

CLOUD-PICTURES.

1. The Exile of von Adelstein's Soul.
2. Topankalon.
3. Herr Regenbogen's Concert.
4. A Great-Organ Prelude.

BY

FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD.

" . . . Each beholds in cloud and fire
The shape that answers his own desire."

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TO
HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

These "Cloud-Pictures"

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

Life is a kaleidoscope which Time turns without ceasing. All passions, virtues, hopes, and fears, all gifts of fortune and scourgings of fate, are the bits of many-colored glass that were enclosed in the tube at the beginning. Each century or each hour may witness some startling combination, but no changes of the original elements.

PREFATORY NOTE.

"HERR REGENBOGEN'S CONCERT" is printed here, with alterations, from Putnam's Magazine for July, 1854. "A Great-Organ Prelude" appeared in Dwight's Journal of Music, October 17, 1863. The reader of the last article, who is not familiar with the appearance of the Boston Music Hall organ, may need a brief explanation. It was built by Walcker and Sons, in Germany. Its front is ornamented with herculean caryatides upholding the two central groups of pipes, which form two colossal towers. Over the organist's head is placed a bust of Bach, and, higher still, a figure of St. Cecilia with a lyre. On the right and left of the towers are leaning figures of choristers, male and female. Angel figures cover the pinnacles of the towers. At the base, on either hand, are severe-looking caryatides representing

the Fates. A majestic statue of Beethoven in bronze, by Crawford, stands directly in front, concealing the organist from view. At the opposite end of the hall, in a niche over the upper balcony, is a cast of the Apollo Belvedere.

Probably the author would write somewhat differently about Bach now; but he has concluded to let the dialogue remain unaltered. The other tales are now printed for the first time. The first was written in 1858, and the second in 1871. The author is aware that the device of employing the magical speculum in "The Exile of von Adelstein's Soul" is not a new one.

If the reader supposes that the names in *TOPIAN KALON* have any special significance, he will find plenty of obliging Grecians to enlighten him.

Boston, October 7, 1871.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE EXILE OF VON ADELSTEIN'S SOUL.	
I. THE ACCIDENT	1
II. THE BANQUET	7
III. THE SLEEP AND THE AWAKING	13
IV. MORE SYMPTOMS, AND USELESS REMEDIES	19
V. ATTEMPTS AT DIAGNOSIS	27
VI. THE SPECULUM OF THE NYKTALOPS	33
VII. A RETROSPECTION	43
VIII. LIVING, OR DEAD?	51
IX. PUTTING ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF RIGHT- EOUSNESS	61
X. THE CONFLICT	65
XI. THE FRUITS OF VICTORY	75
TOPANKALON	79
HERR REGENBOGEN'S CONCERT	110
A GREAT-ORGAN PRELUDE	146

The Exile of von Adelstein's Soul.

I.

THE ACCIDENT.

THREE horsemen were galloping past Saint Stephen's Church in Vienna. A nobleman, clad in a velvet suit and wearing a plumed hat, attended by his groom and another servant, was returning from a hunting excursion at his country-seat. The master was a bold and graceful rider, and easily maintained the lead, save when at times the horse of his groom, an intractable animal, pushed ahead regardless of propriety, and so caused the party to advance *en echelon*. Hoofs clanked and spurs jingled, giving a general alarm to those on foot; the peasants and chapmen fled to the right and left, leaving a way open for the horsemen. Every one knew the Baron von Adelstein, one of the proudest of the old nobility, and every head was uncovered as

he passed. Citizens and strangers crossed themselves and thanked God after they had escaped the peril of his horse's thundering hoofs. The Baron, however, rode serenely on as the way was opened for him by the instinct of fear; while the people on either hand were conscious of their very existence only by all-pervading heart throbs.

This was nearly four hundred years ago; but the same scenes are still daily enacted in other cities than Vienna. Even to-day the defenceless pedestrian leaps with terror as he feels on his cheek the hot breath of trampling horses, driven no longer by titular nobles, to be sure, but by coachmen and draymen, more imperious and not less brutal than they. The right of way is of little consequence in the actual presence of danger; for one does not care to get a broken leg, though he were a hundred times entitled to the precedence.

Among these fluttering foot-passengers two wretched beings were not so lucky as their fellows. One halted and hobbled from age; the other, from weakness and deformity. It was a bent and lame old woman and her bent and lame

son that were right before the prancing horses. Both shrieked, but neither was able to make the swift and strong effort that was necessary to avoid the imminent danger. The groom, whose vicious beast chanced to be ahead, reined up, but only to let the poor cripples come in the way of the Baron's powerful charger. The Baron was just lifting his plumed hat to a lady passing in a coach; and his winning smile was transformed into a frown as he found himself losing his balance, while his horse was treading down the helpless wretches before him. He halted, and directed his servants to dismount and assist the injured people to get up and out of the way, while he withdrew to a convenient distance.

"I trust your Lordship is not hurt," said the groom.

"No, Johann, not at all; but the man, is he killed?"

"Truly, my Lord, it would seem so; his eyes are closed, and a stone image is n't more helpless, poor fellow!"

"Then he won't get in the way another time. One cannot ride anywhere in the streets with-

out turning out every minute for some loitering peasant or limping apple-woman. Why can't they stay in the lanes where they belong?"

The groom bowed, but did not reply. A piercing cry, at once a wail of sorrow and a sound of rage, went up from the group that surrounded the victims of the accident. The old woman, who was but slightly injured, threw herself with passionate exclamations upon the body of her son. While Johann was soothing the frightened horse the old woman raised her head, and, recognizing the livery, well known in Vienna, exclaimed, "Baron von Adelstein, you have murdered my son!"

The Baron fumbled in his purse for money, but, finding none readily, bade her come to his palace and he would give her gold for her wants.

Without noticing his offer she continued: "You thought no more of him than of a limping dog in your way."

Slowly she raised herself, and, extending her shrivelled hand, fixed upon him a look which he had cause to remember long. "You are rich and powerful, but see if all your wealth and your

retinue can shield you! I curse you, curse you!"

The remainder of the sentence, whether prophecy or imprecation, was lost amid the confused sounds of the street; for the Baron, though struck to the heart by her awful maledictions, disdained to talk more about the matter in public, and, giving spur, had ordered his servants to follow.

As the sound of the receding hoofs grew fainter, the woman fell on her knees beside the body, and appeared to be rapt in a mumbling, inarticulate prayer. Again she rose up and stretched her skinny finger towards the distant horseman. The bystanders thought her crazed with grief, and proposed to take the body home. Some of them were familiar with her uncanny face and figure, but none knew more of her than that she was reputed to be skilled as a midwife, although suspected of unholy sorceries. Her face was not one that prepossessed the curious; its sharp outlines and parchment color were sufficiently forbidding, even if the eyes had been soft as a maiden's, — but soft they were not; usually they were dull as the windows of a deserted house, while at times they

flashed with a sudden phosphorescent lustre, like the same windows lighted up by some midnight orgy. Some of the more superstitious shuddered now as they saw the baleful light, and were only relieved when tears, long unused to those dry channels, came to quench the fierce flames. "Yes," she said vacantly, "carry him home. *Home!* Good God, what is home to me?" Tears fell faster, until she covered her withered face with her cloak, moaning, and swinging her body from side to side.

The men drew near the corpse and began to lift it from the ground. "Holy saints protect us!" exclaimed one in a terror-stricken voice. "Do you see? His eyes move!" It was true. The eyes slowly unclosed, stared for an instant with a stony fixedness, and then as slowly shut.

The bearers stopped, while their hearts beat a simultaneous tattoo. A slight shiver ran over the body, like a wind-ripple over a wintry lake; then all was still.

"He dies hard," whispered one to another.

"Yes," was the reply, "but it is over now; that last quake was the end of him."

"Come," said the mother, observing their trepidation, "I will lead the way. The poor dead boy can't harm you."

Slowly they followed the desolate woman. The cathedral clock struck the hour as it were a death-knell. The sorrowful procession passed under the shadow of the lofty spire through the Graben, then turned into an obscure street, and was lost from the view of the throngs that filled the square

II.

THE BANQUET.

THE Baron von Adelstein had invited his friends to a feast. The most powerful of the nobles and the most beautiful ladies of the court were gathered in the dining-hall of his town residence. Lights flashed from hundreds of candles, and were reflected from the suits of armor on the walls, — armor that had been worn at Acre and Jerusalem. Upon the dais sat the Baron, with the most distinguished of his guests on either hand; while over his head was a col-

lection of antlers, bows, spears, and horns, brought from his hunting-lodge near Adelstein, and grouped with striking effect. Massive plate covered the board, and the wines were served either in goblets of silver or of the rarer Venetian glass; the wares of Sèvres were not yet known, and Dresden china was for after times to produce. The viands were served with profusion, but the fact that an immense boar's head held the place of honor is sufficient to show at once the refinement of the age and the resources of a nobleman's *cuisine*.

The Baron was unmarried, and the only members of his family were his younger sister and his widowed mother. He was handsome, rich, and the eighth baron of his race; he was naturally, therefore, the centre of admiration. High-born ladies felt a flutter of pleasure when he addressed them, and the prospect of an alliance was enough to turn the heads of the proudest. To those in his own circle he showed only the traits that win regard; that he should be indifferent or haughty to inferiors was to be expected. Still he was not naturally hard-hearted; only his birth and ad-

vantages had made him selfish and neglectful of those below him. On this occasion he would have been at the summit of happiness could he have forgotten for one moment the haunting face of the old woman that had sent her curses after him. Let him do what he would, those malignant eyes were constantly before him. They were reflected from his silver vessels; they shot their rays through the bubbles of his wine; the very air was peopled with skinny faces and baleful eyes. But he was too practised a courtier to let his anxiety be visible. Invitations to court parties and to hunting excursions were discussed. Mothers of marriageable daughters looked admiringly. Fathers with long pedigrees wondered how their arms would look quartered with his. Courtiers and gay youths whispered of unimagined pleasures in store. From others came weightier suggestions. A high dignitary sitting near whispered words calculated to rouse his ambition. The Baron had talent and position,—so the astute statesman urged,—why should he not distinguish himself in the service of the Emperor? It was well, doubtless, to be first in

the tourney, most intrepid in hunting the wild boar, gayest in courtly revels, but why not first also in the noble art of leading armies and ruling men? And what monarch ever honored his chief barons so highly as Friedrich?

Pleased and flattered, von Adelstein promised to think upon the matter.

After the ceremony of proposing the health of his mother and of a few of the elder nobles, the Baron arose, flushed with gratified vanity as well as with wine, and, looking towards a brilliant lady near him, bade the guests fill again. At this point Father Wilhelm, the Baron's chaplain and confessor, who sat just below the dais, seeing the direction of his pupil's eyes, and guessing his purpose, leaned forward and spoke in a low but emphatic whisper. The Baron's brow roughened to a frown; the coming smile faded from his features, and he whispered back, "Keep thy counsel until asked." Then aloud, "I drink to the loveliest, the Lady Margaret of Schönhofeld."

The goblets were drained and clanged upon the tables. The lady bowed gracefully to the host, while a crimson flush covered her cheeks.

None scanned her so sharply as Father Wilhelm, who set his teeth firmly and muttered, "It shall not be!" The interruption was noticed by few, and the cause was understood by none save the parties concerned.

The actors in this little scene presented some marked points of contrast. The lady was superbly beautiful, covered with blushes as by a robe, but proud of the glances which she seemed to shun; the Baron radiant with the pleasure reflected on him from a hundred faces, yet turning momentarily with self-reliant air to the man whose authority he braved; and, lastly, Father Wilhelm, tall, spare, and with an alertness of manner not often seen in his profession, resting with the quiet confidence of one who expects in the end to be obeyed, — much like the kind but wary groom, who, with bridle on his arm, watches the gambols of his favorite colt, and waits for the voluntary submission which he knows will come after the freak of rebellion is over.

The pantomime, however, was cut short in the most unlooked-for way. The Baron was rising to propose another toast, when he paused and

tottered; an ashy pallor overspread his face; his lips parted and he spoke feebly, like one in sleep; his jaw drooped, his head fell on his breast, and he sank to the floor insensible. Consternation reigned; the ladies trembled and wept, and the hearts of men-at-arms throbbed strangely. From out the disorder the clear voice of Father Wilhelm rang, "Pray, keep in your places, all!" It was a voice that carried its warrant of authority along with it. The next instant the lithe form of the priest was seen bounding over the table, while the magnates on the dais instinctively made room for him. Quickly and dexterously he loosened the Baron's collar; still no breath came. He undid his doublet, and, raising the helpless form, bade the servants open the windows for fresh air; the stillness of death continued. A cold sweat stood on his own forehead as he thrust in his hand to ascertain whether the heart was yet beating; but he could not tell whether there was a feeble motion, or whether the sensation came from his own throbbing arteries. Was it death? It was too soon to decide; but, seeing that it was more

than a passing faintness, he asked the guests to retire, and bade the servants summon a physician. With varied emotions, but in profound silence, all took leave. The Lady Margaret, attended by her mother and brother, was led away in a maze of terror and grief.

III.

THE SLEEP AND THE AWAKING.

DURING the night, under the direction of the physician, restoratives were applied unceasingly without effect. The Baron, if still alive, lay in a profound slumber, without motion, apparently without breathing. Still the body remained warm, the joints were not stiffened, and the general expression of the face was unchanged. The limited resources of science were soon exhausted, and the house was in despair. The Countess mourned for her son as for one dead, and his sister hung over his couch in speechless sorrow.

But at the usual hour for breakfast he awoke,

and before he took notice of the surroundings he exclaimed with a loud voice, "*Austrinken!*" Some seconds passed before he comprehended that he was not still at the head of the banquet table, with his guests waiting for the toast he had begun. On rising, he had no recollection of the swoon; he declared himself perfectly well, only a little fatigued; he refused the ill-looking potions prepared for him, and insisted upon eating a hearty breakfast as usual. The physician shook his head, but had no power to enforce his directions. Father Wilhelm attended the Baron to the table, wondering not a little at the sudden recovery, but disposed nevertheless to let nature have its way. The Baron still complained of fatigue; he did not take his customary drive, but resolved to amuse himself at home. Still he was restless and could not confine his attention to anything. He sent his carriage for the imperial Councillor whose hints he had listened to with such a thrill at the supper-table, and the statesman came, full of affectionate solicitude. But the great plan of the evening before now seemed frivolous as the nursery-games of chil-

dren. The Councillor bored him, and in return the Baron quizzed his guest as Hamlet did Polonius; and at last he outraged propriety by actually yawning in the venerable official's face. What could he find to do? His mother had not recovered her equanimity, and was by no means a cheerful companion; his sister was still more melancholy. He could not bring himself to play chess; the game required too much effort. He could not read, for, in the first place, it was an accomplishment in which he was only moderately skilled, and, besides, the palace library consisted only of a few manuscripts, a well-worn missal, a volume of tiresome romances, and the Scriptures in black-letter, bound in ox-hide,—none of them very attractive to a man who merely wished to be amused. At his wit's end he sent for Father Wilhelm.

"No preaching, no confession, good father, but entertainment rather. Nay, your face is as solemn as the others! Can nobody be cheerful? You were wont to have a nimble wit. Bless me! I am so t-i-r-e-d!" And a yawn seized and prolonged the last word ludicrously.

"You fear that I shall renew the warning of last evening," said the priest, with a quiet look.

"No, by my faith, you are too wise a man to waste your words when it is too late."

"Are you in love with the Lady Margaret?"

"Sometimes, yes; that is, I was; not to-day. She is a fine woman, no doubt." A wider yawn followed.

"You know, probably, that the manner in which you proposed her health (pardon me if I say it was somewhat indelicate) will lead your guests to suppose.—"

"That I intend to make her the Baroness von Adelstein. Yes. I made her a formal offer yesterday."

"I am rejoiced. I feared otherwise. Pardon me, but you have not always offered pretty damsels a ring with your love."

"*Gott im Himmel*, what did I tell you? I am not at your feet to be shrived. You are as grim with your 'Thou art the man!' as one of those awful graybeards that used to come down from the mountains to worry the Jews. It is no marvel that they got stoned. The Lady Margaret is

well enough, — a pretty damsel, as you say, — should have a ring or no love; but we can talk of her some other day." A yawn. "I am so tired!"

The priest was too polite to say more; he therefore shifted his conversation, and strove by employing the resources of his active and well-stored mind to lead the troubled spirit of his patron into pleasant fields.

The day wore slowly away and evening came. The Baron determined to attend a revel at the palace of a favorite of the Emperor, in the hope of recovering his spirits. It was to no purpose that his mother and sister urged him to remain at home; equally fruitless were the efforts of Father Wilhelm. His appearance in the hall was the signal for the admiration which had always attended him on such occasions, and he felt the delicious intoxication of that silent flattery which no mere words can convey. Some of the company had been his guests the preceding evening, and they were profuse in their congratulations upon his recovery. The influences of the scene completely re-established him; he never

felt better. His pulses beat healthfully; life tingled along every nerve; the faintness or swoon was entirely forgotten.

After enjoying the spectacle for a while, he led the Lady Margaret upon the floor, and was borne upon the music through the eddies of the dance. Before the figure was completed, and while he was thrilled with the influence which his lovely partner exerted upon him, the Baron stopped suddenly, uttered a feeble groan, and sank to the floor. His face was overspread with the same deadly pallor, and his breathing apparently ceased. Then followed a scene of confusion and terror. The agitated throng hurried in opposite directions uselessly. Some crowded around the body as if to prevent the access of fresh air; others stifled him with perfumes or chilled him with water. All to no purpose. At length the Baron's servants were sent for, and he was carried home, to all appearance a lifeless corpse.

