He called constantly to his Ammy, until his weeping turned into violent hiccoughing, so that Borgenstierna was obliged to take him from the window.

With pouting lips, and eyes filled with tears, Alfred was finally composed, by the repeated assurances that he would be allowed to go to his "Ammy" the next morning, and take her some flowers. To keep his word, Ivar sent to Mr. Simonson's

garden that evening, to obtain some of the finest flowers he had. A little basket of cherries was also procured, and joyfully did little Alfred dance, when he was dressed the next morning to go to his little Ammy.

"Be a good, obedient boy, and do not be too forward," said Borgenstierna, when the boy went his way.

"Oh, I am very good, and so is Ammy, too," said the little boy.

At the moment when he was about departing, with a fine bouquet of flowers in his little hand, and a basket of cherries hanging over his arm, accompanied by the waiter, Wirén entered the room. He was pleased with the little gardener, who looked very pretty, in his neat straw hat, from which fell his long black ringlets, and wished to take him in his arms, and carry him back into the room. But this caused the boy to cry loudly: "Let me be, let me be, I must go to my Ammy, with the flowers and cherries."

"What does all this mean? Are you a little *postillion d'amour?* Yes, yes, you look just as though you might be used for such a purpose. But who is your dear Ammy?"

"Ammy is my dear Ammy. She plays with me, and cuts out of paper for me big, big horses, and little, little dogs."

"Let him go his way; you see that he is in haste," said Ivar, and conducted his friend into the room.

"All right. I did not know that you had lady acquaintances here in the bath."

"Ammy is the young lady De Dressen, who, with her parents, travelled with me on the steam-boat; and from that time Alfred dates his close acquaintance with the lovely Amelia."

"Indeed! and how does your own account stand with the young lady, since Alfred is such a great favourite?"

"Mine! well, about that I can give you no explanation, as I know nothing about it myself. But that does not amount to much."

"By no means, brother; the little fellow's message has almost created bad thoughts within me. One does not show such civilities to ladies, if their opinion is indifferent to him."

Borgenstierna blushed slightly, and said, not without some anger, "My acquaintance with Miss De Dressen is about eight days old."

"And I am of the opinion," interrupted Wirén, "that one does not require more than eight hours to fall in love. Yes, sometimes not more than eight minutes."

"That I leave to every fool who has thrown away his inclinations all of a sudden—I shall never follow such an example. For the rest, the father of Miss De Dressen is the most overbearing man who has ever borne a noble name; and besides that, I consider him the most ridiculous fool, whom I am not able to esteem for a peculiar reason."

"Well, the father is one thing—the daughter another—therefore——"

"Yes, and for that very reason you must draw no conclusions," interrupted Borgenstierna, with some warmth. "For the reason why I am interested in the girl is, that it was her and her mother whom I accompanied and protected at the time when I was a skjuts-boy at Swarteborg, as I have related to you already several times. You also know that I received Diana from them."

"O thousands! that is almost a romance! Madame De Dressen is the pretty, pale German lady with the little girl!"

"Certainly; and her father is the same courier-officer who treated me, in the year 1814, with the lashes of his whip, because I dared to be a skjuts-boy with a noble name. The well-educated nobleman beat an ignorant, defenceless boy, because he had no idea what a ticklish thing a noble name is."

"He may go to ——. But you have probably put him to shame, and shown him what has become of the skjuts-boy?"

"By no means; he shall smell that at a more appropriate

season. I have not altogether yet made up my mind about it; but then, I shall repay him the lashes—of that you may be assured. But now, be so kind as to be silent about it; I am not accustomed to do a thing in a hurry, and must reflect."

"Only one word more: does the girl please you? If she does, you will marry her, and afterward——"

"Be silent! not so rash, you hot-brained mortal! You have not yet seen her even, and I——"

"Yes, *you!* you are not indifferent toward her. I shall not permit you to throw sand into my eyes about that, but now will tell you that I have seen her, although as they were passing by, when they went home last night from the soirée. I will communicate to you, farther, that she has already a lover—the richest, but, at the same time, the most foolish, scapegoat who was ever sent by his dear parents to a bath, to make a *furore.*"

"Who is he?"

"Yes, he is his dear father's son, and his papa understands how to procure for his heir-apparent, before his original vulgar Goesse, the little word "*De,*" and the patent of chamberlain. At the academy he has undergone precious adventures. He had nothing less in his mind than to become a doctor, and his inaugural address turned out in about the same way as that of the *Count Jacob Pankrazius, of Heaven and Earth,* whose biography our witty Cederborgh has so humorously described. Mr. De Goesse had a tutor, who was concealed during the solemn examination behind the speaker's stand, between the legs of our worthy respondent, for which purpose the forbearance of the president had been gained some way or another. At every question put to the aspirant for doctorship, he bent down and obtained advice from his subterranean oracle. Although there arose from the auditory much suspicion, murmuring, and hilarity at this proceeding, he nevertheless passed his '*specimen eruditionis summa cum laude.*' Mr. De Goesse did not make use of his doctorship. He laid all further studies upon the shelf,

went through the *cameral* examinations with difficulty, and now believed that he had done enough to give to the world a conviction that he was a scientifically-educated man, and had the most perfect right to repose upon his laurels."

"A highly-drawn picture, which I hope is not an invention," said Ivar, with a smile; "and this jackanapes was so kind as to observe Miss Amelia?"

"Observe! what a shallow, unmeaning expression. Baron Lindenskoeld has told me that Mr. De Goesse had assured him that he would make her the chosen queen of his heart for the whole season, and that he would challenge any one who would dare question her beauty — to champagne; and that he has already ordered by express four dozen bottles from Frederickshall."

"Great courage!" observed Ivar, although his laconic words were somewhat tinctured with irony.

"Yes, that is what he has, too. We were about inviting him this afternoon to the fishing-party, to which I now invite you; and for which you must engage the family De Dressen. It will be rather comical to see Mr. De Goesse perform the part of a lover."

"Much obliged to you; but you promised me yesterday to let me hear something of your adventures," said Ivar.

At these words Wirén's countenance, which had hitherto worn a gay aspect, suddenly assumed a melancholy expression, and he replied, "Certainly; I will repay your confidence, and relate to you the story of my marriage."

Both men took chairs, and, in a subdued tone, Wirén began:

"If you weighed carefully the faults of your wife before marriage, I have done just the contrary.

"I was in love, brother—loving to a degree that bordered on madness—and as I was not without means, and had lately received an appointment, I considered it the duty of a gentleman to lay my property and my person at the feet of the icy-cold

beauty, who had hitherto kept me at a distance in such a manner as would hardly become a queen; but I thought all this would cease after I had made my declaration of love.

"With a burning heart I flew to my inamorata, and emptied the whole flood of my love at her feet, and received a hardly audible 'Yes,' but it was certainly a Yes; and who was happier than I, when she pronounced it a second time before the altar?

"But the time soon came when my castles in the air, of Virginia's high, strong soul, and warm appreciation of her love for everything beautiful, suddenly vanished. I was not able to find in her the least trace of it.

"I venture to say boldly, that you have never, in the course of your life, seen a woman like Virginia—beautiful as a vestal, but, if possible, colder than marble—yes, colder than the icy peaks of the Alps. Speak to her of poetry, of literature, of the news of the day, of amusements, of fashion, of enjoyments of all kinds, no feature in her countenance will express that she takes the least interest in them. Sit, for instance, close to her side in 'Hamlet;' look at her, when everything that can touch the human heart the deepest is before her; behold the most violent passions contending with each other; listen to the mighty words of the immortal poet, which thrill your every nerve—and she will sit there as cold and as immoveable as if before the portrait painter. Speak to her of the misery in the huts of the poor; describe it in the most lively colours—she will render all possible assistance which she is able to give, but without showing the slightest evidence of further participation. In short, give everything which human powers can present, and you will not allure from her the smallest particle of excitement.

"It is now one year and a half since we were married. Wherever my beautiful wife appears, she is admired, and her happy husband envied; but once behold us sitting together, alone in our room for a few hours, you will not then envy him any more; for although she answers, with the greatest conscientious-

ness, and with an eternal equality of tone, 'yes' or 'no,' 'very well,' 'all right,' 'as you please,'—it is nevertheless an impossibility to gain from her, even in the most familiar hours, anything but the most common and the most terse words.

"Think now of a man of gaiety, with my warm heart, chained to a woman who never replies even to one of those tender words which I lavish upon her, and you have the picture of a desert, where the wanderer perceives a clear, bright spring in the neighbourhood, but must be satisfied to ravish it at a distance with longing gaze—for he is separated from it by a wide and deep gulf. He may even consume with burning thirst, while the quiet surface of the well remains nearly placid, almost as though by malice—there you have the picture of Virginia's smile.

"And yet I love my wife, love her with unspeakable tenderness." Here Wirén's words sank to their softest tones—"It is a weakness of mine thus to adore her; but you can imagine what pangs of hell I experience with such feelings, to behold her constantly in the eternally equal state of placidity."

"That is strange indeed," said Ivar, reflecting. "I am anxious to see Virginia, and convince myself whether your description is not exaggerated. Those kind of women are scarce, and the man is to be pitied who has such a companion for life."

"You shall see her. Come this afternoon at five o'clock, and I will introduce you to her. At six o'clock the fishing party commences; but you had better go, before dinner, to De Dressen's, and persuade him to join in the party; I will inform Mr. De Goesse of it, who must go with us to add to the fun. That the baron will join the party is a matter of course."

"But your wife is not acquainted with the De Dressens."

"Pshaw! that makes no difference; she is contented with everything I propose to her. At dinner I shall simply say to her, 'The friend of whom I have spoken, and the family De Dressen, whom you saw yesterday at the soirée, will take part

in our fishing party this evening. I believe you will have no objection to it, dear Virginia?' Then she will answer, 'Not in the least,' and that in the same tone which she uses when she demands a glass of water from the servant. This is always her custom; she is so much habituated to silence, that not the slightest contradiction will enter her mind."

"Well, be it upon your own risk; where shall I bid De Dressen go?"

"To the toll-bridge, precisely at six o'clock. Bring your little one with you; the sea is certainly good for him, and it will be a pretty sight to witness dear Ammy play mamma."

"Go away with your jokes," interrupted Ivar, half angry. "I have found you an orderly boy, with whom Alfred is much pleased, and rather than——"

"Keep still," cried Wirén, "you may compose yourself. If my wife is of the party, it always appears as though a mist was over my eyes; yes, not seldom over my soul. In the meantime, farewell—*au revoir*, this evening."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MORNING VISIT.

In the front parlour of the house occupied by the De Dressen family, sat Amelia, with the little boy, on the sofa. A round tea-table was drawn close to her side, and Amelia furnished it with a new supply of card-houses, soldiers, women, ships, and various other similar beauties, all for the entertainment of her little guest.

The clock had struck twelve some time previously, when Madame de Dressen entered the room with a cloak thrown over her arm, and a bonnet in her hand.

"I cannot wait any longer, my child; I should miss my bathing hour."

"But supposing he comes while you are gone down, mother? It is strange that my father does not return."

"That will not be a great misfortune; you have not become so short of words that you cannot entertain him here as well as you did on the *Thor*."

"Yes, upon the *Thor;* I do not see how you can speak thus. It is certainly different to talk to one on the steamboat, than to receive one in one's own house."

"One would think you had never seen a stranger before in your life," replied Madame De Dressen, a slight reproach lying in her tone, as she threw a look full of meaning from the child to her daughter. She remembered the old adage, "even the smallest pots have ears;" and she was right, for Alfred looked up to Amelia and said, "Be not afraid, Ammy. I shall remain with you, and papa will come also."

"Yes, that is just the thing," thought Amelia, blushing at the

mistake of the boy, although she was glad that he had caught another idea. Madame De Dressen buttoned her bathing-gown, put on her bonnet, Amelia placed the cloak around her, and with the little bundle of napkins, her mother stepped on her way. On the bridge she met Borgenstierna, who entreated to be allowed to accompany her a short distance. During the walk, he prayed that the De Dressen family would participate in a pleasure drive and fishing party. The party would consist only of Assessor Wirén and lady, Baron Lindenskoeld, and Chamberlain De Goesse.

Madame De Dressen politely thanked Borgenstierna for his kindness, and hoped that her husband had not made any other engagement which might prevent them from taking part in the proposed excursion. After that she expressed her joy at the hope of meeting such an exceedingly charming woman as Madame Wirén, and assured him, that in her whole life she had never seen such a beautiful woman, complaining only that the latter was so exceedingly silent.

"For my part," said she, with a good-natured smile, "I do certainly not belong to the loquacious tribe; but Madame Wirén, nevertheless, excels me by far in the art of silence."

They had now arrived at the corner of Long-street, and Ivar took leave, to liberate, with her gracious permission, the young lady from her little tormentor.

"But you must not depart before I return home—by no means. My husband, in the meantime, will come home also, and we shall hear what he says concerning the fishing party."

"I shall have the honour to await your return," replied Borgenstierna, departing with a quicker step than he had used in going down the street.

During all this time Alfred, who had awakened very early that morning, had complained, toward noon, of heat and extreme sleepiness; and as he was now alone with Amelia, he laid his head upon her lap, and entreated her to tell him a pretty story.

Amelia immediately commenced the very interesting story of the "Yellow Water and the Singing Birds;" but as much pains as Alfred took to listen to her, with open eyes and ears, he, nevertheless, once in a while fell into a doze. As often, however, as Amelia suffered her thoughts to roam from the subject, he cried, impatiently—

"Tell me, tell me farther, Ammy; I have my eyes closed only; I am not asleep."

And she continued to relate to him pretty stories, until, at length, a knock was heard at the door, and immediately afterward, Mr. Borgenstierna entered.

As Alfred was by no means inclined to give up his comfortable position, Amelia was only able to half salute the entering gentleman, and hardly had she answered Ivar's question concerning her health, when her peevish little favourite exclaimed—

"Papa, you ought to hear once what pretty stories Ammy knows. Tell him, Ammy."

But to relate children's stories, such ridiculous, unmeaning stuff, in presence of the reserved Borgenstierna, Amelia could not make up her mind, and in spite of the most urgent entreaties of the boy, she remained faithful to her refusal. He soon fell into a quiet slumber, although he still held his little head on Amelia's lap.

Borgenstierna sat opposite them. Amelia had never before appeared to him as she now did. She looked very charming indeed, as she sat there, in beautiful confusion, caused by the motherly part she was obliged to perform, and singing lowly, so that she would not be obliged to converse or look up.

A sweet and powerful sentiment thrilled through Borgenstierna's breast, moving every fibre to fresh exertion, and aroused by these means the frozen spirits of life from their slumber.

Their silence, however, had already lasted too long—it had transgressed the forms of politeness; and, although Ivar looked upon outward forms far less than other people, an inner voice

told him that Amelia might possibly draw from the continued silence various kinds of conclusions, which would be better, at least, for her not to do.

"Alfred troubles you too much, indeed; will you permit me to lay him on the other side of the sofa? I should think that you would be quite fatigued from bending over so long, my lady!"

Here Borgenstierna approached her; Amelia, however, feared that his assistance would render the evil still worse. She arose, therefore; and, laying the boy on the soft pillow, spread her veil over his face to protect him from the flies.

"What shall I say to this mute man?" thought she, as she continued to busy herself about Alfred. But her confusion was soon to have an end. Suddenly her father's well-known steps were heard in the hall; and when Amelia turned around, her father stood in the room.

"Ah! your obedient servant, Mr. Borgenstierna! Very glad to see you. I thought of visiting you this forenoon; but have been engaged until this very moment. My friends, the Count S—— and gay Baron C——, have detained me at the billiard-table—one who has so many acquaintances as I, may always be sure of finding friends everywhere. But what shall we do this afternoon? This is not the day for the soirée. We might take a ride on horseback. You do not ride very badly, Amelia; and besides this, the Chamberlain De Goesse has told me that one of his horses was at your disposal as often as you wish to make use of it—it is one of the most quiet animals in the world. A d—d gay bird is that Mr. De Goesse—always full of mirth and good spirits; he has the chips, also he certainly weighs his three tons of gold."

"It is some time since I occupied myself in riding—when Lears rode the horses into the water. I am afraid, therefore, I would not make a very pretty figure as an Amazon," observed Amelia, with a laugh.

The lieutenant-colonel threw an ireful look upon his daughter, and angrily replied—

"Then I shall give you lessons in riding, commencing to-morrow; and you will then accompany the next party on horse-back."

He then turned towards Borgenstierna, to give him the opportunity of saying something which would turn the conversation to another subject. Borgenstierna now delivered his message with due solemnity; and when the lieutenant-colonel heard that Baron Lindenskoeld and the Chamberlain De Goesse were to be of the party, he willingly consented, for himself as well as his ladies.

His wife returned home a short time after; and after they had chatted a short time about the coming afternoon's entertainment, about bathing, the bathing guests, the saloon, and the weather, Borgenstierna went to the sofa to awaken his boy.

Madame De Dressen, however, prevented his doing so, saying that the boy would be sleepy during the whole day. She proposed that Alfred should remain with her, and she would then take him to the toll-bridge.

The lieutenant-colonel was very polite, and of the same opinion —for he had, as was natural, not quite made up his mind which of his daughter's lovers should be the favoured one; for the present, by all means, both should be taken regularly in tow during the bathing season; and if, in the meantime, a third or fourth could be picked up—well, why not? The lieutenant-colonel calculated that the more gallants a lady had the more she would become celebrated—and to become celebrated was a very fine and laudable endeavour.

In consequence of a natural connexion of thoughts, he now suddenly remembered that his wife had always been exceedingly fond of children, and Borgenstierna would oblige them very much if he would leave little Alfred there still longer.

Not without many objections, Ivar was finally obliged, to his

great regret, to comply with their wishes, and enter thus into obligations for a politeness upon which he had not counted; for, he well saw, that it was not done only for politeness and compliment, and, at length, was forced to walk away alone, so as not to appear impolite.

Amelia had not said a word concerning this arrangement, neither in favour or against it, and this, perhaps, was the reason why Ivar became still more chagrined, on his way home, that he had complied with their wishes, and left his son behind.

CHAPTER XIV.

VIRGINIA.—THE CHAMBERLAIN.

At the stroke of five, Ivar entered Wirén's house, and found the latter with Baron Lindenskoeld in the inner room, with a glass of water before each of them, and pipes in their mouths.

"Well; have the De Dressens consented?" inquired Wirén, after saluting his friend.

"They received the invitation with thanks, and will appear at the proper time."

"Now that is capital. But where is your boy?"

"Madame de Dressen was so kind as to take him along with her," answered Ivar, in a tone which was intended to be indifferent; but which, on the contrary, came out very bashfully. Wirén smiled. Without making any further remarks, he left Ivar with Baron Lindenskoeld, and went into an adjoining room to announce Borgenstierna to his wife.

Baron Lindenskoeld was one of those friendly, splendid old men, who are true pearls to every class in society. An old bachelor, he lived, having considerable wealth, just as he saw fit —now in the gay circles of the capital, now in the isolated life of a country village. He occupied his time with himself and literary occupations, or lived in a pleasant house in the country. Every year, however, he visited one of the mineral springs, or a bathing-place. As he had now been spending a few weeks in Wirén's house, where the gay host, the beautiful hostess, and the strict order which reigned supreme, were peculiar to his taste, he resolved to accompany the family on their bathing trip; and if the lady did not appear to be more than a beautiful statue, her husband, on the other side, had all the more life and social qualities.

"The fishing parties are well conducted here," said the baron, taking several fish-hooks from the table, and examining them. "Stroemstad is a pretty place. For my part, I always feel well here, and have never eaten anything better than the precious whiting, which one catches himself."

"But the country," interrupted Borgenstierna, for the purpose of taking part in the conversation, also, "does not seem to offer much."

"Certainly, it does: and a great deal, too. You must not become weary of seeking for it. If you are fond of excursions on water, or land, I should be much pleased, as the elder guest, to show you all that is to be seen. We shall visit the Yster cave, a very remarkable place, into which I have a great desire to descend, to examine what it conceals in its depth. On all of the mountains you will find Huenenpots (large round holes). After a difficult, but well-rewarded wandering, you reach the spring, discovered by Charles the Twelfth, which contains the most excellent water in the world. There, look yourself; see what beautiful water, clear and bright as crystal! You can find nowhere any better. Besides that, Stroemstad is not so bad as many pretend it to be. Take a drive only around the island: fish, hunt, climb upon the mountains, and hear the strand-boy's story, how Norberg beat the Norman fleet, and sent them home with a long face; and one will find, my dear sir, that this spot, which accident seems to have thrown amidst these cliffs, contains enough for one to entertain himself, with good company, not only for a short time, but even for the whole summer."

The old gentleman's amiable loquaciousness was now interrupted by Wirén's return, who stood in the parlour-door, inviting Ivar, with a friendly look, to enter.

"Don't leave me alone," said the baron, placing his pipe upon the table and emptying his glass, "although our charming chamberlain will soon be here. I do not care to converse with him upon my own responsibility."

The gentlemen entered the room. Seated at a small work-table was Madame Wirén, busy with her embroidery of gold and silk. She was a stately woman, her face a perfect oval, making one think, on account of her faultless classical beauty, of the masterpieces of ancient art, which usually fill us with so much admiration; and one might also have thought that these statues, formed with a chisel, had more soul within them than Virginia's countenance indicated.

During her work, a few of her curls had fallen down, so that they hung over her cheeks like an airy net of golden threads, and when she arose to return Borgenstierna's salute, in a stiff and precise manner, she did not push them back with that gracefulness which so often pleases us in charming coquetry, but simply threw them with a violent shake of her head, to their proper position.

"This gentleman, dear Virginia, is Mr. Borgenstierna, my old and good friend. You will certainly see him with pleasure here, as a gain to our little domestic circle."

"Most assuredly," replied Virginia; and with these words bowed in a manner, in which even the nicest critic could not have observed that her body had inclined, not even the breadth of a hair, either to the right or left. Borgenstierna said something, although it was very unimportant, about the happiness of having met his friend so unexpectedly, and married into the bargain; a politeness to which Virginia responded by a scarcely visible parting of her lips, which might have been taken for a smile. After this mutual introductory manœuvring, the ceremony of introduction had an end, Madame Wirén quietly resumed her work, and did not appear to be aware that anyone else was in the room.

But the baron, who often endeavoured, when it was possible, to excite her by pertness, so that she would give a slight glance of impatience or anger, approached her in a familiar manner, as a friend of the family, and sat down beside the work-table.

"Heigho! beautiful lady, how rapidly you work; but what do you intend to make of that?"

"A portfolio."

"For your husband?"

"No."

"Perhaps for your own use?"

"Still less."

"You do not venture anything by confiding to me such secrets. A pretty lady does not make anything for her husband, and not for—one might think something else by it, that you must certainly confess."

"Willingly."

"Indeed! if I should think that you were working the portfolio for me, for instance?"

"Then you would be mistaken."

"I am sorry to hear that; but old people are prone to say things they ought not; come, you must tell me, for whom that work is intended."

"I cannot tell you."

"Perhaps for a favoured lover?"

"Possibly."

"We must now give my wife time to dress," said Wirén, who had, in the mean time, been conversing with Ivar. "I hear somebody in the hall. It is surely Mr. de Goesse. Within half-an-hour we shall be ready to start, dear Virginia."

Virginia nodded, looked at the clock, and continued working at her embroidery.

Let us now look at the new personage whom Wirén introduced to our hero. It is the worthy Chamberlain de Goesse. Upon a pair of attenuated spindle-shanks, reposed a belly of the shape and size of a hogshead. Above that rose the body, scarcely longer than three inches, and thus one after another, the flat breast, the round shoulders, of a yard in width, the crane's

neck, and finally the large head, which was not exactly ill-looking, but signified a high degree of stupid vanity.

The chamberlain was clothed in the most foppish manner. His hair, properly anointed with odoriferous pomatum, surrounded in wavy curls his red, sweaty brow, and the eternal uneasy flexibility with which he bowed, after he had entered, now to the right, then to the left, now backward, now forward, was so irresistible, that certainly the most fashionable frock-skirts never before attracted so much attention as these, when they kissed with inimitable grace Goesse's sharp-angled knees.

"A charming, a divine idea, gentlepeople. I shall soon become a fool with all this rapture. Upon my honour, no sultan can sit prouder in his harem, than I shall sit in a boat filled with ladies. Long live the ladies; they are certainly the crown of all our joy."

"Excellent, most excellent," exclaimed the baron, "but I hope that the chamberlain will graciously excuse me, if I and the other gentlemen present, protest against the honour of belonging to the *genere feminino*, for we shall also take the liberty of enjoying the excursion."

"Beg your pardon, dear baron, but I love to speak in parables." ("I also," thought the baron.) "And only intended to express by it, them, the ladies, I mean, as the better part of the load. But, my dearest assessor, can you tell me for sure, whether Miss de Dressen will also be of the party?"

"Certainly. I gave her a wink through a third person, that her adorer of yesterday would also grace the company with his presence, and then — But I do not consider it proper to talk more concerning the matter."

"Ay! why not? Do me the favour of—are we not altogether among ourselves? In the mean time, to be sincere, I observed at once, that my advances were not unwelcome."

"Your modesty, Mr. Chamberlain," said Wirén, "has cer-

tainly prevented you from seeing still more; but the baron, who was also present, has assured me, that her eyes always followed you, with a very decided expression."

"Indeed! with a decided expression? that is saying much, upon my honour, very much. If I may rely, then, upon the testimony of the baron, then —"

The gentleman allowed one to guess the meaning of his words, with a decided wink, and a short loud laugh, with which he was always accustomed to accompany his own remarks, at the same time slapping his thin legs with his gloves, and looked well pleased upon those parts of his body, which he honoured with the flattering title of calves.

Baron Lindenskoeld had never any objection to an innocent joke, with a foppish fool, as De Goesse was, and replied immediately, with all the frankness and dignity of which he was capable—"I hope that no one will doubt the truth of my words. When the eyes of the young lady followed the chamberlain, they certainly wore a peculiarly decided expression."

"Gentlemen," said Mr. de Goesse, with a look of triumph, "I expect to-morrow morning the champagne I ordered from Frederickshall, and hope that all of you will do me the pleasure to take a glass with me at twelve o'clock. You shall not only judge of the merits of my champagne, but the question to be debated will be also, to empty at least twenty glasses in honour of the lady of my heart. That would flatter her, wouldn't it?" With these words he laughed, according to his invariable custom.

Borgenstierna's stern character despised the joke, which so much amused his friends. He leaned upon the window-sill, appearing not to know the subject of their conversation; but as he had also to reply to the chamberlain's invitation, as he tapped his shoulder in an inquiring manner, he turned round, and replied shortly. "I cannot have the honour of being one of the party."

"Why not, sir? Does this mean that you do not recognise

Miss de Dressen as the most charming of creatures? No; that would not express it sufficiently, for the most divinely-beautiful Dryade who ever paddled in a bathing machine? Don't you know that I, as her declared knight, might challenge you for this presumption?"

With huge self-complacency at the high-sounding fulsome words he had just uttered, the chamberlain beat his calves still more violently, and laughed until the window-blinds trembled with the force of his mirth.

Borgenstierna blushed. It was easily to be seen that he considered De Goesse too insignificant to give him such an answer as his words deserved. He deemed it sufficient, therefore, to place his hands in his waistcoat pocket, to look at his watch, and to draw the attention of the gentlemen to the fact that the lieutenant-colonel and his family might, perhaps, be waiting for them.

"Ah! they must pass here," replied the baron.

But the chamberlain did not take time for an answer. With the exclamation, "Pardon me, gentlemen, I shall precede you; for I shall never have it said of me that I kept the lady of my heart waiting," he hastened down stairs, and shot with his long spindle legs like a racer towards the bridge, where he almost ran down the assessor's servant, laden with baskets.

When De Goesse had departed, the baron and Wirén laughed heartily at the fop and his "Dryade in the bathing-machine."

Borgenstierna was afraid, however, to make it appear that he was angry at his friend, because the latter had not hesitated to make a joke, in which Miss de Dressen had played a part, and was content to be relieved from an answer by the approach of the lieutenant-colonel; as, at that moment, the long, lank, and stiff figure of that gentleman became visible at the other end of the street, as he strode up with his wife on his arm, accompanied by Amelia and little Alfred.

Wirén knocked at the door of his wife's apartment, saying,

"The family of the lieutenant-colonel is now coming. Are you ready, dear wife?"

"In a moment," said Virginia, from within; and, after a few moments, she appeared, plainly dressed, but charming in herself, with her neat straw bonnet, ornamented only with a somewhat faded silk ribbon. When the party went out into the street, they met the lieutenant-colonel and his family. While they were walking to the bridge, various civilities were exchanged, which were principally conducted by the lieutenant-colonel, the baron, and the assessor; Madame de Dressen and Madame Wirén walked silently beside each other; and Alfred, who had run from his Ammy to his papa, demanded that both should lead him by each hand, because he was so weary.

"I will take you in my arms, dear son!" said Borgenstierna, who was fearful that De Dressen would be offended at this familiarity; but Alfred cried so much, that the rest turned round toward them; and he said that he would not walk any way but between papa and Ammy; so they were obliged to give way before the sickly, stubborn little fellow, although Amelia was much confused, not only because she had to share the care of Alfred with his father, but more on account of the look which Ivar gave her, when he took the child's little hand.

When the party arrived at the corner of the street, they saw the chamberlain, as he hurried toward them, with a quizzing-glass stuck over his eye.

"Welcome, welcome, my ladies!" said he, passing Madame de Dressen and Madame Wirén, with a politely negligent bow, and advanced to Amelia.

"I hope that yesterday's dance has done you good, my graceful lady! Allow me to assure you that the chevalier, to whom you have granted your hand, is too small. Cannot I have the precious happiness of offering you my arm? My arm will be a better support. I entreat you most humbly? Please have the kindness to do so!"

"I thank you," she replied, anxiously pressing her shawl arm to her side, of which the chamberlain was desirous of taking possession; "the way is but short, and little Alfred will not let me go, by any means."

"No, no! I do not wish to leave Amelia's hand; go your own way!" exclaimed the boy, making an angry face at him, because he would take his Ammy from him.

"Then, at least, I shall assist the young lady into the boat," said Goesse, consoling himself, and adding, in a half-whisper, "I have spread my cloak for my lady on the seat, where she will sit like the sun amid the heavens; and I hope and flatter myself that she will not refuse the silent language of the heart in this simple act of devotion!"

Amelia pretended not to hear this chatter, in which, according to Goesse's conviction, there lay a deep meaning, and, as she did not answer, he was sure that she had understood his words properly. Her silence, certainly, was the plainest evidence that she accepted him as her chevalier; for an answer expressed in words would certainly not be fit for a well-educated girl, who was naturally confined by extreme modesty.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FISHING PARTY.

When the party had arrived nearly to the end of their walk, they suddenly heard a loud screaming voice behind them, entreating them to wait; and shortly afterward appeared one of those privileged old maids who may travel throughout the whole world without running any risk of losing their good reputation. Mademoiselle Nyquist was from the capital; and the elements of life in her whole existence consisted of three favourite sins: to tell tales, to talk politics, and to slander the reputation of others. With these faculties were united an extensive acquaintance with men and things, which she did not extend to her own large circle of acquaintances alone, but also to an immense mass of other people. She was acquainted with everybody's affairs most minutely, and as she was wealthy, and gave free coffee parties every week, she was sure to be a welcome guest wherever she visited.

Mademoiselle Nyquist never thought that she was an incumbrance to any one: she was, therefore, not bashful in the least, and intruded her presence in all places where she thought there was an opportunity to pick up some gossip. For these reasons, she approached the company this time. Her brown silk cloak flew like a huge sail in the air; with one hand she grasped her hood, which threatened to blow off every moment, while her veil dragged along behind her like a weathercock. She nodded to left and right, like an old acquaintance; and half out of breath, exclaimed, when yet at some distance, "Beg your pardon for detaining you, gentlefolks; but I was just about paying a visit to my dear little Madame Wirén! Yes, I am ashamed that I did not do my duty before; but one's time is so horribly occupied.

The ladies and gentlemen, I see, are about taking a pleasure excursion; and, as I count upon the happiness of enjoying the company of my dear Mrs. Wirén, I will participate in the excursion, if the ladies and gentlemen will permit me to do so!"

With these words Mademoiselle Nyquist put herself in motion, and was the first to enter the boat, where she sat down without further ceremony upon the spot where the gallant chamberlain had spread his cloak!

But the chamberlain, far from submitting to his evil star, sprang into the boat behind her, and insinuated to her, with the utmost politeness, that his cloak had been spread there for another lady, and that he was extremely sorry that he had not brought a second one.

"But it is impossible for me to sit in my silk cloak upon that bench. I am sure that the chamberlain will be so much of a chevalier as to perceive this," said Mademoiselle Nyquist, deeply offended, but not moving from her position.

"Yes, but my honoured lady, you should perceive——" at these words Mr. de Goesse, who was standing like the Colossus of Rhodes, with outspread legs over two benches, received such a shove from Wirén, who was just entering the boat, that he fell over the benches, and landed at the feet of Mademoiselle Nyquist.

"Lord of my life! my corns!" screamed the old lady, writhing with pain; but sat, nevertheless, upon the cloak the closer.

Red as a turkey-cock, De Goesse regained his feet. "One should not shove one so on the stomach, when they wish to advance," said he to Wirén, endeavouring to wipe off the dirty water which was dripping from the skirts of his frock coat.

"You must not place yourself before the noses of the ladies, when they wish to come on board," muttered Wirén, arranging it, during the drying process of the chamberlain's coat tails, so that all the seats were occupied; so when the latter looked around for the lady of his heart, he found her sitting between her mother

and Baron Lindenskoeld. If he did not choose to stand erect, which the rocking of the boat, caused by the oarsmen, prevented, he was forced to occupy the only vacant seat, which was directly beside Mademoiselle Nyquist, where he located his agreeable person. This highly unfortunate accident could not do otherwise than seriously affect the good nature of the chamberlain.

His neighbour, however, soon recovered her equanimity, and entered into a brisk conversation with the gentlemen about politics, and about the great review of the troops on the field of Ladugard, of which the evening journal had furnished such a grand description; but the gentlemen had yet not read the latest news, and wished much to give another turn to the lady's favourite topics. They, therefore, sought an opportunity to inquire concerning many people who were at the bathing-place. And now the words poured forth from Mademoiselle Nyquist's lips like a perfect flood. Properly speaking, she had no auditor save the lieutenant-colonel, who was not unwilling to lend his ears, as a great deal of knowledge might be obtained, which would be of great use at some future time. When they had gone far enough out in the sea to use their fishing-rods, the company changed their seats. The baron, Wirén, the lieutenant-colonel, and Amelia, threw out their lines at the same time, and the chamberlain exhorted them all to keep the most profound silence. Suddenly little Alfred screamed with joy, for "his Ammy" had caught a small whiting, which Borgenstierna assisted her in placing in the fish-box.

In this manner some time passed by, the baron was as fortunate as usual, but the assessor could not obtain a bite; he almost lost his good humour, and ascribed his want of good luck to the unceasing chatter of Mademoiselle Nyquist, when all of a sudden he felt something give a strong tug at his line. "Ah! my look out, now comes my turn; I have only got a flounder!" exclaimed he, triumphantly, and hastily drew the from the water; but at that moment Mademoiselle Nyquist

gave an hysteric scream, for as the assessor was about throwing his fish into the fish-box, it turned out to be a huge sea-cat, which slipped from the hook and fell into her lap. It is best not to joke with that kind of fish, for they have long sharp teeth, and well know how to use them. The upper part of the body bears a close resemblance to that of a cat, and in this horrible shape the animal was wriggling on Mademoiselle Nyquist's silk cloak.

Wirén did not appear to have much desire to handle the huge being; but when he saw his wife, who sat in his immediate neighbourhood, turn pale, and heard the screams of the other ladies, in which Alfred united with full throat, he made preparations to recover his game, by covering his hands with the skirts of his coat; but Borgenstierna, who stood near by, was quicker; he caught the dangerous fellow with a sure grip by the neck, and threw him into the fish-box.

"Now, for God's sake, throw him into the sea!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Nyquist. But the boatmen, who sat behind her, laughed, and assured her that there was no better or more savory fish in the waters round Stroemstad.

"Then I shall keep it," said Wirén, "if the other ladies are not of the same opinion as Madamoiselle Nyquist. What do you think, Virginia, shall we take it home?"

"Why not?"

Madame de Dressen and Amelia were of the same opinion, and the baron exclaimed, "For the sake of the whole world, don't throw such a rarity back into the water; I have long wished to give such an animal a close inspection."

"Oh, my Heavenly Father! my cloak," said Mademoiselle Nyquist, complaining. "It is entirely spoiled. Mr. Wirén should have been more careful when a lady is so near him."

"Alas! my lady, I beg your pardon a thousand times; but my thoughts were on the interesting article in the evening paper, which explains so beautifully and explicitly our present political position with France. Perhaps you have not noticed

it. I should like to know what number it is in. It was in the last one, I believe. I should like to have your opinion concerning it."

"I have read it, certainly, and as much as I understand of it:" with these words, Mademoiselle Nyquist advanced nearer the assessor, who came near being drowned under the torrent of politics she poured forth, threatening to overwhelm him. To escape his certain destruction, he commenced pulling at his line again, which gave reason for the presumption that another representative of the sea-cat family would make its appearance.

Quicker than lightning Mademoiselle Nyquist sprang from her new seat, so that the rest of the ladies screamed with fright at the rocking of the boat, and retired to the opposite extremity, where she took a seat next to the baron.

"This business is becoming monotonous," said De Goesse, after a short pause, which had occurred in the conversation, and starting up, gazed longingly at the Kjeball's strand. "The ladies are undoubtedly fatigued."

Madame Wirén remained silent; to Amelia's mother the affair was novel and entertaining, and her daughter, who had caught nearly thirty whitings within a very short time, found the sport so pleasant, that she did not like the proposal to return to the shore at all. They enjoyed their fishing for some time, and then steered toward the beach, after arriving at which, they went up to Norkjaerr, where they stopped in one of the shady lanes, and invited the assessor to seat himself. A white cloth was spread upon the green sward, and the baskets disgorged their treasures of bottles, cups, tumblers, cakes, oranges, and more of such precious things.

"A divine feast," exclaimed the baron, extending his hand after a glass of lemonade. "Which of the ladies will be the first to peel an orange for me, if I can be so bold as to trouble them with doing so?"

