

TALES OF TERROR,
OR THE
MYSTERIES OF MAGIC:

A SELECTION OF
WONDERFUL AND SUPERNATURAL STORIES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE, TURKISH, AND GERMAN.

COMPILED BY HENRY ST. CLAIR.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

VOL. I.



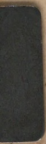
"I could a little unfold, whose lightest wind
Y^e could blow up the soul, from the young blood,
"Make the two eyes, like stars, and from their spheres,
"The Lovers' and compassed looks in part,
"And each remember how to stand on eye,
"Like quills upon the battled parapet."—*Shakespeare.*

BOSTON.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY CHARLES GAYLORD.

1833.

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116.
STORY OF THE BOARWOLF.

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"I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
" Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood,
" Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
" Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
" And each particular hair to stand on end,
" Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."—*Shakespeare.*

BOSTON :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY CHARLES GAYLORD.

1833.

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P R E F A C E.

THE Editor of this volume makes no doubt that it will be an acceptable offering to the Public. There was time, indeed, when men were burned for witchcraft, and Quakers were hanged for non-conformity, that Tales like those which compose this collection would have been improper for publication. That time has passed away—old women ride through New-England on broomsticks no longer—children are no longer hushed to rest by threats of the coming of the Devil--

*"E'en the last lingering phantom of the brain,
The churchyard ghost, is now at rest again!"*

Stories founded on supernatural agency cannot now mislead the young, or terrify the old. At the same time there are no tales which excite such intense interest, or will bear frequent perusal so well. Witness the Arabian Nights Entertainment, the Tales of the Genii, and many other collections of a like nature, which have been the delight of centuries past, and will constitute a large portion of the amusement of centuries future.

These works, however, have become rather hacknied. Every one knows the Arabian Tales by rote; the Tales of the Genii are scarcely less familiar; even Winter Evenings at Home are not sought with the same avidity they once were. The Editor has, therefore, sought and put together such supernatural tales as are written with equal power, and are less gene-

rally known. He is confident that his stories will have their day also, and that a long one.

The Editor hopes, that one circumstance, if no other, will recommend his book to the favorable consideration of the public. Great care has been taken to admit nothing of immoral or irreligious tendency. The stories are such as will not raise a blush on the cheek of the most fastidious. Some of them have no particular end, save the amusement of the reader; others contain useful allegories, which all may profit by reading. If we may be permitted to make any distinction among them, we would particularly notice that powerfully written tale, *The Magic Dice*, in which many and useful lessons may be found. In it, the danger of tampering with evil, the folly of impertinent curiosity, the evil consequences of gaming, and the necessity of prudence in the choice of a companion for life, are set forth in the guise of an allegory, in a light no less vivid than novel.

In conclusion we may say, that many may be benefited, and none can be injured, by the perusal of this volume.

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THE MAGIC BIRD

AN ADVENTURE IN THE
MOUNTAINS OF SWITZERLAND

The story of the Magic Bird is a tale of adventure and discovery in the mountains of Switzerland. It begins with a young boy who is fascinated by the birds of the forest. One day, he discovers a small, colorful bird that he has never seen before. He follows it through the woods and eventually finds a hidden cave. Inside the cave, he discovers a book of magic spells. The boy uses the spells to help his friends and to overcome various challenges. The story is filled with excitement and wonder, and it is a classic tale of a young hero's journey.

THE MAGIC DICE,

AN AWFUL NARRATION.

[From the German.]

FOR more than one hundred and fifty years had the family of Schroll been settled at Taubendorf; and generally respected for knowledge and refinement of manners superior to its station. Its present representative, the bailiff Elias Schroll, had in his youth attached himself to literature; but later in life, from love to the country, he had returned to his native village, and lived there in great credit and esteem.

During this whole period of one hundred and fifty years, tradition had recorded only one Schroll as having borne a doubtful character: he, indeed, as many persons affirmed, had dealt with the devil. Certain it is that there was still preserved in the house a scrutoire fixed in the wall, and containing some mysterious manuscripts attributed to him; and the date of the year—1630, which was carved upon the front, tallied with his era. The key of this scrutoire had been constantly handed down to the eldest son, through five generations—with a solemn charge to take care that no other eye or ear should ever become acquainted with its contents. Every precaution had been taken to guard against accidents or oversights: the lock was so constructed that, even with the right key, it could not be opened without special instructions; and, for still greater security, the present proprietor had added a padlock of most elaborate workmanship, which presented a sufficient obstacle before the main lock could be approached.

In vain did the curiosity of the whole family direct itself to this scrutoire. Nobody had succeeded in discovering any part of its contents, except Rudolph, the only son of the bailiff: he *had* succeeded: at least, his own belief was, that the old folio, with gilt edges, and bound in black velvet, which he had one day surprised his father anxiously reading, belonged to the mysterious scrutoire. For the door of the scrutoire, though not open, was unlocked; and Elias had hastily closed the book with great agitation, at the same time ordering his son out of the room in no very gentle tone. At the time of this incident, Rudolph was about twelve years of age.

Since that time, the young man had sustained two great loss-

es, in the deaths of his excellent mother, and a sister tenderly beloved. His father also had suffered deeply in health and spirits under these afflictions. Every day he grew more fretful and humorsome; and Rudolph, upon his final return home from school in his eighteenth year, was shocked to find him greatly altered in mind as well as in person. His flesh had fallen away, and he seemed to be consumed by some internal strife of thought. It was evidently his own opinion that he was standing on the edge of the grave: and he employed himself unceasingly in arranging his affairs, and in making his successor acquainted with all such arrangements as regarded his more peculiar interests. One evening, as Rudolph came in suddenly from a neighbor's house, and happened to pass the scrutoire, he found the door wide open, and the inside obviously empty. Looking round, he observed his father standing on the hearth close to a great fire, in the midst of which was consuming the old black book.

Elias entreated his son earnestly to withdraw: but Rudolph could not command himself; and he exclaimed—"I doubt, sir, that this is the book which belongs to the scrutoire."

His father assented with visible confusion.

"Well, then, allow me to say, that I am greatly surprised at your treating in this way an heir-loom that, for a century and more, has always been transmitted to the eldest son."

"You are in the right, my son," said the father, affectionately taking him by the hand: "You are partly in the right: it is not quite defensible, I admit: and I myself have had many scruples, about the course I have taken. Yet still I feel myself glad, upon the whole, that I have destroyed this accursed book. He that wrote it never prospered; all traditions agree in that:—why then leave to one's descendants a miserable legacy of unhallowed mysteries?"

This excuse, however, did not satisfy Rudolph. He maintained that his father had made an aggression upon his rights of inheritance; and he argued the point so well, that Elias himself began to think his son's complaint was not altogether groundless. The whole of the next day they behaved to each other—not unkindly, but yet with some coolness. At night, Elias could bear this no longer; and he said, "Dear Rudolph, we have lived long together in harmony and love; let us not begin to show an altered countenance to each other during the few days that I have yet to live."

Rudolph pressed his father's offered hand with a filial warmth; and the latter went on to say—"I proposed to communicate to you by word of mouth the contents of the book which I have destroyed: I will do this with good faith and without reserve—unless you yourself can be persuaded to forego your right to such a communication."

Elias paused—flattering himself, as it seemed, that his son

would forego his right. But in this he was mistaken: Rudolph was far too eager for the disclosure; and earnestly pressed his father to proceed.

Again Elias hesitated and threw a glance of profound love and pity upon his son—a glance that conjured him to think better and to waive his claim: but, this being at length obviously hopeless, he spoke as follows:—"The book relates chiefly to yourself: it points to you as *to the last of our race*. You turn pale. Surely, Rudolph, it would have been better that you had resolved to trouble yourself no farther about it?"

"No," said Rudolph, recovering his self-possession, "No: for it still remains a question whether this prophecy be true."

"It does so,—it does, no doubt."

"And is this all that the book says in regard to me?"

"No: it is *not* all: there is something more. But possibly you will only laugh when you hear it: for at this day nobody believes in such strange stories. However, be *that* as it may, the book goes on to say plainly and positively, that the *Evil One* (Heaven protect us!) will make you an offer tending greatly to your worldly advantage."

Rudolph laughed outright; and replied that, judging by the grave exterior of the book, he had looked to hear of more serious contents.

"Well, well my son," said the old man, "I know not that I myself am disposed to place much confidence in these tales of contracts with the devil. But, true or not, we ought not to laugh at them. Enough for me that, under any circumstances, I am satisfied you have so much natural piety, that you would reject all worldly good fortune that could meet you upon unhallowed paths."

Here Elias would have broken off: but Rudolph said, "One thing more I wish to know: What is to be the nature of the good fortune offered to me? And did the book say whether I should accept it or not?"

"Upon the nature of the good fortune the writer has not explained himself: all that he says is, that, by a discreet use of it, it is in your power to become a very great man. Whether you will accept it—but God preserve thee, my child, from any thought so criminal—upon this question there is a profound silence. Nay, it seems even as if this trader in black arts had at that very point been overtaken by death: for he had broken off in the very middle of a word. The Lord have mercy upon his soul!"

Little as Rudolph's faith was in the possibility of such a proposal, yet he was uneasy at his father's communication, and visibly disturbed; so that the latter said to him—"Had it not been better, Rudolph, that you had left the mystery to be buried with me in the grave?"

Rudolph said—"No:" but his restless eye, and his agitated air, too evidently approved the justice of his father's solicitude.

The deep impression upon Rudolph's mind from this conversation—the last he was ever to hold with his father—was rendered still deeper by the solemn event which followed. About the middle of that same night, he was awakened suddenly by a summons to his father's bed-side: his father was dying, and earnestly asking for him.

"My son!" he exclaimed with an expression of the bitterest anguish; stretched out both his arms in supplication towards him; and, in the anguish of the effort, he expired.

The levity of youthful spirits soon dispersed the gloom which at first hung over Rudolph's mind. Surrounded by jovial companions at the university which he now entered, he found no room left in his bosom for sorrow or care: and his heaviest affliction was the refusal of his guardian at times to comply with his too frequent importunities for money.

After a residence of one year at the university, some youthful irregularities in which Rudolph was concerned subjected him, jointly with three others, to expulsion. Just at that time, the seven years' war happened to break out: two of the party, named Theiler and Werl, entered the military service together with Rudolph; the last very much against the will of a young woman to whom he was engaged. Charlotte herself, however, became reconciled to this arrangement, when she saw that her objections availed nothing against Rudolph's resolution, and heard her lover describe in the most flattering colors his own return to her arms in the uniform of an officer: for that his distinguished courage must carry him in the very first campaign to the rank of lieutenant was as evident to his own mind as that he could not possibly fall on the field of battle.

The three friends were fortunate enough to be placed in the same company. But, in the first battle, Werl and Theiler were stretched lifeless by Rudolph's side: Werl, by a musket-ball through his heart, and Theiler by a cannon-shot which took off his head.

Soon after this event, Rudolph himself returned home: but how? Not, as he had fondly anticipated, in the brilliant decorations of a distinguished officer; but as a prisoner in close custody: in a transport of youthful anger he had been guilty, in company with two others, of insubordination and mutiny.