IV

MORE SYMPTOMS, AND USELESS REMEDIES.

THE Baron lay like one dead through the night, and in the morning awoke as before, unconscious of what had happened, fatigued and petulant. After breakfast, by the advice of his physician, he went out to take the air on horseback, attended by two servants, for fear of another seizure. In a few minutes the exhilarating exercise had its natural effect; the Baron's fine figure straightened, his manly color came to his cheeks, and he felt the glow of a new life. After cantering through a few streets he came near to the residence of the Lady Margaret, and drew rein at the gate. As he dismounted he was aware of being looked at by sharp and malignant eyes. It was the old woman whose curses even yet rang in his ears, and whose glances burned into his soul. She spoke no word, but raised a skinny finger and laughed inwardly, while a fiendish grin overspread her wrinkled visage.

Mechanically he followed the servants up the grand staircase, and was ushered into the reception-room. All the blood in his body seemed to have retreated to his heart. Once more his shoulders drooped, and the bright glow faded from his eyes. The Lady Margaret appeared, glorious as rosy-fingered Aurora, and came towards him with smiles; but the smiles gave place to looks of apprehension at the sight of his pallid, anxious, and careworn face. She extended her hand; he took it with an air of indifference, and then let it drop. Where was the thrill that shot along his nerves when last he felt that gentle pressure, and looked in those trustful eyes? Was he under a spell then or now, that he could look with stolid unconcern upon that wonderful beauty, and feel unmoved at her generous sympathy?

Their conversation was without interest; the lady's thoughts were swallowed up in her intense solicitude, and the Baron seemed to be void of natural feelings, and as enfeebled in intellect as he was in bodily vigor. After making allowance for his depressed state, it was still evident to her,

not only that his fervent admiration had cooled, but that a state of cruel indifference had succeeded. She might have thought his listless manner the effect of his disease, had she not seen him, at the moment when he was rudely breaking off her unfinished sentence, walk with a tolerably firm gait towards the window. Gazing out into the sky, his back turned upon the lady, he yawned, then declared it was a fine day for hunting, and regretted that he was not at Adelstein to bring down a buck.

Controlling as best she could her mingled sorrow, shame, and indignation, the Lady Margaret left him and retired to her room heart-broken. After her departure the Baron yawned till in danger of dislocating his jaw, and as he rode home wondered why everybody was so solemn, and especially what the lady went off crying about? The day was spent in various attempts to amuse the patient, his appetite was good and his bodily sensations natural, but he was no longer the same man. In the evening, at the same hour, he fell for the third time into the same deadly swoon. On this occasion his eyes remained wide open, fixed,

and with pupils dilated; they seemed to express the agony of a lost soul. The body was not so flexible as before; if the physician bent a limb, or changed the position of the head, it remained so, no matter how uncomfortable it would have been to one in a natural state. All night the family remained about the bed,—the physician with half a dozen eminent brethren plying their useless remedies, and Father Wilhelm sending up equally useless prayers. The faculty solemnly decided that the case was beyond their skill, and intimated that the Baron was the victim of diabolical possession or magical arts. Father Wilhelm was now determined to make a vigorous effort to exorcise the fiends or break the wicked spell. Accordingly that day the Bishop was sent for, and came to the chapel with a train of priests, the Superior of a neighboring convent, renowned for sanctity, and two lay-brothers, bringing the most holy relics from a renowned shrine. The Baron, with his mother and sister, and the household servants, took their usual places while mass was celebrated with great solemnity. The object of all their solicitude

seemed less concerned than any one present, but went through the prayers and genuflections as it were to oblige his anxious friends. The Baron had been noted for his ardent enthusiastic temperament, and his present listless indifference caused no little remark. He did not appear to be irreverent, or cruel, or wanting in affection; his faculties seemed rather benumbed, so that joy or grief made no impression upon him. After the consecration of the Host, he partook of the sacrament, and, sprinkling himself at the porch a second time with holy water, he returned to his own apartment. Meanwhile the Bishop and the holy men took the Host and the relics, and walked through all the halls of the Adelstein residence, sprinkling holy water and chanting portions of the Psalms.

*Miserere mei, Domine, quoniam infirmus sum.
Sana me, Domine, quoniam conturbata sunt ossa mea.*

Quoniam non est in morte qui memor sit tui; in inferno autem quis confitebitur tibi? (Ps. vi., Vulgate.)

The chapel bell was solemnly tolled, and the whole household on their knees spent an hour in

prayer. The time approached, and the unfortunate Baron, sitting near his couch, rose to receive the ghostly procession, and then fell on his knees. The ecclesiastics ranged themselves round him, the Bishop elevating the Host, the Superior the relics, while Father Wilhelm, holding aloft a crucifix, exclaimed, "I charge thee, come out of him! Vex not the soul which our Lord hath redeemed!" The awe-inspiring chant was resumed:—

Laboravi in gemitu meo, lavabo per singulas noctes lectum meum; lacrymis meis stratum meum rigabo. (Ps. vi., Vulgate.)

Quoniam circumdederunt me canes multi; concilium malignantium obsedit me. (Ps. xxi., Vulgate.)

Inclina ad me aurem tuam; accelera ut eruas me.

Esto mihi in Deum protectorem; et in domum refugii ut salvum me facias. (Ps. xxx., Vulgate.)

Upon the first stroke of the anxiously awaited hour Father Wilhelm said to the Baron, "Fix thine eyes on the cross, and call upon Him who hung thereon." But he spoke to ears which were closed to earthly sounds, and not even the sacred emblem could hold those wildly staring

eyes. At that instant the Bishop imagined that he caught sight of a face at the window, and he shouted in a voice that was husky with fright,—

Exorcizo! Anathematizo! Apage Sathanas!

Trembling fell upon all in the chamber, and most covered their eyes to shut out the dreaded sight of the Evil One. Father Wilhelm alone had presence of mind to raise the Baron and lay him on his bed.

The baffled priests, having fixed candles on the posts of the bed, and set up the crucifix with others burning before it, retired in a humbled and bewildered state of mind, leaving the house to its sorrow.

The Baron's first attack having come on at a banquet, it might be supposed that excessive indulgence was the primary cause. Dizziness from dancing and excitement might account for that of the second day. But the third happened in the quiet of his chamber, and all the medical skill of Vienna was employed in vain. How ineffectual religious rites were to avert the fourth attack we have just seen. The case seemed beyond human aid.

For a month this state of affairs continued without change. Regularly at eight o'clock the Baron fell into a sleep from which no power could rouse him until the stroke of eight next morning. The phenomenon became as unvarying as the results of mechanism,—the same pallor, the same wildly staring, horror-struck eyes, the same cessation of pulse and breathing, followed, upon waking, by the same unconsciousness of the last interval, and the same unaccountable sense of fatigue. The course of nature seemed to be reversed, and rest during the day was necessary for the Baron to throw off the tired feeling which morning brought.

Such an extraordinary case could not fail to make a deep sensation in the city. The Baron, whenever he went abroad, which was seldom, became painfully conscious of the prying curiosity of some, and the undisguised terror of others among the lower orders; but he was especially indignant at the coolness of most of his former friends. To crown all, the Lady Margaret refused to see him, and it was rumored that nothing but this mysterious affliction prevented her young

brother from sending him a mortal challenge. He was everywhere a marked man. Children fled from his sight; even beggars held out their hands to him no more. Women crossed themselves as they met him, and nurses covered the faces of the babes they carried, lest his evil eye should fall upon them. If the Baron had been wicked or defiant, he might have borne all this, but he was naturally sensitive to the opinions of others, and even his malady had not made him utterly callous. Gradually he withdrew from public sight, and at last confined himself to his own court-yard.

V.

ATTEMPTS AT DIAGNOSIS.

FATHER WILHELM meanwhile was not idle nor unobservant. He kept a daily record of the Baron's condition, both of body and mind. He noted every unusual motion, and especially strove, by recalling every chance word, to follow the course of the patient's thoughts; this, how-

ever, was a difficult matter, since the Baron seemed to have lost much of his usual force of character, and to have become fitful, capricious, and childlike. One thing engaged Father Wilhelm's special attention. The Baron became morbidly careful in his morning ablutions; he scrubbed his hands as though they had been soiled by labor; he used perfumes upon his hair and beard; he was dissatisfied daily with his clothes, unless they were a long time aired, and, as it were, disinfected. His valet was in despair. When the priest casually asked the reason of this scrupulousness, the Baron had no definite reply to make; his actions seemed to be guided by instinct, with no more reason than the duck has for trimming its feathers, or the cat for licking smooth its fur. Holding his hand to the priest one day, he asked, "See, is it not growing broad and bent? And look, there are callous places!"

"No," said Father Wilhelm, "your hand is as soft and shapely as ever."

"Nevertheless it *feels* stubbed and hard. Besides," he added, standing up, "are not my

shoulders becoming humped, and my legs crooked?"

"Not at all; you are straight as a pine tree."

"Yet I *feel* stooped, as though my shoulders had carried burdens; my back seems bent like a sickle, and my legs bowed out like a pair of misshapen tongs."

A sudden flash, as from heaven, came into Father Wilhelm's mind.

"Let your thoughts run back on the track of this sensation; what does it come from, no matter how indistinct is the idea? What do you first think of when it occurs to you that you are tired, or that your limbs are out of shape? And what is the first notion, no matter how vague, which occupies you when you first wake in the morning?"

"I can't say," he answered, in a doleful maze; "sometimes I have glimpses; but it is like the opening of a door that shuts again before one can look in. Don't you think sometimes that you have lived before, and find yourself trying to remember what you were, because you are sure you were somebody else?"

"And what are the glimpses like? Are they pleasant? Is it like looking into heaven, or (*Deus salve nos!*) the opening of the abyss of hell?"

"Neither, I should say. There is no glory of brightness nor any smoke of torment."

"*Laus Deo!*" thought the priest. "His soul, then, has not crossed the river of death."

"Still it is not a recollection that brings joy: something lingers mysterious and invisible, but hard as iron, cold as winter, dreary as poverty, filthy as dirt and rags."

"Then you do remember!" said the priest, with a shiver at the chaotic horrors into which his imagination had plunged.

"No, good father, I remember nothing; I have only these indefinable impressions, — *tracks* of memories, after themselves have fled. If a deaf man were miraculously restored to hearing just *after* the stroke of a cathedral bell he would not remember the booming tone, but only the vibration that followed it."

Father Wilhelm now strove to get at the mystery by making approaches from other points,

but the Baron was exhausted; he had not the nerve to hold his heart in his hand to be anatomized. He fell back from the endeavor as the boy shrinks from the mathematical problem which he has not strength to grapple. His faculties, like troops without discipline, fell into disorder and fled, leaving him in a state of utter perplexity.

Father Wilhelm meditated long upon this conversation; all things pointed to one solution of the mystery. The unfortunate Baron was beyond a doubt controlled by some magician or evil spirit, who during the period of unnatural slumber led his soul out of the body and subjected it to trial and pain. That accounted for his fatigue, for the paralysis of will, the quenching of enthusiasm, the loss of natural affection, and the indifference towards all high and noble things. For what soul can live two lives? What eye can remain forever open? What torture was ever devised so exquisite, so fiendish, as that of the Chinese, by which the subject is kept awake until death kindly shuts the eyelids forever?

A strong corroboration was found in the fact

that the mental condition of the Baron improved during the day up to the time of the next seizure; from the time of waking he grew hourly more rational, humane, gentle, and affectionate. But if this hypothesis were true, why had not the solemn exorcism prevailed? Perhaps the Baron had some secret sin upon his conscience which rendered the sacred rite nugatory. But then he had confessed and had received absolution. Still there might be something he had forgotten, some unwitting sacrilege, some unfulfilled vow, some deadly heresy in his thought, some act for which his unenlightened conscience had not reproved him. With new diligence, therefore, the faithful priest bent all his powers to understand the spiritual state of his patron, and, as far as it was possible for erring human nature, to place him clean and spotless before the throne of the Infinite Mercy.

I.

THE SPECULUM OF THE NYKTALOPS.

FATHER WILHELM now bethought him that it might be well to make an attempt to follow the wanderings of the Baron's soul during the period when it apparently left the body. It was not clear to him that it might be done without mortal sin, but he could at least ascertain whether the thing were possible, and what means were to be employed. With some misgivings, therefore, he went to seek one Albrecht Werner, known to the learned as Albertus Nyktalops, because he was rarely seen by day, and, as it was supposed, spent his nights in the study of the stars. The common people called him Albert the Bat. No one knew his origin; he was not a native of the city, but made his appearance mysteriously some years before. Although no one suspected him of evil arts, and although he refused to cast horoscopes, unless it were for princes, and was not known to turn his knowledge to any worldly

advantage by playing on the passions or the fears of mankind, still he was not in favor with the clergy, because he never went to mass, and was believed to be more attached to the speculations of human philosophy than to the infallible teachings of the Church. He lived in the upper story of a house so high that it seemed to be a tower rather than a dwelling. Father Wilhelm made his way thither at dusk, and, ascending the long staircase, was admitted, after some delay, into the philosopher's study. The room was plainly furnished with oaken tables and chairs, and the only ornaments upon the walls were geometrical and astronomical diagrams. A few bulky volumes, brazen-clasped, lay upon the table, together with some sheets of parchment, a pen, and an inkhorn in a bronze frame. The philosopher rose and welcomed his visitor. He was a man of middle age, with a flowing beard sprinkled with gray, and an Oriental cast of countenance, and was dressed in a long Persian robe. The priest felt and acknowledged the dignity of this striking figure in a reverential bow, and, seeing that he had interrupted Albrecht at

his studies, he propounded the object of his visit without delay.

"I come, Master Albrecht," he began, "to lay a very extraordinary case before you."

"That of the Baron von Adelstein, I presume."

"Yes; then you have heard of it?"

"Truly, who in Vienna has not?"

"The physicians are completely at fault. It is not a swoon or faintness, nor is it an ordinary seizure with convulsions; the breathing seems actually suspended and the heart still. It is death in all respects but the stiffness and cold. Then the entire absence of dreams as well as of memory upon awaking makes me think that his soul, for the time being, leaves his body."

"And why not? The soul *dwells* in the body, but surely it can go forth to the length of its tether."

"I would fain follow that soul, if it may be done innocently. Have I not heard of a wonderful speculum or mirror of steel in your possession, by means of which distant objects and even spirits of the dead are brought within view at pleasure?"

"The people, I suppose, must needs amuse themselves with wonderful tales concerning me. There is so much of the report true as this, that I have a mirror into which, at certain times, one may look and see what he wishes, always within the limits set by the great First Cause. Judge you, therefore, whether the spirits of the departed can be beheld in it."

"Truly I doubt whether their airy forms can ever be discerned by our grosser senses; but happily that question does not concern us now. It will be sufficient if by your aid I can find the cause of my patron's affliction."

"At what hour does the attack occur?"

"At the stroke of eight."

"It lacks now half an hour of the time. In the mean time, to assure yourself of its properties, and accustom your eye to the peculiar light, you might make an experiment; for instance, you could look at the present occupation of some of the Baron's friends."

Albrecht withdrew, and, a moment after, called to Father Wilhelm. Following the voice, the priest found himself in a darker room without

angles or resting-places for the eyes,—all its lines, as in a perspective, tending to one point, in which was placed the speculum. The floating nebulous light that hung over its surface struck him with apprehension, for no lamp or other means of illumination was visible. "Tell me, Albrecht," he exclaimed, "is not this evil? I desire not, even if I might restore my patron to soundness, to peril his soul and my own by becoming indebted to the Prince of Darkness for the means."

"If I were to jest," answered Albrecht from behind the curtains, "I should say that the Prince of Darkness would hardly furnish illuminated mirrors; but, in seriousness, if it be evil I know it not. The speculum, a disk of polished steel, I obtained, while travelling in the East, from an Arabian philosopher. I consult no oracle, make no incantations, raise no spirits; but place the mirror according to certain laws which I have discovered. What thou seest, thou seest."

Somewhat reassured, Father Wilhelm replied: "The maker, as his race would indicate, was doubtless a follower of the false prophet, but he

may not have done aught amiss in this; and on thy word I will proceed."

The priest fixed his eyes steadfastly upon the mirror, and thought of the Baron. Slowly the mirror seemed to become a window, expanding every moment like the opening in an iris, and growing more transparent, until at last there was before his vision the family group in the palace; the Baron rising from his chair, his mother shedding tears as she was about to accompany him to his chamber, and his sister hanging pensively upon his arm. Father Wilhelm found his own eyes moist, and he turned away from the sight. The room was painfully still, and after looking at the wonderful light in the speculum, all other objects around were invisible in the gloom.

The priest had no alternative; he must continue to consult the mirror or leave the apartment; for he could not bear to count his own heart-beats. So he thought of the Lady Margaret. At once appeared a small chapel or oratory, and a lady kneeling at the shrine of the Virgin. "Poor girl!" said the compassionate

priest, half aloud, "if it shall please God to restore him, he shall make you the largest amends."

Baron Grosfuss, the royal Councillor, was next called. Behold an aged gentleman dictating a despatch to a secretary, while a servant is gingerly polishing his gouty toe with flannel.

"Let us leave him," thought the priest; "we shall find our good Bishop better employed." With disgust he saw that bulky and venerated prelate at the table with a voluminous napkin tucked under his chin, and half strangled by a mouthful of venison which he had undertaken to wash down with a glass of wine.

"Truly," thought the priest, "it were well that this mirror should always be in discreet hands; else the most ill-favored scandals might air themselves abroad, and fiendish laughter ring through hell."

