The German Classics of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Volume 03

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VOLUME III

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FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

THE GERMAN CLASSICS

Masterpieces of German Literature

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

IN TWENTY VOLUMES

ILLUSTRATED

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THE LIFE OF SCHILLER

BY CALVIN THOMAS, LL.D.

Professor of Germanic Languages and Literatures, Columbia University

He kept the faith. The ardent poet-soul,
Once thrilled to madness by the fiery gleam
Of Freedom glimpsed afar in youthful dream,
Henceforth was true as needle to the pole.
The vision he had caught remained the goal
Of manhood's aspiration and the theme
Of those high luminous musings that redeem
Our souls from bondage to the general dole
Of trivial existence. Calm and free
He faced the Sphinx, nor ever knew dismay,
Nor bowed to externalities the knee,
Nor took a guerdon from the fleeting day;
But dwelt on earth in that eternity
Where Truth and Beauty shine with blended ray.[2]

Friedrich Schiller, the greatest of German dramatic poets, was born November 10, 1759, at Marbach in Swabia. His father was an officer in the army which the Duke of

Württemberg sent out to fight the Prussians in the Seven Years' War. Of his mother, whose maiden name was Dorothea Kodweis, not much is known. She was a devout woman who lived in the cares and duties of a household that sometimes felt the pinch of poverty. After the war the family lived a while at the village of Lorch, where Captain Schiller was employed as recruiting officer. From there they moved, in 1766, to Ludwigsburg, where the extravagant duke Karl Eugen had taken up his residence and was bent on creating a sort of Swabian Versailles. Here little Fritz went to school and was sometimes taken to the gorgeous ducal opera, where he got his first notions of scenic illusion. The hope of his boyhood was to become a preacher, but this pious aspiration was brought to naught by the offer of free tuition in an academy which the duke had started at his Castle Solitude near Stuttgart.

This academy was Schiller's world from his fourteenth to his twenty-first year. It was an educational experiment conceived in a rather liberal spirit as a training-school for public service. At first the duke had the boys taught under his own eye at Castle Solitude, where they were subjected to a strict military discipline. There being no provision for the study of divinity, Schiller was put into law, with the result that he floundered badly for two years. In 1775 the institution was augmented by a faculty of medicine and transferred to Stuttgart, where it was destined to a short-lived career under the name of the Karlschule. Schiller gladly availed himself of the permission to change from law to medicine, which he thought would be more in harmony with his temperament and literary ambitions. And so it proved. As a student of medicine he made himself at home in the doctrines and practices of the day, and for several years after he left school he thought now and then of returning to the profession of medicine.

For posterity the salient fact of his long connection with the Karlschule is that he was there converted into a fiery radical and a banner-bearer of the literary revolution. Just how it came about is hard to explain in detail. The school was designed to produce docile and contented members of the social order; in him it bred up a savage and relentless critic of that order. The result may be ascribed partly, no doubt, to the natural reaction of an ardent, liberty-loving temperament against a system of rigid discipline and petty espionage. The *élèves*—French was the official language of the school—were not supposed to read dangerous books, and their rooms were often searched for contraband literature. But they easily found ways to evade the rule and enjoy the savor of forbidden fruit.

[Illustration: FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER]

So it was with Schiller: he read Rousseau more or less, the early works of Goethe, Lessing's *Emilia Galotti*, and plays by Klinger, Leisewitz, Lenz and Wagner—all more or less revolutionary in spirit. He also made the acquaintance of Shakespeare and steeped himself in the spirit of antique heroism as he found it in Plutarch.

Perhaps this reading would have made a radical of him even if he had just then been enjoying the normal freedom of a German university student. Be that as it may, the time came—it was about 1777—when the young Schiller, faithfully pursuing his medical course and doing loyal birthday orations in praise of the duke or the duke's mistress, was not exactly what he seemed to be. Underneath the calm exterior there was a soul on fire with revolutionary passion.

It was mainly in 1780—his last year in the Karlschule—that Schiller wrote *The Robbers*, altogether the loudest explosion of the Storm and Stress. The hero, Karl Moor, was conceived as a "sublime criminal." Deceived by the machinations of his villainous brother Franz, he becomes the captain of a band of outlaws and attempts by murder, arson and robbery to right the wrongs of the social order. For a while he believes that he is doing a noble work. When he learns how he has been deluded he gives himself up to the law. The effect of the play is that of tremendous power unchecked by any of the restraints of art. The plot is incredible, the language tense with turbulent passion, and the characters are extravagantly overdrawn. But the genius of the born dramatist is there. It is all vividly seen and powerfully bodied forth. What is more important, the play marks the birth of a new type—the tragedy of fanaticism. We are left at the end with a heightened feeling for the mysterious tangle of human destiny which makes it possible for a really noble nature such as Karl Moor to go thus disastrously wrong.

Toward the end of 1780 Schiller left the academy and was made doctor to a regiment of soldiers consisting largely of invalids. He dosed them with drastic medicines according to his light, but the service was disagreeable and the pay very small. To make a stir in the world he borrowed money and published *The Robbers* as a book for the reader, with a preface in which he spoke rather slightingly of the theatre. The book came out in the spring of 1781—with a rampant lion and the motto *in Tirannos* on the title-page. Ere long it came to the attention of Dalberg, director of the theatre at Mannheim, who saw its dramatic qualities and requested its author to revise it for the stage. This Schiller readily consented to do. To please Dalberg he set the action back from the eighteenth to the sixteenth century and made many minor changes. The revised play was performed at Mannheim on January 12, 1782, with ever-memorable success. The audience, assembled from far and near, went

wild with enthusiasm. No such triumph had been achieved before on a German stage. The author himself saw the performance, having come over from Stuttgart without leave of absence. For this breach of discipline, or rather for a repetition of the offense in May, he was sent to the guardhouse for a fortnight and forbidden to write any more plays. The consequence was a clandestine flight from a situation that had become intolerable. In September, 1782, he escaped from Stuttgart with his loyal friend Streicher and took his way northward toward the Palatinate. He had set his hopes on finding employment in Mannheim.

[Illustration: SCHILLER'S FATHER AND MOTHER]

Before leaving his native Swabia he had virtually completed a second play dealing with the conspiracy of Count Fiesco at Genoa in the year 1547. He had also won his spurs as a poet and a critic. His *Anthology for 1782* contains a large number of short poems, some of them evincing a rare talent for dramatic story-telling, others foreshadowing the imaginative sweep and the warmth of feeling which characterize the best poetic work of the later Schiller. Such, notably, are the poems to Laura, in which the lover's raptures are linked with the law of gravitation and the preestablished harmony of the world. He also contributed several papers to the Württemberg *Repertorium*, especially a review of *The Robbers* in which, dissecting his own child with remorseless impartiality, he anticipated nearly everything that critics were destined to urge against the play during the next hundred years. Having left his post of duty and being a military officer, Schiller was technically a deserter and had reason to fear pursuit and arrest. At Mannheim his affairs went badly. The politic Dalberg was not eager to befriend a youth who had offended the powerful Duke of Württemberg; so *Fiesco* was rejected and its author came into dire straits. Toward the close of the year he found a welcome refuge at Bauerbach, where a house was put at his disposal by his friend Frau von Wolzogen. Here he remained several months, occupied mainly with a new play which came to be known as *Cabal and Love*. He also sketched a historical tragedy, *Don Carlos*, being led to the subject by his reading of St. Réal's historical novel *Don Carlos*. During the first part of his stay at Bauerbach Schiller went by the name of Dr. Ritter and wrote purposely misleading letters as to his intended movements. By the summer of 1783, however, it had become apparent that the Duke of Württemberg was not going to make trouble. Relieved of anxiety on this score, and not having had very good success of late with his theatre, Dalberg reopened negotiations with Schiller, who was easily persuaded to emerge from his hiding-place and become theatre-poet at Mannheim under contract for one year.

During this year at Mannheim *Fiesco* and *Cabal and Love* were put on the stage and published. The former is a quasi-historical tragedy of intriguing ambition, ending—in the original version—with the death of Fiesco at the hands of the fanatical republican Verrina. While there is much to admire in its abounding vigor and its picturesque details, *Fiesco* lacks artistic finality and is the least interesting of Schiller's early plays. Much more important is *Cabal and Love*, a domestic tragedy that has held the stage to this day and is generally regarded as the best of its kind in the eighteenth-century German drama. Class conflict is the tragic element. A maid of low degree and her high-minded, aristocratic lover are done to death by a miserable court intrigue. Far more than in *The Robbers* Schiller was here writing with his eye on the facts. Much Württemberg history is thinly disguised in this drastic comment on the crimes, follies and banalities of German court life under the Old Régime.

Notwithstanding his success as a playwright and his receipt of the honorable title of Councilor from the Duke of Weimar, Schiller was unhappy at Mannheim. Sickness, debt and loneliness oppressed him, making creative work well-nigh impossible. In June, 1784, when the sky was looking very black, he received a heartening letter from a quartet of unknown admirers in Leipzig, one of whom was Gottfried Körner. Schiller was deeply touched. In his hunger for sympathy and friendship he resolved to leave Mannheim and seek out these good people who had shown such a kindly interest in him. Fortunately Körner was a man of some means and was able to help not only with words but with cash. So it came about that in the spring of 1785 Schiller forsook Mannheim, which had become as a prison to him, and went to Leipzig. Thence, after a short sojourn, he followed Körner to Dresden. The relation between the two men developed into a warm and mutually inspiring friendship. A feeling of jubilant happiness took possession of Schiller and soon found expression in the *Song to Joy*, wherein a kiss of love and sympathy is offered to all mankind.

[Illustration: 1. SCHILLER'S HOUSE IN WEIMAR]

[Illustration: 2. SCHILLER'S BIRTHPLACE IN MARBACH]

During his two years' sojourn in Dresden Schiller was mainly occupied with the editing of a magazine, the *Thalia*, and with the completion of *Don Carlos*, the first of his plays in blank verse. Hitherto he had written with his eye on the stage, and in the savage spirit of the Storm and Stress. Now, however, the higher ambition of the dramatic poet began to assert itself. His views of life were changing, and his nature craved a freer and nobler self-expression than was possible in the "three hours' traffic of the stage." He had begun *Don Carlos* at Bauerbach, intending to make it a love-

tragedy in a royal household and incidentally to scourge the Spanish inquisition. Little by little, however, the centre of his interest shifted from the lovesick Carlos to the quixotic dreamer Posa, and the result was that the love-tragedy gradually grew into a tragedy of political idealism with Posa for its hero. As finally completed in the summer of 1787, *Don Carlos* had twice the length of an ordinary stage-play and, withal, a certain lack of artistic unity. But its sonorous verse, its fine phrasing of large ideas, and its noble dignity of style settled forever the question of Schiller's power as a dramatic poet. The third act especially is instinct with the best idealism of the eighteenth century.

After *Don Carlos* Schiller wrote no more plays for some nine years, being occupied in the interval chiefly with history and philosophy. His dramatic work had interested him more especially in the sixteenth century. At Dresden he began to read history with great avidity and found it very appetizing. What he most cared for, evidently, was not the annals of warfare or the growth of institutions, but the psychology of the great man. He was an ardent lover of freedom, both political and intellectual, and took keen delight in tracing its progress. On the other hand, play-writing had its disadvantages. Thus far it had brought him more of notoriety than of solid fame, and his income was so small that he was dependent on Körner's generosity. To escape from this irksome position he decided to try his fortune in Thuringia. Going over to Weimar, in the summer of 1787, he was well received by Herder and Wieland—Goethe was just then in Italy—and presently he settled down to write a history of the Dutch Rebellion. His plan looked forward to six volumes, but only one was ever written. It was published in 1788 under the title of *The Defection of the Netherlands* and led to its author's appointment as unsalaried professor of history at the University of Jena. He began to lecture in the spring of 1789.

Meanwhile he had taken up the study of the Greek poets and found them very edifying and sanative—just the influence that he needed to clarify his judgment and correct his earlier vagaries of taste. He was fascinated by the *Odyssey* and in a mood of fleeting enthusiasm he resolved to read nothing but the ancients for the next two years. He translated the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides and a part of *The Phenician Women*. Out of this newborn ardor grew two important poems, *The Gods of Greece* and *The Artists*; the former an elegy on the decay of Greek polytheism conceived as a loss of beauty to the world, the latter a philosophic retrospect of human history wherein the evolutionary function of art is glorified. At the same time he revived the dormant *Thalia* and used its columns for the continued publication of *The Ghost-seer*, a pot-boiling novel which he had begun at Dresden. It is Schiller's one serious attempt at prose fiction. His initial purpose was to describe an elaborate and

fine-spun intrigue, devised by mysterious agents of the Church of Rome, for the winning over of a Protestant German prince. The story begins in a promising way, and the later portions contain fine passages of narrative and character-drawing. But its author presently began to feel that it was unworthy of him and left it unfinished.

[Illustration: MONUMENT TO SCHILLER (Berlin) *Sculptor, Reinhold Begas*]

On the 22d of February, 1790, Schiller was married to Lotte von Lengefeld, with whom he lived most happily the rest of his days. His letters of this period tell of a quiet joy such as he had not known before. And then, suddenly, his fair prospects were clouded by the disastrous breakdown of his health. An attack of pneumonia in the winter of 1790-1791 came near to a fatal ending, and hardly had he recovered from that before he was prostrated by a second illness worse than the first. He bade farewell to his friends, and the report went abroad that he was dead. After a while he rallied, but never again to be strong and well. From this time forth he must be thought of as a semi-invalid, doomed to a very cautious mode of living and expectant of an early death. It was to be a fourteen years' battle between a heroic soul and an ailing body.

For a while, owing to the forced cessation of the literary work on which his small income depended, he was in great distress for lack of money. His wife, while of noble family, had brought nothing but herself to the marriage partnership. And then, just as in the dark days at Mannheim in 1784, help seemed to come from the clouds. Two Danish noblemen, ardent admirers quite unknown to him personally, heard of his painful situation and offered him a pension of a thousand thalers a year for three years. No conditions whatever were attached to the gift; he was simply to follow his inclination, free from all anxiety about a livelihood. Without hesitation he accepted the gift and thus found himself, for the first time in his life, really free to do as he chose. What he chose was to use his freedom for a grapple with Kant's philosophy. Today this seems a strange choice for a sick poet, but let Schiller himself explain what lay in his mind. He wrote to Körner:

"It is precisely for the sake of artistic creation that I wish to philosophize. Criticism must repair the damage it has done me. And it has done me great damage indeed; for I miss in myself these many years that boldness, that living fire, that was mine before I knew a rule. Now I see myself in the act of creating and fashioning; I observe the play of inspiration, and my imagination works less freely, since it is conscious of being watched. But if I once reach the point where artistic procedure becomes natural, like

education for the well-nurtured man, then my fancy will get back its old freedom and know no bounds but those of its own making."

From these words we understand the nature of Schiller's enterprise—he wished to fathom the laws of beauty. It seemed to him that beauty could not be altogether a matter of changing taste, opinion, and fashion; that somehow or other it must be grounded in eternal laws either of the external world or of human nature. He felt, too, that a knowledge of these laws, could it once become second nature, would be very helpful to him as a dramatic poet. Whether he was right in so thinking is a question too large to be discussed here, nor can we follow him in the details of his esthetic speculation. The subject is too abstruse to be dispatched in a few words. Suffice it to say that a number of minor papers, the most important being *On Winsomeness and Dignity (Über Anmut and Würde)* and *On the Sublime*, prepared the way for a more popular exposition of his views in the *Letters on Esthetic Education* and in the memorable essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, which deserves to be called, next to Lessing's *Laocoon*, the weightiest critical essay of the eighteenth century. The Letters contain a ripe and pleasing statement of Schiller's philosophy in its relation to the culture-problems of his epoch.

Along with these philosophic studies Schiller found time for much work more closely related to his professorship of history. To say nothing of his minor historical writings, he completed, in 1793, his *History of the Thirty Years' War*. It appeared in successive numbers of Göschen's *Ladies' Calendar*, a fact which in itself indicates that it was not conceived and should not be judged as a monument of research. The aim was to tell the story of the great war in a readable style. And in this Schiller succeeded, especially in the parts relating to his hero, the Swedish king Gustav Adolf. Over Schiller's merit as a historian there has been much debate, and good critics have caviled at his sharp contrasts and his lack of care in matters of detail. But the great fact remains that the *Defection of the Netherlands* and the *Thirty Years' War* are the earliest historical classics in the German language. Schiller was the first German to make literature out of history.

The year 1794 brought about a closer relation between Schiller and Goethe, an event of prime moment in the lives of both. On Goethe's return from Italy, in the summer of 1788, Schiller was introduced to him, but the meeting had no immediate consequences. In fact, Schiller had quietly made up his mind not to like the man whom, for a whole year, he had heard constantly lauded by the Weimar circle. He thought of Goethe as a proud, self-centred son of fortune, with whom friendship would be impossible. Goethe, on the other hand, was not drawn to the author of *The*

Robbers. He looked on the popularity of the detestable play as a shocking evidence of depraved public taste and was not aware how its author had changed since writing it. So it came about that, for some six years, the two men lived as neighbors in space but strangers in the spirit. At last, however, an accidental meeting in Jena led to an interchange of views and prepared the way for the most memorable of literary friendships.

By this time Schiller had undertaken the editorship of a new literary magazine to be called *Die Horen*, which was to be financed by the enterprising publisher Cotta in Stuttgart. The plan was that it should eclipse all previous undertakings of its kind. But it was to eschew politics. Germany was just then agitated by the fierce passions of the revolutionary epoch, and this excitement was regarded by Schiller as ominous for the nation. There was need of esthetic education. So he proposed to keep the *Horen* clear of politics and try to divert the minds of men into the serener regions of letters and art. To Goethe, who also hated the Revolution, this was a highly acceptable program. So he readily undertook to write for the *Horen*, and thus he and Schiller soon became linked together in the public mind as allied champions of a cause. It is for this reason that the Germans are wont to call them the Dioscuri.

By way of signalizing their community of interest the Dioscuri presently began to write satirical distichs at the expense of men and tendencies that they did not like. For example:

> Gentlemen, keep your seats! for the curs but covet your places,
> Elegant places to hear all the other dogs bark.

The making of these more or less caustic epigrams amused them. Sometimes one would suggest the topic and the other write the distich; again, one would do the hexameter, the other the pentameter. They agreed that neither should ever claim separate property in the *Xenia*, as they were called. The number grew apace, until it reached nearly a thousand. About half the number on hand were published in 1797 in Schiller's *Musenalmanach* and had the effect of setting all Germany agog with curiosity, rage or solemn glee. Some of those hit replied in kind or in vicious attacks, and for a little while there was great excitement. But having discharged their broadside Goethe and Schiller did not further pursue the ignoble warfare. They wisely came to the conclusion that the best way to elevate the public taste was not to assail the bad in mordant personal epigrams, but to exemplify the good in creative work.

After his nine years of fruitful wandering in other fields Schiller returned at last, in 1796, to dramatic poetry. Once more it came in his way to write for the stage, since Goethe was now director of the Weimar theatre. After some hesitation between *Wallenstein* and *The Knights of Malta*, both of which had long haunted his thoughts, he decided in favor of the former. It occupied him for three years and finally left his hands as a long affair in three parts. Yet it is not a trilogy in the proper sense, but a play in ten acts, preceded by a dramatic prelude. At first Schiller found the material refractory. The actual Wallenstein had never exhibited truly heroic qualities of any kind, and his history involved only the cold passions of ambition, envy, and vindictiveness. Whether he was really guilty of treason was a moot question which admitted of no partisan treatment. But Schiller's genius triumphed splendidly over the difficulties inherent in the subject. In the *Camp* we get a picturesque view of the motley soldatesca which was the basis of Wallenstein's power and prestige. In *The Piccolomini* we see the nature of the dangerous game he is playing, and in *Wallenstein's Death* the unheroic hero becomes very impressive in his final discomfiture and his pitiable taking-off. The love-tragedy of Max and Thekla casts a mellow light of romance over the otherwise austere political action.

[Illustration: 1. THE MILITARY ACADEMY IN STUTTGART WHERE SCHILLER WAS EDUCATED]

[Illustration: 2. THE THEATRE IN MANNHEIM IN 1782 WHERE SCHILLER'S "THE ROBBERS," "FIESCO," AND "LOVE AND INTRIGUE" WERE FIRST PLAYED]

During the years 1795-1800 Schiller wrote a large number of short poems in which he gave expression to his matured philosophy of life. His best ballads also belong to this period. Pure song he did not often attempt, his philosophic bent predisposing him to what the Germans call the lyric of thought. Perhaps his invalidism had something to do with it; at any rate the total number of his singable lyrics, such as *The Maiden's Lament*, is but small. As a poet of reflection he is at his best in *The Ideal and Life*, *The Walk*, *The Eleusinian Festival*, and the more popular *Song of the Bell*. The first-named of these four, at first called *The Realm of Shades*, is a masterpiece of high thinking, charged with warm emotion and bodied forth in gorgeous imagery. Its doctrine is that only by taking refuge in the realm of the Ideal can we escape from the tyranny of the flesh, the bondage of Nature's law, the misery of struggle and defeat. Yet it is not a doctrine of quietism that is here preached, as if inner peace were the supreme thing in life, but rather one of hopeful endeavor. *The Walk*, one of the finest elegies in the

German language, is a pensive retrospect of the origins of civilization, loving contemplation of Nature giving rise to reflections on man and his estate. *The Song of the Bell*, probably the best known of all Schiller's poems, gives expression to his feeling for the dignity of labor and for the poetry of man's social life. Perhaps we may say that the heart of his message is found in this stanza of *The Words of Illusion*:

And so, noble soul, forget not the law,
And to the true faith be leal;
What ear never heard and eye never saw,
The Beautiful, the True, they are real.
Look not without, as the fool may do;
It is in thee and ever created anew.

In 1797—*Hermann and Dorothea* was just then under way—Goethe and Schiller interchanged views by letter on the subject of epic poetry in general and the ballad in particular. As they had both written ballads in their youth, it was but natural that they should be led to fresh experiments with the species. So they both began to make ballads for next year's *Musenalmanach*. Schiller contributed five, among them the famous *Diver* and *The Cranes of Ibycus*. In after years he wrote several more, of which the best, perhaps, are *The Pledge*, a stirring version of the Damon and Pythias story, and *The Battle with the Dragon*, which, however, was called a romanza instead of a ballad. The interest of all these poems turns mainly, of course, on the story, but also, in no small degree, on the splendid art which the poet displays. They are quite unlike any earlier German ballads, owing nothing to the folk-song and making no use of the uncanny, the gruesome, or the supernatural. There is no mystery in them, no resort to verbal tricks such as Bürger had employed in *Lenore*. The subjects are not derived from German folk-lore, but from Greek legend or medieval romance. Their great merit is the strong and vivid, yet always noble, style with which the details are set forth.

[Illustration: THE CHURCH IN WHICH SCHILLER WAS MARRIED]

We come back now to the province of art in which Schiller himself felt that his strength lay, and to which he devoted nearly all his strength during his remaining years. The very successful performance of the complete *Wallenstein* in the spring of 1799 added greatly to his prestige, for discerning judges could see that something extraordinary had been achieved. Weimar had by this time become the acknowledged centre of German letters, and its modest little theatre now took on fresh glory. Schiller had made himself very useful as a translator and adapter, and Goethe was disposed to

lean heavily on his friend's superior knowledge of stage-craft. In order to be nearer to the theatre and its director, Schiller moved over to Weimar in December, 1799, and took up his abode in what is now called the Schillerstrasse. He was already working at *Mary Stuart*, which was finished the following spring and first played on June 14, 1800.

In *Mary Stuart*, as in *Wallenstein*, Schiller focused his light on a famous personage who was the subject of passionate controversy. But of course he did not wish to make a Catholic play, or a Protestant play, or to have its effect dependent in any way on the spectator's pre-assumed attitude toward the purely political questions involved. So he decided to omit Mary's trial and to let the curtain rise on her as a prisoner waiting for the verdict of her judges. This meant, however, according to his conception of the tragic art, a pathetic rather than a tragic situation; for the queen's fate would be a foregone conclusion, and she could do nothing to avert it. To give her the semblance of a tragic guilt he resorted to three unhistorical inventions: First, an attempt to escape, with resulting complicity in the act of the murderous Catholic fanatic Mortimer; second, a putative love on the part of Mary for Leicester, who would use his great influence to bring about a personal interview between her and Elizabeth; and, finally, the meeting of the two queens, in which Mary's long pent-up passion would get the better of her discretion and betray her into a mortal insult of her rival. In reality, however, the meeting of the two queens, while theatrically very effective, is not the true climax of the play. That comes when Mary conquers her rebellious spirit and accepts her ignominious fate as a divinely appointed expiation for long-past sins. The play thus becomes a tragedy of moral self-conquest in the presence of an undeserved death.

Next in order came *The Maid of Orleans*, expressly called by its author a romantic tragedy. It is a "rescue" of the Maid's character. Shakespeare had depicted her as a witch, Voltaire as a vulgar fraud. Schiller conceives her as a genuine ambassadress of God, or rather of the Holy Virgin. Not only does he accept at its face value the tradition of her "voices," her miraculous clairvoyance, her magic influence on the French troops; but he makes her fight in the ranks with men and gives to her a terrible avenging sword, before which no Englishman can stand. But she, too, had to have her tragic guilt. So Schiller makes her supernatural power depend—by the Virgin's express command—on her renunciation of the love of man. A fleeting passion for the English general Lionel, conceived on the battle-field in the fury of combat, fills her with remorse and the sense of treason to her high mission. For a while she is deprived of her self-confidence, and with it of her supernatural power. There follow scenes of bitter humiliation, until her expiation is complete. At last, purified by suffering, she

recovers her divine strength, breaks her fetters, brings victory once more to the disheartened French soldiers, and dies in glory on the field of battle. One sees that it is not at all the real Jeanne d'Arc that Schiller depicts, but a glorified heroine invested with divine power and called to be the savior of her country. Here, for the first time in German drama, the passion of patriotism plays an important part.

After the completion of *The Maid of Orleans* Schiller was minded to try his hand on a tragedy "in the strictest Greek form." He had been deeply impressed by the art of Sophocles and wished to create something which should produce on the modern mind the effect of a Greek tragedy, with its simple structure, its few characters, and above all its chorus. But the choice of a subject was not easy, and for several months he occupied himself with other matters. He made a German version of Gozzi's *Turandot* and took notes for a tragedy about Perkin Warbeck. In the summer of 1802 he decided definitely to carry out his plan of vying with the Greeks. *The Bride of Messina* was finished in February, 1803. While he was working at it there arrived one day—it was in November, 1802—a patent of nobility from the chancelry of the Holy Roman Empire. It may be noted in passing that several years before he had been made an honorary citizen of the French Republic, his name having been presented at the same time with those of Washington, Wilberforce, and Kosciusko.

Among the later plays of Schiller *The Bride of Messina* is the one which shows his stately poetic diction at its best, but has proved least acceptable on the stage. As we have seen, it was an artistic experiment. A medieval prince of Messina has an ominous dream which is interpreted by an Arab astrologer to mean that a daughter to be born will cause the death of his two sons, thus making an end of his dynasty. When the child is born he orders it put to death. But meanwhile his queen has had a dream of contrary import, and thereby saves the life of her new-born daughter, but has her brought up remote from the court. In time the two quarrelsome brothers, ignorant that they have a sister, fall in love with the girl. One slays the other in a frenzy of jealous rage, the other commits suicide in remorse. This invention can hardly be called plausible. Indeed, so far as the mere fable is concerned, it is a house of cards which would collapse any moment at the breath of common sense. One must remember in reading the play that common sense was not one of the nine muses. The dreams take the place of the Delphic oracle, and the Greek chorus is represented by two semi-choruses, the retainers of the quarreling brothers, who speak their parts by the mouth of a leader, at one moment taking part in the action, at another delivering the detached comment of the ideal spectator. There is much splendid poetry in these pseudo-choruses, but it was impossible that such a scheme should produce the effect of the Greek choral dance.

Did Schiller feel that in *The Bride of Messina* he had wandered a little too far away from the vital concerns of modern life? Probably, for he next set to work on a play which should be popular in the best sense of the word—*William Tell*. It is his one play with a happy ending and has always been a prime favorite on the stage. The hero is the Swiss people, and the action idealizes the legendary uprising of the Forest Cantons against their Austrian governors. There are really three separate actions: the conspiracy, the love-affair of Bertha and Rudenz, the exploits of William Tell. All, however, contribute to the common end, which is the triumph of the Swiss people over their oppressors. The exposition is superb, there is rapidity of movement, variety, picturesqueness, the glamor of romance; and the feelings evoked are such as warm and keep warm the cockles of the heart. When the famous actor Iffland received the manuscript of the first act, in February, 1804, he wrote:

"I have read, devoured, bent my knee; and my heart, my tears, my rushing blood, have paid ecstatic homage to your spirit, to your heart. Oh, more! Soon, soon more! Pages, scraps—whatever you can send. I tender heart and hand to your genius. What a work! What wealth, power, poetic beauty, and irresistible force! God keep you! Amen."