The court-martial sentenced them to death. The judges, however, were so favorably impressed by their good conduct, whilst under confinement; that they would certainly have recommended them to the royal mercy, if it had not been deemed necessary to make an example. However, the sentence was so far mitigated, that only one of the three was to be shot. And which was he? That point was reserved in suspense until

the day of execution, when it was to be decided by the cast of the dice.

As the fatal day drew near, a tempest of passionate grief assailed the three prisoners. One of them was agitated by the tears of his father; the second by the sad situation of a sickly wife and two children; the third, Rudolph, in case the lot fell upon him, would be summoned to part not only with his life, but also with a young and blooming bride, that lay nearer to his heart than any thing else. "Ah!" said he, on the evening before the day of final decision, "Ah! if but this once I could secure a lucky throw of the dice!" And scarce was the wish uttered, when his comrade Werl, whom he had seen fall by his side in the field of battle, stepped into his cell.

"So, brother Schroll, I suppose you didn't much expect to see me?"

"No, indeed, did I not"—exclaimed Rudolph in consternation: for in fact, on the day after the battle, he had seen this very Werl committed to the grave.

"Ay, ay, its strange enough, I allow: but there are not many such surgeons as he is that belongs to our regiment: he had me dug up, and brought me round again, I'll assure you. One would think the man was a conjurer. Indeed there are many things he can do which I defy any man to explain; and, to say the truth, I'm convinced he can execute impossibilities.

"Well, so let him, for aught that I care: all his art will scarcely do me any good."

"Who knows, brother? who knows? The man is in this town at this very time; and for old friendship's sake I've just spoken to him about you: and he has promised me a lucky throw of the dice that shall deliver you from all danger."

"Ah!" said the dejected Rudolph, "but even this would be of little service to me."

"Why, how so?" asked the other.

"How so? Why, because—even if there were such dice (a matter I very much dispute)—yet I could never allow myself to turn aside, by black arts, any bad luck designed for myself upon the heads of either of my comrades."

"Now this, I suppose, is what you call being noble? But excuse me if I think that in such cases one's first duty is to oneself."

"Ay, but consider, one of my comrades has an old father to maintain, the other a sick wife with two children."

"Schroll, Schroll, if your young bride were to hear you, I fancy she wouldn't think herself much flattered. Does poor Charlotte deserve that you should not bestow a thought on her and her fate? A dear young creature, that places her whole happiness in you, has nearer claims (I think) upon your consideration than an old dotard with one foot in the grave, or a wife

and two children that are nothing at all to you. Ah! what a deal of good might you do in the course of a long life with your Charlotte!—So, then, you really are determined to reject the course which I point out to you? Take care, Schroll! If you disdain my offer, and the lot should chance to fall upon you,—take care lest the thought of a young bride whom you have betrayed,—take care, I say, lest this thought should add to the bitterness of death when you come to kneel down on the sand-hill. However, I've given you advice sufficient, and have discharged my conscience. Look to it yourself: and farewell!"

"Stay, brother, a word or two;" said Rudolph, who was powerfully impressed by the last speech, and the picture of domestic happiness held up before him, which he had often dallied with in thought both when alone and in company with Charlotte:—"stay a moment. Undoubtedly, I do not deny that I wish for life, if I could receive it a gift from Heaven: and that is not impossible. Only I would not willingly have the guilt upon my conscience of being the cause of misery to another. However, if the man you speak of can tell, I should be glad that you would ask him upon which of us three the lot of death will fall. Or—stay; don't ask him," said Rudolph, sighing deeply.

"I have already asked him," was the answer.

"Ah! have you so? *And it is after his reply that you come to me with this counsel?*"

The foretaste of death overspread the blooming face of Rudolph with a livid paleness: thick drops of sweat gathered upon his forehead; and the other exclaimed with a sneer—"I'm going: you take too much time for consideration. May be you will see and recognise me at the place of execution: and, if so, I shall have the dice with me; and it will not be too late even then to give me a sign: but take notice I can't promise to attend."

Rudolph raised his forehead from the palm of his hand, in which he had buried it during the last moments of his perturbation, and would have spoken something in reply: but his counsellor was already gone. He felt glad and yet at the same time sorry. The more he considered the man and his appearance, so much the less seemed his resemblance to his friend whom he had left buried on the field of battle. This friend had been the very soul of affectionate cordiality—a temper that was altogether wanting in his present counsellor. No! the scornful and insulting tone with which he treated the unhappy prisoner, and the unkind manner with which he had left him, convinced Schroll that he and Werl must be two different persons. Just at this moment a thought struck him, like a blast of lightning, of the black book that had perished in the fire and its ominous contents. A lucky cast of the dice! Ay; *that* then was the shape in which the tempter had presented himself; and heartily glad he felt that he had not availed himself of his suggestions.

But this temper of mind was speedily changed by his young bride, who hurried in, soon after, sobbing, and flung her arms about his neck. He told her of the proposal which had been made to him; and she was shocked that he had not immediately accepted it.

With a bleeding heart, Rudolph objected that so charming and lovely a creature could not miss of a happy fate, even if he should be forced to quit her. But she protested vehemently that he or nobody should enjoy her love.

The clergyman, who visited the prisoner immediately after her departure, restored some composure to his mind, which had been altogether banished by the presence of his bride. "Blessed are they who die in the Lord!" said the gray-haired divine; and with so much earnestness and devotion, that this single speech had the happiest effect upon the prisoner's mind.

On the morning after this night of agitation—the morning of the fatal day—the three criminals saw each other for the first time since their arrest. Community of fate, and long separation from each other, contributed to draw still closer the bond of friendship that had been first knit on the field of battle. Each of the three testified a lively abhorrence for the wretched necessity of throwing death to some one of his comrades, by any cast of the dice which should bring life to himself. Dear as their several friends were to all, yet at this moment the brotherly league, which had been tried and proved in the furnace of battle, was triumphant over all opposing considerations. Each would have preferred death himself, rather than escape it at the expense of his comrade.

The worthy clergyman, who possessed their entire confidence, found them loudly giving utterance to this heroic determination. Shaking his head, he pointed their attention to those who had claims upon them whilst living, and for whom it was their duty to wish to live as long as possible. "Place your trust in God!" said he: "resign yourselves to him! He it is that will bring about the decision through your hands; and think not of ascribing that power to yourselves, or to his lifeless instruments—the dice. He, without whose permission no sparrow falls to the ground, and who has numbered every hair upon your head—He it is that knows best what is good for you; and he only.

The prisoners assented by squeezing his hand, embraced each other, and received the sacrament in the best disposition of mind. After this ceremony they breakfasted together, in as resigned,—nay, almost in as joyous a mood as if the gloomy and bloody morning which lay before them were ushering in some gladsome festival.

When, however, the procession was marshalled from the outer gate, and their beloved friends were admitted to utter their last

farewells, then again the sternness of their courage sank beneath the burden of their melancholy fate. "Rudolph!" whispered amongst the rest his despairing bride, "Rudolph! why did you reject the help that was offered to you?" He adjured her not to add to the bitterness of parting; and she in turn adjured him, a little before the word of command was given to march—which robbed her of all consciousness—to make a sign to the stranger who had volunteered his offer of deliverance, provided he should anywhere observe him in the crowd.

The streets and the windows were lined with spectators. Vainly did each of the criminals seek, by accompanying the clergyman in his prayers, to shelter himself from the thought, that all return, perhaps, was cut off from him. The large house of his bride's father reminded Schroll of a happiness that was now lost to him forever, if any faith were to be put in the words of his yesterday's monitor; and a very remarkable faintness came over him. The clergyman, who was acquainted with the circumstances of his case, and, therefore, guessed the occasion of his sudden agitation, laid hold of his arm—and said, with a powerful voice, that he who trusted in God would assuredly see all his *righteous* hopes accomplished—in this world, if it were God's pleasure; but, if not, in a better.

These were words of comfort: but their effect lasted only for a few moments. Outside the city-gate his eyes were met by the sand-hill already thrown up—a spectacle which renewed his earthly hopes and fears. He threw a hurried glance about him; but nowhere could he see his last night's visitor.

Every moment the decision came nearer and nearer. It has begun. One of the three has already shaken the box: the die is cast: he has thrown a six. This throw was now registered amidst the solemn silence of the crowd. The by-standers regarded him with silent congratulations in their eyes. For this man and Rudolph were the two special objects of the general compassion: this man as the husband and father; Rudolph as the youngest and handsomest, and because some report had gone abroad of his superior education and attainments.

Rudolph was youngest in a double sense—youngest in years, and youngest in the service: for both reasons he was to throw last. It may be supposed, therefore, how much all present trembled for the poor delinquent, when the second of his comrades likewise flung a six.

Prostrated in spirit, Rudolph stared at the unpropitious die. Then a second time he threw a hurried glance around him—and that so full of despair, that from horrid sympathy a violent shuddering ran through the by-standers. "Here is no deliverer," thought Rudolph, "none to see me, or to hear me! And if there were, it is now too late: for no change of the die is any

longer possible." So saying, he seized the fatal die; convulsively his hand clutches it; and before the throw is made he feels that the die is broken in two.

During the universal thrill of astonishment which succeeded to this strange accident, he looked round again. A sudden shock, and a sudden joy, fled through his countenance. Not far from him, in the dress of a pedlar, stands Theiler without a wound—the comrade whose head had been carried off on the field of battle by a cannon ball. Rudolph made an under sign to him with his eye. For, clear as it now was to his mind with whom he was dealing, yet the dreadful trial of the moment overpowered his better resolutions.

The military commission were in some confusion. No provision having been thought of against so strange an accident, there was no second die at hand. They were just on the point of despatching a messenger to fetch one, when the pedlar presented himself with the offer of supplying the loss. The new die is examined by the auditor, and delivered to the unfortunate Rudolph. He throws: the die is lying on the drum; and again it is a six! The amazement is universal: nothing is decided: the throws must be repeated. They *are*: and Weber, the husband of the sick wife—the father of the two half-naked children, flings the lowest throw.

Immediately the officer's voice was heard wheeling his men into their position: on the part of Weber there was as little delay. The overwhelming injury to his wife and children inflicted by his own act, was too mighty to contemplate. He shook hands rapidly with his two comrades; stepped nimbly into his place; knelt down; the word of command was heard—"Lower your muskets;" instantly he dropt the fatal handkerchief with the gesture of one who prays for some incalculable blessing: and in the twinkling of an eye, sixteen bullets had lightened the heart of the poor mutineer of its whole immeasurable freight of anguish.

All the congratulations, with which they were welcomed on their return into the city, fell powerless on Rudolph's ear! Scarcely could even Charlotte's caresses affect with any pleasure the man who believed himself to have sacrificed his comrade, through collusion with a fiend.