"Dost thou see?" inquired Albrecht.

"Yes, marvellously," replied the priest.

The bell from the neighboring church put an end to these observations, for it struck *eight*. The soul of the Baron was now abroad. With a

tremor that he could not control, Father Wilhelm turned once more to the mirror, and looked for a long time in silence. At length he spoke: "Master Albrecht, dost thou know what this is?"

"Assuredly not; I cannot see the speculum."

"And there can be no mistake."

"No more than in the other cases. Tell me what thou seest."

"A mean room, dimly lighted by a fire under a small furnace; pans and other vessels are full of boiling or simmering fluids; leaves, stems, and roots of plants cover the floor. In one corner is a wretched bed, fit for a beggar. Long-necked bottles are hung about the walls. Ah! it stirs! I thought at first there was no one in the room, and that this object which now moves was only a bundle of rags laid before the furnace fire to dry. It rises; it wears the semblance of a man, but crooked and lame. It is a man, but so hideous and so sad! A whip is thrust through a fissure in the dingy curtain that serves for a door, and falls heavily on the shoulders of the wretch. His lips move as if in pain, and he hastens to

put more fagots under the furnace and to stir the contents of the vessels on the fire. A frightful face now peers through the curtain; the face is that of a woman, but the chin is grizzled with a thin beard; the rest of the figure is concealed. There is no other person visible."

"If thou didst fix thy thoughts upon the Baron von Adelstein, then thou hast seen where his soul now tarries."

"May God pity him! Reason enough there is for his feeling tired and lame upon waking!—reason enough for his haunting memories of poverty, squalor, and pain!"

"Hast thou looked long enough?"

"Yes, too long. My bones ache for him, and my heart is heavy as lead. And yet I would see the end of this. Doubtless his servitude lasts for the twelve hours."

"He comes out of his trance, then, at eight in the morning?"

"Yes, at that hour precisely."

"I am sorry; but the last part of the scene cannot be shown thee. This speculum can be consulted only at night; with the coming of dawn

its brightness is dimmed, and at sunrise its power of reflection is gone."

"Well, since that is the case I desire to look no more now; if necessary, I will come again."

It was silent, and in a moment the priest saw the light fade out of the mirror until the room became as rayless as chaos. Presently the philosopher called, and Father Wilhelm, following the voice confidently, found himself again in the study. He drew an involuntary sigh.

"It was a sad spectacle truly," said Albrecht.

"It is something to know what we do," replied the priest, "but we are only a step on our way. We do not know where the hag lives who holds him under her spell. Even if we find her, what can we do? And just here a serious question comes up: the Baron's body remains lifeless during the night; no soul comes as tenant in place of his own; where, then, is the soul of the body into which he is forced to enter? The man I saw, though deformed and vile, was doubtless one of human kind. Can *two* souls dwell in the same earthly tenement?"

"It is a serious question, of a truth, and one

that we can now only guess at. We must first find the woman."

"That may not be easy, for such a malignant sorceress would keep her den concealed. But we can learn the names of those who would be likely to deal in magic, — the midwives, fortune-tellers, and sellers of herbs and simples. With time and patience we shall track her."

Returning thanks for the unusual courtesy shown him, Father Wilhelm took leave of the philosopher, promising to see him again within twenty-four hours.

VII.

A RETROSPECTION.

ON his way home Father Wilhelm meditated again; some motive must exist for the diabolical cruelty inflicted upon the Baron. What could he have done to cause the vengeance of an obscure old woman living in a garret, — he, the associate of princes? Even if he had had amours, they would be in a different sphere. His estates were

in the country, so that it could not be an oppressed tenant that was pursuing him. But it must be that it was for some wrong, real or fancied, that the calamity had fallen upon him. The Baron must be questioned more closely.

In the morning the family met at breakfast at the usual hour. The Baron seemed careworn, and complained of being rather more tired than common, often rubbing his shoulders, which he said felt bruised. Father Wilhelm writhed at the thought of the lash which he had seen uplifted in the speculum, but, of course, was obliged to remain silent. After a time the Baron recovered his spirits somewhat, and jested upon his misfortune. It was a good thing, he said, to compel a man to sleep a suitable number of hours. There was no fear now of his ruining his constitution or morals by nightly revels. Besides, other people had dreams, walked in their sleep, or were wakeful and fidgety, and had to take poppy or mandragora; he, on the other hand, slept without opiates, and never had the nightmare. Again Father Wilhelm recoiled at the recollection of that dismal room, the pile of

animated rags, the wan face, seamed with sorrowful lines, and shrinking from the hideous witch; was there ever a nightmare horror like that? It was with great self-command that he listened to this pleasantry and kept down the pity that would have welled up from his heart. At length, taking a favorable time to change the conversation, he began to question the Baron as he had intended.

"I ask you, not as your confessor, but as your friend. Recall carefully the events of the last few months, and let us see whom you may have offended."

The Baron thought for a while; then spoke of a huntsman whose ears he had boxed for carelessly maiming a hound, of a beggar whom he had ordered to be thrust out of doors for telling a lying tale, of a servant whom he had struck with the flat of his sword for not making obeisance when spoken to. Father Wilhelm shook his head.

"Trivial matters, all of them; the knaves expect as much from a nobleman. There must be something else."

"Yes, now I recollect. My horse ran over a

fellow near the cathedral. He was killed, too, I fancy ; at all events, his mother howled like a lioness robbed of her whelp."

"Was it your fault?"

"Hardly my fault, as I was looking the other way, bowing to a lady at the time."

"And did you make amends?"

"I told her to follow me and I would give her gold."

"Without any words of sympathy or regret?"

"No. I was annoyed by the interruption, by the gathering crowd, and by the old woman's groaning ; and I said something about beggars keeping out of the way."

"And did the woman know you?"

"Without doubt ; she began her invectives upon me as von Adelstein at once. I did not tarry to hear her, however. You know I could not undo the mischief."

"When was this?"

"A month or so ago ; in fact, it was the day of my banquet, — the day I had the first attack. I remember, because I was in haste to get home and prepare for the feast."

Father Wilhelm's heart beat tumultuously ; he could hardly wait for evening to come, that he might look again in the speculum, but he concealed his emotions and said gravely, "I promised you I would not speak to-day as your confessor, but I must say, for your own good, that hereafter I shall try to set this affair in a proper light before your conscience." The tide of pity swelled and surged in his bosom as he rose up and turned away, saying, "God be merciful to you, my son !"

The Baron rather marvelled at the unwonted gush of feeling, but presently forgot the incident, taking refuge from his weariness in watching the gambols of a favorite dog.

As soon as night came, Father Wilhelm repaired to the lofty dwelling of Albertus Nyktalops, and desired once more to look in the speculum. "I wish, Master Albrecht," he said, "to recall an event of a month ago."

"For that purpose much depends upon the vision of the observer. Many are so gross that they cannot see even passing events in my speculum, much less the dim shadows of weeks gone by. You seem otherwise. Your faculties are

sharp; no rust gathers on them. No load of flesh weighs you down to earth. Let me warn you, however, that, even if you succeed, it will be only a faint image that will be presented to you."

Albrecht then led the way into the next room, and Father Wilhelm took his place in silence. Soon the speculum began to diffuse a powdery light, like that of the Milky Way, then brighter and rippling like the reflection of the moon in water, but seeming as far away as the humid brilliancy of Sirius. He fixed his eyes upon it with eagerness, and at length saw microscopic figures passing through a distant square. On they walked upon the sides of mimic streets under the shadow of a tiny cathedral. How frail looked the Gothic pinnacles and sculpture! it seemed that a breath would melt them like the architecture of the frost. A group of horsemen came dashing along the street; two limping creatures, a man and a woman, were crossing; one of the horses struck the man and bore him down. The rider remained in his saddle; an attendant dismounted for a moment, until bystanders gathered around the body. The woman

rose up, gesticulating excitedly, and the party rode rapidly away.

Father Wilhelm now turned his attention to the woman, who followed the body as it was borne away on the shoulders of men. The little procession slowly moved through street after street, each narrower and meaner than the last, and finally stopped at a door in a miserable lane. The priest felt sure that he could follow the same course from the cathedral square without the least hesitation. Up the dark stairway he could not see their progress; but presently a door opened from which came a flickering light. The bearers stooped and laid down the body, and then left the room. After they had gone the woman lighted torches and then knelt over the body. A long time she remained on her knees; then, rising, she took a vessel and put coals in it, from which white clouds arose and floated over her head. She drew figures on the floor with a wand, then waved it in the air and stamped her foot, apparently speaking all the while in an excited manner. Then, taking a phial, she poured the contents into the mouth of the body at her feet,

after which she sat down shivering before the fire.

Father Wilhelm then willed that the same scene should be brought up at the hour of eight. Looking steadily at the body, he saw a tremulous motion, — first a leg drawn up, then an arm stretched out, then a yawn. Soon the figure got up tottering and looked about the room.

Just then a flash lighted the woman's face, and he saw with a shudder her malignant smile of triumph. It was enough. He did not care to look any longer, and asked Albrecht to lead him back to the study. "Master Albrecht," he said, when they had returned, "the body I saw in the speculum belonged to the son of the witch. *It is dead, and would go to corruption if it were not kept warm by the soul of the Baron dwelling in it nightly.*

"Horrible!"

"It is even so; and I tremble, in what is to come, at the mischief a false step may cause. The Baron hangs now, as it were, on the verge of a precipice, with a bottomless abyss below. The witch must be circumvented, not defied; for

her punishment, however severe and merited, would be poor amends for the loss of his life."

"What do you propose?"

"To go and see her to-morrow, taking the Baron with me. What I shall say, I know not; but it will be given to me, I am well assured. Will you go also?"

"I fear I might be rather a hindrance. But if you remain until after dark, I will consult my speculum, and if I can be of service will be with you instantly."

VIII.

LIVING, OR DEAD?

WITH much difficulty Father Wilhelm induced the Baron next day to return to the subject of his personal relations with mankind and with his God. Could he have dared to relate what he had so lately seen, he might have awed the Baron into instant obedience; but he feared that fever or madness might ensue. He was charitable, moreover, respecting this apathy on moral points,

for it was evident that all his faculties were sluggish from the unnatural strain upon them. The priest told his patron that he was about to make a new and strenuous effort to throw off the malady, and that a pure conscience was an absolute prerequisite. The Baron was at length induced to promise that he would endeavor to find the woman whose son had been killed under his horse's hoofs, that he would ask her forgiveness for his thoughtless and unfeeling words, and settle a pension upon her. He dictated, also, a letter to the Lady Margaret, making humble acknowledgments for his unseemly behavior. Then, after a general confession, he followed the priest into the chapel, where mass was celebrated and the sacrament administered.

In the afternoon they drove to the cathedral square, and threaded the narrow streets through which the priest had seen the shadowy procession pass in the speculum. Arriving near the house, the coachman was dismissed, with orders to come to the same place at half past eight o'clock.

Before reaching the door, Father Wilhelm said: "Remember this is an enraged and possibly

dangerous woman whom we are to see. If she threatens, do not be frightened at her rage; and, above all, believe nothing she may say about yourself."

The clock struck seven as they entered the house.

"Who seeks Frau Eldzeit?" said a voice from the stairway.

"Friends, good woman," answered the priest. "We come to do you good; admit us, and you will not regret it."

Mumbling to herself, she led the way into a dark room scantily furnished. She pointed to chairs; then, putting her rushlight on the floor, she sat down with her chin on her hands, her elbows on her knees.

"Your son, by a sad accident, was run over, I believe," began the father.

"Yes, I know," broke in the woman; "murdered by the Baron von Adelstein."

"No, not murdered; the Baron was careless, even criminally so, perchance, and not so sorry for the mishap as he should have been. But that is past now, and the Baron seriously repents it."

"No doubt, but can he bring my son back to life?"

"I come to ask your pardon, dame," interposed the Baron, "and I will settle upon you a pension that will maintain you in comfort as long as you live."

"I have n't long to live, and I don't expect to die for want of bread. I am comfortable enough."

It was a scornful glance with which she tossed him the words.

"But you will forgive him?" said the priest.

"What does it matter to a lord whether an old woman forgives him or not?"

"But it matters much to you, dame."

"That is my affair; I have not asked you to shrive me, good father."

"I ask not to come between you and your God," said the priest, reverently; "but I have counselled my patron here, who commits his soul to my charge, to see you and offer all the reparation in his power."

"Humph! It must be a strong motive that brings a dainty lord and his well-fed priest into a hovel like this!"

"Truly, dame, and the Lord of Glory came into a stable."

"So I have been told."

"Where have you buried the body? Let the Baron erect a headstone, and I will say a mass for the repose of his soul."

"His body I have embalmed; his soul has gone where your masses won't follow it."

"Embalmed!" said the Baron, starting up. "Will you let us see the body?"

"Yes, if you want to; but a corpse is not a sight for gentlemen like you."

They rose and followed her into the room which Father Wilhelm had seen in the speculum. The Baron held his nose as he encountered the odors from the furnace. On the bed lay the bundle of rags, to which the woman pointed with an air of indifference. The priest knelt by the body and prayed fervently. Frau Eldzeit sat by the furnace, silently rocking to and fro.

The Baron looked on with heightening curiosity; he touched the movable limbs, marked the staring eyes, and at length said in a low tone, "Father Wilhelm, this is awful! the limbs are

not rigid, as in death; and see! those metallic eyes, wide open! Mother has told me of my own condition at night. It must be like this. My blood freezes to think of it!" The priest whispered a word of caution, and then renewed to the woman his prayer for forgiveness. Feeling the terrible responsibility that rested upon him, he addressed her with all the eloquence of his fiery nature, but yet clothed his ideas in words that would neither disclose the fearful truth to the unhappy Baron, nor let the witch see that he understood her cruel vengeance. While he pleaded with her the time passed on. The Baron, feeling a strange fascination in the presence of the unearthly-looking corpse, bent again over the bed, and lifted first a yielding hand, then a leg, but turned the face away, so that he might not see the eyes, whose stony glare curdled the blood in his veins. Suddenly the clock struck EIGHT! Down upon the wretched heap of clothes sank the Baron, breathless, lifeless. The priest started up in alarm; in his earnestness he had forgotten the near approach of the fatal hour.

"Bless me, the Baron has fainted!" said the

old woman, calmly. "The sight of the body was too much for him, as I feared."

Father Wilhelm thought unutterable things, but dared not venture a word. Slowly the hitherto inanimate body crawled out from the rags, shaking off the outstretched limbs of the Baron, who had fallen helplessly upon him; the figure looked at the witch, then at the priest, and uttered an unnatural cry, when the woman rose up and spoke quickly and sternly to her unwelcome visitor. "Go, carry away the Baron there! Depart! If you speak again to me or to *him*," — pointing to the hideous figure, yawning and shivering by the furnace, — "you will never see your master alive again!"

Father Wilhelm did not dare disobey, but, taking up the body of the Baron, with great exertion he groped his way down the dark stairs. At the door stood the Nyktalops. "I saw your dilemma," he said, quietly, "and have come to assist you."

"You are welcome, but would that you had come sooner; this might have been averted."

"I doubt. Still, we shall triumph in the end."

Let me help you; the body is not a sack of feathers."

At the appointed place the coachman and attendants came; the body was placed in the carriage, and sent home under the charge of Albertus. The priest proposed to himself a reconnoissance. Going back to the house which he had just left, he pulled off his shoes and noiselessly crept up stairs. The woman had left the door a little ajar, and therefore he could hear what was going on within, and a crack afforded him a tolerable view of the room. First of all, he noticed, with a thrill, that the witch addressed the creature that wore her son's likeness as von Adelstein, and that his replies admitted his consciousness of the title. The Baron's soul in its own proper body could not have had a more complete sense of hardship, degradation, and wretchedness than was expressed in every look and tone of this complex monstrosity. At the same time, all that part of our nature which we term the will seemed to be enfeebled, if not destroyed. His sorrows were the sorrows of an infant, poignant and passionate, but helpless, and leading to no efforts for escape

or redress. And all the manifestations of mind which bring into use the external organization were feeble, like those of an imbecile whose bodily faculties had not been brought under control. The soul was a stranger in its temporary habitation; it had not learned the mastership of the machinery which it was designed to put in motion. A more abject and woe-begone creature could not be conceived of. And doubtless the help he was able to give in her rude laboratory was of little moment compared with the opportunity of feeding her implacable vengeance. Every order she gave was accompanied with abusive exclamations; every fagot was thrust under the furnace by direction of the lash; thumps and kicks were the signals for stirring the boiling herbs. And the only replies were childish moans and complaints, feeble calls on his mother and servants, whose absence he could not account for, and threats of retribution which would have been ludicrous if they were not so pitiable. Having finished the distillations for the night, she made the lame drudge bring out a large cradle; she crawled into it and compelled

him to rock her unceasingly. If he stopped or faltered, her snaky eyes opened instantly, and a single glance was enough to recall him to his task.

Father Wilhelm now saw the extent of the punishment inflicted on his patron, and with a heavier heart than he had ever known he stole down the stairs and took his solitary way home. There was only one meliorating circumstance; the memory of the night did not last into the day. But could any soul long do this double duty without rest,—like the flying-fish, pursued by sharks in one element and birds of prey in the other?

IX.

PUTTING ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS.