"I, if you will permit me to do so," cried Amelia, and took an

orange and a small silver fruit-knife in her hand. The old baron nodded joyously, and looked roguishly at Mr. De Goesse, who assumed a mournful expression, but nevertheless seized an orange, and exclaimed, "Oh, that I was as happy also. Never before have I seen such white fingers which knew better how to separate the peel from the heart than yours." Highly contented with this new witty compliment, in which he had succeeded so well, he proudly looked around the whole circle.

Amelia heard and saw nothing. Gracefully she placed the peeled orange upon the point of the knife, and presented it to the baron, who with the liberty which is allowed to age, patted her little white hand, which had rendered him such charming service.

Alfred now cried that Ammy should peel one for him also. She took the boy to her side, did as he wished her, and cut the orange into quarters.

"That was done fast, Ammy. Now, you must have a piece, and papa one, and Diana one."

Amelia took her share, for the purpose of complying with the boy's desire. Borgenstierna ate his piece with the utmost complacency, but when De Goesse wished to exchange his whole orange for the quarter which was destined for Diana, Alfred refused his prayer roundly, to the no small secret joy of Amelia. But Diana did not want the orange, she licked it, not knowing what to make of the strange bit presented to her.

"There, you may have it," said Alfred to De Goesse, "Diana does not want it."

"Sanctified by the symbol of fidelity, the fruit is of double value," said the chamberlain, with a tender glance toward Amelia, and sucked, with long draughts, the bit which the dog had sneezed at. The peel he carefully put into his pocket-book, which always reposed upon his heart.

"Chivalrous in word and deed, Mr. Chamberlain," said Wirén, and the whole party were convulsed with laughter. When they

arose to take a walk through the avenues, De Goesse hastened to Amelia and offered her his arm. A stern look from her father told her that she was unable to escape this time. With feelings of disgust Amelia placed barely her two fingers upon the arm offered to her by the chamberlain, and as Alfred was tired, and sat on his father's arm, she had now nobody else with whom she could converse. Enraptured that fate had at last favoured him, De Goesse gave forth his whole store of imaginary politeness and wit. He flattered himself that he was entertaining Amelia in the best manner, and, as he really succeeded in often causing the girl to laugh heartily—as she had not lived in the "world" long enough yet, and had not yet learned how to conceal her impressions in a "fine manner"—the courage of the chamberlain increased, and he was just about declaring his love, when the baron stepped to the other side of Amelia, and drew Amelia's whole attention upon himself, by a speech concerning the neighbouring mountains, and by that filled her with the deepest gratitude.

"The next time, my dear young lady, you must confide yourself to my care. Then we will fish for ourselves, and climb up the neighbouring hills, but it is too late to do so to-day, for the dew begins to wet the grass, and it is nearly time to return home."

The two other ladies, when spoken to concerning the subject, were also of the same opinion, and Mademoiselle Nyquist, who had taken charge of the lieutenant-colonel altogether, and would not have left his arm at any price, voted also for the proposition to return home, for her "corns pained and burned her awfully," with which evil, as she remarked, her friend, the dowager countess P——, was also suffering, into whose circle she offered to introduce the lieutenant-colonel and his family.

At length they again arrived at the boat. Alfred was unwell, complained of a headache, and, weepingly, asked for his Ammy.

"Alas! how hot your forehead is," said Amelia, and took the boy under her cloak, to protect him from the cold and the evening mist, which began to rise from the sea.

As much from his own inclination, as to secure Amelia from the impudence of the chamberlain, Borgenstierna sat down close by her side, and a profound feeling came over him, in which he forgot all that was transpiring around him. He heard nothing of De Goesse's foolish conversation, nor Mademoiselle Nyquist's everlasting stories. He thought only—felt only. He saw only Amelia, as she sat there holding his child in her arms. He saw her uneasiness concerning his son, and heard her relate to him the conclusion of the beautiful story which had been broken off in the morning. If it had not been necessary for Alfred's health to return home soon, he would have been willing to sit always in the swaying boat. The rosy clouds of the evening sky were reflected in the water. They were the symbols of the sky which now arose within his inner world; the clouds of the latter were also now covered with gold—with the difference only that it was, with his heaven, the rising sun which developed its genial rays.

Borgenstierna was aroused from his dreams by the voice of Madame de Dressen, who requested Amelia to allow her to take Alfred.

"No, I assure you, mother, he does not trouble me in the least," replied Amelia, and it was not until then that Ivar remembered that he had not thanked her even once for her kindness, and that he had not even thought that it could have troubled her. Confused with his long silence, he bowed down over the boy, but at the same time his lips touched Amelia's soft hand, which he mistook for Alfred's brow. He thanked the twilight that no one on the boat observed this accidental contact; but nevertheless he was sensible of it, and felt its thrilling effect in his innermost heart, and through every nerve, and drew back without speaking a word.

Amelia's sensations were, properly speaking, only those of surprise; although she entertained a dim uncertain desire to please Borgenstierna, she, notwithstanding, felt a certain uneasiness as

soon as she came into close contact with him. She was not able to be so easy and unconcerned with him as with other persons, and was, therefore, heartily glad when the boat landed at the bridge, and the company separated, after having exchanged mutual salutations.

Madame de Dressen wrapped her own shawl around the sleeping child, and taking him from Amelia's arms placed him in Borgenstierna's, accompanying her motherly care with a hearty wish, that she would not be obliged to hear on the morrow, that her little favourite was really unwell.

With a hasty bow Ivar departed, pressing his child to his bosom with the most heterogeneous sentiments.

The chamberlain followed the De Dressen family, and Baron Lindenskoeld complied with necessity, and conducted Mademoiselle Nyquist to her fortunately not far distant residence, for in case he had not done so, she would have been without a companion, as Wirén had already given his wife his arm, and hurried on in advance.

When De Goesse, already mortally in love, was forced to renounce the pleasure of going any further with his chosen one, he asked the lieutenant-colonel to grant him the honour of allowing him to visit him, and at the same time invited him to the before-mentioned *déjeûner*.

Amelia was thankful to her Creator, when she at length laid her little head on the pillow. After minutely recalling the events of the day, she found in her heart no other perfectly clear picture than little Alfred, and a dim shadow of his father.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NEXT MORNING.

AFTER they had finished a game at billiards, Baron Lindenskoeld and Assessor Wirén walked arm in arm up and down the billiard-room, and conversed familiarly concerning the jokes of the day before, among which the sea-cat in Mademoiselle Nyquist's lap, and De Goesse's miscarried cloak-speculation with his "dryade," reminded them of their breakfast with him.

"It is now time to go," said the baron.

"Or else we might miss the oysters," said the assessor.

"And the champagne."

At their arrival at De Goesse's residence, they found the host very busy in arranging the dishes and placing the wine-bottles around the table; two faculties in which the chamberlain showed much artistic skill.

"Beg your pardon, gentlemen," said De Goesse, in an important tone, "my presence is still necessary here. You will have the kindness, in the mean time, to step into my studio."

The baron and the assessor, being the first comers, stepped into the room pointed out to them; the room, however, was nothing but a common sleeping apartment, from which, Wirén, with his accustomed jocoseness, was led to conclude that sleeping was the chamberlain's proper study.

After some search, they found upon a shelf in the corner of the room, a volume of poems, together with a few quires of letter-paper, and a silver inkstand. To give the whole a proper relief, and if possible a learned appearance, two volumes of Berzelius's Chemistry, and Montesquieu's "*Esprit des Lois*" were

scattered around, and besides this a leaf from Boettiger's "Reminiscences of Youth" encased in a glass frame.

"His mighty studies," said the baron, with a smile, as he pointed to these relics.

"But look here," with these words Wirèn drew a quarto page from De Goesse's memorandum-book, which was bound in red morocco, grasped the baron's arm, and whispered, with a half suppressed smile: "As true as I am a live man, here are verses: to draw a conclusion from the heading, they must be truly classic. See here, 'Modest Flowers, to Her, the Divine.'

"And if it should cost me three bowls of punch (for by that he will be reconciled), I must learn the flow of his poetic vein." Thus saying, Wirén commenced reading the innocent expectorations of the enamoured chamberlain, who had written, in the mighty pressure of his poetic madness, the evening before, immediately after separating from the object of his adoration.

"MODEST FLOWERS.

"INSCRIBED TO HER, THE DIVINE.

"As the odoriferous flower of the sun
Bows down before old Sol's deep-seated eye,
Thus, Amelia, do I gaze on thee,
When evening to western sea sinks from on high.

"For fast retaining faith, hope, and pangs of love,
My pilgrimage cannot be for naught,
If I only could thy cruel heart but move
With friendship, which explains when sought.

"But . . . it is friendship, more than snow
Cold as ice on North Cape's frozen dell?
But love is warmer, truer, as you surely know,
Than nun with rosary within her cell.

"Thy faith is glittering o'er the grave yet, bride,
Faith, hope, and love, as before spoken,
May these exalted three, all side by side,
Protect thee with their deserved token.

"When from the clear, bright, crystal bath set free,
In fancy's imaginative ray,
I saw thy likeness, O, vision rapturous to see!
Deynér can picture none so splendid, so gay!

"In Norkaerr's verdant park I beheld
Thee peel an orange with that hand of thine,
I knew thou couldst not resist me then,
And that thy heart beat unison with mine!

"O yes, may heaven bless me, and forever
Unite us in faith, hope, and fervent love,
And not fill us with jealous gloomy sorrow,
Such as Frithiof's Ingeborg doth prove."

Wirén had scarcely concluded the last verse, and had wiped away from his eyes and his spectacles the tears which the chamberlain's elegy had extracted from him, when De Goesse entered with a note in his hand, and handed it to the assessor.

After reading it, Wirén's features, which had been brightened by a gay expression, caused by the reading of the poem, assumed a serious cast. It ran as follows?

"MY DEAR CHAMBERLAIN,—I am very sorry that I am obliged to deprive myself of the agreeable pleasure of being present at your *déjeûner;* but I am forced to go immediately for a physician."

"The note is from Borgenstierna," said Wirén, "whose son complained this morning of a violent sickness, and as my friend is alone, I must procure a physician for him, and find out how I can render him assistance."

"Alas! that is too bad," exclaimed Goesse, in ill-humour. "Now that I have bought nearly a thousand oysters, and have caused such champagne to be brought, that even the angels in heaven do not drink better. It is not very delicate of Mr Borgenstierna, to spoil our glorious sport, without any notice."

"Yes, it is certainly an unpleasant circumstance; but if you do not eat up the oysters, skin and hair, I may perhaps return for my share."

"Do so, dearest assessor, we shall remain sitting here together but a few hours only, if it pleases, until five o'clock, when we shall drive out, and I shall see the most—most—"

Wirén hastened away without waiting for the conclusion of the chamberlain's speech. When he arrived at the corner of Long-street, he met Mademoiselle Nyquist, who was coming from the mineral spring, and with the words, "Ah! dearest Mr. Wirén, have the kindness to lend me your arm, that I may be able to get over this outrageous hole," she clung fast to Wirén, who never had less desire to show her his attentions than at that present moment.

"My honoured Lady Nyquist, I have, to be sincere, so little time, that I will be obliged to walk too rapidly for you."

"O, on the contrary, I am very much in a hurry myself. My most intimate friend, the Dowager Countess P——, is waiting for me to take chocolate, and I am already almost too late. But I had first necessarily to make a visit this morning at De Dressen's, and see how the people are doing there. It is certainly no great joke, for a person who lives next door to the bathing-house, to make such a long walk to the north side. But, O Lord, one must take just such a residence as they are able to, and Heaven only knows where these people have found the money to go to a bathing-place. My friend, the countess, of whom I have just spoken, has confided to me, as something already known—although, as a matter of course, it would not be agreeable for a lady of her rank to trouble herself about the affairs of people so much beneath her—that the lieutenant-colonel has borrowed the money upon his estate, which, however, is said not to be very extensive. Alas! it is horrible, my dear assessor, how much people are duped by the vanity of the world. Aside from this, he is not a very stupid man, that Dressen, but his

ladies, may the Lord preserve us from such geese, one can easily see that they have not before left their native village during their whole life. The countess was so condescending, however, as to allow me to let them hope that she would invite them to her house. Speaking confidentially—I have given a good word for them, for it is so sweet to be enabled to assist one's neighbour, and especially in our time, when money rules alone. But, by-the-by, speaking of the times—in a political relation, I shall——"

"Beg your pardon, dear lady, there goes the doctor, I must talk with him, you will excuse me"—and before Mademoiselle Nyquist was able to imprint her hard, bony fingers deeper into Wirén's arm, he had disappeared.

"Mr. Assessor! Mr. Assessor! wait one moment only; tell me at least whether you will have, to-day, the continuation of the article. Lord! what a coarse-mannered man. I was just about offering my services to him, to present him and his wife of stone at the countess's! but now they may wait a long time."

In Borgenstierna's private apartment little Alfred was lying under the influence of a burning fever: he complained of a pain in the head and in the breast. The father sat silently at the head of his son's bed, holding in his hand the little one of his boy. Dark visions of the future pressed heavily upon Ivar's breast, and his gloomy gaze was directed, when the fluttering curtains permitted him to do so, upon that blue arch from which the sun cast its rays equally upon joy and misery.

"Do you wish for anything, my son?" With these words Ivar bowed over the face of the boy.

"Yes, I want my playthings which Ammy cut out for me yesterday."

"I will cut out just as fine horses for you."

"No, no, horses I have enough. I want little ships and card-houses as Ammy makes them."

Borgenstierna took a sheet of paper from his portfolio, and

wrote a few lines to Madame de Dressen, in which he informed her of the serious indisposition of his son, and asked for the play-things which the young lady had had the kindness to make for him.

In the mean time the assessor arrived with the doctor. The latter found the boy in a dangerous state; and Wirén offered his friend all possible services which lay in his power to perform.

Borgenstierna was again left alone, and not much consoled, for Wirén wished to advise with the doctor whether it was possible to take the boy across the road. He saw that to Ivar, as a single man, it was impossible for him to nurse his child in case of sickness; and, even should he hire ever so good a sick-nurse, he would not leave, even for a moment, his son's sick-bed. Ahem! was there no means to be found to remedy this? and instead of walking back to De Goesse's and his oysters, he went directly home to his wife.

"Dear Virginia," said he, in the tenderest tone, "Borgenstierna's little boy is very ill. My poor friend is a widower, as you know, and has nobody to advise or assist him in his sad position, and no female to extend a helping hand toward his sick child."

"That is very sad," said Virginia, not stopping in her work.

"It will be easy now to take the child somewhere else."

"Whither?" inquired Virginia, with such an icy expression of indifference, that Wirén, without asking further questions, took his hat and left the house.

He avoided the house where the chamberlain gave his breakfast, and hurried on over the bridge to the residence of the lieutenant-colonel.

His rapid knock was replied to by a friendly "Come in," and in a moment he stood before the benevolent-looking Madame de Dressen, who had just returned from her bath, and was about arranging her hair, which, surprised at the sudden visit, she endeavoured to push under her bonnet. Wirén entreated pardon for troubling them at such unseasonable hours.

Madame de Dressen asked *his* pardon, on account of her appearance, and after mutual excuses, they at length took seats, which was certainly the wisest thing they could do.

"I believe that the gentlemen were all at the chamberlain's this morning?"

"I was there also, but went away early to look after my friend Borgenstierna."

"O, certainly; I also take the most lively interest in Mr. Borgenstierna's misfortune. He appears to love his son so much, that it is easy to be imagined how much he must suffer."

"Yes, my dear lady, you are right. Deep grief is always expressed upon his countenance, and this may be the reason why one feels so much interest in him. A certain melancholy, at least seriousness, always oppresses him. I have known him since the year 1814."

"Since 1814!" interrupted Madame de Dressen, quickly; "where did he stay at that time?"

"At Uddevalla. I believe I have no right to speak concerning his circumstances of life at that time, as he is generally silent about it himself; but many features in his character, which I can remember from that time, are an assurance to me of the early nobleness of his heart, accompanied with firmness and seriousness in all which he did. Genuine humanity, ready to love all, caused him often to do deeds of the greatest mercy toward entire strangers. Such are certainly but seldom found among the class of people with whom he lived at that time."

Madame de Dressen's usually pale cheeks were overspread with a slight blush. "I almost think that I must have seen him at that time," said she, in a tone almost sunk down to a whisper. "I am told so, at least, by a sentiment which reminds me how many obligations I owe to the one of whom he almost always makes me think."

"I might almost be tempted to entertain the same thought," cried Wirén, "when I notice how much he seems to be attracted

by you; but I beg your pardon for sitting here and talking with you as familiarly as though we were old acquaintances."

"Ay! you are so good and so compassionate, Mr. Assessor. May God grant that he may show us the same."

"This wish, honoured lady, will surely be fulfilled as long as one has an open heart for the grief of others. Concerning Borgenstierna, he wants female assistance for his son; not such as can be hired with money: but such as can only be given by one who takes the motherless child to her own heart. God knows, that if my wife was at all fit to take care of children, I would take his little treasure to my own house."

"Do you think, Mr. Assessor, that Alfred would be strong enough to be brought over the street yet?"

"Yes, both the physician and myself are of that opinion, providing it is done soon. In such warm weather as the present there is no danger. Pardon my too great liberty; but if the picture of 1814 is still before you, then think of him who called it to your mind. But to every one save himself let this recollection be as dead; and, before anything else, I beg to assure you, that Borgenstierna is far from knowing my visit here or its object."

"Be not uneasy; I shall know how to dissimulate," replied Madame de Dressen, in a tone which proved that she had understood him fully.

Wirén returned with a lighter heart to the chamberlain, after having completed his work, where oysters and champagne were awaiting him.

CHAPTER XVII.

STROEMSDAL.—THE KEYHOLE.

THE lieutenant-colonel did not return home until six in the evening, and then only with the intention of commanding his ladies to dress as quickly as possible; for the pleasure-drive in which they were to participate was to commence within half an hour.

"How shall we go?" inquired Madame de Dressen.

"I shall take my own carriage, and Amelia will ride with the chamberlain."

"O, dear, angelic papa, will you not allow me to remain at home? I am so fatigued—I have been on my feet all the afternoon, and one of them hurts me horribly."

"Don't make any excuse, I entreat you; and dress as quick as you can, so that I will not be obliged to wait for you."

"Will the assessor be of the party?" asked Madame de Dressen, commencing to collect the things necessary for her simple toilet.

"No, I believe not; but what new whim has Amelia got into her head this time? shall I again tell you to get ready?"

Amelia silently left the room. She was not in the mood to listen to Mr. de Goesse's foolish conversation; and now she was obliged to ride with him, sit beside him, and be exposed to his foolish, vulgar chatter—that was insufferable, more than she thought she could bear.

As soon as Amelia had departed, the lieutenant-colonel said, unreservedly, to his wife: "It is true that the chamberlain is a stupid devil; but he has money like hay, and is a cavalier

besides, I think the girl may congratulate herself, if she becomes mistress over him and his wealth."

"In this case, I venture to be of another opinion," said Madame de Dressen, and for the first time took those weapons in her hands, which the daughters of Eve so skilfully know how to use if they wish, by cunningly profiting by the weaknesses of their lords and husbands, to lead them by the nose, as we say in vulgar language. "Yes," said she, "I am altogether of another opinion; for if a girl wishes to be happy, she can only be so with a man who is master of his own house. Woman is a frail being, made to be supported by strong man. For instance, dear Dressen, you yourself, a man indeed, will certainly perceive how disgusting such a fool as the chamberlain must appear to every girl."

"Yes, yes, it cannot be denied; he is neither an Adonis, nor an Hercules; but all girls cannot flatter themselves that they have made such an excellent choice as you have. I well recollect that in my most brilliant days of single blessedness, four girls, and three young married ladies actually pined away in consequence of their unfortunate love for me. But one cannot make all happy who are in love with him. I have always been highly esteemed by the ladies. But, as I said before, such men do not always hang on the fence, and it would be desirable if you would remember that fact once in a while, dear Sophia."

"Ay! dear Dressen, I am reminded of that every day; but I would not wish at all, that the people here in the bath should say, that a man with such sound judgment as you, had taken so much pains to procure a husband for his daughter; and, to be sincere, I should think that our blood is too noble to throw away upon such a new-made nobleman as de Goesse."

"Sophia!" exclaimed the lieutenant, and could almost have embraced his dear lady with pure rapture, "now for once you speak as a pure De Dressen. You were not in the habit of thinking of such things formerly; but you now perceive what great

advantages travelling offers, and the value and authority which is procured to us by the custom of appearing in society with the air, which only ladies of old families can give to themselves. This change in your sentiments and conversation gives me more pleasure than I am able to express. But under all circumstances we must have a husband for Amelia, for I do not wish that this journey should be made for naught."

"As to that you need not fear my interference, for, if I am not greatly mistaken there is still a second one here."

"You mean Borgenstierna? That perhaps would not be so bad either. I think that I now remember that the Borgenstiernas, in the year 1719 or 1720, sat in the House of Lords; yes, I am sure of it. I heard an acquaintance relate also, that one of them, who was the page of King Gustavus the Third, had raised the family. The rest of the rabble, however, were degraded to the rank of common people, and have perfectly vanished. It is said that in the neighbourhood of Swarteborg there was an estate, which was once owned by one of the family, a Major Borgenstierna; but that happened long ago, dear wife, and the best for us will be—you understand me—to let no one know anything about the fate of the family, which, confidentially speaking, is said not to have been of the highest order."

Madame de Dressen cared as little for speaking further on the subject as did her husband, as each of them had their little secret concerning it, which they intended to keep to themselves; the lieutenant-colonel being ashamed of his behaviour at that time; and besides, he was perfectly convinced that his new acquaintance could not be the skjuts-boy of Swarteborg, although he supposed almost to a certainty that he must be a relation to him; Madame de Dressen, because she believed that her husband, if the matter should ever become known, would never give his consent to such a marriage, as soon as he found out that his son-in-law had in former times been a common peasant boy.

"But however that may be," replied Madame de Dressen, "an

old noble name is none the less noble, because poverty has prevented its owner from appearing in the world the same way that his ancestors did; but concerning the representative of that family, I have heard Mademoiselle Nyquist say that he owned considerable property—a large estate in Nerike, a share in an iron-mine, and God only knows what else. Baron Lindenskoeld told me this, and he heard it from the assessor, Borgenstierna's most intimate friend; and the Countess P——, who is certainly the most prominent of the nobility at the bath, is also willing to receive him at her house. 'One can easily see,' said Mademoiselle Nyquist, 'that he is of old and genuine blood.'"

"I cannot for my life comprehend why you have become so loquacious, dear Sophia. If you had only been one half as amiable before, I should not so often have called you a goose. The sea-bath strengthens your body and clears your head. But is it true that the boy is sick?"

"Certainly; Borgenstierna sent this forenoon for the playthings that Amelia made for the boy yesterday afternoon. But, dear Dressen, I have an idea how we can attach the reserved man still more closely to us. Don't you think that it would be a good plan to offer to take the little boy into our house! He, as a widower, cannot nurse him as he ought, and will surely accept such an offer with much gratitude."

"No, dear wife; if we should do so, we would be obliged to clear one of our rooms, and it would cost me a great deal of trouble to become accustomed to his childish whims."

"Ay! I am certain that Borgenstierna, after such a proposal from us, will immediately propose to you that he wished to share his lodgings with you, which, at all events, would be much more convenient."

"An excellent thought, my angel! that must be listened to. He may then sit here, and hang down his head near the sick bed as much as he pleases. In the meantime, I shall act in his lodgings just as though I was at home."

"But perhaps it would be better if I should arrange the matter. I love the boy very much indeed, and shall let Borgenstierna know, in a few words, that I will come and visit my little favourite. On which occasion—"

"All right, dear wife. I perceive that it must be managed in that manner. But here are the carriages. Amelia must hurry. I will go down and see whether our equipage is ready also."

After a few moments' reflection, Madame de Dressen was rather surprised herself that it had been so easy for her to perform a feigned part; and although her fine sense of honour was far from approving of the manner of acting to which her husband had forced her, while she was influenced by nobler principles, she at last had to satisfy herself with the old worn-out adage, that "the end justifies the means."

On the next evening, when little Alfred was more free from fever, he was carried—well bundled up—to Madame de Dressen's, where a little bed had been prepared for him already.

It had cost Madame de Dressen, as well as the assessor, much persuasion to obtain Borgenstierna's consent to Alfred's removal; but after the lady had proved that the little patient was in much need of a female nurse, and that he would find in her a second mother, Ivar finally gave way. But when he took leave of his son, and was obliged to place him in the arms of strangers, a bright tear glistened in his eye.

Madame de Dressen had, however, with the utmost delicacy, removed Amelia; and it became much easier for Ivar to pass the hard hour with her mother alone.

It was a matter of more difficulty for him to give himself the annoyance of having the lieutenant-colonel as his daily guest and companion; but all this was arranged by Wirén, with the ease so peculiar to him. He proved to Borgenstierna, minutely, and with all possible reason, that it was an utter impossibility for a single man to nurse a sick boy in a proper manner, without

weakening his own health; so that Ivar, for the purpose of becoming easy in mind, at last allowed him to act as he saw fit, for he could not prevent himself from thinking that Wirén was right in the end.

"But this does not complete the business," said the assessor; "you are in need of fresh air, and relaxation of mind as well as body. Come, our honest old baron will take you on a voyage of discovery on Easter morning."

Several days had elapsed. It was on a Sunday evening: the ball guests had already left the dancing-hall, and the streets were ruled by quietness, which indicated that a time of rest had arrived. A cool night breeze wafted through the air, and howled with low murmurings through the distant mountains of Stroemdal. From "the broken fields," a place which was situated some distance from the city, and had been used during the old wars as a burial-ground, and which the superstitious said was haunted, a thick fog arose, and through its misty veil there might have been seen a human figure, moving to and fro, like a ghost of fancy, which grows larger or smaller as we look at it with distorted or excited senses.

It was Borgenstierna, who, with his dog, wandered over the uneven ground to the place where, at the present time, is located the cholera burying-ground, where can be seen the plain but numerous monuments of that destructive plague, which, during the year following our story, drove away all the bathing guests from Stroemstad.

In deep gloomy melancholy, worn out and fatigued in body and mind, Ivar leaned against the grey stone wall, which forms the boundary of the valley. His heart was both full and void—it was overflowing with pain, with infinite longings; but at the same time dreary and void, for he felt himself so lonely, so isolated, without having once the consolation of placing his cold cheek upon the burning brow of his son.

It is a mournful and weighty feeling of sadness to stand alone

in life; to long for warmth, and yet feel that the heart is frozen by an icy breath. The power of man is much praised, but as mighty as it may be, man is never satisfied with himself alone. The longing to love, and to be loved by an object which cares for him, and for which he cares, lives powerfully and ardently within him, and perhaps the more so, as he strives to furnish the evidence that he has no need of the holy sentiments of nature to be happy.

Borgenstierna felt deeply and painfully that he was lacking much. But for several years a sickly misanthropy had entered into his very soul, to master which was no easy task for him. Neither could he convince himself that a new and happy connexion would make life appear in a different light to him.

Ivar often measured in his mind the long period which had ensued between now and then, and often lingered on the time when he, as a skjuts-boy, had earned a few farthings, so that his father would be enabled to pay his taxes; when, in familiar conversation with his white pony, many an hour had passed by; when he carried fuel home for his mother; or when he shrilly whistled through his fingers, in spite of the storm that raged over the forest. They were pleasant visions, for they were those of his childhood. Nor had the night-hawk, at that bright period, cried in his ears the song of misfortune; but from that hour he began to ponder upon things which were not plain to him, but whose presence he heartily felt.

In after-life many things became more clear to him; but, notwithstanding, he felt no better. He remembered how his family had lost its caste. How hard his parents had worked to earn their bread! how often he had stood on the cart, or ran along beside it, to earn a little money! All of which had not seemed unjust until he was informed that a nobleman was altogether different from the rest of mankind. By degrees his natural pride developed itself, and he suffered the torture which can be more easily experienced than described. In short, it often appeared

to him as if his noble name, which stood in crying opposition to former times, was almost sneering at his recollections, and loaded him with an indescribable burden. He endeavoured, by all means in his power, to deliver himself from that pressure, for he felt the power and courage to clear his escutcheon from the thick dust which had sullied it so long.

Ivar did not love outward show—neither power nor honour; his claims were based on nothing but civil virtue and interior value. He did not hate nobility, of which he was, to all appearance, a scion, but without a root. But it appeared to him as though the shoot would again recover its life, and grow up more vigorously if it was transplanted into another soil.

Nevertheless, he was not that evening in that state of mind, which in a like contemplation, so frequent at other times, could have depressed his spirits. His thoughts were solely with the treasure that he had left in the care of the two female beings toward whom he felt himself so much attracted. In the course of the afternoon the boy had become somewhat better, and Borgenstierna had left him but a few hours before, in a quiet, refreshing slumber. In spite of all this, the father was tortured with an unceasing uneasiness. The cool night-breeze had already fanned his dejected countenance, and scarcely aware what he was doing, he descended the steep rocks which connect Stroemdal with the so-called Slotter Mountains. He soon reached a mill-dam, passed over the little bridge just as the clock in the tower was striking twelve, and stood suddenly, without having properly wished it so, on the north side again, in front of the building occupied by the family of the Lieutenant-colonel De Dressen.

He saw a dim light glimmering from the inner room, and thought he saw a shadow behind the curtains, which was moving to and fro. "They have moved him into another room," thought Ivar. "He was undoubtedly uneasy, and disturbed Amelia in her sleep. She must be fatigued from dancing at the ball; but ›can be with him now? Probably a nurse. He was angry

at Wirén's well-intended advice, and he wished that he had been strong-minded enough to have refused it. Was he not now worse off than before? Was he not deprived of the only happiness he could call his own?—namely, to watch over his child. Although he did not wish to confess it himself, he was no doubt in bad humour because Amelia had gone with the Wiréns to the ball. But Madame De Dressen, who knew how to treat the whole affair with delicacy, was not willing to give Borgenstierna, or the rest of the bathing-guests, the suspicion of the motive of her actions. For these reasons she always kept Amelia as distant as possible, and allowed her to participate in almost all amusements, under the care of her father or Madame Wirén, while she nursed and watched her little favourite with infinite maternal love.

In consequence of one of those common accidents which frequently happen in houses with negligent servants, the house-door was partially open. When Ivar observed this, he could not refrain from walking close to it, and entering the hall. Through the key-hole of the parlour-door he did not see a nurse —but Amelia, in a loose white gown, a large shawl thrown over her shoulders, as she bore Alfred in her arms, trying to soothe him, while the acute pains kept the suffering child awake. This view was to the heart of Ivar both sweet and bitter; but it cost him the more pain when Alfred loudly cried,

"Papa! papa! where is papa?"

"Alas! dear Alfred, do not cry so much," said Amelia, soothingly. "Your papa has just gone to sleep a little while; to-morrow, when the sun shines so bright on Alfred's little bed, papa will come and look for his good little boy."

"Yes, but he must come now."

"Not now; is not Ammy with you? Don't you love me any more?"

"You went to the ball also, but papa did not."

"Yes, I went to the ball," said Amelia, in a tone which told

Ivar's sharp ear plainly that she had not enjoyed it much. In a kind manner she continued: "Do you believe, dear Alfred, that Ammy had much pleasure at the ball, when she knew that you were sick at home? No, I thought of you all the time."

"You are weeping," said Alfred, aloud, as a tear dropped from Amelia's eyes upon his cheek. "You must not cry, Ammy. I am not angry at you, but my breast pains and burns me so, and I am so thirsty, so horribly thirsty."

The boy pressed himself closer to her bosom. Amelia walked toward the table, and gave him some broth. And drying the tears in his eyes with her falling tresses, afterwards placed them in their proper position.

The scene lasted until Alfred, becoming quiet, fell asleep. Amelia laid him down gently, and afterward sat down by his side, with a book in her hand. Although soothed in mind, Ivar left his listening position with a high-beating heart.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A HORRIBLE SUICIDE.

It was a sultry forenoon. The bathers hurried home from the inclosed bathing-houses, dripping with perspiration from the oppressive heat, to inhale, as they sat on their comfortable sofas, the sea-air, which ever and anon sent its refreshing breeze through the open windows.

Mademoiselle Nyquist alone had sufficient patience and endurance to pay all her acquaintances her due morning visits. But she was also totally exhausted when she panted up the long stairs of the tall yellow house near the City Hall, where the Countess P—— resided. We will accompany her thither to hear something concerning the news of the day.

Mademoiselle Nyquist was conducted by a servant into a saloon, which would have been an ornament to many a residence in the capital, and was received at the door of the second parlour by a little pug dog, who represented, for the time being, the old lady in waiting, whose duty it was to receive the visitors of the countess, when the latter was not at home. As an old acquaintance Mademoiselle Nyquist stepped up to the third parlour, where she found her grace, reposing on a pile of several hair cushions.

After the customary smile of welcome, and the usual interchange of salutations, the countess put the old question to her visitor:

"Well, what's the news, dear Mademoiselle Nyquist? I am obliged to lie here, and therefore time rolls by very heavily."

Mademoiselle, taking a seat, to regain her breath, took a pinch

of snuff, cleansed off the particles of snuff from her dress, and scratched her head.

"There is not much news stirring now, except that last night and this morning a couple of carriages arrived with strangers; but I have not yet had an opportunity to find out what kind of folks they are—but, to-night, at the soirée, I will squeeze it out, some way. I have already, this morning, called a short time on the Baroness Heichen; and there I heard a story about the Wiréns, which seems to be well founded. The woman—well—one can easily see that by her stiff behaviour, which lacks all grace—is said to be of the most vulgar extraction; but I shall not further trumpet forth the manner in which she has risen: for, oh, Lord! if it was slander, then—— But, it is quite a knack to cause her to open her mouth; and people do say, that she is so awfully stupid, that her husband has forbidden her to speak in company at all. The poor assessor has probably heard that a silent, stiff manner, frequently conceals talents and education; and I cannot blame him for wishing that she might be considered by strangers as something more than she really is."

"I think this quite reasonable. An uneducated woman will do well to keep her mouth shut."

"True—that is my opinion; and the clownish fellow, De Goesse, said the same when I met him, a short time ago, on the bridge, and had half a minute's talk with him concerning the matter. Yes, that half-fool is also a striking evidence of the blindness of youth. Would you believe that he is in love up to his ears with the snippish Miss de Dressen? It is, indeed, horrible to see such a mis-educated girl! But, the poor people! I believe that they are in want of this world's goods, or else they would have expended more on their daughter's education. I believe your grace spoke something about their circumstances a short time ago?"

"O! I know these people but a very little; but I know this much, it does not show much good breeding on the part of

Madame de Dressen, that she refused my invitation for this evening, and sits at home, in the meantime, to watch the boy, who is nothing to her."

"What!" exclaimed Mademoiselle Nyquist; "your grace has done her the honour to invite her?"

"It is a fact. The lieutenant-colonel called upon me, and begged the honour of presenting his ladies to me. To prepare an agreeable surprise for them, as I thought, I invited them to come and take tea with me to-night; but who was it that refused to come? they did!"

Mademoiselle Nyquist was almost petrified with horror at this want of *bon ton* and gratitude.

"In such a case one might as well be struck down with apoplexy," said she, throwing back her long neck. "Now, I am not surprised at all at what happened to me about an hour ago, when I was about making her a visit, which I would not have even dreamed of if my road had not accidentally called me over the bridge—yes, only think, I received the answer, that the lady of the house did not receive anybody, because the little boy —so they called him—was sick; and that they were fearful that he would not live until evening. Well, I shall say no more about it; but, that old Madame de Dressen intends to hook the sour-faced misanthrope, Borgenstierna; that is so plain that a blind man might touch it with his cane. I know, for certain, that they wished their daughter to marry him so much, that they have almost thrown themselves upon his back. The lieutenant-colonel has even moved over to his house, that he may have him under his eye; and to complete the matter still more, they have taken his sick boy into their house. There—you can plainly see what their intentions are. I should think it would not require so much trouble to obtain a husband for the

"It might, at least, have been done more decently," observed the countess.

"Yes, that is just what I told Baron Lindenskoeld, when I met him the other day. They might only have given the matter an appearance of delicacy, said I; but the old fool himself is perfectly enraptured with the girl. Only think, he did not hesitate to pretend that Miss de Dressen was the most charming lady in the whole bath. Gentle, as a dove; innocent, as a lamb; and God knows what more! To sum up, the pert little minx has coquetted for her two lovers. I must add, that her mother has done everything in her power to play the sister of charity for the last two weeks. Well, she can, at least, have this praise—that is, she has spared neither trouble nor pains."

"Yes, there is nothing very bad about such a soothing of one's conscience," said the countess, with a smile. "But it might be hoped, at least for their own sake, that one of the lovers would bite; for it would be a sad story, if they had made their journey without success in their object."

"Ay! we will hope the Lord will have compassion upon the prayer of his faithful," snickered Mademoiselle Nyquist, in a hysterical voice, and slowly tightening the strings of her work-bag.

"Is there no other news?" inquired the countess, as mademoiselle, arising, located herself near the window, which presented a free aspect of the sea, and the vessels which were gliding along on its surface. Mademoiselle Nyquist looked at one of these vessels with a piercing glance, and it could be seen that something very important had happened. She heard the question of the countess, and hastily exclaimed—

"There is the chamberlain! That's him; he is riding alone out in the sea, and has a gun in his hand. Lord! how he looks —pale as death—and gray as ashes. Ah! now something strikes my mind. When we met each other on the bridge, he was on his way to De Dressen's; I saw him with my own eyes, when he went up the right-hand stairs; and the man appeared much more crazy than usual. He has proposed for her, no



doubt, and has received the mitten. I can see it by his looks; I have keen eyes which never deceive me. But did you ever hear of the like? to refuse a rich, handsome lover! I should only like to know, for the sake of heaven, what these people think. But your grace will see that it is impossible for that to end well; you may depend upon it. It is now fashionable for people to shoot themselves. O Lord! he is just aiming his gun. No—that will not do—I must know what is at the bottom of the matter. I must contrive to find some business out there, for I must know how the story runs, as true as I live."

And, in a perfect frenzy of curiosity, Mademoiselle Nyquist picked up her gloves, parasol, and handkerchief—in her hurry forgot her snuff-box; and hardly taking time to take leave of the countess and to answer her question whether she would return after dinner, hurried through the hall, where she ran over two children with baskets of strawberries in their hands. The latter cried loudly, wishing to be paid for their lost fruit, ran after her and caught at the flying ends of her shawl. With a raving gesture she tore herself from them, and had already reached the end of Long-street, before the children, with a piece of the shawl-fringe in their hands, could venture a second attack.