The importunities of Charlotte prevailed over all objections which the pride of her aged father suggested against a son-in-law who had been capitally convicted. The marriage was solemnized: but at the wedding-festival, amidst the uproar of merriment, the parties chiefly concerned were not happy or tranquil. In no long time the father-in-law died, and by his death placed the young couple in a state of complete independence. But Charlotte's fortune, and the remainder of what Rudolph had inherited from his father, were speedily swallowed up by an idle

and luxurious mode of living. Rudolph now began to ill-use his wife. To escape from his own conscience, he plunged into all sorts of dissolute courses. And very remarkable it was, that, from manifesting the most violent abhorrence for every thing which could lead his thoughts to his own fortunate cast of the die, he gradually came to entertain so uncontrollable a passion for playing at dice, that he spent all his time in the company of those with whom he could turn this passion to account. His house had long since passed out of his own hands: not a soul could be found anywhere to lend him a shilling. The sickly widow of Weber and her two children, whom he had hitherto supported, lost their home and means of livelihood. And in no long space of time the same fate fell upon himself, his wife, and his child.

Too little used to labor to have any hope of improving his condition in that way, one day he bethought himself that the Medical Institute was in the habit of purchasing from poor people, during their life-time, the reversion of their bodies. To this establishment he addressed himself; and the ravages in his personal appearance and health, caused by his dissolute life, induced them the more readily to lend an ear to his proposal.

But the money thus obtained, which had been designed for the support of his wife and half-famished children, was squandered at the gaming-table. As the last dollar vanished, Schroll bit one of the dice furiously between his teeth. Just then he heard these words whispered at his ear—"Gently, brother, gently: All dice do not split in two like that on the sand hill." He looked round in agitation, but saw no trace of any one who could have uttered the words.

With dreadful imprecations on himself and these with whom he had played, he flung out of the gaming-house, homewards on his road to the wretched garret where his wife and children were awaiting his return and his succour. But here the poor creatures, tormented by hunger and cold, pressed upon him so importunately, that he had no way to deliver himself from misery but by flying from the spectacle. But whither could he go thus late at night, when his utter poverty was known in every ale-house? Roaming he knew not whither, he found himself at length in the church-yard. The moon was shining solemnly upon the quiet grave-stones, though obscured at intervals by piles of stormy clouds. Rudolph shuddered at nothing but at himself and his own existence. He strode with bursts of laughter over the dwellings of the departed; and entered a vault which gave him shelter from the icy blasts of wind, which now began to bluster more loudly than before. The moon threw her rays into the vault full upon the golden legend inscribed in the wall—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!" Schroll took up a spade that was sticking in the ground, and struck with

it furiously against the gilt letters on the wall: but they seemed indestructible; and he was going to assault them with a mattock, when suddenly a hand touched him on the shoulder, and said to him, "Gently, comrade: thy pains are all thrown away." Schroll uttered a loud exclamation of terror: for, in these words, he heard the voice of Weber, and, on turning round, recognised his whole person.

"What wouldst thou have?" asked Rudolph,— "What art thou come for?"—"To comfort thee," replied the figure, which now suddenly assumed the form and voice of the pedlar to whom Schroll was indebted for the fortunate die. "Thou hast forgotten me: and thence it is that thou art fallen into misfortune. Look up and acknowledge thy friend in need that comes only to make thee happy again."

"If *that* be thy purpose, wherefore is it that thou wearest a shape before which, of all others that have been on earth, I have most reason to shudder?"

"The reason is—because I must not allow to any man my help or my converse on too easy terms. Before ever my die was allowed to turn thy fate, I was compelled to give thee certain intimations from which thou knewest with whom it was that thou wert dealing."

"With whom, then, was it that I was dealing?" cried Schroll, staring with his eyes wide open, and his hair standing erect.

"Thou knewest, comrade, at that time—thou knowest at this moment," said the pedlar, laughing, and tapping him on the shoulder. "But what is it that thou desirest?"

Schroll struggled internally; but, overcome by his desolate condition, he said immediately—"Dice: I would have dice that shall win whenever I wish."

"Very well: but first of all stand out of the blaze of this golden writing on the wall: it is a writing that has nothing to do with thee. Here are dice: never allow them to go out of thy own possession: for *that* might bring thee into great trouble. When thou needest me, light a fire at the last stroke of the midnight hour; throw in my dice, and with loud laughter. They will crack once or twice, and then split. At that moment catch at them in the flames: but let not the moment slip or thou art lost. And let not thy courage be daunted by the sights that I cannot but send before me whensoever I appear. Lastly, avoid choosing any holy day for this work; and beware of the priest's benediction. Here, take the dice."

Schroll caught at the dice with one hand, whilst with the other he covered his eyes. When he next looked up, he was standing alone.

He now quitted the burying-ground to return as hastily as possible to the gaming-house, where the light of candles was still visible. But it was with the greatest difficulty that he ob-

tained money enough from a "friend" to enable him to make the lowest stake which the rules allowed. He found it a much easier task to persuade the company to use the dice which he had brought with him. They saw in this nothing but a very common superstition—and no possibility of any imposture, as they and he should naturally have benefited alike by the good luck supposed to accompany the dice. But the nature of the charm was—that only the possessor of the dice enjoyed their supernatural powers; and hence it was that, towards morning, Schroll reeled home, intoxicated with wine and pleasure, and laden with the money of all present, to the garret where his family were lying, half frozen and famished.

Their outward condition was immediately improved. The money which Schroll had won was sufficient not only for their immediate and most pressing wants: it was enough also to pay for a front apartment, and to leave a sum sufficient for a very considerable stake.

With this sum, and in better attire, Rudolph repaired to a gaming-house of more fashionable resort—and came home in the evening laden with gold.

He now opened a gaming establishment himself; and so much did his family improve in external appearances within a very few weeks, that the police began to keep a watchful eye over him.

This induced him to quit the city, and to change his residence continually. All the different baths of Germany he resorted to beyond other towns: but, though his dice perseveringly maintained their luck, he yet never accumulated any money. Everything was squandered upon the dissipated life which he and his family pursued.

At length at the baths of —— the matter began to take an unfortunate turn. A violent passion for a beautiful young lady whom Rudolph had attached himself to in vain at balls, concerts, and even at church, suddenly bereft him of all sense and discretion. One night, when Schroll (who now styled himself Captain Von Schrollshausen) was anticipating a master-stroke from his dice, probably for the purpose of winning the lady by the display of overflowing wealth and splendor,—suddenly they lost their virtue, and failed him without warning. Hitherto they had lost only when he willed them to lose: but, on this occasion, they failed at so critical a moment, as to lose him not only all his own money, but a good deal beside that he had borrowed.

Foaming with rage, he came home. He asked furiously after his wife: she was from home. He examined the dice attentively; and it appeared to him that they were not his own. A powerful suspicion seized upon him. Madame Von Schrollshausen had her own gaming circle as well as himself. Without betray-

ing its origin, he had occasionally given her a few specimens of the privilege attached to his dice: and she had pressed him earnestly to allow her the use of them for a single evening. It was true he never parted with them even on going to bed: but it was possible that they might have been changed whilst he was sleeping. The more he brooded upon this suspicion, the more it strengthened: from being barely possible, it became probable; from a probability it ripened into a certainty; and this certainty received the fullest confirmation at this moment, when she returned home in the gayest temper, and announced to him that she had been this night overwhelmed with good luck; in proof of which, she poured out upon the table a considerable sum in gold coin. "And now," she added laughingly, "I care no longer for your dice; nay, to tell you the truth, I would not exchange my own for them."

Rudolph, now confirmed in his suspicions, demanded the dice — as his property that had been purloined from him. She laughed and refused. He insisted with more vehemence; she retorted with warmth: both parties were irritated: and, at length, in the extremity of his wrath, Rudolph snatched up a knife and stabbed her: the knife pierced her heart: she uttered a single sob—was convulsed for a moment—and expired. "Cursed accident!" he exclaimed, when it clearly appeared, on examination, that the dice which she had in her purse were not those which he suspected himself to have lost.

No eye but Rudolph's had witnessed the murder: the child had slept on undisturbed: but circumstances betrayed it to the knowledge of the landlord; and, in the morning, he was preparing to make it public. By great offers, however, Rudolph succeeded in purchasing the man's silence: he engaged in substance to make over to the landlord a large sum of money, and to marry his daughter, with whom he had long pursued a clandestine intrigue. Agreeably to this arrangement, it was publicly notified that Madame Von Schrollshausen had destroyed herself under a sudden attack of hypochondriasis, to which she had been long subject. Some there were, undoubtedly, who chose to be skeptics on this matter; but nobody had an interest sufficiently deep in the murdered person to prompt him to a legal inquiry.

A fact, which at this time gave Rudolph far more disturbance of mind than the murder of his once beloved wife, was — the full confirmation, upon repeated experience, that his dice had forfeited their power. For he had now been a loser for two days running to so great an extent, that he was obliged to abscond on a misty night. His child, towards whom his affection increased daily, he was under the necessity of leaving with his host as a pledge for his return and fulfilment of his promises. He would not have absconded, if it had been in his power to

summon his dark counsellor forthwith: but on account of the great festival of Pentecost, which fell on the very next day, this summons was necessarily delayed for a short time. By staying he would have reduced himself to the necessity of inventing various pretexts for delay, in order to keep up his character with his creditors: whereas, when he returned with a sum of money sufficient to meet his debts, all suspicions would be silenced at once.

In the metropolis of an adjacent territory, to which he resorted so often that he kept lodgings there constantly, he passed Whitsunday with impatience—and resolved on the succeeding night to summon and converse with his counsellor. Impatient, however, as he was of any delay, he did not on that account feel the less anxiety as the hour of midnight approached. Though he was quite alone in his apartments, and had left his servant behind at the baths,—yet long before midnight he fancied that he heard footsteps and whisperings round about him. The purpose he was meditating, that he had regarded till now as a matter of indifference, now displayed itself in its whole monstrous shape. Moreover, he remembered that his wicked counsellor had himself thought it necessary to exhort him to courage, which at present he felt greatly shaken. However, he had no choice. As he was enjoined, therefore, with the last stroke of twelve, he set on fire the wood which lay ready split upon the hearth, and threw the dice into the flames, with a loud laughter that echoed frightfully from the empty hall and staircases. Confused, and half-stifled by the smoke which accompanied the roaring flames, he stood still for a few minutes, when suddenly all the surrounding objects seemed changed, and he found himself transported to his father's house. His father was lying on his death-bed just as he had actually beheld him. He had upon his lips the very same expression of supplication and anguish with which he had at that time striven to address him. Once again he stretched out his arms in love and pity to his son; and once again he seemed to expire in the act.

Schroll was agitated by the picture, which called up and re-animated in his memory, with the power of a mighty tormentor, all his honorable plans and prospects from that innocent period of his life. At this moment, the dice cracked for the first time; and Schroll turned his face towards the flames. A second time the smoke stifled the light, in order to reveal a second picture. He saw himself on the day before the scene of the sand-hill sitting in his dungeon. The clergyman was with him. From the expression of his countenance, he appeared to be just saying—“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” Rudolph thought of the disposition in which he then was—of the hopes which the clergyman had raised in him—and of the feeling which he then had that he was still worthy to be reunited to his father, or had

become worthy by bitter penitence. The next fracture of the die disturbed the scene—but to substitute one that was not at all more consolatory. For now appeared a den of thieves, in which the unhappy widow of Weber was cursing her children, who—left without support, without counsel, without protection, had taken to evil courses. In the background stood the bleeding father of these ruined children, one hand stretched out towards Schroll with a menacing gesture, and the other lifted towards heaven with a record of impeachment against him.