With *Tell* off his hands Schiller next threw his tireless energy on a Russian subject—the story of Dmitri, reputed son of Ivan the Terrible. The reading, note-taking and planning proved a long laborious task, and there were many interruptions. In November, 1804, the hereditary Prince of Weimar brought home a Russian bride, Maria Paulovna, and for her reception he wrote *The Homage of the Arts*—a slight affair which served its purpose well. The reaction from these Russophil festivities left him in a weakened condition, and, feeling unequal to creative effort, he translated Racine's *Phèdre* into German verse, finishing it in February, 1805. Then he returned with great zest to his Russian play *Demetrius*, of which enough was written to indicate that it might have become his masterpiece. But the flame had burnt itself out. Toward the end of April he took a cold which led to a violent fever with delirium. The end came on May 9, 1805.

[Illustration: SCHILLER AT THE COURT OF WEIMAR]

No attempt can here be made at a general estimate of Schiller's dramatic genius. The serious poetic drama, such as he wrote in his later years, is no longer in favor anywhere. In Germany, as in our own land, the temper of the time is on the whole hostile to that form of art. We demand, very properly, a drama attuned to the life of the present; one occupied, as we say, with living issues. Yet Schiller is very popular

on the German stage. After the lapse of a century, and notwithstanding the fact that he *seems* to speak to us from the clouds, he holds his own. Why is this? It is partly because of a quality of his art that has been called his "monumental fresco-painting"; that is, his strong and luminous portraiture of the great historic forces that have shaped the destiny of nations. These forces are matters of the spirit, of the inner life; and they persist from age to age, but little affected by the changing fashion of the theatre. The reader of Schiller soon comes to feel that he deals with issues that are alive because they are immortal.

Another important factor in his classicity is the suggestion that goes out from his idealized personality. German sentiment has set him on a high pedestal and made a hero of him, so that his word is not exactly as another man's word. Something of this was felt by those about him even in his lifetime. Says Karoline von Wolzogen: "High seriousness and the winsome grace of a pure and noble soul were always present in Schiller's conversation; in listening to him one walked as among the changeless stars of heaven and the flowers of earth." This is the tribute of a partial friend, but it describes very well the impression produced by Schiller's writings. His love of freedom and beauty, his confidence in reason, his devotion to the idea of humanity, seem to exhale from his work and to invest it with a peculiar distinction. His plays and poems are a priceless memento to the spirit of a great and memorable epoch. Hundreds of writers have said their say about him, but no better word has been spoken than the noble tribute of Goethe:

For he was ours. So let the note of pride
Hush into silence all the mourner's ruth;
In our safe harbor he was fain to bide
And build for aye, after the storm of youth.
We saw his mighty spirit onward stride
To eternal realms of Beauty and of Truth;
While far behind him lay fantasmally
The vulgar things that fetter you and me.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 1: Translated by Edward, Lord Lytton.]

[Footnote 2: This Sonnet, by the author of this sketch of Schiller's life, was written for the Chicago Schiller Celebration of 1905, but has not been printed before. EDITOR.]

* * * * *

POEMS

[All poems in this section are translations by Edward, Lord Lytton, and appear by permission of George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., London.]

* * * * *

TO THE IDEAL (1795)

Then wilt thou, with thy fancies holy—
Wilt thou, faithless, fly from me?
With thy joy, thy melancholy,
Wilt thou thus relentless flee?
O Golden Time, O Human May,
Can nothing, Fleet One, thee restraint?
Must thy sweet river glide away
Into the eternal Ocean Main?

The suns serene are lost and vanish'd
That wont the path of youth to gild,
And all the fair Ideals banish'd
From that wild heart they whilome fill'd.
Gone the divine and sweet believing
In dreams which Heaven itself unfurl'd!
What godlike shapes have years bereaving
Swept from this real work-day world!

As once, with tearful passion fired,
The Cyprian Sculptor clasp'd the stone,
Till the cold cheeks, delight-inspired,
Blush'd—to sweet life the marble grown:
So youth's desire for Nature!—round

The Statue so my arms I wreathed,
Till warmth and life in mine it found,
And breath that poets breathe—it breathed;

With my own burning thoughts it burn'd;—
Its silence stirr'd to speech divine;—
Its lips my glowing kiss return'd—
Its heart in beating answer'd mine!
How fair was then the flower—the tree!—
How silver-sweet the fountain's fall!
The soulless had a soul to me!
My life its own life lent to all!

The Universe of things seem'd swelling
The panting heart to burst its bound,
And wandering Fancy found a dwelling
In every shape, thought, deed, and sound.
Germ'd in the mystic buds, reposing,
A whole creation slumbered mute,
Alas, when from the buds unclosing,
How scant and blighted sprung the fruit!

How happy in his dreaming error,
His own gay valor for his wing,
Of not one care as yet in terror
Did Youth upon his journey spring;
Till floods of balm, through air's dominion,
Bore upward to the faintest star—
For never aught to that bright pinion
Could dwell too high, or spread too far.

Though laden with delight, how lightly
The wanderer heavenward still could soar,
And aye the ways of life how brightly
The airy Pageant danced before!
Love, showering gifts (life's sweetest) down,
Fortune, with golden garlands gay,
And Fame, with starbeams for a crown,
And Truth, whose dwelling is the Day.

Ah! midway soon lost evermore,
Afar the blithe companions stray;
In vain their faithless steps explore,
As one by one, they glide away.
Fleet Fortune was the first escaper—
The thirst for wisdom linger'd yet;
But doubts with many a gloomy vapor
The sun-shape of the Truth beset!

The holy crown which Fame was wreathing,
Behold! the mean man's temples wore,
And, but for one short spring-day breathing,
Bloom'd Love—the Beautiful—no more!
And ever stiller yet, and ever
The barren path more lonely lay,
Till scarce from waning Hope could quiver
A glance along the gloomy way.

Who, loving, lingered yet to guide me,
When all her boon companions fled,
Who stands consoling yet beside me,
And follows to the House of Dread?
Thine FRIENDSHIP—thine the hand so tender,
Thine the balm dropping on the wound,
Thy task the load more lightly to render—
O! earliest sought and soonest found!

And Thou, so pleased, with her uniting,
To charm the soul-storm into peace,
Sweet TOIL, in toil itself delighting,
That more it labored, less could cease;
Tho' but by grains thou aid'st the pile
The vast Eternity uprears,
At least thou strik'st from Time the while
Life's debt—the minutes, days and years.[3]

* * * * *

THE VEILED IMAGE AT SAÏS (1795)

A youth, whom wisdom's warm desire had lured
To learn the secret lore of Egypt's priests,
To Saïs came. And soon, from step to step
Of upward mystery, swept his rapid soul!
Still ever sped the glorious Hope along,
Nor could the parch'd Impatience halt, appeased
By the calm answer of the Hierophant—
"What have I, if I have not all," he sigh'd;
"And giv'st thou but the little and the more?
Does thy truth dwindle to the gauge of gold,
A sum that man may smaller or less small
Possess and count—subtract or add to—still?
Is not TRUTH *one* and indivisible?
Take from the Harmony a single tone
A single tint take from the Iris bow—
And lo! what once was all, is nothing—while
Fails to the lovely whole one tint or tone!"

They stood within the temple's silent dome,
And, as the young man paused abrupt, his gaze
Upon a veil'd and giant IMAGE fell:
Amazed he turn'd unto his guide—"And what
Towers, yonder, vast beneath the veil?"
"THE TRUTH,"
Answered the Priest.
"And have I for the truth
Panted and struggled with a lonely soul,
And yon the thin and ceremonial robe
That wraps her from mine eyes?"
Replied the Priest,
"There shrouds herself the still Divinity.
Hear, and revere her best: 'Till I this veil
Lift—may no mortal-born presume to raise;
And who with guilty and unhallow'd hand
Too soon profanes the Holy and Forbidden—
He,' says the goddess."—

"Well?"
"'SHALL SEE THE TRUTH!'"
"And wond'rous oracle; and hast *thou* never
Lifted the veil?"
"No! nor desired to raise!"
"What! nor desired? O strange, incurious heart,
Here the thin barrier—there reveal'd the truth!"
Mildly return'd the priestly master: "Son,
More mighty than thou dream'st of, Holy Law
Spreads interwoven in yon slender web,
Air-light to touch—lead-heavy to the soul!"

The young man, thoughtful, turn'd him to his home,
And the sharp fever of the Wish to Know
Robb'd night of sleep. Around his couch he roll'd,
Till midnight hatch'd resolve—
"Unto the shrine!"
Stealthily on, the involuntary tread
Bears him—he gains the boundary, scales the wall,
And midway in the inmost, holiest dome,
Strides with adventurous step the daring man.

Now halts he where the lifeless Silence sleeps
In the embrace of mournful Solitude;—
Silence unstirr'd—save where the guilty tread
Call'd the dull echo from mysterious vaults!

High from the opening of the dome above,
Came with wan smile the silver-shining moon.
And, awful as some pale presiding god,
Dim-gleaming through the hush of that large gloom,
In its wan veil the Giant Image stood.

With an unsteady step he onward past,
Already touch'd the violating hand
The Holy—and recoil'd! a shudder thrill'd
His limbs, fire-hot and icy-cold in turns,
As if invisible arms would pluck the soul
Back from the deed.

"O miserable man!
What would'st thou?" (Thus within the inmost heart
Murmur'd the warning whisper.) "Wilt thou dare
The All-hallow'd to profane? 'No mortal-born'
(So spake the oracular word)—'may lift the veil
Till I myself shall raise!' Yet said it not—
The same oracular word—'who lifts the veil
Shall see the truth?' Behind, be what there may,
I dare the hazard—I will lift the veil—"
Loud rang his shouting voice—"and I will see!"
"SEE!"
A lengthen'd echo, mocking, shrill'd again!
He spoke and rais'd the veil! And ask'st thou what
Unto the sacrilegious gaze lay bare?
I know not—pale and senseless, stretch'd before
The statue of the great Egyptian queen,
The priests beheld him at the dawn of day;
But what he saw, or what did there befall,
His lips reveal'd not. Ever from his heart
Was fled the sweet serenity of life,
And the deep anguish dug the early grave
"Woe—woe to him"—such were his warning words,
Answering some curious and impetuous brain,
"Woe—for her face shall charm him never more!
Woe—woe to him who treads through Guilt to TRUTH!"

* * * * *

THE IDEAL AND THE ACTUAL LIFE (1795)

I

Forever fair, forever calm and bright,
Life flies on plumage, zephyr-light,
For those who on the Olympian hill rejoice—
Moons wane, and races wither to the tomb,
And 'mid the universal ruin, bloom
The rosy days of Gods—

With Man, the choice,
Timid and anxious, hesitates between
The sense's pleasure and the soul's content;
While on celestial brows, aloft and sheen,
The beams of both are blent.

II

Seek'st thou on earth the life of Gods to share,
Safe in the Realm of Death?—beware
To pluck the fruits that glitter to thine eye;
Content thyself with gazing on their glow—
Short are the joys Possession can bestow,
And in Possession sweet Desire will die.
'Twas not the ninefold chain of waves that bound
Thy daughter, Ceres, to the Stygian river—
She pluck'd the fruit of the unholy ground,
And so—was Hell's forever!

III

The Weavers of the Web—the Fates—but sway
The matter and the things of clay;
Safe from each change that Time to Matter gives,
Nature's blest playmate, free at will to stray
With Gods a god, amidst the fields of Day,
The FORM, the ARCHETYPE,[4] serenely lives.
Would'st thou soar heavenward on its joyous wing?
Cast from thee, Earth, the bitter and the real,
High from this cramp'd and dungeon being, spring
Into the Realm of the Ideal!

IV

Here, bathed, Perfection, in thy purest ray,
Free from the clogs and taints of clay,
Hovers divine the Archetypal Man!
Dim as those phantom ghosts of life that gleam
And wander voiceless by the Stygian stream,—
Fair as it stands in fields Elysian,

Ere down to Flesh the Immortal doth descend:—
If doubtful ever in the Actual life
Each contest—*here* a victory crowns the end
Of every nobler strife.

V

Not from the strife itself to set thee free,
But more to nerve—doth Victory
Wave her rich garland from the Ideal clime.
Whate'er thy wish, the Earth has no repose—
Life still must drag thee onward as it flows,
Whirling thee down the dancing surge of Time.
But when the courage sinks beneath the dull
Sense of its narrow limits—on the soul,
Bright from the hill-tops of the Beautiful,
Bursts the attainèd goal!

VI

If worth thy while the glory and the strife
Which fire the lists of Actual Life—
The ardent rush to fortune or to fame,
In the hot field where Strength and Valor are,
And rolls the whirling thunder of the car,
And the world, breathless, eyes the glorious game—
Then dare and strive—the prize can but belong
To him whose valor o'er his tribe prevails;
In life the victory only crowns the strong—
He who is feeble fails.

VII

But Life, whose source, by crags around it pil'd,
Chafed while confin'd, foams fierce and wild,
Glides soft and smooth when once its streams expand,
When its waves, glassing in their silver play,
Aurora blent with Hesper's milder ray,
Gain the Still BEAUTIFUL—that Shadow-Land!
Here, contest grows but interchange of Love;

All curb is but the bondage of the Grace;
Gone is each foe,—Peace folds her wings above
Her native dwelling-place.

VIII

When, through dead stone to breathe a soul of light,
With the dull matter to unite
The kindling genius, some great sculptor glows;
Behold him straining every nerve intent—
Behold how, o'er the subject element,
The stately THOUGHT its march laborious goes!
For never, save to Toil untiring, spoke
The unwilling Truth from her mysterious well—
The statue only to the chisel's stroke
Wakes from its marble cell.

IX

But onward to the Sphere of Beauty—go
Onward, O Child of Art! and, lo,
Out of the matter which thy pains control
The Statue springs!—not as with labor wrung
From the hard block, but as from Nothing sprung—
Airy and light—the offspring of the soul!
The pangs, the cares, the weary toils it cost
Leave not a trace when once the work is done—
The Artist's human frailty merged and lost
In Art's great victory won!

X

If human Sin confronts the rigid law
Of perfect Truth and Virtue, awe
Seizes and saddens thee to see how far
Beyond thy reach, Perfection;—if we test
By the Ideal of the Good, the best,
How mean our efforts and our actions are!
This space between the Ideal of man's soul
And man's achievement, who hath ever past?

An ocean spreads between us and that goal
Where anchor ne'er was cast!

XI

But fly the boundary of the Senses—live
The Ideal life free Thought can give;
And, lo, the gulf shall vanish, and the chill
Of the soul's impotent despair be gone!
And with divinity thou sharest the throne,
Let but divinity become thy will!
Scorn not the Law—permit its iron band
The sense (it cannot chain the soul) to thrall.
Let man no more the will of Jove withstand,
And Jove the bolt lets fall!

XII

If, in the woes of Actual Human Life—
If thou could'st see the serpent strife
Which the Greek Art has made divine in stone—
Could'st see the writhing limbs, the livid cheek,
Note every pang, and hearken every shriek
Of some despairing lost Laocoon,
The human nature would thyself subdue
To share the human woe before thine eye—
Thy cheek would pale, and all thy soul be true
To Man's great Sympathy.

XIII

But in the Ideal Realm, aloof and far,
Where the calm Art's pure dwellers are,
Lo, the Laocoon writhes, but does not groan.
Here, no sharp grief the high emotion knows—
Here, suffering's self is made divine, and shows
The brave resolve of the firm soul alone:
Here, lovely as the rainbow on the dew
Of the spent thunder-cloud, to Art is given,

Gleaming through Grief's dark veil, the peaceful blue
Of the sweet Moral Heaven.

XIV

So, in the glorious parable, behold
How, bow'd to mortal bonds, of old
Life's dreary path divine Alcides trod:
The hydra and the lion were his prey,
And to restore the friend he loved today,
He went undaunted to the black-brow'd God;
And all the torments and the labors sore
Wroth Juno sent—the meek majestic One,
With patient spirit and unquailing, bore,
Until the course was run—

XV

Until the God cast down his garb of clay,
And rent in hallowing flame away
The mortal part from the divine—to soar
To the empyreal air! Behold him spring
Blithe in the pride of the unwonted wing,
And the dull matter that confined before
Sinks downward, downward, downward as a dream!
Olympian hymns receive the escaping soul,
And smiling Hebe, from the ambrosial stream,
Fills for a God the bowl!

* * * * *

GENIUS (1795)

Do I believe, thou ask'st, the Master's word,
The Schoolman's shibboleth that binds the herd?
To the soul's haven is there but one chart?
Its peace a problem to be learned by art?
On system rest the happy and the good?
To base the temple must the props be wood?

Must I distrust the gentle law, imprest,
To guide and warn, by Nature on the breast,
Till, squared to rule the instinct of the soul,—
Till the School's signet stamp the eternal scroll,
Till in one mold some dogma hath confined
The ebb and flow—the light waves—of the mind?
Say thou, familiar to these depths of gloom,
Thou, safe ascended from the dusty tomb,
Thou, who hast trod these weird Egyptian cells—
Say—if Life's comfort with yon mummies dwells!—
Say—and I grope—with saddened steps indeed—
But on, thro' darkness, if to Truth it lead!

Nay, Friend, thou know'st the golden time—the age
Whose legends live in many a poet's page?
When heavenlier shapes with Man walked side by side,
And the chaste Feeling was itself a guide;
Then the great law, alike divine amid
Suns bright in Heaven, or germs in darkness hid—
That silent law—(call'd whether by the name
Of Nature or Necessity, the same),
To that deep sea, the heart, its movement gave—
Sway'd the full tide, and freshened the free wave.
Then sense unerring—because unreproved—
True as the finger on the dial moved,
Half-guide, half-playmate, of Earth's age of youth,
The sportive instinct of Eternal Truth.
Then, nor Initiate nor Profane were known;
Where the Heart felt—there Reason found a throne:
Not from the dust below, but life around
Warm Genius shaped what quick Emotion found.
One rule, like light, for every bosom glowed,
Yet hid from all the fountain whence it flowed.
But, gone that blessed Age!—our wilful pride
Has lost, with Nature, the old peaceful Guide.
Feeling, no more to raise us and rejoice,
Is heard and honored as a Godhead's voice;
And, disenhallowed in its eldest cell

The Human Heart—lies mute the Oracle,
Save where the low and mystic whispers thrill
Some listening spirit more divinely still.
There, in the chambers of the inmost heart,
There, must the Sage explore the Magian's art;
There, seek the long-lost Nature's steps to track,
Till, found once more, she gives him Wisdom back!
Hast thou—(O Blest, if so, whate'er betide!)—
Still kept the Guardian Angel by thy side?
Can thy Heart's guileless childhood yet rejoice
In the sweet instinct with its warning voice?
Does Truth yet limn upon untroubled eyes,
Pure and serene, her world of Iris-dies?
Rings clear the echo which her accent calls
Back from the breast, on which the music falls?
In the calm mind is doubt yet hush'd—and will
That doubt tomorrow, as today, be still?
Will all these fine sensations in their play,
No censor need to regulate and sway?
Fear'st thou not in the insidious Heart to find
The source of Trouble to the limpid mind?

No!—then thine Innocence thy Mentor be!
Science can teach thee naught—she learns from thee!
Each law that lends lame succor to the Weak—
The cripple's crutch—the vigorous need not seek!
From thine own self thy rule of action draw;
That which thou dost—what charms thee—is thy Law,
And founds to every race a code sublime—
What pleases Genius gives a Law to Time!
The Word—the Deed—all Ages shall command,
Pure if thy lip and holy if thy hand!
Thou, thou alone mark'st not within thy heart
The inspiring God whose Minister thou art,
Know'st not the magic of the mighty ring
Which bows the realm of Spirits to their King:
But meek, nor conscious of diviner birth,
Glide thy still footsteps thro' the conquered Earth!

* * * * *

VOTIVE TABLETS

[Under this title Schiller arranged that more dignified and philosophical portion of the small Poems published as Epigrams in the *Musen Almanach*; which rather sought to point a general thought, than a personal satire.—Many of these, however, are either wholly without interest for the English reader, or express in almost untranslatable laconism what, in far more poetical shapes, Schiller has elsewhere repeated and developed. We, therefore, content ourselves with such a selection as appears to us best suited to convey a fair notion of the object and spirit of the class.—Translator]

* * * * *

MOTTO TO THE VOTIVE TABLETS.

What the God taught—what has befriended all
Life's ways, I place upon the Votive Wall.

* * * * *

THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

(ZWEIERLEI WIRKUNGSARTEN)

The Good's the Flower to Earth already given—
The Beautiful, on Earth sows flowers from Heaven!

* * * * *

VALUE AND WORTH

If thou *hast* something, bring thy goods—a fair return be thine;
If thou *art* something, bring thy soul and interchange with mine.

* * * * *

THE KEY

To know *thyself*—in others self discern;
Wouldst thou know others? Read thyself—and learn!

* * * * *

THE DIVISION OF RANKS

Yes, in the moral world, as ours, we see
Divided grades—a Soul's Nobility;
By deeds their titles Commoners create—
The loftier order are by birthright great.[5]

* * * * *

TO THE MYSTIC

Spreads Life's true mystery round us evermore,
Seen by no eye, it lies all eyes before.

* * * * *

WISDOM AND PRUDENCE

Wouldst thou the loftiest height of Wisdom gain?
On to the rashness, Prudence would disdain;
The purblind see but the receding shore,
Not that to which the bold wave wafts thee o'er!

* * * * *

THE UNANIMITY

Truth seek we both—Thou, in the life without thee and around;
I in the Heart within—by both can Truth alike be found;
The healthy eye can through the world the great Creator track—
The healthy heart is but the glass which gives creation back.

* * * * *

THE SCIENCE OF POLITICS

All that thou dost be right—to that alone confine thy view,
And halt within the certain rule—the All that's right to do!
True zeal *the what already is* would sound and perfect see;
False zeal would sound and perfect make the something that's to be!

* * * * *

TO ASTRONOMERS

Of the Nebulæ and planets do not babble so to me;
What! is Nature only mighty inasmuch as you can see?
Inasmuch as you can measure her immeasurable ways,
As she renders world on world, sun and system to your gaze?
Though through space your object be the Sublimest to embrace,
Never the Sublime abideth—where you vainly search—in space!

* * * * *

THE BEST GOVERNED STATE

How the best state to know?—It is found out,
Like the best women—that least talked about.

* * * * *

MY BELIEF

What thy religion? Those thou namest—none!
None! Why?—Because I have religion!

* * * * *

FRIEND AND FOE

Dear is my friend—yet from my foe, as from my friend, comes good;
My friend shows what I *can* do, and my foe shows what I *should*.

* * * * *

LIGHT AND COLOR

Dwell, Light, beside the changeless God—God spoke and Light began;
Come, thou, the ever-changing one—come, Color, down to Man!

* * * * *

FORUM OF WOMEN

Woman—to judge man rightly—do not scan
Each separate act;—pass judgment on the Man!

* * * * *

GENIUS

Intellect can repeat what's been fulfill'd,
And, aping Nature, as she buildeth—build;
O'er Nature's base can haughty Reason dare
To pile its lofty castle—in the air.
But only thine, O Genius, is the charge,
In Nature's kingdom Nature to enlarge!

* * * * *

THE IMITATOR

Good out of good—that art is known to all—
But Genius from the bad the good can call;
Then, Mimic, not from leading-strings escaped,
Work'st but the matter that's already shaped
The already-shaped a nobler hand awaits—
All matter asks a Spirit that *creates!*

* * * * *

CORRECTNESS

(FREE TRANSLATION)

The calm correctness, where no fault we see,
Attests Art's loftiest or its least degree;
Alike the smoothness of the surface shows
The Pool's dull stagner—the great Sea's repose.

* * * * *

THE MASTER

The herd of scribes, by what they tell us,
Show all in which their wits excel us;
But the True Master we behold,
In what his art leaves—just untold.

* * * * *

EXPECTATION AND FULFILLMENT

O'er Ocean, with a thousand masts, sails forth the stripling bold—
One boat, hard rescued from the deep, draws into port the old!

* * * * *

THE PROSELYTE MAKER

"A little earth from out the Earth-and I
The Earth will move:" so spake the Sage divine.
Out of myself one little moment—try
Myself to take:—succeed, and I am thine!

* * * * *

THE CONNECTING MEDIUM

What to cement the lofty and the mean
Does Nature?—What?—Place vanity between?

* * * * *

THE MORAL POET

[This is an Epigram on Lavater's work, called "Pontius Pilatus, oder der Mensch in Allen Gestalten," etc.—TRANSLATOR.]

"How poor a thing is man!" Alas, 'tis true
I'd half forgot it—when I chanced on you!

* * * * *

THE SUBLIME THEME

[Also on Lavater, and alluding to the "Jesus Messias, oder die Evangelien und Apostelgeschichte in Gesängen."—TRANSLATOR.]

How God compassionates Mankind, thy muse, my friend, rehearses—
Compassion for the sins of Man!—What comfort for thy verses!

* * * * *

SCIENCE

To some she is the Goddess great, to some the milch-cow of the field;
Their care is but to calculate—what butter she will yield.

* * * * *

KANT AND HIS COMMENTATORS

How many starvelings one rich man can nourish!
When monarchs build, the rubbish-carriers flourish.

* * * * *

THE MAIDEN FROM AFAR (1796)

Within a vale, each infant year,
When earliest larks first carol free,
To humble shepherds doth appear
A wondrous maiden, fair to see.
Not born within that lowly place—
From whence she wander'd, none could tell;
Her parting footsteps left no trace,
When once the maiden bade farewell.

And blessèd was her presence there—
Each heart, expanding, grew more gay;
Yet something loftier still than fair
Kept man's familiar looks away.
From fairy gardens, known to none,
She brought mysterious fruits and flowers—
The things of some serener sun—
Some Nature more benign than ours.

With each, her gifts the maiden shared—
To some the fruits, the flowers to some;
Alike the young, the aged fared;
Each bore a blessing back to home.
Though every guest was welcome there,
Yet some the maiden held more dear,
And cull'd her rarest sweets whene'er
She saw two hearts that loved draw near.

* * * * *

THE GLOVE (1797)

A TALE

Before his lion-court,
To see the gruesome sport,
Sate the king;
Beside him group'd his princely peers;

And dames aloft, in circling tiers,
Wreath'd round their blooming ring.
King Francis, where he sate,
Raised a finger—yawn'd the gate,
And, slow from his repose,
A LION goes!
Dumbly he gazed around
The foe-encircled ground;
And, with a lazy gape,
He stretch'd his lordly shape,
And shook his careless mane,
And—laid him down again!

[Illustration: THE KNIGHT SCORNS CUNIGONDE Eugen Klimsch]

A finger raised the king—
And nimbly have the guard
A second gate unbarr'd;
Forth, with a rushing spring,
A TIGER sprung!
Wildly the wild one yell'd
When the lion he beheld;
And, bristling at the look,
With his tail his sides he strook,
And roll'd his rabid tongue;
In many a wary ring
He swept round the forest king,
With a fell and rattling sound;—
And laid him on the ground,
Grommelling!
The king raised his finger; then
Leap'd two LEOPARDS from the den
With a bound;
And boldly bounded they
Where the crouching tiger lay
Terrible!
And he gripped the beasts in his deadly hold;
In the grim embrace they grappled and roll'd;
Rose the lion with a roar!

And stood the strife before;
And the wild-cats on the spot,
From the blood-thirst, wroth and hot,
Halted still!
Now from the balcony above,
A snowy hand let fall a glove:—
Midway between the beasts of prey,
Lion and tiger; there it lay,
The winsome lady's glove!

Fair Cunigonde said, with a lip of scorn,
To the knight DELORGES—"If the love you have sworn
Were as gallant and leal as you boast it to be,
I might ask you to bring back that glove to me!"

The knight left the place where the lady sate;
The knight he has pass'd thro' the fearful gate;
The lion and tiger he stoop'd above,
And his fingers have closed on the lady's glove!

All shuddering and stunn'd, they beheld him there—
The noble knights and the ladies fair;
But loud was the joy and the praise, the while
He bore back the glove with his tranquil smile!

With a tender look in her softening eyes,
That promised reward to his warmest sighs,
Fair Cunigonde rose her knight to grace;
He toss'd the glove in the lady's face!
"Nay, spare me the guerdon, at least," quoth he;
And he left forever that fair ladye!

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE DIVER CARL GEHRTS]

THE DIVER (1797)

A BALLAD

[The original of the story on which Schiller has founded this ballad, matchless perhaps for the power and grandeur of its descriptions, is to be found in Kircher. According to the true principles of imitative art, Schiller has preserved all that is striking in the legend, and ennobled all that is common-place. The name of the Diver was Nicholas, surnamed the Fish. The King appears, according to Hoffmeister's probable conjectures, to have been either Frederic I. or Frederic II., of Sicily. Date from 1295 to 1377.]

"Oh, where is the knight or the squire so bold,
As to dive to the howling charybdis below?—
I cast in the whirlpool a goblet of gold,
And o'er it already the dark waters flow;
Whoever to me may the goblet bring,
Shall have for his guerdon that gift of his king."