WHEN the Baron arose next morning his attendants thought him insane. He doubled up the bed-clothes and hurled them from him, exclaiming, in tones of mingled disgust and affright, "Off, you mooncalf, you imp of Satan!" His whole frame quivered violently, his nostrils curved as if encountering some sickening odor, and he strove to leap out of the room, as from the presence of a leper. But after a few minutes, when he was thoroughly awakened, the impressions with which he had fallen asleep faded, and he became calmer as he saw the actual state of affairs. But his mind had received a deadly blow; the awful expression he had seen upon the face of the supposed mummy haunted him, and the sturdy, unforgiving temper of the old woman was more than ever a mystery. Was it possible that his own unaccountable seizures were under

her control? If not, why had Father Wilhelm made such strenuous efforts to conciliate her revengeful disposition? He trembled, and sank down overpowered by the possibility of this unheard-of crime.

That day Father Wilhelm was silent, uncommunicative. The burden was too heavy for his sympathetic nature to bear. But the Baron, though feeble and exhausted, was no longer listless and apathetic; his whole soul recoiled at the horrible idea, which, like a wrathful cloud, had begun to shut in his horizon. There was no peace for him henceforth until the accursed spell was broken. Even death seemed welcome, if there should be no other avenue of escape.

Much to Father Wilhelm's surprise the Baron proposed that religious services should be renewed. With tears of joy the priest complied, and after mass, taking up the sacred volume, he read from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans. It seemed almost prophetic that he came at once upon the passage: *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* The Baron fell on his knees and repeated the

aspiration, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* A ray of sunlight just then shone in and illuminated the altar, and the picture of our Saviour's passion which hung over it. The priest's face was touched by the welcome beam, and he proceeded fervently: *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Greatly cheered in his heart, Father Wilhelm could but improve the occasion to impress upon the penitent's mind the salutary lesson which his affliction was designed to teach. For he was one to whom truth had been revealed in its absolute beauty; and though reared in the midst of factitious distinctions, and of legalized or permitted injustice and cruelty, he saw in the Word, no less than in the laws of the human soul, the brotherhood of the race and the impartial fatherhood of God. "My dear son, in what God for his own wise purposes has permitted, see how the great idea of Christianity has been vindicated. For with all your possessions and your lordship over men, in spite of your exalted birth and princely associations, you are yet brother and yoke-fellow to the meanest of his creatures. Thank Him that your soul came into

so fair a tabernacle at the first, and has been surrounded with so many resources for comfort and for usefulness. And if you are humbled in that, as you suppose, you have been made to grovel at times in a meaner tenement, think of the mystery of the Incarnation, and murmur no more. When it shall please Him to release you, as I trust He will, remember henceforth that to all men you are a brother, highly favored, it is true, — an heir, while many are, as it were, disinherited, — but held, therefore, to bear the larger burden, and, above all, to minister to the wants and comfort the souls of the wretched.”

Much more he added in a fervent strain.

The Baron clasped his hands together, — for his deepest feelings were touched by the kindly admonition no less than by the suffering he had undergone, — and he vowed that if his life were spared he would endeavor to make his conduct conform to the exalted standard set up in the teachings of our Lord.

“Be of good cheer,” concluded the priest, “I feel assured that the time of your deliverance is at hand. Saith not the Word, *He shall make*

the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder he will restrain? We will go again to the evil woman, and, I doubt not, we shall prevail. But in the mean time distress not your mother by any hint of what has passed.”

“And to-morrow,” said the Baron, “if we do overcome the sorceress, I will go to see the Lady Margaret, with such amends as I am able to offer.”

“I knew your generous heart would speak,” said Father Wilhelm. “But for that let us wait. We have a serious matter in hand, one that will task our courage and strength to the uttermost.”

X.

THE CONFLICT.

FRAU ELDZEIT sat in her solitary room in the afternoon, rocking herself in the cradle wherein she was wont to rest. The furnace fire was out, and the body lay as usual on the heap of rags in the corner. Her resolution was unshaken, and her craving for vengeance even stronger; but yet

she felt a strange sinking within her; something tugged at her heart-strings, and checked the current of life along its worn and gullied channels. Anon her breath tripped, and she gasped as though the vital organs were halting and fluttering, like the wheels of a clock when the weights begin to touch and the pendulum beats with lingering intermissions.

A strange, firm step sounded on the creaking staircase; she roused herself and saw the stately form of Albert the Bat, his beard flowing tranquilly over his broad chest, and his calm, mysterious face wearing the commanding look which awed all beholders.

"Frau Eldzeit," he said in measured tones, "I have come! I told you we should meet."

"You could have seen me any day these ten years," was the reply. But her indifference was palpably assumed, for she shook like one with palsy.

"Yes, but I vowed to see you discomfited, exposed, punished; and for that I have come."

"You may have to wait then, if that is your only errand."

"Do you remember my Gretchen, the one delight of my heart? Do you remember how fair she was, and how pure, when, through your fiendish arts, she was delivered over to the betrayer of innocence?"

"Humph! she had flesh and blood like the rest of us. She gave herself to Count Muhlsdorf when she had not even a promise of a ring to hoop her dainty finger. And yet you blame *me*!"

"Waste not your failing breath in uttering such lies! None knew better than you the villany which hedged her about, the overmastering influences which bent her gentle but upright soul, the sorrow and wretchedness with which her fault was expiated. But enough of that; it is not a picture I would fain recall. Now you have ventured your all in this inthralment of the Baron. You are not strong enough to keep the reins you have rashly taken in hand. You must drop them from very weakness, and your own life is the penalty. Even now it ebbs away; your heart is clogged with the black blood that feeds it, and soon will stop forever. Then shall that heap of carrion there go with you to the worms

who wait for you. And I am here to see it!"

The words sounded fearfully in the old woman's ears, the more because the fateful knocking against her ribs within gave emphasis to the prophecy. Before she could command herself to answer him, Father Wilhelm and the Baron entered the room. The philosopher saluted the two with a stately obeisance, and remained silent. Father Wilhelm was the first to speak. He adjured the woman, by the dread hereafter, to set free the soul which she had impiously dared to enslave.

"Where are your prayers?" she exclaimed with sudden energy. "Why does not your God hearken? Where sleep his lightnings? Go, bring your Host and your candles. Mutter over your beads. If it be the Devil's work, overthrow it!"

"Do not provoke the Almighty," said the Baron, solemnly, "nor, I pray you, look upon me as your enemy any longer. Behold, I acknowledge the wrong, and again humbly ask your forgiveness."

Her breath came thicker, but her lip was wreathed in scorn, and her eyes glared like a serpent's when about to spring.

"She is dying," said Albertus, in a low voice to the priest.

She heard the words, and shrieked, "I am not dying! I shall not die, *will* not die, until the clock strikes EIGHT! With me one of the bodies shall go to dust. Then, after I am gone, set free the caged soul of the Baron who can!"

The Baron shuddered as the threat was hissed out between her straggling teeth. A new dilemma presented itself. What if she *were* to continue the mastery until the fated hour came? What if, upon her death, *one* of the bodies must share her fate? Would it not be his own that would then be tenantless and a prey to corruption, and the lame and deformed body that would live? He glanced at the priest and the philosopher alternately, full of the liveliest apprehension.

"A well-directed blow from a dagger into that inanimate ugliness," said Albertus in the same unmoved tone, pointing to the body in the corner, "might end this difficulty. It is without a soul, and to kill it is no murder."

"You dare not!" said the woman, fiercely. "Life hangs between them in equal balance."

Destroy the one by violence, and both will perish by the same blow."

The Baron was to be pardoned if, when this idea was suggested, he did grasp his sword-hilt, and turn with instinctive fury upon the half of his miserable self. But the woman's threat made him pause.

"If she dies before the hour, all will be well," said Albertus in an undertone; "otherwise, I fear me what may happen. Mark well the time by the cathedral clock, and set your hourglass; and if she does not go over the precipice in season, why, it were a small matter to give her a push. A minute or so more or less is nothing to a wretch who must presently die, but of great moment to the Baron, entangled as he is."

But Father Wilhelm's calmer judgment banished the thought of obtaining a release through violence: "This is not for earthly weapons to accomplish," he said; "with the sword of the Spirit we must achieve the victory."

"Very well, as you will," said Albertus; "but my way is to fight the Devil with fire."

"A fine priest, a famous servant of the Lord,"

gasped the old woman, feebly, "to resort to the help of a magician, one of the princes of Satan's realm!"

"I know not of the arts of Master Albrecht," said the priest. "If they be of the Devil, I have employed them unwittingly, and with him the burden rests."

"Besides," added the Baron, "it cannot be that he is on the same side with you; for doth not the Scripture say, 'If Satan cast out Satan, how then shall his kingdom stand'?"

Father Wilhelm motioned to the Baron to be silent, that he might not needlessly irritate the woman, and so steel her heart. Momently she seemed to fail in strength, and at last offered no resistance when she was laid back in the cradle. But the old triumph still shone in her features, and her snaky eyes unclosed at intervals, expressing the fulness of hate. The Baron watched the hourglass until every flinty atom within it seemed to be one of the sands of his own life ebbing away. How anxiously he listened to her breathing, that he might calculate the time it might continue! Is it to be wondered at that while, as he believed,

she held the issue of his own life in her palsied hands, he fervently prayed that her end might come before she involved him in her own fate? And she, sullen and wrathful as the blind Israelitish captive, how she hugged the pillars by whose fall she meant to destroy her enemies!

Albertus stood calmly by, watching the changes in her face. Father Wilhelm had exhausted entreaty and devoted himself to prayer. He seemed to wrestle with God like Jacob, saying, "I will not let thee go unless thou bless him." The Baron strove to maintain his composure, but he would rather have faced the enemy on the battle-field. He never before felt the sensation of utter helplessness; he was a child in arms, a bubble on the river, borne on by a resistless power. Still faster fell the gleaming sands; he could almost hear their dropping; and still the breath came to those heaving lungs. The hour approached. Father Wilhelm with new earnestness, like one crying for the life of his first-born, besought the Almighty. Even the statuesque philosopher began to show signs of human interest, to look anxiously at the hourglass, and to fix his eyes

upon the lingering crone, as if by a glance he would frighten her out of the world. Tears began to moisten the Baron's eyes; hardly a thimbleful of sand remained, and he could no longer bear to see it dropping, dropping, while still that vengeful breathing sounded in his ears.

"May curses light upon you all!" said the woman, while rage and despair gleamed from her starting eyes. The cord of life snapped, and she lay silent, but with all the ferocity of her nature stamped upon her stiffening features.

"Thank Heaven she is dead!" said Albertus and the Baron in a breath.

"Thank Heaven, rather, that you are free," said Father Wilhelm with unspeakable affection, while he embraced the Baron, — their manly tears mingling upon each other's cheeks. The Baron could not speak, but listened awe-struck to the cathedral clock. What if, after all, the spell should survive, and he be dragged down with the witch! The sound rang in his brain and almost made his heart delay so as to keep time with its slow and solemn pulsations. Each stroke seemed

to come nearer and nearer till the air was full of the surging, thundering tone. EIGHT! The figure was still motionless in the corner; and the Baron still upright, in the full possession of his faculties. Then on his knees he poured forth such thanksgiving as his soul had never felt before.

"How great a mercy that she died before the stroke of the bell!" said Father Wilhelm.

"Ay," replied Albertus, "but she had lost her power, nevertheless; for the Almighty is not deaf to the prayer of the righteous, nor does he suffer a soul to be tried beyond what it can bear."

"How can we be grateful enough to you?" said the priest, warmly.

"I am fully repaid. I have waited in Vienna but for this. I go now to the East, the fountain of knowledge as of light. Farewell."

He was gone.

XI.

THE FRUITS OF VICTORY.

FATHER WILHELM and the Baron left the desolate house and gave orders to the city officials for burying the bodies. That of the son, which had been so long preserved from decay, soon became rigid and cold. Side by side they lay, the sorrowful ugliness of the one and the fiend-like malignity of the other alike unchanged by death.

At home the Baron's mother and sister, who were expecting to see his helpless form brought in for the night, when they beheld him erect and heard his cheerful voice rejoiced and wept by turns in an ecstasy of delight. Ceremony was forgotten in the general joy. Servants and retainers crowded around their patron and overwhelmed him with boisterous congratulations. He ordered a feast for them in the great hall, but excused himself from joining in the revel, and early withdrew to his chamber.

To Father Wilhelm was left the task of relating

the events of the day to the Baron's mother; although it was not likely that he represented all the sad trials to which her son had been subjected.

It was growing late, and the Baroness could not content herself with going to bed without one look at the face of her son. She tapped softly at his door, there was no answer; she pushed it gently open. A candle still burning before the crucifix, and an open volume, showed that his devotions had not been forgotten. It was all true; his recovery was no dream; he was calmly, sweetly sleeping,—his face wearing no longer the look of pain and horror, but almost angelic in its repose. To her who had witnessed his awful and mysterious seizures, what delight it brought now to watch the full but gentle heaving of his chest, the fresh color that already began to suffuse his cheeks, and the steady pulsation under the curls that negligently hung over his temples! Life became full of intense meaning, and her heart swelled with emotions she had never felt, not even when, twenty-five years before, she had taken him to her bosom with the pride

and rapture of a young mother. With a kiss on his forehead, as light as the fall of a rose-leaf, she left him to his slumbers.

Next day the Baron devoted himself to regaining the friendship of the family of the Lady Margaret, and renewing the engagement so unhappily broken off. It would have been a most unreasonable pride that would not be satisfied by the full and delicate apology, especially when offered by lips so persuasive as the Baron's. The whole temper of the man seemed to have been changed. His manner was as natural and frank as a child's, but quiet and dignified as became the head of a noble house. His sensations seemed to have the freshness of early youth; and the hearty sound of his voice, the honest touch of his hand, the clear, loving glance of his eyes, would have been irresistible even to a colder heart than the Lady Margaret's.

Nothing but an almost inconceivable heat in nature's ancient laboratory sufficed to change carbon into diamonds; and nothing but the most fiery trial could have turned the soul of the gay, volatile Baron into a jewel without speck or flaw,

such as it now appeared. Blessings followed his daily walks. The poor found their burdens lighter and their comforts more abundant. The Church owned him as her most faithful son. When, a few months later, he wedded the Lady Margaret, the public rejoicing was as tumultuous as upon the marriage of an Archduke of the Empire.

Father Wilhelm, though often offered preferment in the Church, kept his humble position, well pleased to share the intimate friendship of his noble patron.

All search for the Nyktalöps proved vain. Vienna had seen the last of him. With his instruments and the speculum he had gone eastward to devote himself, for the remainder of his days, to the pursuits which he thought alone worthy of a philosopher's zeal.

And thus it was that the soul of the Baron von Adelstein returned from exile.

Topankalon.

IN a country so old that none of the tedious historians have any account of it, and so remote that no modern explorer has discovered the ruins of its once splendid temples, there was a city, called by its inhabitants Topankalon, or the All-Beautiful, the capital of Symmelodia. It was built in a green valley at the foot of a mountain. Above the gardens of the city the mountain-sides were covered with groves of oak, orange, and laurel, whose verdure was softened by the spray of cascades; and far into the sky rose the mountain peak, crowned with pinnacles of eternal ice that gleamed like opals in the pale heaven. In that simple age all forms of life were held sacred, and the birds that lived in these air-hung groves swooped down without fear into the city streets, gladdening all hearts with melody.

The people were from an old and now forgotten race, highly endowed, sensitive to all forms of beauty, gentle in manners, but capable of the most intense feeling, and in higher moods rising to expressions of joy and devotion that our plodding and faithless age only smiles at. Their language was full of soft vowel sounds, and all their names of objects, as well as their familiar forms of speech, were so suggestive of allegory that one would imagine that an academy of poets must have contrived the whole. But the peculiarity that distinguished them from all other peoples was that they used no plain speech, but only musical utterances. Their language sparkled like liquid rubies in its flow, adjusting itself at once to musical tone and to all varieties of musical rhythm. The chat of the streets, the gossip of the drawing-room, the chaffering of the shops, no less than the imposing ceremonies of the temples, and the plays of the great amphitheatre, were in appropriate musical phrases; now in easy or wayward recitative, now glowing with lyrical fervor, and now swelling in triumphal chorals.

It was a serenely gay, a chastely brilliant city. The people had simple tastes; fruits from their gardens and fresh wines from the overhanging vineyards, cooled by the streams that ran from the ice-fields above, satisfied their appetites. They ate no flesh and offered no bloody sacrifices. All the arts that minister to the sense of beauty were assiduously cultivated. Teachers of vocal and dramatic expression had their followers in the groves. The houses were surrounded by fragrant flowers and shaded by noble trees. In the public places were groups of statuary, and the temples were hung with magnificent pictures. No unseemly sight, no jarring sound, was allowed. All the bells were accurately pitched upon tones of a perfect chord, so that their clangor only produced satisfying harmonies. In the chief market-place stood a gigantic clock, which hourly told the time by silvery undulations, while its long pendulum served as a metronome by which all movements were instinctively regulated; and it was seldom that either the infirmity of age or the precipitancy of youth broke the harmony of agreeing footfalls.

All that was needed to render Topankalon a paradise was immortality; the wings of the destroying angel at times darkened the bright valley, but in the simple faith of its people the final repose of death was only a blessing, not to be rashly sought, but to be calmly awaited.