With flying footsteps Mademoiselle Nyquist ran down the street.

"God be praised! here comes the assessor, as though just called. Have you heard, my dear sir, what an unfortunate accident has happened?"

"What do you mean? Is there a fire anywhere? Or is it the article about the Jesuitical liberalism, which thus puts you out of your senses?"

"Oh, God! no; I mean the story of the poor young Chamberlain de Goesse?"

"With the chamberlain! what is the matter with him?"

"Yes! he has proposed to Miss de Dressen, and has received the mitten. If you wish to prevent the most fearful suicide,

immediately start on your way. He is riding out in a boat on the sea with a loaded gun in his hands. Perhaps you may hear the next minute the report of the gun from one of the islands over there. Alas! it is a fearful time in which we live; and, if we did not have the excellent evening journal for our consolation, one would have to die of tediousness in this hole."

While Mademoiselle Nyquist continued to chatter in this way, she hurried off; and her shawl and veil fluttered still more around her tall, lank, bony figure. When she arrived at De Dressen's house, it was quite a hard matter for our mademoiselle to force a visit where she had been refused a few hours before; but, cost what it might, she was determined to find out, at least, whether De Goesse had been there.

She went up-stairs, and knocked at the hall-door without success; therefore, steering straight to the kitchen, she met the servant-girl, cleaning fish.

"Excuse me, my child: I was here before, and had the misfortune to lose a letter, when I took out my visiting-cards. Did you find it?"

"No, I have not seen it."

"My God! it would be very unpleasant to me, if I should have lost it. Can you recollect what kind of people have been here since I left?"

"I do not know of any one else but the lieutenant-colonel and the Chamberlain de Goesse."

"Ah! Mr. de Goesse? Did he come immediately after I left?"

"Yes, shortly afterward."

"Well, if he has the letter I am sure to regain it. But I believe that your mistress does not receive any one to-day?"

"The chamberlain wished to see the lieutenant-colonel only. My lady and young mistress are in the back room, where they are weeping, and are almost distracted on account of the boy."

"His father is probably there, also?"

"Of course, he has been there the whole day. He is so sad that he sits there like a painted picture, without moving at all. My mistress endeavours to console him, but he only shakes his head, and speaks not a word."

"Yes, there is much grief and sorrow in this world. If you should find the letter, have the kindness to take care of it. Did De Goesse stay here long?"

"O, yes, he staid with the lieutenant-colonel at least an hour."

"It is all right," muttered Mademoiselle Nyquist; and ran round to all her acquaintances as fast as she was able, and everywhere the story ran thus: "I believe you have heard of the horrible accident which has befallen the Chamberlain de Goesse. They say that the poor man has shot himself, because he received the mitten from Miss de Dressen this morning."

Within half an hour the report was spread throughout the whole city; and as Mr. de Goesse had in truth not been seen for the whole day, it created quite a stir, and arrangements were made to search for the body of the lost lover; when all at once, at about nine o'clock in the evening, he arrived, safe in body and limb, at the bridge, with half a dozen wild ducks slung over his gun, which he carried over his shoulder.

"Welcome to life again, Mr. Chamberlain," resounded several voices around him. "There have been the most horrible reports about you to-day in the city. It was said, as a truth, you had started on a journey to the other world."

With his big and stupid eyes, De Goesse looked around the circle of his congratulators, and as the room echoed with a continual malicious laughter, he saw fit, for the sake of keeping his honour and dignity, to make the following reply—

"I cannot hope that the gentlemen are pleased to joke at my expense."

"The Lord save us! we have, on the contrary, wept for you," said a gay lieutenant, who had squeezed himself through the

crowd surrounding our hero. "We had hardly received the rumour of your mournful end, when, with one of your most intimate friends, we went to your apartment, where we persuaded the servant to admit us. What happened farther, your empty bottles will tell you."

As the affair had taken such a turn, De Goesse laughed also: but wished to know how anybody could have entertained the foolish idea, that he, who loved nothing more than his life, should have shot himself.

"I will relate that to you in confidence," replied the lieutenant, drawing the chamberlain out of the room. "Unexpectedly an unpleasant rumour has been set afloat. They said that you had proposed this morning to Miss de Dressen, but had been jilted, and therefore, in despair had—you understand me."

"That is scandalous—insulting my honour—to spread such a report," exclaimed De Goesse, almost weeping with vexation. "To make me the general laughing-stock of the town. I should have proposed—yes, the devil. I didn't think of it by a hundred miles. The lieutenant-colonel desired to borrow money from me. Lord! what stories; one ought to weep for me; and Amelia, my divine Amelia, will not grant me the slightest glance of favour, since the whole world says that I had adored her immortal charms in such a fiery manner. Give me your advice, dearest friend, you are a military man, and understand such affairs—what shall I do?"

The lieutenant was at the end of his bathing season, but was unable to depart, because he did not have the requisite funds, and had already formed all kinds of plans, to mend his bad position by a loan, or to run away. Goesse's last words, however, opened to him the very favourable hope, that he would not only be able to leave the bathing-place, but could count upon the prolongation of his pleasures during the summer. He kept silent for awhile, assuming an air of importance, and then said, quickly—

"Let us walk to your lodgings; there we can talk undisturbed about the delicate affair, which cannot well be talked about in the open streets, as well on account of your own good name, as from respect for the reputation of the young lady."

"That is true," said De Goesse; and ran more than walked until he reached his residence, where he threw himself, panting and out of breath, upon the sofa. "Now say, what is to be done? How can we manage the matter?"

"You must make one grand, manly resolution."

"Yes, that I must do," replied de Goesse, "a grand, manly resolution, that's plain. But what do you mean by it?"

"First tell me, have you really proposed to Miss de Dressen?"

"The Lord protect me, how could I have done so? As I said before, the lieutenant-colonel wished to borrow money of me. I intended to make a proposal of marriage to his daughter at a later period, and, therefore, thought to appear very polite, and so carried the money there myself."

"Well, they are, therefore, under obligations to you, and this, in connexion with the esteem which you will undoubtedly create in them, by your present mode of action, will, as far as I am acquainted with women, have a greater effect upon the young lady's heart than all the compliments you could bestow upon her."

"Yes, I thought that myself. But what do you think we had better do?"

"You must order post-horses to-morrow morning at precisely five o'clock. Write a note to the lieutenant-colonel, which I will dictate to you, in which you will let him know, although in a fine manner, that you felt obliged—out of due regard to the young lady, as well as a man of honour—to leave the place as soon as possible, in consequence of the unpleasant report which had reached the ears of the lieutenant-colonel, etc., etc. This resolution will not only raise you still more in the opinion of the De Dressen family, but will also create much attention from

society at large; and, once for all, you have set an example how a man of honour should meet calumny and vulgar gossip. You will be the admired of all admirers throughout the whole season, and people will not talk of anything else save the high-minded, whole-souled Chamberlain de Goesse."

"By this proposal you express my own thoughts," said De Goesse, and was highly elevated at the idea of becoming such an important personage. "But if I travel I should lose the happiness of seeing Amelia."

"And if you remain you will lose her esteem, and to all eternity the hope of ever calling her your own. You know the world well enough yourself to understand that she, as a respectable girl, will never be allowed to direct her eyes toward you, if you do not smooth the matter over by an energetic and well-directed step."

"It is true. I am of that opinion also: but where shall I go?"

"As far as I am concerned," replied the lieutenant, "I had made up my mind to stay here at least two weeks longer; but, as your friend, I cannot leave you in this critical affair. We shall, therefore, go to another bathing-place—perhaps to Gustavsborg, and there I shall display the way you acted, in such a manner, that all young men will throng around you, to form your acquaintance, as though you were super-human."

"Excellent! excellent!" exclaimed De Goesse, rubbing his hands in delight. "They shall see that a man like me does not allow anybody to dance upon his nose."

"And as for the expenses of our bathing journey in common, you can be the treasurer, you understand that better than I do. At the end of the jaunt we will count up together, for I like, even with the dearest friends. the utmost punctuality."

"Do me the favour not to talk about such trifles," hastily interrupted De Goesse. "I am no prodigal, but when my honour is at stake I am not miserly. I hope that you do not

believe that I shall make you pay into the bargain for your friendly services, as you are leaving the bath so abruptly, for the purpose of showing what one friend can do for another in case of necessity."

"It will indeed cost me some self-sacrifice," replied the lieutenant; "but to prove to you that I never do a thing half-way, I will even do that for you."

With this, the matter was settled. The note was written, the horses ordered, the trunks packed—and on the following morning, at the stroke of six, the gentlemen departed.

Mademoiselle Nyquist had, at ten o'clock, a hemorrhage of the lungs—the consequence of the exertions she had undergone during the whole morning; for within two hours she had made twenty and a half calls, as at the last she reached no farther than the hall, where, exhausted by heat and fatigue, she fell fainting to the floor, after she had stammered the words,

"Have the gentlefolks already heard that——"

It is said that her sickness did not allow her to leave her room for six weeks. The wicked world will have it, however, that the lady-in-waiting of the countess had daily carried, as an itinerant gazette, the news between them, until both of the exalted dames left the bath at the same time.

CHAPTER XIX.

SEPARATION.

THE lieutenant-colonel, with his nose at least three inches higher, strutted over to the assembly-room the next morning. Was not the father of such a daughter an important man? And, aside from that, there was contained in Mr. de Goesse's note the undoubted meaning, that he wished, after the lapse of a short time, to renew the acquaintance. With proud steps, the lieutenant-colonel ascended the stairs, and half-opened the door of the saloon, and looking through, saw that a few gentlemen from the city were the only occupants.

"Ay, ay! there is no one here," said the lieutenant-colonel, throwing an aristocratic look round the room.

"O yes, we are here," replied the city tax-collector, Haltgrén, looking with his lively little eyes sharply at the lieutenant-colonel; who replied, with his peculiar smile,

"I sought for Baron G——, and Count A——;" after which he retired, and directed his course over the bridge, to see his family, before he went to the billiard-room. Within the inner room he met his wife, whose eyes were red with weeping, and fatigued with night-watching.

"Well, Sophia, how is the boy? I believe you will kill yourself, by being up so late every night. But what do you think of the story about De Goesse, and the note which I sent to you?"

"Alas! do not talk to me of that crazy fool. All I can say about it is, that I thank God that he has gone away. You cannot think what a bad night we had last night, and how dear the boy is to me."

"Yes, yes, I am well aware of that; but is he alive yet, or is he dead?"

"We have no more hope for him; but young life is tough. How is Borgenstierna? will he not be here soon?"

"Has he not been here yet? He has not been at home, either last night or this morning."

"Great God! what do you say? Until three o'clock he watched here with me, and then I persuaded him to go away. For God's sake, dear Dressen, go and look after him!"

The lieutenant-colonel took his hat in silence, but he had not unlocked the door when Borgenstierna entered. He was pale as death: his eyes, which were usually deep sunken, had retreated farther back in their sockets, and the blue rings around them gave to their dark-brown colour a still more gloomy expression. His brow was knitted into deep furrows, and his hair hung in confused locks around his shoulders.

No question came forth from his lips, but a look to the sick-room expressed it plainly enough,

"I have been out of the city—in the fields. I knew beforehand that it would be impossible for me to remain at home and rest; for this reason, I preferred to walk out in the fresh air."

Madame de Dressen shook her head disapprovingly. Without asking any further questions, Borgenstierna, with his usual *nonchalance*, went into the bedroom.

There, in his bed, little Alfred was lying; his eyes were half closed, and his breast heaved heavily. The yellowish gray eyelids, the fallen and sharp chin, announced that death was loudly demanding his tender victim. On one side of the bed sat Diana, faithful to her post. On the other Amelia, bending over the child, who had become so dear to her, and who loved her so tenderly. Borgenstierna advanced to the side of the bed, and grasped his son's hand.

"It begins to grow cold already," whispered he, looking with indescribable anxiety at Amelia.

She had not an answer to his grief; but a tear, which fell upon Alfred's forehead, told the sorrowing father that he had met with a heart which understood him. But this was not certainly able to decrease the anxiety which consumed him. He had fostered and nursed his child with infinite tenderness, and raised it to his heart, and the love of the child caused life to appear less gloomy to him—and now this last link was also to be torn asunder.

While Borgenstierna was thus engulfed in his misery, Diana scratched at his foot. He bent down, and, patting the animal's back, said, in a low tone,

"And you also, poor dear Diana, will soon leave me. Altogether alone will I stand here, entreating for compassion and assistance from strangers."

"O! do not call us strangers," begged Amelia, in a soft, almost reproachful voice. "Little Alfred never considered either my mother or myself as a stranger."

"Ammy! dear Ammy!" murmured Alfred, "I want a drink."

She complied with his request, and could not at the same time refrain from asking him,

"Do you love your Ammy, dear Alfred?"

"Yes, much—very much."

Borgenstierna bowed down deeper over his child, asking,

"Your father also?"

At these words his voice trembled—the man became soft as a child.

"Yes, I love you also, papa. My dear papa, and my dear Ammy, who tells me such beautiful stories of the dear angels in heaven above."

A tear dropped from Ivar's eye, as he sat there immovable. Amelia left the room.

Slowly the day dragged by. The assessor came three times persuade Borgenstierna to leave the place with him—but all

endeavours were fruitless. When Wirén called, about half-past nine o'clock in the evening, to make a fourth trial, Ivar met him at the door, and in an unnatural composure of tone said,

"Now I will go with you; but to-night we must together take little Alfred home to my room."

The assessor pressed his hands in silence, and Ivar turned toward Madame de Dressen. He wished to thank the lady who had nursed and attended his sick child like a mother, with so much self-denial, and an almost uninterrupted loss of sleep and the comforts of life; but his words failed him, and he could only thank her with looks. The speech of the eyes is often more expressive than that of the lips.

Toward morning the boy was conveyed to a cool bower, which Wirén had caused to be made close to a fisherman's hut, on the beach of the ocean, where the fresh sea air would allow the father to gaze upon the countenance of his favourite for a few days longer.

We need not say anything of Ivar's deep pain. It was, as is the case usually with reserved people, silent and quiet. Grief and sorrow hardly ever give vent to words. It is only joy which is communicative. Words are the echo of the voice which speaks within the heart, and in words this voice is doubly resounding. A person filled with grief is not able to double his pain; but the gay man loves to announce his joy to others.

Borgenstierna was silent; and even when he stood, equipped for a journey, in the reception room of the De Dressens, he had but little to say.

Wirén, with whom he was going, wished him to hurry, for he observed the violent excitement of both parties. After a few but heartfelt words to Madame de Dressen, and a more formal expression of his thanks to the lieutenant-colonel, Ivar approached Amelia, who stood, uncommonly pale and silent, near the window, brushing a speck of dust from her arm.

"Miss de Dressen," said Borgenstierna, in a low tone, and for the first time took her hand in his, "a mournful accident

changed our slight acquaintance into a more familiar position. By the grief which is now gnawing at my heart-strings, I shall always remember that it was to *it* that I am indebted for understanding you more thoroughly. God be with you, Miss Amelia."

A glow, like the slightly-tinged morning dawn, overspread the cheeks of the girl, and the hand, which Ivar still held, trembled violently. He sought her eye—he did not wish to leave without a last look from her—but Amelia, who felt that a tear was about stealing through her downcast eyelids, had not the courage to raise them.

At this moment Borgenstierna said, in an almost soft voice,

"Farewell Ammy, dear Ammy."

These familiar, sweet words, she could not withstand longer; her look was almost lost in his earnest gaze—that was her adieu.

We shall now leave our mariners, driven away by this storm of life's sorrows, to look after the lieutenant-colonel, and observe how he sails out of the port. A few days afterward he was prepared for departure, when the following conversation took place between him and his wife:

"Well, the devil; now both are gone, and none of them has popped the question. What good does it do me now, that I have borrowed seven hundred rix-dollars upon my estate, aside from the debts which I have contracted here? and whether I shall be able to repay them, is only known to Him who feeds the birds beneath the sky. Who knows whether either of them will ever be heard of again? Goesse, that fool, has certainly written something about it, but that is very uncertain; and as Borgenstierna is also about to depart—as if he had come here for the sole purpose that we should play the sisters of charity to his boy—my chances to recover the sums which I have expended, with interest, are d——d small. He has not, by my soul, said a word about returning—or has he said so to you?"

"Not a word; but I believe, nevertheless, that he will do so. His grief, which was yet so new——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted the lieutenant-colonel. "If one has sorrows he must try to console himself; but you have behaved in this matter just as stupidly as in a hundred others. You do not know how to pluck the bird, even though you have it in your hands; and I have now to suffer, because I did not immediately follow my advantageous plan with the Chamberlain de Goesse. But that is always the consequence when a person listens to women's talk; but this I vow, if the chamberlain comes back again, he shall have her on the spot."

"But, dear Dressen."

"Not any more words. I do not wish to have made a journey here for nothing, and to have expended my money that you might paddle around in a water-cart. You may, for the future, wash yourself at home. I should think it was worth the trouble to take such a goose with one on a journey——"

A visit which was now announced stopped this flow of eloquence from the polite husband; and, afraid that some one might have overheard some of these tender expressions, she allowed the chocolate-cup which she held in her hand, to fall upon the floor, when a low, "Alas!" escaped from her lips.

"Do not trouble yourself about this trifle, my angel," said the lieutenant-colonel, soothingly, and with the politeness of an amiable husband. "Go down, girl, and inquire the price of the cup."

The girl returned, and the price was not cheap by any means; but the lieutenant-colonel paid it with a smile—for there was a visitor announced.

CHAPTER XX.

TUNEFORS.—A LETTER.

In that part of Sudermanland which extends towards the frontiers of East Gothland, there lies, near the foot of a slight acclivity, a small hamlet, and a lively little brook gushed ripplingly over the rocks. From the red-coloured dwelling-house a beautiful view is presented of a small mountain-inclosed lake, the shores of which resound with the sound of the axe, and with the shouting of the lumbermen in the forest, for other sound is scarcely ever heard, except that of the cuckoo. The country is some distance from inhabited districts. Although, properly speaking, isolated from the world, the little estate lies there comfortably and cosily, and many a wanderer, more than once, has looked at this little paradise with envious eyes, as it lies there quietly between the pine-clad mountains and leaf-covered hills.

That is Tunefors, the little estate of Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen.

The fall, with its storms, its chills, and its thousand domestic duties, had now arrived. Against the outward storms Tunefors was well protected by its situation, as mentioned before; but it was a pity that the storms inside were so much the worse; and they had hardly come to an end after the long journey on water and land.

The lieutenant-colonel unceasingly grumbled that he had ever entertained the cursed thought of mortgaging Tunefors, and cursed a great many other things which had been of equal advantage; which, however, we feel that it is proper to be silent

about, out of due regard for the veil which should be drawn over the secresy of such kind of family affairs.

To be brief, Madame de Dressen was constantly in a purgatory on earth, and Amelia was reminded at least ten times each day, what an enormous, unpardonable fault she had committed, because she had refused, entirely setting aside all delicacy, the overtures of the Chamberlain de Goesse. Amelia, however, appeared to be very quiet under these reproaches, which she was forced to hear every day and every hour, as well as the remembrance of the events that had been the cause of them. She never became angry about it, and with her natural animation of mind, she always listened to her father with respectful attention, without making bitter remarks concerning it, and always attended with an undisturbed mind to her domestic affairs. Concerning the affairs of her heart, we have no right to look into them; but from the healthy sleep, and the liveliness and blooming cheeks of our heroine, it is not to be supposed that her mind was much troubled.

Amelia was not sensitive; the sentiments of her heart were sincere, gay, and fiery enough, so that she was able to become excited as well as any other of Eve's daughters. But it required more than what she had until now experienced, to strain her feelings to a higher degree.

During her sojourn at the bath, the one who had awakened her spirit first, would have excited her to the highest pitch. As soon, however, as she returned to her old accustomed circle, and had to encounter daily the effect of her father's ill-humour, she returned to her old track gradually, and even if she did look back with longing to the man she esteemed the highest of all men of her acquaintance, her heart, nevertheless, beat more quietly each evening; and it became more probable, and almost certain to her, that the one of whom she thought with so much interest, would hardly think of her in the same manner.

Madame de Dressen had already finished her large washing

and bread-baking, and prepared the whortleberry preserves, dried the apples, shelled the peas, and prepared the potato grit; the sour-krout only was to be made; and this important business in the domestic department was to be performed on the next Saturday, when the lieutenant-colonel was to take a ride to the city.

Saturday came. After the lieutenant-colonel had preached, with peculiar emphasis, a sermon, which he was accustomed to do even when he started on the shortest journey, which consisted of an extensive exposition of the fatal bathing journey, that he could not help putting in connexion with everything else, he finally started, left the house, and with a lighter heart, Amelia sprang from the last step of the staircase, to which place she had accompanied her father, then went to the hall, afterward into the little saloon, where she, like a thrifty housewife, prepared the table, to put cabbage heads thereon, and began to sing in a clear voice the gay little song—

"Remember me when you pick the flowers," &c.

Madame de Dressen entered the room for the purpose of assisting her daughter. Seating herself by her side, and during their familiar chatting, the work went on not very rapidly, for there was much cabbage raised at Tunefors, and as it is a cheap food, they whittled and cut until evening, and had not quite finished their labours, when the horses of the lieutenant-colonel were heard down in the yard. We here cannot forbear making the remark, that there are housewives who know, even before they arrive, in what humour their husbands will return home. Some know it by the first sound of his voice; others by his step; and others, again, strange as it may appear, have practised so much, and have sharpened their ears to such a degree, that they can ascertain by the pawing of the horse, whether the pendulum of humour inclines to the right or the left.

"O Lord, papa has already come home!" exclaimed Amelia,

"and we are yet sitting here, before our cabbage. I think it will be best to clear off the table; it is time for supper, any how."

"Never mind, my child," replied her mother, "we will quietly proceed. I hear it. You will see that papa is in very good humour."

"I should like to know how you can tell that," said Amelia with a smile, and took a candle to light her father up the stairs.

"Good evening, child," said the lieutenant-colonel, kissing her tenderly, which he had not done before, since that great epoch in their existence, the bathing journey.

"Welcome home, dear little papa. How good and kind you look. I am sure that you have sold your potatoes well."

"O yes, God be thanked, they went off well. I believe you are making sour-krout, dear Sophia?"

The last words were addressed to Madame de Dressen, who arose to salute her husband, and was now favoured with an embrace, and a rather moist kiss from the lieutenant-colonel's frozen, bristly mustache, as he whispered into her ear,

"News, my dear, good news."

With these words the eyes of the lady glistened with joy. She was sure, that the man about whom she carefully avoided speaking to her daughter, must be near them, or had announced his own arrival by a letter, perhaps even— But here Madame de Dressen's run of thoughts made a halt. She was acquainted with Borgenstierna's great natural bashfulness, and that he should go so far as to announce himself as a suitor for the treasure which she had under her care—that she could not believe.

"Get supper ready as soon as possible; I am very hungry," said the lieutenant-colonel, and nobody will be surprised that his wife obeyed his command as soon as possible, and laid aside the cabbage, which was just salted, and which had been destined for the master's table, but now for a baser purpose, namely, the

cattle-manger, that the cattle might have a little enjoyment also. In this manner everything was pushed forward with extraordinary velocity, and never before was a domestic matter so quickly concluded, and a table laid with so much despatch.

Amelia thought to herself that something else had occurred, than the favourable sale of the potatoes, for did not the singular case happen that although the warm beer had been burned in the hurry, papa drank his three glasses without saying anything about it! and besides, expressed, with a smile, his supposition that Amelia would make a good housekeeper, and the man who would lead her to the altar would certainly not be more cheated than the one who had done the same to her mother.

This was no joke; and as no one else was present, Amelia was confirmed in her suspicion that something else had happened, for it was only during very rare occasions, and only in his brightest moments, that the lieutenant-colonel did justice to his wife, which in his mind he never refused her, although in his actions he was altogether to the contrary. Reflecting upon these facts, Amelia wished her parents good-night, and for a long time before sleep visited her, all kind of thoughts contended within her for the honour of being the cause of her father's good-humour.

From the right cause, however, our heroine was as far distant as earth from heaven.

"Now, dear Sophia, guess," said the lieutenant-colonel, when he had bolted the bedroom door, and had pulled off one boot with the toe of the other, to exchange his boots for the "divine enjoyment" of slippers. "Guess once, old woman."

"Dear Dressen! alas, I am altogether confused! Perhaps Borgen—"

"Borgenstierna, and always Borgenstierna!" interrupted the lieutenant-colonel, somewhat rudely. "Can't you get that fellow out of your head by any means? No, no! go higher than that in your thoughts."

At these words, the countenance of Madame de Dressen

became clouded, and, instead of rising, her thoughts fell lower, until she said,

"O Lord! Dear husband, I hope not Mr. de Goesse!"

"Yes, certainly; just *that* one has made, although in a very ridiculous, yet very plain manner, an honourable proposal of marriage to our Amelia. I shall read the letter to you, and from this day hence will never mention our journey to the bath, for it has been of great advantage to us. You will probably remember, dear Sophia, that it is not a very easy matter for a girl to obtain a husband, and that if my proposition had not been carried into effect, Amelia would certainly never have had a husband in her whole life."

Madame de Dressen was too prudent a woman to disclose her sentiments on this subject immediately, and to present her objections all at once. With due presence of mind, she therefore replied,

"That is true, my dear! But what does the chamberlain say?"

"You shall hear it immediately." With these words, the lieutenant-colonel took the letter from his pocket, lit his pipe, and sat down in the arm-chair, and began his important epistle, in a low and mysterious voice:

"HIGH AND WELL-BORN—PARTICULARLY HIGHLY TO BE HONOURED, MR. LIEUTENANT-COLONEL AND CHAMBERLAIN:—After the unfortunate event which drove me away, like an exile, from the place which was so dear to me, where the object of my sweet thoughts beckoned to me, there I was, or I found, I should say, neither rest nor quiet in my wanderings; and, like a pilgrim, did I steer over the desert—as a broken wreck did I shoot through gloomy waves, and through the foaming surges of the world.

"The kindness, the exceeding benevolence with which his High and Well-born the Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain, together

with your most amiable, infinitely-high relations have overwhelmed me, have at last awakened me from the dream in which my dim senses were swimming; and I beheld before me the lovely star, in the dark space, which encased my heart's inner world. Since I had lost the rapturous enjoyment of most exalted souls, to be again allowed to live in the bosom of your family—as I do not know whether the Mr. Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain's grace admires allegorical symbols, and I myself may compare me, in consequence of my glowing fancy, to the rich sun of the glowing Orient; for these reasons I love allegorical pictures, which, peculiarly formed by nature for that purpose, raise the heart in a theoretical way, almost above life's tossing waves, at the moment were, at the same time, ennobled and decked with wings, which carried it over the common, vulgar, prosaic herd, which, in the practical relations of society, never deserve an undivided regard, where the mind flies away in truly lofty contemplation over the contemptible transactions of worldly matters, for I love liberty in act and thought, freedom of will, and especially freedom in the elastic flight of fancy.

"There is only one case where the mortal cannot remain free; and that is, if the ideal that his eternal happiness is at stake, when the thoughts unite with sentiments, which is the principal feature in its component parts, in relation of its soaring into heaven, and the spiritual world, after which the future inhabitants, bound to it by the most exalted and truest being, are compelled to long. This is certainly true of the man; and this is also the reason why I was not able to restrain my sentiments as they will lead me to the aim of my ambition.

"I therefore submit most submissively to the lieutenant-colonel and chamberlain's grace; and allow me to put the modest question—Whether I may be allowed to entertain some hope in relation to your grace's lovely daughter, the divine Amelia—the

chosen of my heart, the sweet 'Laura' of my love, whose praise I should sing just as inspired as if I owned Petrarca's lyre? I herewith ask you, with the utmost devotion and esteem, to allow me to propose for her honourable hand in writing. For this reason, my personal appearance—which has often been said to resemble that of King Charles the Twelfth—differs so far from that great man, that the chain, which he refused with horror, is my highest aim.

"And if Aurora Koningsmark had been the governess of my thoughts, and I had been Charles the Twelfth, I should, nevertheless, not have had the courage to send her away, as he did, when he . . . well, it is not of importance where it was—it is sufficient that it has happened, and, as our historians tell us, not in a very delicate manner, that a man should be guarded in his conduct toward these masterpieces of creation, I should have remained to study the picture a little longer in hearty faith and love, her warmest admirer, even her devoutly-obedient king, Augustus of Poland.

"Concerning my worldly goods—for a frank and open character should also look out for material matters—and as I am not of the belief that it would do to live in a subtle, ideal world, allow me to say, that, aside from the estate of Loennerupp, my annual income amounts to five thousand rix-dollars, *banco*, and there is no doubt that if the family should in the future receive an increase, my father would add considerably to it yet.

"As I wish now to submit to your high and well-born grace my tender heart's desire, in the most urgent manner I beseech the Mr. Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain, to do every thing in his power to lay my heart-burning and most fiery adorations at the feet of Amelia. I have, furthermore, the honour of asking from her lady mother, the hand of her lovely daughter—of the exalted lady whom I value so highly and venerate—whom I, like an eagle suspended between heaven and the deepest abyss—

devoutly pray that you will favour me with an answer at Loennerupp, near Calmar.

"With the most highest esteem, I beg leave to subscribe myself,

"My High and Well-born,
"Mr. Lieutenant-colonel
"and Chamberlain's grace's
"Most obedient servant,
DE GOESSE."

"Well, I must say," exclaimed Madame De Dressen, with a hearty laugh, "if this is not the most remarkable letter I ever saw in my life! Do you really believe that the man has his five senses?"

"Certainly, that is all good and right; but it is now the fashion with young gentlemen to be rather pathetic, and Mr. De Goesse, the poor dupe! who, it is said, has not inventive power, screws up his phrases still more high, and in a more confused manner, than all the rest. But here we have not to do with the genius of a man only, but with his money, and his goodwill to make Amelia happy; and in both cases we have a guarantee that we will be secured and satisfied."

"Concerning his means," replied Madame De Dressen, with a certain caution, "it is surely larger by far than Amelia may ever expect to obtain by any other man. But whether he will be able to make her happy, that's another question. And certainly, dear Dressen, if Amelia should ever read the letter, it would awaken feelings within her, which, perhaps, with too much neglect of her pecuniary interest, would have an injurious effect upon her sentiments and actions. I do say it, that it will strengthen her opinion, that the chamberlain, with all his wealth, is one of the most ridiculous fools who ever tried to propose for a girl. By these reasons, you ought to see—"

"Assuredly, dear Sophia, I see everything, and therefore this

letter, which, to tell the truth, is nothing but a collection of stupidity and nonsense, shall never meet Amelia's eyes. I will tell her very plainly that Mr. de Goesse wishes her for his wife, and her expectations are of such a nature that no other choice is left to her."

"But I have no doubt that you will agree with me, dear Dressen, that he is a stupid and vain fool; just think of the torture to be chained, because poor, to such a thing, between monkey and man."

"You say too much, Sophia. You look at the dark side of the picture. Many people may be stupid, but they are no less good and honest men. The chamberlain is not a very powerful hero with a quill, and his mode of expression is sometimes rather silly; but he is, notwithstanding, an honest fellow; rich, and, what is the best, a nobleman. It would indeed be far more foolish than himself, if one should ask for more. After all this, we may look at the matter as completely settled."

"But Amelia, dear husband?"

"Amelia, dear wife, will know how to comply, as a hundred others have done before her. She obtains a husband, the name and rank of a noble lady, and will gain a brilliant establishment."

"Domestic happiness, dear Dressen."

"You are always talking the same as a blind man speaks of colour. I should like to know what you understand by domestic happiness—if it is not an honest husband and a full house. Do not trouble me again with such matters. When one like you has arrived at rather an interesting age, one ought to know how to talk better; but since you again sit in your own barn-yard, all your little knowledge of the world which, to my great pleasure, you had gained at the bath, is all gone to the devil."

Madame de Dressen was silent, for she knew that she could not persuade him.

After the lieutenant-colonel had talked in the same strain a long time, he finally fell asleep, and allowed his wife to weep undisturbed. For weeping was her only enjoyment—and now she wept from deceived expectation — she had been of the opinion that Borgenstierna would have spared her this unlucky hour.

CHAPTER XXI.

IN PAPA'S ROOM.

THE next morning, when Amelia, without having the least suspicion of the happiness which was awaiting her, and which was to bring about such a mighty revolution in her monotonous life, was standing in all her innocence before the fire, and was beating some eggs to put them over the ham, which was cooking for papa's breakfast, she saw the lieutenant-colonel, coming into the kitchen in *propria persona*, to obtain a light for his pipe.

"You may bring my breakfast to my room, dear Amelia; I have something to do," said he, and looked so surprisingly friendly and joyful that Amelia was amazed.

"Certainly, dear papa; I will be there in a moment," and a few moments afterward, she ran up the stairs, into the attic room of her father, with the little china plate in her hand, and the white napkin thrown over her arm. Amelia presented, in her short apron and her hair smoothly combed, the neatest-looking waiting-girl who ever spread a table.

"Zounds! what a precious pancake you bring me, I am just in the spirits to relish your dish much; and I think you observed last night that something agreeable had happened to your father?"

"Yes, dear papa; but what is it?"

"I wish you to marry, child."

"Marry!" replied Amelia, rather startled, "you call that pleasant? I should think since you two were married you have had much trouble and sorrow."

"Of course, sometimes. It is unfortunate that there is no perfect cloudless happiness on this earth," replied the lieutenant-

colonel, with sentimental pathos. "But if a couple love each other as your mother and myself do, they will bear the good and evil days together, in true love and——" *concord*, the lieutenant-colonel was about to add, but amended the word, and said—"patience."

Amelia's lips were moved with a slight smile. She well knew how much her father was troubled to give a satisfactory answer to her question. She considered it, however, her duty as a child to remain silent, and the lieutenant-colonel was therefore obliged to resume the conversation himself, which he did without delay, using the often used, but more often abused sentence, that straitened circumstances were often obliged to produce disputes in a family, which otherwise would not happen—but Amelia would not have to fear such a thing under the present matrimonial proposal, as the suitor was wealthy.

To the great amazement of her father, Amelia showed not the least curiosity, as a sentiment of maidenly modesty forbade her to mention Borgenstierna's name, and if it should happen to be another person she would be informed of it soon enough.

"Have you no desire to know the name of your future husband?" inquired her father, and felt inward joy at the skilfulness which he had used to give the subject such a turn, that it would appear as though the question was settled.

But Amelia was a clever girl, and was not to be caught so easily.

"Of my future husband?" said she, shaking her head. "All is not finished when one presents himself as a suitor, that is only one side of the question—something more important remains, namely, whether he will be accepted."

"Ay! concerning that," interrupted the lieutenant-colonel, with so much haste that the piece of pancake which he was eating came nearly choking him, causing him to cough violently, "I should think that a well-bred daughter would only see through her parents' eyes, and follow their advice."

"No, dear papa. I declare roundly, that before I know of whom you are speaking, I shall wish to see with my own eyes, and take advice from my own heart; and do you not think that is natural, dear papa? as *my* own future happiness is certainly most concerned."

"Those are very improper remarks, dear Amelia. Is not the careful love of your parents a sufficient pledge that the person whom they have chosen for you would be worthy of you?"

But now Amelia's heart beat higher, and a deeper red overspread her cheeks, for if her father was speaking of a man who was worthy of her, by which Amelia meant one who knew how to gain her heart, in that case, the one could not be referred to, whom she of all most detested; no, it certainly was——

Here Amelia's further conclusions came to an end. Partly her own modesty did not allow her to carry them further, and partly by the rough manner in which the lieutenant-colonel put the next question. With an important air, he continued—

"Has Amelia so little confidence in the reason of her parents that she will not even leave to them the choice of a husband?"

"Assuredly, dear papa, I have the utmost confidence in you, I was afraid, for a moment only, that it might be, possibly, the most insufferable man in the world, the Chamberlain de Goesse, who was made, by everybody at the bath, the butt of their jokes and laughter."

"For my part," replied the lieutenant-colonel, coldly, "I know that none did so but the assessor, who allowed himself the impoliteness of doing so. To make merry at the expense of others is, of itself, such a dishonourable thing, that I believe such an attempt would arouse sentiments of disgust in a noble-souled girl. If the contrary is the case, it is only an evidence that she is yet too weak and too careless, so that one might not demand her judgment of others. I had expected, on the contrary, that you would have entertained a feeling of horror against the man

who knew how to exert his talents and eloquence in such an unworthy manner."

"Dear papa, I will not deny but that it is a great fault to laugh at the foolishness of others, but I assure you, that even with the best intentions, I could not overcome a smile when I saw the ridiculous manners, and heard the silly words of the chamberlain, in which he served up his ideas. They were so uncouth and so silly, that I was often obliged to turn away my face to conceal my laughter."

"By this, you only expose yourself and your parents. I have often told you before, and tell you again, that there is nothing which so much proves a vulgar descent, and a bad education, as the evil custom of laughing. Vulgar people laugh; educated people, to say the most, only twist the mouth, and this is done in a manner, that there remains still a doubt as to what caused the smile."

"Yes, but, papa, I assure you that it is utterly impossible for me to accustom myself to such a smile; especially when one, whose outward appearance already proves him to be a fool, uses stupid language; then I must either turn my face aside or laugh right out."

"But I do not wish you to laugh at anybody. I tell you now, once for all, I hope that you will obey me."

"Yes, if I should ever happen to meet him again, I shall certainly take all pains to do as you desire me," replied Amelia; "but I hope, from the bottom of my heart, that the difficult task which you impose upon me will be spared me."

"As far as that is concerned, you are greatly mistaken, for he is the very man who has written to me, and proposed for your hand."

"What! if that is the case, I shall knit him one of the most beautiful little mittens, and present it to him; or, if you do not think that appropriate, then—— Oh, wont you have the kindness, dear papa, to write to him, that I was greatly obliged for

the honour he bestowed upon me; but that the prospect of becoming Mrs. de Goesse was not, nevertheless, sufficiently alluring to prevail upon me to leave the dear home of my beloved parents?"

"Amelia," said the lieutenant-colonel, with returning composure, for this unexpected frankness reassured him, "Amelia, we are poor. You need not hope to have a free choice like the daughter of a rich nobleman, or a wealthy citizen; you must bear in mind that you have not more than one suitor, and probably cannot count upon any more; you must, therefore, accept whatever presents itself, or you will become an old maid, and will, perhaps, be compelled to battle your way through life as a female overseer on a large estate, or in some other way equally disgusting."