He spoke, and the cup from the terrible steep,
That, rugged and hoary, hung over the verge
Of the endless and measureless world of the deep,
Swirl'd into the maëlstrom that madden'd the surge.
"And where is the diver so stout to go—
I ask ye again—to the deep below?"
And the knights and the squires that gather'd around,
Stood silent—and fix'd on the ocean their eyes;

They look'd on the dismal and savage Profound,
And the peril chill'd back every thought of the prize.
And thrice spoke the monarch—"The cup to win,
Is there never a wight who will venture in?"

And all as before heard in silence the king—
Till a youth with an aspect unfearing but gentle,
'Mid the tremulous squires—stept out from the ring,
Unbuckling his girdle, and doffing his mantle;
And the murmuring crowd as they parted asunder,
On the stately boy cast their looks of wonder.

As he strode to the marge of the summit, and gave
One glance on the gulf of that merciless main;
Lo! the wave that forever devours the wave
Casts roaringly up the charybdis again;
And, as with the swell of the far thunder-boom,
Rushes foamingly forth from the heart of the gloom.

And it bubbles and seethes, and it hisses and roars,[6]
As when fire is with water commix'd and contending,
And the spray of its wrath to the welkin up-soars,
And flood upon flood hurries on, never-ending.
And it never *will* rest, nor from travail be free,
Like a sea that is laboring the birth of a sea.

Yet, at length, comes a lull O'er the mighty commotion,
As the whirlpool sucks into black smoothness the swell
Of the white-foaming breakers—and cleaves thro' the ocean
A path that seems winding in darkness to hell.
Round and round whirl'd the waves-deeper and deeper still driven,
Like a gorge thro' the mountainous main thunder-riven!

The youth gave his trust to his Maker! Before
That path through the riven abyss closed again—
Hark! a shriek from the crowd rang aloft from the shore,
And, behold! he is whirl'd in the grasp of the main!
And o'er him the breakers mysteriously roll'd,
And the giant-mouth closed on the swimmer so bold.

O'er the surface grim silence lay dark; but the crowd
Heard the wail from the deep murmur hollow and fell;
They hearken and shudder, lamenting aloud—
"Gallant youth-noble heart-fare-thee-well, fare-thee-well!"
More hollow and more wails the deep on the ear—
More dread and more dread grows suspense in its fear.

If thou should'st in those waters thy diadem fling,
And cry, "Who may find it shall win it and wear;"
God wot, though the prize were the crown of a king—

A crown at such hazard were valued too dear.
For never shall lips of the living reveal
What the deeps that howl yonder in terror conceal.

Oh, many a bark, to that breast grappled fast,
Has gone down to the fearful and fathomless grave;
Again, crash'd together the keel and the mast,
To be seen, toss'd aloft in the glee of the wave.
Like the growth of a storm, ever louder and clearer,
Grows the roar of the gulf rising nearer and nearer.

And it bubbles and seethes, and it hisses and roars,
As when fire is with water commix'd and contending;
And the spray of its wrath to the welkin up-soars,
And flood upon flood hurries on, never ending;
And as with the swell of the far thunder-boom
Rushes roaringly forth from the heart of the gloom.

And, lo! from the heart of that far-floating gloom,[7]
What gleams on the darkness so swanlike and white?
Lo! an arm and a neck, glancing up from the tomb!—
They battle—the Man's with the Element's might.
It is he—it is he! In his left hand, behold!
As a sign!—as a joy!—shines the goblet of gold!

And he breathed deep, and he breathed long,
And he greeted the heavenly delight of the day.
They gaze on each other—they shout, as they throng—
"He lives—lo the ocean has render'd its prey!
And safe from the whirlpool and free from the grave,
Comes back to the daylight the soul of the brave!"

And he comes, with the crowd in their clamor and glee,
And the goblet his daring has won from the water,
He lifts to the king as he sinks on his knee;—
And the king from her maidens has beckon'd his daughter—
She pours to the boy the bright wine which they bring,
And thus spake the Diver—"Long life to the king!

"Happy they whom the rose-hues of daylight rejoice,
The air and the sky that to mortals are given!
May the horror below never more find a voice—
Nor Man stretch too far the wide mercy of Heaven!
Never more—never more may he lift from the sight
The veil which is woven with Terror and Night!

"Quick-brightening like lightning—it tore me along,
Down, down, till the gush of a torrent, at play
In the rocks of its wilderness, caught me—and strong
As the wings of an eagle, it whirl'd me away.
Vain, vain was my struggle—the circle had won me,
Round and round in its dance, the wild element spun me.

"And I call'd on my God, and my God heard my prayer
In the strength of my need, in the gasp of my breath—
And show'd me a crag that rose up from the lair,
And I clung to it, nimbly—and baffled the death!
And, safe in the perils around me, behold
On the spikes of the coral the goblet of gold!

"Below, at the foot of the precipice drear,
Spread the gloomy, and purple, and pathless Obscure!
A silence of Horror that slept on the ear,
That the eye more appall'd might the Horror endure!
Salamander—snake—dragon—vast reptiles that dwell
In the deep-coil'd about the grim jaws of their hell.

"Dark-crawl'd—glided dark the unspeakable swarms,
Clump'd together in masses, misshapen and vast—
Here clung and here bristled the fashionless forms—
Here the dark-moving bulk of the Hammer-fish pass'd—
And with teeth grinning white, and a menacing motion,
Went the terrible Shark—the Hyena of Ocean.

"There I hung, and the awe gather'd icily o'er me,
So far from the earth, where man's help there was none!
The One Human Thing, with the Goblins before me—
Alone—in a loneness so ghastly—ALONE!

Fathom-deep from man's eye in the speechless profound,
With the death of the Main and the Monsters around.

"Methought, as I gazed through the darkness, that now
IT[8] saw—the dread hundred-limbed creature-its prey!
And darted—O God! from the far flaming-bough
Of the coral, I swept on the horrible way;
And it seized me, the wave with its wrath and its roar,
It seized me to save—King, the danger is o'er!"

On the youth gazed the monarch, and marvel'd; quoth he,
"Bold Diver, the goblet I promised is thine,
And this ring will I give, a fresh guerdon to thee,
Never jewels more precious shone up from the mine,
If thou'lt bring me fresh tidings, and venture again
To tell what lies hid in the *innermost* main?"

Then outspake the daughter in tender emotion
"Ah! father, my father, what more can there rest?
Enough of this sport with the pitiless ocean—
He has served thee as none would, thyself has confest.
If nothing can slake thy wild thirst of desire,
Let thy knights put to shame the exploit of the squire!"

The king seized the goblet—he swung it on high,
And whirling, it fell in the roar of the tide:
"But bring back that goblet again to my eye,
And I'll hold thee the dearest that rides by my side;
And thine arms shall embrace, as thy bride, I decree,
The maiden whose pity now pleadeth for thee."

In his heart, as he listen'd, there leapt the wild joy—
And the hope and the love through his eyes spoke in fire,
On that bloom, on that blush, gazed delighted the boy;
The maiden-she faints at the feet of her sire!
Here the guerdon divine, there the danger beneath;
He resolves! To the strife with the life and the death!

They hear the loud surges sweep back in their swell,
Their coming the thunder-sound heralds along!

Fond eyes yet are tracking the spot where he fell:
They come, the wild waters, in tumult and throng,
Roaring up to the cliff—roaring back, as before,
But no wave ever brings the lost youth to the shore.

* * * *

THE CRANES OF IBYCUS (1797)

From Rhegium to the Isthmus, long
Hallow'd to steeds and glorious song,
Where, link'd awhile in holy peace,
Meet all the sons of martial Greece—
Wends Ibycus-whose lips the sweet
And ever-young Apollo fires;
The staff supports the wanderer's feet—
The God the Poet's soul inspires!

Soon from the mountain-ridges high,
The tower-crown'd Corinth greets his eye;
In Neptune's groves of darksome pine,
He treads with shuddering awe divine;
Nought lives around him, save a swarm
Of CRANES, that still pursued his way.
Lured by the South, they wheel and form
In ominous groups their wild array.

And "Hail! beloved Birds!" he cried;
"My comrades on the ocean tide,
Sure signs of good ye bode to me;
Our lots alike would seem to be;
From far, together borne, we greet
A shelter now from toil and danger;
And may the friendly hearts we meet
Preserve from every ill—the Stranger!"

His step more light, his heart more gay,
Along the mid-wood winds his way,

When, where the path the thickets close,
Burst sudden forth two ruffian foes;
Now strife to strife, and foot to foot!
Ah! weary sinks the gentle hand;
The gentle hand that wakes the lute
Has learn'd no lore that guides the brand.

He calls on men and Gods—in vain!
His cries no blest deliverer gain;
Feebler and fainter grows the sound,
And still the deaf life slumbers round—
"In the far land I fall forsaken,
Unwept and unregarded, here;
By death from caitiff hands o'ertaken,
Nor ev'n one late avenger near!"

Down to the earth the death-stroke bore him—
Hark, where the Cranes wheel dismal o'er him!
He hears, as darkness veils his eyes,
Near, in hoarse croak, their dirge-like cries.
"Ye whose wild wings above me hover,
(Since never voice, save yours alone,
The deed can tell)—the hand discover—
Avenge!"—He spoke, and life was gone.

Naked and maim'd the corpse was found—
And, still through many a mangling wound,
The sad Corinthian Host could trace
The loved—too well-remember'd face.
"And must I meet thee thus once more?
Who hoped with wreaths of holy pine,
Bright with new fame—the victory o'er—
The Singer's temples to entwine!"

And loud lamented every guest
Who held the Sea-God's solemn feast—
As in a single heart prevailing,
Throughout all Hellas went the wailing.
Wild to the Council Hall they ran—

In thunder rush'd the threat'ning Flood—
"Revenge shall right the murder'd man,
The last atonement-blood for blood!"

Yet 'mid the throng the Isthmus claims,
Lured by the Sea-God's glorious games—
The mighty many-nation'd throng—
How track the hand that wrought the wrong?—
How guess if that dread deed were done,
By ruffian hands, or secret foes?
He who sees all on earth—the SUN—
Alone the gloomy secret knows.

Perchance he treads in careless peace,
Amidst your Sons, assembled Greece;
Hears with a smile revenge decreed;
Gloats with fell joy upon the deed.
His steps the avenging gods may mock
Within the very Temple's wall,
Or mingle with the crowds that flock
To yonder solemn scenic[9] hall.

Wedg'd close, and serried, swarms the crowd—
Beneath the weight the walls are bow'd—
Thitherwards streaming far, and wide,
Broad Hellas flows in mingled tide tide—
A tide like that which heaves the deep
When hollow-sounding, shoreward driven;
On, wave on wave, the thousands sweep
Till arching, row on row, to heaven!

The tribes, the nations, who shall name,
That guest-like, there assembled came?
From Theseus' town, from Aulis' strand—
From Phocis, from the Spartans' land—
From Asia's wave-divided clime,
The Isles that gem the Ægean Sea,
To hearken on that Stage Sublime,
The Dark Choir's mournful melody!

True to the awful rites of old,
In long and measured strides, behold
The Chorus from the hinder ground,
Pace the vast circle's solemn round.
So this World's women never strode—
Their race from Mortals ne'er began;
Gigantic, from their grim abode,
They tower above the Sons of Man!

Across their loins the dark robe clinging,
In fleshless hands the torches swinging,
Now to and fro, with dark red glow—
No blood that lives the dead cheeks know!
Where flow the locks that woo to love
On *human* temples—ghastly dwell
The serpents, coil'd the brow above,
And the green asps with poison swell.

Thus circling, horrible, within
That space—doth their dark hymn begin,
And round the sinner as they go,
Cleave to the heart their words of woe.
Dismally wails, the senses chilling,
The hymn—the FURIES' solemn song;
And froze the very marrow thrilling
As roll'd the gloomy sounds along.

And weal to him—from crime secure—
Who keeps his soul as childhood's pure;
Life's path he roves, a wanderer free—
We near him not-THE AVENGERS, WE,
But woe to him for whom we weave
The doom for deeds that shun the light:
Fast to the murderer's feet we cleave,
The fearful Daughters of the Night.

"And deems he flight from us can hide him?
Still on dark wings We sail beside him!
The murderer's feet the snare enthralls—

Or soon or late, to earth he falls!
Untiring, hounding on, we go;
For blood can no remorse atone I
On, ever—to the Shades below,
And there—we grasp him, still our own!"

So singing, their slow dance they wreathe,
And stillness, like a silent death,
Heavily there lay cold and drear,
As if the Godhead's self were near.
Then, true to those strange rites of old,
Pacing the circle's solemn round,
In long and measured strides—behold,
They vanish in the hinder ground!

Confused and doubtful—half between
The solemn truth and phantom scene,
The crowd revere the Power, presiding
O'er secret deeps, to justice guiding—
The Unfathom'd and Inscrutable
By whom the web of doom is spun,
Whose shadows in the deep heart dwell,
Whose form is seen not in the sun!

Just then, amidst the highest tier,
Breaks forth a voice that starts the ear;
"See there—see there, Timotheus,
Behold the Cranes of Ibycus!"
A sudden darkness wraps the sky;
Above the roofless building hover
Dusk, swarming wings; and heavily
Sweep the slow Cranes, hoarse-murmuring, over!

"Of Ibycus?"—that name so dear
Thrills through the hearts of those who hear!
Like wave on wave in eager seas,
From mouth to mouth the murmur flees—
"Of Ibycus, whom we bewail!
The murder'd one! What mean those words?

Who is the man—knows *he* the tale?
Why link that name with those wild birds?"

Questions on questions louder press—
Like lightning flies the inspiring guess—
Leaps every heart—"The truth we seize;
Your might is here, EUMENIDES!
The murderer yields himself confest—
Vengeance is near—that voice the token—
Ho!-him who yonder spoke, arrest!
And him to whom the words were spoken!"

Scarce had the wretch the words let fall,
Than fain their sense he would recall
In vain; those whitening lips—behold!
The secret have already told.
Into their Judgment Court sublime
The Scene is changed;—their doom is seal'd!
Behold the dark unwitness'd Crime,
Struck by the lightning that reveal'd!

* * * * *

THE WORDS OF BELIEF (1797)

Three Words will I name thee—around and about,
From the lip to the lip, full of meaning, they flee;
But they had not their birth in the being without,
And the heart, not the lip, must their oracle be!
And all worth in the man shall for ever be o'er
When in those Three Words he believes no more.

Man is made FREE!—Man, by birthright, is free,
Though the tyrant may deem him but born for his tool.
Whatever the shout of the rabble may be—
Whatever the ranting misuse of the fool—
Still fear not the Slave, when he breaks from his chain,
For the Man made a Freeman grows safe in his gain.

And Virtue is more than a shade or a sound,
And Man may her voice, in this being, obey;
And though ever he slip on the stony ground,
Yet, ever again to the godlike way,
To the *science* of Good though the Wise may be blind,
Yet the *practice* is plain to the childlike mind.

And a God there is—over Space, over Time;
While the Human Will rocks, like a reed, to and fro,
Lives the Will of the Holy—A Purpose Sublime,
A Thought woven over creation below;
Changing and shifting the All we inherit,
But changeless through all One Immutable Spirit!

Hold fast the Three Words of Belief—though about
From the lip to the lip, full of meaning, they flee;
Yet they take not their birth from the being without—
But a voice from within must their oracle be;
And never all worth in the Man can be o'er,
Till in those Three Words he believes no more.

* * * * *

THE WORDS OF ERROR (1799)

Three Errors there are, that for ever are found
On the lips of the good, on the lips of the best;
But empty their meaning and hollow their sound—
And slight is the comfort they bring to the breast.

The fruits of existence escape from the clasp
Of the seeker who strives but those shadows to grasp—
So long as Man dreams of some Age in *this* life
When the Right and the Good will all evil subdue;
For the Right and the Good lead us ever to strife,
And wherever they lead us, the Fiend will pursue.

And (till from the earth borne, and stifled at length)
The earth that he touches still gifts him with strength![10]
So long as Man fancies that Fortune will live,
Like a bride with her lover, united with Worth;
For her favors, alas! to the mean she will give—
And Virtue possesses no title to earth!
That Foreigner wanders to regions afar,
Where the lands of her birthright immortally are!

So long as Man dreams that, to mortals a gift,
The Truth in her fulness of splendor will shine;
The veil of the goddess no earth-born may lift,
And all we can learn is—to guess and divine I
Dost thou seek, in a dogma, to prison her form?
The spirit flies forth on the wings of the storm!
O, Noble Soul! fly from delusions like these,
More heavenly belief be it thine to adore;
Where the Ear never hearkens, the Eye never sees,
Meet the rivers of Beauty and Truth evermore!
Not *without* thee the streams—there the Dull seek them;—No!
Look *within* thee—behold both the fount and the flow!

* * * * *

[Illustration: THE LAY OF THE BELL JULIUS BENEZUR]

THE LAY OF THE BELL[11] (1799)

"*Vivos voco—Mortuos plango—Fulgura frango*." [12]

I

Fast in its prison-walls of earth,
Awaits the mold of bakèd clay.
Up, comrades, up, and aid the birth—
THE BELL that shall be born today!
Who would honor obtain,
With the sweat and the pain,
The praise that Man gives to the Master must buy!—

But the blessing withal must descend from on high!
And well an earnest word beseems
The work the earnest hand prepares;
Its load more light the labor deems,
When sweet discourse the labor shares.
So let us ponder—nor in vain—
What strength can work when labor wills;
For who would not the fool disdain
Who ne'er designs what he fulfils?
And well it stamps our Human Race,
And hence the gift To UNDERSTAND,
That Man within the heart should trace
Whate'er he fashions with the hand.

II

From the fir the faggot take,
Keep it, heap it hard and dry,
That the gathered flame may break
Through the furnace, wroth and high.
When the copper within
Seethes and simmers—the tin
Pour quick, that the fluid that feeds the Bell
May flow in the right course glib and well.
Deep hid within this nether cell,
What force with Fire is molding thus
In yonder airy tower shall dwell,
And witness wide and far of us!
It shall, in later days, unfailing,
Rouse many an ear to rapt emotion;
Its solemn voice with Sorrow wailing,
Or choral chiming to Devotion.
Whatever Fate to Man may bring,
Whatever weal or woe befall,
That metal tongue shall backward ring
The warning moral drawn from all.

III

See the silvery bubbles spring!
Good! the mass is melting now!
Let the salts we duly bring
Purge the flood, and speed the flow.
From the dross and the scum,
Pure, the fusion must come;
For perfect and pure we the metal must keep,
That its voice may be perfect, and pure, and deep.
That voice, with merry music rife,
The cherished child shall welcome in,
What time the rosy dreams of life
In the first slumber's arms begin;
As yet in Time's dark womb unwarning,
Repose the days, or foul or fair,
And watchful o'er that golden morning,
The Mother-Love's untiring care!
And swift the years like arrows fly—
No more with girls content to play,
Fast in its prison-walls of earth,
Awaits the mold of bakèd clay.
Up, comrades, up, and aid the birth—
The BELL that shall be born to-day!
Bounds the proud Boy upon his way,
Storms through loud life's tumultuous pleasures,
With pilgrim staff the wide world measures;
And, wearied with the wish to roam,
Again seeks, stranger-like, the Father-Home.
And, lo, as some sweet vision breaks
Out from its native morning skies,
With rosy shame on downcast cheeks,
The Virgin stands before his eyes.
A nameless longing seizes him!
From all his wild companions flown;
Tears, strange till then, his eyes bedim;
He wanders all alone.
Blushing, he glides where'er she move;

Her greeting can transport him;
To every mead to deck his love,
The happy wild flowers court him!
Sweet Hope—and tender Longing—ye
The growth of Life's first Age of Gold,
When the heart, swelling, seems to see
The gates of heaven unfold!
O Love, the beautiful and brief! O prime,
Glory, and verdure, of life's summertime!

IV

Browning o'er, the pipes are simmering,
Dip this wand of clay[13] within;
If like glass the wand be glimmering,
Then the casting may begin.
Brisk, brisk now, and see
If the fusion flow free;
If—(happy and welcome indeed were the sign!)
If the hard and the ductile united combine.
For still where the strong is betrothed to the weak,
And the stern in sweet marriage is blent with the meek,
Rings the concord harmonious, both tender and strong:
So be it with thee, if forever united,
The heart to the heart flows in one, love-delighted;
Illusion is brief, but Repentance is long.
Lovely, thither are they bringing,
With her virgin wreath, the Bride!
To the love-feast clearly ringing,
Tolls the church-bell far and wide!
With that sweetest holyday,
Must the May of Life depart;
With the cestus loosed—away
Flies ILLUSION from the heart!
Yet love lingers lonely,
When Passion is mute,
And the blossoms may only
Give way to the fruit.
The Husband must enter

The hostile life;
With struggle and strife,
To plant or to watch,
To snare or to snatch,
To pray and importune,
Must wager and venture
And hunt down his fortune!
Then flows in a current the gear and the gain,
And the garners are filled with the gold of the grain,
Now a yard to the court, now a wing to the centre!
Within sits Another,
The thrifty Housewife;
The mild one, the mother—
Her home is her life.
In its circle she rules,
And the daughters she schools,
And she cautions the boys,
With a bustling command,
And a diligent hand
Employed she employs;
Gives order to store,
And the much makes the more;
Locks the chest and the wardrobe, with lavender smelling,
And the hum of the spindle goes quick through the dwelling,
And she hoards in the presses, well polished and full,
The snow of the linen, the shine of the wool;
Blends the sweet with the good, and from care and endeavor
Rests never!
Blithe the Master (where the while
From his roof he sees them smile)
Eyes the lands, and counts the gain;
There, the beams projecting far,
And the laden store-house are,
And the granaries bowed beneath
The blessèd golden grain;
There, in undulating motion,
Wave the corn-fields like an ocean.
Proud the boast the proud lips breathe:—

"My house is built upon a rock,
And sees unmoved the stormy shock
Of waves that fret below!"
What chain so strong, what girth so great,
To bind the giant form of Fate?—
Swift are the steps of Woe.

V

Now the casting may begin;
See the breach indented there:
Ere we run the fusion in,
Halt—and speed the pious prayer!
Pull the bung out—
See around and about
What vapor, what vapor—God help us!—has risen?—
Ha! the flame like a torrent leaps forth from its prison!
What friend is like the might of fire
When man can watch and wield the ire?
Whate'er we shape or work, we owe
Still to that heaven-descended glow.
But dread the heaven-descended glow,
When from their chain its wild wings go,
When, where it listeth, wide and wild
Sweeps the Free Nature's free-born Child!
When the Frantic One fleets,
While no force can withstand,
Through the populous streets
Whirling ghastly the brand;
For the Element hates
What man's labor creates,
And the work of his hand!
Impartially out from the cloud,
Or the curse or the blessing may fall!
Benignantly out from the cloud,
Come the dews, the revivers of all!
Avengingly out from the cloud
Come the levin, the bolt, and the ball!
Hark—a wail from the steeple!—aloud

The bell shrills its voice to the crowd!
Look—look—red as blood
All on high!
It is not the daylight that fills with its flood
The sky!
What a clamor awaking
Roars up through the street!
What a hell-vapor breaking
Rolls on through the street!
And higher and higher
Aloft moves the Column of Fire!
Through the vistas and rows
Like a whirlwind it goes,
And the air like the steam from a furnace glows.
Beams are crackling—posts are shrinking—
Walls are sinking—windows clinking
Children crying—
Mothers flying—
And the beast (the black ruin yet smoldering under)
Yells the howl of its pain and its ghastly wonder!
Hurry and skurry—away—away,
The face of the night is as clear as day!
As the links in a chain,
Again and again
Flies the bucket from hand to hand;
High in arches up-rushing
The engines are gushing,
And the flood, as a beast on the prey that it hounds,
With a roar on the breast of the element bounds.
To the grain and the fruits,
Through the rafters and beams,
Through the barns and the garners it crackles and streams!
As if they would rend up the earth from its roots,
Rush the flames to the sky
Giant-high;
And at length,
Wearied out and despairing, man bows to their strength!
With an idle gaze sees their wrath consume,

And submits to his doom!
Desolate
The place, and dread
For storms the barren bed!
In the blank voids that cheerful casements were,
Comes to and fro the melancholy air,
And sits despair;
And through the ruin, blackening in its shroud,
Peers, as it flits, the melancholy cloud.
One human glance of grief upon the grave
Of all that Fortune gave
The loiterer takes—then turns him to depart,
And grasps the wanderer's staff and mans his heart:
Whatever else the element bereaves
One blessing more than all it reft—it leaves
The face that he loves!—He counts them o'er,
See—not one look is missing from that store!

VI

Now clasped the bell within the clay—
The mold the mingled metals fill—

Oh, may it, sparkling into day,
Reward the labor and the skill!
Alas! should it fail,
For the mold may be frail—
And still with our hope must be mingled the fear—
And, ev'n now, while we speak, the mishap may be near!
To the dark womb of sacred earth
This labor of our hands is given,
As seeds that wait the second birth,
And turn to blessings watched by heaven!
Ah seeds, how dearer far than they
We bury in the dismal tomb,
Where Hope and Sorrow bend to pray
That suns beyond the realm of day
May warm them into bloom!
From the steeple

Tolls the bell,
Deep and heavy,
The death-knell,
Guiding with dirge-note—solemn, sad, and slow,
To the last home earth's weary wanderers know.
It is that worshipped wife—
It is that faithful mother![14]
Whom the dark Prince of Shadows leads benighted,
From that dear arm where oft she hung delighted.
Far from those blithe companions, born
Of her, and blooming in their morn;
On whom, when couched her heart above,
So often looked the Mother-Love!
Ah! rent the sweet Home's union-band,
And never, never more to come—
She dwells within the shadowy land,
Who was the Mother of that Home!
How oft they miss that tender guide,
The care—the watch—the face—the MOTHER—
And where she sate the babes beside,
Sits with unloving looks—ANOTHER!

VII

While the mass is cooling now,
Let the labor yield to leisure,
As the bird upon the bough,
Loose the travail to the pleasure.
When the soft stars awaken!
Each task be forsaken!
And the vesper-bell, lulling the earth into peace,
If the master still toil, chimes the workman's release!
Homeward from the tasks of day,
Through the greenwood's welcome way
Wends the wanderer, blithe and cheerily,
To the cottage loved so dearly!
And the eye and ear are meeting,
Now, the slow sheep homeward bleating;
Now, the wonted shelter near,

Lowing the lusty-fronted steer
Creaking now the heavy wain,
Reels with the happy harvest grain;
While, with many-colored leaves,
Glitters the garland on the sheaves;
For the mower's work is done,
And the young folks' dance begun!
Desert street, and quiet mart;—
Silence is in the city's heart;
And the social taper lighteth
Each dear face that HOME uniteth;
While the gate the town before
Heavily swings with sullen roar!
Though darkness is spreading
O'er earth—the Upright
And the Honest, undreading,
Look safe on the night
Which the evil man watches in awe,
For the eye of the Night is the Law!
Bliss-dowered! O daughter of the skies,
Hail, holy ORDER, whose employ
Blends like to like in light and joy—
Builder of cities, who of old
Called the wild man from waste and wold,
And, in his but thy presence stealing,
Roused each familiar household feeling,
And, best of all, the happy ties,
The centre of the social band—
The Instinct of the Fatherland!
United thus—each helping each,
Brisk work the countless hands forever;
For naught its power to Strength can teach,
Like Emulation and Endeavor!
Thus linked the master with the man,
Each in his rights can each revere,
And while they march in freedom's van,
Scorn the lewd rout that dogs the rear!
To freemen labor is renown!

Who works—gives blessings and commands;
Kings glory in the orb and crown—
Be ours the glory of our hands,
Long in these walls—long may we greet
Your footfalls, Peace and Concord sweet!
Distant the day, oh! distant far,
When the rude hordes of trampling War
Shall scare the silent vale—
The where
Now the sweet heaven, when day doth leave
The air,
Limns its soft rose-hues on the veil of Eve—
Shall the fierce war-brand, tossing in the gale,
From town and hamlet shake the horrent glare!

VIII

Now, its destined task fulfilled,
Asunder break the prison-mold;
Let the goodly Bell we build,
Eye and heart alike behold.
The hammer down heave,
Till the cover it cleave:—
For not till we shatter the wall of its cell
Can we lift from its darkness and bondage the Bell.
To break the mold the master may,
If skilled the hand and ripe the hour;
But woe, when on its fiery way
The metal seeks itself to pour,
Frantic and blind, with thunder-knell,
Exploding from its shattered home,
And glaring forth, as from a hell,
Behold the red Destruction come!
When rages strength that has no reason,
There breaks the mold before the season;
When numbers burst what bound before,
Woe to the State that thrives no more!
Yea, woe, when in the City's heart,
The latent spark to flame is blown,

"Freedom! Equality!"—to blood
And Millions from their silence start,
To claim, without a guide, their own!
Discordant howls the warning Bell,
Proclaiming discord wide and far,
And, born but things of peace to tell,
Becomes the ghastliest voice of war:
"Freedom! Equality!"—to blood
Rush the roused people at the sound!
Through street, hall, palace, roars the flood,
And banded murder closes round!
The hyena-shapes (that women were!)
Jest with the horrors they survey;
They hound—they rend—they mangle there,
As panthers with their prey!
Naught rests to hallow—burst the ties
Of life's sublime and reverent awe;
Before the Vice the Virtue flies,
And Universal Crime is Law!
Man fears the lion's kingly tread;
Man fears the tiger's fangs of terror;
And still, the dreadliest of the dread,
Is Man himself in error!
No torch, though lit from Heaven, illumes
The Blind!—Why place it in his hands?
It lights not him—it but consumes
The City and the Land!