At the third splitting of the dice, out of the bosom of the smoke arose the figure of his murdered wife, who seemed to chase him from one corner of the room to another, until at length she came and took a seat at the fireplace; by the side of which, as Rudolph now observed with horror, his buried father and the unhappy Weber had stretched themselves; and they carried on together a low and noiseless whispering and moaning that agitated him with a mysterious horror.

After long and hideous visions, Rudolph beheld the flames grow weaker and weaker. He approached. The figures that stood round about held up their hands in a threatening attitude. A moment later, and the time was gone forever; and Rudolph, as his false friend had asserted, was a lost man. With the courage of despair he plunged through the midst of the threatening figures, and snatched at the glowing dice—which were no sooner touched than they split asunder, with a dreadful sound, before which the apparitions vanished in a body.

The evil counsellor appeared on this occasion in the dress of a grave-digger, and asked with a snorting sound—"What wouldst thou from me?"

"I would remind you of your promise," answered Schroll, stepping back with awe: your dice have lost their power."

"Through whose fault?"

Rudolph was silent, and covered his eyes from the withering glances of the fiendish being who was gazing upon him.

"Thy foolish desires led thee in chase of the beautiful maiden into the church: my words were forgotten; and the benediction, against which I warned thee, disarmed the dice of their power. In future, observe my directions better."

So saying, he vanished; and Schroll found three new dice upon the hearth.

After such scenes, sleep was not to be thought of; and Rudolph resolved, if possible, to make trial of his dice this very night. The ball at the hotel over the way, to which he had been invited, and from which the steps of the waltzers were still audible, appeared to present a fair opportunity. Thither he repaired; but not without some anxiety, lest some of the noises in his own lodgings should have reached the houses over the way. He was happy to find this fear unfounded. Every thing

appeared as if calculated only for *his* senses: for when he inquired with assumed carelessness what great explosion *that* was which occurred about midnight, nobody acknowledged to have heard it.

The dice, also, he was happy to find, answered his expectations. He found a company engaged at play: and by the break of day he had met with so much luck, that he was immediately able to travel back to the baths, and to redeem his child and his word of honor.

In the baths he now made as many new acquaintances as the losses were important which he had lately sustained. He was reputed one of the wealthiest cavaliers in the place; and many who had designs upon him in consequence of this reputed wealth, willingly lost money to him to favor their own schemes; so that, in a single month he gained sums which would have established him as a man of fortune. Under countenance of this repute, and as a widower, no doubt he might now have made successful advances to the young lady whom he had formerly pursued: for her father had an exclusive regard to property, and would have overlooked morals and respectability in any candidate for his daughter's hand. But with the largest offers of money he could not purchase his freedom from the contract made with his landlord's daughter—a woman of very disreputable character. In fact, six months after the death of his first wife, he was married to her.

By the unlimited profusion of money with which his second wife sought to wash out the stains upon her honor, Rudolph's new-raised property was as speedily squandered. To part from her was one of the wishes which lay nearest his heart: he had, however, never ventured to express it a second time before his father-in-law: for on the single occasion when he had hinted at such an intention, that person had immediately broken out into the most dreadful threats. The murder of his first wife was the chain which bound him to his second. The boy whom his first wife had left him, closely as he resembled her in features and in the bad traits of her character, was his only comfort—if, indeed, his gloomy and perturbed mind would allow him at any time to taste of comfort.

To preserve this boy from the evil influences of the many bad examples about him, he had already made an agreement with a man of distinguished abilities, who was to have superintended his education in his own family. But all was frustrated. Madame Von Schrollshausen, whose love of pomp and display led her eagerly to catch at every pretext for creating a *fête*, had invited a party on the evening before the young boy's intended departure. The time which was not occupied in the eating-room was spent at the gaming-table, and dedicated to the dice, of whose extraordinary powers the owner was at this time avail-

ing himself with more zeal than usual—having just invested all his disposable money in the purchase of a landed estate. One of the guests having lost very considerable sums in an uninterrupted train of ill luck, threw the dice, in his vexation, with such force upon the table, that one of them fell down. The attendants searched for it on the floor; and the child also crept about in quest of it: not finding it, he rose; and, in rising, stepped upon it, lost his balance, and fell with such violence against the edge of the stove—that he died in a few hours of the injury inflicted on the head.

This accident made the most powerful impression upon the father. He recapitulated the whole of his life from the first trial he had made of the dice. From them had arisen all his misfortunes. In what way could he liberate himself from their accursed influence?—Revolving this point, and in the deepest distress of mind, Schroll wandered out towards nightfall, and strolled through the town. Coming to a solitary bridge in the outskirts, he looked down from the battlements upon the gloomy depths of the waters below, which seemed to regard him with looks of sympathy and strong fascination. “So be it then!” he exclaimed, and sprang over the railing. But, instead of finding his grave in the waters, he felt himself below seized powerfully by the grasp of a man—whom, from his scornful laugh, he recognised as his evil counsellor. The man bore him to the shore, and said—“No, no, my good friend: he that once enters into a league with me—him I shall deliver from death even in his own despite.”

Half crazy with despair, the next morning Schroll crept out of the town with a loaded pistol. Spring was abroad—spring flowers, spring breezes, and nightingales: they were all abroad, but not for *him* or *his* delight. A crowd of itinerant tradesmen passed him, who were on their road to a neighboring fair. One of them, observing his dejected countenance with pity, attached himself to his side, and asked him in a tone of sympathy what was the matter. Two others of the passers-by Schroll heard distinctly saying—“Faith, I should not like for my part to walk alone with such an ill-looking fellow.” He darted a furious glance at the men, separated from his pitying companion with a fervent pressure of his hand, and struck off into a solitary track of the forest. In the first retired spot, he fired the pistol: and behold! the man who had spoken to him with so much kindness lies stretched in his blood, and he himself is without a wound. At this moment, while staring half-unconsciously at the face of the murdered man, he feels himself seized from be-

* It may be necessary to inform some readers, who have never lived far enough to the south to have any personal knowledge of the nightingale, that this bird sings in the daytime as well as the night.

hind. Already he seems to himself in the hands of the public executioner. Turning round, however, he hardly knows whether to feel pleasure or pain on seeing his evil suggester in the dress of a grave-digger. "My friend," said the grave-digger, "if you cannot be content to wait for death until I send it, I must be forced to end with dragging you to *that* from which I began by saving you—a public execution. But think not thus, or by any other way, to escape me. After death, thou wilt assuredly be mine again."

"Who, then," said the unhappy man, "who is the murderer of the poor traveller?"

"Who? why, who but yourself? was it not yourself that fired the pistol?"

"Ay; but at my own head."

The fiend laughed in a way that made Schroll's flesh creep on his bones. "Understand this, friend, that he whose fate I hold in my hands cannot anticipate it by his own act. For the present, begone, if you would escape the scaffold. To oblige you once more, I shall throw a veil over this murder."

Thereupon, the grave-digger set about making a grave for the corpse, whilst Schroll wandered away—more for the sake of escaping the hideous presence in which he stood, than with any view to his own security from punishment.

Seeing by accident a prisoner under arrest at the guard-house, Schroll's thoughts reverted to his own confinement. "How happy," said he, "for me and for Charlotte—had I then refused to purchase life on such terms, and had better laid to heart the counsel of my good spiritual adviser!"—Upon this a sudden thought struck him—that he would go and find out the old clergyman, and would unfold to him his wretched history and situation. He told his wife that some private affairs required his attendance for a few days at the town of ———. But, say what he would, he could not prevail on her to desist from accompanying him.

On the journey, his chief anxiety was, lest the clergyman, who was already advanced in years at the memorable scene of the sand hill, might now be dead. But, at the very entrance of the town, he saw him walking in the street, and immediately felt himself more composed in mind than he had done for years. The venerable appearance of the old man confirmed him still more in his resolution of making a full disclosure to him of his whole past life: one only transaction, the murder of his first wife, he thought himself justified in concealing; since, with all his penitence for it, that act was now beyond the possibility of reparation.

For a long time, the pious clergyman refused all belief to Schroll's narrative; but being at length convinced that he had a wounded spirit to deal with, and not a disordered intellect, he

exerted himself to present all those views of religious consolation which his philanthropic character and his long experience suggested to him as likely to be effectual. Eight days' conversation with the clergyman restored Schroll to the hopes of a less miserable future. But the good man admonished him at parting to put away from himself whatsoever could in any way tend to support his unhallowed connexion.

In this direction, Schroll was aware that the dice were included: and he resolved firmly that his first measure on returning home should be to bury in an inaccessible place these accursed implements, that could not but bring mischief to every possessor. On entering the inn, he was met by his wife, who was in the highest spirits, and laughing profusely. He inquired the cause. "No," said she: "you refused to communicate your motive for coming hither, and the nature of your business for the last week: I, too, shall have my mysteries. As to your leaving me in solitude at an inn, *that* is a sort of courtesy which marriage naturally brings with it: but that you should have travelled hither for no other purpose than that of trifling away your time in the company of an old tedious parson, *that* (you will allow me to say) is a caprice which seems scarcely worth the money it will cost."

"Who, then, has told you that I have passed my time with an old parson?" said the astonished Schroll.

"Who told me? Why, just let me know what your business was with the parson, and I'll let you know, in turn, who it was that told me. So much I will assure you, however, now—that the cavalier who was my informant is a thousand times handsomer, and a more interesting companion, than an old dotard who is standing at the edge of the grave."

All the efforts of Madame Von Schrollshausen to irritate the curiosity of her husband proved ineffectual to draw from him his secret. The next day, on their return homewards, she repeated her attempts. But he parried them all with firmness. A more severe trial to his firmness was prepared for him in the heavy bills which his wife presented to him on his reaching home. Her expenses in clothes and in jewels had been so profuse, that no expedient remained to Schroll but that of selling, without delay, the landed estate he had so lately purchased. A declaration to this effect was very ill received by his wife. "Sell the estate?" said she: "what, sell the sole resource I shall have to rely on when you are dead? And for what reason, I should be glad to know; when a very little of the customary luck of your dice will enable you to pay off these trifles? And whether the bills be paid to-day or to-morrow cannot be of any very great importance." Upon this, Schroll declared with firmness that he never meant to play again. "Not play again!"

exclaimed his wife, "pooh! pooh! you make me blush for you! So, then, I suppose it's all true, as was said, that scruples of conscience drove you to the old rusty parson? and that he enjoined, as a penance, that you should abstain from gaming? I was told as much: but I refused to believe it; for, in your circumstances, the thing seemed too senseless and irrational."