One day there was a *fête*. The king, who was the twentieth of his dynasty, had determined to dedicate a statue to the memory of his mother. She was the most beautiful woman of her time, renowned for her skill in playing upon the cithara and for improvising songs in which the poem and the melody were twin-born, the life of each bound up in that of the other. The fair marble shape stood in what had been the queen's favorite grove, east of the royal palace and in the outskirts of the city. A grandly sonorous chime rang from all the bells, harmony answering harmony across the hushed air, until it seemed that the mountain had taken up the sounds, and the far-off ice-peak sent down a silver echo. The people poured out of their trellised dwellings, perfumed and garlanded, following in artless groups, chanting the national song with accompaniment of stringed

instruments and sweet bucolic pipes, until they filled all the grassy slopes of the grove. There, on a pedestal of bronze, stood the image of the queen they had revered, her face upturned in the rapture of poetry and song, her cithara upon her arm, and her beautiful fingers hovering over the strings. Then silence was proclaimed, and the king's household arose, and his daughter Chrysostoma, the princess apparent, who inherited her father's noble character and her grandmother's transcendent genius, apostrophized the form of beauty in strains that were long after remembered. Then, turning to the people, she led the way by imperceptible modulations until she brought all hearts to the beginning of their favorite hymn, and as she struck the well-known chords for prelude, countless voices joined in chorus. As she stood all radiant in her maidenly beauty, while her features shone with the kindling glow of inspiration, tears of joy trickled down upon the beards of the old, and thrills of admiration shot through the nerves of the young. A laurel wreath was placed upon the marble brow of the statue, and another upon that of the princess.

But suddenly there was a thrill of another sort, a tremor as of a coming earthquake. Sounds were heard that had never before jarred the charmed air of Topankalon. There was a confused *tantara* of trumpets, and a beating of barbaric drums, mingled with harsh shouts and cries, which to the cultured ears of this people seemed to have come from a troop of fiends let loose. Each looked at the other with ashy cheeks, and quaking with helpless fear. Weapons they had none. Some few swords, with chased silver hilts, were kept in cabinets as curiosities, relics of an almost forgotten age; but no living man knew, except by tradition, of the terrible arts of war. None of this peaceful people had ever seen human blood flow. Their country was peninsular in shape; and a chain of mountains in their rear, which they fondly believed were impassable, had defended them from the rest of the world. But the dreadful fact was forced upon them that the mountains had been pierced or scaled, and a barbarian invasion had come upon them.

It was even so. The King of Malaccordia,

from his capital of Acantia, had long looked upon the jealous mountains that barred his way, and he burned with impatience to see and to possess the wonderful country which he imagined lay behind the ice-capped range.

The Malaccordians were not without some knowledge and cultivation; but it was in the arts of offence and destruction that they excelled. They were a nomadic race, stalwart, active, fierce, and immitigable. Their speech was compounded mainly of harsh consonants and gutturals, and they not only had no musical sense, but they despised all melodious sounds as fit only for women and slaves. Their vast empire had grown by conquest and rapine, and was maintained by fear. Animal food, fiery stimulants, and heady narcotics heightened their natural ferocity. Their only literature was the record of wars and slaughter. They snuffed the scent of blood with the same delight that their transmontane neighbors felt in the odors of roses and violets.

Calling his vassals from far and near, this fierce king had successfully threaded the moun-

tain passes, with an escaped criminal from Symmelodia as a guide, and with his vast army now enveloped the doomed city. The festive grove was soon reached, and the terror-stricken people fell like sheep. Those who resisted were killed, and the rest were made slaves. Their mild and noble king, who was conspicuous by the splendor of his robes, was struck down at once. The son of the barbarian monarch took the Princess Chrysostoma a prisoner. A tall horseman, whose sheepskin garments and tallow-stained beard made him look like some filthy centaur, and whose exploits were vaunted by the gory heads that hung as trophies on either side of his saddle-bow, knocked off the garland from the head of the new statue, and broke the sculptured cithara with his spear.

By midday King Aphonos, of Malaccordia, was established in the palace of the slain monarch of Symmelodia, and his troops were quartered, like hawks among doves, upon the wretched people of Topankalon. As the sun passed the meridian, a glad musical chime sounded from all the bells. King Aphonos exclaimed in wrath, "What is

that foolish noise?" The traitor's native interpreted the question, and the chamberlain of the late king, who was distinguished by his courteous manners, came forward, and in a chant of swinging pentameter measure answered that in Topankalon it was the custom to have the bells give out harmonious sounds for the hours, and especially at noon.

"What does the mincing dotard say?" thundered out King Aphonos. "Does he dare SING to me?" And, reaching for a mace in the hands of a retainer, he dealt the chamberlain a blow that laid him dead on the spot. "As for those senseless bells, pitch them out into the streets. And what have we here?" he continued. "This wooden box with stretched catgut strings,—a toy to amuse silly girls, I suppose. Search the city, gather them all up, and make a bonfire of them!"

So the bells were tumbled out of their towers, and all the guitars, mandolins, citharas, flageolets, and horns were wrested from their owners, and burned in the market-place. As for any more singing, to say nothing of their own sorrows, the

people were so in dread of the fate that had befallen the unlucky chamberlain, that they refrained from further utterances. They were dumb in presence of their victors, as they did not know how to speak except in musical cadences. Even the songs of birds ceased; scared by the beating of gongs and tomtoms, and their mates picked off continually by cruel arrows, they left the orange-groves silent and flew far away. Music was dead.

The chisel of the sculptor and the brush of the painter were untouched. The younger of the people were driven to menial tasks, and the sole comfort of the elder was to escape for a time from their oppressors, and to mourn in solitary haunts for the lost glories of their city.

The poor Princess Chrysostoma was shut up in one of the rooms of the palace under the charge of a female camp-follower of the invading army. She had seen her father murdered, and had heard the sounds of distress that pervaded the city, and her situation as the slave of a savage youth filled her soul with the liveliest apprehensions. Aside from the instinctive detestation with which she

regarded the creature who was set to watch over her, she would have been unable to communicate except by signs; and she remained silent, her eyes fixed on the floor, refusing any commerce with the enemy. A few weeks later her captor, Prince Kallion, being sated with butchery, and finding the bloody struggles of animals and the contests of armed men in the amphitheatre no longer entertaining, left to his troop the congenial occupation of breaking noses off statues and ripping pictures with spears, and thought meanwhile he would look at his prize. He entered the room, waved out the attendant woman, and, advancing to the patiently drooping figure, put his rude hand under her chin as a command to look up. A fine glow of anger overspread her classic features. "How well her wrath becomes her!" he thought to himself. "This is a maiden of spirit." As conversation was impossible, and as she was hedged in by that viewless but impregnable defence which is given to the pure and the resolute, he retired, somewhat abashed, to muse upon the matter. He could not get the lovely, angry face out of his

mind, and was rallied merrily by his comrades for his doleful looks.

In the evening the young bloods had some sport. They had collected some of the wretched inhabitants of both sexes, and, having reserved a few musical instruments from the fire as curiosities, they compelled old men and maidens, boys and matrons, to sing and dance to the sound of pipe and tabor, spurring on the laggards with spear-points whenever the spirit of the dance declined. With peals of laughter at the one sex, and with shouts of derision at the other, they heard the sweet sounds and watched the manifold graces of motion, and thought it a jest worth crossing the mountains to behold. But Kallion was not amused; he was annoyed, in fact. He could only think of the lovely, angry face of his captive, and wonder how *her* voice would sound if he could only pacify her.

As days passed by the prince grew thin, absent-minded, and irritable. He finally obtained permission to be relieved from command of his troop for a time, that he might give himself up to his thoughts. The court physician, however, could

make nothing of his case. Sometimes the base thought arose that he would assert his right as her master, but then, when he remembered her serene loveliness, he thought how much better to win it, rather than to seize it; it had not occurred to him yet that he ought first to deserve it.

Love, like the butterfly, is only beautiful while it floats on free wings; when caught with rude hands, there is nothing in the grasp but a shrivelled body and a trace of golden dust.

He did not know the story of the dispersion of tongues at the Tower of Babel, but how he cursed the fate that interposed between him and his lovely captive, and made his bold and abrupt speech a jargon to her, and her musical phrases worse than meaningless to him!

At last he happened to think of the native of Topankalon who had guided his father's army through the mountains. He beat his own head in his rage. "What a dolt not to think of the fellow before!" He sought out the interpreter, and, making sure of his fidelity by much gold and more golden promises, prepared to pay a second visit to the princess.

In well-ordered robes, with carefully smoothed locks and trimmed beard, Prince Kallion approached the lady's apartment. Similar marks of deference on the part of enamored youth are not wholly obsolete in our day. As the door opened, he was far more timid and apprehensive of the issue than was his captive. It was with a pleased surprise that she heard in her own tongue the kindly words, and felt in his looks the more than kindly feeling that prompted them. But with a gracious firmness she controlled herself, as his words and manner became more pointed, and said: "It is not necessary for the master to sue while he can command; and the slave who knows she cannot deny feels the homage of her lord to be only a mockery. Love breathes only the air of liberty; neither the prisoner nor the jailer can know the feeling."

To his further protestations and promises of release she answered: "Kites do not pair with pigeons. My people are at your mercy; not a home has been sacred from the crimes of your hordes; and, great as are my own sorrows, I do not ask for deliverance one hour before my poor neighbors."

Her brave words and queenly bearing chilled his rising hopes, but still he listened to every tone, and stored in his memory the meaning of every beautiful word. How rough and uncouth sounded his own speech in comparison! He was discreet enough not to push matters too far, nor to commit himself upon what might become affairs of state, in the presence of a third person; he preferred to wait, as only a lover can wait, to learn her own delicious language, and in that medium pour out his soul to her. In a few weeks he was able to dispense with the interpreter, and was thenceforth daily at the feet of the princess, a delighted pupil.

The influence of this tuition upon his character was marked. His tall and well-proportioned figure was always conspicuous in court, but he had never seemed so majestic as now. His manners had lost the rude freedom of the camp, and, without exhibiting a trace of foppery, his speech was marked by a sweet and thoughtful gravity that charmed while it repelled. The sergeant of his troop declared, on penalty of being kicked by wild horses, that he could not imagine what had

come over Prince Kallion, — that he had not known him to curse a groom, nor toss off a draught of raw spirits, nor eat a slice of raw mutton, nor smile at a damsel, nor ask for the amusement of a dog-fight, he could not say for how long. Under the plea of illness the prince still kept aloof from military duty, and shunned the society of the boisterous warriors among whom he was once chief. The king much wondered, but he loved Kallion as the apple of his eye, and he sternly checked any allusion to his altered mien.

The world might go on as it would, for all that Prince Kallion cared. He had but one thought; he lived only for the hour that he daily spent with Chrysostoma. How the golden days sped! It did not take long to complete his education under such a teacher; and he had not merely acquired her language, — his moral perceptions were cleared, his nature was refined until it exhibited the true blending of gentleness with strength.

“As I live, my dear princess,” he declared, “your people shall be my people. You shall

not only be my wife, but my queen, and in the presence of the king my father. — All the dwellers in Topankalon shall be equal before the law; and the liberty and the grace that have been trodden down in blood shall be restored in ampler measure.

“As for your captivity,” he continued, “yonder door shall be opened at any time, but I know you would not take an ill-advised step that might cause my ruin, and would certainly defeat what is now the great object of my life. Be content to remain, a prisoner in name only, until I can prepare the mind of the king for the change. Do you trust me?”

None of his soldiers would have recognized their leader at that moment, had they seen his gentle face and beseeching eyes. As their glances met, a reciprocal trust was exchanged in a flash. A mere line of light may knit two souls forever. The princess, being unable, from the rush of feeling, to reply even in her ordinary musical speech, sang for him a song in which she revealed unconsciously the rare genius with which she was endowed, as well as the exquisite

tenderness of her nature. As the song ended, and the glow of enthusiasm overspread her lovely face, the soul of Kallion was on fire. He seized her hands in a rapturous fury, sprang up from his seat at her feet, raised his imploring arms, and —

The door opened! The chancellor of King Aphonos entered, — a man past middle age, with a sinister eye and a beard that seemed to writhe in snaky folds; after him came the dreaded official whose fixed look upon a prisoner was regarded as a prophecy of death. The chancellor motioned to the horror-struck prince, who, with a single despairing look at his mistress, turned and silently followed, the grim official bringing up the rear. The Princess Chrysostoma fainted.

The author of this mischief was Prince Lynkopolis, the savage king's second son. Instigated by a jealous and malignant temper he had watched the Prince Kallion, had tracked him to his daily retreat, had seen him at the feet of the captive princess, and had heard him (monstrous

thought!) attempting to chant in the language and after the manner of the slaves. But he knew his father's fondness for Kallion, and he dared not denounce him openly. However, at a royal reception he mentioned his fear that some of the bold Malaccordians were yielding to the blandishments of the women of the conquered race, and he demanded to know what should be done to an officer of high rank who should be found in dalliance with a female slave, and disgracing his lineage by the effeminacy of song? The king plucked out a hair from his sunburnt beard, and, drawing his keen dagger, cut the hair with a swift stroke, his foreboding eyes meanwhile glowing like coals. "By the beard of my father," he exclaimed, "such a wretch, if there be one, shall die!"

Lynkopolis bowed reverently and retired. The chancellor was his devoted adherent, and the arrest followed. When the king found what royal game was caught in the toils his soul was heavy. Kallion was his eldest, best-beloved son, always bravest in battle, and most discreet and respectful at home. How could he save his dar-

ling and keep his oath? Meanwhile Kallion was kept in close confinement, and the king meditated. Week succeeded week, and still the king was irresolute; his eyes became sunken, his visage haggard, his shoulders bowed, and his silence was an awful mute sorrow that no one dared break in upon.

The delay of the expected trial and sentence was beginning to alarm the plotting Lynkapis. Should the king spare Kallion, he, the denouncer, would be in a dangerous position. He wondered whether one further step in crime might not accomplish what he had intended more effectually. In fact, he determined to depose and murder his father, King Aphonos, and then be rid of his brother.

His first work was to sow disaffection in the army. Nothing is easier than to create a prejudice among the coarse, the ignorant, and the base-minded against those of superior knowledge and character, and especially against those distinguished by reserved or refined manners. And this is an observation not wholly confined to the ancient peninsula, nor to the period of our story.

The fierce warriors were soon made to believe that the army was becoming effeminate; that Kallion was a lost and shameless wretch; and that the king, grown luxurious by inaction, and perhaps won over by some of the enticing arts that had ensnared his son, had lost his old fire, and would never put himself at the head of his troops again. The chancellor aided indirectly; whenever he came near the muttering groups he looked knowing, twisted the lists of his snaky beard, and gave all the encouragement he dared to the incipient treason. The discontent spread; all things appeared to favor the revolt; still the plan was known to but few.

On a certain day the plot took a definite form. About fifty soldiers, all noted as desperate men, were admitted into the secret, together with half a dozen trusted officers. It was to be a short and bloody business. At a signal, during the hours when the king was usually either alone or in repose, Lynkapis was to cause the palace doors to be opened, when the confederates were to rush in and despatch the king and Kallion and their attendants. It should then be announced that

the king was dead, and that Lynkopolis reigned, and the city was to be given up to pillage anew.

Meanwhile the king's long meditation continued. At length he said: "I will see this maiden, and learn, if I can, how she has fatally charmed my son. Poor Kallion!"

So the princess was brought trembling into the king's presence. During her long tuition of the prince she had learned something of the speech of the invaders, and she answered all his questions with nice womanly tact, waiting for the favorable moment to intercede for her lover. The influence that had charmed the prince was not lost upon his father. Had the king been thirty years younger there is no knowing what might have happened; perhaps the events of our story would have been somewhat complicated. No longer regarding her with cloudy and baleful eyes, he asked her to sing some of her folk-songs. With sudden tears, she answered: "When I remember our former happy and peaceful life, and see now in thought the blasted groves and profaned temples, the slain parents and scattered households, how can I sing to please the author

of all this desolation, when he too has vowed to slay his own first-born and my heart's only remaining joy?" Moved by the inspiration of the moment, her answer was in unconscious rhythm, and her voice of natural melody made it as plaintive as the chant of the exiled Israelites by the rivers of Babylon. The king experienced a new sensation. He had been disobeyed, and by a woman, a slave. Had the same reply been hurled at him in prose, and by a man, he would have reached for his battle-axe. As it was, he told the princess to retire behind the tapestry while he sent for his chancellor.

Some vague ideas in new shapes and hues began to float into the king's mind. He contrasted the stern and cheerless aspect of his former capital with the elegance by which he was now surrounded. He wondered whether, after all, fighting was the chief end of man's creation. Was a lank horseman, clad in skins, bearing a bloody spear, a being really superior to the poets and artists of Topankalon? And among all the maidens he had ever known, who could for one moment be compared to the princess, either in

intellect or in the graces that charm mankind? Surely something better could be done than to set Kallion's noble head over the city gate, and doom this lovely being — little less than divine — to an eternity of sorrow. Not that these shadows of thoughts took definite form, or that he followed them out in words, but such was the unconscious drift of his mind.

The chancellor did not come. The king grew impatient, and the old fire began to kindle in his foreboding eyes. He stamped violently, and called for an attendant, while his nervous fingers toyed with the hilt of his dagger.

When the princess was commanded to retire, she passed between the folds of tapestry and stood by a window that looked into the courtyard. She opened a shutter for air. It was fortunate that she had keen senses and quickness of apprehension. When she heard the king's anger she mistook the cause, and in a moment, without ceremony or obeisance, with wild eyes and incoherent speech, she rushed into his presence. "Troops in four bands are in the courtyard! Prince Lynkapis is leader. Their watch-

word is "Death to the womanish king!" They come! O king, save yourself! Call your guards, and let me release Kallion before they kill him, and he will be your defence!"

This sudden appeal instantly drove away the unworthy wrath of the king, and the present danger cooled him into a granite column. He drew his sword, and said proudly, "King Aphonos can die, but he cannot suffer fear."