This was certainly a very bitter pill for a young girl, who could not be without a small quantity of self-love and vanity, and she therefore replied, somewhat excited—

"I do not know, father, how you can be so well aware of that of which nobody can know. At all events, however, I should prefer being the servant of the most severe mistress than the wife of a foolish man like the chamberlain. I would be obliged to blush for him at least twenty times a day, and would have to be ashamed of his vanity, as, unfortunately, he is so vain, that he thinks himself able to converse on every subject, when he is not able to talk of the most common-place subjects in a reasonable and proper manner."

"You dare, therefore, disobey your father's commands, and defy his wishes?" said the lieutenant-colonel, with suppressed anger.

"No, papa, I shall never do so—we need not carry the matter thus far, God be praised, for my papa is too tender a father, that he should wish to render his daughter miserable."

"But if it is my firm, irrevocable will; supposing I write to De Goesse, and tell him that it is our wish, and that he can come and continue his suit?"

"If you do that, papa, which I entreat you not to do, I will tell him, the first time he proposes to me, in the kindest manner, that I will not accept him under any circumstances, and that it would be better for him to return home."

"Would you indeed dare to take such a step, Amelia? reflect well before you answer me." With these words the lieutenant-colonel threw the napkin on the table, and shoved the plate aside, with a countenance from which all mildness had disappeared.

Amelia, with tender earnestness, looked into her father's countenance. It could readily be perceived that she was deeply grieved at the thought, that she was obliged to disobey him for the first time; but the matter was of far too much importance that any hesitation should prevent her from doing right. She therefore answered, in a modest, dutiful, but nevertheless, firm tone:—

"There is nothing which grieves me more, dear papa, than to make you angry; but it is impossible for me to do otherwise as long as you speak of the chamberlain. We poor women have only one right left to us, which is to dispose of our own hearts, and it would be too hard to deprive us of this liberty. For these reasons, you will not be surprised that I should defend that right."

"Away from my sight!" exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel, with violent rage. "Enjoy the thought that your father owes the man whom you refuse a much larger debt than he is able to pay. Take pleasure at the bitter sentiments I will experience in writing your refusal to a man whose generosity has relieved me when in a strange place, and to whom, together with the refusing answer which you wish me to send to him, I am unable to send his money."

"Dear papa, if I dare venture to say"—with these words Amelia approached her father hesitatingly, "what I think, I am of the opinion that even had you the money which you owe

Mr. De Goesse, it would not be very delicate to return it to under present circumstances."

"Ah! but you do not consider it indelicate to advise your father. Go; do not let me again see you, until you have thought of something better, which your duty to me as your father demands of you."

Fully aware that it was not possible, at present, to soothe her father, Amelia went down stairs, thanking God, that at least she had attained so much. Her resolute air had had a visible effect upon him, and she believed, with good reason, that she might entertain a hope, that she would be allowed finally to let the matter with De Goesse drop. On the other side, she reflected what she would have to do to furnish her father with an answer for the morning question. She had not exactly yet made up her mind how she would accomplish it; but had the consolation, however, of having heard of the fact that there was an old gentleman who lived in the neighbourhood of Tunefors, who was reputed very wealthy, and lent money on property, and who sometimes bought valuable effects, to relieve people from their troubles. He was generally known by the name of the Old Man of the Mountain. Nobody knew who he was, and nobody cared for him; only this much was known that he had come to the place many years before, and had bought an estate which was called "the Mountain." He lived there alone with an old female domestic, shut out from the world, as he pretended that he was too poor to keep a man servant; and as for the money he lent, it was always entrusted to him by an old distant relative, who had required him, in all cases, to take the best securities.

All this had been told to Amelia by the kitchen servants, when they were together occasionally, as the duties of her housework called her to the kitchen. The Old Man of the Mountain was, moreover, reputed to be a morose and silent man, and he was applied to very unwillingly, and then only in cases of the utmost necessity. Amelia's thoughts had now taken that direc-

tion, and they were not easily diverted from it, as perhaps through his means she might obtain the money. It was certainly not a very pleasant task to undergo such an adventure, by which she might not only expose herself to rough treatment, but also to refusal. But when such an important question was at stake, she could not view matters so minutely.

Amelia commenced by counting over her jewelry, which she had received, time by time, from her aunts; she found that, aside from the chain that we have mentioned before, it was perhaps of sufficient value to encourage her to make an endeavour.

She determined to venture it, not from a romantic notion; for, as we said before, there was nothing enthusiastic in Amelia's character—not the slightest trace of it; therefore, it was not in emulation of the heroic Romans, but the devotedness of a child, whose kind and pure heart wished to help her father out of his difficulty, with which Amelia reflected concerning the step which she was about taking, and placed the inclination of her heart before the chair of practical reason.

The result of all these reflections was, previously to speak to her mother, and hear whether her father was really in the difficulty which he pretended. If this was not so, Amelia was willing, with all her heart, to give up the plan which she had entertained; but if her father was really in what he sometimes called a "scrape," then all petty objections would have to be overruled; for Amelia sincerely believed that her father's greatest trouble was to pay back the money to the chamberlain.

Amelia had entertained the intention of visiting her friend Mina, the neighbouring pastor's daughter, who was to be married in a short time, and who had asked her to come there that they might hold an important consultation. This was a very fitting opportunity to attend to her own affairs also. She was glad that she had such a pretext, and hurried to her mother that she might tell her what had occurred in papa's room.

Madame De Dressen could hardly believe that Amelia had

gained such an advantage over her father. She could not see how the girl who was so mild and gentle at other times, could have assumed such an air of firmness. The good mother thanked God that he had given Amelia so much firmness of spirit, which did not submit to every passing freak, without, on the other side, compromising her duty as a child.

To Amelia's inquiry concerning the pecuniary circumstances of her father, her mother replied that they were indeed very critical, and with the undoubted impossibility of covering the amount due to De Goesse, it would be doubly painful to her father to send him a refusal.

Amelia did not wish to know more; and as her father was in very bad humour that day, and besides she had seen in his countenance that he had banished her from his presence, she thought it would be better for her to be out of his way for a few hours, and therefore asked her mother's permission to be allowed to visit the minister's daughter.

"You wanted to go there anyway during these days," replied her mother; "neither do I think that your father will be angry at your absence, or will look for you much, in his present state of mind. Give my compliments to the pastor's wife, and to Mina, and tell them that I shall not be able to see her before her day of honour; but if you can assist Mina in any way you may stay there; her willing hands have often rendered us many a service, as you know, before the bathing journey, and at other times."

"Then you will not soon go to the minister's; for the wedding will not take place until Christmas. Her bridal furniture is not yet ready."

"Yes, yes, but I have enough business to attend to at home, although there is to be no wedding," said Madame De Dressen, with a half-suppressed sigh. "Fall always supplies a thrifty housekeeper with sufficient work to attend to; but do not chatter too much, dear Amelia; but go now."

Amelia did not wait for a farther request to go, but hurried away to change her every-day clothing for a brown bombazine dress—her usual state dress. She then took hood and cloak, and with a small package, under her arm, which her mother did not see, went forth on her path.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TWO VISITS.

At a short distance from Tunefors, a path branches off from the main road, which leads from the lake toward the forest. This path leads to the parsonage, while the other goes straight on to the mountain. Amelia was afraid of nothing—neither of mud-puddles, nor of wild animals or robbers. With the light heart of a clever country girl, she climbed over the obstacles in the road, jumped over swampy holes, and upturned stumps, and after a good hour's walk she arrived at the little valley, from which at the top of the hill a little cottage could be seen. That was "the Mountain."

Glad that she had arrived at the end of her journey, Amelia hastened on, and was soon at the door, at which her little fingers knocked several times before she was admitted, because the loud continued rappings of a hammer drowned the sounds of her knocks. At length the door was opened by an old red-haired female domestic, who looked surprised at such an unexpected visit, and stepped backward; but as the door was open, Amelia passed in, and walked up to the table where an old man was busy driving a wedge into a worn-out window-blind, to keep it from falling to pieces.

The old man's torn and patched coat, the dirty room, and the miserable furniture, were not calculated to produce the idea that the inmates of the cottage were wealthy. On the contrary, the utmost poverty seemed to have taken its residence within the dilapidated walls. When Amelia approached the old man, he pushed his night-cap a little on one side, and laying down the hammer, made a motion, which was not without a certain

kind of politeness, although it would be difficult to say what it really meant. He looked sharply at the unexpected visitor, with his twinkling grey eyes; and on his brown wrinkled forehead there was not a trace of benevolence to be discovered. There was something, however, in his conduct which assured Amelia that she need not be fearful of any impolite treatment.

"I have a favour to ask of you, Mr. Broger," said she, in her soft, friendly voice; which, although not like the voice of the nightingale, sounded nevertheless very pleasant. It was as little a coquettish whisper as a rasping gurgle; but it was a clear, full-chest voice, that sounds well to the ear.

"What does it amount to?" inquired the old man; and, giving a signal for the old domestic to depart, pointed with his hand toward an old pine bench on the other side of the table.

Amelia wiped with her handkerchief some crumbs of bread and cheese from off the seat which had been offered her, seated herself, and reflected how she should make her wishes known to the man.

"I am informed that you sometimes assist people who are in trouble."

"I already know what the young lady desires; but you have been wrongly informed," interrupted the old man, roughly. "I am a poor man, as every body may see, and such false rumours are only spread by bad people to hang vagrants and other wicked folks about my neck."

"In that case, I am sorry that I have come for no purpose," replied Amelia, who had been prepared for such an introduction, and therefore did not lose her courage in the least. "Yes, I am very sorry, for I have something with me which, perhaps, is worth more than the amount of money I need."

"Oh, indeed, the young lady has valuables with her. But, as I said before, I myself have not a farthing to lend; although I sometimes take it upon myself to negotiate small sums upon commission; but such affairs are always a little ticklish, and I

usually get ingratitude and slander for my willingness to serve others. May I be informed what sort of a pledge your ladyship has?"

"O, all kinds of things. A large, massive gold chain; a bracelet; lockets; several rings; a cross; a large gilded goblet, and three silver spoons." She took out one thing after another, and the countenance of the old man brightened.

"Perhaps," said he, measuring the glittering objects which were heaped in Amelia's lap with an avaricious eye, "I might, perhaps, assist the young lady with some money which a friend has deposited with me, if I knew how much she wanted."

Amelia had heard that the money due to De Goesse amounted to two hundred rix-dollars *banco*. She named that sum.

"Alas! God bless me, that would be twice as much as the things are worth. I cannot give you more than one half of that sum."

"Then we may let the matter rest at once," replied Amelia; and, with apparent indifference, covered the jewelry with one fold of the napkin.

"Well, for your sake, dear young lady, I will make it two hundred dollars rix-money."

"I must have the sum mentioned, or else give up the whole trade," replied Amelia, quietly arising.

"Let me look at the stuff again." Thus saying, the old man carefully weighed the articles in his hand, and after long bargaining he brought the money.

But now a circumstance occurred which made a great difference in her calculations. The old man of the mountain, like other usurers, had the fatal custom of making a slight deduction from the sum he lent, a little commission fee—for it is impossible for one to serve people for nothing; but as Amelia had no such idea about it, she became seriously confused and troubled. As soon as the sum was diminished in the least, her whole sacrifice amounted to nothing, as Mr. Broger, by all means, wished

his commission before he allowed the money to go out of his possession.

"Alas! what a bother such money matters are," sighed Amelia to herself. "If I get through this safely I shall never meddle with it again, except with the butter and egg money."

Mr. Broger, however, made a favourable proposal, to which Amelia agreed with pleasure. It was to make a little note of security that was to be paid at the redemption of the pledged articles. Amelia now parted with her treasures, and saw one after another glide into a leathern bag, which the old man drew forth from a concealed cavity in the floor. She felt the most pain at the loss of the chain which her mother had given her—she also had other thoughts about it—but for such contemplations it was now too late.

Amelia took leave of her new acquaintance, and after she had deposited her money in that place where it is said that ladies like to preserve their love-letters, in the absence of which Amelia thought it would be a safer place of concealment than in her work-bag, she went her way toward the parsonage, which was nearer at hand than Tunefors, and arrived there just as the family were seating themselves at the supper-table, where they offered a place to Amelia by the side of her friend Mina.

Mina, the daughter of the minister, and the betrothed of his assistant, Lamm, was a clever girl, and well versed in all domestic affairs: in the preparation of cheese she especially excelled, for which reason her mother always had prophesied that she would become the wife of a deacon.

Amelia was very much attached to the good and lively Mina, to whom she was indebted for her knowledge of many domestic matters; but a real, confidential friendship did not exist between the two girls. Not that Amelia drew a distinction between the daughter of the Lieutenant-colonel and Chamberlain De Dressen and the pastor Wickmann's daughter—no; but because Amelia had, in spite of her plain appearance, a finer judgment, more

powers of reason, and a better education than Mina. For these reasons alone there could no real harmony exist between the girls, and only when the conversation was upon weaving, spinning, gardening, and household affairs, their ideas coincided. In regard to other matters, they were generally of a different opinion, which we will see from the conversation they had together, when, after the coffee, Mina accompanied her friend a part of the distance home.

"Why did you not allow Lamm to accompany us?" said Mina; "I believe you saw that it was his intention to do so when he took his hat? One could well infer from your haste that you did not want him to walk with us."

"Ay, dear Mina, I thought that you could be content with my society alone for a little time. Your betrothed is, in every respect, an honest, upright man, but——"

"Well, *but* what?" inquired Mina, tossing her head.

"See, dear Mina, he is too tedious; at least so it appears to me. But it is not right that I should say so to you."

"Why not? sincerity is always the best, but I should like to know what you really have against him?"

"Nothing; but, as I told you before, I find him tedious."

"That's strange, indeed. What do you mean by tedious? It appears to me that he is very pretty and pleasant."

"One can be both, and even still more, and yet be tedious," replied Amelia. "When he says anything, it always comes out so monotonous. He has only three hobbies, which he rides alternately. First, the sermon to be preached on the ensuing Sunday; second, the next visit to the sick; and, third, his stereotyped story about the family of the count with whom he lived as a teacher."

"Well, that is funny, indeed. I am never tired in the least of his stories, for he says them in such a pretty and neat way."

"That's just what I do not find; but we do not have similar tastes."

"Yes, but that is not his fault," said Mina, somewhat piqued. "I know well enough why you say so—if he would only court you——"

"By-the-by," interrupted Amelia, "have you read the book that I lent you a short time ago?"

"No, I have not; and you, Amelia, have certainly not read that old trashy book? for I know nothing more tiresome than for somebody to have a book printed, and then want others to read it into the bargain."

"What, tiresome!" exclaimed Amelia. "I read the two first volumes with the deepest interest. What, do you call Walter Scott's 'Ivanhoe' tiresome? I can hardly wait until I can obtain the third volume."

"I have no objection, as far as I am concerned. I have enough trouble with our own swineherd, and with our own pigs, without reading such stuff in books. No, if I am obliged to read anything at all, I want to read something touching, and not such rough, uncouth stuff; for my father said that the expression 'sow' was very indecent; 'bristly feminine swine,' one should say; for the rest, it would not amount to much even if the expression was a little indecent, if the story was only pretty and exciting, so that one would know how it is to end. But Lamm, I must tell you, he has a couple of such touching books: three volumes of 'Célestine; or, the mysterious Child,' that is awfully beautiful; and what pretty songs to sing are in it. These we usually sing together, as Lamm has a beautiful voice, as you have heard in church. But your books, Amelia—do not be angry—we lay aside. The string of my patience is broken a hundred times before I get through the first chapter, so I do not read it through."

"Well, that is no fault," said Amelia, and tripped on hastily, for the dew had commenced falling. "But see, what a beautiful evening! how magnificently the sun is sinking behind the mountains, and casts its long shadows. Ah! now we step into

the pretty little valley, and we will soon come to the beach of the lake. How splendidly will the rays of the sun reflect in the water! Such a sunset in the fall, when nature does not offer much beauty, is certainly a true luxury."

"Lord! I do not see anything particular here," exclaimed Mina, climbing dexterously over a fence which barred her road. "I can look at the sun every day; and it is more prudent to hurry on, or else it will be dark before we get home."

"I will not allow you to go with me farther now," said Amelia; "the next time that I come to your house I wish to see your new piece of linen, which I forgot to-day. Have you much to weave of it yet?"

"O, not much; you cannot think how fast it goes off. Lamm held the spool for me—my mother helped me to wind it off and twist it—even my father has twisted yarn. O, dear heaven! when one wishes to marry, every body wants to assist her. I wish that you also may have, by-and-by, such a neat man as my Lamm is."

"I shall be glad if your cloth turns out well," said Amelia, with a smile, in which lay a little of the De Dressen pride, in spite of its being so strange to her at other times. "Good night, dear Mina; give my love to all at home, and be not angry that I have not fallen in love with your lover."

"O! never mind about that; I love him so much the better. But good night, dear Amelia; do not forget the handkerchief which you promised to embroider for me."

With a friendly nod the girls separated. Amelia contemplated for a short time the rich combination of colours which contrasted so deeply with the dark ground, and afterward hurried, lightly and in good spirits, toward her own home. Her heart beat higher and more joyously, when she thought what a pleasant surprise she had prepared for her father.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A LETTER FROM BORGENSTIERNA TO ASSESSOR WIRÉN.

"No, it is not possible that you should be seriously offended at something so natural as my inclination to be alone. Moreover, I must tell you—for friends should be frank toward each other—that I did not feel at home in your house. This may appear strange to you, but believe me, as dark and gloomy as I may be, inwardly, the icy frost of darkness with which Virginia covers everything around her, weighs heavy upon me, as she appears in a more striking contrast to your own gay disposition, which is neither disturbed nor obstructed for a moment by the repulsive behaviour of your wife.

"With you I have seen what is wedded life without unity of character and inclination. You certainly strive to repay yourself by a mass of pleasures, and your wife does not seem to feel that it should be otherwise; but I have, during my short stay at your house, after our journey, become firm in my determination to bid farewell to the plan which at least I partly entertained, and which evidently had taken possession of my heart. Before that time I did not know how much one partner in marriage is able to embitter the life of the other. My poor Matilda has certainly suffered more than I ever dreamed of; and Amelia—what would be her lot, to be bound to a husband of my gloomy disposition? She—with her young heart full of life—she would weep and sigh about me as you do for Virginia. Even if she could be able to console herself, by the light conduct I so often see in you, she would have, as her gay humour would not fail to exert, now and then, a favourable impression upon me—to use the mildest expression—certainly no reason to be rejoiced at a

sudden return of my ill-humour. I already tremble at the thought of such a misalliance.

"Do not believe that these words are the productions of a diseased imagination, which has seized me since my last sorrow and since my entire solitude. You must know that Diana has ceased to recognise me with the usual caresses which she used in times long past. No, Wirén, what I just said is not the creation of unmanly weakness. I am not ashamed to confess that the dog's death has much moved me, and grieves me yet; but for what purpose have we a soul but to contend with the natural tendency of our nature, which strives to submit to pain involuntarily, and to conquer these inclinations victoriously? The power of the will, is power already half gained; but halfness is always perfection, and, I am sorry to say, this is probably the reason why I am able to suffer with firmness that pain which I cannot prevent, and to give another direction to my feelings, conduct, and whole life.

"'Why,' you inquire of me in your last letter, 'do you bury yourself in such deep, gloomy ponderings? Whoever tells himself, with a pleasing and just pride, that he had risen from the darkness which surrounded his early youth, by his own exertions; that he had schooled his own talents; and had enlarged his knowledge, gaining for himself, by his own exertions, an honoured name and an independent position in the world, to be at last enabled to follow the free choice of his heart—what reason has he to be gloomy?'

"Friend Wirén, did you ever inquire of the stream, why it did not change its bed, from that which had been given it by nature?

"Try it, and the monotonous flow will tell you, that the uninterrupted law of nature cannot be stayed. You may answer me, 'A volcanic convulsion may change its direction entirely, and throw it into the bosom of another stream, in which its own current is lost.' All well and good; but the consequences of any eruptions always produce evil, even in the domestic circle.

"I do not like to swim against the current of my own inclinations, for I know beforehand that the trouble would be for naught.

"Neither should you believe that it is envy or discontent which prevents me from springing over the gulf that separates me from the spot on which stood my ancestors. No; from such sentiments I am as far distant as heaven is from earth, inasmuch as I have ever entertained the thought of enlarging that gulf; and if I should ever come to the conclusion of offering my hand to the daughter of a proud and rank-loving man, the first proof of her devotedness to me must be that she would consent to descend to that position in life which I intend to maintain.

"More concerning this point at another time. My business now calls. You must know I am only the dreamer when I am alone in my little room, or when I am surrounded by the confusion and turmoil of the world. Among my own people, when my establishment is in full blast, amid the working men in my tannery, I am not the same man. There at least I am fully awake; and although real quietness and content during the work are strangers to me, I do not at least feel that eternal voidness, which troubles me so much—and labour is true life to me.

"Now farewell, Wirén, dear brother of my heart. Give my compliments to your wife, and forgive me for preferring to spend my Christmas near my own fireside—although Roestorp is very lonely and dreary during the winter; but my misanthropy would surely increase if I should know that I was in the neighbourhood of your wife. If Virginia was less beautiful, her dulness would be less repulsive; and if you were not one of those happy gifted beings, whom the Creator brought forth in a peculiarly friendly moment, when a gayer and warmer sun shone over the dimness of earth, then I should consider you one of the most unhappy of husbands. But your incomprehen-

sible gayness and lightness of mind are the cause why your lot appears far less dark to you than to me.

"Of the Dressens I know nothing. I am hardly able to express to you what a powerful indescribable feeling prevents me from writing to them, and set forth my gratitude, which I now and ever shall entertain for them. This is a feeling which does no honour to my heart, and yet—I wish I had never entered your house. Farewell once more. Let me soon hear from you, and oblige, Your faithful

"IVAR."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ASSESSOR WIRÉN'S REPLY.

"MY DEAR BORGENSTIERNA—

"Although your letter relating to my house, and its principal article of luxury, my wife, contains matters which may be forgiven only to a friend, who is diseased in mind, it has, nevertheless, rendered me the utmost service, especially as it refers to the cure which it has effected in Virginia. Judge for yourself whether I have not every reason to be grateful to you. As to matters concerning yourself we shall chatter, after I have communicated to you all in relation to my wife and to myself.

"After I had read your letter through, it struck my mind that I owed to my wife a little attention, and should inform her of the judgment of a man concerning her, for whom she feels a high degree of esteem, in her own way. I went to her room, where she sat in all the glory of a housewife, preparing my shirt-frills.

"'Dear Virginia,' said I, in a half grieved tone—I am sure, at least, that it sounded grieved, for I felt somewhat depressed—'I have received very unpleasant news.'

"'I am sorry for it,' replied my wife, in such an unconcerned, and indifferent manner, as though there was nothing at stake but the shirt-frills.

"I do not know how it happened—whether I had been excited by certain remarks in your letter about Virginia, or whether something else grieved me; in short, I was at first really angry with her. But can one more easily become excited than at a woman, who resembles in her outward appearance, her position, and her whole conduct, a complete automaton? The consequence

was, that I replied to her with unusual violence, 'I do not think that you would be grieved at anything, even did you hear that I had broken my neck.' Without answering, she looked at me with an air of reproach. This was certainly more than I ever before had seen. Every trace of ill-humour vanished, and grasping her hand and kissing her—'Would it not grieve you some, Virginia,' said I, 'would it not arouse you from your usual apathy, if you should suddenly hear that you had become a widow?'

"'Without doubt,' said she, slowly, but this same 'without doubt,' I had heard her say at the most indifferent things, and I felt displeased beyond all measure, that she did not choose a more fitting expression. My ill-humour and my anger increased to a greater degree. I restrained my excited feelings, and bending over her, said, in the same tone, 'Take care of your shirt-frills; you are spoiling them.'

"Cooled off, I arose, and was about departing, when I thought of your letter, and taking it out, read aloud the passages referring to her. Would you believe it? she blushed; yes, blushed indeed, when I read the following words, with appropriate accent: 'Moreover, I must tell you—for friends should be frank toward each other—that I did not feel at home in your house. This may appear strange to you, but believe me, as dark and gloomy as I may be, inwardly, the icy frost of darkness with which your wife covers everything around her, weighs heavy upon me, as she appears in a more striking contrast to your own gay disposition, which is neither disturbed nor obstructed for a moment by the repulsive behaviour of your wife'—and further below.

"'My compliments to your wife, and forgive me for preferring to spend my Christmas near my own fireside—although Roestorp is very lonely and dreary during the winter; but my misanthropy would surely increase if I should know that I was in the neighbourhood of your wife. If Virginia was less beautiful, her dulness would be less repulsive; and if you were not

one of those happy gifted beings, whom the Creator brought forth in a peculiarly friendly moment, when a gayer and warmer sun shone over the dimness of earth, then I should consider you the most unhappy of husbands. But your incomprehensible gayness and lightness of mind are the cause why your lot appears less dark to you than to me.' Here the little knife she held fell from her hand, and when I stooped down to take it from the floor, I became aware of two equally remarkable facts, which drew my serious attention, as well as excited my highest surprise. In her thoughtlessness, she had made a cut in the frill—and on it was a spot—the spot of a tear from Virginia's eye!

"As incredible as this may appear to you, it is true, nevertheless; but what could have caused this emotion? was it wounded pride, or the first knowledge of her own mind, which came upon her suddenly, when the scales were violently torn from her eyes? or was it—? There is a third supposition, but I do not wish to mention it, for it borders on impossibility, and God save me from such a suspicion, which probably, nay, certainly, would be the utmost injustice toward her. Suffice it to say that that spot was indeed there, and it may be presumed that she must highly esteem the one whose opinions could cause her so much excitement, when she is usually as rigid as marble.

"'Virginia,' said I, with deep feeling, 'I suppose it grieves you very much that my dearest friend refuses an invitation to come to our house with such disgust, and speaks in such terms of my wife. Am I not right?'

"'Yes, certainly you are right,' she replied, composedly; 'but Wirén, I did not know that you were considered so unhappy; and still less did I know that I was not like other women. I cannot help it, however.' She had never spoken so much before; and placing every word together that she had spoken during the three years of our marriage, there would not lie so much feeling in them as in this single expression. 'But, Virginia, if you feel a coldness within your heart, then warm it on mine,' said I,

excited with my happiness; yes, more happy than I had ever been before. 'Warm yourself by my heart;' and thus saying, I embraced her rapturously.

"A violent tremor thrilled her whole form; she tore herself from me. 'Not now, not now,' cried she, displaying the most visible anxiety of mind. 'I must first compose myself. Let me go.'

"I did not wish to detain her against her inclination; but the time before the supper, when I should again see her, had never before appeared so long. At length supper was announced, and when I entered the room with your letter in my hand, she was there already. She stood before the open window, stiff and cold as usual. When I approached her, a slight but suddenly vanishing smile passed over her lips. Oh, if you could only behold and comprehend how beautiful she is, when even a gleam of feeling enlivens her features. Yes, I know that now, after a lapse of three years, I could again fall in love with her, more violently than ever—to madness—and that with my own wife!

"But Virginia is not like other women. There is something repelling and at the same time attracting in this strange mixture of life and death; and to imagine her at once like her fellow-sisters, with the same fire, and warm sentiments, would be something so uncommon to me, that I would be scarcely able to comprehend it. But if it should be reserved to me to become a second Prometheus, I believe my own work would increase my love for her, and my happiness a hundredfold.

"When we were alone in the evening, she began to speak about the incidents of the day first. 'Wirén,' said she, 'I have a favour to ask of you.'

"'Speak, dearest. Shall I go straight to Roestorp, and bring Borgenstierna here, whether he wishes to come or not, so that he may beg your pardon?' At this jesting proposal, which my glowing sentiment caused me to make, a deep cloud, deeper than the reddest rose that ever appeared on the face of woman,

tremblingly overspread her cheeks, giving way the next moment to an icy paleness; at the same time she made a repelling gesture, full of painful displeasure.

"'What's the matter, my angel?' said I, not much edified by the emotion which the mention of your name caused her.

"'I intreat you never to speak of this evening again; as far as I am concerned, the sharp lesson which I have received this day, will be sufficient to cause me henceforth to master the indifference and silence which are so intimately connected with my whole existence. I shall endeavour, further, to fill up my sphere in a better manner, and try to become the same as other women.'

"What a miracle, my friend! such words from Virginia's lips; and what a sorcerer you are, to cause by your simple judgment such a change; you see now yourself how strong explosions sometimes have their good influence. There are matters, the consequences of which we eschew the most, if we accept them as they are, and enjoy them as they are, without further inquiry; and whither these inquiries would lead me, even if I should endeavour to solve them, I do not know, and feel no inclination to try it.

"In nature, especially human nature, there are many things which cannot be explained at all; to what purpose will the endeavour lead, to throw light upon a matter which, wrapped in mysterious darkness, has undoubtedly a far more pleasing effect, than to lift the veil from it, when it will be so close to us that we will be obliged to shut our eyes, that we may not see it in too bright a light? But now to your own affairs. If you are not an incurable sick stickler, then follow my well-intended and reasonable advice, and go on with the girl. What in the whole world do you wish more than is here offered? Amelia is as lovely as a Hebe. She is virtuous, and kind-hearted, as any woman can be; without that, her smoothness would degenerate into softness and even dulness; she possesses just that degree of

education which will render her a lovely, pleasing housekeeper, an excellent companion for a somewhat morose man; and finally, she loves you, and will faithfully share in your joys and sorrows. And if all this is not sufficient to compel you to allow you to let the feeling take hold of your heart, which is there already, then remember with what an unspeakable tenderness she has watched, nursed, and cared for your child; then you will blush at the ignoble selfishness with which you intend to leave the girl thus unrewarded, and look quietly on, while she will, of her own accord, have to refuse the overtures of the disgusting De Goesse, and the stupid obstinacy of her father; while you are reflecting, in your backwardness, whether you will trouble yourself sufficiently to stretch forth your hand to pluck the rose which stands ready for you, or whether you will leave her to the storm which will destroy her, and draw upon you the eternal reproach, of having suffered the time to glide away to no purpose, while action would have been more honourable to the man, than useless cogitations.

"In the meantime I have considered it my duty, as your oldest and most devoted friend, to meddle with the affair a little myself, and to stop others in their actions, until you have come to a resolution. I know Lieutenant N——, who, since the bathing season at Stroemstad, has been the faithful and steady companion of De Goesse, and through him, I have not only received, according to our mutual agreement, the news of De Goesse's proposal, but likewise a copy of a precious letter, which he has written with that honourable intention to the lieutenant-colonel. It is a remarkable appendix to those choice verses, which he ascribed to the chosen queen of his heart, and which you will undoubtedly remember. The letter itself you will find inclosed, but with the express condition that you will return it immediately; for you will perceive that, to an amateur collector of literary rarities, the loss of such a magnificent edition, as Goesse's letter is, could not be made up for.

"But as fanciful as the letter may be, he is, nevertheless, in earnest in his intentions, and as you do not let any at Tunefors hear or see anything of you, it is very excusable if the chamberlain finds, at least with the lieutenant-colonel, open ears and doors. And, in fact, this is the case, for he says in his answer to De Goesse, among other things, 'I cannot refrain from telling you, sir, that my daughter, at least *for the moment*, has no inclination to comply with your desires. I am of the opinion, however, that, as experience has often taught us, young maids are of a changeable disposition, and therefore take the liberty to propose to you to come here personally, and carry on the matter yourself; in which I wish you the utmost success.'

"Relying upon this letter, De Goesse is making preparations for his journey, and it may be that he has arrived there already, although not alone, as you will soon hear. As I am afraid that the lieutenant-colonel, who appears to me to be of a very violent nature, might by threats or persuasion move Amelia to give way, I have prevailed upon Baron Lindenskoeld to take a roundabout road on his journey to Stockholm, for the support of my plan. You know what an honest, good-natured old man he is, and is always willing to render his assistance to forward an innocent joke, especially if he entertains the hope of rendering a service to his favourite Amelia. The baron will conduct himself in a manner so that the lieutenant-colonel, who is always eager to bite, will not know what he is about; and, in the hope of, perhaps, seeing Amelia as a baroness yet, will not exactly give Goesse the cold shoulder, but will put him off until you can bring the matter to a conclusion by your arrival. You need not be afraid that the baron will not conduct the matter with necessary ability; the lieutenant-colonel always has his head filled with plans of marriage; so that it will not cost the baron a great deal of trouble to arrange matters in such a manner that the other will not consider his presence as a friendly visit alone. I have made Baron Lindenskoeld acquainted with

all that I knew myself about your inclination; and we both agree that the small sin of cutting a joke upon the stupid lieutenant-colonel—of course, with the utmost forethought—finds more than one excuse, in our intention of retaining for you the lovely Amelia. All we expect to demand of you is, that you will not wish us to bother our heads for nothing, and that our troubles and exertions will not be to no purpose, and that you will see what will be the best for you.

"I have no objection to what you mention at the close of your letter; upon this point we agree. In the meantime I do not wish you to understand that I would have acted in the same way if I had been in your situation; such things cannot possibly be expressed in words. But I again lay it before your heart: do not cast away that most precious thing—time!

"Yours,

"WIRÉN."

CHAPTER XXV.

BORGENSTIERNA AT HOME.

NEAR one of the inlets of Lake Hjelmar lies Roestorp, upon a gently-sloping hill, from the summit of which the white dwelling-house, surrounded by a dense grove of old chestnut-trees, presents a charming picture close by, as well as from a distance. In the second story on the front of the house, there is a balcony that the owner had caused to be made immediately after his return from the baths. On this balcony, he often stood leaning over the railing, rapt in meditation, or gazing toward the road, which was seldom travelled by strangers, to interrupt the monotony of the place. Often he felt the desire to change his mode of life, but was always kept back by mistrust and want of decision.

From the balcony, on which he was wont to stand for hours, he usually went down to the tannery, and saw that the work went on lively and briskly. He spoke to his factor about improvements on the farm, and advised with him concerning his arrangements and plans, which might have a bearing upon their mutual business. Activity was a necessity for him, and he had a sufficiency of it; yet he also had his hours of leisure, and it was especially during the latter that his misanthropy grew upon him, when he went up to his lonely room after dinner, where his factor was his only companion.

Here, on that sofa which stood opposite the one he now sat on, he had often heard Matilda's sighs; but, just as often, her friendly words of gratitude for his tender nursing. On the carpet at his feet Diana had played with Alfred; but all were now gone—everything empty. Horribly dreary stood the long

series of splendidly-furnished rooms; no sound was now to be heard, but the deep breath of the owner, and the ticking of the clock.

"I shall suffocate," said Borgenstierna, one afternoon when he felt more than usually depressed with melancholy, which was so intimately connected with his whole existence. "I must have air." He advanced to the balcony. It was an evening in the fall, when the sun sinks at an early hour; and he gazed at the blurred background, where the tree tops swam together in one dark mass, upon which the glittering rays of the sun were shining, until they finally sunk into the foam-crowned surface of the lake.

What Borgenstierna was thinking about we do not know; but it might have been of distant memories which passed by his soul, as for the last few days he had lived much in bygone times. His parents, the poor cot in the forest of Swartenborg, his faithful pony, and the adventure which was connected with his death, the true turning-point of his life; and, finally, his journey to Spinesund, occupied his thoughts for many an hour, and became entwined gradually more and more with the events of the past summer. As he was thus standing contemplating the sunset, his factor approached him and gave him a letter: it was Wirén's. No sooner had Borgenstierna recognised his friend's familiar handwriting, than he immediately returned to his room, cheerfully pleased to rid himself of his own thoughts.

The relation of Virginia's miraculous excitement at the instance of hearing his letter read, awakened feelings within him, which cannot easily be deciphered or explained, and still less be described. He could not help understanding the hints contained therein, as dark as the veil was, which the writer had thrown over the whole; but as it rejoiced him, on one side, that something—let it be what it was—had brought life into that marble statue, it was, on the other hand, almost a capital crime to think that which her husband expressed. At the mere thought of it, the blood rushed to his head, and his brain grew

dizzy, as often as he strove to peep into the depth of that woman's heart; for was it possible that Virginia, who appeared as cold and chaste as a vestal, could really be able to carry another picture in her heart than that of her husband? If that was the case, what could be expected of all the rest of women?

One hope, however was left him; he was aware of Wirén's hasty character, and how easily he received every impression, which, at least for this time, at a more mature reflection, must necessarily lose the colour that it possessed at first. At this supposition he halted; and it became a settled fact with him, that Wirén must have fallen into a great error, on which the false conclusions he had made in his last letter were based. So much, however, was certain, that Virginia, either by reflection, or in consequence of some other motive, the cause of which was not to be discovered, had suddenly awoke from her indifference. And as there could be nothing more desirable for the happiness of his friend, Borgenstierna considered it better to make no further inquiry, but to leave it to the One who looks deeper into our hearts than men are able to do.

He then read the letter further, and found much which claimed his attention. The chamberlain's letter caused him to smile; but Wirén's good-natured readiness to serve him, and to intermeddle with Baron Lindenskoeld and his affairs, created much ill-humour within him; for that certainly was his own care, and it did not concern any other man to help him to a wife. This single-handed interference with so tender an affair, which concerned his future happiness or misery so much, that he determined to do exactly opposite from that which Wiren advised.

He resolved to allow the performers in this play to act according to their own wishes; and only until after he had found out the sequel would he consider what he should do himself. In the meantime, he was fearful that he would miss the most suitable

season. Amelia, a poor girl, without prospects of another offer, would accept whatever appeared, and even could not be blamed for doing so.

"But no matter"—here Borgenstierna's thoughts took a more rapid flight—"If Amelia is willing to give her hand away for the sake of a husband alone, and to secure a subsistence during life, then, in God's name, she may take whoever she pleases; but if her heart is already given away, then —"

He did not proceed further for the present; but, on the contrary, he made up his mind to let the matter go on as it would, and see how it would terminate without his interposition. A few days afterwards he wrote to Wirén as follows:

"You have thought fit to hasten on my matters; but, nevertheless, as far as I am concerned, they are standing still. Let us not talk any more of Amelia, and, upon the whole, not concerning marriage at all—if I should ever be bound by new fetters—at least I wish to bind myself. Concerning the other subjects, of which we have often conversed, I have now formed a resolution. I have already entered my petition, and hope to see my desire in that respect realized. It is a pity that everything has to take such roundabout ways, and takes so much time; but one must have patience. If I once arrive at that position, I shall feel as free as the birds amid the green leaves of the forest.