"My dear girl," said Schroll, "consider"—

"Consider! what's the use of considering? what is there to consider about?" interrupted Madame Von Schrollshausen: and, recollecting the gay cavalier whom she had met at the inn, she now, for the first time, proposed a separation herself. "Very well," said her husband, "I am content." "So am I," said his father-in-law, who joined them at that moment. "But take notice that, first of all, I must have paid over to me an adequate sum of money for the creditable support of my daughter: else"—

Here he took Schroll aside; and the old threat of revealing the murder so utterly disheartened him, that at length, in despair, he consented to his terms.

Once more, therefore, the dice were to be tried; but only for the purpose of accomplishing the separation: *that* over, Schroll resolved to seek a livelihood in any other way, even if it were as a day laborer. The stipulated sum was at length all collected within a few hundred dollars; and Schroll was already looking out for some old disused well into which he might throw the dice, and then have it filled up: for even a river seemed to him a hiding place not sufficiently secure for such instruments of misery.

Remarkable it was, on the very night when the last arrears were to be obtained of his father-in-law's demand,—a night which Schroll had anticipated with so much bitter anxiety,—that he became unusually gloomy and dejected. He was particularly disturbed by the countenance of a stranger, who, for several days running, had lost considerable sums. The man called himself Stutz; but he had a most striking resemblance to his old comrade, Weber, who had been shot at the sand-hill; and differed indeed in nothing but in the advantage of blooming youth. Scarcely had he leisure to recover from the shock which this spectacle occasioned, when a second occurred. About midnight, another man, whom nobody knew, came up to the gaming-table—and interrupted the play by recounting an event which he represented as having just happened. A certain man, he said, had made a covenant with some person or other, that they call the Evil One—or what is it you call him? and by means of this covenant he had obtained a steady run of good luck at play.

"Well, sir (he went on), and, would you believe it, the other

day he began to repent of this covenant; my gentleman wanted to rat,—he wanted to rat, sir. Only, first of all, he resolved privately to make up a certain sum of money. Ah! the poor idiot! he little knew whom he had to deal with: the Evil One, as they choose to call him, was not a man to let himself be swindled in that manner. No, no, my good friend. I saw—I mean, the Evil One saw—what was going on betimes; and he secured the swindler just as he fancied himself on the point of pocketing the last arrears of the sum wanted.”

The company began to laugh so loudly at this pleasant fiction, as they conceived it, that Madame Von Schrollshausen was attracted from the adjoining room. The story was repeated to her: and she was the more delighted with it, because in the relater she recognised the gay cavalier whom she had met at the inn. Everybody laughed again, excepting two persons—Stutz and Schroll. The first had again lost all the money in his purse; and the second was so confounded by the story, that he could not forbear staring with fixed eyes on the stranger, who stood over against him. His consternation increased when he perceived that the stranger's countenance seemed to alter at every moment; and that nothing remained unchanged in it, except the cold expression of inhuman scorn with which he perseveringly regarded himself.

At length, he could endure this no longer: and he remarked, therefore, upon Stutz's again losing a bet, that it was now late; that Mr. Stutz was too much in a run of bad luck; and that, on these accounts, he would defer the further pursuit of their play until another day. And, thereupon, he put the dice into his pocket.

“Stop!” said the strange cavalier! and the voice froze Schroll with horror; for he knew too well to whom that dreadful tone, and those fiery eyes, belonged.

“Stop!” he said again: “produce your dice!” And tremblingly Schroll threw them upon the table.

“Ah! I thought as much,” said the stranger; “they are loaded dice!” So saying, he called for a hammer, and struck one of them in two. “See!” said he to Stutz, holding out to him the broken dice, which, in fact, seemed loaded with lead. “Stop, vile impostor!” exclaimed the young man, as Schroll was preparing to quit the room in the greatest confusion; and he threw the dice at him, one of which lodged in his right eye. The tumult increased; the police came in; and Stutz was apprehended, as Schroll's wound assumed a very dangerous appearance.

Next day, Schroll was in a violent fever. He asked repeatedly for Stutz. But Stutz had been committed to close confinement; it having been found that he had travelled with false passes. He now confessed that he was one of the sons of the

mutineer Weber; that his sickly mother had died soon after his father's execution; and that himself and his brother, left without the control of guardians, and without support, had taken to bad courses.

On hearing this report, Schroll rapidly worsened; and he unfolded to a young clergyman his whole unfortunate history. About midnight, he sent again in great haste for the clergyman. He came: but, at sight of him, Schroll stretched out his hands in extremity of horror, and waved him away from his presence; but, before his signals were complied with, the wretched man had expired in convulsions.

From this horror at the sight of the young clergyman, and from the astonishment of the clergyman himself, on arriving and hearing that he had already been seen in the sick-room, it was inferred that his figure had been assumed for fiendish purposes. The dice and the strange cavalier disappeared at the same time with their wretched victim; and were seen no more

THE GORED HUNTSMAN.

If thou be hurt with hart,
It brings thee to thy bier;
But barber's hand will bear's hurt heal,
Thereof thou need' st not fear. *Old Rhyme.*

THE night was drawing on apace. The evening mist, as it arose from the ground, began to lose its thin white wreaths in the deep shadows of the woods. Kochenstein, separated from his companions of the chase, and weary with his unsuccessful efforts to rejoin them, became more and more desirous of discovering in what direction his route lay. But there was no track visible, at least by that uncertain and lessening light, the mazes of which could guide him to his home. He raised his silver-mouthed bugle to his lips, and winded a loud and sustained blast. A distant echo plaintively repeated the notes. The Baron listened for other answer with the attention his situation required, but in vain.

"This will never do," said he, casting the reins on his horse's neck: "see, good Reinzaum, if thy wit can help thy master at this pinch; it has done so before now." The animal seemed to understand and appreciate the confidence placed in him. Pricking up his before drooping ears, and uttering a wild neigh, he turned from the direction his rider had hitherto pursued, and commenced a new rout at an animated trot. For awhile the path promised well; the narrow defile, down which it lay between rows of gigantic larch and twisted oaks, seemed manifestly intended to conduct to some more extended opening. But on reaching its termination the horse suddenly stopped. The glimmering light that yet remained just enabled the Baron to perceive the impervious enclosure of thickly planted trees, that surrounded the little, natural amphitheatre at which he had arrived.

"This is worse and worse, Reinzaum," exclaimed the disappointed rider, as he cast a disconsolate glance upwards. There was not a single star visible, to diminish the deep gloom in

which the woods were enveloped. "Guetiger himmel! that I should be lost in my own barony, and not a barelegged schelm to point out my road!"

Weary of remaining in one spot, he rode round the enclosure in which he found himself thus unpleasantly placed. He repeated the same exercise, gazing wistfully on every side, though the darkness was now almost too great to discover to him the massy trunks, under the branches of which he rode. At length he stopped suddenly.

"Is that a light," said he inwardly, "that glimmers through the—no, 't is gone. Ach Gott! it comes again! If I could but reach it!"

Again he winded his horn, and followed the blast with a most potent halloo. His labor was in vain, the light remained stationary. The Baron began to swear. He had been educated at Wurtzburg, and for a Swabian swore in excellent German.

He was perplexed whether to remain where he was, with this provoking light before him, and the probable chance of remaining all night in the woods; or to abandon his steed, and endeavor to penetrate through the trees to the spot whence the light issued. Neither of these alternatives was precisely to his liking. In the former case he must abide the cold air and damp mist till morning; in the other he incurred the risk of losing his steed, should he not be able to retrace his way to the spot. Indecision however was not the fault of his character; and, after a minute's hesitation, he sprung from his horse, fastened him to a tree, and began to explore the wood in the direction of the light.

The difficulties he encountered were not few. The Baron was a portly personage and occasionally found a difficulty in squeezing through interstices, where a worse fed man would have passed ungrazed. Briers and thorns were not wanting, and the marshy ground completed the catalogue of annoyances. The Baron toiled and toiled, extricating first one leg and then the other from the deep entanglement in which each was by turns plunged, while the object of his attention seemed as distant as ever. His patience was exhausted. Many and emphatic were the figures of his inward rhetoric. Of one fact he became convinced, that all the evil influences of the stars had this night conspired to concentrate their power on one unlucky wight, and that this wight was no other than the Baron Von Kochenstein.

But the Baron was not a man to be easily diverted from his purpose, and he labored amain. His hands were bruised with the branches he had torn down when they impeded his course, and the heat drops on his brow, raised by his exertions, mixed

with the chill and heavy night dew that fell around him. At length a desperate effort, almost accompanied with the loss of his boots, placed him free from the morass through which he had waded. He stamped and shook his feet when on dry land with the satisfaction that such a deliverance inspires. To add to his joy, he perceived, that the light he had so painfully sought was not more than fifty ells distant.

A moment or two brought him to the door of a low dwelling over-shadowed by a beetling, penthouse-like roof. As far as he could discern, the building was of considerable antiquity. The portal was of stone, and the same material composed the frames of the windows, which were placed far from the ground, and from which proceeded the light he had sought.

Our huntsman lost little time in applying to the door, at first with a gentle knock, which being disregarded increased to a thundering reverberation of blows. The gentle and the rude knocks were of equal avail. He desisted from his occupation to listen awhile, but not a sound met his ear.

"This is strange, by the mass," said the Baron: "the house must be inhabited, else whence the light? And though they slept like the seven sleepers, my blows must have aroused them. Let us try another mode—the merry horn must awaken them, if aught can move their sluggish natures." And once more resorting to his bugle he sounded a *réveillée*. A jolly cheering note it would have been at another time, but in the middle of the dull night it seemed most unfit. A screech owl's note would have harmonised better.

"I hear them now," said he of the bugle, "praised be the saints." On this as on other occasions, however, the saints got more thanks than their due. An old raven disturbed by the Baron's notes, flapping her wings in flight, had deceived his ears. She was unseen in the congenial darkness, but her hoarse croakings filled the air as she flew.

Irritated at the delay, the Baron made a formal declaration of war. In as loud a voice as he could he demanded entrance, and threatened in default of accordance to break open the door. A loud laugh as from a dozen revellers was the immediate reply.

A piece of the trunk of a young tree lay near the Baron; he took it up and dashed it with all his strength against the door. It was a mighty blow, but, though the very building shook before it, the strong gate yielded not.

Before Kochenstein could repeat the attack, a hoarse voice, seemingly proceeding from one of the windows, greeted his ears.

"Begone with thy noise," it said, "else I will loose the dog on thee."

"I will break the hound's neck, and diminish his caitiff master by the head, if thou open not the door this instant. What! is this the way to treat a benighted traveller? Open, I say, and quickly."

It seemed that the inmate was about to put his threat in execution for the low deep growl of a wolf-dog was the only answer to the Baron's remonstrance. He drew his short hunting sword and planted himself firmly before the door. He waited awhile, but all was silent.

He had again recourse to his battering ram. The door resisted marvellously, but it became evident, that it could not long withstand such a siege. As the strong oak cracked and groaned, the Baron redoubled his efforts. At length the voice he had before heard again accosted him.

"Come in, then, if thou wilt. Fool! to draw down thy fate on thee." The bolts were undrawn. "Lift up the latch."