IX

Rejoice and laud the prospering skies!
The kernel bursts its husks—behold
From the dull clay the metal rise,
Pure-shining, as a star of gold!
Neck and lip, but as one beam,
It laughs like a sunbeam.
And even the scutcheon, clear-graven, shall tell
That the art of a master has fashioned the Bell!
Come in—come in,

My merry men—we'll form a ring
The new-born labor christening;
And "CONCORD" we will name her!
To union may her heart-felt call
In brother-love attune us all!
May she the destined glory win
For which the master sought to frame her—
Aloft—(all earth's existence under)
In blue-pavilioned heaven afar
To dwell—the Neighbor of the Thunder,
The borderer of the Star!
Be hers above a voice to raise
Like those bright hosts in yonder sphere,
Who, while they move, their Maker praise,
And lead around the wreathèd year!
To solemn and eternal things
We dedicate her lips sublime,
As hourly, calmly, on she swings,
Fanned by the fleeting wings of Time!
No pulse—no heart—no feeling hers!
She lends the warning voice to Fate;
And still companions, while she stirs,
The changes of the Human State!
So may she teach us, as her tone
But now so mighty, melts away—
That earth no life which earth has known
From the last silence can delay!
Slowly now the cords upheave her!
From her earth-grave soars the Bell;
'Mid the airs of Heaven we leave her!
In the Music-Realm to dwell!
Up—upwards—yet raise—
She has risen—she sways.
Fair Bell to our city bode joy and increase,
And oh, may thy first sound be hallowed to—PEACE.[15]

* * * * *

THE GERMAN ART (1800)

By no kind Augustus reared,
To no Medici endeared,
German Art arose;
Fostering glory smil'd not on her,
Ne'er with kingly smiles to sun her,
Did her blooms unclose.

No! She went, by Monarchs slighted
Went unhonored, unrequited,
From high Frederick's throne;
Praise and Pride be all the greater,
That Man's genius did create her,
From Man's worth alone.

Therefore, all from loftier mountains,
Purer wells and richer Fountains,
Streams our Poet-Art;
So no rule to curb its rushing—
All the fuller flows it gushing
From its deep—The Heart!

* * * * *

COMMENCEMENT OF THE NEW CENTURY (1801)

Where can Peace find a refuge? Whither, say,
Can Freedom turn? Lo, friend, before our view
The CENTURY rends itself in storm away,
And, red with slaughter, dawns on earth the New!
The girdle of the lands is loosen'd[16]—hurl'd
To dust the forms old Custom deem'd divine,—
Safe from War's fury not the watery world;—
Safe not the Nile-God nor the antique Rhine.
Two mighty nations make the world their field,
Deeming the world is for their heirloom given—

Against the freedom of all lands they wield
This—Neptune's trident; that—the Thund'rer's levin
Gold to their scales each region must afford;
And, as fierce Brennus in Gaul's early tale,
The Frank casts in the iron of his sword,
To poise the balance, where the right may fail—
Like some huge Polypus, with arms that roam
Outstretch'd for prey—the Briton spreads his reign;
And, as the Ocean were his household home,
Locks up the chambers of the liberal main.
On to the Pole where shines, unseen, the Star,
Onward his restless course unbounded flies;
Tracks every isle and every coast afar,
And undiscover'd leaves but—Paradise!
Alas, in vain on earth's wide chart, I ween,
Thou seek'st that holy realm beneath the sky—
Where Freedom dwells in gardens ever green—
And blooms the Youth of fair Humanity!
O'er shores where sail ne'er rustled to the wind,
O'er the vast universe, may rove thy ken;
But in the universe thou canst not find
A space sufficing for ten happy men!
In the heart's holy stillness only beams
The shrine of refuge from life's stormy throng;
Freedom is only in the land of Dreams;
And only blooms the Beautiful in Song!

* * * * *

CASSANDRA (1802)

[There is peace between the Greeks and Trojans—Achilles is to wed Polyxena, Priam's daughter. On entering the Temple, he is shot through his only vulnerable part by Paris.—The time of the following Poem is during the joyous preparations for the marriage.]

And mirth was in the halls of Troy,
Before her towers and temples fell;
High peal'd the choral hymns of joy,
Melodious to the golden shell.
The weary had reposed from slaughter—
The eye forgot the tear it shed;
This day King Priam's lovely daughter
Shall great Pelides wed!

Adorn'd with laurel boughs, they come,
Crowd after crowd—the way divine,
Where fanes are deck'd—for gods the home—
And to the Thymbrian's[17] solemn shrine.
The wild Bacchantic joy is madd'ning
The thoughtless host, the fearless guest;
And there, the unheeded heart is sadd'ning
One solitary breast!

Unjoyous in the joyful throng,
Alone, and linking life with none,
Apollo's laurel groves among
The still Cassandra wander'd on!
Into the forest's deep recesses
The solemn Prophet-Maiden pass'd,
And, scornful, from her loosen'd tresses,
The sacred fillet cast!

"To all its arms doth Mirth unfold,
And every heart foregoes its cares;
And Hope is busy in the old;
The bridal-robe my sister wears.
But I alone, alone am weeping;
The sweet delusion mocks not me—
Around these walls destruction sweeping
More near and near I see!

"A torch before my vision glows,
But not in Hymen's hand it shines;
A flame that to the welkin goes,

But not from holy offering-shrines;
Glad hands the banquet are preparing,
And near, and near the halls of state
I hear the God that comes unsparing;
I hear the steps of Fate.

"And men my prophet-wail deride!
The solemn sorrow dies in scorn;
And lonely in the waste, I hide
The tortured heart that would forewarn.
Amidst the happy, unregarded,
Mock'd by their fearful joy, I trod;
Oh, dark to me the lot awarded,
Thou evil Pythian god!

"Thine oracle, in vain to be,
Oh, wherefore am I thus consign'd
With eyes that every truth must see,
Lone in the City of the Blind?
Cursed with the anguish of a power
To view the fates I may not thrall,
The hovering tempest still must lower—
The horror must befall!

"Boots it the veil to lift, and give
To sight the frowning fates beneath?
For error is the life we live,
And, oh, our knowledge is but death!
Take back the clear and awful mirror,
Shut from mine eyes the blood-red glare
Thy truth is but a gift of terror
When mortal lips declare.

"My blindness give to me once more[18]—
The gay dim senses that rejoice;
The Past's delighted songs are o'er
For lips that speak a Prophet's voice.
To me *the future* thou hast granted;
I miss *the moment* from the chain—

The happy Present-Hour enchanted!
Take back thy gift again!

"Never for me the nuptial wreath
The odor-breathing hair shall twine;
My heavy heart is bow'd beneath
The service of thy dreary shrine.
My youth was but by tears corroded,—
My sole familiar is my pain,
Each coming ill my heart foreboded,
And felt it first—in vain!

"How cheer'ly sports the careless mirth—
The life that loves, around I see;
Fair youth to pleasant thoughts give birth—
The heart is only sad to me.
Not for mine eyes the young spring gloweth,
When earth her happy feast-day keeps;
The charm of life who ever knoweth
That looks into the deeps?

"Wrapt in thy bliss, my sister, thine
The heart's inebriate rapture-springs;—
Longing with bridal arms to twine
The bravest of the Grecian kings.
High swells the joyous bosom, seeming
Too narrow for its world of love,
Nor envies, in its heaven of dreaming,
The heaven of gods above!

"I too might know the soft control
Of one the longing heart could choose,
With look which love illumes with soul—
The look that supplicates and woos.
And sweet with him, where love presiding
Prepares our hearth, to go—but, dim,
A Stygian shadow, nightly gliding,
Stalks between me and him!

"Forth from the grim funereal shore,
The Hell-Queen sends her ghastly bands;
Where'er I turn—behind—before—
Dumb in my path—a Spectre stands!
Wherever gayliest, youth assembles—
I see the shades in horror clad,
Amidst Hell's ghastly People trembles
One soul for ever sad!

"I see the steel of Murder gleam—
I see the Murderer's glowing eyes—
To right—to left, one gory stream—
One circling fate—my flight defies!
I may not turn my gaze—all seeing,
Foreknowing all, I dumbly stand—
To close in blood my ghastly being
In the far strangers' land!"

Hark! while the sad sounds murmur round,
Hark, from the Temple-porch, the cries!—
A wild, confused, tumultuous sound!—
Dead the divine Pelides lies!
Grim Discord rears her snakes devouring—
The last departing god hath gone!
And, womb'd in cloud, the thunder, lowering,
Hangs black on Ilion.

[Illustration: CASSANDRA Ferdinand Keller]

* * * * *

RUDOLPH OF HAPSBURG (1803)

A BALLAD

[Hinrichs properly classes this striking ballad (together with the yet grander one of the "Fight with the Dragon") amongst those designed to depict and exalt the virtue of

Humility. The source of the story is in Ægidius Tschudi, a Swiss chronicler; and Schiller appears to have adhered, with much fidelity, to the original narrative.]

At Aachen, in imperial state,
In that time-hallow'd hall renown'd,
At solemn feast King Rudolf sate,
The day that saw the hero crown'd!
Bohemia and thy Palgrave, Rhine,
Give this the feast, and that the wine;[19]
The Arch Electoral Seven,
Like choral stars around the sun,
Gird him whose hand a world has won,
The anointed choice of Heaven.

In galleries raised above the pomp,
Press'd crowd on crowd their panting way,
And with the joy-resounding tromp,
Rang out the millions' loud hurra!
For, closed at last the age of slaughter,
When human blood was pour'd as water—
LAW dawns upon the world![20]
Sharp force no more shall right the wrong,
And grind the weak to crown the strong—
War's carnage-flag is furl'd!

In Rudolf's hand the goblet shines—
And gaily round the board look'd he;
"And proud the feast, and bright the wines
My kingly heart feels glad to me!
Yet where the Gladness-Bringer—blest
In the sweet art which moves the breast
With lyre and verse divine?
Dear from my youth the craft of song,
And what as knight I loved so long,
As Kaiser, still be mine."

Lo, from the circle bending there,
With sweeping robe the Bard appears,
As silver white his gleaming hair,

Bleach'd by the many winds of years;
"And music sleeps in golden strings—
Love's rich reward the minstrel sings,
Well known to him the ALL
High thoughts and ardent souls desire!
What would the Kaiser from the lyre
Amidst the banquet-hall?"

The Great One smiled—"Not mine the sway—
The minstrel owns a loftier power—
A mightier king inspires the lay—
Its hest—THE IMPULSE OF THE HOUR!"
As through wide air the tempests sweep,
As gush the springs from mystic deep,
Or lone untrodden glen;
So from dark hidden fount within
Comes SONG, its own wild world to win
Amidst the souls of men!

Swift with the fire the minstrel glow'd,
And loud the music swept the ear:—
"Forth to the chase a Hero rode,
To hunt the bounding chamois-deer;
With shaft and horn the squire behind;—
Through greensward meads the riders wind—
A small sweet bell they hear.
Lo, with the HOST, a holy man—
Before him strides the sacristan,
And the bell sounds near and near.

"The noble hunter down-inclined
His reverent head and soften'd eye,
And honor'd with a Christian's mind
The Christ who loves humility!
Loud through the pasture, brawls and raves
A brook—the rains had fed the waves,
And torrents from the bill.
His sandal-shoon the priest unbound,

And laid the Host upon the ground,
And near'd the swollen rill!

"What wouldst thou, priest?" the Count began,
As, marveling much, he halted there,
"Sir Count, I seek a dying man,
Sore-hungering for the heavenly fare.
The bridge that once its safety gave,
Rent by the anger of the wave,
Drifts down the tide below.
Yet barefoot now, I will not fear
(The soul that seeks its God, to cheer)
Through the wild wave to go!"

"He gave that priest the knightly steed,
He reach'd that priest the lordly reins,
That he might serve the sick man's need,
Nor slight the task that heaven ordains.
He took the horse the squire bestrode;
On to the sick, the priest!
And when the morrow's sun was red,
The servant of the Savior led
Back to its lord the beast.

"'Now Heaven forfend!' the Hero cried,
'That e'er to chase or battle more
These limbs the sacred steed bestride
That once my Maker's image bore;
If not a boon allow'd to thee,
Thy Lord and mine its Master be,
My tribute to the King,
From whom I hold, as fiefs, since birth,
Honor, renown, the goods of earth,
Life and each living thing!"

"'So may the God, who faileth never
To hear the weak and guide the dim,
To thee give honor here and ever,
As thou hast duly honor'd Him!'

Far-famed ev'n now through Swisserland
Thy generous heart and dauntless hand;
And fair from thine embrace
Six daughters bloom,[21] six crowns to bring,
Blest as the daughters of a KING,
The mothers of a RACE!"

The mighty Kaiser heard amazed!
His heart was in the days of old;
Into the minstrel's heart he gazed,
That tale the Kaiser's own had told.
Yes, in the bard the priest he knew,
And in the purple veil'd from view
The gush of holy tears!
A thrill through that vast audience ran,
And every heart the godlike man
Revering God—reveres!

[Illustration: THE COUNT GIVES UP HIS HORSE TO THE PRIEST Alexander Wagner]

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 3: Though the Ideal images of youth forsake us, the Ideal itself still remains to the Poet. It is his task and his companion, for, unlike the Phantasies of Fortune, Fame, and Love, the Phantasies of the Ideal are imperishable. While, as the occupation of life, it pays off the debt of Time, as the exalter of life it contributes to the Building of Eternity.—TRANSLATOR.]

[Footnote 4: "Die Gesalt"—Form. the Platonic Archetype.]

[Footnote 5: This idea is often repeated, somewhat more clearly in the haughty philosophy of Schiller. He himself says, elsewhere—"In a fair soul each single action is not properly moral, but the whole character is moral. The fair soul has no other service than the instincts of its own beauty."—Translator]

[Footnote 6: "Und es wallet, and siedet, und brauset, and zischt," etc. Goethe was particularly struck with the truthfulness of these lines, of which his personal observation at the Falls of the Rhine enabled him to judge. Schiller modestly owns his

obligations to Homer's descriptions of Charybdis, Odyss. I., 12. The property of the higher order of imagination to reflect truth, though not familiar to experience, is singularly illustrated in this description. Schiller had never seen even a Waterfall.—TRANSLATOR.]

[Footnote 7: The same rhyme as the preceding line in the original.]

[Footnote 8: "—da kroch's heran," etc. The *It* in the original has been greatly admired. The poet thus vaguely represents the fabulous misshapen monster, the Polypus of the ancients.]

[Footnote 9: The theatre.]

[Footnote 10: This simile is nobly conceived, but expressed somewhat obscurely. As Hercules contended in vain against Antæus, the Son of Earth,—so long as the Earth gave her giant offspring new strength in every fall,—so the soul contends in vain with evil—the natural earth-born enemy, while the very contact of the earth invigorates the enemy for the struggle. And as Antæus was slain at last, when Hercules lifted him from the earth and strangled him while raised aloft, so can the soul slay the enemy (the desire, the passion, the evil, the earth's offspring), when bearing it from earth itself and stifling it in the higher air.—Translator.]

[Footnote 11: Translated by Edward, Lord Lytton (Permission George Routledge & Sons.)]

[Footnote 12: "I call the Living—I mourn the Dead—I break the Lightning." These words are inscribed on the Great Bell of the Minster of Schaffhausen—also on that of the Church of Art near Lucerne. There was an old belief in Switzerland that the undulation of air, caused by the sound of a Bell, broke the electric fluid of a thunder-cloud.]

[Footnote 13: A piece of clay pipe, which becomes vitrified if the metal is sufficiently heated.]

[Footnote 14: The translator adheres to the original, in forsaking the rhyme in these lines and some others.]

[Footnote 15: Written in the time of the French war.]

[Footnote 16: That is—the settled political question—the balance of power.]

[Footnote 17: Apollo.]

[Footnote 18: "Everywhere," says Hoffmeister truly, "Schiller exalts Ideal Belief over real wisdom;—everywhere this modern Apostle of Christianity advocates that Ideal, which exists in Faith and emotion, against the wisdom of worldly intellect, the barren experience of life," etc.—TRANSLATOR.]

[Footnote 19: The office, at the coronation feast, of the Count Palatine of the Rhine (Grand Sewer of the Empire and one of the Seven Electors) was to bear the Imperial Globe and set the dishes on the board; that of the King of Bohemia was cup-bearer. The latter was not, however, present, as Schiller himself observed in a note (omitted in the editions of his collected works), at the coronation of Rudolf.]

[Footnote 20: Literally, "*A. judge (ein Richter*) was again upon the earth." The word substituted in the translation is introduced in order to recall to the reader the sublime name given, not without justice, to Rudolf of Hapsburg, viz., "THE LIVING LAW."—TRANSLATOR.]

[Footnote 21: At the coronation of Rudolf was celebrated the marriage-feast of three of his daughters—to Ludwig of Bavaria, Otto of Brandenburg, and Albrecht of Saxony. His other three daughters married afterward Otto, nephew of Ludwig of Bavaria, Charles Martell, son of Charles of Anjou, and Wenceslaus, son of Ottocar of Bohemia. The royal house of England numbers Rudolf of Hapsburg amongst its ancestors.—TRANSLATOR.]

* * * * *

DRAMAS

INTRODUCTION TO WALLENSTEIN'S DEATH

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Schiller wrote in rapid succession, during his Storm and Stress period, *The Robbers*, *Fiesco*, *Cabal and Love*, and the beginning of *Don Carlos* (finished in 1787). Between this time and his last period, which opens with *Wallenstein*, he devoted himself assiduously to the study of philosophy, history, and esthetic theory. Even in writing *Don Carlos* he had felt that he needed to give more care to artistic form and to the deeper questions of dramatic unity. His own dissatisfaction with the results achieved was one of several reasons why for nearly ten years he dropped dramatic composition. He felt, too, that he needed more experience of life. He himself said of the greatest of his Storm and Stress dramas that he had attempted to portray humanity before he really knew humanity.

In 1788 he published the first part of his *History of the Rebellion of the Netherlands*, which brought him the appointment to the chair of history in the University of Jena. The occupation with his next historical work, the *History of the Thirty Years' War*, suggested to him the thought of dramatizing the career of Wallenstein. But he was not yet clear with himself on questions of artistic method. He was studying Homer and dramatizing Euripides, lecturing and writing on dramatic theory. Further delays were due to marriage and to serious illness. It was not until 1796 that Schiller felt ready to begin work on the long planned drama of *Wallenstein*.

The first scenes were written in prose, but soon the poet realized that only the dignified heroic verse was suited to his theme. Then "all went better." Constant discussions with Goethe and Christian Gottfried Koerner helped him to clear up his doubts and overcome the difficulties of his subject. He found that history left too little room for sympathy with Wallenstein, for he conceived him as really guilty of treason. He decided early to lighten the gloom of his theme by introducing the love episode of Max and Thekla. He modified also his view of the nature of Wallenstein's guilt. Gradually the material grew upon him. What he had planned as a Prologue became the one-act play, *Wallenstein's Camp*, which, when it was produced in October, 1798, at the reopening of the Weimar Theatre, was preceded by 138 lines of Dedication, since printed as the *Prologue*. Already Schiller had foreseen the development into more than five acts, and accordingly *The Piccolomini* appeared separately, January 30, 1799, and the whole series in order about the middle of April, upon the completion of *Wallenstein's Death*.

Wallenstein is a trilogy, but in name rather than in real connection and relation of parts. *Wallenstein's Camp* is a picture of masses, introducing only common soldiers and none of the chief personages of the other parts of the composition. Its purpose is to present something of the tremendous background of the action proper and to give a

realizing sense of the influence upon Wallenstein's career of the soldiery with which he operated—as Schiller expressed it in a line of his Prologue: "His camp alone explains to us his crime." By this he meant that, on the one hand, the blind confidence of the troops in the luck and the destiny of their leader made him arrogant and reckless, and, on the other hand, perhaps, that the mercenary character of these soldiers of fortune forced Wallenstein to steps which his calm judgment would have condemned.

In a succession of eleven scenes of very unequal length the various arms of the service are introduced, together with camp followers and a Capuchin preacher; in reminiscences the earlier features of the great war and some feats of the general are recalled; in discussions the character of Wallenstein and of his leading officers is sketched; finally the report of the recent demand of the Emperor, that Wallenstein detach 8,000 men to escort the Cardinal Infant to the Netherlands, reveals the opposition of the army to such an order and its unconditional loyalty to Wallenstein.

The second and third parts of the trilogy, *The Piccolomini* and *Wallenstein's Death*, constitute, in fact, one ten-act play, which requires two evenings for presentation. So slight is the organic division between the two plays that, as first presented, in the fall of 1798 and the spring of 1799, *The Piccolomini* included the first two acts of *Wallenstein's Death* as later printed and here given, while the last three acts were so divided as to constitute five.

The Piccolomini, which could not be reprinted in this anthology, presents essentially what is called the "exposition" of the entire drama, together with a *part* of the complication of the plot. Questenberg, the imperial commissioner, visits Wallenstein's headquarters in Pilsen to present the order of the Emperor for the detachment of eight regiments of Wallenstein's best cavalry to serve as escort to the Cardinal Infant on his way to the Netherlands. He meets distrust and almost incredible defiance from Wallenstein's officers, excepting Octavio Piccolomini, one of the oldest and most trusted, to whom he brings secret dispatches directing him to supersede Wallenstein in case of the latter's open rebellion, which the court believes he has already determined upon. Wallenstein himself meets the demands with a reproachful reference to the violation of the plenary powers intrusted to him by the Emperor as the condition of his assuming the command, but announces that he will relieve him from embarrassment by resigning. This announcement is received with a storm of protests from his officers. Questenberg and Octavio are deeply concerned to make sure of the adherence to their cause of Octavio's son, Max, a child of the camp and an especial favorite with Wallenstein. Max has just arrived at Pilsen as escort of Wallenstein's

wife and of his daughter Thekla, to whom he has lost his heart. Wallenstein and his masterful sister, Countess Terzky, are also eager to secure Max to their side in the coming conflict, and the Countess tries to persuade Thekla to govern her actions accordingly. Thekla, however, is nobly frank with Max and warns him to trust only his own heart; for she realizes that the threads of a dark plot are drawing close about herself and Max, though she does not clearly understand what it is. Meanwhile Terzky and Illo have planned a meeting of Wallenstein's officers to protest against his withdrawal. In a splendid banquet scene they present a written agreement (Revers) to stand by the general *so far as loyalty to the Emperor will permit*, and then, when all are heated with wine, secure signatures to a substituted document from which this reservation of loyalty to the Emperor is omitted. It is the hope of Illo and Terzky, through the sight of this document, to persuade Wallenstein to open rebellion. Max Piccolomini, coming late to the banquet from the interview with Thekla, refuses to sign the pledge, not because he sees through the deception, but because he is in no mood for business. Before morning his father summons him, thinking Max has refused to sign because he scented the intended treason, and reveals to him the whole situation—the plots of the officers, Wallenstein's dangerous negotiations with enemies of the Emperor, and his own commission to take command and save whatever he can of loyal troops. Max is thunder-truck. He can believe neither Wallenstein's purpose of treason nor his father's duplicity in dealing behind the back of his great commander. He refuses to follow his father's orders and leaves him with the avowed intention of going to Wallenstein and calling upon him to clear himself of the calumnious charges of the court. At this point begins the action of *Wallenstein's Death*.

In all of his later dramas excepting *William Tell*, Schiller endeavored to introduce a factor which is called "the dramatic guilt," a circumstance, usually in the character of the hero but sometimes in his environment, which makes the tragic outcome inevitable and yet leaves room in the breast of the reader or spectator for sympathy with the hero in his fate. In the case of Wallenstein this "guilt" is the dalliance with the love of power and the possibility of rebellion, not a deliberate intention to commit treason. In the close of his treatment of Wallenstein in The Thirty Years' War Schiller says: "No one of his actions justifies us in considering him convicted of treason. * * * Thus Wallenstein fell, not because he was a rebel, but he rebelled because he fell."

The circumstances are urged that Wallenstein was a prince of the Empire, and had as such the right to negotiate with foreign powers; that his delegated authority from the Emperor gave him the right to do so in the Emperor's name; that the Emperor had not kept faith with Wallenstein, and had thus justified him in at least frightening the court; that self preservation seemed to indicate rebellion as the only recourse; that

Wallenstein's belief in his destiny and the fatuous devotion of his army led him to reckless action; and finally that he did not originally intend to commit actual treason.

Thus prepared, the reader can easily sympathize with Wallenstein in his downfall; this sympathy is entirely won by the admirable courage with which Wallenstein bears the successive blows of fate, and it is strengthened by consideration of the mean motives of the men who serve as the tools of his execution, and by the remembrance that the fate of Max and Thekla is bound up in his. Schiller was concerned lest the love episode should detract from the interest due the chief persons of the tragedy; his art has effected the exact opposite.

The influence of Shakespeare is more or less obvious in all of Schiller's later dramas. Aside from the splendid rhetoric of the monologues, the character of Countess Terzky, so similar to that of Lady Macheth, suggests this. But such influence is not so controlling as to be in any respect a reproach to Schiller. Goethe in his generous admiration considered Wallenstein "so great that nothing could be compared with it." "In the imaginative power whereby history is made into drama, in the triumph of artistic genius over a vast and refractory mass of material, and in the skill with which the character of the hero is conceived and denoted, *Wallenstein* is unrivaled. Its chief figure is by far the stateliest and most impressive of German tragic heroes." [22]

* * * * *

THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WALLENSTEIN, *Duke of Friedland, Generalissimo of the Imperial Forces in the Thirty Years' War*.

DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND, *Wife of Wallenstein*.

THEKLA, *her Daughter, Princess of Friedland*.

The COUNTESS TERZKY, *Sister of the Duchess*.

LADY NEUBRUNN.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, *Lieutenant-General*.

MAX PICCOLOMINI, *his son, Colonel of a regiment of Cuirassiers*.

COUNT TERZKY, *the Commander of several Regiments, and Brother-in-law of Wallenstein*.

ILLO, *Field Marshall, Wallenstein's Confident*.

ISOLANI, *General of the Croats*.

BUTLER, *an Irishman, Commander of a regiment of Dragoons*.

GORDON, *Governor Egra*.

MAJOR GERALDIN.

CAPTAIN DEVEREUX.

CAPTAIN MACDONALD.

AN ADJUTANT.

NEUMANN, *Captain of Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp to Terzky*.

COLONEL WRANGEL, *Envoy from the Swedes*.

ROSENBURG, *Master of Horse*.

SWEDISH CAPTAIN.

SENI.

BURGOMASTER *of Egra*.

ANSPESSADE *of the Cuirassiers*.

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER, A PAGE, } *Belonging to the Duke*.

Cuirassiers, Dragoons, Servants.

[Illustration: WALLENSTEIN AND SENI As performed at the Municipal Theatre, Hamburg, 1906.]

THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN (1800)[23]

TRANSLATED BY S.T. COLERIDGE

ACT I

SCENE I

A Room fitted up for astrological labors, and provided with celestial Charts, with Globes, Telescopes, Quadrants, and other mathematical Instruments—Seven Colossal Figures, representing the Planets, each circle in the background, so that Mars and Saturn are nearest the eye.—The remainder of the Scene, and its disposition, is given in the Fourth Scene of the Second Act.—There must be a Curtain over the Figures, which may be dropped, and conceal them on occasion.

[*In the Fifth Scene of this Act it must be dropped; but in the Seventh Scene it must be again drawn up wholly or in part.*]

WALLENSTEIN *at a black Table, on which a Speculum Astrologicum is described with Chalk*. SENI *is taking Observations through a window*.

WALLENSTEIN.

All well—and now let it be ended, Seni. Come,
The dawn commences, and Mars rules the hour.
We must give o'er the operation. Come,
We know enough.

SENI.

Your Highness must permit me
Just to contemplate Venus. She's now rising;
Like as a sun, so shines she in the east.

WALLENST.

She is at present in her perigee,
And now shoots down her strongest influences.

[*Contemplating the figure on the table.*]

Auspicious aspect! fateful in conjunction,
At length the mighty three corradiate;
And the two stars of blessing, Jupiter
And Venus, take between them the malignant
Slily-malicious Mars, and thus compel
Into *my* service that old mischief-founder:
For long he viewed me hostilely, and ever
With beam oblique, or perpendicular,
Now in the Quartile, now in the Secundan,
Shot his red lightnings at my stars, disturbing
Their blessed influences and sweet aspects.
Now they have conquer'd the old enemy,
And bring him in the heavens a prisoner to me.

SENI (*who has come down from the window*).