An attendant, who had heard the king stamping, was hastily sent for the guards. Even as they came in, there was a dull sound of approaching footsteps without. The king took off his signet-ring, and, giving it to the princess, directed her to the room in which Kallion was confined. She flew like the wind along the corridors, and, showing the royal signet to his jailer, obtained the Prince's release.

The four bands had found an easy entrance from the court-yard into the palace. Two opposite doors into the presence chamber were burst violently open, and the followers of Lynkapis, who were the fiercest of all the fierce brigands of the army, came in with terrible groups of spears.

They rushed towards the king, who parried their thrusts with his long sword, while his few followers threw themselves bravely before him, and soon fell dead or wounded in the unequal fight.

If Kallion would come!

He did not come a second too soon. The king had been disarmed, and a sword was swinging in a fiery arch over his head, when Kallion, with a small number of hastily gathered followers came to the rescue. The descending blade was turned aside, and its owner pierced through. There was no word spoken; only a shock, a grapple, a struggle as of two opposing thunder-storms, an overthrow, and all was still. Kallion stood with eyes of triumph, with thin and eager nostrils and firm-set lips, over the prostrate form of Lynkopolis. The false chancellor was detected crouching among the prisoners, and bound. The conspirators were killed or disarmed.

When all was over, the princess embraced her royal lover in transports, and then silently knelt at the king's feet. King Aphonos, having gently raised her up, fell, weeping, upon the shoulder of Kallion, saying, "My son and my saviour! You

were to have been the victim of your brother's treacherous arts. Now pronounce his fate! For he shall die, and by unheard-of tortures."

"My gracious king and father," said the youth, "I crave no vengeance. So that you are preserved from further danger, and my own life and liberty are secured, I ask for nothing more. Let the base son, who would slay both father and brother in his way to the throne, be left to the torments of his own conscience. Then let him return to Malaccordia."

"It shall be as you have spoken," said the king. "Lynkopolis and the chancellor shall set out alone to our old kingdom."

Whether they accomplished their perilous journey, or whether they perished miserably among the cold and barren mountains, was never known. Their adherents were delivered to the officers of justice, and, loaded with manacles, were made to toil on the public roads.

The news of this great event quickly spread. Throngs of people of all classes now filled the palace. Still the guards stood leaning on their spears. Still the beautiful Chrysostoma, pale

with excitement, leaned upon the supports of the throne. Still, on the other hand, the noble Kallion clung to his father, while he cast glances of unutterable love to his mistress. No one seemed ready to break the silence that brooded over such a crime, so miraculously frustrated.

The king's breast heaved with strong emotion, and the knotted veins on his temples bore witness to his mental throes. Looking first on one side, and then on the other, he exclaimed, in tones that quivered with feeling: "My children, it is vain to struggle against fate. I owe my life to the son whose blood I had sworn to spill, and to the captive maiden whose distress moved me no more than the bleatings of a kid. The arms of my soldiers have conquered your beautiful city, dear princess, but you and your people have conquered us. I had intended to found a new kingdom on the ruins of your state, but your arts and your culture cannot be reached by weapons; they can only perish with your extermination. Your statues, temples, pictures, your graceful manners, and your beautiful daily life, are only a reproach to us. We are ignorant,

fierce, and unlovely. Let us be taught by you. And on your part, natives of Topankalon, avail yourselves of our courage and strength. Your culture was no defence against a foe.

"You, my son, shall succeed me. I am not fit to rule such a people as Topankalon is yet to bear. Your strong soul will not forget its heritage of valor and endurance, whatever else you may acquire when joined to this beautiful princess. To her, the rightful ruler of the city, I confide an equal share with you in its government. Thus will you hold an even balance of justice and of benignant favor between the two peoples. Let your union be auspicious, and may it be followed by the blending of both races in one. Then shall be seen the reign of music without loss of manliness; learning shall be linked with energy, culture with the power of defence, and repose with vigilance. So shall the new realm be as renowned for power as it has been illustrious in art. Your hand, my daughter, and yours, my son."

Placing their hands together, he rose and blessed them. Then, leaving the throne, he

commanded the prince and princess to ascend and seat themselves.

The people, much wondering, raised a shout. Seeing that the natives of the city were more silent than his own soldiers, the king exclaimed: "Fear not, O people of Topankalon, to raise your voices in song. Chant, chant, I say, the anthem your fathers loved to hear!"

So with acclamations and with divine chorals the new reign was inaugurated.

The example of the prince and princess was widely followed. Harmony came at once, and in a few years the two peoples became one. The statues and pictures were restored, the bells once more counted the hours in music, and at evening, under trellises and in gardens, could be heard the sweet voices of singers and the cunning notes of instruments. Something of the sternness of the warrior race remained and gave stability to the new society. At court and in camp, in the market and on the street, musical recitative fell into complete disuse, supplanted by the manlier and more practical utterances of prose. But forever after the old blood of their artistic ancestors

at times asserted itself; and on festive occasions, in religious rites, in the perpetual youth of love, and amid the calm delights of home, the thoughts and emotions of the hour found their natural expression in fitting music.

So without statute or royal decree the two elements combined, and supplemented each other by an instinctive affinity. Even the resulting language, which was naturally composite, adapted itself to the ends required; and with no Della Cruscan academy to lay down laws, the vocabulary was adjusted either to prosaic or poetical needs.

In that happy country, and among that sensible and finely cultured people, the affairs of everyday life were never disguised under emblematic phrases, nor decked with an unnatural ornate diction; nor did any author venture to obtrude upon such a critical public compositions inherently prosy, decked in poetic garb and cast in poetic measure.

But Topankalon and its people have vanished from the earth.

Herr Regenbogen's Concert.

WHAT music could have been before Guido Aretinus perfected notation, and before the laws of harmony had been established, it is difficult to imagine. To describe a sound or a concord of sounds is as hard as to give an idea by types of the flavor of a truffle, or of the odor of violets. We know that voices have always had sweet tones, and that very simple forms of instruments, such as flutes, trumpets, and hautboys, could be played upon melodiously without any knowledge of musical laws; but consider what would happen if a dozen different people, all well intentioned, but without plan or agreement, should sing, blow through musical tubes, and strike vibrating strings at once! It is difficult to see how even Solomon's Temple was saved from hubbub, since we know, from the antiquities of contemporary cities, that they had in Jerusa-

lem nearly all the fearful brass instruments, including trombones. Perhaps by the concurrence of some chance blasts, as by a lucky shake of the kaleidoscope, a combination of dissonance might have been effected that would rival in sublime ugliness an orchestral climax of Wagner. (It must be so; no one could achieve such cacophony as in some parts of "Lohengrin," for instance, from any fixed purpose. The notes *were* tossed into the air like dice, and came down upon the staves where they would.)

Anciently instrumental music was employed chiefly as an accompaniment to the voice, or else in short interludes between the recitations of poetry; and it is not probable that any intricate movements were attempted.

That all poetry in early times was repeated with a musical cadence, *intoned*, and with accompanying chords, there is no doubt. One cannot read a line of Horace, or of that splendid old "native," Catullus (whose measures sound as though barefooted youths and maidens were keeping time under beech-trees), without feeling the strong musical lilt. We know that this musical

sense was cultivated in a high degree by public speakers. An accomplished Roman orator, when he addressed the citizens, had a slave placed near him behind a screen, with a pipe to give him the pitch on which to deliver certain passages in his oration.

The tendency to fall into melodic phrase in repeating ceremonial sentences is seen in the origin and growth of chants. The modern priest goes through the appointed service at the altar with a few simple notes, handed down from antiquity, very little if at all changed from the musical cadences employed by the priests of the older religion of Rome in their hymns to the fabled gods. Street cries always grow into musical sentences, — not always to the gain of business; so do the varied calls of farmers, drovers, and milkmaids to their fourfooted charges. And what is the peroration of a camp-meeting sermon, with all its energy and pathos, but a performance of a rather unmelodious recitative *fortissimo*, with inevitable cadences and an approving chorus of Amens?

We once heard a preacher of gentle manners and scholarly tastes begin a sermon like this:—



It is a characteristic of the higher orders | of cre | ation,
To pay great attention to the habits | of the | lower.

His fine unwavering baritone voice led to an instant comparison of pitch with the organ, and the temptation to "switch him off the key" by an occasional modulation and to close his final period with proper harmonies was very strong, but it was resisted.

The effect of many parts moving together, each with its own melody, and each in turn giving support and beauty to the other, is always bewildering to the uninstructed mind. A forest at midnight, a network of alleys and "places" χ in an old-fashioned city, the motions of fireflies over a meadow on a summer evening, the gyrations of water-beetles on the black surface of a pool, the performance of a "Cornwallis" by a rustic militia company, — all have their various perplexities; but nothing puts the untutored faculties into such a maze as the attempt to follow an elaborate passage for orchestra, or a Bach fugue in four parts on the great organ. Indeed, to

those who are used only to the simple melody of a single voice or instrument even our friend the organ-grinder brings a miracle of strange effects in his mysterious cabinet. If *Lyra* with its half-dozen tinkling notes has a place in the celestial maps, what would not the ancients have done for this marvellous machine? In the very brightest part of the heavens there would have been located the constellation of the Hand-Organ, steeple-hatted Savoyard and all, and astronomers would have been peering at the double stars in the crank-handle, or attempting to resolve the nebula that formed the wart on the grinder's Roman nose.

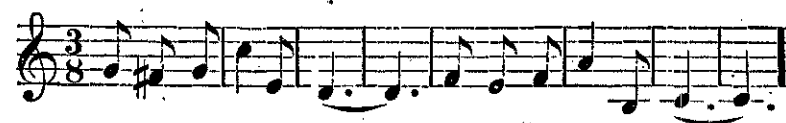
When jingle constitutes the principal charm of music, and a melody is addressed to alternate heel and toe, the memory often follows its meaningless dance without effort. Indeed, the effort is required, to be rid of the iteration.

So, in a mood of revery, says Tennyson, —

“An echo from a measured strain
Beat time to nothing in the head,
From some odd corner of the brain.
It haunted me the morning long,
With weary sameness in the rhymes,

The phantom of a silent song
That came and went a thousand times.”

Such music once, rendered attractive by perfect instrumentation, became as universal as the air in our city. In every quiet nook, where the sounds of traffic were hushed by distance, the same magical tones floated. Themes, of themselves commonplace, by exquisite treatment had become almost beautiful; if, indeed, perfection in execution *could* raise reminiscences or platitudes into forms of life. Do what we would, the melody followed every footstep, haunted every thought. We could not escape it. On the common, the street, in parlor and library, the same sentimental strain —



fluttered about us like an officious sprite, and cut loose from their moorings the barges on which we were wont to float out upon the sea of revery, leaving us only the sing-song of its own refrain.

When, by cultivation, the ear learns to sepa-

rate an orchestral theme from its attendant harmonies, and follow the idea of the composer as it is taken up by section after section of the performers, the various instruments seem to be parts of an army whose movements, though diverse, are yet in obedience to one comprehensive mind that surveys the whole field, and will bring order and unity out of seeming confusion. But even to those who grasp the composer's thought and appreciate the full beauty that Beethoven or Mozart have created, what shadowy, impalpable forms arise at the summons of their wondrous strains! Can the amateur *describe* his emotions when the last tones of the master-piece of his favorite composer are sinking into his heart, while his eye brims with tenderness or exultation? Can he say what subtle links connect music with the world about us, so that, as the stream of melody flows on, green meadows seem to slope to its banks, majestic trees wave over it, mountains with leaping cascades stand on either hand, and the immensity of ocean heaves on the line of the horizon?

But there are many strains which charm the

untutored multitude as well as the accomplished few, and yet are utterly intangible. We feel their influence, as of the wind in gentle dalliance or in resistless tempest; and, though moved like the tree-tops, we cannot detain or analyze the viewless force that sweeps over us. Such music is instinct with life, "vital in every part"; but you cannot tell where the subtle essence lurks. You cannot anatomize the structure, and say where resides the animating soul which gives character and expression to the whole. It is an auroral display, where the crimson flush of the sky is a canvas on which ever-shifting forms of beauty, golden, steel-gray, sparry-white, emerald, and purple,—

"Hues of the silken sheeny woof
Momently shot into each other,"—

blend in ceaseless embrace, only to reappear more gloriously.

Does music, then, convey ideas and excite emotions above and beyond the power of speech? If so, may it not aptly symbolize those impressions which the spirit receives, without knowing how, in this life, and which may be supposed to

bear an intimate relation to the mode of communication in another sphere of existence? Often the musing artist sees forms of more than mortal beauty hovering over his easel, yet vanishing at a breath. He would catch and embody the vision, but it fades into nebulous indistinctness, and the memory is all that is left him. Will he not some brighter day reproduce it? So, too, the poet feels his brain throbbing with greater thoughts than he can set to the music of his verse; but dull characters could never express all that his imagination has conceived. Will he not find utterance hereafter?

Perhaps the *forms* into which thought is crystallized—its external crust of words—will perish with the organs that produce them; but the interior life will survive, and *may* be appreciated by the finer powers of the spirit, without the aid of its original medium. It becomes, then, pleasant to anticipate that music, one of the universal media of thought and feeling, will, in some form, accompany us through our immortality. And as the man finds beauty and sublimity in the verses which he read listlessly while a school-boy, so

with our enlarged faculties we may hereafter perceive a meaning and force in music far beyond our present apprehensions. Therefore it is, whenever music transcends our experience as an interpreter of our ideas or emotions, or suggests images other than of the actual world, that our spirits prophetically lean forward, and we fancy that we catch sounds from the celestial sphere. Who could hear the sublime *andante* movement from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony without feeling his soul wafted on the serene airs and fed with the beauty and fragrance of the better land?

Such are some of the speculations with which I was occupied while quietly waiting for the commencement of Herr Regenbogen's concert.* Of course, all the world has heard of Herr Regenbogen. The journalists, who certainly ought to know, tell us that he is profoundly skilled in music, both as a science and as an art. With a liberal eclecticism he combines in his programmes the most celebrated compositions of all the existing schools. Nothing is too minute for

* In German, "Regenbogen" signifies rainbow.

his notice, nothing too profound for the grasp of his genius. The plaintive melodies of the Celts, the brilliant, graceful, impassioned music of Italy, and the grand, intellectual, yet soulful creations of Germany, that sweep over every chord wherewith we are strung, all find in him their common and fitting interpreter. And whether one would be swayed by the liquid movement of the waltz, or would hear the *Marseillaise* till his blood tingles to his fingers' ends; whether he would listen to the music of love,—the alpha and omega of the Italian opera,—or would hear a symphony by Beethoven, all he may enjoy to his heart's overflowing at the concerts of Herr Regenbogen. So said the editors with one accord, from those of the great capital of letters and art, down to the obscurest man of ink who had been blest by the receipt of Herr Regenbogen's compliments with a card of admission.

Some days previous, placards with letters of Patagonian stature, decked with all the colors as yet compounded in ink, and emblazoned with attractive symbolic devices, had announced with

portentous exclamation points that Herr Regenbogen was COMING! The public, stimulated before to the highest point by the wonderful accounts that preceded the great master, waited with eager expectation for his arrival. Anecdotes of his boyhood, of his youthful struggles, and of the brilliant successes of his manhood, appeared in all the newspapers. It was wonderful to see how familiar the press were with the minutest details of his history. In due time he came, and straightway a new set of "posters," with yet larger and more brilliant characters, published the fact in the crowded streets, and announced the first afternoon concert in Beethoven Hall. The programme was very attractive. With Herr Regenbogen's well-known taste and tact, how could it be otherwise? I obtained a ticket by crowding my way for near half an hour towards the office window, and with the prize in hand reached the open street again, exhausted, breathless, and with sad detriment to my gravely respectable dress. My hat might be cylindrical no more, my linen crumpled and limp, and my boots might bear contributions of mud from scores of

huddled feet, but I had my ticket; I should hear Herr Regenbogen's orchestra, and I was more than content. And now, after a day's delightful anticipation, I had been in my place half an hour, ruminating, as the reader is aware, upon the mystery that is bound up in this divine art.

The usual difficulty was experienced in obtaining seats by those whose stately figures or rich costumes showed to advantage in sweeping along the aisles. There was the usual fidgeting and giggling of misses in early teens; the usual industrious fanning by ladies of all ages, though the hall was delightfully cool from perfect ventilation; the usual crinkling of glazed programmes; the usual fitful volleys of impatience, that sounded like the first heavy drops of a summer shower on the roof of an old farm-house by night; the usual noises escaping from the orchestral room, where violins wailed in tuning, *'celli* and *contra-bassi* mingled their deep vibrations with the carolling of flutes and the reedy tones of the oboë, and over all the ponderous ophicleide rang. These indispensable preliminaries being finished, the performers entered and took their places.

Last of all came Herr Regenbogen, and, having bowed gravely, he stepped upon the conductor's platform, unmoved by the shouts of welcome, the waving of perfumed handkerchiefs, and the tribute of flowers that fell at his feet. He did not pick up the bouquets. His air seemed to say, "Wait till I earn your applause; when the flowers are mine by right of benefit conferred, I will enjoy their fragrance and beauty." This unusual dignity or stoicism caused me to regard him with closer attention. Not that I had occasion to use a lorgnette; my vision had been sharpened in boyhood when I selected my cow from among the scattered herd grazing on the far hillside, or when (God forgive me!) I shot the bright-eyed squirrel as he barely raised his head over a fork in a lofty tree. His manner was plain and unpretending. The necessary white gloves and waistcoat were not wanting; but there was no frippery of watch-seals, diamond pins, or crosses upon his modest dress. His face was a study. The temples, from which the hair lay smoothly back, like those of most poets and artists, swelled to a full and beautiful outline. The mouth was

exquisitely mobile, now compressed with the resolute look of command, now just perceptibly smiling, and now tremulous with a sensibility which the eye, faithful as it may be to the soul within, could never alone express. But in his gray eyes, overhung by projecting brows and shaded by lashes of almost feminine length and softness, there dwelt a strange fascination. His glance seemed like the keen gaze of a spirit which pierces all things while its own essence is impenetrable. The heart of mystery seemed familiar ground to him. I felt assured that the man was found who could unfold what is most recondite in music, and demonstrate the relation between its various moods and the changeful emotions of the soul. Under such a leader, with a rigidly disciplined orchestra, in which every performer was himself a master, I knew I should hear

"Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek";

or loftier strains, which would

"Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes."