"I am about making a great many alterations and repairs in Roestorp—not concerning the immediate concerns of the estate, for there my improvements never cease—but I speak principally of new ornaments in the garden, and an extension of the park. Occupation I must have; it is the only cure for my inward uneasiness. I cannot discover the cause of this misanthropy, as my doctor calls it: it has increased from year to year—especially it troubles me much in the fall of the year; and there are moments when I fruitlessly look about me for support, and find assistance

neither in nature nor within my heart, nor in religion; then it weighs heavily upon my breast, and everything is dreary and dark around me, and my reason and all better sentiments are near being lost in the combat, which they cannot avoid, in which they are frequently victorious, only again to be conquered. It is an everlasting strife, which can only be put down by gaiety, labour, and new plans. If I should cowardly give way to my fate, my energy would soon be overpowered; but to that point it shall never come. I will conquer the enemy which wishes to fetter my heart with such bonds of ignominy!

"I am leading, perhaps, too much of a lonely life, but society makes me sick; I can only talk with the factor, since I cannot hear Alfred's dear voice! But am I not poor indeed! Where is there a being whom I can call my own?—where a heart which rejoices in my joy, and shares my sorrow with me? which understands me, and, even without questions, fathoms my thoughts, and feels deep interest for me?

"Man and wife—thought and sentiment—one life, one soul; but in that manner *she* must love, or it is not marriage according to my ideas. But I think it best that we should break off here. I have already lingered too long upon my own affairs. In relation to you, and to Virginia's change of mind, I only say, take care. According to my opinion, she is at the turning point of making a heaven or a hell within her heart. Any further words concerning it would be as unnecessary as inappropriate.

"IVAR."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DOOMED CALF.

WHEN Amelia returned from her errand, which she had performed through filial love, she entered the room quickly and full of joy. She found her mother sitting at her sewing, engaged in deep meditation.

"Has papa been down?" inquired Amelia.

"Yes, at noon."

"Is he angry still, dear mother?"

"I do not know, my child; but it appears to me as though he had repented of the forbearance which he showed you this morning; at least, he has already sent away an answer."

"He is in a terrible hurry," replied Amelia. "I do not know to what conclusions I shall come; but I should think that, according to what I told my father this morning, the answer would not be very favourable toward the chamberlain."

"Then I am of another opinion," said her mother, with unmistakable uneasiness in her voice. "Your father is not in the habit of concealing anything from me; and if he had sent a decided refusal, I would have heard long ago what a sacrifice he had made for your obstinacy. But his silence causes me to draw other conclusions."

"If that is the case, I will immediately go up to his rooms and talk with him before he will be able to think about the various expedients he will use to force me into obedience. I have done something to-day which will cause papa to rejoice, and will now try my good luck."

That she might not be obliged to confess to her mother the self-willed step she had taken in pawning her jewels, she intended

to wait until she had discovered what her father would say to it. For the purpose of avoiding her mother's "what do you mean?" which was already on the lips of the latter, she hurried away, and with a few springs was before her father's door.

Although Amelia's knock was unanswered, she ventured to open the door. The lieutenant-colonel was sitting near the table, supporting his head with his hand.

"Will you allow me to disturb you a little?" inquired Amelia, peeping through the door.

"Yes, if you come back more reasonable than you went off this morning. If the contrary is the case, you may leave me alone."

"I must tell you something, papa. I have seen that it would be of course very disagreeable to you to remain the chamberlain's debtor, and especially at the time when he wished to marry me."

"Indeed! do you really entertain such a reasonable thought? that does honour to your heart as well as to your reason. I hope you see that we cannot do better than to say, yes."

"Far from it, dear papa. Would it not be better to endeavour to collect the sum of two hundred rix-dollars *banco*, than to extend our hand to Mr. de Goesse? Such a reason for accepting his hand can indeed not be a real ground for so doing."

"No; if it was at all necessary to look around for such an objection, as I do not see that it should require any further reason than that the proposal is a good one."

"Whether I feel a desire to do so or not, is an objection which you will certainly not leave unrespected."

"You women never know what you want. But what is it you really have to tell me?"

"Yes, papa, money is at stake. I have ventured to obtain some, with the hope that you would rather grant the joy to me of assisting you in an accidental difficulty, than that you would ask of me that I should throw away my happiness, and the peace of my whole life, for the golden chains which De Goesse wishes to present me."

"Where, in the name of the Lord, did you obtain so much money?" inquired the lieutenant-colonel, forgetting, in the two bank-bills which Amelia extended him, almost the whole of the last part of her speech.

"I have pawned all my jewels, dear little papa, and even the spoons which I received as a new year's present from aunt Utter."

"What! pawned your jewels! loaned them as a pledge! Are you dreaming? or have you lost your reason? You, the daughter of the lieutenant-colonel? It cannot be. You could not have forgotten what is due to your rank and family"

"I did not know that one way of borrowing money was worse than the other; besides, the matter can be considered as a mere trade. I have sold my jewels, and, therefore, the money is my own."

"Take care, Amelia; do not jest with your father." Thus saying, the cheeks of the lieutenant-colonel turned almost purple, and the hand in which he held the bank-bills trembled violently.

Amazed, and unable to comprehend what it was that caused her father so much excitement, Amelia replied.

"Joke! how can you believe such a thing, my father? How dare I venture to jest with my father?"

"Then it is true; you have indeed lost your senses. Without hesitation, you have sacrificed your father's good reputation, his credit, his name, and what is still more sacred, his honour, to a childish whim. What will the people say when they hear that Miss de Dressen runs into the country, pawns her jewels for the purpose of paying her father's debts? Oh, it is horrible! Is this your filial love? I already see all tongues in motion about this unheard-of act. Who has loaned money upon your trinkets? I can hardly think who could have done so."

"The Old Man of the Mountain lent me the money, and was rejoiced that I would be able to help my father out of his difficulties."

"Then you have been to the miserable old usurer, to whom the poorest and most wretched peasant turns, when he has to pay his taxes, or desires seed. At his house, in that nest of thieves, you have been."

A cold shudder passed through the lieutenant-colonel's whole form. But notwithstanding the terrible thunderstroke which fell upon his pride, he was touched by Amelia's simple and beautiful deed. That one sentiment was forced to give way before the other.

After a few moments of deep silence, which Amelia did not dare to break, the lieutenant-colonel inquired, in a tone as though life and death depended upon the answer:

"Did you meet anybody else on the mountain? Can anybody guess where you have been? or have you told any one?"

"Not a soul is aware of it, papa. I met no one, nor spoke with any one; even mother knows nothing about it."

"Good, my daughter; I shall try and hush up the matter."

He questioned her concerning the terms she had made, and then continued:

"I cannot possibly applaud your actions, which were certainly well intended, but which might easily bring me into bad repute, so that the whole neighbourhood would point their fingers in scorn at me; but, nevertheless, I am willing to pardon your youthful indiscretion. Now give me a list of the effects which you have pledged."

Amelia wrote them down as soon as possible; and with a silent seriousness the lieutenant-colonel took his cloak and cap.

"My God, papa, I hope that you will not yourself now—"

"Hush, Amelia; the first condition of my pardon is, that you will keep silence."

"But, dear father, have I done so very wrong? I should not think it was such an uncommon thing to borrow money, if one wants it; and have not noblemen debts as well as other people?"

"To borrow money, my child, is certainly no shame; but it depends a good deal on the manner in which one does it. In the present case, I would have to shut my eyes with shame, if it should become known that my daughter had gone to a miserable usurer to borrow a few withered bank-notes, spotted by many a bloody tear. A usurer in the country is not the same as one in a large city: with the former one cannot negotiate without impairing his honour; with the other it can be done in a respectable manner, and the matter is known by two only. Do you now see the difference? and do you comprehend the scandal if it should be said, that it cannot fare well with the Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen of Tunefors, as his daughter pawned her jewellery? No, that must be prevented—or else it will become a story to be the heroine of which would cause you much shame, if you had any idea of the world and good manners."

"But, dear papa, I am so—"

"Hush! hush! no more of your chatter. Drive the subject from your mind. Remember, however, that by the manner in which you have commenced the business, I can never be relieved from my unpleasant position."

Thus saying, the lieutenant-colonel hastily descended the stairs. It had already become dark, and with anxiety Amelia thought of the long walk he had to make through the forest.

She was unable to keep her little secret longer to herself, and how harshly her father had treated her; and to the first question of Madame de Dressen, "What is the matter with you, my child?" she reported all that she had done, as well as what her father had said to it.

"Oh, you kind-hearted child!" said Madame de Dressen, embracing Amelia warmly. "You should not have followed the sentiments of your heart, if you had asked my advice. I should have told you that your father would rather go to jail, than that he should have entered into any arrangements with such a person as the Old Man of the Mountain. Your conduct loses none of

its value, however, dear Amelia; and you may be sure that, at least, the heart of your mother understands you."

"Then I am satisfied," said Amelia; and then a light gleamed from her pretty eyes, which no other feeling had ever before created.

When the lieutenant-colonel returned, at a very late hour, the glowing blush on Amelia's cheeks, and the expression of his wife's eyes, told him that an explanation had taken place.

"I thought that you would not be able to keep silent," said the lieutenant-colonel; "neither have I any objections to your having made your mother acquainted with the secret; but here let the matter rest, and for the future keep silence."

With these words the lieutenant-colonel drew a little package from under his cloak, and with a half-compassionate, half-punishing look, gave it to his daughter; and without speaking went hastily up to his room.

Several days had elapsed, without any one speaking of Amelia's walk or its cause In the meantime, however, a certain reservedness existed in the family, as the lieutenant-colonel never communicated his intentions to his wife, and Amelia troubled her head to no purpose, endeavouring to think what her papa was about to do. But it was reserved for a very simple circumstance to draw out the concealed purposes which the lieutenant-colonel entertained.

The matter stood thus. One fine morning, when the head of the family was promenading through the court-yard, to examine some birch logs, he heard strange sounds, which attracted him to the spot from whence they proceeded. Near a shed into which he entered, stood a female domestic, who had charge of the cattle, and with her a man-servant. Between them a calf was lying, tied "hand and foot," which protested with all its strength against the intentions that were manifested against its life.

Now, the lieutenant-colonel had always made it a rule—which, by the way, is very reasonable—never to oppose the dignity and

authority of his wife when in the presence of his servants. But here a sudden resolution was necessary; for he knew from the calendar of his wife, that no cow was to have a calf before Christmas, and that a few weeks later a calf was more needed than at the present time.

"Wait a little; that's a very fine calf. Is it to be slaughtered? I should think it was not more than eight days old."

"Yes, but her grace our lady says, she cared more for the milk, which is now very scarce," replied the female domestic, with much assurance.

"Wait a short time longer. I will first speak with the lady myself."

With a friendly mien he stepped into his wife's apartment.

"You must not have that calf slaughtered yet, I entreat you. Wait until it has become fatter."

"Yes, dear De Dressen; but then I will be more pressed. I have neither milk nor meat on hand."

"Never mind about that; I will be satisfied during the time with smoked-beef, and shall, even, if necessary, eat my mush with honey-sauce."

"But my dear De Dressen—"

"Dear Sophia, I should think that we might gradually understand each other; you know that all objections are lost upon me. Could I not have ordered the calf back to the stable at once, if I had not come to you, out of respect to your commands to the servants, hoping that you would consent to my wishes with joy."

"Well, how long do you wish him to live?"

"Until I—but never mind; let it live until I say it is time."

"This seems to indicate that you are expecting strangers; but, I can assure you, I have nothing prepared—neither the one, nor the other."

"Well, then, prepare everything in the best manner you know how; you will do well to hurry, for every day I expect one or the other will arrive."

"I can hardly believe it, for the roads are horrible."

"Do not depend too much on that; but arrange everything, or we will have visitors before you are aware of it."

"Is that so? Pray tell me at least whom you are expecting, that I may make my arrangements accordingly; for you certainly must perceive, dear De Dressen, that then I would be more easily able to fulfil your wishes, than now, while you speak in riddles."

"If you talk reasonably, so that one can listen to you, I am by no means disinclined to tell you the truth, that we may expect shortly a visit from the chamberlain."

Now Madame de Dressen knew all that she wished to know; and without entering into an explanation concerning the delicate question, whether it was right or wrong to support De Goesse's suit, which would have been very foolish, she merely replied,

"I shall take my measures in accordance with your information."

And to the lieutenant-colonel this calm reply was as much a subject for surprise, as she had found in his communication.

Soon, however, the sharp-sighted man, who, of course, could not be mistaken, thought: "Women will always be women. I would not give a farthing for a woman's word. It is good that one knows them, that he may act accordingly," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MISFORTUNE UPON MISFORTUNE.

A FORTNIGHT after the rescue of the calf in the great shed behind the brewhouse, it might be seen, sleek and fat, frisking with joy around the maid servant; and it little divined that it would fare otherwise than it had heretofore. And such was not the case; for the chamberlain had arrived in his own lofty person, and the lieutenant-colonel had resolved to give a grand supper in honour of his coming, to which the whole neighbourhood was to be invited. At the dawn of the day, the man-servant, Nicholas, was sent with a few bushels of rye and a quantity of barley, into the city, for the purpose of selling it. The poor fellow's head was so much crammed with orders and commissions concerning the many things he should purchase and bring home, that his ounce of reason was entirely bewildered when he mounted into the cart. The cow-boy was also sent around with invitations for the following evening, as it was necessary to keep the chamberlain in a state of excitement, that he might not observe the disinclination of the one who was destined for him.

It would certainly not be a little amusing to follow the chamberlain in his busy activity. Wherever Amelia went, he was sure to follow her, if it could be done decently. In this, he obeyed a hint from his friend the lieutenant. Before he started out on his journey, the latter had advised him not to desist in his attentions; and this manœuvre, according to his mind, would lead to the acceptance of the marriage-proposal, for every woman might be gained by perseverance. And the charming chamberlain, perfectly convinced of the practical as well as the theoretical

talents of his adviser in this case, would have considered himself guilty of the utmost ingratitude if he had not been his most obedient pupil.

In the meantime, Amelia was not in the least edified by these impudent attentions. Her mother had placed under her charge a great many domestic affairs, which, although they did not require her constant attendance in the kitchen, nevertheless occupied her time in the pantry; but, as a door led from the parlour into the pantry, the chamberlain was sure to be there also, as he assured her, ten times a day, that he was the most passionate lover of all domestic flowers.

"But here we have nothing but potatoes, parsnips, and cucumbers," replied Amelia, a little spitefully. "Here, at Tunefors, we have few flowers, especially at the present time."

"Don't say that, adorable Amelia! It is just you that leads into your enrapturing domestic idyllic world of flowers, and what thought can be more sublime than hand-in-hand with his lovely, beautiful——"

"Parsnips and cucumbers!" replied Amelia, supplying the words of the chamberlain, who willingly would have been thought a skilful speaker.

"No, little barbarian; I meant those beautiful little hands, which are now preparing with so much grace and skill the herring-salad, the equal of which the world never before saw."

"You are, therefore, a lover of herring salad, Mr. de Goesse?"

"I love it to a passion; for you must know, Lady Amelia, that fiery natures like mine, created for everything beautiful—for art, nature, and science, in short, for all the spices of life—prefer a real herring-salad before all other delicacies. I should think, also, as far as I can infer from the study of my organization, and from a slight knowledge of phrenology, one of the most interesting sciences, and one which I esteem highly, as it leads us to plain conclusions concerning our mental formation, what we really are, and what we are to become—I mean to say, as far

as the formation of our cranium is concerned, the different forms of which it is very interesting to examine, and whose discovery bestows much honour upon Gall—in short, as far as this can be set down as an indisputable, reliable principle, wine, that consoling fluid of gods and men, in the ups and downs of life, will taste the best after herring-salad."

At the word wine, Amelia felt a desire to laugh outright at De Goesse's passion for herring-salad, that suddenly changed into a pressing anxiety, which was caused by the fact, that, as she was accidentally looking from the window into the court-yard, she saw her father standing on a pile of boards, looking into the road with an uneasy expression of countenance, by which she learned that the messenger who had been sent to the city, should have already arrived in the morning.

"Certainly an accident has happened to Nicholas," thought Amelia; "the scamp, perhaps, has got drunk, thrown the cart over, and broken it, for it is old and worn out. How anxious father looks! It is now three o'clock, at half past five the guests arrive. I dare not think of it!—what a misfortune! Alas! what will become of our supper? If I could only rid myself of that insufferable chatterbox, that I might dust out the rooms and set the raspberries, pickled onions, and whortleberries on the table, prepare the napkins, cut bread, and even dress myself. Oh, if he would only go!"

"With your permission, my dear lady, you look too serious for the daughter of the graces; but, perhaps, I have been so unfortunate as to offend you with my learned treatise upon the organs, which is certainly rather a dry subject for a lady. Or what else is it that sullies the pure mirror of the fountain, before which I should like to die, could I only see my figure reflected in its beautiful depth?"

"What do you command?" said Amelia, whose mind was busily occupied with Nicholas, her father on the pile of boards, and with her own affairs.

"God protect me from commanding you, my honoured lady! You do not wish to understand that by this deep fountain I mean your own bewitching eyes."

"We have but a well here from which you may expect such a favour," replied Amelia, with a slight maliciousness.

"And where does it lie, sorceress?" exclaimed Mr. de Goesse, looking with dizzy rapture at the lady of his heart.

"In the court-yard, near the big elder bush. Its water is so clear and bright, that King Charles's well, near Stroemstad, hardly equals it. Do you still remember, Mr. de Goesse, how old Baron Lindenskoeld gloried in the well, as though there was nothing like it in the world?"

"Oh, yes. I remember it! But I had believed—there, to tell the truth, I had hoped——"

"And I am so imprudent as to hope that the chamberlain will help me to wind a couple of skeins of silk."

"Oh, with enthusiasm! I am your most obedient—I am your devout slave! Do with me whatever you please! Give me herring-salad—I shall eat it!—give me silk!—I shall wind it!—

"'Give me a battle and the sword;
For I can conquer or fall!'

as Valerius says. Nothing can be too hard or impossible for me, if I can only gain your favour by it!"

"Then you will oblige me by going into the next room; I will follow you in a moment."

De Goesse's long shanks took three long steps from the pantry into the parlour; there he sat down in quiet submissiveness on a stool near the sofa. Hundred of times before had he heard of knights who had sat at the feet of their mistresses, playing with their silken ringlets; certainly this time it was only allowed him to play with the silken skeins of his goddess; this, however, was something—a good commencement at least.

But, oh, horror! how much did the full-moon face of our polite

De Goesse lengthen when Amelia entered the room, and he found himself so much deceived by his bold dreams of a tender lover's hour! The sight of the little winding-machine which she brought along and screwed to the table, smashed his sweet hopes at once. Close beside the spool, his little torturer placed some skeins of silk and a few pieces of card-paper. She then invited the chamberlain, with the utmost politeness, to resign his inconvenient seat, and place himself near the table. Before Mr. de Goesse was able to comply with her request, Amelia had disappeared, and nothing remained for him but to be patient, and entertain the hope, that the future would, perhaps, be more pleasant.

During this time, Amelia was busying herself with her usual zeal throughout the entire house, where her presence was required. After she had concluded her domestic arrangements, she dressed herself, and just as she had tied her mother's new bonnet ribbon. the clock struck six; but Nicholas had not yet arrived. The anxiety of the lieutenant-colonel increased, and his rage overflowed. He ran to and fro, cursed God and man; but all in his own mind, for he dared not speak, as the chamberlain might have heard it. One must allow, however, that his grace, the lieutenant-colonel, had reason to be enraged, as Nicholas was to bring home with him arrack, wine, and even whiskey. Punch was no more to be thought of; but, O Lord, if there had only been a chance to make toddy at least!

Madame de Dressen could almost have wept with vexation, for she expected by Nicholas, besides the fish, sugar, chocolate, raisins, and cinnamon also; and, what was worse, tea. "For," said the poor woman, "a little of such things are always wanted in the house, but if one wants a dinner, he has to send to town for the materials;" and with a heart full of a housekeeper's troubles, she advanced to the door, to receive the gradually coming guests.

Only a person who has been in a similar position can know how Madame de Dressen felt under such circumstances. The

water was boiling, the cups were standing in parade around the tea-table; the sweet cakes arose in savoury pyramids from the cake-baskets, and the scant contents of the sugar-box—all that the house was able to afford—were crushed, and placed in the sugar-bowl, but what did all this amount to? The clock struck six; Nicholas seemed as though he had been swallowed with all his load, by the earth, and as often as one of the guests complained with horror of the cold weather, Madame De Dressen felt worse than if one had trod upon one of her most painful corns.

"Tea will be ready immediately," said the polite hostess, with a smile; but despair was within her heart.

"Do you not wish me to assist in filling the cups?" inquired the pastor's daughter, Mina, who was in the next room.

"Assist me!" said Amelia, with a smile; "God grant that we were so far that I should be able to assist myself. Thank you, dear Mina, we are waiting with anxiety for Nicholas, who drove to the city before eight o'clock yesterday morning, and has not yet returned with all the things which he was to fetch back, and should have arrived this morning at ten o'clock at least."

"What are you saying, poor Amelia! The guests here, and you have no tea?"

"And no sugar; in fact, nothing," added Amelia, despairingly.

"But, dear Lord, we must find some expedient to get out of this difficulty," said Mina, with good-natured readiness to serve. "You have a little sugar yet, I see; put now a couple of cups of honey on the table; all the guests have bad colds; I shall also say that you put both on the table for the sake of their choosing which to take, and I'll bet you a hundred to one, that if the chamberlain accepts it, every one will take honey; such a distinguished gentleman must of course have sugar, and for him there will be enough. Leave it all to me, my dear."

"O, you excellent Mina, you are worth your weight in gold, but we have no tea; God help us."

"Never mind about that, there is nothing so bad as green tea. I hope you have cinnamon or orange peeling, or at least a few cloves?"

"Ah, yes, in the spice drawer there is some still left; but, dear Mina——"

"Well, never mind, only throw a handful of dried gooseberry leaves, and as many strawberry leaves, with a few pieces of cinnamon, into the teapot, and it will make the most excellent tea which ever one has drunk before; we at home never do otherwise, and Lamm says, that at Rundenac, the count's, where, as you know, he was tutor, their tea was not half as good; but let us hurry, dear; you shall see what good tea it will make, and how soon it can be made."

At these words both girls hurried to the kitchen, and ten minutes had not elapsed before the huge teapot, with all its appurtenances, appeared at the door, and it did not require much before Madame de Dressen would have cried out aloud with joy.

"Ay, mamma! ay, dear Lamm! is not Amelia the most polite hostess that you ever saw!" exclaimed Mina, addressing her mother as well as Lamm. "I was just complaining of a pain in the lungs, and Amelia placed honey on the table—and what honey! Look here; there, no one has it so pure and clear as her ladyship at Tunefors. I always think that it has a much better taste here than anywhere else."

Now all the ladies wished to taste the honey so precious, either to find fault with it, by whispering in their neighbour's ear, or if they found it good, to inquire of Madame de Dressen how she made it so nice. The gentlemen, also, or the most of them, preferred the honey, and the rapturous manner in which the tea was drunk, proved clearly how well Miss Mina understood how to brew it.

Mr. de Goesse only sat without drinking, turning his cup between his fingers. The strong, peculiar, and unusual aroma of the tea did not please him at all. He endeavoured to empty

his cup as soon as possible, but could not suppress an inward desire that the divine Amelia would soon add to her numerous qualities the one of making good tea.

In the meantime, it could have been easily seen that the position of the host and his wife was not to be envied. The lieutenant-colonel, with the utmost possible resignation, arranged a few chess parties for the gentlemen; the ladies drew their colours for a game of whist, and the young people collected around the centre table, where the chamberlain, after a mutual interchange of all possible kinds of compliments and bows with the lieutenant-colonel, finally took his seat at the table, entering into conversation, and commenced to boast, with great emphasis, about the miraculous tricks with cards with which he pretended to be familiar, and related a mass of anecdotes which he had already told hundreds of times before.

After an hour of the most painful expectation, the noise of a cart was heard in the court-yard, and with a host of *polite* and *extremely* gentlemanly expressions, the lieutenant-colonel welcomed poor Nicholas, who assured him, with the most devout gestures, that his long delay was caused by the gentleman in the city to whom the letter had been addressed. The latter had gone to the country, and Nicholas knew no other way than to wait until he returned. The road, also, was so horrible as had never been seen before that year, and for this reason nothing was more natural than that poor Nicholas had been upset.

"And the basket, you d——d *canaille!*"

"Yes, I brought the basket."

"Yes, the basket; but the bottles? Your back will be sorry if I find one of them broken. Hurry, and take the stuff into the pantry."

In the pantry were now assembled the lieutenant-colonel, his wife, Mina, and Amelia, who were soon busily engaged in packing up and arranging everything. It was a beautiful picture to see the two girls unpacking the loaves of sugar and parcels of

spice; but it was a horrible aspect to behold the lieutenant-colonel and his lady, their countenances dimly illumined by the light of the candle, and deathly pale, when they drew forth from the well-closed straw covered basket, nothing but mere pieces of broken black glass, as dry as though they had never seen any port wine, arrack, or whisky. Amid the mute, but expressive silence, they drew alternately straw and pieces of glass, until the basket was empty. O, night of grief and tears! Madame de Dressen wrung her hands in anxiety, the lieutenant-colonel stood there rigid, his countenance as pale as death; and his lips, trembling and blue with rage, were only able to stammer broken curses. The two girls, Amelia and Mina, did not know whether to laugh or to cry.

"We are shamed for ever," said the lieutenant-colonel, at length, in a tone of desperate composure, which signified that he was prepared to defy this stroke of fate. "Put to shame, eternally; why do we stand here staring at each other. My supper will be a laughing-stock to the whole neighbourhood. Peasant's tea with honey, no punch, no toddy, not even wine on the table; not a drop of anything proper to drink; but Nicholas, he shall be greased for it, I swear it by ——. In the meantime, dear wife," he continued, turning toward his spouse, "it will now be your duty to acquaint our guests, in as frank and easy a manner as possible, what a misfortune has happened to us; but do not forget to modulate your tone to such a degree, that the affair will create mirth and not ridicule, when you state to them that a drunken lout of a servant had thrown overboard three great baskets filled with wine, arrack, rum, cognac, &c."

"The deuce; there are then two more baskets?" exclaimed Mina, in surprise; "perhaps we may find whole bottles in the others."

"Oh, no, they are all smashed to atoms," replied the lieutenant-colonel, turning rather angrily toward his daughter. "What do you think our guests will say about the matter? I hope that you

will have *presence d'esprit* sufficiently, as a girl of rank and education, to draw a curtain over the matter as a good joke."

Amelia laughed, and was of the opinion that it would not require much talent to drive a blue smoke into the chamberlain's face. While Amelia was still receiving some suggestions from her father, and the company were about departing, one of the female domestics shot like a rocket through the door, and brought the news that a carriage and four had just driven up to the door.

"A carriage and four! They must be people of rank," muttered the lieutenant-colonel. "Misfortunes never come single. A supper without wine and brandy, our modest neighbours might perhaps excuse; but what kind of people are these? what will they think? I will run mad—that cursed Nicholas!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

NEW PLANS.

"Now we are in a pretty fix," said Madame de Dressen, looking from one to another; "it is surely an old acquaintance who wishes to stay one night with us, and we have not more than one room, which is now occupied by the chamberlain."

"And no beds except those that we use ourselves," whispered Amelia in the ear of her friend Mina.

"Ay! in that case you must make a bed on the sofa," said Mina.

"It will be better still, if my father would lie on the sofa in the antechamber, then we might take his room; but where shall we get the new pillow-cases and sheets?"

"We shall find an expedient for that; I will tell Lamm to drive home, and get the pillow-cases which belong to my bridal furniture. I have stitched the edges to-day, and they are therefore lying round the room; ay! there is another thing; he might also bring some of the church wine; we have a good deal of it in store, and are willing to lend it to you. He may bring some of the whisky too; it is good, and has been distilled with orange peel and cumin seed."

"You are a true friend in need; you will hear what my mother says to your proposal. Dear mother, what is your opinion?"

Here their council was interrupted by a strange voice that resounded through the hall; but the lieutenant-colonel exclaimed still louder,

"Your most obedient servant, your most obedient servant. Heartily welcome to Tunefors."

These words appeared to express a high degree of rapture; but the ladies read the lieutenant-colonel, and knew how he felt toward the new visitor.

"But where are the ladies? where does Miss Amelia keep herself?" exclaimed a well-known voice; and mother and daughter hurried out to welcome the honourable Baron Lindenskoeld.

The baron begged their pardon a thousand times for having taken the liberty of calling upon his friends at Tunefors, while on his way to the capital.

"My pleasant bathing acquaintance with you constantly filled my mind, and I was longing for a sandwich and a good supper this evening in good company, for alone one does not half relish it—not to forget a good bed also."

"Much obliged—very much obliged; you honour my house exceedingly," stammered the lieutenant-colonel, in the utmost uneasiness. "We have this evening a little party, given on account of a mutual acquaintance. You undoubtedly remember the Chamberlain de Goesse?"

"Yes, certainly, very well; the chamberlain is one of those people who are not easily forgotten when you once become acquainted with them. Is Mr. de Goesse on his way to Stockholm also?"

"As far as I know, not exactly."

"Ah! perhaps he is taking advantage of the calm water, to fish. I hope he has not the intention to catch our dear little Amelia, for, in that case, I shall trespass on his fishing-ground. But before we enter the parlour, Lady Amelia must promise me that she will at any rate give him the mitten. Indeed, I would despair if the chamberlain was so fortunate as to carry off the prize for which so many are contending."

Amelia laughed pleasantly, and frankly replied, "Let us strike hands upon that; I shall never become Mrs. de Goesse."

In this manner the lieutenant-colonel received the first dose

which the assessor and the baron had prepared for him, and it actually seemed to accomplish its object, for all of a sudden it seemed to him as though a whole swarm of gnats were buzzing in his head, so that he forgot rum, brandy, and arrack, and only one matter stood clearly before him, and that was the certainty that, fortunately, he had not yet given Mr. de Goesse a decided answer. This thought was accompanied with the half-muttered words,—

"God be praised that I took time for reflection! This expression of the baron—ahem!—he has all the time had an attachment for the girl."

"May it please you, my dear lady," said the unwearying Mina, plucking at the dress of Madame de Dressen, "the sleigh is ready. I have talked with Lamm, and he will drive to our house, to bring mattresses, coverlids, quilts, and brandy. But what shall we do about the wine? The chamberlain's servant, who is in the kitchen, said that his master had with him a case filled with all kinds of wine. Could we not borrow some of him? The lieutenant-colonel might return it to him some other time."

"No, no, you good girl, the wine we will not think of; but for your kindness I cannot thank you and Lamm too much. Does not the noble fellow drive home again to relieve us of our troubles? For these reasons, anything my house can afford you, shall be at your service on your wedding-day, my dear girl."

Mina nodded friendlily, and hurried from the room.

While Mr. Lamm was in the sleigh, driving slowly toward home, she stood behind on the runners, admonishing him to take care, as well of his own clothing as the pillow-cases, that they should not get soiled, and not to allow his new cloak—for which she had spun the wool with her own hands—to drag along in the dirt. She exhorted him, furthermore, to be very careful when he took the whisky from the pantry, as right beside it stood a

bottle that resembled it much, and which was filled with oil of vitriol.

"Just think," said she, "if you should take the wrong one, dear Lamm. O! I have heard a horrible story of that kind. Be careful, also, that you do not stumble over the head-cheese; neither get your coat sleeves into the yeast, for the stain could not be got out in a whole lifetime."

While Mr. Lamm accepted the heavy load of advice from his betrothed, Madame de Dressen was making her excuses to her guests, and communicated to them in what a terrible predicament they had been placed by the messenger who had been sent to the city. Some pitied, others laughed at the accident; but the chamberlain was highly pleased, as he proved by his profound bows, that such a welcome accident had given him an opportunity to show the gratitude that was glowing within his heart, through the means of Bacchus' mild juice, as he had not yet a chance to show his gratitude sufficiently to them. He had, as he said, two cases of old wine with him, and had only hesitated to offer it to the honourable family as he was not yet sufficiently allied to it.

At such a prospect the lieutenant-colonel's state of mind became brightened, and from the worst he soon changed into the very gayest humour. At dinner, where the good appetites of the guests did due honour to the well-prepared dishes, the lieutenant-colonel talked incessantly, and filled up the glasses as hospitably as though he was the most extensive wine-merchant, and as if he could call the whole cellars-full of grape-juice his own. For this, however, the lieutenant-colonel was not so much to blame, as it was but seldom that he had an opportunity to show himself so much; and as the matter had turned out so favourably for him, he took the utmost advantage of it, especially as the bottles, with their excellent contents, were a gift of friendship, and a token of attention toward his own person.

After the dinner was concluded, Amelia, assisted by Mina,

went to work to transform her father's library into an apartment for the baron. Amelia's own bed, and Mina's things, which had arrived in the meantime, with the red silk curtains that had served in olden times as the bridal curtains of the minister and his wife, made a most excellent show, together with the white linen which Mina had woven herself. The old table near the window was covered with a napkin; papa's shaving mirror was placed upon it, and one side, which was slightly cracked, was draped with Amelia's white veil. The chairs that were bad and old-fashioned, and not without other defects, were in the meantime thrown into an old lumber-room, and the parlour had to give up four arm-chairs from the dozen which occupied it.

"The room now looks very neat indeed," said Mina, who was looking from an old writing-desk on which she was standing, with a light in her hand, at the curtain that she had formed from an old muslin petticoat belonging to her friend, and which she had suspended before the window. "Very neat, indeed. If he wants a better one, he must bring it from Paris."

"Ay! yes, it looks tolerably well," said Amelia; "only that old earthen stove looks so awful black and dirty—it looks so vulgar."

"What! nothing under the sun can be perfect; and besides, he is not a prince," were Mina's consoling words. "Could he not have had his visit announced first? But he looks so friendly, that he will certainly be satisfied with it."

And our honest friend was satisfied with it, at least to a certain degree. It could hardly be expected that he could feel comfortable in the damp bed-clothes which had been brought from the parsonage, and which, when extended over his whole body, caused him to have a bad cold and cough. This gave him so much trouble, that he wished from the bottom of his heart that he had not accepted Wirén's delicate commission.

Amelia, however, was a careful and friendly nurse to him. This accident, which had been caused, although with the best

intentions, by Mina and herself, grieved her so much, that the baron's assurances, which he made with no small self-denial, that it was a feast indeed to be served by such a nurse, gave her but little consolation.

The visit of Baron Lindenskoeld, and still more his indisposition, that had detained him for a few days at Tunefors, were a great disadvantage to Mr. de Goesse's operations. Amelia, whose attentions to the latter were very small, and only such as were due to him from a hostess, did not now regard him; and even the lieutenant-colonel had but little time to spare for his guest who had arrived first. The gentle Madame de Dressen only remained equal in her politeness toward him. An equal friendly manner always remained with her, which, although it did not encourage, did not deter him. For these reasons, it was only to her that poor De Goesse turned his attention, for nobody else seemed to have ears to listen to him. The lieutenant-colonel wavered between hope and fear: he hoped to entrap the better of the two suitors, but at the same time was fearful that he would catch the poorest. This irresolute uneasiness increased almost every hour; for during the four days that the baron remained at Tunefors, he often let words drop which were certainly occasioned only by a general interest in Amelia, but which, nevertheless, on the other hand, had the appearance of a deeper feeling for her; and as the lieutenant-colonel was too honest to suffer two suitors in his house at the same time, he wished to be careful to adopt the wisest measures.

"At a bathing-place," thought he, "a beau costs nothing; but here, with four horses—— No, I am much obliged to you."

"Listen!" said he to his wife; "if the baron is really in earnest concerning Amelia, it will not be right to keep Mr. de Goesse here any longer. At least, it would be no token of gratitude for his honourable proposal, and would show delicacy still less."

"That is true, dear husband; but I fear that you construe

the baron's attentions wrongly: and looking at it from one point of view, the chamberlain is certainly not one who should be rejected."

Madame de Dressen assumed this little duplicity, first and principally, to secure herself from the future reproach, that she was opposed to the will of her husband; and secondly, because she knew, from her well-tried experience, that opposition would make the lieutenant-colonel still more obstinate, and drive him to a still more rash resolution than it would have been under other circumstances.

"Yes, yes, you are now altogether of another opinion," interrupted the lieutenant-colonel, peevishly. "Have I not told you a thousand times, that you women never know whether to steer to the right or the left?—but it is my duty, as a father, to see that my daughter makes the best match possible; and that the chamberlain rather displeases the baron, one can easily see without spectacles; and as we cannot make use of both at once, one of them must leave the field; therefore I shall bid the chamberlain farewell this very day, and by so doing oblige the baron to stay a few days longer with us."

"But, dear Dressen, do you believe that Amelia would accept such an old man as the baron, supposing he should want her?"

"What a stupid question! Do you not know that a young lady would rather become a baroness than the wife of a simple nobleman? If, by the Lord's assistance, we were only so far, the rest would not be difficult."

After the coffee, the lieutenant-colonel, who evidently was under the influence of some secret witchcraft, knew how to arrange it so that he was alone with the chamberlain. The plain, although half-joking hint of the baron, that a rival would soon arrive who would put an end to all other courting, excited the lieutenant-colonel to a more rapid action, and he communicated to the chamberlain, in polite but nevertheless decided language, that Amelia's views in regard to him were of such a nature,

that, even in time, she would not be willing to alter them; that he himself, as a father, upheld the principle never to force a daughter to a choice upon which her whole future happiness depended.

Mr. de Goesse had not expected such a sudden *finale* to his suit. He took the matter sharply, and said, if that had been the opinion of his grace from the beginning, it should have been communicated to him before, in the letter; and it would not have been necessary to cause him to undertake such an expensive journey to fool him at Tunefors, and to find out there that they had been making merry at his expense.

"The chamberlain does not choose his words in a very fitting manner," said the lieutenant-colonel, his blood rushing toward his brain in his rage. "I hope you do not mean to say that I wished you to sue for my daughter; and if from courtesy I have requested the Mr. Chamberlain to conduct matters here in his own person, I am certainly not obliged to expose myself to malicious insinuations. It is not my fault, by the Lord, if you have not succeeded in gaining the girl's heart."

"Malicious insinuations!" exclaimed the chamberlain, almost weeping, as was generally the case when he became excited. "I wonder who has been ill-treated here, if it is not my own unworthy person. The whole world knows that I came here on a bridal trip, and my love-stricken heart will not be able to bear it, if I am thus rejected. No, that I cannot stand. I shall be eternally lost. My dear lieutenant-colonel, at least allow Amelia to sit in judgment upon me; her lips shall either raise me to the highest pitch of happiness, or cast me into the deepest abyss of despair."