And in a corner house, your Highness—think of that!
That makes each influence of double strength.

WALLENST.

And sun and moon, too, in the Sextile aspect,
The soft light with the vehement—so I love it;
SOL is the heart, LUNA the head of heaven;
Bold be the plan, fiery the execution.

SENI.

And both the mighty Lumina by no
Maleficus *affronted*. Lo! Saturnus,
Innocuous, powerless, *in cadente Domo*.

WALLENST.

The empire of Saturnus is gone by;
Lord of the secret birth of things is he
Within the lap of earth, and in the depths
Of the imagination dominates;
And his are all things that eschew the light.
The time is o'er of brooding and contrivance,
For Jupiter, the lustrous, lordeth now,
And the dark work, complete of preparation,
He draws by force into the realm of light.
Now must we hasten on to action, ere
The scheme and most auspicious positure
Parts o'er my head, and takes once more its flight,
For the heavens journey still, and sojourn not.

[*There are knocks at the door*.]

There's some one knocking there. See who it is.

TERZKY (*from without*).

Open, and let me in.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ay—'tis Terzky.
What is there of such urgence? We are busy.

[Illustration: WALLENSTEIN AND TERZKY As performed at the Municipal Theatre, Hamburg, 1906.]

TERZKY (*from without*).

Lay all aside at present, I entreat you.
It suffers no delaying.

WALLENSTEIN.

Open, Seni!

[*While* SENI *opens the door for* TERZKY, WALLENSTEIN *draws the curtain over the figures*.]

SCENE II

WALLENSTEIN. COUNT TERZKY

TERZKY (*enters*).

Hast thou already heard it? He is taken.
Gallas has given him up to the Emperor.

[SENI *draws off the black table, and exit*.]

WALLENSTEIN (*to* TERZKY).

Who has been taken? Who is given up?

TERZKY.

The man who knows our secrets, who knows every
Negotiation with the Swede and Saxon,
Through whose hands all and everything has pass'd—

WALLENSTEIN (*drawing back*).

Nay, not Sesina?—Say, No! I entreat thee.

TERZKY.

All on his road for Regensburg to the Swede
He was plunged down upon by Gallas' agent,
Who had been long in ambush, lurking for him.
There must have been found on him my whole packet
To Thur, to Kinsky, to Oxenstiern, to Arnheim:
All this is in their hands; they have now an insight
Into the whole—our measures and our motives.

SCENE III

To them enters ILLO.

ILLO (*to* TERZKY).

Has he heard it?

TERZHY.

He has heard it.

ILLO (*to* WALLENSTEIN).

Thinkest thou still
To make thy peace with the Emperor, to regain
His confidence? E'en were it now thy wish
To abandon all thy plans, yet still they know
What thou hast wish'd: then forwards thou must press,
Retreat is now no longer in thy power.

TERZKY.

They have documents against us, and in hands,
Which show beyond all power of contradiction—

WALLENST.

Of my handwriting—no iota. Thee
I punish for thy lies.

ILLO.

And thou believest,
That what this man, and what thy sister's husband,
Did in thy name, will not stand on thy reck'ning?
His word must pass for thy word with the Swede,
And not with those that hate thee at Vienna?

TERZKY.

In writing thou gavest nothing—But bethink thee,
How far thou ventured'st by word of mouth
With this Sesina! And will he be silent?

If he can save himself by yielding up
Thy secret purposes, will he retain them?

ILLO.

Thyself dost not conceive it possible;
And since they now have evidence authentic
How far thou hast already gone, speak!—tell us,
What art thou waiting for? Thou canst no longer
Keep thy command; and beyond hope of rescue
Thou'rt lost, if thou resign'st it.

WALLENSTEIN.

In the army
Lies my security. The army will not
Abandon me. Whatever they may know,
The power is mine, and they must gulp it down—
And if I give them caution for my fealty,
They must be satisfied, at least appear so.

ILLO.

The army, Duke, *is* thine now—for this moment—
'Tis thine, but think with terror on the slow,
The quiet power of time. From open violence
The attachment of thy soldiery secures thee
Today—tomorrow: but grant'st thou them a respite
Unheard, unseen, they'll undermine that love
On which thou now dost feel so firm a footing,
With wily theft will draw away from thee
One after the other other—

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis a cursed accident!

ILLO.

Oh! I will call it a most blessèd one,
If it work on thee as it ought to do,

Hurry thee on to action—to decision.
The Swedish General—

WALLENSTEIN.

He's arrived! Know'st thou
What his commission is—

ILLO.

To thee alone
Will he intrust the purpose of his coming.

WALLENST.

A cursed, cursed accident! Yes, yes,
Sesina knows too much, and won't be silent.

TERZKY.

He's a Bohemian fugitive and rebel,
His neck is forfeit. Can he save himself
At thy cost, think you he will scruple it?
And if they put him to the torture, will he,
Will *he*, that dastardling, have strength enough—

WALLENSTEIN (*lost in thought*).

Their confidence is lost, irreparably!
And I may act which way I will, I shall
Be and remain forever in their thought
A traitor to my country. How sincerely
Soever I return back to my duty,
It will no longer help me—

ILLO.

Ruin thee,
That it will do! Not thy fidelity,
Thy weakness will be deemed the sole occasion—

WALLENSTEIN (*pacing up and down in extreme agitation*).

What! I must realize it now in earnest,
Because I toy'd too freely with the thought!
Accursed he who dallies with a devil!
And must I—I *must* realize it now—
Now, while I have the power, it *must* take place?

ILLO.

Now—now—ere they can ward and parry it!

WALLENSTEIN (*looking at the paper of signatures*).

I have the Generals' word—a written promise!
Max Piccolomini stands not here—how's that?

TERZKY.

It was—he fancied—

ILLO.

Mere self-willedness.
There needed no such thing 'twixt him and you.

WALLENST.

He is quite right; there needed no such thing.
The regiments, too, deny to march for Flanders—
Have sent me in a paper of remonstrance,
And openly resist the Imperial orders.
The first step to revolt's already taken.

ILLO.

Believe me, thou wilt find it far more easy
To lead them over to the enemy
Than to the Spaniard.

WALLENSTEIN.

I will hear, however,
What the Swede has to say to me.

ILLO (*eagerly to* TERZKY).

Go, call him
He stands without the door in waiting.

WALLENSTEIN.

Stay!
Stay but a little. It hath taken me
All by surprise; it came too quick upon me;
'Tis wholly novel that an accident,
With its dark lordship, and blind agency,
Should force me on with it.

ILLO.

First hear him only,
And after weigh it.

[*Exeunt* TERZKY *and* ILLO.]

SCENE IV.

WALLENSTEIN (*in soliloquy*).

Is it possible?
Is't so! I *can* no longer what I *would*?
No longer draw back at my liking? I
Must *do* the deed, because I *thought* of it?
And fed this heart here with a dream? Because
I did not scowl temptation from my presence,
Dallied with thoughts of possible fulfilment,
Commenced no movement, left all time uncertain,
And only kept the road, the access open?
By the great God of Heaven! it was not
My serious meaning, it was ne'er resolved.
I but amused myself with thinking of it.
The free-will tempted me, the power to do
Or not to do it—Was it criminal
To make the fancy minister to hope,
To fill the air with pretty toys of air,

And clutch fantastic sceptres moving t'ward me!
Was not the will kept free? Beheld I not
The road of duty close beside me—but
One little step, and once more I was in it!
Where am I? Whither have I been transported?
No road, no track behind me, but a wall
Impenetrable, insurmountable,
Rises obedient to the spells I muttered
And meant not—my own doings tower behind me.

[*Pauses and remains in deep thought.*]

A punishable man I seem; the guilt,
Try what I will, I cannot roll off from me;
The equivocal demeanor of my life
Bears witness on my prosecutor's party.
And even my purest acts from purest motives
Suspicion poisons with malicious gloss.
Were I that thing for which I pass, that traitor,
A goodly outside I had sure reserved,
Had drawn the coverings thick and double round me,
Been calm and chary of my utterance;
But being conscious of the innocence
Of my intent, my uncorrupted will,
I gave way to my humors, to my passion:
Bold were my words, because my deeds were *not.*
Now every planless measure, chance event,
The threat of rage, the vaunt of joy and triumph,
And all the May-games of a heart o'erflowing,
Will they connect, and weave them all together
Into one web of treason; all will be plain,
My eye ne'er absent from the far-off mark,
Step tracing step, each step a politic progress;
And out of all they'll fabricate a charge
So specious that I must myself stand dumb.
I am caught in my own net, and only force,
Nought but a sudden rent, can liberate me.

[*Pauses again.*]

How else! since that the heart's unbias'd instinct
Impell'd me to the daring deed, which now
Necessity, self-preservation, *orders*.
Stern is the on-look of Necessity,
Not without shudder may a human hand
Grasp the mysterious urn of destiny.
My deed was mine, remaining in my bosom:
Once suffer'd to escape from its safe corner
Within the heart, its nursery and birth-place,
Sent forth into the Foreign, it belongs
Forever to those sly malicious powers
Whom never art of man conciliated.

[*Paces in agitation through the chamber, then pauses, and after the pause breaks out again into audible soliloquy.*]

What is thy enterprise? thy aim? thy object?
Hast honestly confess'd it to thyself?
Power seated on a quiet throne thou'dst shake,
Power on an ancient consecrated throne,
Strong in possession, founded in all custom;
Power by a thousand tough and stringy roots
Fix'd to the people's pious nursery-faith.
This, this will be no strife of strength with strength.
That fear'd I not. I brave each combatant,
Whom I can look on, fixing eye to eye,
Who, full himself of courage, kindles courage
In me too. 'Tis a foe invisible
The which I fear—a fearful enemy,
Which in the human heart opposes me,
By its coward fear alone made fearful to me.
Not that, which full of life, instinct with power,
Makes known its present being; that is not
The true, the perilously formidable.
O no! it is the common, the quite common,
The thing of an eternal yesterday.
What ever was, and evermore returns,
Sterling tomorrow, for today 'twas sterling!
For of the wholly common is man made,

And custom is his nurse! Woe then to them
Who lay irreverent hands upon his old
House furniture, the dear inheritance
From his forefathers! For time consecrates;
And what is gray with age becomes religion.
Be in possession, and thou hast the right,
And sacred will the many guard it for thee!

[*To the* PAGE *who here enters*.]

The Swedish officer?—Well, let him enter.

[*The* PAGE *exit*, WALLENSTEIN *fixes his eye in deep thought on the door*.]

Yet is it pure—as yet!—the crime has come
Not o'er this threshold yet—so slender is
The boundary that divideth life's two paths.

SCENE V

WALLENSTEIN *and* WRANGEL

WALLENSTEIN (*after having fixed a searching look on him*).

Your name is Wrangel?

WRANGEL.

Gustave Wrangel, General
Of the Sudermanian Blues.

WALLENSTEIN.

It was a Wrangel
Who injured me materially at Stralsund,
And by his brave resistance was the cause
Of the opposition which that sea-port made.

WRANGEL.

It was the doing of the element
With which you fought, my Lord! and not my merit.
The Baltic Neptune did assert his freedom:
The sea and land, it seem'd, were not to serve
One and the same.

[WALLENST.

You pluck'd the Admiral's hat from off my head.

WRANGEL.

I come to place a diadem thereon.]

WALLENSTEIN (*makes the motion for him to take a seat, and seats himself*).

And where are your credentials?
Come you provided with full powers, Sir General?

WRANGEL.

There are so many scruples yet to solve—

WALLENSTEIN (*having read the credentials*).

An able letter!—Ay—he is a prudent
Intelligent master whom you serve, Sir General!
The Chancellor writes me, that he but fulfils
His late departed Sovereign's own idea
In helping me to the Bohemian crown.

WRANGEL.

He says the truth. Our great King, now in heaven,
Did ever deem most highly of your Grace's
Preëminent sense and military genius;
And always the commanding Intellect,
He said, should have command, and be the King.

WALLENST.

Yes, he *might* say it safely.—General Wrangel,

[*Taking his hand affectionately.*]

Come, fair and open. Trust me, I was always
A Swede at heart. Eh! that did you experience
Both in Silesia and at Nuremberg;
I had you often in my power, and let you
Always slip out by some back door or other.
'Tis this for which the Court can ne'er forgive me,
Which drives me to this present step: and since
Our interests so run in one direction,
E'en let us have a thorough confidence
Each in the other.

WRANGEL.

Confidence will come
Has each but only first security.

WALLENST.

The Chancellor still, I see, does not quite trust me;
And, I confess—the game does not lie wholly
To my advantage. Without doubt he thinks,
If I can play false with the Emperor,
Who is my sovereign, I can do the like
With the enemy, and that *the one* too were
Sooner to be forgiven me than the *other*.
Is not this your opinion, too, Sir General?

WRANGEL.

I have here a duty merely, no opinion.

WALLENST.

The Emperor hath urged me to the uttermost:
I can no longer honorably serve him;
For my security, in self-defence,
I take this hard step, which my conscience blames.

WRANGEL.

That I believe. So far would no one go
Who was not forced to it.

[*After a pause*.]

What may have impell'd
Your princely Highness in this wise to act
Toward your Sovereign Lord and Emperor,
Beseems not us to expound or criticise.
The Swede is fighting for his good old cause,
With his good sword and conscience. This concurrence,
This opportunity, is in our favor,
And all advantages in war are lawful.
We take what offers without questioning;
And if all have its due and just proportions—

WALLENST.

Of what then are ye doubting? Of my will?
Or of my power? I pledged me to the Chancellor,
Would he trust *me* with sixteen thousand men,
That I would instantly go over to them
With eighteen thousand of the Emperor's troops.

WRANGEL.

Your Grace is known to be a mighty war-chief,
To be a second Attila and Pyrrhus.
'Tis talked of still with fresh astonishment,
How some years past, beyond all human faith,
You call'd an army forth, like a creation:
But yet—

WALLENSTEIN.

But yet?

WRANGEL.

But still the Chancellor thinks
It might yet be an easier thing from nothing
To call forth sixty thousand men of battle,
Than to persuade one sixtieth part of them—

WALLENST.

What now? Out with it, friend!

WRANGEL.

To break their oaths.

WALLENST.

And he thinks *so*? He judges like a Swede,
And like a Protestant. You Lutherans
Fight for your Bible. You are interested
About the cause; and with your *hearts* you follow
Your banners. Among *you*, whoe'er deserts
To the enemy hath broken covenant
With two Lords at one time. We've no such fancies.

WRANGEL.

Great God in Heaven! Have then the people here
No house and home, no fireside, no altar?

WALLENST.

I will explain that to you, how it stands:—
The Austrian *has* a country, ay, and loves it,
And has good cause to love it—but this army,
That calls itself the Imperial, this that houses
Here in Bohemia, this has none—no country;
This is an outcast of all foreign lands,
Unclaim'd by town or tribe, to whom belongs
Nothing except the universal sun.
And this Bohemian land for which we fight—
[Loves not the master whom the chance of war,
Not its own choice or will, hath given to it.

Men murmur at the oppression of their conscience,
And power hath only awed but not appeased them;
A glowing and avenging mem'ry lives
Of cruel deeds committed on these plains;
How can the son forget that here his father
Was hunted by the blood-hound to the mass?
A people thus oppress'd must still be feared,
Whether they suffer or avenge their wrongs.]

WRANGEL.

But then the Nobles and the Officers?
Such a desertion, such a felony,
It is without example, my Lord Duke,
In the world's history.

WALLENSTEIN.

They are all mine—
Mine unconditionally—mine on all terms.
Not me, your own eyes you must trust.

[*He gives him the paper containing the written oath.* WRANGEL *reads it through, and, having read it, lays it on the table, remaining silent*.]

So then?
Now comprehend you?

WRANGEL.

Comprehend who can!
My Lord Duke, I will let the mask drop—yes!
I've full powers for a final settlement.
The Rhinegrave stands but four days' march from here
With fifteen thousand men, and only waits
For orders to proceed and join your army.
Those orders *I* give out, immediately
We're compromised.

WALLENSTEIN.

What asks the Chancellor?

WRANGEL (*considerately*).

Twelve regiments, every man a Swede—my head
The warranty—and all might prove at last
Only false play—

WALLENSTEIN (*starting*).

Sir Swede!

WRANGEL (*calmly proceeding*).

Am therefore forced
T' insist thereon, that he do formally,
Irrevocably break with the Emperor,
Else not a Swede is trusted to Duke Friedland.

WALLENST.

Come, brief, and open! What is the demand?

WRANGEL.

That he forthwith disarm the Spanish regiments
Attached to the Emp'ror, that he seize on Prague,
And to the Swedes give up that city, with
The strong pass Egra.

WALLENSTEIN.

That is much indeed!
Prague!—Egra's granted—but—but Prague!—'T won't do.
I give you every security
Which you may ask of me in common reason—
But Prague—Bohemia—these, Sir General,
I can myself protect.

WRANGEL.

We doubt it not.
But 'tis not the protection that is now
Our sole concern. We want security

That we shall not expend our men and money
All to no purpose.

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis but reasonable.

WRANGEL.

And till we are indemnified, so long
Stays Prague in pledge.

WALLENSTEIN.

Then trust you us so little?

WRANGEL (*rising*).

The Swede, if he would treat well with the German,
Must keep a sharp look-out. We have been call'd
Over the Baltic, we have saved the empire
From ruin—with our best blood have we sealed
The liberty of faith and gospel truth.
But now already is the benefaction
No longer felt, the load alone is felt.
Ye look askance with evil eye upon us,
As foreigners, intruders in the empire,
And would fain send us, with some paltry sum
Of money, home again to our old forests.
No, no! my Lord Duke! no!—it never was
For Judas' pay, for chinking gold and silver,
That we did leave our King by the Great Stone[24]
No, not for gold and silver have there bled
So many of our Swedish Nobles—neither
Will we, with empty laurels for our payment,
Hoist sail for our own country. *Citizens*
Will we remain upon the soil, the which
Our Monarch conquer'd for himself, and died.

WALLENST.

Help to keep down the common enemy,
And the fair border land must needs be yours.

WRANGEL.

But when the common enemy lies vanquish'd,
Who knits together our new friendship then?
We know, Duke Friedland! though perhaps the Swede
Ought not to have known it, that you carry on
Secret negotiations with the Saxons.
Who is our warranty, that *we* are not
The sacrifices in those articles
Which 'tis thought needful to conceal from us?

WALLENSTEIN (*rises*).

Think you of something better, Gustave Wrangel!
Of Prague no more.

WRANGEL.

Here my commission ends.

WALLENST.

Surrender up to you my capital!
Far liever would I face about, and step
Back to my Emperor.

WRANGEL.

If time yet permits—

WALLENST.

That lies with me, even now, at any hour.

WRANGEL.

Some days ago, perhaps. Today, no longer;
No longer since Sesina's been a prisoner.

[WALLENSTEIN *is struck, and silenced*.]

My Lord Duke, hear me—We believe that you
At present do mean honorably by us.
Since *yesterday* we're sure of that—and now
This paper warrants for the troops, there's nothing
Stands in the way of our full confidence.
Prague shall not part us. Hear! The Chancellor
Contents himself with Altstadt; to your Grace
He gives up Ratschin and the narrow side.
But Egra above all must open to us,
Ere we can think of any junction.

WALLENSTEIN.

You,
You therefore must I trust, and not you me?
I will consider of your proposition.

WRANGEL.

I must entreat that your consideration
Occupy not too long a time. Already
Has this negotiation, my Lord Duke,
Crept on into the second year! If nothing
Is settled this time, will the Chancellor
Consider it as broken off for ever.

WALLENST.

Ye press me hard. A measure such as this,
Ought to be *thought* of.

WRANGEL.

Ay! but think of this too,
That sudden action only can procure it
Success—think first of this, your Highness.

[*Exit* WRANGEL.]

SCENE VI

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, *and* ILLO (*re-enter*)

ILLO.

It's all right?

TERZKY.

Are you compromised?

ILLO.

This Swede
Went smiling from you. Yes! you're compromised.

WALLENST.

As yet is nothing settled: and (well weighed)
I feel myself inclined to leave it so.

TERZKY.

How? What is that?

WALLENSTEIN.

Come on me what will come,
The doing evil to avoid an evil
Cannot be good!

TERZKY.

Nay, but bethink you, Duke.

WALLENST.

To live upon the mercy of these Swedes!
Of these proud-hearted Swedes!—I could not bear it.

ILLO.

Goest thou as fugitive, as mendicant?
Bringest thou not more to them than thou receivest?

WALLENST.

How fared it with the brave and royal Bourbon
Who sold himself unto his country's foes,
And pierced the bosom of his father-land?
Curses were his reward, and men's abhorrence
Avenged th' unnatural and revolting deed.

ILLO.

Is that thy case?

WALLENSTEIN.

True faith, I tell thee,
Must ever be the dearest friend of man:
His nature prompts him to assert its rights.
The enmity of sects, the rage of parties,
Long cherish'd envy, jealousy, unite;
And all the struggling elements of evil
Suspend their conflict, and together league
In one alliance 'gainst their common foe—
The savage beast that breaks into the fold,
Where men repose in confidence and peace.
For vain were man's own prudence to protect him.
'Tis only in the forehead nature plants
The watchful eye—the back, without defence,
Must find its shield in man's fidelity.

TERZKY.

Think not more meanly of thyself than do
Thy foes, who stretch their hands with joy to greet thee;
Less scrupulous far was the Imperial Charles,
The powerful head of this illustrious house;
With open arms he gave the Bourbon welcome;
For still by policy the world is ruled.

SCENE VII

To these enter the COUNTESS TERZKY

WALLENST.

Who sent for you? There is no business here
For women.

COUNTESS.

I am come to bid you joy.

WALLENST.

Use thy authority, Terzky; bid her go.

COUNTESS.

Come I perhaps too early? I hope not.

WALLENST.

Set not this tongue upon me, I entreat you:
You know it is the weapon that destroys me.
I am routed, if a woman but attack me:
I cannot traffic in the trade of words
With that unreasoning sex.

COUNTESS.

I had already
Given the Bohemians a king.

WALLENSTEIN (*sarcastically*).

They have one,
In consequence, no doubt.

COUNTESS (*to the others*).

Ha! what new scruple?

TERZKY.

The Duke will not.

COUNTESS.

He *will not* what he *must*!

ILLO.

It lies with you now. Try. For I am silenced
When folks begin to talk to me of conscience
And of fidelity.

COUNTESS.

How? then, when all
Lay in the far-off distance, when the road
Stretch'd out before thine eyes interminably,
Then hadst thou courage and resolve; and now,
Now that the dream is being realized,
The purpose ripe, the issue ascertain'd,
Dost thou begin to play the dastard now?
Plann'd merely, 'tis a common felony;
Accomplish'd, an immortal undertaking:
And with success comes pardon hand in hand,
For all event is God's arbitrament.

SERVANT (*enters*).

The Colonel Piccolomini.

COUNTESS (*hastily*).

Must wait.

WALLENST.

I cannot see him now. Another time.

SERVANT.

But for two minutes he entreats an audience:
Of the most urgent nature is his business.

WALLENST.

Who knows what he may bring us! I will hear him.

COUNTESS (*laughs*).

Urgent for him, no doubt? but thou may'st wait.

WALLENST.

What is it?

COUNTESS.

Thou shalt be inform'd hereafter.
First let the Swede and thee be compromised.

[*Exit* SERVANT.]

WALLENST.

If there were yet a choice! if yet some milder
Way of escape were possible—I still
Will choose it, and avoid the last extreme.

COUNTESS.

Desirest thou nothing further? Such a way
Lies still before thee. Send this Wrangel off.
Forget thou thy old hopes, cast far away
All thy past life; determine to commence
A new one. Virtue hath her heroes too,
As well as fame and fortune.—To Vienna
Hence—to the Emperor—kneel before the throne
Take a full coffer with thee—say aloud,
Thou didst but wish to prove thy fealty;
Thy whole intention but to dupe the Swede.

ILLO.

For that too 'tis too late. They know too much;
He would but bear his own head to the block.

COUNTESS.

I fear not that. They have not evidence
To attaint him legally, and they avoid

The avowal of an arbitrary power.
They'll let the Duke resign without disturbance.
I see how all will end. The King of Hungary
Makes his appearance, and 'twill of itself
Be understood that then the Duke retires.
There will not want a formal declaration;
The young King will administer the oath
To the whole army; and so all returns
To the old position. On some morrow morning
The Duke departs; and now 'tis stir and bustle
Within his castles. He will hunt, and build,
And superintend his horses' pedigrees;
Creates himself a court, gives golden keys,
And introduces strictest ceremony
In fine proportions, and nice etiquette;
Keeps open table with high cheer: in brief,
Commences mighty King—in miniature.
And while he prudently demeans himself,
And gives himself no actual importance,
He will be let appear whate'er he likes;
And who dares doubt that Friedland will appear
A mighty Prince to his last dying hour?
Well now, what then? Duke Friedland is as others,
A fire-new Noble, whom the war hath raised
To price and currency, a Jonah's gourd,
An over-night creation of court-favor,
Which with an undistinguishable ease
Makes Baron or makes Prince.

WALLENSTEIN (*in extreme agitation*).

Take her away.
Let in the young Count Piccolomini.

COUNTESS.

Art thou in earnest? I entreat thee! Canst thou
Consent to bear thyself to thy own grave,
So ignominiously to be dried up?

Thy life, that arrogated such an height
To end in such a nothing! To be nothing,
When one was always nothing, is an evil
That asks no stretch of patience, a light evil;
But to become a nothing, having been—

WALLENSTEIN (*starts up in violent agitation*).

Show me a way out of this stifling crowd,
Ye powers of Aidance! Show me such a way
As *I* am capable of going. I
Am no tongue-hero, no fine virtue-prattler;
I cannot warm by thinking; cannot say
To the good luck that turns her back upon me,
Magnanimously: "Go; I need thee not."
Cease I to work, I am annihilated.
Dangers nor sacrifices will I shun,
If so I may avoid the last extreme;
But ere I sink down into nothingness,
Leave off so little, who began so great,
Ere that the world confuses me with those
Poor wretches whom a day creates and crumbles,
This age and after ages[25] speak my name
With hate and dread; and Friedland be redemption
For each accursed deed.

COUNTESS.

What is there here, then,
So against nature? Help me to perceive it!
O let not Superstition's nightly goblins
Subdue thy clear bright spirit! Art thou bid
To murder?—with abhorr'd, accursed poinard,
To violate the breasts that nourish'd thee?
That *were* against our nature, that might aptly
Make thy flesh shudder, and thy whole heart sicken,[26]
Yet not a few, and for a meaner object,
Have ventured even this, ay, and perform'd it.
What is there in thy case so black and monstrous?

Thou art accused of treason—whether with
Or without justice is not now the question—
Thou art lost if thou dost not avail thee quickly
Of the power which thou possessest—Friedland! *Duke!*
Tell me where lives that thing so meek and tame,
That doth not all his living faculties
Put forth in preservation of his life?
What deed so daring, which necessity
And desperation will not sanctify?

WALLENST.

Once was this Ferdinand so gracious to me;
He loved me; he esteem'd me; I was placed
The nearest to his heart. Full many a time
We like familiar friends, both at one table,
Have banqueted together. He and I—
And the young kings themselves held me the basin
Wherewith to wash me—and is't come to this?

COUNTESS.

So faithfully preserves thou each small favor,
And hast no memory for contumelies?
Must I remind thee, how at Regensburg
This man repaid thy faithful services?
All ranks and all conditions in the empire
Thou hadst wronged, to make him great,—hadst loaded on thee,
On *thee*, the hate, the curse of the whole world.
No friend existed for thee in all Germany,
And why? because thou hadst existed only
For the Emperor. To the Emperor alone
Clung Friedland in that storm which gather'd round him
At Regensburg in the Diet—and he dropp'd thee!
He let thee fall! he let thee fall a victim
To the Bavarian, to that insolent!
Deposed, stript bare of all thy dignity
And power, amid the taunting of thy foes,
Thou wert let drop into obscurity.—
Say not the restoration of thy honor

Has made atonement for that first injustice.
No honest good-will was it that replaced thee;
The law of hard necessity replaced thee,
Which they had fain opposed, but that they could not.

WALLENST.

Not to their good wishes, that is certain,
Nor yet to his affection I'm indebted
For this high office: and if I abuse it,
I shall therein abuse no confidence.

COUNTESS.

Affection! confidence!—they *needed* thee.
Necessity, impetuous remonstrant!
Who not with empty names, or shows of proxy,
Is served, who'll have the thing and not the symbol,
Ever seeks out the greatest and the best,
And at the rudder places *him*, e'en though
She had been forced to take him from the rabble—
She, this Necessity, it was that placed thee
In this high office; it was she that gave thee
Thy letters patent of inauguration.
For, to the uttermost moment that they can,
This race still help themselves at cheapest rate
With slavish souls, with puppets! At the approach
Of extreme peril, when a hollow image
Is found a hollow image and no more,
Then falls the power into the mighty hands
Of Nature, of the spirit giant-born,
Who listens only to himself, knows nothing
Of stipulations, duties, reverences,
And, like the emancipated force of fire,
Unmaster'd scorches, ere it reaches them,
Their fine-spun webs, their artificial policy.