The Baron troubled not himself to inquire the meaning of the ominous words of the speaker, but obeyed the direction given, and entered. He found himself in a spacious apartment that appeared to comprise the whole tenement. He looked around for the foes he expected to meet, and started back with astonishment.

The only occupant of the apartment was a lady, the rich elegance of whose dress would have attracted admiration, had not that feeling been engrossed by her personal loveliness. Her white silken garment clung to a form modelled to perfection, and was fastened at her waist by a diamond clasp of singular shape, for it represented a couchant stag. A similar ornament confined the long tresses of her hair, the jetty blackness of which was as perfect as the opposite hue of the brow they shaded. Her face was somewhat pale, and her features melancholy, but of exquisitely tender beauty.

She arose, as the Baron entered, from the velvet couch on which she was seated, and with a slight but courteous smile motioned him to a seat opposite to her own. A table was ready spread by its side, laden with refreshments. He explained the cause of his coming, and apologized with great fervency for his rude mode of demanding admission.

"You are welcome," said the lady again, pointing to the vacant seat. Nothing could be more ordinary than these three words, but the sound of her voice thrilled through the hearer's sense into his soul. She resumed her seat, and Kochenstein took the place offered him. He gazed around, and was convinced, to his amazement, that they were alone. Whence then the voice, with which he had held converse? and whence the uproarious laugh, which had first assailed his hearing? There could not, he felt certain, be another chamber under

that roof capable of containing such a number of laughers. The dog too, whose savage growl had put him on his guard, where was he?—

The Baron was however too genuine a huntsman, to suffer either surprise or admiration to prevent him from doing justice to the excellent meal before him, and to which his hostess invited him, declining however to partake with her guest. He eat and drank therefore, postponing his meditations, except an anxious thought on the situation of his steed. "Poor Reinzaum," thought he, thou wilt suffer for my refreshment. A warm stable were fitter by far for thee than the midnight damps that chill thee." And the Baron looked with infinite satisfaction on the blazing hearth, the ruddy gleams of which almost eclipsed the softer light of the brilliant lamp that hung from the ceiling.

As his appetite became satisfied, his curiosity revived. Once or twice as he raised his eyes he met the bright black ones of his entertainer. They were beautiful; yet, without knowing why, the Baron shrunk from their glance. They had not the pensive softness of her features. The expression was one he could not divine, but would not admit that he feared.

He filled his goblet, and in the most courteous terms drank the lady's health. She bowed her head in acknowledgement, and held to him a small golden cup richly chased. The Baron filled it,—she drank to him, though but wetting her lip with the liquor. She replaced the cup and rose from her seat.

"This room," she said, "must be your lodging for the night. Other I cannot offer you.—Farewell."

The Baron was about to speak. She interrupted him. "I know what you would say—Yes, we *shall* meet again. Take this flower," she added, breaking a rose from a wreath that twined among her hair in full bloom, though September had commenced, and the flowers of the gardens and the fields were long since dead, "take this flower. On the day that it fades you see me once more." She opened a small door in the wainscoting, hitherto unseen by the Baron, and closed it after her before he could utter a word.

The Baron felt no disposition to sleep, and paced about the room revolving the events of the evening. The silence of the hour was favorable to such an employment, and the soft carpets that covered the floor prevented even his own footsteps from being heard.

Wearied with his fruitless ruminations, he was beginning to relieve himself from his lonely want of occupation, by taking note more minutely than before of the handsome though antique furniture of the apartment, when his attention was claimed by the sounds of a harp. A few bars only had been played, when the music was sweetened by a voice the softest he had ever heard.

The words of the song applied too strikingly to himself to escape his ear.

Wo to him, whose footsteps rude
Break my fairy solitude;
Wo to him, whose fated grasp
Dares undo my portal clasp;
Wo to him, whose rash advance
Dooms him to my blighting glance;
In the greenwood shall he lie,
On the bloody heather die.

The voice and music ceased together, leaving the Baron oppressed with unwonted fears. "And I must see her again! would this rose would bloom forever!" He seated himself, and ere long he fell into a troubled sleep.

When he awoke, the ashes on the hearth were sparkless, and the morning, casting away her gray mantle, was beginning to dart her gayer beams through the narrow windows. He perceived, with surprise, that the door through which his hostess had retired was ajar, yet she was not in the apartment, and from the situation in which he had sat she could not have passed through the door by which he had entered. He arose, and walked about with as much noise as he could make, with the object of apprising the lady of the dwelling, that the wainscot door was open. After continuing this for a length of time his curiosity increased. He ventured to look through the doorway. It opened into a small closet, which was entirely empty.

He had already witnessed too much to feel any great additional astonishment at this discovery. "Besides," said he to himself, "her words spoke but of a meeting at a future day. Why therefore should I expect her now?"—

He opened the entrance door, and found his horse, which he had left tied in the wood, ready for departure, and apparently in excellent condition. "Woman or witch," he exclaimed, "I owe her a good turn for this—Now, Reinzaum, keep up thy credit." And springing on his horse's back he pursued a track, that seemed to lead in the direction he wished; and without aid of whip or spur was at Kochenstein in an hour.

His first act was to place the rose in a vase of water. Day by day he visited it, and found its bloom unabated. Three months passed away without any visible alteration in the beauty of the flower. The Baron became less sensible of the remembrances connected with it, and gazed on it with indifference. He even displayed it to the inmates of his castle, and among others, to his only daughter, the death of whose mother had left Kochenstein a widower. Frederica was in her seventh year, and within a few days of its completion. To her earnest intreaties for the flower, her father promised it should be hers on her

birthday. The child was overjoyed at the idea of a present, to which much importance was attached in her eyes, for the ever-blooming rose was the talk of the whole castle; and every human creature in it, except its lord, offered many conjectures respecting the flower, all very ingenious, and all very absurd.

On the morning of his daughter's birthday the rose was dead. The Baron Von Kochenstein, though a man of courage and thirty-two quarterings, changed color when he beheld the faded flower. Without speaking a word he mounted Reinzaum, and galloped off at the rate of four German miles an hour.

He had ridden some half hour, when he saw before him a stag, the finest he had ever beheld. It was prancing on the frosty ground, and throwing aloft its many-tined antlers in proud disdain of the meaner brutes of the earth. At the approach of the Baron, it fled. In pure distraction of spirits, and in that dread of his own thoughts, which prompts a man to any thing to avoid himself, Kochenstein pursued, though unattended by a single hound. The stag seemed wind-footed. Reinzaum followed like a noble horse as he was.

Through glade and copse, over hill and plain, the Baron chased the lordly stag. At length it abated its speed near the side of a transparent pool, in the midst of which a fountain threw up its beautiful column of waters. The stag halted, and turned to gaze on its pursuer. For the first time Kochenstein applied his spur to the quivering flank of his steed, and grasped his hunting sword. A moment brought him to the side of the quarry: ere another had elapsed, a stroke from its branching antlers brought him to the ground. The steed fled in dismay. In vain did Kochenstein endeavor to avert his impending fate. With all the strength of terror he grasped the left horn of the stag, as it bended against its prostrate victim. The struggle was but for an instant, and a branch of the other antler pierced the Baron's side.

No sooner was the stroke inflicted, than the rage which had possessed the stag seemed wholly abated. It offered not to trample on the defenceless man, or to repeat the blow. Gazing awhile on its work it turned away, plunged into the waters of the fountain, and was lost from sight in the overwhelming flood.

Enfeebled as he was, for the blood gushed in torrents from his side, the Baron half raised himself up to look on the closing waters. Something in the stag's gaze awoke associations, that carried his mind back to the events of a few months ago. While he gazed on the fountain, the column of its jet divided, then sunk, and ceased to play. A figure appeared from the midst. It glided across the pool and approached the Baron. A lady stood beside him. She was clad in robes of white, and her

head was girt with a wreath of faded flowers. Her left brow was spotted with recent blood. The Baron shuddered at her glance, still more at her voice, for he knew too well the soft tone in which she sang these lines.

To my plighted promise true,
Once again I meet thy view;
Now my garland's roses fade,
And thy rashness' debt is paid.
Sud the fate, and dark the doom,
That led thee to my secret home:
In the greenwood thou art lying,
On the bloody heather dying!

The last sounds mingled with the rush of the fountain as it rose again, when, retreating on the waters, the songstress sank into their embrace. Her last notes had fallen on the ears of the Baron. The rush of the waters was unheard by him; for when the song ceased, he was no more.—*The Keepsake.*

THE NIKKUR HOLL.

In one of the outer Skerries of the Shetland Islands there dwelt many years ago, two fishermen, who, from their having both been left when young without parents or protectors, had formed an intimacy which subsisted throughout their lives. By their joint exertions they had managed to possess themselves of a boat, which led to a mutual good will or partnership, extending itself over all their other property in trade; for, as each inherited the cabin of his ancestors, there were two separate domestic establishments, though these existed more in appearance than reality. The difference in the ages of this pair was not great, but their persons and tempers were as unlike as a sealgh and a sillock. Petie Winwig was a thickset, Dutch-built, heavy-headed calf, with a broad, swollen, grinning countenance. His cheeks rose like two lumps of blubber on each side of his nose, almost concealing that, as well as his little eyes, when he laughed. A perpetual smile of good humour and acquiescence sat upon his face, and his well fattened limbs and body showed that care and discontent never prevented his stomach's doing its duty in an able manner. If, instead of having been born in this needy land, he had been the son of an English trader, he would have become one of those sleek, oily, fullbottomed swabbers, whom I have seen marching down Wapping High Street as if they were heaving an anchor at every step; and who, when they come aboard to look after stores, oblige us to lay a double plank from the quay to the gangway, for fear they should snap a good two inch deal asunder with their weight.

"Ay!" said Captain Shafton, "I know one who could raise a ton at least—perhaps you have seen him—old Fodder?"

"Fat Fodder!" cried Shipley, laughing, "I know him well—they say he measures three yards round the waist. I have seen the watermen refuse to take him across the river, for fear of swamping their boats. I wanted him to let them tow him astern, like a dead fish, for there would be no fear of his sinking."

"I can tell you a merry jest of old Fodder," said the first mate, "if you'll put me in mind of him another night—at present I'll continue the laird's story."