How attentively, reverently, the musicians awaited the signal! Not a movement throughout the serried line. From the leading violin down to the men of drums and cymbals, they stood like automata. The white wand was raised and swept evenly like a pendulum; the symphony began. I had never heard it before. If it had been familiar, my attention might have been given to critical observations; I might have endeavored to notice the treatment of the principal *motifs* by the composer, and the style of execution by the performers. Happily it was new, and I was content to listen with the unquestioning delight of a child, and to surrender myself wholly to its influences. The name, the Italian Symphony, gave me an idea of its character; but even without that key it would not have been difficult to guess the design of the composer. It had few salient melodies like those of Mozart and Rossini; its beauty was the result of complex forces. You followed no single instrument; you found no returning strain to cling to. But the whole had an exquisite symmetry which the omission of the most subordinate part would

have seriously marred. A thought from the "Fable for Critics," which was recalled by this wonderful unity, shows the analogy between poetry and music in this respect.

"Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,
The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue."

Under the irresistible spell of the music I was soon in Italy, among the scenes it so vividly reproduced. Imagination outstripped the diligence and the railway train. I saw (with Goethe's *Mignon*) the mountain and its airy path, over which the mule seeks his way through the mist; but I was exempt from the toilsome transit. Whatever the music suggested, or memory recalled, I saw without the fatiguing conditions that are imposed upon the tourist. I was borne onward, as upon a gently undulating current. My shallop swept under the shadow of marble palaces, and its silken sail was distended with perfumed airs from the shore. Monuments of

Grecian genius and of Roman art, partly crumbling or prone, crowned the heights or gleamed among clumps of trees in vales. All that the traveller and artist have brought over the Atlantic — St. Peter's, the Coliseum, baths and temples numberless, picturesque bandits, cowed and tonsured monks, and the multitudinous confusion of the Carnival — crowded in airy procession before me.

But while in imagination under the glorious sky of Italy, rapt in the thoughts which its past magnificence inspired, I was conscious of an almost startling sensation at every modulation into a new key. The key in which music is written is what the background is to a painting; upon its tone, sombre or mellow, depends all the harmony of coloring and much of the expression of the prominent figures. It is the warp through which the silver thread of melody is woven. It is the language — Italian, English, or French — that by its liquid or strong or impassioned character moulds the poet's conceptions. I am affected in an unusual degree by the changes of key which a great composer knows how to intro-

duce. Sometimes after a fierce tumult of sounds, as in representing a battle or elemental strife, the change brings a relief like entering a cool grotto out of the noontide glare, or like breathing the dewy air of evening after the toil and dust of a long summer's day. When the modulation is gradually effected, it brings a gentle sensation of pleasure without causing any mental exertion. It is but the swinging of the door on golden hinges, which, when opened, discloses new delights beyond. But often the abrupt change brings a sudden and thrilling emotion, as when

" on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder."

Herr Regenbogen seemed to have reached perfection in this respect. The harmonies which his orchestra gave were absolute, and not mere approximations. And when a theme had produced its effect in one key, and was to be repeated with a new shade of coloring, the transition was marked by an easy simplicity which is the result of the highest art. The less sympathetic listener

might doubt whether there had been any change at all. My nerves could not but acknowledge this exquisite delicacy and precision of intonation; every fibre was tremulous while the chromatic intervals were firmly yet airily touched in the modulation. There was nothing of the jolt that attends the "switching off" a car on the railway. Either the bland tones imperceptibly shifted into other combinations, or suddenly arranged themselves on a new front with the startling effect of an instantaneous military manœuvre. In one case it was a vaguely indolent pleasure, lulling the senses in elysium; in the other, a bold rapture that led captive the soul.

A new phenomenon was now apparent under the sway of Herr Regenbogen's marvellous baton. I had formerly read of Gardiner's ingenious theory of the correspondence between the seven prismatic colors and the seven tones of the scale, but it rested in a dusty crypt, covered with an accumulation of later deposits. Now by some occult association of ideas it came vividly to mind. I could not remember the particular color which was assigned to any one tone; nor, indeed,

could I have told the letter to which any passing tone was assigned. But, by a not unnatural analogy, the succession of keys that left so deep an impression upon my mind seemed to diffuse in turn their peculiar hues as well as their influences through the air. Every pulse of sound that knocked at the ear appealed to the sight as well. For the air that trembled with those magical tones seemed to have a supernatural subtlety, and, when cheerful or soothing music prevailed, was tinted with azure, amethyst, amber, or rose-color; or it shifted imperceptibly from one to another, like the colors of the opal when turned in the sun, or as the light breaks from the glossy plumage of the pigeon's neck. When passion inspired the strain, deeper colors pervaded, — scarlet, crimson, purple, or gold-brown. Every emotion, even, seemed to have its symbolic hue; and as love and jealousy, repose and fear, hope and despair alternated, the sympathetic ether quivered with a new and often startling change.

Herr Regenbogen seemed to be absorbed in the development of these modulations, listening with

evident solicitude to be sure that the orchestra maintained the relation of tones which had such power over the primal elements of matter. And when at the sweep of his wand the soft azure dissolved into emerald, or blazed with the color of the oriole's breast, his anxious eye brightened, and his face wore a proud look of triumph.

But with all this perfection of harmony melody was not neglected. The themes were given by the leading instruments with the utmost finish in details without in any way detracting from the breadth of design. The tones had a clearness and purity and a soulful expression like that which characterizes the performances of the perfect singer.

Merely imitative music Herr Regenbogen is understood to esteem lightly. He would not attempt, except in burlesque, to portray, as Haydn has done, the tiger's leap, the trampling of buffaloes, the cooing of doves, or the surging of leviathan's tail. But in listening to his orchestra, all the varied sights and sounds of nature arose spontaneously to the mind. Trees with grateful coolness lent their shadows, and their

leaves whispered to each other as the music softly rose. Birds swinging on pensile boughs, happy in the flood of melody that undulated through the air, broke into song as their rightful part in Nature's grand orchestra, of which Herr Regenbogen's was only a section. The breezes held their way silently; only, as the music grew loud, a sound as of the wind wrestling with the old oaks on some November's night shook the heart with a momentary shudder, and then died away with a sigh. Little brooks tumbled down the hillsides, or tinkled into moss-rimmed basins in meadows. Larger streams swept on in placid beauty, or whitened and rushed in yeasty confusion over rocky slopes. The ocean, too, gave an endless, low murmur, or, vexed by the winds, roared with all its angry waves upon the rugged coast.

With such associations the first part of the concert closed. One by one the louder instruments stopped, and the last note seemed to swoon away; you could not say when its breathing ceased. It was a sensation worth a year's life. I hardly knew whether I was still in the land of

realities, while the pearly pink atmosphere overhung the dense throng. I could not turn from my revery and pass the intermission in glancing along the glittering ranks of the balconies, or in scrutinizing my immediate neighbors. In my brain the symphony was repeated, and I was but too happy a listener.

The second part of the concert, according to the programme, was to consist of a song, a piano-forte solo, and a concert overture,—a new work by Herr Regenbogen himself. I awaited the commencement of the overture with curiosity not altogether free from apprehension; for so complete had been his success as an interpreter of the grand conceptions of others, that I feared he would be unable to maintain the interest he had aroused. A perfect conductor is not necessarily a composer, any more than a great actor is a poet or rhetorician. I knew that if there were any new orchestral effects possible we should have them. The harmonies would undoubtedly be at once massive and satisfying, and good taste would temper the whole; but the freshness of originality might, after all, be wanting. I did not know Herr Regenbogen.

After a brief prelude the concert overture began; before a dozen measures were performed my apprehensions were at an end. The structure of every phrase showed the master; and the melody, salient, clearly defined, and bearing a meaning beyond words, affected me inexpressibly. As the painter who aims to portray the human form in various attitudes, and under the influence of different emotions, patiently studies anatomy, and reproduces on his canvas the minutest effect of muscular action in the living model; so, it seemed to me, Herr Regenbogen had studied the anatomy of the soul, until he knew how to awaken every sensation of which it is capable. Whatever effects he had observed in performing the works of the great masters, these he had used as studies in the treatment of the subject. With him the representation of the melting strain of love, the eager joy of hope, the fierce shout of rage, and the sullen tone of despair, was not an accidental lucky hit; nor were his symbols mere conventionalisms; so exquisite was their adaptation, there was no mistaking the composer's drift; you

rushed on with the music, and felt every emotion it was designed to portray. What wonderful force now attended each modulation, while, with this music piercing to the innermost soul, the atmosphere displayed its chromatic changes!

The effect of constant attention had now become almost painful. I seemed to lose individuality and power of resistance. My whole being throbbed with the rhythm of the orchestra; and as the "medium" or mesmeric subject is conscious of the presence of another soul in her own, so the very citadel of life seemed possessed by the genius of music, until I was helpless alike in my joy and in my dissolving tears. I was like a cloud driven by the wind, dyed by the sun's chemistry, and shivered by lightning.

For very relief from this overmastering influence, though it was as fascinating as opium, I determined to break away and to watch the effect of the music and the changeful light upon others.

A ruddy face near me while a flood of crimson poured down might have served Falstaff for a

flambeau; anon it was overspread with a ghastly green such as old Roger Chillingworth wore in his later, evil days. His whiskers, that doubtless looked respectably brown while on his morning promenade, now bore the undecided hue that generally attends the efforts of the chemist to imitate nature. What an ordeal for shams was this *zauberlicht*! There was a maiden, a model of the reigning mode in dress and adornments, doubtless the beloved of some dry-goods clerk; her features arch, her eyes dancing with an exuberance of spirits. What a fascinating creature she seemed while the soft rose-tint prevailed! But just then an amber radiance was diffused, and her cheek, so delicately shaded before, told of cosmetics and artistic touches; her teeth, before pearls, were palpably just from the furnace of the dentist.

"There comes dear old Mr. Fiftysix," said her younger and more rustic companion. "See his face rippling into smiles, like a film of cream breathed on by the dairymaid." "Yes," rejoined the more experienced damsel, "and look, too, at his comical head. One can see now each

separate simple of which his hair-dye is compounded." "Better make a note of them in time," said a voice that suggested an excess of free acid. I looked at the lemon-colored portal from which this ill-natured warning came, and remembered the face; it was one I had formerly admired; now it gave me an inward start. For, as I looked, green was the reigning color; and the eyes that had seemed so tenderly blue in the crystal light were now dull like sea-water, or, at times, were lighted up with a sinister, feline lustre. Her hair, which curled so coquettishly, was now almost instinct with life in its crisp radiation. I even fancied each coil a serpent and herself the ancient Medusa. And if this be envy, I thought, how fortunate is it, that in the clear light which falls upon earth a veil is thrown over much that would otherwise render us miserable!

A young woman, not many seats removed, seemed to be giving her whole soul to the music. Sometimes she nodded or whispered a brief word in answer to her companion, but still she was a loyal subject of Herr Regen-

bogen. The companion seemed to be at the cross-roads; he looked at her doubtfully, for her face was not beautiful, and she used no coquettish arts of fascination. He evidently construed her undivided and eager attention to the orchestra as in some measure a slight to himself. With a less sympathetic organization, he could not appreciate that perfection in music which so enchained her. Soon there came a glorious strain, lofty and pure as the sky, and diffusing a mild, blue radiance. Nothing of enchantment ever equalled the effect of that azure light upon the plain features of the maiden. In her eyes the warmth of affection enhanced and softened the gleam of intellect, and a halo encircled her head like that which painters give to the Virgin Mother. I hoped the hesitating admirer would see her transfiguration; and he did. Having seen the beauty of her soul, he can never forget it.

A young man with silken mustaches and delicate features, his hands cased in spotless gloves, sat beside a girl who might, in Paris, have been taken for a *grisette*. Evident dis-

parity in rank, as the world has settled it, raised a wall between them. True manliness might level it, but, alas, if he does pass over, how likely is it that it will be by stealthily climbing like a thief! While he whispered she cast her eyes upon her pretty foot that kept unconscious time to a delicious air. Under the influence of the music, which now was like *Vedrai Carino* in its tender simplicity, listening to the honeyed words which were breathed in her ear, the maiden was lulled into a dream of love. I almost thought that Herr Regenbogen had observed the net spread for her, for the key changed with a stunning violence. Crimson flushed the face of the suitor, telling of nightly debauchery, and from his eye glared a lurid flame. Could the simple girl have looked up the spell would have been broken. But she did not.

The unequalled excellence of this music, accompanied by the unearthly lights that glowed or trembled or danced through the air, appeared to me to evince such supernatural power, that I wondered at the comparative indifference which

the audience manifested. It is true they were enthusiastic in their admiration, and applauded to the echo every marked passage; but it was merely such enthusiasm as I had witnessed when Jenny Lind sang; it was the tribute which genius in its higher manifestations always obtains. But this unheard-of art, which compassed all height and depth, and mastered the very soul of the listener, and to which the elements of the material world seemed to be in perfect obedience, appeared to me to be but imperfectly appreciated. It was doubtless owing to the fact that Herr Regenbogen had wisely brought the audience by easy and almost insensible degrees from their delight in merely mechanical effects up to the influence of the profoundest ideas that lie in the reach of the human faculties. Accordingly, whilst these last and almost miraculous results were produced, though the attention of all was riveted, yet it was not a painful or enforced silence; every one seemed at ease, and the occasional whisper, the sidelong glance, the adjustment of ornaments, the relief-giving change of position, all were part of the usual experience

of concert-goers. A few enthusiastic people seemed to me to sympathize with my own highly wrought feelings; and it relieved me to find myself justified by their example, so that I might be sure I was neither dreaming nor pursued by the thick-coming fancies of insanity.

Among the faces thus lighted up was that of a lady dressed in black, sitting under the balcony with a bright boy of eight or ten years by her side. Poverty was not wholly concealed by her mourning garb, nor by the neatness which marked her own and her boy's appearance. Under the oppressive splendor her eyes were downcast, and her face pale. The boy looked up inquiringly, putting his little hand in hers. Again the key changed, and the hall was filled with an indescribable rosy and golden light, such as the west casts on mountain and cloud when the sun pauses on the horizon. A heavenly melody floated out upon the air, while every rare and delicate device of instrumentation was employed to buoy it up and heighten its beauty. Even the immortal trio in *Don Giovanni* never affected me so deeply. The widow's soft eyes

were suffused with tears, and their upward glances seemed "commercing with the skies." Was not the spirit of the husband near to enjoy with her that wondrous music, and to know with what tender affection she cherished his memory?

My attention was soon recalled to the orchestra, for I heard the prelude to a new movement. A few violins, a violoncello, horn, flute, bassoon, and harp were detailed as an advance corps, leaving the main army to follow.

I do not know the name of a single chord; and as for modulations I have not the least idea of the laws which govern them. Therefore I cannot tell what charm Herr Regenbogen had given to this final movement; but it was beyond my highest conception. Airs danced to each other in ceaseless play, sparkling like gold-fishes. The low tone that closed some delicate strain supported on its firm base a troop of melodies that came leaping and carolling after it, each of which in turn rested as the foundation for a new display. Then came a period of repose. The exuberance of spirits that had animated the prin-

cipal instruments subsided, and all blended into a choral strain so full and perfect in its harmony that another element could not be imagined. Over this stream of music,

"Deep, majestic, smooth and strong,"

I heard the silvery vibrations of a harp as it was touched by a master hand; and I strove to catch the countenance of the player who could create such sounds. But the lights danced over the orchestra like *ignes fatui*. Mists seemed to envelop the harp as with a dim cloud that shook into widening circles with every vibration, forming a glory around it. I could see no object clearly. As in a battle the spectator sees through the smoke and the confused crush of men, now an arm with blazing sword, now a lance, now colors waving, and now a rearing horse, so in the spot whence the music issued I caught glimpses of instruments and players through the rosy mist. And the harp seemed to be the same which is immortalized in the old ballad,—made from the breast-bone of a woman; for I saw the yellow hair glisten as those gentle fingers caressed it.

"A famous harper passing by,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie,
 The sweet pale face he chanced to spy
 By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

And when he looked that lady on,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie,
 He sighed and made a heavy moan,
 By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

He made a harp of her breast-bone,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie,
 Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone,
 By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

The strings he framed of her yellow hair,
 Binnorie, O Binnorie,
 Whose notes made sad the listening ear,
 By the bonny mill-dams of Binnorie.

The loud shouts, the universal clapping of hands, and the general movement of the audience, first indicated to me the close of the concert. I did not applaud; the noisy tribute of hands and feet seemed a most unfit manifestation. I remained fixed upon my seat while the fading colors fluttered through the lofty room and melted in the cool ashy twilight that came

in at the upper windows. When the musicians had all gone, when Herr Regenbogen had picked up the fragrant flowers that were now incontestably his, and the last straggling auditor was leaving the darkening hall, I stepped into the street, alone though in a crowd, and went to my solitary room.

A Great-Organ Prelude.