WALLENST.

'Tis true! they saw me always as I am—
Always! I did not cheat them in the bargain.
I never held it worth my pains to hide
The bold all-grasping habit of my soul.

COUNTESS.

Nay rather—thou hast ever shown thyself
A formidable man, without restraint;
Hast exercised the full prerogatives
Of thy impetuous nature, which had been
Once granted to thee. Therefore, Duke, not *thou*
Who hast still remained consistent with thyself;
But *they* are in the wrong, who fearing thee,
Intrusted such a power in hand they fear'd.
For, by the laws of Spirit, in the right
Is every individual character
That acts in strict consistence with itself.
Self-contradiction is the only wrong.
Wert thou another being, then, when thou
Eight years ago pursuedst thy march with fire,
And sword, and desolation, through the Circles
Of Germany, the universal scourge,
Didst mock all ordinances of the empire,
The fearful rights of strength alone exertedst,
Trampledst to earth each rank, each magistracy,
All to extend thy Sultan's domination?
Then was the time to break thee in, to curb
Thy haughty will, to teach thee ordinance.
But no, the Emperor felt no touch of conscience;
What served him pleased him, and without a murmur
He stamp'd his broad seal on these lawless deeds.
What at that time was right, because thou didst it
For him, today is all at once become
Opprobrious, foul, because it is directed
Against him.—O most flimsy superstition!

WALLENSTEIN (*rising*).

I never saw it in this light before;
'Tis even so. The Emperor perpetrated
Deeds through my arm, deeds most unorderly.
And even this prince's mantle, which I wear,
I owe to what were services to him,
But most high misdemeanors 'gainst the empire.

COUNTESS.

Then betwixt thee and him (confess it Friedland!)
The point can be no more of right and duty,
Only of power and the opportunity.
That opportunity, lo! it comes yonder
Approaching with swift steeds; then with a swing
Throw thyself up into the chariot-seat,
Seize with firm hand the reins, ere thy opponent
Anticipate thee, and himself make conquest
Of the now empty seat. The moment comes;
It is already here, when thou must write
The absolute total of thy life's vast sum.
The constellations stand victorious o'er thee,
The planets shoot good fortune in fair junctions,
And tell thee, "Now's the time!" The starry courses
Hast thou thy life long measured to no purpose?
The quadrant and the circle, were they play-things?

[*Pointing to the different objects in the room*.]

The zodiacs, the rolling orbs of heaven,
Hast pictured on these walls, and all around thee
In dumb, foreboding symbols hast thou placed
These seven presiding Lords of Destiny—
For toys? Is all this preparation nothing?
Is there no marrow in this hollow art,
That even to thyself it doth avail
Nothing, and has no influence over thee
In the great moment of decision?—

WALLENSTEIN. (*during this last speech walks up and down with inward struggles, laboring with passion; stops suddenly, stands still, then interrupting the* COUNTESS).

Send Wrangel to me—I will instantly
Dispatch three couriers—

ILLO (*hurrying out*).

God in heaven be praised!

WALLENST.

It is *his* evil genius and *mine*.
Our evil genius! It chastises *him*
Through me, the instrument of his ambition;
And I expect no less than that Revenge
E'en now is whetting for *my* breast the poinard.
Who sows the serpent's teeth, let him not hope
To reap a joyous harvest. Every crime
Has, in the moment of its perpetration,
Its own avenging angel—dark misgiving,
An ominous sinking at the inmost heart.
He can no longer trust me. Then no longer
Can I retreat—so come that which must come.
Still destiny preserves its due relations,
The heart within us is its absolute
Vicegerent.

[*To TERZKY*.]

Go, conduct you Gustave Wrangel
To my state-cabinet.—Myself will speak to
The couriers.—And dispatch immediately
A servant for Octavio Piccolomini.

[_To the _COUNTESS, *who cannot conceal her triumph*.]

No exultation! woman, triumph not!
For jealous are the Powers of Destiny.
Joy premature, and shouts ere victory,

Encroach upon their rights and privileges.
We sow the seed, and they the growth determine.

[*While he is making his exit the curtain drops*.]

* * * * *

ACT II

SCENE I

Scene, as in the preceding Act

WALLENSTEIN, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI

WALLENSTEIN (*coming forward in conversation*).

He sends me word from Linz that he lies sick;
But I have sure intelligence that he
Secretes himself at Frauenberg with Gallas.
Secure them both, and send them to me hither.
Remember, thou takest on thee the command
Of those same Spanish regiments,—constantly
Make preparation, and be never ready;
And if they urge thee to draw out against me,
Still answer YES, and stand as thou wert fetter'd;
I know that it is doing thee a service
To keep thee out of action in this business.
Thou lovest to linger on in fair appearances;
Steps of extremity are not thy province;
Therefore have I sought out this part for thee.
Thou wilt this time be of most service to me
By thy inertness. The mean time, if fortune
Declare itself on my side, thou wilt know
What is to do.

Enter MAX PICCOLOMINI

Now go, Octavio.
This night must thou be off, take my own horses
Him here I keep with me—make short farewell—
Trust me, I think, we all shall meet again
In joy and thriving fortunes.

OCTAVIO (*to his son*).

I shall see you
Yet ere I go.

SCENE II

WALLENSTEIN, MAX PICCOLOMINI

MAX. (*advances to him*).

My General?

WALLENSTEIN.

That I am no longer, if
Thou stylest thyself the Emperor's officer.

MAX.

Then thou wilt leave the army, General?

WALLENST.

I have renounced the service of the Emperor.

MAX.

And thou wilt leave the army?

WALLENSTEIN.

Rather hope I
To bind it nearer still and faster to me.

[*He seats himself.*]

Yes, Max, I have delay'd to open it to thee,
Even till the hour of acting 'gins to strike.
Youth's fortunate feeling doth seize easily
The absolute right, yea, and a joy it is
To exercise the single apprehension
Where the sums square in proof;
But where it happens that of two sure evils
One must be taken, where the heart not wholly
Brings itself back from out the strife of duties,
There 'tis a blessing to have no election,
And blank necessity is grace and favor.
—This is now present: do not look behind thee,—
It can no more avail thee. Look thou forwards!
Think not! judge not! prepare thyself to act!
The Court—it hath determined on my ruin,
Therefore I will be beforehand with them.
We'll join the Swedes—right gallant fellows are they,
And our good friends.

[*He stops himself, expecting* PICCOLOMINI's *answer*.]

I have ta'en thee by surprise. Answer me not.
I grant thee time to recollect thyself.

[*He rises, retires at the back of the stage*. MAX *remains for a long time motionless, in a trance of excessive anguish. At his first motion* WALLENSTEIN *returns, and places himself before him*.]

MAX.

My General, this day thou makest me
Of age to speak in my own right and person,
For till this day I have been spared the trouble
To find out my own road. Thee have I follow'd
With most implicit unconditional faith,
Sure of the right path if I follow'd thee.
Today, for the first time, dost thou refer
Me to myself, and forcest me to make
Election between thee and my own heart.

WALLENST.

Soft cradled thee thy Fortune till today;
Thy duties thou couldst exercise in sport,
Indulge all lovely instincts, act forever
With undivided heart. It can remain
No longer thus. Like enemies, the roads
Start from each other. Duties strive with duties.
Thou must needs choose thy party in the war
Which is now kindling 'twixt thy friend and him
Who is thy Emperor.

MAX.

War! is that the name?
War is as frightful as heaven's pestilence,
Yet it is good. Is it heaven's will as that is?
Is that a good war, which against the Emperor
Thou wagest with the Emperor's own army?
O God of heaven! what a change is this!
Beseems it me to offer such persuasion
To thee, who like the fix'd star of the pole
Wert all I gazed at on life's trackless ocean?
O! what a rent thou makest in my heart!
The ingrain'd instinct of old reverence,
The holy habit of obediency,
Must I pluck live asunder from thy name?
Nay, do not turn thy countenance upon me—
It always was as a god looking upon me!
Duke Wallenstein, its power has not departed.
The senses still are in thy bonds, although,
Bleeding, the soul hath freed itself.

WALLENSTEIN.

Max, hear me.

MAX.

O! do it not, I pray thee, do it not!
There is a pure and noble soul within thee

Knows not of this unblest, unlucky doing.
Thy will is chaste, it is thy fancy only
Which hath polluted thee; and innocence—
It will not let itself be driven away
From that world-awing aspect. Thou wilt not,
Thou canst not, end in this. It would reduce
All human creatures to disloyalty
Against the nobleness of their own nature.
'Twill justify the vulgar misbelief
Which holdeth nothing noble in free will
And trusts itself to impotence alone
Made powerful only in an unknown power.

WALLENST.

The world will judge me sternly, I expect it.
Already have I said to my own self
All thou canst say to me. Who but avoids
The extreme, can he by going round avoid it?
But here there is no choice. Yes—I must use
Or suffer violence—so stands the case;
There remains nothing possible but that.

MAX.

O that is never possible for thee!
'Tis the last desperate resource of those
Cheap souls to whom their honor, their good name
Is their poor *saving*, their last worthless *keep*,
Which, having staked and lost, they stake themselves
In the mad rage of gaming. Thou art rich
And glorious; with an unpolluted heart
Thou canst make conquest of whate'er seems highest!
But he, who once hath acted infamy,
Does nothing more in this world.

WALLENSTEIN (*grasps his hand*).

Calmly, Max!
Much that is great and excellent will we

Perform together yet. And if we only
Stand on the height with dignity, 'tis soon
Forgotten, Max, by what road we ascended.
Believe me, many a crown shines spotless now
That yet was deeply sullied in the winning.
To the evil spirit doth the earth belong,
Not to the good. All that the powers divine
Send from above are universal blessings,
Their light rejoices us, their air refreshes,
But never yet was man enrich'd by them
In their eternal realm no *property*
Is to be struggled for—all there is general
The jewel, the all-valued gold we win
From the deceiving Powers, depraved in nature,
That dwell beneath the day and blessed sun-light.
Not without sacrifices are they render'd
Propitious, and there lives no soul on earth
That e'er retired unsullied from their service.

MAX.

Whate'er is human, to the human being
Do I allow—and to the vehement
And striving spirit readily I pardon
The excess of action; but to thee, my General,
Above *all* others make I large concession.
For thou must move a world, and be the master—
He kills thee who condemns thee to inaction.
So be it then! maintain thee in thy post
By violence. Resist the Emperor,
And, if it must be, force with force repel:
I will not praise it, yet I can forgive it.
But not—not to the *traitor*—yes!—the word
Is spoken out—
Not to the traitor can I yield a pardon.
That is no mere excess! that is no error
Of human nature—that is wholly different;
O that is black, black as the pit of hell!

[WALLENSTEIN *betrays a sudden agitation*.]

Thou canst not hear it *named*, and wilt thou *do* it?
O, turn back to thy duty! That thou canst
I hold it certain. Send me to Vienna:
I'll make thy peace for thee with the Emperor.
He knows thee not. But I do know thee. He
Shall see thee, Duke, with my unclouded eye,
And I bring back his confidence to thee.

WALLENST.

It is too late! Thou knowest not what has happen'd.

MAX.

Were it too late, and were things gone so far,
That a crime only could prevent thy fall,
Then—fall! fall honorably, even as thou stood'st!
Lose the command. Go from the stage of war,
Thou canst with splendor do it—do it too
With innocence. Thou hast lived much for others,
At length live thou for thy own self. I follow thee;
My destiny I never part from thine.

WALLENST.

It is too late! Even now, while thou art losing
Thy words, one after the other are the milestones
Left fast behind by my post couriers
Who bear the order on to Prague and Egra.

[MAX *stands as convulsed, with a gesture and countenance expressing the most intense anguish*.]

Yield thyself to it. We act as we are forced.
I cannot give assent to my own shame
And ruin. *Thou*—no—thou canst not forsake me!
So let us do what must be done, with dignity,
With a firm step. What am I doing worse
Than did famed Cæsar at the Rubicon,

When he the legions led against his country,
The which his country had delivered to him?
Had he thrown down the sword he had been lost,
As I were if I but disarm'd myself.
I trace out something in me of this spirit;
Give me his luck, *that other thing* I'll bear.

[MAX *quits him abruptly*. WALLENSTEIN *startled and overpowered, continues looking after him and is still in this posture when* TERZKY *enters*.]

SCENE III

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY

TERZKY.

Max Piccolomini just left you?

WALLENSTEIN.

Where is Wrangel?

TERZKY.

He is already gone.

WALLENSTEIN.

In such a hurry?

TERZKY.

It is as if the earth had swallow'd him.
He had scarce left thee when I went to seek him.
I wish'd some words with him—but he was gone.
How, when, and where, could no one tell me. Nay,
I half believe it was the devil himself;
A human creature could not so at once
Have vanish'd.

ILLO (*enters*).

Is it true that thou wilt send Octavio?

TERZKY.

How, Octavio! Whither send him?

WALLENST.

He goes to Frauenburg, and will lead hither
The Spanish and Italian regiments.

ILLO.

No!
Nay, Heaven forbid!

WALLENSTEIN.

And why should Heaven forbid?

ILLO.

Him!—that deceiver! Wouldst thou trust to him
The soldiery? Him wilt thou let slip from thee,
Now in the very instant that decides us—

TERZKY.

Thou wilt not do this—No! I pray thee, no!

WALLENST.

Ye are whimsical.

ILLO.

O but for this time, Duke,
Yield to our warning! Let him not depart.

WALLENST.

And why should I not trust him only this time,
Who have always trusted him? What, then, has happen'd
That I should lose my good opinion of him?

In complaisance to your whims, not my own,
I must, forsooth, give up a rooted judgment.
Think not I am a woman. Having trusted him
E'en till today, today too will I trust him.

TERZKY.

Must it be he—he only? Send another.

WALLENST.

It must be he whom I myself have chosen;
He is well fitted for the business. Therefore
I gave it him.

ILLO.

Because he's an Italian—
Therefore is he well fitted for the business!

WALLENST.

I know you love them not—nor sire nor son—
Because that I esteem them, love them—visibly
Esteem them, love them more than you and others.
E'en as they merit. Therefore are they eye-blights,
Thorns in your foot-path. But your jealousies,
In what affect they me or my concerns?
Are they the worse to *me* because you hate them?
Love or hate one another as you will,
I leave to each man his own moods and likings;
Yet know the worth of each of you to me.

ILLO.

Von Questenberg, while he was here, was always
Lurking about with this Octavio.

WALLENST.

It happen'd with my knowledge and permission.

ILLO.

I know that secret messengers came to him
From Gallas—

WALLENSTEIN.

That's not true.

ILLO.

O thou art blind,
With thy deep-seeing eyes!

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou wilt not shake
My faith for me—my faith, which founds itself
On the profoundest science. If 'tis false,
Then the whole science of the stars is false;
For know, I have a pledge from Fate itself,
That he is the most faithful of my friends.

ILLO.

Hast thou a pledge, that this pledge is not false?

WALLENST.

There exist moments in the life of man,
When he is nearer the great Soul of the world
Than is man's custom, and possesses freely
The power of questioning his destiny:
And such a moment 'twas, when in the night
Before the action in the plains of Lützen,
Leaning against a tree, thoughts crowding thoughts,
I look'd out far upon the ominous plain.
My whole life, past and future, in this moment
Before my mind's eye glided in procession,
And to the destiny of the next morning
The spirit, fill'd with anxious presentiment,
Did knit the most removed futurity.
Then said I also to myself: "So many

Dost thou command. They follow all thy stars
And as on some great number set their All
Upon thy single head, and only man
The vessel of thy fortune. Yet a day
Will come when Destiny shall once more scatter
All these in many a several direction:
Few be they who will stand out faithful to thee."
I yearn'd to know which one was faithfullest
Of all, this camp included. Great Destiny,
Give me a sign! And he shall be the man,
Who, on the approaching morning, comes the first
To meet me with a token of his love.
And thinking this, I fell into a slumber.
Then midmost in the battle was I led
In spirit. Great the pressure and the tumult!
Then was my horse kil'd under me; I sank;
And over me away, all unconcernedly,
Drove horse and rider—and thus trod to pieces
I lay, and panted like a dying man;
Then seized me suddenly a savior arm;
It was Octavio's—I awoke at once;
'Twas broad day, and *Octavio* stood before me.
"My brother," said he, "do not ride today
The dapple, as you're wont; but mount the horse
Which I have chosen for thee. Do it, brother!
In love to me. A strong dream warn'd me so."
It was the swiftness of his horse that snatch'd me
From the hot pursuit of Bannier's dragoons.
My cousin rode the dapple on that day,
And never more saw I of horse or rider.

ILLO.

That was a chance.

WALLENSTEIN (*significantly*).

There's no such thing as chance.
[And what to us seems merest accident

Springs from the deepest source of destiny.]
In brief, 'tis sign'd and seal'd that this Octavio
Is my good angel—and now no word more.

[*He is retiring*.]

TERZKY.

This is my comfort—Max remains our hostage.

ILLO.

And he shall never stir from here alive.

WALLENSTEIN (*stops and turns himself round*).

Are ye not like the women who forever
Only recur to their first word, although
One had been talking reason by the hour!
Know that the human being's thoughts and needs
Are not like ocean billows, blindly moved.
The inner world, his microcosmus, is
The deep shaft out of which they spring eternally.
They grow by certain laws, like the tree's fruit—
No juggling chance can metamorphose them.
Have I the human *kernel* first examined?
Then I know, too, the future will and action.

[*Exeunt*.]

SCENE IV

Chamber in the residence of Piccolomini

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI (*attired for traveling*), AN ADJUTANT

OCTAVIO.

Is the detachment here?

ADJUT.

It awaits below.

OCTAVIO.

And are the soldiers trusty, Adjutant?
Say, from what regiment hast thou chosen them?

ADJUT. From Tiefenbach's.

OCTAVIO.

That regiment is loyal;
Keep them in silence in the inner court,
Unseen by all, and when the signal peals
Then close the doors; keep watch upon the house,
And all ye meet be instantly arrested.

[*Exit Adjutant*.]

I hope indeed I shall not need their service,
So certain feel I of my well laid plans;
But when an empire's safety is at stake
'Twere better too much caution than too little.

SCENE V

A Chamber in PICCOLOMINI's Dwelling-House.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, ISOLANI, *entering*

ISOLANI.

Here am I—Well! who comes yet of the others?

OCTAVIO (*with an air of mystery*).

But, first, a word with you, Count Isolani.

ISOLANI (*assuming the same air of mystery*).

Will it explode, ha?—Is the Duke about
To make the attempt? In me, friend, you may place
Full confidence—Nay, put me to the proof.

OCTAVIO.

That may happen.

ISOLANI.

Noble brother, I am
Not one of those men who in words are valiant,
And when it comes to action skulk away.
The Duke has acted toward me as a friend.
God knows it is so; and I owe him all—
He may rely on my fidelity.

OCTAVIO.

That will be seen hereafter.

ISOLANI.

Be on your guard,
All think not as I think; and there are many
Who still hold with the Court—yes, and they say
That those stolen signatures bind them to nothing.

[OCTAVIO.

Indeed! Pray name to me the chiefs that think so.

ISOLANI.

Plague upon them! all the Germans think so;
Esterhazy, Kaunitz, Deodati, too,
Insist upon obedience to the Court.]

OCTAVIO.

I am rejoiced to hear it.

ISOLANI.

You rejoice

OCTAVIO.

That the Emperor has yet such gallant servants,
And loving friends!

ISOLANI.

Nay, jeer not, I entreat you.
They are no such worthless fellows, I assure you.

OCTAVIO.

I am assured already. God forbid
That I should jest!—In very serious earnest,
I am rejoiced to see an honest cause
So strong.

ISOLANI.

The Devil!—what!—Why, what means this?
Are you not, then—For what, then, am I here?

OCTAVIO.

That you may make full declaration, whether
You will be call'd the friend or enemy
Of the Emperor.

ISOLANI (*with an air of defiance*).

That declaration, friend,
I'll make to him in whom a right is placed
To put that question to me.

OCTAVIO.

Whether, Count,
That right is mine, this paper may, instruct you.

ISOLANI (*stammering*).

Why,—why—what! this is the Emperor's hand and seal! [*Reads*.]
"Whereas, the officers collectively
Throughout our army will obey the orders

Of the Lieutenant-General Piccolomini.
As from ourselves."—*Hem*—Yes! so I—
Yes! yes!—
I—I give you joy, Lieutenant-General!

OCTAVIO.

And you submit you to the order?

ISOLANI.

I—
But you have taken me so by surprise—
Time for reflection one *must* have—

OCTAVIO.

Two minutes.

ISOLANI.

My God! But then the case is—

OCTAVIO.

Plain and simple
You must declare you, whether you determine
To act a treason 'gainst your Lord and Sovereign,
Or whether you will serve him faithfully.

ISOLANI.

Treason!—My God!—But who talks then of treason?

OCTAVIO.

That is the case. The Prince-duke is a traitor—
Means to lead over to the enemy
The Emperor's army.—Now, Count!—brief
and full—
Say, will you break your oath to the Emperor?
Sell yourself to the enemy?—Say, will you?

ISOLANI.

What mean you? I—I break my oath, d'ye say,
To his Imperial Majesty?
Did I say so!—When, when have I said that?

OCTAVIO.

You have not said it yet—not yet. This instant
I wait to hear, Count, whether you *will* say it.

ISOLANI.

Ay! that delights me now, that you yourself
Bear witness for me that I never said so.

OCTAVIO.

And you renounce the Duke then?

ISOLANI.

If he's planning Treason—why, treason breaks all bonds asunder.

OCTAVIO.

And are determined, too, to fight against him?

ISOLANI.

He has done me service—but if he's a villain,
Perdition seize him!—All scores are rubb'd off.

OCTAVIO.

I am rejoiced that you are so well disposed.
This night, break off in the utmost secrecy
With all the light-arm'd troops—it must appear
As came the order from the Duke himself.
At Frauenburg's the place of rendezvous;
There will Count Gallas give you further orders.

ISOLANI.

It shall be done.-But you'll remember me With the Emperor—how well-disposed you found me.

OCTAVIO.

I will not fail to mention it honorably.

[*Exit* ISOLANI. *A Servant enters*.]

What, Colonel Butler!—Show him up.

ISOLANI (*returning*).

Forgive me too my bearish ways, old father! Lord God! how should I know, then, what a great Person I had before me.

OCTAVIO.

No excuses!

ISOLANI.

I am a merry lad, and if at time A rash word might escape me 'gainst the Court Amidst my wine—You know no harm was meant.

[*Exit*.]

OCTAVIO.

You need not be uneasy on that score That has succeeded. Fortune favor us With all the others only but as much!

SCENE VI

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, BUTLER

BUTLER.

At your command, Lieutenant-General.

OCTAVIO.

Welcome, as honor'd friend and visitor.

BUTLER.

You do me too much honor.

OCTAVIO (*after both have seated themselves*).

You have not
Return'd the advances which I made you yesterday—
Misunderstood them as mere empty forms.
That wish proceeded from my heart—I was
In earnest with you—for 'tis now a time
In which the honest should unite most closely.

BUTLER.

'Tis only the like-minded can unite.

OCTAVIO.

True! and I name all honest men like-minded.
I never charge a man but with those acts
To which his character deliberately
Impels him; for alas! the violence
Of blind misunderstandings often thrusts
The very best of us from the right track.
You came through Frauenburg. Did the Count Gallas
Say nothing to you? Tell me. He's my friend.

BUTLER.

His words were lost on *me*.

OCTAVIO.

It grieves me sorely,
To hear it: for his counsel was most wise.
I had myself the like to offer.

BUTLER.

Spare
Yourself the trouble—me th' embarrassment,
To have deserved so ill your good opinion.

OCTAVIO.

The time is precious—let us talk openly.
You know how matters stand here. Wallenstein
Meditates treason—I can tell you further,
He has committed treason; but few hours
Have past since he a covenant concluded
With the enemy. The messengers are now
Full on their way to Egra and to Prague.
Tomorrow he intends to lead us over
To the enemy. But he deceives himself;
For Prudence wakes—The Emperor has still
Many and faithful friends here, and they stand
In closest union, mighty though unseen.
This manifesto sentences the Duke—
Recalls the obedience of the army from him,
And summons all the loyal, all the honest,
To join and recognize in me their leader.
Choose—will you share with us an honest cause?
Or with the evil share an evil lot?

BUTLER (*rises*).

His lot is mine.

OCTAVIO.

Is that your last resolve?

BUTLER.

It is.

OCTAVIO.

Nay, but bethink you, Colonel Butler!
As yet you have time. Within my faithful breast
That rashly utter'd word remains interr'd.
Recall it, Butler! choose a better party;
You have not chosen the right one.

BUTLER (*going*).

Any other
Commands for me, Lieutenant-General?

OCTAVIO.

See your white hairs: recall that word!

BUTLER.

Farewell!

OCTAVIO.

What! Would you draw this good and gallant sword
In such a cause? Into a curse would you
Transform the gratitude which you have earn'd
By forty years' fidelity from Austria?

BUTLER (*laughing with bitterness*).

Gratitude from the House of Austria!

[He is going.]

OCTAVIO (*permits him to go as far as the door, then calls after him*).

Butler!

BUTLER.

What wish you?

OCTAVIO.

How was't with the Count?

BUTLER.

Count? what?

OCTAVIO (*coldly*).

The title that you wish'd, I mean.

BUTLER (*starts in sudden passion*).

Hell and damnation!

OCTAVIO (*coldly*).

You petition'd for it—
And your petition was repelled—Was it so?

BUTLER.

Your insolent scoff shall not go by unpunish'd.
Draw!

OCTAVIO.

Nay! your sword to 'ts sheath! and tell me calmly,
How all that happen'd. I will not refuse you
Your satisfaction afterward. Calmly, Butler!

BUTLER.

Be the whole world acquainted with the weakness
For which I never can forgive myself.
Lieutenant-General! Yes; I have ambition.
Ne'er was I able to endure contempt.
It stung me to the quick, that birth and title
Should have more weight than merit has in the army.
I would fain not be meaner than my equal,
So in an evil hour I let myself
Be tempted to that measure. It was folly!

But yet so hard a penance it deserved not.
It might have been refused; but wherefore barb
And venom the refusal with contempt?
Why dash to earth and crush with heaviest scorn
The gray-hair'd man, the faithful veteran?
Why to the baseness of his parentage
Refer him with such cruel roughness, only
Because he had a weak hour and forgot himself?
But nature gives a sting e'en to the worm
Which wanton Power treads on in sport and insult.

OCTAVIO.

You must have been calumniated. Guess you
The enemy who did you this ill service?

BUTLER.

Be't who it will—a most low-hearted scoundrel!
Some vile court-minion must it be, some Spaniard,
Some young squire of some ancient family,
In whose light I may stand; some envious knave,
Stung to his soul by my fair self-earn'd honors!

OCTAVIO.

But tell me, did the Duke approve that measure?

BUTLER.

Himself impell'd me to it, used his interest
In my behalf with all the warmth of friendship.

OCTAVIO.

Ay? are you sure of that?

BUTLER.

I read the letter.

OCTAVIO.

And so did I—but the contents were different. [BUTLER *is suddenly struck*.]

By chance I'm in possession of that letter—
Can leave it to your own eyes to convince you.

[*He gives him the letter*.]

BUTLER.

Ha! what is this?

OCTAVIO.

I fear me, Colonel Butler,
An infamous game have they been playing with you.
The Duke, you say, impell'd you to this measure?
Now, in this letter, talks he in contempt
Concerning you; counsels the minister
To give sound chastisement to your conceit,
For so he calls it.

[BUTLER *reads through the letter; his knees tremble, he seizes a chair, and sinks down in it*.]

You have no enemy, no persecutor;
There's no one wishes ill to you. Ascribe
The insult you received to the Duke only.
His aim is clear and palpable. He wish'd
To tear you from your Emperor: he hoped
To gain from your revenge what he well knew
(What your long-tried fidelity convinced him)
He ne'er could dare expect from your calm reason.
A blind tool would he make you, in contempt
Use you, as means of most abandoned ends.
He has gained his point. Too well has he succeeded
In luring you away from that good path
On which you had been journeying forty years!

BUTLER *(his voice trembling)*.

Can e'er the Emperor's Majesty forgive me?

OCTAVIO.

More than forgive you. He would fain compensate
For that affront, and most unmerited grievance
Sustain'd by a deserving gallant veteran.
From his free impulse he confirms the present,
Which the Duke made you for a wicked purpose.
The regiment, which you now command, is yours.

[BUTLER attempts to rise, sinks down again. He labors inwardly with violent emotions; tries to speak, and cannot. At length he takes his sword from the belt, and offers it to PICCOLOMINI.]

OCTAVIO.

What wish you? Recollect yourself, friend.

BUTLER.

Take it.

OCTAVIO.

But to what purpose? Calm yourself.

BUTLER.

O take it!
I am no longer worthy of this sword.

OCTAVIO.

Receive it then anew, from my hands—and
Wear it with honor for the right cause ever.

BUTLER.

Perjure myself to such a gracious Sovereign!

OCTAVIO.