"This is unnecessary, as I, her father, have already answered in her stead; but to convince you, Mr. de Goesse, that I am not lacking in good-will toward you, I will send her to you."

"O! yes, do so; it is impossible that she has carried on so

cruel a joke with me. She will appear as the star of rescue of my life."

The lieutenant-colonel went in search of Amelia, and found her in the pantry, preparing grit sausages.

"Look here! dear child, that man, the chamberlain, does not please me any more, and as you do not seem to like him, it would be wrong for me to force you to marry him. Dress up a little, therefore, and go to the ante-chamber, where he is waiting for you, to hear from your own lips the decision; after which he may prepare his carriage, and drive to the devil, for all I care. One cannot feed a suitor for nothing."

"Assuredly not," replied Amelia, laughing; "that can be seen by our hams and sausages." Neither did she wonder at the change in her father's plans, as her mother had lately hinted it to her. "But if you wish me to dismiss the chamberlain, you will first allow me to finish my work here."

"No, my child; before you had finished, he would fall into a fit, out of pure expectation. 'What should be done to-day, don't put off for the morrow.'"

As soon as the lieutenant-colonel commenced citing from the Bible, Amelia knew that he was in good spirits, and without answering, she was reminded of the words of the poet, "It is woman's lot to sacrifice," untied her apron, and throwing it over the vessel filled with grits, tied the spice-woods into a bundle, and sallied forth to her own room, for the purpose of arranging her hair. Shen then attired herself with a clean apron and neckerchief, and, first washing her hands, hurried into the room where De Goesse was, to wish him a happy journey.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A MAN WHO KNEW HOW TO BEAR HIS FATE.

WHEN Amelia entered, the sorrow-stricken chamberlain, who, in spite of his stupidity and other ridiculous qualities, loved Amelia with his whole heart—as far, at least, as his nature allowed him to entertain such feelings—stood in the corner of the room perfectly crushed in spirits. He felt as though all his confidence and courage had left him; it was plain to him that he was far from playing that proud part that he would have done if the lieutenant had been present to conduct his steps. Mr. de Goesse missed his friend so much at this important time, that his mental exertions almost overweighed the powerful uneasiness which his friend would have advised him to conceal during the violent stroke that was about to fall upon him. As soon as he saw Amelia he forgot everything—the lieutenant, his advice, and even the large store of select phrases that he had scraped together. In his anxiety, he became natural, and, therefore, far less stupid; for he took no pains to play the fop.

"Amelia! Amelia!" he exclaimed, "is it really true that you do not wish to have me? You do not know how much grief it will cause me! I love you more than anything else! My estates, my horses, and all my hounds are as nought to me henceforth! On the whole earth, I yearn for nothing else but you! Why do you reject me?"

"Dear Mr. de Goesse," replied Amelia, frankly, for she was moved by the intense grief which was manifested in his whole bearing, as well as in his silly but true words, "that depends not upon my own will; neither is it a whim that obliges me to

refuse your honourable proposals. It is my heart which says, I can never love you!"

"Alas! if you will only become my wife, and not hate me, I will be satisfied; I shall love you the more myself."

"That cannot be; it would be wrong! It is also utterly impossible for me to marry any one but the one who really gains my heart. But a gentleman with such pride as you have, Mr. de Goesse, who knows what he owes to himself, I should think, would not thus give himself up to unmanly weakness. I think that I have been enabled to learn sufficiently of you, during our short acquaintance, to convince myself that you will prove to a girl who is obliged to refuse your hand, that she has not renounced only the mere expectation of a maintenance—"

"What do you mean, divine Amelia? Help, advise me! What shall I do to be worthy of you?"

"If you really wish my advice, and to win my esteem, and that of others who are acquainted with the matter, then be as reserved as possible, even to your most intimate friends. Do not give way to unmanly complaints and wailings, because hope has failed you; as, aside from that, such weaknesses will avail you nothing, and will give other people an opportunity to make a laughing-stock of you: but if you are silent and reserved, no one will be able to guess how your visit has turned out. Even should they know that you came here for the purpose of honouring me with the proposal of your hand, they will not know but that you altered your mind after you had arrived here. You must try to make them believe that you have given up your former plans."

"Ay, Miss Amelia, your confidence, your friendship, are invaluable to me! I thank you from the bottom of my heart! I now know how I must act. No mortal shall ever know what has happened between us. This sweet, but so bitter secret, I will keep to myself; and the world shall see that I am a man who knows how to bear his fate!"

Mr. de Goesse here straightened himself up at least three inches higher, and looked around the room, like a man who means to indicate that he was henceforth resolved to play the self-governed man of the world, whose inner man is concealed from every curious eye.

"When do you start on your journey? As to inviting you to be our guest any longer—"

"I pray you—say no more!" interrupted Mr. de Goesse, assuming a dignified manner, and stretching forth both hands into the air. "Do not ask me to remain, do not endeavour to melt my steel-encased heart. Farewell, Amelia! I shall order my carriage immediately!"

"In the meantime, I will bake two cakes for you, which you will well relish on the road!"

"I do not know," said Mr. de Goesse, reflectingly, "whether I shall be able to eat them, in my present position. I fear as though I am now too much soul, to think of my bodily wants at all."

"This may be the case for the time being; but when you are in the cool evening air, you will find that it is good, nay, even necessary to have some consolation of that kind with you. I am firmly convinced," she added, with a roguish smile, "that even such great men as Napoleon or Tegnér did not refuse to take food after the most powerful mental excitement."

"That is true! Well, if you will, you may put some preserved cherries between the cakes; even half a bottle of hot wine would prove acceptable to wash down the cakes."

"And a cold cutlet upon it!"

"Yes, I have no objection. On this great and momentous occasion, I cannot refuse you anything. Most lovely Amelia! excellent creature! even in this exalted and solemn moment, you think of the welfare and comfort of your departing friend! Amelia, now and for ever—eternally as eternity itself—I shall miss her! But, were it possible, be still more high-minded than

you have heretofore shown yourself. Pray for me, that I may find a girl to whom I may say, 'Resemble her whom I adore, and you shall be my idol!'"

"Dear Mr. de Goesse, rest assured that if prayers ever avail, this will be my most fervent one. You know it is said, 'Seek and thou shalt find.' But now allow me to remind you, that if I shall be obliged to bake cakes, broil cutlets, and prepare wine for you, and you will have to pack, so we must separate; therefore I am obliged to leave you."

With a friendly courtesy, Amelia left him. As soon as she had gone, De Goesse exclaimed, extending his hands toward heaven,

"It is all over. I have lost her! but I am a Goesse. Only the dark shadows of the night shall be the witnesses of my grief, and conceal it with their gloomy vail of woe!"

As we now part with our charming chamberlain for ever, we deem it our duty to add that he kept his word faithfully, and did not even communicate to his confidential friend, the lieutenant, how the affair really ended.

"Do not ask me," he would say, when questioned; "I am a man, and men do not tell their secrets, like boys—I know how to bear my fate!"

Six months afterwards, it was reported that he said to a maiden, who was as handsome, but not so intelligent as Amelia:

"Resemble her whom I adored, and you will be my idol!"

The girl promised to do her best; and it is said that the chamberlain had so much reason to be satisfied with her, that he never repented of his second choice.

At Tunefors everything was now dreary. After the chamberlain had departed, the baron seemed to care for nothing else than to hasten his own departure—assuring his host, by-the-by, that he was of the opinion that the lieutenant-colonel was right, that he so soon put an end to the chamberlain's suit; for it

would have been unpardonable, if the amiable Miss Amelia should have been forced to marry such a fellow.

"As soon as I come this way again, which will probably be in the early part of next summer," said the baron, when he took his leave, "I expect to see Miss Amelia a bride; but perhaps she is engaged already? One does not know how soon such things sometimes happen."

The lieutenant-colonel was highly offended at the manner in which the baron expressed himself. For his intention, as shown by his words, was clear enough. He therefore replied to Lindenskoeld's hearty words of farewell with haughty and measured coldness. Before the carriage had gone, the lieutenant-colonel felt more miserable than ever. He had made a supper for naught, and fed a man and horse for a whole week out of his pantry, and sparely provided oat-bin; captivated by an unfortunate mistake, that had blinded his eyes in such a manner, that he dropped a certainty for an uncertainty. And the worst—at least, for the moment, what touched him most—was that he was unable to wreak his wrath upon his wife, and could not console himself, as usual, by placing everything in her shoes. It was truly a pity that this mode of excuse was cut off from him; as she had not been obliged to consent to a separation from De Goesse only, but she had drawn her husband's attention to the fact, that he might have construed the words and intentions of the baron wrongfully—thanks to woman's invention and cunning. This time the quiet and unassuming Madame de Dressen had known how to spare to herself a whole flood of reproaches, and rejoiced at this fact with all her heart.

"I wish the whole matter was to the devil," exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel with a curse. "May the hangman take me, if I ever again move my finger to get a husband for her. She may look out for herself. I am sure very few suitors will lose their way, and come to this dreary, out-of-the-way Tunefors; and she may wait a long time before I make another proposition for a

bathing journey. That honest fellow, De Goesse, deserved better treatment, by my soul! Well, here the matter is ended—and she will have to die an old maid."

Amelia was far from partaking of her father's ill-humour. She thought that surely there were more men in the world, "and if I find none as I wish him, I do not think I will die immediately. There are a great many things which a woman can do, if she is single, by which she can take herself through the world. For instance, you can establish a school in a country village—but that is certainly tedious. Or you can become a governess—to be one I have no great desire either. Or a housekeeper—if I should be that, and anything should go wrong, I would have the whole house upon me, and a dozen reproaches from the lady and master of the house, into the bargain. To work as a common overseer of the female servants on a noble estate—that would be too troublesome. Perhaps it would be more prudent to open a weaving establishment, or some other manufacturing institution, for the purpose of instructing young girls—that is not so bad, and might be listened to; but, good Lord, to carry out such an idea, one requires money; and until I had earned that, many a drop of water would have run into the sea. I hardly think that anything would come of the matter; and it is hard, surely, to work for one's bread. But why should a person look out for the next day at all? It will be time enough for that, when I am an old maid—then advice will come of itself, and there will always be a way to get a living. In the meantime—" These words our Amelia did not even lisp; but her little lips were moulded into a roguish smile.

In the year 1833, there was not so much talk of the emancipation of women, as now. But, in the meantime, Amelia's expressions might have sprung from that source which, as a whole, sounded much more natural than the self-deceiving pretensions that one is obliged often to hear, namely: that a single woman leads the happiest life.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LOOKS UPON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF THE PICTURE.

THE remainder of the fall passed away, under the influence of a kind of general eclipse of the sun, in consequence of which the whole family suffered. The days gradually became shorter, the roads grew worse, and no stranger appeared to interrupt the monotony of Tunefors, with a very few exceptions. Not even the friendly Mina found leisure to visit her friends: for she was very busy in preparing for her wedding, that was to take place upon New-Year's Day; and thus with gloomy feelings our acquaintances at Tunefors looked forward toward Christmas Eve. It finally arrived.

"It might have been otherwise with us," said the lieutenant-colonel, in a soft, almost bewailing tone, as he was walking to and fro in the room with a pipe in his mouth; "but all hopes have now gone. If I had only not undertaken that cursed bathing-journey."

"Let us forget what has passed, dear husband," said Madame de Dressen, consolingly. "Let us daily enjoy what we have now —health and a good rice-pudding."

"And *genuine* tea," exclaimed Amelia, laughing, as she thought of the artificial tea of that unfortunate supper.

"But not even a dog or a cat to keep us company,"* replied the lieutenant-colonel, peevishly.

"We shall enjoy what we have, dear papa, so much the

* It is customary in Sweden to keep the house open during the Christmas holidays for every visitor. People visit each other mutually; and even strangers are welcome.—TRANS.

better," said Amelia. "Come and sit down near the tea-table. I am sure that my dear father will allow that he never before tasted such good sweet cake, or twisted bread, as I have now the honour of offering him. Now tell me, dear papa, are they not nice?"

"Oh, yes, they are not very bad, but——"

"Oh, papa; you must promise not to say one if or but, to-night, and to be glad with me that everything is so good as it is. There are many, to-day, who do not fare as well as we do."

Amelia appeared as though she wished to say still more. But she suddenly stopped, and requested, with a hasty gesture of her hand, that the rest of the company should listen.

"Hear!" she exclaimed; "a carriage is coming; yes, surely, some one is driving up."

The lieutenant-colonel hastened to the window, and lifted the curtain. His wife placed the teacup on the table, and an expression of surprised expectation was upon all countenances.

"By my soul, somebody is coming!" exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel. "In a sleigh, with two horses. I hope to God, that he has got skjut-horses, for my provender still suffers, from the time when those suitors were here, and at the present time can stand but very little."

"But who, in the whole world, is it that should come to see us in Christmas time?" said Madame de Dressen, looking first at her husband, and then at her daughter.

Amelia had advanced to her father, who was still standing near the window; but, notwithstanding her good eyes, she was unable to discover who the strange gentleman was.

"We shall soon see," said the lieutenant-colonel, seating himself upon the sofa, to receive the expected guest with due solemnity.

The reader, no doubt, has already divined that it was our hero, who considered that now was the best time to appear on

the scene of action. He was now perfectly convinced that the suit of the chamberlain, as well as the baron's comedy, was concluded, and that, as far as he knew, it had taken such an end, that it proved that Amelia did not wish to accept a husband merely to secure to herself a maintenance in life.

It would now be the best opportunity to develop the sentiments which caused Ivar to take this journey; but it surely would not be polite on our part to postpone, still longer, the friendly salutations and welcomes of Madame de Dressen and her daughter. Taking it all in all, it will not be necessary to explain the motives of an action, the mainspring of which was love. That Borgenstierna did not take this step without serious reflection, being as it was of so much importance, one may easily gather from the features of his character which are already known to us.

"O, there is our dear friend, Mr. Borgenstierna!" exclaimed Madame de Dressen. (By-the-by, rejoiced in her heart, that her earnest prayers had met with the appearance of success at least.) "Welcome, a thousand times, welcome."

Madame de Dressen had never before received a person so warmly; but the lieutenant-colonel, who—for losses make men wise—never omitted to remember the expense that the baron and the chamberlain had placed upon his neck, was very much reserved in his polite attentions this time. He thought thus:

"It might again prove a fruitless task. I shall conduct myself as though the matter was entirely indifferent to me; the women may manage it all themselves."

As for Amelia she was too amiable to have recourse to the cunning and evil artifices which sometimes do not fail to please men, but never attract them. Amelia showed neither artful surprise, nor forced indifference, to punish Ivar for his long absence. She saluted her old acquaintance frankly, and with a certain modest familiarity; all was as though it had to be so. And therefore their conduct resembled more that of two beings

who were dear to each other, and who were in the habit of seeing each other often, than the encounter of two persons who were doubtful whether they should ever see each other again.

This friendly reception had a very beneficial effect upon Borgenstierna's sick heart; he felt so well, sitting near the warm fire, served by Amelia with the excellent tea and precious tea-cake, that it appeared to him, that he was now, for the first time, within the cheerful circle of his own fireside.

Nothing had troubled Borgenstierna so much before, as well as during his journey, as his first appearance at Tunefors, and he had striven a hundred times to forget the subject entirely, when he thought what a disturbance his arrival would create, and what a mass of exclamations of surprise it would call forth. If the approximation of Christmas had not set bounds to his resolution, or if there had been a longer season before that holiday, he would have meditated still longer. But the reason why he had set Christmas as the day for this visit, was because he had conceived the idea, that if he ever visited Tunefors, it must be on this solemn festival. First, because housekeepers are, on that day, prepared for guests—and Borgenstierna was sufficiently acquainted with the De Dressen family to know that the latter was not always the case. In the second place he was able to discharge certain pressing obligations this evening. without being obliged to enter into an explanation, concerning the cause of those gifts, or to be flooded with thanks, which were equally as unpleasant. In short, Christmas eve was better adapted for the delicate visit than any other day in the year, and could not have been more aptly chosen.

There was so much modesty existing in the reservedness that guided our friend Borgenstierna, that there was no cause for surprise in his hearty satisfaction, as well as in his content. After the first fearful hour had passed, he sat there in quietness and comfort, like an old friend, of whom one knows that sincerity is of more worth to him than the most profuse compli

ments. In the eyes of our hero, which were usually veiled with melancholy, this evening glistened a fire that lent to him the expression of inward, as well as outward peace. He had it also, for he was happy. The industrious Amelia appeared much more charming to him, as she busied herself in her domestic affairs, than she did at the bathing-place. And every moment when she bestowed upon him that friendly care, which ladies are apt to show us, without affecting an air of business, her merits increased in his eyes, and at the same time his heart gradually opened to the impressions of love, that he received so willingly.

But it was not Amelia alone who caused these comfortable sentiments to arise within him. It also appeared to him that the lieutenant-colonel, who to-day fortunately did not trouble him with his usual questions and bombast, had amended beyond all measure. Madame de Dressen had always been a pleasing and amiable woman; but even she developed more than her usual grace.

Little Alfred was not mentioned that evening. A common feeling caused all to avoid every painful recollection which might have embittered the joyful evening.

After tea, when the housewife's splendid Christmas presents were admired, Amelia turned her package over in her hands, not daring to open it.

"Do you not wish to see what it contains?" inquired her mother.

"Not before I am alone in my own room; there I will be undisturbed," replied her daughter.

A friendly, almost grateful look from Borgenstierna, proved to Amelia that he approved of her intention. She had perceived how unpleasant her father's pompous thanks had been to him, and how much uneasiness even the simple words of her mother had caused him. She therefore did not wish to cause him a

similar feeling, which would of necessity have been the case, had she broken the seal in his presence to satisfy her curiosity.

To give the conversation another turn, Madame de Dressen inquired whether her guest would not like to attend church the next day?

"With the utmost pleasure," replied Ivar, under the conviction that he would then be allowed to drive Amelia.

The lieutenant-colonel, however, was of a contrary opinion; he pretended to think that it was absurd to rise early; and, above all things, one required repose after a journey over such bad roads; nay, it was very impolite for his wife to make such a proposition at all.

"By no means," interrupted Borgenstierna; "I will have sufficient rest after a few hours sleep, and do not like to omit the service on Christmas morning, for it is one of our most beautiful church customs, and if you will permit me, I count upon the pleasure of accompanying you."

"With the utmost pleasure, if it is any satisfaction to you; but I shall stay at home and take care of the house," replied the lieutenant-colonel, with all the importance of the father of a family. "The ladies may go to church under the protection of Mr. Borgenstierna."

With this arrangement, and after wishing each other a pleasant good-night, they separated.

It was about the same time, when Amelia was bestowing a tear in memory of little Alfred, and kissed his name that had been engraved upon the locket of the chain which had been presented to her, that the lieutenant-colonel said to his wife, as he was examining a piece of black silk and comparing it with a genuine cashmere shawl.

"Take me to the devil! but he has done nobly; but, taking everything into consideration, he has done no more than his duty, in thus repaying us for the trouble we had with his boy.

I wonder he did not think of discharging his obligations toward us long ago."

"I did not do it for the purpose of a reward," said his wife, somewhat peevishly.

"You will yet know why it has been done," replied the lieutenant-colonel; here he made a face intended for a laugh, and which drove the blood into his countenance.

"Let us talk no more about it," said his wife, impatiently; "tell me whether you are willing that Borgenstierna should drive Amelia to church to-morrow morning?"

"That is none of my business; you shall not have a chance to say that I have done the smallest thing in the matter; if he wants her for his wife, and if he can show that he has sufficient means to support her in accordance to her family, very well; but I have no desire to offer her to the highest bidder."

"I wish that still less," replied Madame de Dressen, slightly offended: "but am of the opinion that everything must be avoided which appears to be exaggerated, and for these reasons a peevish sentimentality is not here in its proper place."

The lieutenant-colonel made no reply to this; he wished to look at the affair as though it was settled, and resolved to regard it with stoical indifference. This uncommon neutrality probably originated from the sad position in which the former suitors had placed him.

"I do not care for it any more," said he, extinguishing the light, and stepping into his bed.

"You will therefore permit me to act according to the dictates of my own conscience?" inquired Madame de Dressen.

"Yes, to a certain point; that is to say, as far as your powers of conception will allow you; but as soon as the main question is at stake, stop, for then you will not know how to act; then you need not meddle with that affair, for I can do that myself."

"But my rights as a mother——"

"Good night, dear wife, I am sleepy, and you will be obliged to rise early to-morrow morning, therefore you will do better to sleep than quarrel about nothing."

Precisely at six o'clock the next morning the horses were pawing before the hall-door. Madame de Dressen was already in the kitchen to give her last commands to the servants, and Amelia was preparing the coffee-table in the saloon, which was lighted by four candles. This business proceeded slowly this time, as she was bothering her little heart how she could thank Ivar for his present.

When the latter entered the room, she was so much confused, that she was not able to say a word.

"Are you up so soon, my young lady?" said he, seeming to enjoy her confusion; "how good a cup of coffee will taste now."

"But it does not appear to look very good," said Amelia, busying herself in testing a few drops in a teaspoon.

"It is clear as crystal."

"Ay! so, so; but I must see where mamma keeps herself; we must hurry, or else we will be too late."

At this moment Madame de Dressen entered, and excused her husband, who, as she said, was not very well, and was unable to rise, which in reality meant that the lieutenant-colonel slept like a bear, and his wife did not dare wake him. After they had partaken of the coffee, Madame de Dressen made the proposition that, as there was only one sleigh with two seats at their disposal, she would be much obliged if Borgenstierna would be kind enough to drive Amelia. She herself would ride in a sleigh, behind which a man servant should stand on the runners for the purpose of driving her.

It was a bitter cold morning, the snow-flakes whirled in dense clouds around the inmates of the sleighs; the snow creaked gaily beneath the runners, and amid the merry jingling of the sleigh-bells, the sleigh-ride went along joyously. The road passed through a dense forest, which, in the dim light of the

snow, reminded our hero of the forests of Swarteborg; mentally he compared his present state of mind with that of former times, and a sentiment of indescribable happiness filled his bosom so much, that only a very small spot was left of the remembrance of the insult he had once received from that man in whose house he now resided as a guest.

Only a few days ago, he was a prey of bilious melancholy and doubt, and he now felt himself so vigorous, so invigorated, and so free; sweet sensations of happiness thrilled over him, and he felt in his innermost soul that it was love to which he was indebted for this mighty change. For the purpose of finding an answer to these sensations which so suddenly had taken possession of him, he sought for Amelia's eye.

But the latter had enfolded herself deeply in her shawl and hood, for the wind drove the snow in her face, and although it was glowing with such a warm blush that the breeze would do it no damage, she nevertheless found it advisable to envelop herself still closer, and draw the veil still more over her face; she felt a modest dislike to meet Borgenstierna's eye, for there was something in his gaze which caused an unexplainable sensation to creep over her.

She did not know why she felt thus, neither did she inquire the reason; it was sufficient that it was so, and caused her to be silent. She was pained at the thought that Borgenstierna might think it strange that she had not mentioned the splendid Christmas present he had made her, and not to appear odd, she overcame her dislike to speak, and said, quickly,

"Ammy will carefully preserve Alfred's gift; but it is too precious for me to wear."

These words had scarcely been uttered when Amelia discovered by them that she had hardly expressed her thanks. And as much as she wished to say at the moment, her lips refused to move. She was unable to utter a syllable, even should the world be at her disposal if she did so.

"If Miss de Dressen will only preserve this little keepsake, I am satisfied," replied Borgenstierna. "I hope that at some future time, Amelia will also wear it."

These words spoke volumes, when coming from the lips of a man of Borgenstierna's serious character. Amelia could not, and did not dare misunderstand what he intended to say by them. A slight sigh passed over her lips. It bore a secret message to her companion.

Quickly the horses flew past one group of solemnly-clad people after the other, whose crackling torchlights illuminated the branches of the trees that overhung the road. Soon the church became visible in the distance.

> "A holy watch-tower amid the tombs,
> With a myriad of stars within its walls."

The full tones of the organ resounded through the bright night—and, without knowing exactly how they had come, they arrived in front of the church.

After the church-service had concluded, the "gentle-folks and their guests" were, of course, invited to take breakfast at the parsonage; and it was not until then that Mina's unceasing tongue awakened Borgenstierna from his dream. Amelia, however, well knew how to explain his serious earnestness, and his more than usual silence; she knew that she had had an equally feeling companion during the earliest prayers she had made in the church; and she read in Borgenstierna's peacefully soft features, that she was to hope for a more peaceful and happy future.

"May God in His mercy preserve you from such a grumbler for a husband," whispered Mina to her friend, as she offered her the cream for the grit-pudding. "No, as far as that is concerned, I am satisfied with my Lamm; he can, at least, talk with people."

But Amelia was not much disposed to chatter with her friend

Mina; and Lamm's beloved was not acute enough to discover, as did Madame de Dressen, the cause of Amelia's silence.

The merry pastor's jests during the meal had finally brought a slight degree of animation into the loving couple, when Madame de Dressen advised them to start back on their return.

The company, therefore, took their leave. During their journey home, the silence was again renewed on both sides, and lasted during the whole of the day, and the next day also, although the lieutenant-colonel and his wife made every endeavour to entertain their guests in the best manner possible.

But on the third day the ice was broken.

"I am no fool, certainly," said Borgenstierna to himself. "No love-sick boy who squanders away his time in sighs. If I love, I must certainly give a sign of that love. I must hear whether she wishes to be my own—whether she loves me sufficiently to accept my hand."

He sought for Amelia, and held a long, very long conversation with her.

But as Borgenstierna was desirous that its subject should be kept secret for some time yet, it would not become his historian to communicate it to everybody. We can only state that he asked for her hand in marriage, and afterward presented himself before the lieutenant-colonel to make certain arrangements.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A SLIGHT CIRCUMSTANCE.

"THAT is a very pretty income, Mr. Borgenstierna, and I have by no means any objection to your proposal. On the contrary, I think I have all reason to congratulate my daughter and myself on the choice, by which you have honoured us; but you will allow me to manifest an insignificant hesitation, caused by a certain circumstance, to clear which lies altogether with you; and, at the same time, I cannot help entertaining the conviction that my future son-in-law will not fail to pay proper regard to it."

This speech of the lieutenant-colonel was given in a measured tone, uttered between pride and politeness. He also flattered himself with the idea that he had made quite an impression upon Borgenstierna; but the lofty-bearing tone that the lieutenant-colonel found impossible to deny himself at this moment, awoke altogether an opposite feeling within our hero's breast than the speaker had intended it should. He replied, nevertheless, with the utmost politeness:

"If, Mr. de Dressen, your desire is of that kind that it does not clash with former feelings or principles hitherto entertained, I will undoubtedly reply to it with the greatest pleasure."

"Ahem! I do not understand what you mean by your former principles. These may be very agreeable, and at the same time very detestable, and often, very often, approach nigh unto obstinacy; but this does not belong here. I only say, that I am of the opinion that the man who barters with a father concerning the hand of a daughter, should not stick so close to old principles. One ought to presume, at least, as long as the matter

remains unsettled, that the new one should be everything to him."

Borgenstierna's cheeks were mantled with a deep glow.

"I think I can boldly contend on the ground of Amelia's character, that she does not desire a man for a husband, who, like a weathercock, will suffer the first breath of strange influence to blow away his principles and convictions. I must, therefore, direct your attention once more to the fact, that, if the questionable circumstance you mention is of such a kind as to contend with one of my decided principles, I shall be obliged to answer you with a refusal; and I am sure that even Miss Amelia would be the last one who would claim a compliance with your wishes, which would necessarily be known by the name of a dishonourable weakness."

"But if my daughter should approve of what I am about proposing to you—should she, therefore, be obliged to refuse to herself an innocent desire, to give you an opportunity to display a firmness of character, that, if you will allow me to speak so, may be based upon wrong presumptions? Indeed, Mr. Borgenstierna, your pretensions are not small for a bridegroom, and it is just the question whether my Amelia will suit you as a housewife."

It was easily to be seen that the lieutenant-colonel was piqued, even offended. Borgenstierna saw that he had gone too far, as he did not know what the intentions of the other really were; but if it happened, and he could only console himself by the fact that, in case his suspicions were correct, and there should be, according to his views, something wrong in the little circumstance, he would be completely right in expressing himself in the way he had.

"We have deviated from the real theme of our conversation," said Borgenstierna, resuming the broken thread of the dialogue; "may I entreat you to acquaint me with your wish?"

The lieutenant-colonel, who certainly was not able to com-

prehend Borgenstierna's manner of thinking and acting, looked at the politeness he was now showing him in the same light as if it was the submission of a child, who, in default of any other mode of escaping the difficulty, gives way, to shelter himself from the storm; and that he entertained such an opinion, was clearly proved by the tone he used in giving his answer.

"I do not mean to say anything further than that, according to my opinion, it would not become Mr. Borgenstierna very badly if he possessed a title. A man who seeks the hand of a noble lady must be able to offer her a certain rank also, which is not in too strong a contrast with the position in life which she is about to relinquish."

"I thought so," was clearly to be read in Borgenstierna's dark brow, but his lips kept an obstinate silence. His breast heaved with violent emotion, and a mass of thoughts filled his brain; but as rapid as the flash of lightning crosses the black sky, the clouds that overshadowed his countenance separated, and a smile of peculiar meaning passed over his lips.

In this smile there was something that again aroused the lieutenant-colonel.

"Is there no possibility that my proposition will be accepted?" asked he, impetuously.

"It will be difficult to answer this question immediately," replied Borgenstierna. "I am certainly entitled to add a title to my name—that is due to me by right, and to attain which, I formerly strove; but——"

"Oh! dearest friend, that is just what I counted upon," said the lieutenant-colonel, with familiar frankness; "upon my honour, I always thought that, under the simple name—Mr. Borgenstierna—nothing behind, or nothing before it—there must assuredly be concealed something mysterious. Young men are not seldom fond of oddities. Let me hear, let me hear!"

The lieutenant-colonel was highly pleased at the thought of hearing something new, and which would gratify his vanity.

"Certain circumstances," said Borgenstierna, his conscience not at all troubled at placing his future father-in-law on the rack of curiosity, "some time ago caused me to leave a path in life into which I had entered, and I have not deemed it necessary to return back to that path, even with the independency which I now enjoy."

"I understand, I understand; it is natural that one should love freedom and independence, if one can have it. This is a correct theory: but it should not be carried to extremes. In any case, it is very useful to have such a little word before one's name."

"About that I am of a contrary opinion. A free man, with an honest name, whose ways of thinking and acting prove the nobility of his heart pure and unalloyed, and who is equally distant from egotistic calculation as from perhaps the envious fear of the world—such a man does not require a boasting escutcheon before his name."

"O! yes, truly! believe me, Mr. Borgenstierna, such an escutcheon, as you please to call it, has its value also. You would oblige me very much, and make me very happy, if you could make up your mind to assume it again."

"But supposing that it is not adequate to the young lady's rank? You were pleased to mention before——"

"Before, I spoke in anger—let us forget that; but now I say, let the gentleman procure a little word before his name, and I am satisfied, only that I may not be compelled to hear the simple name Borgenstierna proclaimed from the pulpit; for I confess that I am labouring under the weakness, if it can so be called, that I like titles. They are, to use that expression, the twin-brothers of us chevaliers. Nay, even still more, these are almost an integral part of us; and a nobleman without a title always appeared to me as something neither hot nor cold."

"From the lips of the lieutenant-colonel, who is himself a chevalier, this expression does not sound very flattering," replied

Borgenstierna; "a supposition might be traced from it, which might not be very flattering to the nobility."

"Let us stick to our subject," said the lieutenant-colonel, with a slight flush. "I only wish to put one more question to you—a question which, taken in the strictest sense, might sound rather indiscreet, but it may meet with some excuse from the fact that I am a great lover of order in all things. Do you receive people in your own house who bear your own name, Mr. Borgenstierna? I mean, whether you have relations—near relations who may claim such a privilege?"

At first, Borgenstierna was near giving a sharp answer to this very odd question; but he soon perceived that the motive that prompted it was the lieutenant-colonel's fear that he might, on some fine day, meet the skjuts-boy in his house, and he therefore only answered, in general terms, and in strict conformity to the truth, that he actually did not know one person bearing his own name, but that his house was open to any one who claimed his hospitality.

"Very well, very well," said the lieutenant-colonel; "and concerning the escutcheon—a droll idea—it is a settled fact that you again assume it."

"To be sincere, I would rather not do so; and I must also draw your attention to the fact, that I am not entitled to assume an equal rank with the lieutenant-colonel in the circles of society; for these reasons I should think it better to allow the subject to drop."

"No, no, do not think of such a thing; let us not lose any more time, but tell me what you have been before. I am very anxious indeed to know it."

"Excuse me; for, concerning that point, I am unable at this moment to satisfy your desires. If it is absolutely necessary that I should procure a title—although my convictions are utterly against it—it shall be the one which I once strove to attain as a great mark of distinction; but this remains my

mystery until the day of proclamation, and if you are satisfied to hear it proclaimed from the pulpit, I am ready to fulfil what I have promised, with the express condition that you will always remember that the proposition did not emanate from me."

"Your conditions, Mr. Borgenstierna, are odd indeed; but under the conviction that nothing dishonourable is connected with your former life—neither in your public nor private life—I will consent, only wishing that you give your word as a gentleman of honour, that nothing dishonourable or ridiculous is attached to it."

"That I can assure you—that there is nothing dishonourable or ridiculous connected with it; but you will find, Mr. Lieutenant-colonel, that the difference between your family and myself is nevertheless quite considerable."

"That amounts to nothing, Mr. Borgenstierna—not the least. You are yet a young man, and in good time counsel will come; besides that, it is not every one who can push himself along as I did, but I had also a number of family connexions, and his Majesty the king had had a personal affection toward me. In short, our mutual position from the commencement was unequal, and yet you would be welcome to me for my son-in-law, as a gentleman and a man of honour, even if you did not own such a splendid estate as Roestorp."

Borgenstierna's only answer to these compliments was a slight bow, and the lieutenant-colonel, after a moment's reflection, resumed the conversation:

"I think that now all doubt is cleared away, and I cannot think otherwise than that the matter is settled. Render Amelia happy. She is a noble girl, has had a good education; sensible, industrious, and withal fond of domestic duties—God bless you both!"

The words were followed by a grand embrace, into which the lieutenant-colonel threw as much feeling as the important moment required. Madame de Dressen and Amelia were now

called; the new-made father-in law made a pompous speech, in which he expatiated with great dignity upon the happiness of marriage, and about the 'white dove' of domestic felicity that was suspended so beautifully over his fireside, and which, so often hid by a dark cloud, had not vanished altogether.

Madame de Dressen was too much moved to say anything; but when she led Amelia to her lover, and joined their hands, a bright tear glistened in her eye, which spoke more plainly how much her heart was with them, than the long bombastic speech of the lieutenant-colonel.

We have nothing more to add, than that the lieutenant-colonel said to his daughter, "Henceforth, my dear child, you will have to call Borgenstierna, *thou*—kiss him in the presence of your parents, and next Sunday your bans will be proclaimed, and then you will hear the title that you will bear as his wife."

In great surprise Amelia looked up into the face of her betrothed, he smiled and whispered into her ear, "About that I shall have to talk to you when we are alone."

They kissed each other. Amelia called him *thou*, and the betrothal was completed.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NOOKS IN THE HUMAN HEART.

"DID you ever see the like. When I thought that the matter had come to an end, and am near catching the bilious fever out of pure anger and his stupid obstinacy, he starts right on the road, like a stubborn fellow as he is, and gets a bride for himself without saying the least word to me."

It was the assessor who uttered these words, as with a letter in his hand he entered the room in which was his wife.

"Of whom do you speak?" inquired Virginia, and in the scarcely visible tremour that affected her lips, a man of a less sanguine disposition than was Wirén's, would certainly find cause for the supposition, that she well knew of whom he spoke.

"Ah, do you not think of Mr. Borgenstierna's often mentioned acquaintance with Miss de Dressen? I have already spoken to you several times, telling you how cunningly I set things at work last fall; at that time, however, he did not want to know anything about it; but now, without farther hesitation, he has started for Tunefors, without confiding even a syllable of his intentions to me, and as he states here in his letter, all is arranged, and the wedding will take place on the first of May."

"Such things happen every day," said Virginia, slightly smiling.

Virginia was now able to smile occasionally; but this smile appeared to all, except Wirén, who still looked upon her with the eyes of a lover, more ghastly and cold than her former immovableness. She was like the glittering dew-drop which kisses the first flower of spring but freezes within its chalice. When Virginia conversed with her husband concerning their present

life, her words were mild and pleasant; but in this tenderness, compulsion could be seen, and there was an anxious uneasiness in it which she strove to conceal, without succeeding in doing so with everybody. It could be seen that she took the utmost pains to meet the hearty and familiar frankness of her husband gratefully, but her heart involuntarily closed again, without being able to oppose the force that pressed it together, with her own power of will.

Virginia was, as we have indicated, one of those odd women, who happily are not frequently met with, who, however, if one takes pains to study them, and read now and then their interior, can make discoveries which one is unable to do with other women, as their minds are so subject to change.

A short description of her inner life, and a history of her heart, might almost be indispensable to understand clearly her sentiments at the time of our narration.

Nature had profusely provided her with all those exterior charms that claim the homage of men, and are but too often the subjects of vanity and a desire to please, and the source of so many other faults; and she had been accustomed to be flattered and admired for many years, without experiencing by it the least sentiment of joy or satisfaction. Her temper was so very quiet, and she was so exempt from all vanity, that she did not entertain even a thought of pleasing others, still less would she have carried out such a design.

Poor, and deprived at an early age of a parent's care and protection, Virginia was compelled to live among strangers; without opposition, she did all that was required of her, and was applauded by all who knew her, for her gentleness and willingness to serve others, without loving anybody on her part, or without feeling even a desire to be loved. She was by no means unhappy, and she never thought that perhaps it might be otherwise; for her reserved, almost icy bearing, was not the consequence of deprivation or ill-treatment. It was her own pure

nature which had as yet not been torn from its balance by any strong impression. Toward the poor she manifested her compassion, by her actions, without ever expressing it in words, and by the proceeds of the work that she performed in her leisure hours, she was often enabled to perform charitable deeds; but she was never seen to be moved by the emotions of those whom she had assisted. It gave her joy to extend a helping hand to others; but she was more sparing of a compassionate word or look, than a miser of his money.