Petie Winwig was not only fat, he was lazy and sleepy; and, had not his station compelled him to daily exertions and noctur-

nal watchings, he would have been the greatest though the most harmless drone in the islands. On the other hand, his associate and partner was a perfect wasp, both in appearance and activity. He was "a lean and hungry looking" rogue, a complete "spare Cassius" in his way. His figure was tall and bony, with a length of arm fit for a king, and an eye as quick as a "donkey's." His looks were prying and inquisitive, and the shrewdness of his features was greatly heightened by a long and hooked nose, which obtained for him amongst his countrymen, who had been, (as most of them have,) in the Greenland seas, the designation of the Mallemak.* This title he indeed well sustained, for he was as rapacious, and as constantly on the wing, as that unwearied bird; but he might as justly have been called a Solan, or a pelican, for if he could not poise himself in the air and plunge down, like one of them on a shoal of fishes, he knew no bounds to his desire to obtain them; nor would the possession of all the inhabitants of the deep have satisfied his covetousness. His real name was Daniel, but he was most commonly called Spiel Trosk, the hardest driver of a bargain who ever brought goods to Lerwick; and, if he did not openly cheat and delude his customers, it was only because he had not been brought up according to the newest and most liberal system of education. He was, indeed, as much in the dark in this particular, as if he had lived through the whole of one of the dark ages, and though Petie Winwig, his comrade, as well from indolence as from stupidity, never questioned his dealings, but left the management of the money entirely in his hands without suspicion, he was not enlightened enough to think of swindling him. This ignorance was indeed deplorable; for Petie preferred sitting in doors, making fishing lines and mending nets, to plying in the market, and was, besides, fully convinced both of his own incapacity for business, and of his companion's talents; so that, but for this want of illumination, Spiel might have bilked him out of the profits of their mutual labors. There were, however, no unfair dealings between them, but, on the contrary, perfect confidence and friendship. They tilled one plot of ground, and sowed it with the same seed; they assisted each other in digging peat, and in making or repairing every shed or utensil which the necessities of either required; and they knew no need of asking when they wished to borrow. In fact, the division of their huts was the only distinction that existed between them, and as these were situated close together, on a slope lying under the lee of a rocky hill, apart from the rest of the village, this separation was merely nominal.

To their lonely and isolated situation may perhaps be traced the commencement of their union; and in such islands, where

* Pronounced "Mollymawk."

every want beyond the capacity of the individual to supply, must be obviated by the assistance of a neighbor, close intimacies must necessarily be produced. Similarity of temper and inclination may be essential to matrimonial connexions, but the friendships of either sex exist most strongly between those of different dispositions and pursuits; and he who considers that jealousy, envy, and avarice, are the rocks on which most friendships are wrecked, will not be at a loss for the cause.

The love of gain, which Spiel Trosk nourished as the dearest affection of his heart, increased, like all other inordinate desires, in strength and magnitude, till it became a monster. He grew discontented with the spare profits of his occupation, a creel of sillocks brought him but a trifle, hundreds of ling and tusk were sold without filling his purse, and the mittens and caps, which he and Petie knitted at spare hours, or whilst watching their lines, hardly repaid the cost and the labor, and to dig and carry peat was absolute waste of time.—In fact, his thoughts were directed towards obtaining large sums of money, such as he had heard were amassed by the southrons, whose ships passed occasionally before his eyes. He had sailed in a Greenlandman, in his youth, and he now dreamed of the wealth the owner must have possessed to fit out such a vessel; he thought of the shoals of bottle-noses he had seen killed in his native coes, and he calculated the produce which the laird had enjoyed—Money became the only theme of his thoughts, his idol, and he might be said to worship Mammon in his heart. At length he became possessed with a strange idea, he fancied that he was destined to be rich—not rich like Magnus Horrick, the fish salter, who traded to Spain; nor like Davis Steinson, the spirit dealer; but rich as Gilbert Maclure of Leith, who, it was said, could buy all Shetland; or as a merchant of London, whose ships came yearly to Lerwick, on their way to the whale fishery, and returned, in their homeward course, laden with the ransom of a monarch.

For some time the idea which Spiel had conceived, of his approaching state of affluence, was of great benefit to the firm of Winwig and Trosk; for the fisherman had believed that his riches were to be the result of unparalleled exertion and success. He had accordingly become more energetic than ever, and he began to attract much notice at this period, from his constantly going about in search of gain. He knew no rest by land or by sea, his nets and his lines were always in the water, and his fish were never wanting in the market. Petie now was of greater importance than he had ever been before, and his hours were well engaged in netting and twisting lines; for Spiel had doubled his demand for tackle, and employed two sets of fishing gear instead of one.

But it was not from fish only that Trosk expected to obtain his wealth; he became a speculator, and at the close of the

summer bought the surplus grain of his neighbors, and added it to an extraordinary quantity which he and Winwig had raised by their own exertions. This he intended to carry in his boat to the surrounding islands, when corn might be dear, and he talked of stretching over to Orkney, if he could hear of a good market. At the departure and return of the Greenland fleet, he was one of the most diligent visitors to the vessels in Brassa Sound, whither he always repaired in due time, with lambs, poultry, eggs, mittens, hose, and every other saleable commodity; but, unlike his brethren, instead of preferring to receive the value of his merchandise in meal, split pease, and pieces of beef or pork, he would never part even with a muscle unless for money, for the only delight he knew was the possession of cash.

Another source of revenue to the firm was down, collected during those times when the weather rendered fishing impracticable, and Spiel was soon known as the most adventurous climber amongst precipices who had ever plundered a nest. Even the eagles of Sumburgh were not safe from his depredations, when engaged in scaling the heights of the mountains—no man could strike down a shag or a gannet like the Skerry fisherman, nor could any one boast of having killed so many wild swans.

With all his diligence and dexterity, after a year and a half spent in anxious labor and peril, Trosk found that the accumulated profits of twice fifty such terms, would not produce the wealth he had allotted to himself in his dream of avarice; and, instead of questioning the justness of his impression that he was to become rich, he concluded that some strange and unprecedented good fortune was to befall him. This fancy wrought in the mind of Spiel till he could not contain it, and it was spread abroad through the medium of Winwig, who, finding his friend did not mean to make it a secret, took delight in telling what he began to believe as truth, for his opinion of Trosk's sagacity was great, and his own weakness of mind was not trifling. To the simple declaration which Petie made, the neighbors added their own comments, and incorporated them with the text. It was said, that Spiel had been visited by his infernal majesty himself, who had offered to make him a rich man, on certain conditions, and that only the consent of the fisherman was wanting to render him wealthy. Several even recollected the time of the proposal, and were almost sure they had seen the evil one pull the latch of the cottage, and enter during a storm. A description of the Devil became familiar with the gossips of the Skerries, and from thence found its way to Lerwick; and at length "Mess John, the pastor," made some allusion to it in the kirk on a Sunday. Others had a different way of accounting for the foretold riches of the fisherman. He was the orphan of an orphan, and that was sufficient to ensure him luck. This assertion, however, did not contain enough of the wonderful to

give general satisfaction; and, accordingly some declared that Trosk had discovered the means of propitiating the lost race of brownies, and of obtaining their long withheld kindness; while still another party said, that the prophet, who had predicted the future riches of the fisherman, was a being without name or description, which had risen up from the bottom of the sea one moonlight night, when Spiel pulled his line, thinking he had hooked a large fish, and which had told him explicitly, that he should possess more pieces of gold than he had ground "aits in the mull."

Which of these reports is correct, is not for me to state, but an occurrence soon took place which induced Spiel Trosk to believe and hope in secret, that that portion of them which referred to the quantity of gold he should amass would prove correct. It is one of the attributes of superstition to give credit to relations which are totally at variance with our own experience and knowledge, provided they promise something improbable and supernatural; and, although the fisherman at first declared that he had neither seen the devil, nor propitiated a brownie, nor fished up a demon from the depth of the ocean, he suddenly altered his manner, and hinted that the report of his having communication with beings of another world was not altogether without foundation.

The desire of wealth, which at first had prompted Spiel to exert every muscle in the pursuit of profitable occupations, now rose to a height which rendered it, like all other overstrained passions, injurious to its entertainer. By his unrivalled diligence and foresight, and the obedience and docility of Petie, Trosk and Winwig were already spoken of as the most flourishing fishermen within the isles. On them Magnus Horrick, the mighty fish curer, depended for a greater supply than on any four others, and from their nets and lines the gastronomes of Lerwick obtained the choicest offerings of the seas. Their fame, too, began to be attached to other articles of commerce; Spiel had disposed of his barley and oats with great success, having carried them to the neighboring isles at a season when they were greatly needed, for which the laird of Calk had presented him with a fizgig or small harpoon.

Petie's mittens and caps were in great esteem amongst traders and sailors, and were thought equal to those of Fair Isle, and their boat was always welcome alongside of every ship in the sound, since, as I have said, they were not civilized enough to know how to cheat. In this thriving condition, when they were considered as the most monied men in the Skerries, and had contracted for more land for raising barley, and feeding sheep and horses, than any other tenants of the laird, Spiel Trosk became discontented, and possessed with the belief that his riches were to be the result of some fortuitous circumstance. His mind

grew uneasy and anxious, and instead of wearing the air of an active man of business, with a keen and decisive glance of the eye, he showed the restless and haggard countenance of a person bereft of his property. He began to prowl and roam about now, more in hopes of meeting with the gifts of chance, than in pursuit of any determined object, and his looks grew rapacious from avarice, and angry from disappointment; still he did not neglect any of his former occupations, though he performed them with less alacrity of spirit and gratification than before; but he was wont to fall into reveries and calculations upon the nature of the event which was to fill up the measure of his covetousness, if, indeed, such a desire can be satiated.

Dangerous is the precipice that hangs over the gulf of futurity, and fearful is his situation who attempts to look steadily down it. The meditations of the fisherman, on the possibility of gaining money without labor, gave birth to strange fancies and desires in his mind. The gossip of the old women often recurred to his thoughts, and when at night the wind whistled around his cabin, and the sea poured into the cove near which it was situated, and broke among the rocks, his ear listened, almost without his consent, for some unusual and portentous sound. What it was he expected to hear, or to behold, he knew not, and wished not to think, but the heavy pattering of rain often sounded to him like footsteps, and when a gust shook his door, he looked at the latch, with the fixed yet haggard eye of one who firmly awaits the arrival of a terrible visiter.

The mind of Spiel was likewise perpetually disturbed by the recurrence of a singular circumstance, whenever he sought repose on his pillow. At the moment of dropping off to sleep, he was awakened by a word whispered in his ear, which notwithstanding all his endeavors, he could not perfectly recollect, although it seemed as if the mention of one letter of it would have enabled him to remember the whole. It was not a word he had ever heard before, nor uttered in a tone like the voice of any being he knew; but, to whatever language it belonged, or however it was spoken, it was distinctly pronounced, and nothing but the want of a cue to begin with prevented his repeating it. He held it in his mind, and felt it as it were at the end of his tongue, but all his attempts to give it utterance were unavailing, and he might have forgotten it, but that, when he least thought of it, the same syllables were repeated near to him—not constantly, but from time to time, just as his eyes closed, and he lost the consciousness of his situation.

Still this was a circumstance of no consequence, and he strove to look upon it as a curious annoyance, which caused him more uneasiness than it deserved. It was the omen of nothing; for nothing took place that had not happened before. No good or evil fortune crossed his path, but the neighbors, with natural

malignity, remarked that success had not made Trosk happier; and pithy hints, about the blessings of poverty and contentment, were dropped in his presence. But the malicious insinuations of his countrymen were less heeded by Spiel than the froth of the sea; his thoughts were on bags of money, and his attention was engaged with things to come.