You'll make amends. Quick! break off from the Duke!

BUTLER.

Break off from him!

OCTAVIO.

What now? Bethink thyself.

BUTLER (*no longer governing his emotion*).

Only break off from him? He dies! he dies!

OCTAVIO.

Come after me to Frauenburg, where now
All who are loyal are assembling under
Counts Altringer and Gallas. Many others
I've brought to a remembrance of their duty:
This night be sure that you escape from Pilsen.

BUTLER (*strides up and down in excessive agitation, then steps up to* OCTAVIO *with resolved countenance*).

Count Piccolomini! dare that man speak
Of honor to you, who once broke his troth.

OCTAVIO.

He, who repents so deeply of it, dares.

BUTLER.

Then leave me here upon my word of honor!

OCTAVIO.

What's your design?

BUTLER.

Leave me and my regiment.

OCTAVIO.

I have full confidence in you. But tell me
What are you brooding?

BUTLER.

That the deed will tell you.
Ask me no more at present. Trust to me.
Ye may trust safely. By the living God
Ye give him over, not to his good angel!
Farewell.

[*Exit* BUTLER.]

SERVANT (*enters with a billet*).

A stranger left it, and is gone.
The Prince Duke's horses wait for you below.

[*Exit* SERVANT.]

OCTAVIO (*reads*).

"Be sure make haste! Your faithful Isolan."
—O that I had but left this town behind me.
To split upon a rock so near the haven!—Away!
This is no longer a safe place
For me! Where can my son be tarrying!

SCENE VII

OCTAVIO and MAX PICCOLOWINI

[MAX *enters almost in a state of derangement, from extreme agitation; his eyes roll wildly, his walk is unsteady, and he appears not to observe his father, who stands at a distance, and gazes at him with a countenance expressive of compassion. He paces with long strides through the chamber, then stands still again, and at last throws himself into a chair, staring vacantly at the object directly before him*.]

OCTAVIO (*advances to him*).

I am going off, my son.

[*Receiving no answer, he takes his hand*.]

My son, farewell.

MAX.

Farewell.

OCTAVIO.

Thou wilt soon follow me?

MAX.

I follow thee?
Thy way is crooked—it is not my way.

[OCTAVIO *drops his hand, and starts back*.]

O, hadst thou been but simple and sincere,
Ne'er had it come to this—all had stood otherwise.
He had not done that foul and horrible deed,
The virtuous had retain'd their influence o'er him:
He had not fallen into the snares of villains.
Wherefore so like a thief, and thief's accomplice
Didst creep behind him, lurking for thy prey!
O, unblest falsehood! Mother of all evil!
Thou misery-making demon, it is thou
That sink'st us in perdition. Simple truth,
Sustainer of the world, have saved us all!
Father, I will not, I cannot excuse thee!
Wallenstein has deceived me—O, most foully!
But thou hast acted not much better.

OCTAVIO.

Son!
My son, ah! I forgive thy agony!

MAX. (*rises and contemplates his father with looks of suspicion*).

Was't possible? hadst thou the heart, my father,
Hadst thou the heart to drive it to such lengths,
With cold premeditated purpose? Thou—
Hadst thou the heart to wish to see him guilty
Rather than saved? Thou risest by his fall.
Octavio, 'twill not please me.

OCTAVIO.

God in heaven!

MAX.

O, woe is me! sure I have changed my nature.
How comes suspicion here—in the free soul?
Hope, confidence, belief, are gone; for all
Lied to me, all that I e'er loved or honored.
No, no! not all! She—she yet lives for me,
And she is true, and open as the heavens!
Deceit is everywhere, hypocrisy,
Murder, and poisoning, treason, perjury:
The single holy spot is our love,
The only unprofaned in human nature.

OCTAVIO.

Max!—we will go together. 'Twill be better.

MAX.

What? ere I've taken a last parting leave,
The very last—no, never!

OCTAVIO.

Spare thyself
The pang of necessary separation.
Come with me! Come, my son!

[*Attempts to take him with him.*]

MAX.

No! as sure as God lives, no!

OCTAVIO (*more urgently*).

Come with me, I command thee! I, thy father.

MAX.

Command me what is human. I stay here.

OCTAVIO.

Max! in the Emperor's name I bid thee come.

MAX.

No Emperor has power to prescribe
Laws to the heart; and wouldst thou wish to rob me
Of the sole blessing which my fate has left me,
Her sympathy? Must then a cruel deed
Be done with cruelty? The unalterable
Shall I perform ignobly—steal away,
With stealthy coward flight forsake her? No!
She shall behold my suffering, my sore anguish,
Hear the complaints of the disparted soul,
And weep tears o'er me. Oh! the human race
Have steely souls—but she is as an angel.
From the black deadly madness of despair
Will she redeem my soul, and in soft words
Of comfort, plaining, loose this pang of death!

OCTAVIO.

Thou wilt not tear thyself away; thou canst not.
O, come, my son! I bid thee save thy virtue.

MAX.

Squander not thou thy words in vain.
The heart I follow, for I dare trust to it.

OCTAVIO (*trembling, and losing all self command*).

Max! Max! if that most damned thing could be,
If thou—my son—my own blood—dare I *think* it?
Do sell thyself to him, the infamous,
Do stamp this brand upon our noble house,
Then shall the world behold the horrible deed
And in unnatural combat shall the steel
Of the son trickle with the father's blood.

MAX.

O hadst thou always better thought of men
Thou hadst then acted better. Curst suspicion,
Unholy, miserable doubt! To him
Nothing on earth remains unwrench'd and firm,
Who has no faith.

OCTAVIO.

And if I trust thy heart,
Will it be always in thy power to follow it?

MAX.

The heart's voice *thou* hast not o'erpowered—as little
Will Wallenstein be able to o'erpower it.

OCTAVIO.

O, Max! I see thee never more again!

MAX.

Unworthy of thee wilt thou never see me.

OCTAVIO.

I go to Frauenburg—the Pappenheimers
I leave thee here, the Lothrings too; Tsokans
And Tiefenbach remain here to protect thee.
They love thee, and are faithful to their oath,

And will far rather fall in gallant contest
Than leave their rightful leader, and their honor.

MAX.

Rely on this, I either leave my life
In the struggle, or conduct them out of Pilsen.

OCTAVIO.

Farewell, my son!

MAX.

Farewell!

OCTAVIO.

How! not one look
Of filial love? No grasp of the hand at parting?
It is a bloody war to which we are going,
And the event uncertain and in darkness.
So used we not to part—it was not so!
Is it then true? I have a son no longer?

[MAX *falls into his arms, they hold each other for a long time in a speechless embrace, then go away at different sides*.]

[*The Curtain drops*.]

* * * * *

ACT III

SCENE I

A Chamber in the House of the Duchess of Friedland

COUNTESS TERZKY, THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN (*the two latter sit at the same table at work*)

COUNTESS (*watching them from the opposite side*).

So you have nothing to ask me—nothing?
I have been waiting for a word from you.
And could you then endure in all this time
Not once to speak his name?

[THEKLA *remaining silent, the* COUNTESS *rises and advances to her*.]

Why, how comes this!
Perhaps I am already grown superfluous,
And other ways exist, besides through me?
Confess it to me, Thekla: have you seen him?

THEKLA.

Today and yesterday I have not seen him.

COUNTESS.

And not heard from him, either? Come, be open.

THEKLA.

No syllable.

COUNTESS.

And still you are so calm?

THEKLA.

I am.

COUNTESS.

May 't please you, leave us, Lady Neubrunn. [*Exit* LADY NEUBRUNN.]

SCENE II

The COUNTESS, THEKLA

COUNTESS.

It does not please me, Princess, that he holds
Himself so *still*, exactly at *this* time.

THEKLA.

Exactly at *this* time?

COUNTESS.

He now knows all:
'Twere now the moment to declare himself.

THEKLA.

If I'm to understand you, speak less darkly.

COUNTESS.

'Twas for that purpose that I bade her leave us.
Thekla, you are no more a child. Your heart
Is now no more in nonage: for you love,
And boldness dwells with love—that *you* have proved
Your nature molds itself upon your father's
More than your mother's spirit. Therefore may you
Hear, what were too much for her fortitude.

THEKLA.

Enough: no further preface, I entreat you.
At once, out with it! Be it what it may,
It is not possible that it should torture me
More than this introduction. What have you
To say to me? Tell me the whole, and briefly!

COUNTESS.

You'll not be frighten'd—

THEKLA.

Name it, I entreat you.

COUNTESS.

It lies within your power to do your father
A weighty service—

THEKLA.

Lies within *my* power?

COUNTESS.

Max Piccolomini loves you. You can link him
Indissolubly to your father.

THEKLA.

I?
What need of me for that? And is he not
Already link'd to him?

COUNTESS.

He was.

THEKLA.

And wherefore
Should he not be so now—not be so always?

COUNTESS.

He cleaves to the Emperor too.

THEKLA.

Not more than duty
And honor may demand of him.

COUNTESS.

We ask
Proofs of his love, and not proofs of his honor.
Duty and honor!
Those are ambiguous words with many meanings.

You should interpret them for him: his love
Should be the sole definer of his honor.

THEKLA.

How?

COUNTESS.

The Emperor or you must he renounce.

THEKLA.

He will accompany my father gladly
In his retirement. From himself you heard,
How much he wish'd to lay aside the sword.

COUNTESS.

He must *not* lay the sword aside, we mean;
He must unsheath it in your father's cause.

THEKLA.

He'll spend with gladness and alacrity
His life, his heart's blood in my father's cause,
If shame or injury be intended him.

COUNTESS.

You will not understand me. Well, hear then:—
Your father has fallen off from the Emperor,
And is about to join the enemy
With the whole soldiery—

THEKLA.

Alas, my mother!

COUNTESS.

There needs a great example to draw on
The army after him. The Piccolomini
Possess the love and reverence of the troops;
They govern all opinions, and wherever

They lead the way none hesitate to follow.
The son secures the father to our interests—
You've much in your hands at this moment.

THEKLA.

Ah!
My miserable mother! what a death-stroke
Awaits thee!—No! she never will survive it.

COUNTESS.

She will accommodate her soul to that
Which is and must be. I do know your mother;
The far-off future weighs upon her heart
With torture of anxiety; but is it
Unalterably, actually present,
She soon resigns herself, and bears it calmly.

THEKLA.

O my foreboding bosom! Even now,
E'en now 'tis here, that icy hand of horror!
And my young hope lies shuddering in its grasp;
I knew it well—no sooner had I enter'd,
An heavy ominous presentiment
Reveal'd to me that spirits of death were hovering
Over my happy fortune. But why think I
First of myself? My mother! O my mother!

COUNTESS.

Calm yourself! Break not out in vain lamenting!
Preserve you for your father the firm friend,
And for yourself the lover, all will yet
Prove good and fortunate.

THEKLA.

Prove good! What good?
Must we not part?—part ne'er to meet again?

COUNTESS.

He parts not from you! He cannot part from you.

THEKLA.

Alas for his sore anguish! It will rend
His heart asunder.

COUNTESS.

If indeed he loves you,
His resolution will be speedily taken.

THEKLA.

His resolution will be speedily taken—
O do not doubt of that! A resolution!
Does there remain one to be taken?

COUNTESS.

Hush,
Collect yourself! I hear your mother coming.

THEKLA.

How shall I bear to see her?

COUNTESS.

Collect yourself.

SCENE III

To them enter the DUCHESS

DUCHESS (*to the COUNTESS*).

Who was here, sister? I heard someone talking,
And passionately too.

COUNTESS.

Nay! there was no one.

DUCHESS.

I am grown so timorous, every trifling noise
Scatters my spirits, and announces to me
The footstep of some messenger of evil.
And you can tell me, sister, what the event is?
Will he agree to do the Emperor's pleasure,
And send the horse-regiments to the Cardinal?
Tell me, has he dismiss'd Von Questenberg
With a favorable answer?

COUNTESS.

No, he has not.

DUCHESS.

Alas! then all is lost! I see it coming,
The worst that can come! Yes, they will depose him;
The accursed business of the Regensburg diet
Will all be acted o'er again!

COUNTESS.

No! never!
Make your heart easy, sister, as to that.

[THEKLA, *in extreme agitation, throws herself upon her mother, and enfolds her in her arms, weeping*.]

DUCHESS.

Yes, my poor child!
Thou too hast lost a most affectionate godmother
In the Empress. O that stern unbending man!
In this unhappy marriage what have I
Not suffer'd, not endured? For even as if
I had been link'd on to some wheel of fire

That restless, ceaseless, whirls impetuous onward,
I have pass'd a life of frights and horrors with him,
And ever to the brink of some abyss
With dizzy headlong violence he bears me.
Nay, do not weep, my child. Let not my sufferings
Presignify unhappiness to thee,
Nor blacken with their shade the fate that waits thee.
There lives no second Friedland: thou, my child,
Hast not to fear thy mother's destiny.

THEKLA.

O let us supplicate him, dearest mother!
Quick! quick! here's no abiding place for us.
Here every coming hour broods into life
Some new affrightful monster.

DUCHESS.

Thou wilt share
An easier, calmer lot, my child! We too,
I and thy father, witnessed happy days.
Still think I with delight of those first years,
When he was making progress with glad effort,
When his ambition was a genial fire,
Not that consuming flame which now it is.
The Emperor loved him, trusted him: and all
He undertook could not but be successful.
But since that ill-starr'd day at Regensburg,
Which plunged him headlong from his dignity,
A gloomy uncompanionable spirit,
Unsteady and suspicious, has possess'd him.
His quiet mind forsook him, and no longer
Did he yield up himself in joy and faith
To his old luck and individual power;
But thenceforth turn'd his heart and best affections
All to those cloudy sciences, which never
Have yet made happy him who follow'd them.

COUNTESS.

You see it, sister, as your eyes permit you,
But surely this is not the conversation
To pass the time in which we are waiting for him.
You know he will be soon here. Would you have him
Find *her* in this condition?

DUCHESS.

Come, my child!
Come wipe away thy tears, and show thy father
A cheerful countenance. See, the tie-knot here
Is off—this hair must not hang so dishevell'd.
Come, dearest! dry thy tears up. They deform
Thy gentle eye.—Well now—what was I saying?
Yes, in good truth, this Piccolomini
Is a most noble and deserving gentleman.

COUNTESS.

That is he, sister!

THEKLA (*to the* COUNTESS, *with marks of great oppression of spirits*).

Aunt, you will excuse me?

[*Is going*.]

COUNTESS.

But whither? See, your father comes.

THEKLA.

I cannot see him now.

COUNTESS.

Nay, but bethink you.

THEKLA.

Believe me, I cannot sustain his presence.

COUNTESS.

But he will miss you, will ask after you.

DUCHESS.

What now? Why is she going?

COUNTESS.

She's not well.

DUCHESS (*anxiously*).

What ails then my beloved child?

[*Both follow the* PRINCESS, *and endeavor to detain her. During this* WALLENSTEIN *appears, engaged in conversation with* ILLO.]

SCENE IV

WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, COUNTESS, DUCHESS, THEKLA

WALLENST.

All quiet in the camp?

ILLO.

It is all quiet.

WALLENST.

In a few hours may couriers come from Prague
With tidings that this capital is ours.
Then we may drop the mask, and to the troops
Assembled in this town make known the measure
And its result together. In such cases
Example does the whole. Whoever is foremost
Still leads the herd. An imitative creature
Is man. The troops at Prague conceive no other
Than that the Pilsen army has gone through

The forms of homage to us; and in Pilsen
They shall swear fealty to us, because
The example has been given them by Prague.
Butler, you tell me, has declared himself?

ILLO.

At his own bidding, unsolicited,
He came to offer you himself and regiment.

WALLENST.

I find we must not give implicit credence
To every warning voice that makes itself
Be listen'd to in the heart. To hold us back,
Oft does the lying Spirit counterfeit
The voice of Truth and inward Revelation,
Scattering false oracles. And thus have I
To entreat forgiveness, for that secretly
I've wrong'd this honorable, gallant man,
This Butler: for a feeling, of the which
I am not master (*fear* I would not call it),
Creeps o'er me instantly, with sense of shuddering
At his approach, and stops love's joyous motion.
And this same man, against whom I am warn'd,
This honest man is he, who reaches to me
The first pledge of my fortune.

ILLO.

And doubt not
That his example will win over to you
The best men in the army.

WALLENSTEIN.

Go and send
Isolani hither. Send him immediately;
He is under recent obligations to me:
With him will I commence the trial. Go.

[*Exit* ILLO.]

WALLENSTEIN (*turns himself round to the females*).

Lo, there the mother with the darling daughter
For once we'll have an interval of rest—Come!
my heart yearns to live a cloudless hour
In the beloved circle of my family.

COUNTESS.

'Tis long since we've been thus together, brother.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the* COUNTESS *aside*).

Can she sustain the news? Is she prepared?

COUNTESS.

Not yet.

WALLENST.

Come here, my sweet girl! Seat thee by me.
For there is a good spirit on thy lips.
Thy mother praised to me thy ready skill;
She says a voice of melody dwells in thee,
Which doth enchant the soul. Now such a voice
Will drive away from me the evil demon
That beats his black wings close above my head.

DUCHESS.

Where is thy lute, my daughter? Let thy father
Hear some small trial of thy skill.

THEKLA.

My mother!
I—

DUCHESS.

Trembling? Come, collect thyself. Go, cheer father.

THEKLA.

O my mother! I—I cannot.

COUNTESS.

How, what is that, niece?

THEKLA (*to the* COUNTESS).

O spare me—sing—now—in this sore anxiety,
Of the o'erburthen'd soul—to sing to *him*,
Who is thrusting, even now, my mother headlong
Into her grave.

DUCHESS.

How, Thekla! Humorsome!
What! shall thy father have express'd a wish
In vain?

COUNTESS.

Here is the lute.

THEKLA.

My God! how can I—

[*The orchestra plays. During the ritornello* THEKLA *expresses in her gestures and countenance the struggle of her feelings; and at the moment that she should begin to sing, contracts herself together, as one shuddering, throws the instrument down, and retires abruptly*.]

DUCHESS. My child! O she is ill—

WALLENSTEIN.

What ails the maiden?
Say, is she often so?

COUNTESS.

Since then herself
Has now betray'd it, I too must no longer
Conceal it.

WALLENSTEIN.

What?

COUNTESS.

She loves him!

WALLENSTEIN.

Loves him! Whom?

COUNTESS.

Max does she love! Max Piccolomini.
Hast thou ne'er noticed it? Nor yet my sister?

DUCHESS.

Was it this that lay so heavy on her heart?
God's blessing on thee, my sweet child! Thou need'st
Never take shame upon thee for thy choice.

COUNTESS.

This journey, if 'twere not thy aim, ascribe it
To thine own self. Thou shouldst have chosen another
To have attended her.

WALLENSTEIN.

And does he know it?

COUNTESS.

Yes, and he hopes to win her!

WALLENSTEIN. Hopes to win her!
Is the boy mad?

COUNTESS.

Well—hear it from themselves.

WALLENST.

He thinks to carry off Duke Friedland's daughter!
Ay?—The thought pleases me.
The young man has no groveling spirit.

COUNTESS.

Since
Such and such constant favor you have shown him—

WALLENST.

He chooses finally to be my heir.
And true it is, I love the youth; yea, honor him.
But must he therefore be my daughter's husband?
Is it daughters only? Is it only children
That we must show our favor by?

DUCHESS.

His noble disposition and his manners—

WALLENST.

Win him my heart, but not my daughter.

DUCHESS.

Then
His rank, his ancestors—

WALLENSTETN.

Ancestors! What?
He is a subject, and my son-in-law
I will seek out upon the thrones of Europe.

DUCHESS.

O dearest Albrecht! Climb we not too high
Lest we should fall too low.

WALLENSTEIN.

What! have I paid
A price so heavy to ascend this eminence,
And jut out high above the common herd,
Only to close the mighty part I play
In Life's great drama, with a common kinsman?
Have I for this—

[*Stops suddenly, repressing himself.*]

She is the only thing
That will remain behind of me on earth;
And I will see a crown around her head,
Or die in the attempt to place it there.
I hazard all—all! and for this alone,
To lift her into greatness—Yea, in this moment, in the which we are speaking—

[*He recollects himself.*]

And I must now, like a soft-hearted father,
Couple together in good peasant-fashion
The pair, that chance to suit each other's liking—
And I must do it now, even now, when I
Am stretching out the wreath that is to twine
My full accomplish'd work—no! she is the jewel,
Which I have treasured long, my last, my noblest,
And 'tis my purpose not to let her from me
For less than a king's sceptre.

DUCHESS.

O my husband!
You're ever building, building to the clouds,

Still building higher, and still higher building,
And ne'er reflect that the poor narrow basis
Cannot sustain the giddy tottering column.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the* COUNTESS).

Have you announced the place of residence
Which I have destined for her?

COUNTESS.

No! not yet.
'Twere better you yourself disclosed it to her.

DUCHESS.

How? Do we not return to Carinthia then?

WALLENSTEIN.

No.

DUCHESS.

And to no other of your lands or seats?

WALLENST.

You would not be secure there.

DUCHESS.

Not secure
In the Emperor's realms, beneath the Emperor's
Protection?

WALLENSTEIN.

Friedland's wife may be permitted
No longer to hope *that*.

DUCHESS.

O God in heaven!
And have you brought it even to this!

WALLENSTEIN.

In Holland
You'll find protection.

DUCHESS.

In a Lutheran country?
What? And you send us into Lutheran countries?

WALLENST.

Duke Franz of Lauenburg conducts you thither.

DUCHESS.

Duke Franz of Lauenburg?
The ally of Sweden, the Emperor's enemy.

WALLENST.

The Emperor's enemies are mine no longer.

DUCHESS (*casting a look of terror on the* DUKE *and the* COUNTESS).

Is it then true? It is. You are degraded—
Deposed from the command! O God in heaven!

COUNTESS (*aside to the* DUKE).

Leave her in this belief. Thou seest she cannot
Support the real truth.

SCENE V

To them enter COUNT TERZKY.

COUNTESS.

—Terzky!
What ails him? What an image of affright!
He looks as he had seen a ghost.

TERZKY (*leading* WALLENSTEIN *aside*).

Is it thy command that all the Croats—

WALLENSTEIN.

Mine.

TERZKY.

We are betray'd.

WALLENSTEIN.

What?

TERZKY.

They are off! This night
The Jägers likewise—all the villages
In the whole round are empty.

WALLENSTEIN.

Isolani!

TERZKY.

Him thou hast sent away. Yes, surely.

WALLENSTEIN.

I?

TERZKY.

No! Hast thou not sent him off? Nor Deodati?
They are vanish'd both of them.

SCENE VI

To them enter ILLO.

ILLO.

Has Terzky told thee?

TERZKY.

He knows all.

ILLO.

And likewise
That Esterhatzy, Goetz, Maradas, Kaunitz,
Kolalto, Palfi, have forsaken thee.

TERZKY.

Damnation!

WALLENSTEIN (*winks at them*).

Hush!

COUNTESS (*who has been watching them anxiously from the distance and now advances to them*).

Terzky! Heaven! What is it? What has happen'd?

WALLENSTEIN (*scarcely suppressing his emotions*).

Nothing! let us be gone!

TERZKY (*following him*).

Theresa, it is nothing.

COUNTESS (*holding him back*).

Nothing? Do I not see that all the life-blood
Has left your cheeks—look you not like a ghost?
That even my brother but affects a calmness?

PAGE (*enters*).

An Aide-de-camp inquires for the Count Terzky.

[TERZKY *follows the* PAGE.]

WALLENST. Go, hear his business.

[*To* ILLO.]

This could not have happen'd
So unsuspected without mutiny.
Who was on guard at the gates?

ILLO.

'Twas Tiefenbach.

WALLENST.

Let Tiefenbach leave guard without delay,
And Terzky's grenadiers relieve him.

[ILLO *is going*.]

Stop!
Hast thou heard aught of Butler?

ILLO.

Him I met;

He will be here himself immediately.
Butler remains unshaken.

[ILLO *exit*. WALLENSTEIN *is following him*.]

COUNTESS.

Let him not leave thee, sister! go, detain him!
There's some misfortune.

DUCHESS (*clinging to him*).

Gracious Heaven! What is it?

WALLENST.

Be tranquil! leave me, sister! dearest wife!
We are in camp, and this is nought unusual;
Here storm and sunshine follow one another
With rapid interchanges. These fierce spirits

Champ the curb angrily, and never yet
Did quiet bless the temples of the leader.
If I am to stay, go you. The plaints of women
Ill suit the scene where men must act.

[*He is going*. TERZHY *returns*.]

TERZHY.

Remain here. From this window must we see it.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the* COUNTESS).

Sister, retire!

COUNTESS.

No—never.

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis my will.

TERZKY (*leads the* COUNTESS *aside, and drawing her attention to the* DUCHESS).

Theresa?

DUCHESS.

Sister, come! since he commands it.

SCENE VII

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY

WALLENSTEIN (*stepping to the window*).

What now, then?

TERZKY.

There are strange movements among all the troops,
And no one knows the cause. Mysteriously,
With gloomy silentness, the several corps
Marshal themselves, each under its own banners.
Tiefenbach's corps make threat'ning movements; only
The Pappenheimers still remain aloof
In their own quarters, and let no one enter.

WALLENST.

Does Piccolomini appear among them?

TERZKY.

We are seeking him: he is nowhere to be met with.

WALLENST.

What did the Aide-de-camp deliver to you?

TERZKY.

My regiments had dispatch'd him; yet once more
They swear fidelity to thee, and wait
The shout for onset, all prepared, and eager.

WALLENST.

But whence arose this larum in the camp?
It should have been kept secret from the army,
Till fortune had decided for us at Prague.

TERZKY.

O that thou hadst believed me! Yester evening
Did we conjure thee not to let that skulker,
That fox, Octavio, pass the gates of Pilsen.
Thou gavest him thy own horses to flee from thee.

WALLENST.

The old tune still! Now, once for all, no more
Of this suspicion—it is doting folly.

TERZKY.

Thou didst confide in Isolani too;
And lo! he was the first that did desert thee.

WALLENST.

It was but yesterday I rescued him
From abject wretchedness. Let that go by;
I never reckon'd yet on gratitude.
And wherein doth he wrong in going from me?
He follows still the god whom all his life
He has worship'd at the gaming-table. With
My fortune, and my seeming destiny,
He made the bond, and broke it not with me.
I am but the ship in which his hopes were stow'd
And with the which, well-pleased and confident,
He traversed the open sea; now he beholds it
In eminent jeopardy among the coast-rocks,
And hurries to preserve his wares. As light
As the free bird from the hospitable twig
Where it had nested, he flies off from me:
No human tie is snapp'd betwixt us two.
Yea, he deserves to find himself deceived
Who seeks a heart in the unthinking man.
Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life
Impress their characters on the smooth forehead,
Nought sinks into the bosom's silent depth;
Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
Moves the light fluids lightly; but no soul
Warmeth the inner frame.

TERZKY.

Yet, would I rather
Trust the smooth brow than that deep furrow'd one.

SCENE VIII

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, ILLO

ILLO (*who enters agitated with rage*).

Treason and mutiny!

TERZKY.

And what further now?

ILLO.

Tiefenbach's soldiers, when I gave the orders,
To go off guard—Mutinous villains!

TERZKY.

Well!

WALLENST.

What followed?

ILLO.

They refused obedience to them.

TERZKY.

Fire on them instantly! Give out the order.

WALLENST.

Gently! what cause did they assign?

ILLO.

No other,
They said, had right to issue orders but
Lieutenant-General *Piccolomini*.

WALLENSTEIN (*in a convulsion of agony*).

What? How is that?

ILLO.

He takes that office on him by commission,
Under sign-manual of the Emperor.

TERZKY.

From the Emperor—hear'st thou, Duke?

ILLO.

At his incitement
The Generals made that stealthy flight—

TERZKY.

Duke! hear'st thou?

ILLO.

Caraffa too, and Montecuculi,
Are missing, with six other generals,
All whom he had induced to follow him.
This plot he has long had in writing by him
From the Emperor; but 'twas finally concluded,
With all the detail of the operation,
Some days ago with the Envoy Questenberg.

[WALLENSTEIN *sinks down into a chair and covers his face*.]

TERZKY.

O hadst thou but believed me!

SCENE IX

To them enter the COUNTESS

COUNTESS.

This suspense,
This horrid fear—I can no longer bear it.
For heaven's sake tell me what has taken place?

ILLO.

The regiments are all falling off from us.

TERZKY.

Octavio Piccolomini is a traitor.

COUNTESS.

O my foreboding! [*Rushes out of the room*.]

TERZKY.

Hadst thou but believed me!
Now seest thou how the stars have lied to thee.

[Illustration: WALLENSTEIN HEARS OF OCTAVIO'S TREASON As performed at the Municipal Theatre, Hamburg, 1906.]

WALLENST.