At the time of her confirmation, she generally lived by herself; her inner world was her indisputable, reserved property. Into that no eye was able to penetrate, and whatever emotions and intentions might have germinated and taken life in her soul at that time, her soul, nevertheless, remained equally calm, reserved, and impenetrable to every impression.

Thus Wirén found her. Enraptured with her beauty, he asked for her hand, without considering the inequality of their mutual dispositions. Virginia's foster-parents told her that she would be obliged to marry once, at any rate, and advised her not to lose the chance, as there would not soon be another opportunity; and Virginia, who had seen no reason to doubt the correct judgment of her guardians, followed their advice. Wirén received her vows of love and faithfulness, and she came to the conclusion to keep them as well as she was able to do.

During the first year after her marriage, she was firmly convinced that her husband was happy, and that she was doing everything on her part to comply with the duties that she had imposed upon herself—for did she not without opposition fulfil all his desires? Was she not silent when he grew excited? Did she not conduct her domestic affairs with order and economy? and did she not prepare for him the prettiest embroideries with his name and birthday stitched thereon? and at the same time not pay the least attention to other men? hardly deigning to

reply to others whom her husband brought to the house, and whom he particularly recommended to her polite attentions.

What did she lack then? Nothing; of this fact she was perfectly convinced, and the thought never struck her mind to inquire of herself whether it might be otherwise, and whether a change would add to the happiness and welfare of her husband.

It was reserved for other circumstances to make her acquainted with her own-self, and to allow her to find her own *I* again, to whose most secret nooks she had thus far been a perfect stranger.

At the bathing-place at Stroemstad, she saw in Borgenstierna the first man who awakened within her something like interest; but far from giving way to a feeling of sympathy, which his gloomy, sorrowful bearing caused her, she conducted herself toward him still more coldly, if possible, than toward others. Was she aware of danger? or was it mere instinct that told her to avoid him?

After the bathing season had concluded, Borgenstierna was invited by his friend to accompany him home. Here Virginia had daily opportunities to see the one in the neighbourhood of whom she felt a secret rapture.

Often, when the assessor was occupied with business in his library, Borgenstierna sat on the sofa opposite Virginia, and it was not seldom that he sank into a deep, admiring gaze at her beautiful immovable form, which gave to his fancy an inimitable resemblance to an exquisite marble statue; but the slightest motion on her part dispelled that illusion, and he was deeply pained at the idea, that the being who made such a mysterious, peculiar impression upon him, was neither dead nor alive. Sometimes he would sit there and gaze at her, until his own gloomy brain grew dizzy; but as soon as he thought of her definitely, he experienced a throb of pity and pain for his friend, as every

day he perceived the certainty, that Wirén could be but unhappy at the sight of such a wife.

New and altogether other sentiments arose within Virginia's soul. At first slightly, and afterwards more violently, she had irresistibly been fettered by Borgenstierna's gloomy, glowing, and speaking eyes, after she had again dived into them for a second look. Whatever he said—short, plain, manly, and powerful—gained her applause; she loved to listen, but never entered into a conversation with him, and often held her breath, that she might not lose a sound that fell from his lips. It was a sensation of indescribable pleasure to be in his presence; and, that she might not disturb this impression, she did not dare make even the slightest motion which might have disturbed the state of mind into which his presence had placed her.

Virginia had not, as yet, accounted to herself for this strange order of things, until one evening she caught herself in an expression of her feelings; which was as shocking as it was painful to her.

Wirén had proposed a boat ride, for the purpose of netting mullet. Besides the assessor, his wife, and Borgenstierna, there was only an assistant going with them. Borgenstierna stood with one foot upon the side of the boat, and, bending too far over it, lost his balance, and fell into the water, coming very near upsetting the boat with its contents.

At the moment that Borgenstierna fell into the water, Virginia screamed involuntarily; her husband turned toward her in surprise, and the first untruth passed her lips when she said, "I boat would overturn."

no danger concerning that," said Wirén, assisting the sudden but harmless bath, back into the boat.

Virginia was silent; but from that moment it appeared to her that the blemish that tarnished her heart was stamped on her brow.

Borgenstierna took leave of his friends; she remained as she

had been before; but it was reserved for the letter before mentioned to arouse her from the apathy in which she had remained so long—an almost happy life, compared with the one she now commenced. She perceived clearly that she had become unfaithful to her intention to render her husband happy—in short, that she had missed her whole existence. With deep grief, she now discovered what had become of her, and saw that the only one who could possibly have saved her disliked to enter into any contact with her, and did not wish even to visit his friend, that he might not be near the being whose appearance alone made such a cold and disgusting impression upon him—that he not only pitied the man who had allied his fate with hers, but found himself even prevented by that which he saw in her domestic life from fulfilling his intentions of entering into a "second marriage."

This was hard, and more than sufficient to crush a woman's heart that did not know upon what to support itself; but Virginia's trials were not yet ended. Even if she did give way to her new inclination, there, nevertheless, arose a new spirit within her the next moment, and she came to the firm conclusion to be another being toward her husband for the future.

Her soul, of which it might be said, its true life had just begun, did not lack strength; but, left entirely to her own self, she was tossed upon an unknown sea; not unlike a mariner, who intends to steer straigl tforward to his place of destination, but who, without knowledge of the concealed rocks and sandbanks that are in his path, is wrecked in consequence of his own ignorance.

Virginia's desire was to be a tender, loving wife; she now intended to be everything to her husband, whom she had so little cared for hitherto. She meant to restore to him every thought, every feeling which she had squandered, against her better knowledge, upon a man who esteemed her but little; she intended to become more tender, more pleasing, more amiable,

and more companionable than all other women; she meant to show Borgenstierna how much she was able to perform by her own firm will, and God only knows what else she intended! Her womanly pride began to arise: but it was a pity that she was not sufficiently powerful to crush her worst enemies—her own thoughts, her own nature, her own character, and even her own heart.

Wirén had not the least idea of what Virginia suffered. It is true that he sometimes thought—

"Is it possible that she loves Borgenstierna?—she who is so cold! Assuredly, her whole being and soul have undergone an important change! But he is a fool who does not enjoy good things without asking for their origin; and a still greater fool is he who does not drink from the bright, clear stream, without first stirring up its dregs, that he may see from whence it comes! Virginia has amended; for the future she will be still more to me than she has been heretofore; and I would but ill reward her exertions should I think of the possibility, that the change in her conduct could have originated in another cause than a renewed sentiment of her duties, and a newly-aroused love for her husband. Under all circumstances, I shall rest quiet; for, even should it be as I thought, I need not be fearful that her heart has received a deep impression; she will never be able really to love!"

Assessor Wiren, as it has been seen, was more liberal than other men usually are who love their wives, indeed; but he was a whole-souled man, and did not consider it wrong, but, on the contrary, thought it very reasonable to display, even in his domestic affairs, that liberality which was the guide of all his actions, as well in his political as private life.

With such a mode of thinking, it can easily be seen why the assessor had not yet been able to read his wife's character. He only saw how much she now strove to please him, and observed how much more care she bestowed upon her tôilet; how she

prepared his favourite dishes for him, and he enjoyed her smiling lips and friendly words. But her painful inward strife, her anguish, her heart-rending prayers, as she besought the Most High, upon her knees, to grant her power to enable her to forget *him*, whose name she did not even dare to proclaim, but who was her only and steadfast thought;—all this Wirén did not see. He did not even divine what passions and emotions were raging within Virginia's cold bosom.

"Passion," says a celebrated author, "resembles the sphinx of olden times: at first, it raises within the human heart a beautiful head crowned with the flowers of imagination, uplifting its eyes towards heaven with a smile of innocence; then it grows up, and becomes a lion, whose strength is the more awful as the heart that feeds it is more noble. It sits threateningly near the verge of the abyss, and demands an answer to the enigma of life; and woe to him who dares to deceive it!"

Assessor Wirén stood before his wife with Borgenstierna's letter in his hand, and heard her say, in her old icy manner, "Such things happen every day!"—but he, nevertheless, saw, at the same moment, the smile that played over her lips, which warmed and delighted his heart; then it appeared to him as though he was awaking from a long dream; and he thought, for the first time, that this smile might be a studied mockery, as one can cause a wired doll to smile. The false play of her lips contrasted disgustingly with her snow-white cheeks, from which, a few seconds before, every trace of colour had vanished.

"You smile, Virginia—why do you smile?" inquired Wirén, in a sharp, almost severe tone.

Virginia's smile had disappeared; she arose, her bearing was still more stiff than usual, and, with a slight motion of her head, she answered:

"You shall never again have cause to put such a question to me. I shall smile no more."

And in these words, "I shall smile no more," which were uttered with almost wild anguish, lay the whole story of her soul, the plain confession of a rent heart striving with itself.

Wirén stood a few moments thunder-stricken; he had never seen her thus before—so exalted, earnest, and deeply moved by the powerful emotions of her mind.

"My Virginia, my love," he exclaimed, "why do you say so? Was the smile caused by your friendliness, which gave me so much joy, not the involuntary action of your heart?—should it—"

And in this manner Wirén inquired farther in his mind, and forgot by it all his former principles, until he finally arrived at the truth, and saw himself alone. Virginia had left him, overcome by the storm of her passions, which his eyes could not be allowed to see. He sought for her in her sleeping apartment—she was not there. He searched in the kitchen, the pantry, and in the cellar—Virginia was nowhere to be found.

Wirén was nearly crazed with anxiety. Outside, in the cold winter twilight, the snow was falling in large flakes.

"Virginia, my Virginia," resounded through the deserted garden. The servants were moved to action—they could not imagine what had happened to their master.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE HUSBAND.

At the second question of her husband, and at the look by which he accompanied it, Virginia's soul, usually so devoid of feeling, was deeply moved. They both told her that he did not only entertain suspicion, but that he was acquainted with the unfaithfulness of her heart.

What could she now do? what had dissimulation availed her? and what would it avail her hereafter? A hysteric sensation contracted her bosom, and she was scarcely able to breathe. Unobserved she hurried down the stairs, and through the court-yard, and entered a small summer-house in the garden, where she sank down upon a sofa.

She felt neither the cold that chilled her limbs, nor the snow through which she had waded. She felt nothing but a glowing flame within her heart and brain. She knew that she had betrayed the confidence of her husband, and had engulfed herself still more deeply; that she had lied with her heart and lips, for the purpose of doing what she thought was her duty; she felt

> "That her love, her tenderness, were false,
> And her every look was but a lie."

With Virginia, as with every woman of strict moral principles, all unfaithfulness of the heart was equivalent to a breach of the marriage vow. The degradation of her more exalted nature did not appear to her less pitiable, although she, who was born with the finest feeling of honour, shrank back in horror from the thought of a coarse dereliction of her duty as a wife.

To have lost, through her own means, the esteem and respect

of her husband, to be deprived of the support which the assurance gave her, that—

"He will never know of my degradation, as it will be my unchangeable endeavour to expiate for that which I have committed."

This conviction, which was pressing upon her, was bitterly painful, nay, even horrible; but the most horrible of all was that she lacked courage and confidence in the husband she had betrayed, to confess on his bosom her crime, and to find strength in his strength to uphold her own weakness.

There are but few men indeed who are able justly to value such confidence—but it might be that their number would be larger if women were not apt, under such dangerous circumstances, to use intrigue and dissimulation, to which they generally fall as victims. Surely there are men to be found who are able to raise up, with reason and argument, a trembling and anxious wife, who can only come to the resolution to unload her heart with loving confidence into his own.

Virginia was not able to form such a resolution. She did not know her husband sufficiently, and entertained the idea that she would humble herself by such a confession. Moreover, she was yet too proud to acknowledge to other than the Most High and her own heart that she was guilty.

Nevertheless, she suffered much, and felt the arrival of that bitter moment with pain. She heard Wirén's voice, heard his anxious cry—"Virginia! my Virginia!" and intended to answer; but it seemed to her as though an invisible hand sealed her lips; it was, however, only the cold, which benumbed her muscles. She would not have been able either to move or rise, if even a human life depended upon it.

Suddenly the door was thrown open, and Wirén rushed in.

"Great God! Virginia, what are you doing here?"

Virginia did not reply, and endeavoured to rise; but unable to do so. The pale, rigid statue of marble appeared to be

dead—and Wirén could scarcely believe that it was his living wife whom he lifted in his arms. Bearing her to the house, he nursed her and watched over her with the most assiduous care.

Midnight had long since passed. Virginia was slumbering soundly; by her side sat Wirén, and his eye, which reposed with the utmost tenderness upon his wife, proved that he was one of the few, who, as soon as they are treated with confidence, show themselves worthy of it in the highest degree.

"I was too careless, I am always too hasty," thought the assessor, reproving himself, and smoothing Virginia's brow.

She awoke and looked up; but, startled by the sight of her husband, again closed her eyes.

"Virginia," he whispered, bending over her, "I hope you do not hate me. Why do you turn away from me? Why do you refuse me your confidence? There is time yet Compose yourself, and be assured that I still love you dearly—warmly, and disinterestedly enough to save you from yourself. Come to me, lay your head upon my bosom—my heart is but human, and has a sympathy for human weaknesses."

Unable to withstand the endearing accents of the tender voice, and those self-denying sentiments, which caused Wirén to forget his own pain, to soothe that of his wife, she leaned upon his shoulder and burst into a flood of tears.

Virginia sobbed upon her husband's breast, and the pride of her heart vanished like the frost before the sun. She breathed freer as she opened to him every secret corner of her heart, and trembled with mingled anxiety, happiness, pain, and shame, as Wirén, with the animation so peculiar to him, pressed his lips to hers, and said,

"My Virginia, all crimes that you have committed within your heart, I forgive you by this kiss; henceforth you will be doubly dear to me, for you have bestowed your confidence upon me. Your first inclination toward Borgenstierna will soon be forgotten; of that I am so firmly convinced that I would stake

my life upon it. The flower of our love will arise from it, still more beautiful, and never more will fade."

With a deep blush, and highly moved by his tender emotions, Virginia raised her head, and a heavenly glance of gratitude shot from her heretofore cold, passionless eye.

"Wirén," said she, "what you believe I believe also; there is something within me which tells me, that from this moment a new and more beautiful epoch of my life begins. Only one thing might yet crush me, and it would take much courage and a long time to restore myself—but I hope I need not be afraid of that —or should I—"

Here she looked up into the face of her husband, with an indescribable expression of anguish depicted upon her features. It appeared as though she wished to penetrate into his very soul, to seek the answer to her doubt.

But Wirén, who had already prepared himself for such a question, and had resolved to conceal the truth from her, thinking it would be better, replied, with the utmost composure, and without reflection,

"Concerning that, you need have no fears, dear Virginia; he is so far from guessing the reality, that he would rather believe that he was able to melt the ice-covered peaks of Mount Blanc with his breath, than your heart, which he considers still more obdurate."

"Good," replied Virginia, elevating her head with more pride than usual; "he shall never believe otherwise. All the flames that are now burning within my bosom shall henceforward only glow in gratitude for you. You have saved me from the storm which threatened to crush my very life; you, and you alone of the whole world, have loved me, and you will teach me to love you in return. He originated the spark; *you* shall fan it into a still brighter flame."

Was this Virginia who spoke these sweet-sounding words? Yes, it was she. She sat erect upon her bed, encircled with the

soft, mysterious glare of the lamp, the curtains fluttering like white clouds around her, and her naturally golden curls fell in clusters over her faultless neck. Never before had she appeared so beautiful; and although wounded womanly vanity was hand-in-hand with her sincere repentance, she was now, nevertheless, when weighed down by humility, the most magnificent subject for a repentant Magdalena that was ever beheld.

Wirén knelt down near the sofa, and for the first time she returned his burning kisses.

On the following morning he wrote to Borgenstierna:—

"I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart, dear brother; and, although I think that you have no reason for being so reserved as to your intentions, I shall not upbraid you; but will pray to the Lord to render you as happy as I now am. You might have been of the opinion, perhaps, by what you have seen, that such a prayer would not amount to much. But as to that you are much mistaken; that leaf in our domestic life which you found exposed, you will not see again. It has been effaced, even to the last letter; for the writing was false. I have not been acquainted with the beautiful and great heart of my Virginia until now. I dare say, with the fullest and happiest assurance, that she loves me now as well as I loved her long ago. The dark hour has passed over; a gloomy cloud was suspended over our heads; but, heaven be praised, the darkness has given way before the brightest light. The cloud has vanished like the morning mist; and amid the confusion and roaring of the elements Virginia and I have found each other.

"When you are conveying your young wife home, I hope that your road will pass Elmtaryd; if this is impossible, then let me know, and I will bring my wife to Roestorp, for we wish to partake with you in your happiness. For my own part, I can hardly deny myself the pleasure of being a witness of the piquant

surprise which you intend to give to your high-faring father-in-law. Farewell, with a salute of friendship.

"I remain, your

"WIREN.

"P S.—In addition, recommend me to your betrothed. Upon my honour, a pleasing, amiable child, and will be, in time, an excellent mother. Only take her rightly, and you will never entertain the foolish thought that you did not understand each other. It is my firm conviction, which is based upon my own experience, that the want of happiness in married life is caused far less by inequality of character than by that pretension. You only require patience, and all will soon be right; and you will become accustomed to each other, if a hearty sincerity exists in both. I am perfectly sure that Amelia will fulfil her duties as a wife in the best possible manner, and will be able to do much for her husband. You may congratulate yourself, therefore, from the bottom of your heart—but also remember that thorns and roses always grow together; and it but too often depends upon our own exertions, whether we shall enjoy the one, or be wounded by the other. W."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE VESTRY-ROOM.

THE first of April, 1834, arose from its misty couch, and shook in its vanity the light folds of its night-robe, until the latter gradually sunk beneath the horizon, and the young day peeped forth in all its glorious beauty. At Tunefors all was stirring. The morning had hardly dawned when Madame de Dressen and her servants had risen to cook, boil, and to roast, for they were waiting for their neighbours to arrive, as they had been invited to attend, after church service, to congratulate the happy couple. It was the first day of the proclamation of the bans.

Borgenstierna had arrived a few days before, and had given the pastor the necessary documents. The lieutenant-colonel was exceedingly anxious to inquire of the minister what was the title of his future son-in-law; but his dignity would not allow him to do so, and still he could not possibly lower himself so much as to ask his wife to inquire about it of Amelia, who, to judge from the intimacy that existed between the lovers, was undoubtedly acquainted with Ivar's most secret thoughts.

The lieutenant-colonel, therefore, perceived that decency required him to restrain his curiosity; but he was obliged to give way to it in a slight degree, for he could not possibly wait so long a time until the guests would arrive. He was forced, therefore, to discover some middle passage; and, thanks to his cunning, he did so.

At breakfast, when the family had assembled, our good lieutenant-colonel suddenly remembered that he had some important business to attend to, at the distance of a mile from

Tunefors, and he therefore commanded the servant to prepare his cart, which, by-the-by, he was pleased to call his gig.

His wife smiled; she could read her husband, and it was plain to her that he was making a roundabout road toward the church; but as she was just as certain that he would not sin so much against all custom as not to be present at the proclamation of his own child, she supposed that her husband would not deem it beneath his dignity to listen to it from the vestry-room. She was right. The sermon had scarcely been concluded, when, at about half-past eleven, the outside door was slightly opened, and the lieutenant-colonel thrust his head through it, much to the surprise of the sexton, saluting the astonished man with a friendly and condescending nod.

Borgenstierna, at the same moment, pressed the hand of his betrothed with a certain uneasiness, and said,

"Perhaps you are not satisfied with it, Amelia. You know I have placed the matter entirely in your own hands; and for your sake I will refrain from it, although I think it is right."

"But I do not wish you, even for my sake, to refrain from anything that you consider right and reasonable. Do you not think that I know but too well how to esteem the treasure which I have gained in your heart, to care about a matter now for which I never cared before? My dear Ivar, we are of the same opinion. Far from repenting, I am, on the contrary, very glad to be enabled to show you how willingly and sincerely I shall always comply with your desires."

"Yes, dearest, as for the main question I am, thank God, firmly convinced; but that is not what I mean. I have been thinking what your father would say"

"So have I, dear Ivar; during the whole night I have thought more about my father than of you, and I have said to myself, at least a hundred times, God grant that evening had already arrived; but it is not yet noon, and you may believe that I do not feel very comfortable."

"My dear Amelia, that is the very reason why I am uneasy. I think I should not have been so egotistical."

"You must not pity me, Ivar. I shall not allow it. Even if an altercation should arise, I will share it with *you*."

Borgenstierna pressed Amelia warmly to his bosom, and her winsome smile banished the frown from his brow.

"The parson's sermon is unusually long to-day," said the lieutenant-colonel, impatiently, looking at the sexton, who was busy in the vestry-room.

"He is just saying amen," said the sexton. "I must now go in with the proclamation-book."

The sexton walked away, and left the lieutenant-colonel, in the utmost expectation, behind the half-closed door

At length the minister began to prepare himself, by coughing and clearing his throat, and after a lapse of a few moments, which he gravely devoted to the use of the handkerchief, and which almost cast the poor lieutenant-colonel into despair, he spoke out, in a clear and plain voice:

"There are persons who wish to enter into the holy state of matrimony—and I therefore herewith proclaim for the first time——" Here the lieutenant-colonel became so much excited that he opened the vestry-room door further, so that he would not lose a single word: "The master-tanner, Ivar Borgenstierna, and the high, well-born, young, and noble lady Bernhardine Eleanora Amelia de Dressen—may the Lord bless their intentions," &c., &c.

It was indeed a miracle that the lieutenant-colonel, at this unexpected stroke, did not throw open the vestry-room door, and cry out to the parson, "Say that once more." There was indeed such an intention thought of, and would have been carried into effect, had not a second, sober thought brought him back to his senses. It suddenly occurred to him how natural it might be, that the old, near-sighted minister might have read wrong. And certainly some other name, commencing with the

word "master," might be on the paper. For instance, "master of the royal horse," "master of the royal mines," or something similar. The lieutenant-colonel, in his present state of mind, was not able to perceive that it was impossible for it to be either the one or the other. Nevertheless, it must be so—for a tanner, a plain mechanic, could not possibly dare to be so presumptuous as to seek a connexion with one of the oldest noble families in the country, neither would he venture to carry it out in such a daring, unheard-of manner.

"I wish the old beast was here now, that I might know how the matter stands." By these words, the lieutenant-colonel meant the parson; but the latter was obliged to attend to other affairs; and, in the mean time, the lieutenant-colonel fully enjoyed the horrible pleasure of witnessing how the congregation whispered to each other; and he could even observe, through a small aperture in the vestry room door, how the people of rank, in the immediate neighbourhood of the choir, exchanged significant glances, and occasionally drew down the corners of their mouths.

"Where is the proclamation-paper? Give it to me," cried the lieutenant-colonel to the old parson, who now approached him with polite bows and congratulations: "How could you read it that way?"

"Read what?" inquired the surprised parson.

"Did not you read master-tanner, where it probably was intended as master of the horse, or master of the mines?"

"Indeed, there is not a word there about either the one or the other," replied the parson, in amazement. "But here it stands, literally as I read it: m-a-s-t-e-r t-a-n-n-e-r. I should think that you would know best what was the rank and trade of your future son-in-law."

"Be so kind as to spare your superfluous remarks," thundered the lieutenant-colonel, giving his anger free vent. "Let me see the paper."

"With the utmost pleasure; as soon as the sexton comes he shall bring it. In the mean time, I must request you to keep silence, as the service is not yet concluded."

The lieutenant-colonel was somewhat cooled by these simple, plain-spoken words. He gradually became aware of the impropriety of his behaviour, and walked silently to and fro, ever and anon striking the pavement with his iron-shod cane, until the walls resounded with the violence of his blows.

When the parson, after the service was over, had again entered the vestry-room, he ordered the sexton to procure the proclamation-paper, which order was obeyed immediately.

But now, the eager haste which the lieutenant-colonel had previously displayed, suddenly vanished, and he received the paper with an appearance of dislike. Opening the important document, he was obliged to read in plain letters, "master-tanner," in spite of the pains he took to make out, "master of the horse," or "master of the mines."

A deep sigh, which sounded almost as loud as the report of a pistol, escaped his lips. He allowed the paper to fall to the floor, and stood rooted to the spot several seconds; but he soon saw the necessity of saving outward appearances, and what was more important, his authority. He stooped to pick up the paper, as though it had accidentally fallen from his grasp, and said, with a composure, which cost such a man as the lieutenant-colonel, especially in his present position, not a little exertion,

"He has, then, at least, the satisfaction of having won the wager. Some time ago, we held a conversation concerning the title under which Mr. Borgenstierna would have his bans proclaimed, and he then said, jokingly, he intended to have himself called a master-tanner, as there is a large tannery on the extensive estate of Roestorp. I laughed at it, and bet him my black pony—you know what an excellent horse it is, Mr. Parson. I would never have thought that I should lose, as I did not believe that Mr. Borgenstierna would be so odd as to suffer himself to be

called a master-tanner, from the pulpit. Since then we have not spoken about the matter. But, this morning, I thought I should like to know whether I should be allowed this evening to call the trotter my own, and must confess, that I was so surprised, as you have seen, at the droll and singular idea about the master-tanner, that I became much excited, which I certainly should not have done—for, at a wager, both parties endeavour to show that they can keep what they have promised. Borgenstierna has his little oddities the same as we have—but the loss of my black pony troubles me a little. I must hasten home, and save the animal somehow or another."

The pastor bowed, after having listened to this explanation; but looked like one who is bound through politeness to believe what another one tells him. He shook the lieutenant-colonel's proffered hand, and was sufficiently acquainted with mankind to know why it trembled. The honest pastor, however, was good-natured enough to say,

"Whatever may have happened in regard to that wager, is strictly confidential"

"I hope so," replied the lieutenant-colonel, who could not think without shame of the deep contrast in which the master of the horse, and master of the mines stood with the story of the wager. "I hope so Your obedient servant, Mr. Parson."

In the next moment he was at the outside; and, entering his gig, drove homeward.

As soon as the lieutenant-colonel had left the church behind him, the great restraint that he had been forced to wear, was followed by a fit of actual craziness; and during his whole ride to Tunefors, he bothered his brains concerning the method by which he could punish Borgenstierna for his arrogance in the most effectual manner. At length he arrived at the conclusion to break off the match entirely, unless his future son-in-law would pledge his word to procure a title.

Madame de Dressen saw, through the kitchen window, the

thunder-cloud that overshadowed the lieutenant-colonel's brow. By his hasty driving she had already seen, at a distance, that a storm was approaching.

She had known as little about the secret proclamation as her lord and husband. Amelia had at one time intended to tell her about the secret of her betrothed; but she declined hearing it, as she thought it would be better for her not to know what title Borgenstierna was to have before his name.

"For if it does not please papa," said the sensible and prudent lady, "I should have to bear the reproach for my whole life, that I had helped you in deceiving him."

The finale of the matter proved that she was correct.

"Do you honour the name of your husband so highly, that you will assist in the degradation of both your ancestors and your posterity?"

Thus the lieutenant-colonel first addressed his wife, as he hastily entered the kitchen, and advanced to the spot where she was busily engaged in stuffing a turkey-cock, which was destined to be roasted.

"Dear De Dressen, what do you mean? For Heaven's sake be calm, and allow it to explain itself. I do not understand anything about it. Look at me, and say whether you believe me, or I shall be deeply grieved."

There was so much good-nature and disarming kindness about Madame de Dressen's prayer, that he could not refuse it.

He looked searchingly into her countenance, and as during the twenty years of their marriage he had become cognizant of the fact that she was a lover of truth, he could no longer be so foolish as to continue to reproach her for having deceived him. Borgenstierna and Amelia, therefore, were the only guilty ones.

"Do you believe me?" inquired Madame de Dressen, extending the fork toward him, as though it was the wand of a sorceress.

"Yes, I believe you, Sophia; but, in the name of God, put out your fires and shut up the kitchen, for there is no use for them to-day."

"What do you mean, dear De Dressen?"

"I mean to say, simply, that no congratulations shall be received, and that, very probably, the whole ceremony will be for naught; for if he does not procure himself a title, none of you, either you, Miss Pert, or the gentleman, need imagine that I will give my consent to the marriage of my daughter with a—a—the devil take it! I am almost crazy when I think of such a shame."

"My dearest and only Dressen, I will soon be with you," she interrupted him, and, casting aside the turkey, followed him into the next room.

"Alas!" exclaimed she, despairingly; "I hope you will not expose us to the ridicule of the whole world, rendering Amelia unhappy and myself insane? Reflect, for Heaven's sake, only reflect. Remember that you yourself have invited the neighbours to dinner, which is now waiting for them."

"Hush! be still; do not cram my ears so full of this cursed stuff. If you only knew what a fine title your stupid son-in-law has."

"Well, my dear, what is it?"

"Tanner!" shouted the lieutenant-colonel, breaking out in a scream of sneering, malicious laughter. "Master-tanner—a mechanic!"

"A mechanic!" exclaimed Madame de Dressen, somewhat confused. "Ah, dear Dressen, you must not feel so bad about it. I understand it all. Rest assured that it arises from your quarrelling about titles. You know well enough, dear husband, that he owns a tannery, and has, therefore, made this little joke, wishing by it——"

The poor woman was in a dilemma; she did not know how

to express in words the idea that Borgenstierna had played a joke upon her husband's love of rank.

"Well, what did he wish?" asked the latter.

"What do I know? I cannot find the word by which to express what I mean, dear Dressen."

"That's right, Sophia; now you talk as my wife should do; but keep quiet. I know how to avenge my honour—he has undertaken to injure his future father-in-law in his most sensitive point, which no gentleman of honour would have done; but I know what I want also, what I'm about, and he shall know it soon, too."

Madame de Dressen, who perceived that she had, to speak vulgarly, upset the gravy, almost lost her senses; she looked at her husband as tenderly as possible, took hold of his sleeve, and patting him on the shoulder, whispered in an entreating tone:

"My good Dressen, do nothing of which you might afterward repent." In short, she said everything that a sensible woman could do under such circumstances.

Her endeavours, however, were fruitless. The lieutenant-colonel gradually approached the door, finally opening it.

Borgenstierna stood in the centre of the adjoining room. His features were composed and earnest, as the important day required, which is natural with every man who is in the habit of thinking deeply. He saluted his father-in-law with a bow, that was more profound and respectful than he had ever before used toward him.

Amelia looked bashfully at her father from behind her lover, where she stood half-concealed. The roguish smile that usually brightened her lips, was not to be seen. Uneasiness and anxious expectation had usurped its place.

The lieutenant-colonel remained silent—rage prevented his utterance. Borgenstierna, therefore, opened the conversation:

"You have been to church, I believe, dear father?"

"Yes, I have been there, to be told how meanly you treated the trust I placed in you."

The lieutenant-colonel thought that he had infused sufficient contempt into these words to crush Borgenstierna and completely destroy his equilibrium.

But he was much mistaken. Borgenstierna replied with politeness, but without submission:—

"With your express permission I have only renewed my title, which I had formerly striven to obtain. I was once a journeyman tanner before I was appointed overseer of my father-in-law's tannery. As I conducted all his business affairs, he kindly granted me the title of factor, which I retained until I became, after his death, the owner of Roestorp."

"But why the devil did you not style yourself Patron of the Mines, as other sensible people do, when they conduct the business of mining?"

"I have not a right to do so, for the mines are not my free property; but as I own a large tannery, I could not comply with your request to place a title before my name in any other manner than by calling myself master-tanner."

"Well, it is enough to drive one mad. Was such folly ever before heard of? I spoke of a title, not a diploma of mastership."

"The word title never passed my lips. I even drew your attention to that fact."

"But I did so," cried the lieutenant-colonel, who did not wish to listen to further explanations; "and as I am not willing to have a tanner for my son-in-law, I declare to you, that the whole affair shall be broken up, if you do not immediately petition for a title. Where my honour is concerned, I do not allow anybody to dance upon my nose."

"That means, therefore, if I understand you rightly, that you intend to break your word and to commit an act that is equally at variance with the honour of a gentleman?"

"By no means! When I gave my word I did not know that it was a mechanic that proposed for my daughter's hand."

"My dear lieutenant-colonel, let us place all sharp words aside; they will serve only to lead us more and more from our object," replied Borgenstierna, sincerely. "Let us understand each other aright. I am now as little a mechanic as at the time when I proposed for Amelia's hand. I consider it an honour to be a free man alone, independent of the obligations of rank and caste. Master of my own estate, I despise all titles from the bottom of my heart. But that I did not defend my principles with sufficient power, which, to tell the truth, should have been my duty, and to give you the conviction that I would never submit to your views; all this originates from a cause which I will take the liberty of communicating to you at a more appropriate season. Allow me to assure you that it will be my pleasure to comply with your wishes in all other respects; but concerning the title, I shall stand by my former position; and I think that your sentiments are too noble, that I should buy my happiness at the expense of my principles."

"Principles! you say; they are nothing but fooleries—different views of life, but no principles. What will the world say, when they are informed, as it certainly is yet doubtful, that I, whose firm principles against such foolish views are known to all, should have given my daughter to a man without a title?"

"The world will say, 'The lieutenant-colonel is too much enlightened to maintain a principle, for any length of time, which, as experience shows, is daily losing ground. Only cast a look at the numerous marriage-notices in the newspapers, and you will be convinced that nothing is more common than that noble ladies are wedded to honest civilians.'"

"And Borgenstierna is still a nobleman!" exclaimed Madame de Dressen, who had not before ventured to raise her gentle voice; "and I am convinced that he will never call himself master-tanner."

"Ah! papa, the guests are coming!" exclaimed Amelia, anxiously, and with a suppliant mien the lovely being advanced toward her father. "Papa! dear, kind papa! allow me to go down and receive their congratulations. Good God! I hear Mina's voice."

"Remain here, girl! talk no more about congratulations!" replied the lieutenant-colonel, harshly. The sight of Amelia, to whom he had not before paid much attention, again raised his ire. "Stay here! I will go down myself."

Thus saying, his eyes glittered with venom and bile; so much so, that Amelia thought it best to retire.

At this moment Borgenstierna advanced to the lieutenant-colonel, and drew him, not without difficulty, into a window-niche.

"Allow me to speak my opinion," he commenced, in an important tone, "it amounts to this: it will be better for your honour, Mr. de Dressen, to avoid all excitement, and not to show the least surprise at that which you should have known before. You are held in so much esteem throughout the neighbourhood, that your word is valued as highly as the gospel. A gentleman who entertains liberal ideas is honoured by all; and the guests whom we expect to day will be surprised at your new views, which you assume at least, for the sake of appearance. By doing so, you will show that you are exempt from prejudice, and are independent in your actions."

"May the hangman take it! I——"

Here the noise caused by the approaching guests increased. Madame de Dressen wrung her hands with anxiety, for she did not know what to do—she did not know whether to meet the company at the threshold or not.

"Papa! I am dying with shame," stammered Amelia, grasping the knob of the hall-door. "Papa! dear papa! do you wish the children in the street to sing about this wedding?"

"I wish that the——!" exclaimed the lieutenant-colonel; and opening the door with a vigorous shove, he displayed his portly figure on the threshold, over which the company was now entering.

"A natural effusion of feelings—the high importance of the day," said the lieutenant-colonel, in a tone which sounded strange indeed, after what had just happened, "has kept us together some moments; but to the congratulations of our dear friends and neighbours this narrow circle is now opened. I heartily welcome you all!"

After this singular speech, during which the lieutenant-colonel remained standing in the doorway, to afford time for his wife and daughter to compose themselves, the guests streamed into the room, and poured their congratulations forth in torrents.

"And why, do you think, I congratulate myself the most?" said the lieutenant-colonel, standing proudly in the centre of the room, where he was visible to all, and where he could himself perceive the impression caused by his words.

As these preliminary words did not meet with any reply from the auditory, he continued:

"Yes, gentlemen and ladies, I have the utmost reason to congratulate myself that I have a son-in-law who is so much free from prejudice as Mr. Borgenstierna. Now-a-days every one who has money is able to obtain a title; but all do not display that glowing patriotism that so much becomes us. Take notice, dear friends, that Mr. Borgenstierna has taken the liberty of calling himself master-tanner merely *pro forma*, because an extensive tannery is attached to his estates. I consider this a highly honourable trait on the part of a nobleman who maintains such liberal views, and am convinced that you all will joyfully recognise with me this extraordinary, and in all respects truly noble method of action."

As the guests were proclaiming their acknowledgments of this

new species of patriotism, Borgenstierna stood near the window in silence. His cheeks were mantled with a deep blush, and a sentiment of shame filled his bosom.

Borgenstierna reproached himself bitterly for listening silently to the vain presumptions of his father-in-law. He had allowed himself to be seduced to this method of action toward the lieutenant-colonel, by the desire of revenging an old insult that he had received from him, and by doing so, had forced his better feelings into the background. He had used one of those paltry, pointed malices, to execute which none but the most despicable would degrade himself; and therefore had committed a fault that one would not have expected from a man of his usual manner of acting and thinking. He was gradually drawn into the merriment of the society there assembled, and Amelia's soothing voice, and her eyes, which reflected the happiness within, drove away the thoughts that pained him; and before the company had sat down to the dinner-table, Borgenstierna had resumed his usual composure.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MINA'S PARTING ADVICE.

THE four weeks which ensued between the proclamation of the bans and the wedding soon passed. On the first day of May, Mina, now Mrs. Lamm, sat beside Amelia's table, busily engaged in winding the bridal wreath, her cheerful voice keeping time with her busy fingers, as she sang—

"We wind for you the bridal wreath,
Entwining violets and silk'"

"You are an odd person, with your violets and silk," said Amelia, laughing; "it should be violet-coloured silk."

"How can you be so foolish?" replied Mina, curling her little nose. "I think I have wound enough bridal crowns and wreaths, but never wound one with blue silk. Don't you know that it means a kind of flower that is called a violet? and in place of myrtle, or other green leaves, they make them of green taffeta, as I have often done myself, when I have made funeral wreaths, or bridal crowns, having nothing better on hand than glazed paper to make them of."

"You are truly a precious girl," said Amelia, and playing with Mina's golden locks, she shook them right heartily, and pressed a warm kiss upon them.

"Oh, oh! my hair!" cried Mina, in much fear. "My poor Lamm has sought all over the house for paper to do up my curls in. God grant it, Amelia, that you may have just such a man as my Lamm."

"No, no, I do not wish to hear anything about a *Lamb;* such lamblike men do not suit me."