Winter had now fairly set in, short days succeeded the long nights of that season, and the northern ocean was dashed in huge billows upon the shores. The blasts, which swept the icy sea of Spitzbergen, came laden with triple coldness, and withered the vegetation of the valleys through which they passed. The spray no longer merely whitened the rocks along the beach; it rose in showers upon the breeze, and smote the face of the wanderer far within the land. The wild fowl forsook the coast, and gathered together upon the sheltered lochs and pools among the hills; and squalls of hail and sleet drove along in rapid succession.

At this season little opportunity offered to the fishermen, to pursue their avocations; they were, for the most part, confined to their cottages, and employed themselves in refitting their tackle for the ensuing spring. Not so Spiel Trosk: if the sea would yield him no fish, it might give him drift wood, or the spoil of a wreck, or curious shells for the Greenland doctors, or even sea weed, or he might light upon a seal sleeping on a rocky nook, or surprise a solan within reach of a stone, or he might find something which would add to his possessions, and eventually be converted into money; for, like Ben Franklin, he well knew that, after lying by for seven years, many things at last turn to account. With this view, Spiel was accustomed to make a tour of the beach early every morning, and he seldom returned without a trifle of some kind in his hand.

In one of his rounds he stopped to observe a speck floating on the water, which, as it drew near, he found to be a seal by its diving. He stood for a little while, in hopes it might crawl out upon the shore, and give him an opportunity of striking it, and whilst thus engaged, just within the verge of the flood tide, which was rising, he occasionally turned his eyes upon the pebbles that were driven forward by the force of the waves. A billow, more heavy and more angry than the rest, rolled towards him, and as it rushed up the strand, it brought, amongst a cluster of wreck and sea moss, a yellow pellet, which it left at his feet. From habitual inclination to appropriate every thing to himself, the fisherman at first picked it up as an uncommon stone; but his fingers soon contracted with spasmodic firmness, when he discovered that he held in his hand a piece of pure gold. After a momentary ecstasy, he again looked at it, and saw that by the action of the water it had been rolled to and fro

at the bottom, till it had become as round, and about as large, as a musket bullet.

From ruminating on his wishes, and on the reports that had been framed concerning their accomplishment, the mind of Trösk had acquired a tinge of superstition. He gazed again and again at the golden pebble and thought of the bullets of precious metal which he had heard in his childhood were sometimes shot at witches, and he felt a slight thrill through his frame, when the idea of a bait being laid for him by the infernal foe crossed his brain.

The consideration of the weight and value of this little ingot, however, soon put weak fancies to flight, and he sat himself down to form some conjecture as to the manner of its arrival on that coast, while he carefully watched the waves for another such gift.

Long and abstract were the meditations of Spiel Trösk, as he patiently awaited the ebbing of the tide, in hopes the retiring waters would leave a second ball of gold for his reward. He reflected that, unless his prize had been cast into the form of a bullet, a supposition which he would not seriously entertain, it had probably formed the centre of a large piece of gold, which had been worn away to the size he now found it; and, with a sigh, at the loss of so many precious grains, as deep as if they had been drawn from his own pocket, he strove to estimate what might have been the bulk of the original ingot.

I cannot tell you how he set to work; but he was interrupted by a heavy squall of rain, hail, and snow, which drove with blinding fury over the ocean, full in his face, and though he cared little for weather, he thought it as well to seek shelter in a kind of cavern in the rocks, not far from where he was standing, foreseeing that the tempest would not last long. Hither, then, he retreated, not by entering at its mouth, for the sea constantly poured in at that opening, but by descending down a wide gap in its roof, which led by craggy steps to the cavity within. A dark and dreary retreat was this cavern, and of unusual formation, for it was not a blind cave, penetrating directly into the cliff, but a vast gallery or tunnel, which opened on one side of a steep headland, and pierced through to the other, allowing the waves to rush and tumble along its gloomy gulf, till they foamed out at the end opposite to that at which they entered. From the position of the external rocks, a constant succession of waves were directed through it, and a perpetual roar reverberated in its hollow bowels. Few but adventurous and thoughtless lads had ever ventured within its interior, and their curiosity led them not far; while the more mature, who had no motive for encountering its difficulties, were contented with warning their children not to fall down the rift that led to it, which gaped amidst a cluster of heather at the back of the prom-

ontory, and with handing down its name of the Nikkur Holl, as they had received it from their fathers.

Trosk left the low beach, and hurried round the hill, to the opening that conducted to the chasm; for the storm came pelting down more angrily than he had expected, and so thickly fell the sleet, that he could scarcely see to pick his way through the peat bogs, that lay at the foot of the acclivity, deluged as they were with the little rills that descended into them. He had not sought "the yawn," as the mouth of the rift was called, since he had been a youth, but he found it with little difficulty. On entering, however, he perceived that its gulf was much less practicable to him now than he had been used to consider it, when younger and more venturesome; and though he was the most expert climber within the Skerries, he felt no inclination to penetrate farther within its abyss, than was requisite to screen him from the driving of the tempest. At about ten or twelve feet below the edge, there was a shelf formed by the projection of a ledge of rock, and to this he let himself down, and having seated himself, at length, under the lee of a block of stone, he drew out his piece of gold from his pocket, and renewed his contemplations.

His chief endeavor was to recollect if he had ever heard of a vessel having been cast away near the Skerries; for to some such occurrence he attributed the presence of the golden bullet, and he wished, besides, to flatter a hope he had conceived, that this prize was only the harbinger of a greater treasure; but, with all his retrospection, he could recall no tradition of a shipwreck near his native isle, and he remained lost in amazement and doubt. Meanwhile, the face of the heavens became less obscure with clouds, the wind no longer howled over the mouth of the gulf, and the deep echoing bellow of the troubled surge within the Nikkur Holl was the only sound distinguishable. The fisherman, however, did not awaken from the revery into which he had fallen, but remained sitting, almost unconsciously, on the ledge within "the yawn." He was calling over in his mind the names of several old persons, from whom he meant to inquire what vessels had been lost on the coast within their memory, and was scarcely aware that he was not seated by his own hearth, when a voice whispered slowly in his ear, "Carmilhan." "Good God!" cried Spiel, starting up and looking fearfully down the abyss, from whence the sound seemed to come, "this is the word that haunts me in my sleep! what can it mean?" What is Carmilhan? he would have said, but he felt unwilling to pronounce the strange term, though he now recognised it as that which he had so long endeavored to utter. He continued a few moments gazing into the dark void beneath, and listening to the roaring waves, which seemed to wrestle unceasingly within the craggy entrails of the hill, till a degree

of alarm overcame him, and he turned to ascend the sides of the rift; but, just as his last foot was withdrawn over the upper edge, a slight breath of wind passed out, and muttered, "Carmilhan." "Carmilhan!" repeated Trosk with violence: "Gracious Heaven, why is this unknown word thus spoken to me!" He then rushed down the hill, and stopped not till he had hastened a great way towards his cottage.

It must not be supposed, from this behavior, that Spiel was a coward; he was, on the contrary, one of the bravest of his countrymen, but the singular coincidence of the same sound, ringing in his ears at unexpected moments, and the dreary place in which he had last heard it, combined to agitate his mind. He felt, too, a degree of nervous irritability gain upon him, as his desire of wealth grew stronger; for that powerful impulse was opposed by a consciousness, that the encouragement he gave it was criminal, and he had, besides, constantly remarked, that the word which annoyed him always followed his reveries and dreams of riches.

By the time he reached his cabin, which he did at a swift pace, Trosk felt inclined to smile at his own folly, at scampering through burns and bogs at the rustling of the air from an outlet in the rock. He now half doubted that he had heard any thing more than a gust of wind; for, though he was confident that "Carmilhan" was the word he had fancied spoken to him in his sleep, and which he had in vain endeavored to recollect, he attributed the supposed repetition of it in "the yawn," to his having remembered it unexpectedly, at the instant the "sough" rose up through the tunnel. In fact he burst out into a laugh, as he looked at his breeks, splashed with the oozy puddles through which he had hurried, and he fondled "Sealgh," the dog who guarded both the cottages, in a more playful manner than was natural to him. Not having been at home to light his fire, he went to Winwig's hut, in hopes of getting some warm burgoo for breakfast, and, on entering, he found Petie fast asleep, sitting with his back propped against a chest, by the side of some smooking peat, that lay amidst a heap of white ashes on the raised hearth, in the midst of the room. In each hand he still held a knitting needle, with which he had been at work, and a kitten was playing with the worsted ball attached to them, whilst Petie's head occasionally nodded forward, as if in mute approbation of its antics.

The fisherman entered the cottage of his comrade, with the intention of showing him the piece of gold he had found, but Winwig did not awake with the noise he made, and Spiel seated himself by the fire, and warmed his pannikin to prepare his meal in silence. At another time he would have roused Petie, who had fallen into a doze, as he was wont when unengaged in any very active employment; but now he felt some

doubts of the prudence of letting his friend know his good fortune, since that harmless and simple being might take delight in spreading the news among the neighbors, who would be continually on the watch for other prizes of the same kind, and who might also adopt a measure he had contemplated himself. At length he resolved not to make his partner acquainted with "his luck," but to pursue his own counsels, till he had satisfied himself that there would be no danger in risking the disclosure; and he continued eating his crowdie with good appetite, and admiring the full, sleek, and torpid countenance of Winwig, and wondering how any being capable of making money by exertion could resign himself to such a state of unprofitable inaction. There was, however, in the blubber swollen cheeks and massive double chin of Petie, an air of contentment and happiness that offered the best reply to the sarcastic reflections of Trosk; and could a stander-by have beheld the broad, smooth, rounded features of one, half smiling in sleep, while his head nodded at ease, unable to sink far, from the rolls of fat that encompassed his neck and pillowed it up, and at the same glance could have viewed the sharp and care-marked visage of Spiel, with its deepening furrows, its wrinkled front, its thin projecting nose, curved over its compressed lips, while its hue of lived brown was rendered still more lurid by the gleams of its haggard eye, which shone behind its contracted brow of stiff black hair, like the glance of a tiger through a bush, he would have required no time to decide which person he would have chosen to be.

Petie's slumber was ended by the kitten, which, after taking sundry gamesome wheels round the room, ran scrambling up his clothes, till it mounted his head, from whence, when the "man mountain" moved, it leaped off in alarm. Not less alarmed was Winwig, who, clapping both his hands on his crown, where the beast had left several scratches, started up and staggered about, with his eyes half open, and his senses yet asleep; but a loud laugh, which Spiel was provoked to utter, recalled his recollection.

"Heigh! Spiel," cried the drowsy loon, rubbing his eyes, "I am very glad you are safe; for I have been dreaming strange things about you."

"About me, do you say?" replied the other.

"Ay, indeed, hinney," said Winwig, "I but now thought I was yourself, and, though I knew I was not you, I still fancied I was, and at the same time I thought I was a fish, and that I saw a bait which I wanted to take, though I knew there was a hook in it, that would lay hold of me. It was a yellow bait, and the more I looked at it the more I longed for it, and something seemed to mutter 'take it, take it,' in my ear, till at last I snapped at it, and was caught, and I felt as if being drawn along