I SAT in the Music Hall as evening was coming on. The gray semicircles above grew opaque like porcelain. The light shimmered faintly along the gilded edges of panel and pilaster. Shadows crouched under the light balconies, and then, growing bolder, stole out to meet each other. The sombre magnificence of the organ was not wholly shrouded, although glooms hung over its towers and angel-peopled pinnacles; and its sculptured figures would have been only vague forms, had not my eyes so often followed their exquisite outlines that vision was unnecessary to recall them. I had frequently seen this stupendous work by daylight, had scrutinized in detail the caryatides, lions, griffins, seraphs, singers, the urns, wreaths, busts, viols, masks, and all the ornaments that incrust the front; and now, as from a seat at the foot of the Apollo opposite

I could view the whole pile in a single glance, the grand design absorbed every separate feature, subordinated all its various lines, and grouped all its beauties into one splendid constellation. One might almost imagine that the

*
". . . . fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet."

No sound from the outer world broke upon the perfect stillness within. As I gazed, the divine sense of symmetry — the sense on which Euclid Copernicus, Newton, and Bach rested — filled me with measureless content. Fainter grew the light; the semicircles above were almost indistinguishable. The organ wore now a dusky, awful front, with only the vague surmise of a line of light along the polished surface of each enormous metal tube. No organist had yet touched the keys. The pomp of Handel's immortal choruses, the oceanic ebb and flow of Bach's themes, the spiritual beauty of Mendelssohn's sonatas, and the all-comprehending majesty of Beethoven, were yet to come. If it were possible now to evoke the spirits of the mighty dead! — to com-

mand the Hallelujah Chorus, played by its inspired author and sung by choirs of angels! — to bring up all that man has imagined in his most exalted moods, and display the celestial beauty of music free from the imperfections of mortality! I listened, almost expecting a breath from the distant forest of pipes. The silence tingled, throbbed, palpitated. Was it a voice that floated over the dark space to where I sat? Were there sounds from

“Airy tongues that syllable men’s names”?

There were, indeed, as it seemed to me, audible voices, confused and multitudinous, and mingled now and then with notes of instruments, like the hurly-burly of an orchestral anteroom. No separate word could be recognized, nor any strain of music; but the sound swelled and sank like the far-off surges of the sea. When it came nearer, strong and manly tones could be distinguished, blended with the softer notes of woman, the sweet prattle of childhood, and

“The horns of Elfland faintly blowing.”

For some time I listened to the delightful med-

ley; how long I do not know, but can only remember that at length the vague murmurs subsided, as though repressed by a powerful voice that seemed to say, “Silence, up aloft there! Silence, you chatterers! One at a time, or I will straighten myself up and topple you all over together!”*

It was a voice that might have startled the Erymanthian boar.

A merry sound of laughter ran tinkling down from above, a cascade of melody, and after it the sweetest of voices asked with provoking archness, “And which of our two burly Dromios is so impatient? *Would* he be so naughty, and play Samson? O Hercules, can it be you? You shall go back a slave to Omphale!”

“Yes, my Roman damsel, my pretty Cecilia, it is I,” returned the thunderous voice. “My brother, hard by, is only a dummy, but he has a brawny shoulder, ay, and an arm! I am — tired — of — this,” and there came a yawn as from a drowsy lion, “and I would like even to spin once more at Queen Omphale’s feet.

* See Prefatory Note.

'Lap me in soft Lydian airs,' as one of those Britons has it, rather than crush me under this tower."

Here broke in another clear, resonant voice: "But if they would only finish their tortures and give us some music! How can I stand here patiently leaning on my lyre and hear the never-ending drawl of pipes, as Walcker turns the feather edges of sound backwards and forwards razor-wise!"

"What a philosopher our chorister is, to be sure!" exclaimed a new and grave voice. "To think of reaching the end by overleaping the means! Life itself is mostly spent in preparation. The play which amuses for an hour cost the actors weeks of study, and taxed the brains of the author for months. The sweetness of Cecilia's song was born of an agonizing struggle with fierce semitones and rebellious trills. The battle which in an hour settles the destiny of nations is a crisis for which all the elements of nature and all the powers of man were concentrated for a generation. But this dainty chorister of ours, who would reap where he has not

sown, would gather where he has not strewed, cannot bear the 'feather edges of tone,' and so, forsooth, we must have our pipes untuned, our registers unharmonized, our punch without sugar, our grapes unripened, our saws" —

"Bach!" screamed the female voice, "*don't* go on with those odious comparisons! My teeth stand on edge. You know how nervous I am. Even Constantia, our steadfast nun over there, drew in a sharp, thin breath."

"I spare your tender sensibilities, Cecilia; but what are the tortures of tuning and voicing pipes compared with what I shall suffer when once the work is done and the organ is given over to profane hands to be played upon?"

"Profane hands!" exclaimed several voices at once; and that which seemed to be the chorister's continued, "What do you mean by profane hands, Meister Bach? Do you consider it the chief end of man to play your fugues? Did chaos precede you, and will the end of all things follow you?"

"Don't be unkind to Bach," said the sweet female voice, "for although I love music like

a girl singing true-love ballads by a brook, and he like an astronomer contemplating the spherul harmonies, still I have a great regard for him, indeed I have. He is a glorious old fellow."

"Thank you, Cecilia," replied the grave voice.

"But," she added, "understand me, your organ music is very grand; sometimes a little tiresome, I think, though that, perhaps, is owing to my weak nature, that cannot bear the strain of following an idea through a hundred changes and combinations, as in the terrible theorems of those mathematical Greeks. But you treat us singers abominably. You move us like chessmen, and pawns at that; we are bits of shining stone in your mosaic; we are just a flute or oboë added to your orchestra, just another pipe to your organ. And you write for the voice as though it had not a human soul behind it. Your airs are difficult enough, and require intellect to sing them properly, but there is no room for emotion, and the most gifted singer cannot breathe into them one particle of fervor. Melody and harmony revolve about a common centre,

like a double star, till they are undistinguishable."

"*Brava!*" shouted the chorister.

"And *I* say *Brava*," said Bach. "I accept the illustration. Melody and harmony — complementary colors — revolving in eternal beauty together. If I combine forces and think lightly of individuals, does not every leader of orchestras and of armies? Even the great Creator, as he evolves harmony out of discord, does he not strictly subordinate the career of every human actor to his mighty plan?"

"Very well put," said the chorister, "if the human larynx were not a finer instrument than a wooden pipe. If you twist *all* your strands into one even chain of harmony, why make any difference in them? Why be at the trouble to give one part to a golden tenor, a luscious soprano, a rich basso, when an insensate tube will take up the treadmill theme and play 'tag' with the other parts just as well? Remember that the human voice is the human soul made audible, and it is little less than profanation to treat it as you have done."

"One other thing," said Cecilia, "I wish to suggest; perhaps 't is a woman's reason, but I believe it moves men just as strongly. You say, my old friend, that the Creator subordinates all actors to his plan. Very true, but then the Creator does n't let each wayward and wilful creature know it. Each of us felt, while in the world, a personal freedom of thought and action that was almost godlike. That the Almighty moved us as a general does troops in the dreadful game of war was true, but we thought we were free, nevertheless. But you, Bach, lose no opportunity of showing us singers your master-ship. We feel the coils of your serpentine harmonies encircling and crushing us. Your accompaniments surround us, but only touch us in points, like the Punic nails that excoriated the too honorable Regulus. I like to sing when the glorious fulness of harmony lifts me up, sustains me; then I have the sense of exultation in song, as of a rider borne by a noble horse, as of a boatman rising on the green hills of ocean, — sometimes an awful joy as of a warrior moving on to the fierce clangor of battle. Look and see how

your friend Haydn sustains a singer (though your brain doubles his), how the harmony swells and sparkles but never submerges, how the voice is raised up to an ecstasy! Ah, when I hum over his airs, after having been tangled up with your vermicular perplexities, I feel like an emancipated slave on a morning in spring. The sense of freedom, the joyousness of motion, the glory of brightness, the perfume of flowers, the myriad notes of birds, all possess me with an inexpressible delight."

"I don't wonder the Romans made you a martyr," interposed the chorister. "You are so charmingly naïve, so rustically enthusiastic, and therefore so fascinating, that, if the polite heathens had spared you, sooner or later you would have turned the augurs into precentors, the temples into art-galleries, and made the Pontifex Maximus acknowledge you as a saint, on his bended knees."

A clear, silvery voice, not heard hitherto, now spoke with a measured accent: "The music of which the holy Cecilia speaks in such glowing words cannot surely be the music of the higher

spheres; she must rather speak from the recollection of her emotions while still in the flesh. The souls that are purified from earthly passion feel none of the unquiet strivings that seem to tremble in the music of mortals. Bach, therefore, serene and self-possessed, reverent and grave, mindful always of the mighty Being to whom all homage is addressed, most fitly represents the composer of the Church, and was born, as I think, to bear the praises of a world up to the Eternal Throne."

"My placid Constantia," replied Cecilia, "you may be right, but it seems to me that others have more purely and more touchingly expressed the sentiment of prayer and adoration, whether of the solitary worshipper or of the multitude in a cathedral. To name no other work, think of the 'Elijah'! Is there not melody, harmony, beauty, devotion? Besides, Bach, as well as Handel, has interspersed long and meaningless *roulades* in his compositions, which on the score of fitness no one can defend. They are instrumental passages, tiresome to singers, inexpressive, suggested by a prevalent false taste, and will not

only die themselves, but will carry into oblivion every work of which they make any large part. But I was thinking of music as living men and women hear and enjoy it, not as it is heard in the realms of the blessed. Here in this hall we shall see crowds, not only of the common herd, but of the most educated and refined. All of them have bodies as well as souls, have blood instead of colorless ichor, have passions, hopes, fears, desires, aspirations. Their nerves thrill, their temples throb, their bosoms heave, their hearts beat. Here and there is a solitary philosopher, a calm admirer of beauty and order and the fitness of things; but for every one an hundred thousand emotional creatures who are blind to the celestial mechanics and deaf to the harmonies of the spheres."

"Let me add a word," said the chorister. "The test of vitality in vocal music is that the sequence of tones contains a melodic idea apart from its accompaniment. '*I know that my Redeemer liveth*,' '*Il mio tesoro*,' '*If with all your hearts*,' '*In diesen heil'gen Hallen*,' every great immortal melody for the voice, sings itself, and is not dependent upon its harmonies."

"You speak of my vocal compositions," said Bach, addressing himself to Cecilia, "according to the warmth of your Southern nature. But each nation as well as each individual has a characteristic mode of expressing feeling. In Germany I have often known tears of rapture to fall, as my organ led the devotions of the people, while they would have been only annoyed at the *Misereres* of your chapels. But, setting that aside, what have you to say about my organ pieces?"

"Let us ask the others," said Cecilia. "We have rather monopolized the conversation thus far. What say you, Hercules?"

"T is scarcely worth while to ask me," he answered like a *basso profundissimo*. "You know I'm an old-fashioned pagan. I have never given in to the new dynasty, and it is the first time I ever upheld anything like worship. But our solemn friend up there has plenty of strength, and is more of a giant in his way than I ever was. I shall feel every fibre in me shake when his youngest scholar begins to trip over the pedals. The other men you have been

talking about are mostly thin fellows, I am told, not at all in my way. You should have heard our handsome friend Apollo, over there; he was great on the lyre before he took to killing snakes or had daubed his fingers with medicine. And such a way he had! Jupiter, how the girls followed him!"

"Well, and what say you, Sister Constantia?"

"I think Bach's organ music is endless variety in unity, and in his fugues one may hear the always-beginning, never-ending song of the glorified, the 'forever and ever, Alleluia!'"

"And you, my vivacious chorister, — though I warn you against a certain flippancy of speech, you know?"

"I will try to be respectful. If fugues are the alpha and omega of organ playing, then Bach has exhausted the subject, and there is nothing more for any one to do. But I hate fugues, *as such*. I have heard passages in which the parts come grandly rolling in after each other like waves on the beach; and such passages may be properly introduced to vary and ennoble an organ composition. But a fugue com-

posed with malice prepense, — one part starting off at a sober pace, followed at fixed intervals by another and another around the same circle, — a wheel of fugacious porpoises, the awkward snout of one just touching the whisking tail of the other, — can anything be more monotonous, — after a time, I mean? One can bear it awhile; even more, can be interested in its complexities, and wonder how the parts ever came together; but when this becomes fatiguing, when the noise redoubles, — deep calling unto deep, — and the “mixtures” scream for mercy, while the unhappy melody is strangled like Laocoön, what then? Who but clockmakers, or torture-loving inquisitors, or the pachydermata could abide it?”

“How patient you are, Bach,” said Cecilia, “to hear these cruel comparisons unmoved!”

“It does not matter,” he answered. “I can afford to be as unmoved as our grim neighbors, the Fates. Men are born what they are, and I suppose it is no more than truth to say that there are Bachists from the cradle. The chorister is not to blame for not understanding me.”

“Precisely, my venerable friend,” retorted the chorister, in a lively tone. “You have just hit it. Your music is for the mathematical, the reflective, the self-poised people, — those whose blood never rushes in turbulent streams to play pranks with their evenly beating brains, — those who can construct cylinders, bristling with myriads of pins, every one of which will hit its predestined tinkler infallibly, — those who can solve enigmas and decipher mysteries. Those are the people that understand you, and the only ones that like you, — I mean, like you as a composer, for every one respects and admires a man of your prodigious power. You are to some extent the fashion, but you are not vain enough to, suppose that all who affect to admire you are really able to grapple with any one of your learned, laborious, tormenting fugues. Now why cannot your sincere followers, the real esoteric circle, keep your worship for themselves, and not attempt to impose it upon the vast outside multitude of earnest music-lovers, who for various reasons do not and cannot understand or appreciate you?”

"And do you agree with this judgment, Cecilia?" asked Bach, gravely.

"Not wholly, although it has some of the elements of truth. I think, my friend Bach, that the interest which centres chiefly in ingenious construction or in learning is not likely to be lasting. A beautiful melody, like a beautiful statue, is for all time; but tastes in regard to harmonic modes and modulations change from age to age. And there can be no question but that in the main the change is for the better. It is so in art, it is so in literature, it is so in social and political science. The world moves, my friend, and we must move with it. Besides, remember how the scope of the organ has altered since you touched a key! Think of its vast increase of power, of the new stops, the exquisite imitations of instruments, the quality of tone! Then consider the new mechanical appliances, the swell and diminuendo, and chiefly the 'pneumatic touch' that gives to Psyche's dainty finger the same power with that of Hercules's iron hand. What a new field is open to the composer as well as to the player! What could you

do when you played? Only just what you did. You did not attempt a more brilliant style of music, for you had not the requisite stops, and no human muscles could long control the forces you did have, unassisted by the new invention."

"But you forget that the essential quality of the organ tone is still unchanged," said Bach. "You cannot produce concussion or crispness, nor any other quality on which the pianist prides himself. The legitimate style for the organ is unalterable; nothing else is possible, least of all the frivolity of dancing overtures. And when one of the 'moderns' shall sit down to make my giant caper,—like an elephant in a minuet,—I shall feel like toppling over upon his stupid head."

"You are right again, my venerable friend," said Cecilia. "Leave to the piano-forte all the lightsome gayeties and prettinesses, and let the majestic organ sound only what is worthy of itself."

"But," asked the chorister, "will not these new elements of power and beauty call forth a

new genius to employ them? It may be long before a composer comes with an intellect so profound as that of the excellent man whom I like to abuse; but will not the happy hour come, when some inspired writer will give to the world organ music as new, as various, as beautiful, as immortal as Beethoven's symphonies? Mozart had written for orchestra before this stately bronze fellow. Mozart was master of construction, and his head was as full of melodies as a hive is of bees. But did Mozart exhaust the symphony and establish his own works for all time? On the contrary, the world is forgetting all but three or four of them as fast as it can, and Beethoven reigns supreme. Will there come a Beethoven for the organ?"

"Will there come — will there — Who calls upon the oracle?" asked Hercules, sadly sleepy. "I never did much in that way," (muttering,) "only a day or so at Dodona or Delphos when the *majores* had an adventure in hand. Ask the Fates; they know. What say you, grim sisters? Is there to be any Beethoven for the organ? I hope so, for my part, and then they'll

take away this hulking fellow who *will* stand in my light. What business has he in our way, I should like to know?"

"The oracles are dumb," said Cecilia. "Let us hope the Fates are kindly, although they have lost the power of prophecy."

"Sister Cecilia," said the gentle voice of the nun, "how you mix up truth and fable! I am afraid you were not purged from all heathenish dross."

"I love the beautiful and the good, Sister Constantia, and I care not where I find them. But let us keep clear of this field of brambles, and call upon Beethoven for his opinion."

"Agreed!" "Excellent!" "Capital!" said several voices.

"Beethoven, most illustrious!" said the chorister.

"Answer, great priest of music!" thundered Hercules.

"My great countryman, Beethoven!" said Bach.

"Beethoven, the all-revered, all-beloved!" said Cecilia, persuasively.

"Beethoven!" called the boy-cherubs from the tower tops, and then sounded their horns.

"Beethoven! Beethoven!" all shouted in chorus.

"Call him louder. You all forget your idol is deaf!" said the chorister.

Silvery peals of laughter rang. Voices arose in murmurs, gently and then louder. Words grew inarticulate and echoed, confused, through the space. Organ pipes sounded. Turmoil grew momentarily. There was a shock, a pause, a stillness, an illumination. I rubbed my eyes. Prudent Mr. Walcker was doing some night work in tuning to be ready for the great "opening" of the next day. It was nine o'clock, and I had slept two hours.

THE END.