"That is no wonder; you speak just as you understand it; you like those best to whom you are best accustomed. I have not been to your house for no purpose. I know how your father used to act; he stamped upon the floor, and cursed and swore like a Turk. Such conduct I do not like at all."

"But I know that Borgenstierna does not stamp, neither does he curse and swear like a Turk or Christian. I know that he is a straightforward man, and deserves the love and respect of a woman."

"Respect! what respect? that is what I should like to know. What do you mean by that?" said Mina, again elevating her little pug nose; "do you mean to say that one should be afraid of her own husband? That is a fine story! I should not advise Lamm to endeavour to frighten me."

"I do not understand the word respect as you do, and am far from thinking of such a thing as fright. It is certainly very disgusting when one party wants what the other does not. I on the contrary, am never so glad as when I am able to comply with all his wishes. Look here, dear Mina, if I should be obliged to marry a man who stood far beneath me in intellect, education, and other qualifications, I should like to be the commander; but, under present circumstances, I plainly perceive that my place is, thank God, where it ought to be, and where it must be; that is the reason why I am so happy. And you ought not to be offended if I speak my mind plainly, that in a house where the wife rules, happiness can never be found: she cannot entertain proper esteem for the man who does not call himself a man."

"Indeed, you speak as silly as a girl twelve years old," replied Mina, contemptuously. "Is it such a beautiful thing to obey, and always obey, and not know whether you will be allowed to move either to the right or left, like a broken-winged goose? Should you not be allowed to grumble a little?"

"I have no desire to resemble a broken-winged goose, I assure

you; and as to obedience, if Borgenstierna should ever wish for anything which was neither right nor reasonable, I probably should not be blind either; but I should always know which of us was right, and even if I should be obliged to give way for the sake of peace, I would draw his attention to his injustice, in friendship, but with firmness. I have learned from my mother that women should always postpone their arguments until the cause of the dispute no longer troubles their husbands. She is perfectly right there, and I will always remember her lesson."

"Yes, yes; you have all reason to do so, indeed; your dear bridegroom does not appear to me as though he was of a very forbearing nature; but allow me to counsel you as a friend. Always take a little care of your own dignity. Just look at Lamm and me, and say whether you can read the smallest particle of respect upon my countenance. No, no; I know the custom better. Lamm does nothing, not even the least thing, without first hearing my advice, and can hardly cease praising me for my care and attention, which does everything for his comfort and happiness. I should like to know what the poor fellows would do without us. You would soon see how they would feel if we should leave them some day in the kitchen or the wash-room; they would cut queer capers there. No, Amelia, do not be a child; you must take reason and resolution with you when you are married. Leave that to those women who do not know better than to crouch on the floor before their husbands; but this is not fit conduct for girls like you and me, who can weave their fourteen yards of linen a day, and spin woollen yarn so nicely that it cannot be produced better even at the factory; and who know how to conduct their domestic matters in such a manner, that under their hands the cent becomes a dollar; and who know how to manage a great many other things properly. No, Amelia, I say no again, such a woman is not only obliged, but has the right to carry her head just as high as her husband's; and as I now have opened my heart to you, I shall always be of the same

opinion as long as I can see. Thank God, that Lamm is such a man as he really is."

"And I thank God that Borgenstierna is such a man as he really is," interrupted Amelia, playfully. "We both have reason to be thankful; but see, what a beautiful carriage that is! Not one of our neighbours owns such a one; there is no one in it. I wonder what it means."

"Look! your bridegroom is just walking across the yard. Supposing it should belong to him! Ah, that would be a nice coach for my young lady."

A deep blush overspread Amelia's countenance at this not improbable remark. And although she had never said anything about it, she thought that Borgenstierna's old coach was a little too old-fashioned to conduct a young wife home; but she had not dared to raise her wishes so high as to the one which now stood in the court-yard.

"What are you chattering about?" said she to Mina. "How can you believe such a thing?"

The conclusion of her sentence was prevented by steps upon the staircase. It was Borgenstierna who knocked at the door, and asked her to come down, saying,

"I want you to look at your carriage."

Amelia opened the door.

"My carriage, dear Ivar?" said she, and her eyes sparkled with secret joy.

"Yes, yours, dearest Amelia."

Arm in arm they descended to the court-yard. The bridegroom opened the carriage door, and with a joyful leap the happy bride entered the carriage, and seating herself on the soft cushions, swayed to and fro in childish glee.

In the meantime, the lieutenant-colonel had arrived, and having seen the modern coach, had donned his uniform, to receive his exalted guests in a proper manner; but was nevertheless pleasantly surprised when he found his daughter in the carriage

and could not praise his son-in-law's taste, as well as his tender attentions towards his bride, too much.

One thing was lacking, however, and about this one thing the lieutenant-colonel inquired in a modest whisper.

"Will you not have a coat of arms painted on it, dear son?"

"It would scarcely be worth while to paint the crest of the Borgenstiernas upon it," replied Ivar, with a smile.

"But as you have given the carriage to Amelia, and she still bears her maiden name, it might not be inappropriate to decorate the coach door with the De Dressen crest. It always gives a certain authority, and always looks noble and brilliant."

"In that case, we should run the risk of a rogue passing by and painting a tanner's coat of arms, surmounted by an ox's head, upon it; this would be a serious joke, and might give rise to many unpleasant anecdotes."

"As you please," replied the lieutenant-colonel, somewhat piqued; he felt, however, that it would be more prudent to abstain altogether from the matter, and thus avoid all controversy.

In the meantime we will allow the De Dressens to rest until the arrival of the important day.

We have not much to say of the wedding itself; we may, therefore, without injury to the thread of our story, jump over several days, and imagine ourselves, on the fifth morning after the wedding, in the court-yard.

The new carriage is standing before the door, and the young wife is busily engaged in packing the coach-boxes, accompanied by Mrs. Lamm, who assists her during the last hour with her advice.

"For the sake of heaven! do not place the smoked goose-breast with the wheat-cakes, they will take an oily taste, and you never will be able to offer them to your husband again; but, Amelia, you appear confused; what is the matter with you, child of humanity? Do you not see that your new bonnet

ribbon lies close beside the preserves. Yes, yes; just as I am thinking where to put it, she comes and puts a pot of plum jelly upon it. You might have spared yourself that trouble, for I have often been present on such occasions, and know how to manage such goods."

"Dear Mina, do not become angry with me on the last morning," replied Amelia, in a tone which at once disarmed her rash, well-meaning, but hard-headed little friend.

"O Lord! what a whining voice that is, Amelia! God bless me, I really believe that you are crying. Ah! you bad child, this is the reason why you have been so busy packing; you did not wish me to see you weep. Do not be ashamed of your tears, dear Amelia; after your mother, I am your best friend; you hardly know how much I think of you, and how painfully I shall miss you when you are away."

Here Mina, who had knelt close beside her friend in the carriage, pressed her to her bosom, and patted her cheeks. Amelia's tears, however, flowed still more freely.

"Now tell me why you are weeping; I do not think you are a child, and therefore would not shed tears for nothing. You know that your parents are going with you to Roestorp, and will stay there with you four weeks; what more can you wish, when everything favours your own desires? It is something else surely. Perhaps your husband has already been treating you impolitely?"

Amelia made a violent denying gesture with her hand.

"How can you ask me such a question?"

"Ah, dear Amelia, such odd questions have often been asked, and as often been answered. I am sure that there are many men who are not to be known until a week has passed. God save me, however, from thinking of your own dear one other than good things; but the proverb says, 'Smooth waters are deep, and whatever does not burn, ... his uniform, to ... der; but was neve... ow,

dear girl, tell me why you weep, for you know that everything, even death, has its cause."

"Would you not weep, dear Mina, if your husband lived far away, and you would have to separate from your loved home, where you had lived during your youth, and if you would be obliged to leave all the dear spots you love, and to which you feel firmly bound—to be obliged to live far away from your parents?"

"Ah, yes, that would not be very pleasant, certainly; but do you not know that it is written in the Bible, 'Woman shall leave her father and mother, and follow man.' And as for your servants, your fields, meadows, and mountains, your lakes, and your cattle, they are earthly, which can be found elsewhere in the world. It would be bad for our cattle, sheep, and especially our lambs, if I should leave them; but I would take some along with me for breeding; and at least one big ewe would remain to me as a consolation."

"You are always more sensible than I," said Amelia, and could not do other than smile, in spite of her natural excitement, at Mina's plain, flat prose.

"But now let us hurry and finish, for I hear my husband on the staircase."

The young ladies returned to their occupation, but suddenly Mina sprang from the carriage with loud screams, clasping her hands above her head—

"Amelia! Amelia! see what we have done; there, that is what such a stupid, sentimental comedy comes to."

Amelia turned her head, and [illegible] woe! there lay all the provisions completely smashed to [illegible] by Mina's embrace. Cheese, goose-breasts, roasted chick[illegible], cakes, all were lying topsy-turvy, like carrots and turnips.

"[illegible] that the ladies have packed up excellently well," [illegible]lia, you appear con[illegible]o arrived just in time to catch his [illegible]nity? Do

little blushing wife in his arms, and to quiet her from the agitation produced by the reproaches of the tidy Mrs. Lamm.

"Pardon me, dear Mina," entreated Amelia. "I could not help being excited."

"Excited! ahem! if you had only let the stuff remain where I placed it; but how does that help us now? There is no use of crying for spilt milk; go away, and let me manage the matter by myself."

Borgenstierna politely offered to assist her, but received such a terrible look, which if it had encountered the poor fellow Lamm, he would have cowed beneath it like a whipped schoolboy.

Borgenstierna, however, knew how to help himself out of the matter; taking the arm of his little wife, he walked into the house.

Madame de Dressen and Mrs. Lamm now had their hands full to restore the basket of broken provisions to its former state. The lieutenant-colonel walked moodily to and fro, grumbling at the slowness of the women. Borgenstierna looked after the carriage to see that it was well packed, and Amelia wept in her little bedroom.

At length the clock struck three; the mother and her daughter stepped into the new coach, and the lieutenant-colonel and his son-in-law into the old one.

"God be with you, dear Amelia; a thousand thanks for the many joyful hours which we have spent together at Tunefors, and at home in our parsonage."

Thus saying, Mina leaned her head upon the bosom of her friend, who had already seated herself in the carriage.

"Ah! dearest Mina, I shall never forget you. You were always a friend in need; be one to my mother also when I am gone."

"Do not trouble yourself about that. Parson's Mina, as they used to call me sometimes, appears to be rough and repelling;

but she has a heart, and I dare say that it beats as warm as any other. To your good mother, dear Amelia, I shall always be a daughter, and during my whole life I shall love you as a sister."

The horses manifested uneasiness. Mina descended from the carriage-step, and when Amelia looked once more toward her friend, Mina's countenance was bathed in tears.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

"HERE is the boundary line of my estates, and from the summit of yon hill glitters the roof of the mansion," said Borgenstierna, causing the coaches to be stopped, that his pretty wife and her parents might have a free view of Roestorp.

"A fine property, and excellently located," said the lieutenant-colonel, joyfully. "I think we had better get out and walk the remainder of the journey."

Borgenstierna thought the walk would be too long and fatiguing. Madame de Dressen, however, agreed to her husband's proposition, and Amelia had already sprang noiselessly from the carriage; supported by the arm of her husband, she walked along the foot-path that meandered through beautiful changes of wheat fields and meadows, resplendent with living green.

The new-married couple spoke not a word, although their hearts were full to overflowing. They looked lovingly into each other's eyes, and in every glance lay the repeated vow of a mutual faithful fulfilment of their duty, and the firm faith that love and forbearance would accompany them on the path of life.

It was a beautiful evening in May; the sun was calmly sinking behind the waves of Lake Hjelmar, and his last rays were glittering through the tree-tops; crowds of well-fed cattle were leaving the luxuriant pastures, and thronged the road, looking with curiosity at the passing strangers. Farther beyond stood the chestnut trees in their holiday dress, saluting the newcomers with mysterious whispers; and every breath of air wafted toward them fresh balmy odours from the alder trees which were just unclosing their buds.

Amelia's eyes filled with tears, and she felt a still warmer sensation around her beating heart. "This will be my Eden," said she, pressing the arm of her lover-husband closer to her heart.

"And mine also," replied Borgenstierna, softly. "You, Amelia, will be the being that will make it so."

"Oh, if I could only do so, as I wish with my whole heart! But shall I also be able to fill up the place of that one who formerly stood near to your heart? Can one ever forget his first love? Can she who follows the first one——"

"Be silent, dearest Amelia! do not talk of what has passed; all that is now gone. Matilda's memory will always remain dear to me; and many a sigh of gratitude have I sent to Heaven, where she now is, for every hour she passed with me in pain and joy. May she rest in peace! I hope that a new life will begin for me—a better and freer life—more consonant with my heart and nature? You understand me, Amelia; this is much, as it is the principal requisite for human happiness that man and wife should know each other's hearts mutually and clearly, that they never should conceal their actions, and the motives that prompted them, as far as they relate to their mutual connexion. Suspicion and want of confidence are often created by inattention to a mass of trifles, which seem at first to be so insignificant that they are scarcely worth noticing, but which soon become more important, and still worse; so that they will cost many a sleepless night, and, perhaps, years of our lives. We, my Amelia, will make mutual confidence our law; not the law of duty, but of love. It must always be our desire to look into each other's heart."

Amelia's warm assurances that she coincided with him had to be postponed until a more fitting time; for at that moment the factor approached them. He came to meet his young master and mistress upon their own soil.

After Borgenstierna had introduced Mr. Berg to his wife and

her parents, he inquired with lively interest whether Assessor Wirén had not yet been seen.

"Not yet, Mr. Patroon; but I have received a letter from Mr. Wirén, stating that the gentlefolks will be here to-morrow noon."

The title "Patroon" sounded sweet to the lieutenant-colonel's ears. "That is something, at least!" whispered he to his wife; "and if Amelia has not lost all feeling for the honour and dignity of her family, she will use flatteries and female cunning sufficient to cause him to procure manufacturing privileges for his Roestorp; for my son-in-law, the master of a factory sounds infinitely better than simple Patroon."

"As much as Patroon sounds better than master-tanner," added Madame de Dressen, attempting a joke, which she had not done before for a long time.

The lieutenant-colonel looked at his wife with extended eyes; he said nothing, however, for she laid her hand upon his arm, and pointed to the beautiful mansion, the present home of her child.

The lieutenant-colonel's vanity—a feeling which he held on equality with his pride—was tickled exceedingly.

"By my soul, Sophia, that is very elegant!" said he, elevating his head still higher, with the utmost dignity, as he looked with examining eye at the splendid curtains, the first things that met his gaze. "Look here: do you see, dear Sophia?—red, blue, and green festoons, splendid fringe, brilliant tassels, and snow-white curtains! It is strange that a man of such refined sentiments does not wish to assume a title. Certainly every man has his whims, and this is peculiarly the case with Borgenstierna, although he is a man of honour in every other respect. The devil take me! such taste! Do you see the balcony up there with the table upon it? Look, Sophia, how invitingly it holds forth comfort and enjoyment!"

The table which so particularly attracted the lieutenant-colonel's attention was covered with shining bottles and tumblers, together with heaped-up plates of sweetmeats and preserves, all of which the factor knew so well how to arrange, that it had even a small touch of art in it.

"What room is that with the red silk curtains?" inquired Amelia, looking up at the high windows.

"The parlour," replied Borgenstierna, to whom the unconcealed pleasure of his wife was a source of much joy.

"And the one with the green ones, dear Ivar?"

"That is the sleeping-room; the festoons on the white bed-curtains are of the same material."

"Ah, that is magnificent!" exclaimed Amelia, and clapped her hands in joy. "You have been too prodigal in your arrangements. But what room is that with the blue curtains?"

"That is a little cabinet; formerly it was a nursing-room for Alfred: I have had it newly painted and furnished according to my taste. It is destined to be your sitting-room, dear Amelia, for it is directly in the centre of the house."

"Ah, Ivar, how can I thank you sufficiently!—by words I am unable to do so! I see that you have deprived yourself of all comfort, to lavish it upon me!"

"I smoke in my own room, where I also receive people with whom I have business; therefore all splendour would be misplaced—although, I confess, I have a weakness for elegance. If I wish to enjoy a few comfortable hours, I will come to you."

"And how welcome you will always be to me! Oh! I already imagine how I shall wait and listen for you! How nicely I shall keep everything arranged! I can always read in your eyes whether you want me to keep at my work in silence, or whether I shall spring into your arms!"

"But let us look after something else than the curtains," said the lieutenant-colonel, interrupting the hearty interchange of

sentiments between the loving couple. "Although I admire them very much, the table yonder looks so inviting, that I cannot forgive my conscience to allow it to beckon for nothing!"

In the meantime, Amelia's mother, who did not care so much about curtains and magnificence, had been busily engaged in examining the grounds. A number of fine fowls showed that they had been well cared for; and the immense milk-pails which were being carried through the yard, led to the conclusion that there was an excellent stock of milch cattle.

In high spirits, the party entered the beautiful mansion, the splendid parlours and modest rooms of which were awaiting the young wife. Almost every door was standing open, and each window was ornamented with flowers, which pleased the master of the house very much; and, as if in a hot-house, the way led through pots of shrubbery and flowers.

"Here," said Borgenstierna, pressing his wife to his bosom, when they had finally arrived at little Alfred's room, "here you are at home, my Amelia. May God grant me the pleasure of rendering you as happy as it is my desire!"

"Ah! upon my soul, I think there will be no trouble!" said the lieutenant-colonel, his eyes beaming with paternal pride. "In a house so splendidly furnished and arranged as this is, beside a noble-hearted husband, a wife may, indeed, be satisfied. What do you think, Sophia? It was not more elegant, I swear, at my great-aunt's, the Countess T——. But now let us inspect the balcony."

The lieutenant-colonel extended his hand to his son-in-law, and Madame de Dressen embraced him with maternal tenderness. The family then sat around the elegantly furnished table that had attracted the lieutenant-colonel's eyes long ago. The wine was excellent, and the sweetmeats equally so. Many glasses were emptied to the welfare of the newly-married couple, as gaily and heartily as was ever done before on such an occasion.

When the lieutenant-colonel prepared himself for bed, in the pretty guests' room, with the utmost complacency he held forth to his wife the following sermon—

"By the Lord! it is no small thing to marry a daughter well; and they are wicked fathers who are indifferent about it, and retain their daughters at home. Had I not pushed through that salutary bathing-journey, in spite of all your opposition, Amelia would now be sitting comfortably at Tunefors, crouching before her loom. But, bless the Lord, my money did not fall upon stony ground; it will bring me rich interest; and, besides all this, I intend to borrow a small sum of money from Borgenstierna, to assist in liquidating the debt due upon our estate. I have no doubt but that it will give him much joy to render this little friendly service to me; and what I owe De Geer he will pay at any rate out of pure rapture, when I relate to him the beautiful feature of character manifested by Amelia, when she procured the money for me. In short, Sophia, I must give myself the praise of having acted as a wise man, and go to bed perfectly satisfied with myself and the whole world."

It was well for the lieutenant-colonel that he was one of those happy individuals who do not stand under the dark influence of ominous foretelling.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SKJUTS-BOY AND THE COURIER-OFFICER.

AT the breakfast-table, where the company were first assembled, Amelia, for the first time, performed the hostess. She looked exceedingly charming in her morning dress, made of green merino, and the little white apron, with a bunch of keys suspended from it. Her little white cap looked as neat as ever could be the case with a pretty young wife.

Borgenstierna was unable to remove his eyes from his pleasant little spouse. The neat, tiny cups had never looked so well as to-day, for they had been arranged by Amelia's own hands; and, although he did not like coffee very well, yet he accepted two cups, as in the manner in which Amelia presented them there was so much grace that he found it impossible to refuse her.

Madame De Dressen praised the white bread, that excelled anything which she could expect from a house without a housekeeper; and the lieutenant-colonel called the cream "heavenly;" for at home, as he said, he used nothing but milk, because his wife thought that the cream could be used to greater advantage in making butter.

Borgenstierna did not praise anything, but looked with the greatest complacency upon Amelia, who conducted herself as though she had been at home in his house for years.

"I should think it would be best, dear Ivar," said the young wife, "if you would accompany my parents down into the garden. I have to attend to a great many things this forenoon, and Mrs. Wirén shall see that there is now a housekeeper at Roestorp."

The proposition was accepted. When Borgenstierna turned

back to take one more kiss from Amelia's smiling lips, he whispered into her ear, "Shall I read it to-day? Perhaps it would be better to allow your father to become more at home here first."

"I do not think that you are right about that, dear Ivar. If I am not mistaken, your intentions for delaying it might be misunderstood, and the sooner we get rid of it the better, but rather let it be read by the assessor."

"Yes, so it shall be. I, at any rate, am against delay."

About one o'clock, the assessor and his wife arrived, and their carriage was met by the most hearty welcomes from the happy inmates of Roestorp.

Every one saw that Wirén was just the same—gay, joyful, and frank as ever. With Virginia, however, all were surprised and rejoiced, for she was gentleness and grace themselves. There was now an infinite loveliness spread over her whole countenance, which before had only breathed unnatural coldness. There was still a kind of haughtiness in her stiff and erect bearing, although she zealously endeavoured to appear quite the reverse. But all this was far from creating an unpleasant impression, for even envy was obliged to confess that her every feature bore the stamp of natural dignity. As she was perfectly convinced that Borgenstierna did not even divine her weakness, she more easily gained that balance of mind for which self-possession is rarely sufficient. Neither would she be satisfied with a half victory. She meant to be worthy of the great confidence that her husband placed in her.

Virginia's bearing toward Borgenstierna was of that kind that is due to a gentle host from a polite guest. Perhaps pride had some weight also, for not the slightest trace of uneasiness or confusion was to be observed in her. But Wirén, who had been an eyewitness of the storm that had raged within her, followed her every motion, silently, and enjoyed the quiet bearing and the easy composure with which she met the man who had been so dangerous to her. He was not able to lay his hand over his

wife's heart, or its violent beating would have betrayed to him that art as well as nature had its share in this composure.

Virginia met the young Lady Borgenstierna even, with cordiality; and Amelia could not praise sufficiently the influence which the bath had had on Mrs. Wirén's outward appearance and state of mind.

"Yes, there is something very beneficial in a sea-bath," said the lieutenant-colonel, seriously; "and I shall recommend Stroemstad, especially, to every lady. It is good for all kinds of diseases. You probably remember, ladies and gentlemen, that there we first became acquainted. At dinner we must certainly drink to Stroemstad, and to its steady increase and popularity."

"That shall not be omitted, dear father-in-law; but let us first empty a glass to civil independence, which is sufficient in itself, and seeks for the power and mainspring of its action only within itself."

"Yes, yes, that is a very good toast; but it appears to me as though that subject does not concern us much now. We are not sitting here in parliament, and are not contending for any other interest than to foster our enjoyment and comfort," said the lieutenant-colonel; but it could easily be seen that he was surprised and confused, and that the words were uttered with a certain uneasiness.

Amelia cleverly managed to turn the conversation upon another subject, in which endeavour she was successfully assisted by Assessor Wirén, who immediately had a store of anecdotes in readiness connected with his journey to Roestorp. This led the lieutenant-colonel to one of his favourite hobbies, namely, the breaking of horses; of the false treatment of which one of the anecdotes had been the consequence. In conversing upon this subject he forgot everything around him, until finally nothing existed with him but horses, whips, and hands to rein the former, and to humble the latter.

During dinner the conversation was brisk and animated, and he did not cease talking until the dessert and champagne arrived, and even then only out of respect to the toasts that were expected—occupying himself in the meantime by drumming upon a plate with his fork.

Amelia sat beside her father, her eyes following all his motions with an expression of uneasiness. When she cut the first slice from the magnificent wedding-cake, and presented it to her father, her hand trembled, for it appeared to her as though her father looked concerned; and it grieved her heart that the one who was wont to handle the baton of authority in his own house, was now obliged to sit near the table of his child with an air of restraint.

Amelia was correct. The lieutenant-colonel was indeed uneasy; he could not comprehend the silence that reigned around the table. Even the assessor, whose tongue was never silent at other times, appeared thoughtful; and the lieutenant-colonel did not fail to observe that he frequently interchanged glances with Borgenstierna, who also displayed a seriousness which ill accorded with a gay dinner-party.

At length the champagne corks popped, and Borgenstierna proposed the healths of his father and mother-in-law. The lieutenant-colonel perceived, however, that this was not all. But returning thanks, and replacing his glass upon the table, he waited in silence for what was to follow.

For a few moments silence reigned supreme. Borgenstierna, however, soon arose, the attendants received a hint to leave the room, and as he stood directly opposite his father-in-law, it was to him that he appeared to address himself.

"An hour ago, I said that we should raise our glasses in honour of civil independence; the reason for this toast derives its origin from the remembrance of an incident that is connected with times long past; which incident exerted a powerful influence upon my life, and is the true and original cause of the

step that I now intend to submit openly and frankly to the judgment of all present."

The lieutenant-colonel coughed; but made no endeavour to interrupt him. Borgenstierna continued:

"I was born a nobleman: but my parents were very poor. Brought up among honest peasants, and obliged to work like the common daily labourers, I had not the least idea of the fact that my name, or the noble blood of my ancestors could be dishonoured by labour, by which I was forced to earn the bread for myself and family—as long as the method of gaining an existence was only honest. I did not believe that the exalted rank of nobility was dependent upon a more or less faded coat. During the first fourteen years of my life, I lived in almost total solitude in our little forest-home, without having the society of any playmates of my own age. I always was odd, and remember well now, how my heart consumed within me by the longing for some object which I did not find in those around me, and which I was unable to name. But when the storm raged through the forest, then I was happy, and desired to be as free as the wind itself.

"During that epoch in my existence I had a dearly beloved friend, a friend with whom I faithfully divided every morsel of bread, and who, on the other side, was attached to me by the strongest ties of gratitude. It was my father's old horse; our faithful white pony. Only the one who has been poor himself, and has loved an animal—aside from which he could call nothing else his own—will be able to truly imagine what that white pony was to me. It was my poor parents' only property, and to me it was everything, the companion of my days, and the vision of my nights.

"One evening—the incident is still as vivid upon my mind as though it had happened yesterday—I was to drive a courier-
who was travelling toward Norway. He was an im-
severe man, with whom a reasonable word could not be

spoken. The horse was old and worn out; but as no other horse could be obtained, I was obliged to serve with my white pony, and the matter, no doubt, would have ended as well as usual, had not the courier-officer whipped the poor animal so severely that it finally sank to the earth, completely exhausted. I felt in my heart every stroke that the poor creature received. Neither prayers nor entreaties availed me. The poor animal was whipped up to proceed a few paces, and then fell again. And thus the matter went on, until the traveller, almost crazy with rage, inquired my name, to inscribe it on the book of complaints at the next station. I told him—and in flaming characters the incident which I am now about to relate is inscribed upon my memory. I shall never forget the lashes and buffets I received from his hands. And why? Because I did not hold my name and crest, as a nobleman, in more esteem than to insult it by driving the trade of a skjuts-boy. Perhaps it would have been better in accordance with his ideas to starve rather than earn my bread honestly, and he was a nobleman who preached such doctrines—it was a nobleman that insulted himself by treating me thus ignominiously.

"The remembrance of that scene excites me much—I shall say no more concerning it. Suffice it to say, that the next morning my white pony lay dead in his stable; and I, who had before cared but little about the difference between a nobleman and a peasant, commenced gradually to reflect about the inequality of castes, and their differences, so that I came to the conclusion, which is now my innermost conviction, that it is only the nobility of heart that constitutes true rank, let it beat either under the peasant's jacket or the gold-embroidered coat. That caste cannot be purchased with money. This lineal tree requires no court soil to thrive, for its ancestors and merits are not of this world.

"It was an accident which gave me this conviction, and I strove to become an independent man, for the purpose of

afterward leaving that rank in society, to belong to which I considered no great honour, after I had been treated so brutally by one of its members.

"My endeavours were crowned with success; and if, after the lapse of years, I have forgotten the resolution I then made, the cause of it always remained in my mind, and succeeding events have confirmed my intentions to carry out the design that I had formerly made, without exactly knowing why. My mind became still more enlarged concerning the motives that prompted me to such a step. The youth had become a man, and the man's firmness dictated a petition, which petition has been granted. Assessor Wirén holds the resolution in his hands; as soon as its contents shall have been read, the Lieutenant-colonel de Dressen, now my highly esteemed father-in-law, may rest firmly assured that not a spark of vengeance exists now in the bosom of the reconciled skjuts-boy. Have the kindness, dear Wirén, to read the document."

Wirén cleared his throat, and unfolding a large paper, read, in a clear, loud voice:

"His Majesty the King's most Gracious Resolution.

"In regard to a devoutly submitted petition, presented by Ivar Borgenstierna, which prays that his Majesty, in consideration of stated circumstances, would graciously condescend to allow the petitioner, a nobleman by birth, to dispose of his rank, and also give up all the privileges to such rank appertaining——"

"Stop! stop! not another word!" cried the lieutenant-colonel, interrupting the reader. The deep blushes which had chased over his countenance during Borgenstierna's narration had entirely vanished, an ashy-grey paleness usurping their place. "Enough, enough!" cried he, in gasping tones.

"father is unwell," said Amelia, in the deepest anguish

and hastily extending a glass of water toward him. But her father thrust it back with such violence that its contents were spilled over Amelia's dress. His limbs trembled like aspen leaves; but the assessor, nevertheless, read the document through. Virginia sat as quiet and cold as ever; but her bosom was filled with violent emotions, and she dared not look at the man whose voice still affected her deeply.

After a short pause, the lieutenant-colonel uplifted his head, and made a visible exertion to use his voice, in which he succeeded.

"Gentlemen," he at last commenced, in a tone, the uncertainty of which was a counterpart of the suppressed storm that raged within him, scarcely permitting him to speak aloud—"I perceive that some one has spoken of a deep insult; but should Mr. Borgenstierna have waited so long as to inform me of it to-day? I submit it to the sentiments of justice of everybody here present, whether it would not have been his duty to communicate his intentions to me, the father, before he led the daughter of a noble family to the altar? If he had done so, I would have been at liberty to refuse his proposition, as he certainly would have deserved it."

"Under other circumstances this would have undoubtedly been my duty," replied Borgenstierna, quietly; "but my principal object was to pay an old debt. I had resolved to avenge myself—for the blows still burned in the soul of the skjuts-boy, as long as the insult was not washed out by a new name. For the future, my name will be Borg; and if my father-in-law should deem it convenient to declare the mutual debt receipted by this act, then let us again fill our glasses, and clink them together in hearty and true friendship for the rest of our lives."

The lieutenant-colonel now clearly perceived that Borgenstierna had recognised him at their first meeting on the steamboat, and the thought struck his mind that he had intentionally carried out the plan to connect his civil name with the noble name

of De Dressen. This thought excited him still more. He not only deemed himself insulted, but that he and his daughter had been deceived concerning the motives of Borgenstierna's suit: for these reasons, he coldly rejected the cup of reconciliation, and, pointing toward Amelia, said,

"It was therefore to revenge an insignificant wrong, which was done in the heat of passion, that you sneaked into the heart of my child, while we nursed and watched over yours with tenderness. That is truly a deed which is indeed worthy of a nobleman who was born and bred on the highway!"

It was now Borgenstierna's turn to grow pale. But Amelia assumed the word: in spite of her father's refusal, she grasped his hand, and said,

"No, my dear father, you must not thus mistake Ivar. When he first craved my consent, he also told me his firm intention to dispose of his noble rank, and left it to me whether I would or would not become his wife. As I loved and esteemed him so highly, this circumstance, of course, had no influence with me, and I was happy to bear his name, be it what it might. In the meantime, I knew almost to a certainty that you, dear father, had other opinions about the matter, and would not have consented to our marriage if you had been acquainted with Ivar's intention. For these reasons, I perfectly agreed with him that the explanation might be deferred until we had arrived here. I was convinced—or at least entertained the hope, that here, in the circle of his beloved children, my father would forget past events, and would not refuse the hand offered him in reconciliation." Here Amelia carried her father's hand to her lips, and kissed it devoutly. "Dear, kind father!" she besought him, in a voice that had become still softer by her tears, "let us not rise from this table until we have clinked our glasses, in token of a renewal of friendship. Only look at my mother, and behold with what anxiety she looks at you; for it was my Ivar who conducted her to the frontiers of Norway, at that time when she

stood alone and forsaken, a stranger in a foreign land. Only think of it, dear father—she was left alone with her unprotected child—with your own dear little Amelia!"

"Yes, it was he—God bless him for it! I have long thought so!" exclaimed Madame de Dressen, extending her hand to her husband. "If you ever loved me, dear Dressen, and if you love me now, then let us strike glasses in a general reconciliation."

"Yes, yes!" cried Wirén, interrupting her with warmth. "Let peace and friendship unite nobleman and citizen in true and firm concord. Ivar will remain the same noble fellow that he was before, even if his name should for the future be deprived of the title—'-stierna,' and the lieutenant-colonel will be just as portly a gentleman, even if his daughter should now repay an old debt."

We live at the present time, thanks to the progressive age, in a sphere where aristocratic prejudices are no longer the order of the day; and the man of the world does not only conform to the times, but he also unites in its progress.

The lieutenant-colonel was on thorns. What should he do? Amelia was married, and would be obliged to wear the name, Mrs. Borg, good or bad; therefore there was no use in his swimming against the stream. The result would be, that he would be obliged to break off entirely from his son-in-law; and this would not be pleasant, as he depended upon sundry little services from Borgenstierna.

"Curse that bathing-journey!" muttered the lieutenant-colonel to himself; but added aloud, and not without apparent dislike, "As Amelia will not be willing to sue for a bill of divorce, I must needs perform the part of a tender father in the comedy, and say, 'Amen!'"

"Now, dear father-in-law," cried Borgenstierna, as a smile of satisfaction played around his lips, "now it is my turn to blush. I have carried the jest a little too far, and am now ready to beg your pardon, since you have submitted. I have not disposed of

my rank, neither do I intend doing so. Wirén was the king who wrote the royal document, and read it to you. The whole affair was a joke; but a joke beneath which deep earnestness lies concealed. My views in relation to the so-styled nobility, are and ever will remain the same. Before love caused me to demand Amelia from you, as my wife, I had the intention to withdraw openly from a rank in society which— In short, my petition had already been sent to Stockholm; but when I reflected more seriously upon the subject, I immediately wrote to my agent, demanding that the document should be returned. It is not the first time that love has destroyed the intentions of a man; but in this case the fear that my method of action, which was based upon conviction, might be considered as the consequence of a vulgar desire for vengeance, had the greatest weight with me.

"It was not necessary to test Amelia She was acquainted with the subject; but I, nevertheless, left her in the opinion that I was about to carry out my design, and resign my rank, and I observed, to my great joy, that her love conquered. Wirén was also acquainted with my resolution, but I afterwards informed him that it would all end in a joke. I am not fond of practical jokes; and, as far as I remember, this, and the proclamation, are the first I ever carried into effect, but—pardon me, dear father. Do not take it amiss if I do not purchase a title, and I will now, on my part, promise never to call myself master-tanner again."

The lieutenant-colonel felt as though he had fallen from heaven; or, better said, that he was in heaven! and in his continued confusion of mind, he sipped at his empty wine-glass. "Ahem! indeed!" were the only sounds that issued from his lips, as he reflected upon the part he should now perform. His pride was offended, that he had been made the laughing-stock of the company: but it soon gave way to the joy that Amelia had been saved. But before he was able to collect his scattered thoughts,

Amelia threw both her arms around his neck, and half-laughing, half-weeping, she ejaculated,

"Dear papa, he has deceived us both, and should be doubly punished; but we will be noble-hearted—say that you will forgive him with all your heart, and I will do the same; for, speaking confidentially, I prefer to be called her Grace the Lady of Roestorp, much more than the simple Mrs. Borg."

"For your sake, Amelia—" The lieutenant-colonel was glad that he had an opportunity to play the tender father, who suffers himself to be softened by the entreaties of his child. "For your sake it shall be so; although the proclamation and the joke of to-day are equally cruel; nevertheless, I again say, amen—or, Sophia, have you any objections?"

Madame de Dressen, who, until now, had sat as though on burning coals, felt at these words, as though she had been elevated to the seventh heaven.

"Oh! dear Dressen," said she, "I think that your children know how to esteem the value of such a word as well as myself."

"Yes, that is what we all do. It would be a shame to do otherwise. Our amen springs from the heart to the glass," said Borgenstierna, arising. "Peace and reconciliation."

The lieutenant-colonel made an approving nod, and the glasses clinked together.

"Another toast, ladies and gentlemen," said the assessor. "All fill your glasses to the welfare of the new-married couple, and drink this toast with as much sincerity as Mr. de Goesse, God bless his honest soul—I should have said his honest skin—displayed in his 'Modest Flowers,' which he inscribed to young Madame Borgenstierna. With as much sincerity do I now apply his classical language to you both:" and in a loud voice, Wirén commenced singing:

"O yes, may heaven bless me and for ever
Unite us in faith, hope, and fervent love,
And not fill us with jealous gloomy sorrow,
Such as Frithiof's Ingeborg doth prove."

And with loud rejoicings they all clinked their glasses together. At a given singal the party arose, and led on by the assessor's example they mutually embraced.

"Coffee, dear Amelia," whispered Madame de Dressen.

"A game of billiards," proposed Borgenstierna.

"Cigars and punch!" cried Wirén; and thus they separated, scarcely knowing how, the ladies occupying one room and the gentlemen another.

This was a very prudent arrangement, for by it the lieutenant-colonel had no time to reflect, but was kept constantly in motion. If it had been otherwise, they feared he might repent, and again become obstinate.

"Why was all this told at the dinner-table?" he inquired, as he leaned against the billiard-table, which, by-the-by, was an old pile of lumber which Borgenstierna had bought at auction, regardful of this his father-in-law's favourite amusement.

"It was actually necessary," replied Ivar, "because this joke, which was made in earnest, would have degenerated into something worse, had it not been performed at the dinner-table, in presence of the ladies, and over the wine. These auxiliaries served to keep the matter in a certain balance, and assisted in disposing of the subject more easily."

"Well, I must confess that you are in the right, but as we have succeeded in keeping on good terms thus far, and our excited feelings have happily been soothed, I will now take the opportunity to beg your pardon for the lashes of the whip, which I gave you, dear son; they have been paid for, every penny and farthing, by the anxiety through which I have passed."

"No doubt of it," replied Ivar; "and, to recompense you, the skjuts-boy will take all pains to become a dutiful and good son, and hopes from the bottom of his heart, that he will never prove himself unworthy of his high relations."

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