The stars lie not; but we have here a work
Wrought counter to the stars and destiny.
The science is still honest: this false heart
Forces a lie on the truth-telling heaven.
On a divine law divination rests;
Where nature deviates from that law, and stumbles
Out of her limits, there all science errs.
True I did not suspect! Were it superstition
Never by such suspicion t' have affronted
The human form, O may that time ne'er come
In which I shame me of the infirmity.
The wildest savage drinks not with the victim,
Into whose breast he means to plunge the sword.
This, this, Octavio, was no hero's deed:
'Twas not thy prudence that did conquer mine;
A bad heart triumph'd o'er an honest one.

No shield received the assassin stroke; thou plungest
Thy weapon on an unprotected breast—
Against such weapons I am but a child.

SCENE X

To these enter BUTLER

TERZKY (*meeting him*).

O look there! Butler! Here we've still a friend!

WALLENSTEIN (*meets him with outspread arms, and embraces him with warmth*).

Come to my heart, old comrade! Not the sun
Looks out upon us more revivingly
In the earliest month of spring,
Than a friend's countenance in such an hour.

BUTLER.

My General: I come—

WALLENSTEIN (*leaning on* BUTLER's *shoulder*).

Know'st thou already?
That old man has betray'd me to the Emperor.
What say'st thou? Thirty years have we together
Lived out, and held out, sharing joy and hardship.
We have slept in one camp-bed, drunk from one glass,
One morsel shared! I lean'd myself on *him*,
As now I lean me on *thy* faithful shoulder.
And now in the very moment, when, all love,
All confidence, my bosom beat to his,
He sees and takes the advantage, stabs the knife
Slowly into my heart.

[*He hides his face on* BUTLER'S *breast*.]

BUTLER.

Forget the false one.
What is your present purpose?

WALLENSTEIN.

Well remember'd!
Courage, my soul! I am still rich in friends,
Still loved by Destiny; for in the moment
That it unmasks the plotting hypocrite,
It sends and proves to me one faithful heart.
Of the hypocrite no more! Think not his loss
Was that which struck the pang: O no! his treason
Is that which strikes this pang! No more of him!
Dear to my heart and honor'd were they both,
And the young man—yes—he did truly love me,
He—he—has not deceived me. But enough,
Enough of this—swift counsel now beseems us.
The Courier, whom Count Kinsky sent from Prague,
I expect him every moment: and whatever
He may bring with him, we must take good care
To keep it from the mutineers. Quick then!
Dispatch some messenger you can rely on
To meet him and conduct him to me.

[ILLO *is going*.]

BUTLER (*detaining him*).

My General, whom expect you then?

WALLENSTEIN.

The Courier
Who brings me word of the event at Prague.

BUTLER (*hesitating*).

Hem!

WALLENST.

And what now?

BUTLER.

You do not know it?

WALLENSTEIN.

Well?

BUTLER.

From what that larum in the camp arose?

WALLENST.

From what?

BUTLER.

That Courier—

WALLENSTEIN (*with eager expectation*).

Well?

BUTLER.

Is already here.

TERZKY and ILLO (*at the same time*).

Already here?

WALLENSTEIN.

My Courier?

BUTLER.

For some hours.

WALLENST.

And I not know it?

BUTLER.

The sentinels detained him
In custody.

ILLO (*stamping with his foot*). Damnation!

BUTLER.

And his letter
Was broken open, and is circulated
Through the whole camp.

WALLENSTEIN.

You know what it contains?

BUTLER.

Question me not!

TERZKY.

Illo, alas for us!

WALLENST.

Hide nothing from me—I can hear the worst.
Prague then is lost? It is! Confess it freely.

BUTLER.

Yes! Prague is lost. And all the several regiments
At Budweiss, Tabor, Braunau, Königingratz,
At Brunn and Zanaym, have forsaken you,
And ta'en oaths of fealty anew
To the Emperor. Yourself, with Kinsky, Terzky,
And Illo have been sentenced.

[TERZKY *and* ILLO *express alarm and fury*. WALLENSTEIN *remains firm and collected*.]

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis decided!
'Tis well! I have received a sudden cure
From all the pangs of doubt: with steady stream
Once more my life-blood flows! My soul's secure!
In the night only Friedland's stars can beam.
Lingering irresolute, with fitful fears
I drew the sword—'twas with an inward strife,
While yet the choice was mine. The murderous knife
Is lifted for my heart! Doubt disappears!
I fight now for my head and for my life.

[*Exit* WALLENSTEIN; *the others follow him*.]

SCENE XI

COUNTESS TERZKY (*enters from a side room*).

I can endure no longer. No!

[*Looks around her*.]

Where are they!
No one is here. They leave me all alone,
Alone in this sore anguish of suspense.
And I must wear the outward show of calmness
Before my sister, and shut in within me
The pangs and agonies of my crowded bosom.
It is not to be borne. If all should fail;
If—if he must go over to the Swedes,
An empty-handed fugitive, and not
As an ally, a covenanted equal,
A proud commander with his army following,
If we must wander on from land to land,
Like the Count Palatine, of fallen greatness
An ignominious monument! But no!
That day I will not see! And could himself

Endure to sink so low, I would not bear
To see him so low sunken.

SCENE XII

COUNTESS, DUCHESS, THEKLA

THEKLA (*endeavoring to hold back the* DUCHESS).

Dear mother, do stay here!

DUCHESS.

No! Here is yet
Some frightful mystery that is hidden from me.
Why does my sister shun me? Don't I see her
Full of suspense and anguish roam about
From room to room? Art thou not full of terror?
And what import these silent nods and gestures
Which stealthwise thou exchangest with her?

THEKLA.

Nothing:
Nothing, dear mother!

DUCHESS (*to the* COUNTESS).

Sister, I will know.

COUNTESS.

What boots it now to hide it from her? Sooner
Or later she *must* learn to hear and bear it.
'Tis not the time now to indulge infirmity;
Courage beseems us now, a heart collect,
And exercise and previous discipline
Of fortitude. One word, and over with it!
Sister, you are deluded. You believe
The Duke has been deposed—the Duke is not
Deposed—he is—

THEKLA (*going to the* COUNTESS).

What? do you wish to kill her?

COUNTESS.

The Duke is—

THEKLA (*throwing her arms round her mother*).

O stand firm; stand firm, my mother!

COUNTESS.

Revolted is the Duke; he is preparing
To join the enemy; the army leave him,
And all has fail'd.

SCENE XIII

A spacious Room in the Duke of Friedland's Palace.

WALLENSTEIN (*in armor*).

Thou hast gain'd thy point, Octavio! Once more am I
Almost as friendless as at Regensburg.
There I had nothing left me, but myself;
But what one man can do, you have now experience.
The twigs have you hew'd off, and here I stand
A leafless trunk. But in the sap within
Lives the creating power, and a new world
May sprout forth from it. Once already have I
Proved myself worth an army to you—I alone!
Before the Swedish strength your troops had melted;
Beside the Lech sank Tilly your last hope;
Into Bavaria like a winter torrent,
Did that Gustavus pour, and at Vienna
In his own palace did the Emperor tremble.
Soldiers were scarce, for still the multitude
Follow the luck: all eyes were turn'd on me,

Their helper in distress: the Emperor's pride
Bow'd itself down before the man he had injured.
'Twas I must rise, and with creative word
Assemble forces in the desolate camps.
I did it. Like a god of war, my name
Went through the world. The drum was beat; and, lo,
The plough, the workshop is forsaken, all
Swarm to the old familiar long-loved banners;
And as the wood-choir rich in melody
Assemble quick around the bird of wonder,
When first his throat swells with his magic song,
So did the warlike youth of Germany
Crowd in around the image of my eagle.
I feel myself the being that I was.
It is the soul that builds itself a body,
And Friedland's camp will not remain unfill'd.
Lead then your thousands out to meet me—true!
They are accustom'd under me to conquer,
But not against me. If the head and limbs
Separate from each other, 'twill be soon
Made manifest in which the soul abode.

(ILLO *and* TERZKY *enter*)

Courage, friends! courage! we are still unvanquish'd!
I feel my footing firm; five regiments, Terzky,
Are still our own, and Butler's gallant troops;
And an host of sixteen thousand Swedes to-morrow.
I was not stronger when, nine years ago,
I marched forth, with glad heart and high of hope,
To conquer Germany for the Emperor.

SCENE XIV

WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, TERZKY

(*To them enter* NEUMANN, *who leads* TERZKY *aside and talks with him*.)

TERZKY.

What do they want?

WALLENSTEIN.

What now!

TERZKY.

Ten Cuirassiers
From Pappenheim request leave to address you
In the name of the regiment.

WALLENSTEIN (*hastily to* NEUMANN).

Let them enter.

[*Exit* NEUMANN.]

This
May end in something. Mark you. They are still
Doubtful, and may be won.

SCENE XV

WALLENSTEIN, TERZBY, ILLO, *ten* Cuirassiers (*led by an* ANSPESSADE,[27] *march up and arrange themselves, after the word of command, in one front before the Duke, and make their obeisance. He takes his hat off and immediately covers himself again*).

ANSPESS.

Halt! Front! Present!

WALLENSTEIN (*after he has run through them with his eye, to the* ANSPESSADE).

I know thee well. Thou art out of Brüggen in Flanders.
Thy name is Mercy.

ANSPESS.

Henry Mercy.

WALLENST.

Thou wert cut off on the march, surrounded by the Hessians, and didst fight thy way with an hundred and eighty men through their thousand.

ANSPESS.

'Twas even so, General!

WALLENST.

What reward hadst thou for this gallant exploit?

ANSPESS.

That which I asked for: the honor to serve in this corps.

WALLENSTEIN (*turning to a second*).

Thou wert among the volunteers that seized and made booty of the Swedish battery at Altenburg.

2D CUIRAS.

Yes, General.

WALLENST.

I forget no one with whom I have exchanged words.

(*A pause*.)

Who sends you?

ANSPESS.

Your noble regiment, the Cuirassiers of Piccolomini.

WALLENST.

Why does not your colonel deliver in your request, according to the custom of service?

ANSPESS.

Because we would first know *whom* we serve.

WALLENST.

Begin your address.

ANSPESSADE (*giving the word of command*).

Shoulder your arms!

WALLENSTEIN (*turning to a third*).

Thy name is Risbeck; Cologne is thy birth-place.

3D CUIRAS.

Risbeck of Cologne.

WALLENST.

It was thou that broughtest in the Swedish colonel, Dübald, prisoner, in the camp at Nuremberg.

3D CUIRAS.

It was not I, General.

WALLENST.

Perfectly right! It was thy elder brother: thou hadst a younger brother too: Where did he stay?

3D CUIRAS.

He is stationed at Olmütz, with the Imperial army.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the* ANSPESSADE).

Now then—begin.

ANSPESS.

There came to hand a letter from the Emperor Commanding us—

WALLENSTEIN (*interrupting him*).

Who chose you?

ANSPESSADE.

Every company
Drew its own man by lot.

WALLENSTEIN.

Now to the business.

ANSPESS.

There came to hand a letter from the Emperor
Commanding us collectively, from thee
All duties of obedience to withdraw,
Because thou wert an enemy and traitor.

WALLENST.

And what did you determine?

ANSPESSADE.

All our comrades
At Braunau, Budweiss, Prague and Olmütz, have
Obey'd already; and the regiments here,
Tiefenbach and Toscano, instantly
Did follow their example. But—but we
Do not believe that thou art an enemy
And traitor to thy country, hold it merely
For lie and trick and a trumped-up Spanish story!

[*With warmth*.]

Thyself shalt tell us what thy purpose is,
For we have found thee still sincere and true:
No mouth shall interpose itself betwixt
The gallant General and the gallant troops.

WALLENST.

Therein I recognize my Pappenheimers.

ANSPESS.

And this proposal makes thy regiment to thee.
Is it thy purpose merely to preserve
In thine own hands this military sceptre,
Which so becomes thee, which the Emperor
Made over to thee by a covenant?
Is it thy purpose merely to remain
Supreme commander of the Austrian armies?—
We will stand by thee, General! and guarantee
Thy honest rights against all opposition.
And should it chance that all the other regiments
Turn from thee, by ourselves will we stand forth
Thy faithful soldiers, and, as is our duty,
Far rather let ourselves be cut to pieces
Than suffer thee to fall. But if it be
As the Emperor's letter says, if it be true,
That thou in traitorous wise wilt lead us over
To the enemy, which God in heaven forbid!
Then we too will forsake thee, and obey
That letter—

WALLENSTEIN.

Hear me, children!

ANSPESSADE.

Yes, or no!
There needs no other answer.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yield attention.
You're men of sense, examine for yourselves;
Ye think, and do not follow with the herd
And therefore have I always shown you honor
Above all others, suffer'd you to reason;

Have treated you as free men, and my orders
Were but the echoes of your prior suffrage.—

ANSPESS.

Most fair and noble has thy conduct been
To us, my General! With thy confidence
Thou hast honor'd us, and shown us grace and favor
Beyond all other regiments; and thou seest
We follow not the common herd. We will
Standby thee faithfully. Speak but one word—
Thy word shall satisfy us, that it is not
A treason which thou meditatest—that
Thou meanest not to lead the army over
To the enemy, nor e'er betray the country.

WALLENST.

Me, me are they betraying. The Emperor
Hath sacrificed me to my enemies,
And I must fall, unless my gallant troops
Will rescue me. See! I confide in you.
And be your hearts my stronghold! At this breast
The aim is taken, at this hoary head.
This is your Spanish gratitude, this is our
Requital for that murderous fight at Lützen!
For this we threw the naked breast against
The halbert, made for this the frozen earth
Our bed, and the hard stone our pillow! never stream
Too rapid for us, nor wood too impervious;
With cheerful spirit we pursued that Mansfeldt
Through all the turns and windings of his flight:
Yea, our whole life was but one restless march:
And homeless, as the stirring wind, we travel'd
O'er the war-wasted earth. And now, even now,
That we have well-nigh finish'd the hard toil,
The unthankful, the curse-laden toil of weapons,
With faithful indefatigable arm
Have roll'd the heavy war-load up the hill,
Behold! this boy of the Emperor's bears away

The honors of the peace, an easy prize!
He'll weave, forsooth, into his flaxen locks
The olive branch, the hard-earn'd ornament
Of this gray head, grown gray beneath the helmet.

ANSPESS.

That shall he not, while we can hinder it!
No one, but thou, who hast conducted it
With fame, shall end this war, this frightful war.
Thou leddest us out to the bloody field
Of death; thou and no other shalt conduct us home,
Rejoicing, to the lovely plains of peace—
Shalt share with us the fruits of the long toil—

WALLENST.

What! Think you then at length in late old age
To enjoy the fruits of toil? Believe it not.
Never, no never, will you see the end
Of the contest! you and me, and all of us,
This war will swallow up! War, war, not peace,
Is Austria's wish; and therefore, because I
Endeavor'd after peace, therefore I fall,
For what cares Austria how long the war
Wears out the armies and lays waste the world!
She will but wax and grow amid the ruin
And still win new domains.

[*The* Cuirassiers *express agitation by their gestures*.]

Ye're moved—I see
A noble rage flash from your eyes, ye warriors!
Oh that my spirit might possess you now
Daring as once it led you to the battle!
Ye would stand by me with your veteran arms,
Protect me in my rights; and this is noble!
But think not that *you* can accomplish it,
Your scanty number! to no purpose will you
Have sacrificed you for your General.

[*Confidentially*.]

No! let us tread securely, seek for friends;
The Swedes have proffer'd us assistance, let us
Wear for a while the appearance of good will,
And use them for your profit, till we both
Carry the fate of Europe in our hands,
And from our camp to the glad jubilant world
Lead Peace forth with the garland on her head!

ANSPESS.

'Tis then but mere appearances which thou
Dost put on with the Swede! Thou'lt not betray
The Emperor? Wilt not turn us into Swedes?
This is the only thing which we desire
To learn from thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

What care I for the Swedes?
I hate them as I hate the pit of hell,
And under Providence I trust right soon
To chase them to their homes across their Baltic.
My cares are only for the whole: I have
A heart—it bleeds within me for the miseries
And piteous groaning of my fellow Germans.
Ye are but common men, but yet ye think
With minds not common; ye appear to me
Worthy before all others that I whisper ye
A little word or two in confidence!
See now! already for full fifteen years,
The war-torch has continued burning, yet
No rest, no pause of conflict. Swede and German,
Papist and Lutheran! neither will give way
To the other, every hand's against the other.
Each one is party and no one a judge.
Where shall this end? Where's he that will unravel
This tangle, ever tangling more and more;
It must be cut asunder;

I feel that I am the man of destiny,
And trust, with your assistance, to accomplish it.

SCENE XVI

To these enter BUTLER

BUTLER (*passionately*).

General! This is not right!

WALLENSTEIN.

What is not right?

BUTLER.

It must needs injure us with all honest men.

WALLENST.

But What?

BUTLER.

It is an open proclamation
Of insurrection.

WALLENSTEIN.

Well, well—but what is it?

BUTLER.

Count Terzky's regiments tear the Imperial Eagle
From off the banners, and instead of it
Have rear'd aloft their arms.

ANSPESSADE (*abruptly to the* Cuirassiers).

Right about! March!

WALLENST.

Cursed be this counsel, and accursed who gave it!

[*To the* Cuirassiers, *who are retiring*.]

Halt, children, halt! There's some mistake in this;
Hark!—I will punish it severely. Stop!
They do not hear. (*To* ILLO.) Go after them, assure them,
And bring them back to me, cost what it may.

[ILLO *hurries out*.]

This hurls us headlong. Butler! Butler!
You are my evil genius! Wherefore must you
Announce it in their presence? It was all
In a fair way. They were half won! those madmen
With their improvident over-readiness—
cruel game is Fortune playing with me.
The zeal of friends it is that razes me,
And not the hate of enemies.

SCENE XVII

To these enter the DUCHESS, *who rushes into the Chamber* THEKLA *and the* COUNTESS *follow her*.

DUCHESS.

O Albrecht!
What hast thou done?

WALLENSTEIN.

And now comes this beside.

COUNTESS.

Forgive me, brother! It was not in my power—
They know all.

DUCHESS.

What hast thou done?

COUNTESS (*to* TERZKY).

Is there no hope? Is all lost utterly?

TERZKY.

All lost. No hope. Prague in the Emperor's hands,
The soldiery have ta'en their oaths anew.

COUNTESS.

That lurking hypocrite, Octavio!
Count Max is off too.

TERZKY.

Where can he be? He's
Gone over to the Emperor with his father.

[THEKLA *rushes out into the arms of her mother, hiding her face in her bosom*.]

DUCHESS (*enfolding her in her arms*).

Unhappy child! and more unhappy mother!

WALLENSTEIN (*aside to* TERZKY).

Quick! Let a carriage stand in readiness
In the court behind the palace. Scherfenberg
Be their attendant; he is faithful to us;
To Egra he'll conduct them, and we follow.

[*To* ILLO, *who returns*.]

Thou hast not brought them back?

ILLO.

Hear'st thou the uproar?
The whole corps of the Pappenheimers is

Drawn out: the younger Piccolomini,
Their colonel, they require: for they affirm
That he is in the palace here, a prisoner;
And if thou dost not instantly deliver him,
They will find means to free him with the sword.

[*All stand amazed*.]

TERZKY.

What shall we make of this?

WALLENSTEIN.

Said I not so?
O my prophetic heart! he is still here.
He has not betray'd me—he could not betray me.
I never doubted of it.

COUNTESS.

If he be
Still here, then all goes well; for I know what

[*Embracing* THEKLA]

Will keep him here forever.

TERZKY.

It can't be.
His father has betray'd us, is gone over
To the Emperor—the son could not have ventured
To stay behind.

THEKLA (*her eyes fixed on the door*).

There he is!

SCENE XVIII

To these enter MAX PICCOLOMINI

MAX.

Yes! here he is! I can endure no longer
To creep on tiptoe round this house, and lurk
In ambush for a favorable moment:
This loitering, this suspense exceeds my powers.

[*Advancing to* THEKLA, *who has thrown herself into her mother's arms*.]

Turn not thine eyes away. O look upon me!
Confess it freely before all. Fear no one.
Let who will hear that we both love each other;
Wherefore continue to conceal it? Secrecy
Is for the happy—misery, hopeless misery,
Needeth no veil! Beneath a thousand suns
It dares act openly.

[*He observes the* COUNTESS *looking on* THEKLA *with expressions of triumph*.]

No, Lady! No!
Expect not, hope it not. I am not come
To stay: to bid farewell, farewell forever.
For this I come! 'Tis over! I must leave thee!
Thekla, I must—*must* leave thee! Yet thy hatred
Let me not take with me. I pray thee, grant me
One look of sympathy, only one look.
Say that thou dost not hate me. Say it to me,
Thekla!

[*Grasps her hand*.]

O God! I cannot leave this spot—I cannot!
Cannot let go this hand. O tell me, Thekla!
That thou dost suffer with me, art convinced
That I cannot act otherwise.

[THEKLA, *avoiding his look, points with her hand to her father*. MAX *turns round to the Duke, whom he had not till then perceived*.]

Thou here? It was not thou whom here I sought.
I trusted never more to have beheld thee.

My business is with her alone. Here will I
Receive a full acquittal from this heart—
For any other I am no more concern'd.

WALLENST.

Think'st thou that, fool-like, I shall let thee go,
And act the mock-magnanimous with thee?
Thy father is become a villain to me;
I hold thee for his son, and nothing more:
Nor to no purpose shalt thou have been given
Into my power. Think not that I will honor
That ancient love, which so remorselessly
He mangled. They are now past by, those hours
Of friendship and forgiveness. Hate and vengeance
Succeed—'tis now their turn—I too can throw
All feelings of the man aside—can prove
Myself as much a monster as thy father!

MAX. (*calmly*).

Thou wilt proceed with me, as thou hast power.
Thou know'st, I neither brave nor fear thy rage.
What has detain'd me here, that too thou know'st.

[*Taking* THEKLA *by the hand*.]

See, Duke! All—all would I have owed to thee,
Would have received from thy paternal hand
The lot of blessed spirits. This hast thou
Laid waste forever—that concerns not thee;
Indifferent thou tramplest in the dust
Their happiness who most are thine. The god
Whom thou dost serve is no benignant deity
Like as the blind, irreconcilable,
Fierce element, incapable of compact,
Thy heart's wild impulse only dost thou follow.[28]

WALLENST.

Thou art describing thy own father's heart.
The adder! O, the charms of hell o'erpowered me;
He dwelt within me, to my inmost soul
Still to and fro he pass'd, suspected never
On the wide ocean, in the starry heaven
Did mine eyes seek the enemy, whom I
In my heart's heart had folded! Had I been
To *Ferdinand* what Octavio was to *me*,
War had I ne'er denounced against him. No,
I never could have done it. The Emperor was
My austere master only, not my friend.
There was already war 'twixt him and me
When he deliver'd the Commander's Staff
Into my hands; for there's a natural,
Unceasing war 'twixt cunning and suspicion;
Peace exists only betwixt confidence
And faith. Who poisons confidence, he murders
The future generations.

MAX.

I will not
Defend my father. Woe is me, I cannot!
Hard deeds and luckless have ta'en place; one crime
Drags after it the other in close link.
But we are innocent: how have we fallen
Into this circle of mishap and guilt?
To whom have we been faithless? Wherefore must
The evil deeds and guilt reciprocal
Of our two fathers twine like serpents round us?
Why must our fathers'
Unconquerable hate rend us asunder,
Who love each other?

WALLENSTEIN.

Max, remain with me.
Go you not from me, Max! Hark! I will tell thee—

How when at Prague, our winter quarters, thou
Wert brought into my tent a tender boy,
Not yet accustom'd to the German winters;
Thy hand was frozen to the heavy colors;
Thou wouldst not let them go.—
At that time did I take thee in my arms,
And with my mantle did I cover thee;
I was thy nurse, no woman could have been
A kinder to thee; I was not ashamed
To do for thee all little offices,
However strange to me; I tended thee
Till life return'd; and when thine eyes first open'd,
I had thee in my arms. Since then, when have
Alter'd my feelings toward thee? Many thousands
Have I made rich, presented them with lands;
Rewarded them with dignities and honors;
Thee have I *loved*: my heart, my self, I gave
To thee! They all were aliens: THOU went
Our child and inmate.[29] Max! Thou cans't not leave me;
It cannot be; I may not, will not think
That Max can leave me.

MAX.

O my God!

WALLENSTEIN.

I have
Held and sustain'd thee from thy tottering childhood;
What holy bond is there of natural love,
What human tie, that does not knit thee to me?
I love thee, Max! What did thy father for thee,
Which I too have not done, to the height of duty?
Go hence, forsake me, serve thy Emperor;
He will reward thee with a pretty chain
Of gold; with his ram's fleece will he reward thee;
For that the friend, the father of thy youth,
For that the holiest feeling of humanity,
Was nothing worth to thee.

MAX.

O God! how can I
Do otherwise? Am I not forced to do it?
My oath—my duty—my honor—

WALLENSTEIN.

How? Thy duty?
Duty to whom? Who art thou? Max! bethink thee
What duties mayst *thou* have? If *I* am acting
A criminal part toward the Emperor,
It is my crime, not thine. Dost thou belong
To thine own self? Art thou thine own commander?
Stand'st thou, like me, a freeman in the world,
That in thy actions thou shouldst plead free agency?
On me thou'rt planted, I am thy Emperor;
To obey *me*, to *belong* to me, this is
Thy honor, this a law of nature to thee!
And if the planet, on the which thou livest
And hast thy dwelling, from its orbit starts,
It is not in thy choice whether or no
Thou'lt follow it. Unfelt it whirls thee onward
Together with his ring, and all his moons.
With little guilt stepp'st thou into this contest,
Thee will the world not censure, it will praise thee,
For that thou held'st thy friend more worth to thee
Than names and influences more removed;
For justice is the virtue of the ruler,
Affection and fidelity the subject's.
Not every one doth it beseem to question
The far-off high Arcturus. Most securely
Wilt thou pursue the nearest duty: let
The pilot fix his eye upon the pole-star.

SCENE XIX

To these enter NEUMANN

WALLENST.

What now?

NEUMANN.

The Pappenheimers are dismounted,
And are advancing now on foot, determined
With sword in hand to storm the house, and free
The Count, their colonel.

WALLENSTEIN (*to* TERZKY).

Have the cannon planted.
I will receive them with chain-shot.

[*Exit* TERZKY

Prescribe to me with sword in hand! Go, Neumann,
'Tis my command that they retreat this moment,
And in their ranks in silence wait my pleasure.

[NEUMANN *exit*. ILLO *steps to the window*.]

COUNTESS.
Let him go, I entreat thee, let him go.

ILLO (*at the window*).

Hell and perdition!

WALLENSTEIN.

What is it?

ILLO. They scale the council-house, the roof's uncovered,
They level at this house the cannon—

MAX.

Madmen!

ILLO.

They are making preparations now to fire on us.

DUCHESS and COUNTESS.
Merciful heaven!

MAX (*to* WALLENSTEIN).

Let me go to them!

WALLENSTEIN.

Not a step!

MAX (*pointing to* THEKLA *and the* DUCHESS).

But their life! Thine!

WALLENSTEIN.

What tidings bring'st thou, Terzky?

SCENE XX

To these TERZKY *returning*

TERZKY.

Message and greeting from our faithful regiments.
Their ardor may no longer be curb'd in.
They entreat permission to commence the attack;
And if thou wouldst but give the word of onset,
They could now charge the enemy in rear,
Into the city wedge them, and with ease
O'erpower them in the narrow streets.

ILLO.

O come!
Let not their ardor cool. The soldiery

Of Butler's corps stand by us faithfully;
We are the greater number. Let us charge them,
And finish here in Pilsen the revolt.

WALLENST.

What? shall this town become a field of slaughter,
And brother-killing Discord, fire-eyed,
Be let loose through its streets to roam and rage?
Shall the decision be deliver'd over
To deaf remorseless Rage, that hears no leader?
Here is not room for battle, only for butchery.
Well, let it be! I have long thought of it,
So let it burst them!

[*Turns to* MAX.]

Well, how is it with thee?
Wilt thou attempt a heat with me? Away!
Thou art free to go. Oppose thyself to me,
Front against front, and lead them to the battle;
Thou'rt skill'd in war, thou hast learn'd somewhat under me,
I need not be ashamed of my opponent,
And never hadst thou fairer opportunity
To pay me for thy schooling.

COUNTESS.

Is it then,
Can it have come to this?—What! Cousin, cousin!
Have you the heart?

MAX.

The regiments that are trusted to my care
I have pledged my troth to bring away from Pilsen
True to the Emperor; and this promise will I
Make good, or perish. More than this no duty
Requires of me. I will not fight against thee,
Unless compell'd; for though an enemy,
Thy head is holy to me still.

[*Two reports of cannon*. ILLO *and* TERZKY *hurry to the window*.]

WALLENST.

What's that?

TERZKY.

He falls.

WALLENSTEIN.

Falls! Who?

ILLO.

Tiefenbach's corps
Discharged the ordnance.

WALLENSTEIN.

Upon whom?

ILLO.

On Neumann,
Your messenger.

WALLENSTEIN (*starting up*).

Ha! Death and hell! I will—

TERZKY.

Expose thyself to their blind frenzy?

DUCHESS *and* COUNTESS.

No!
For God's sake, no!

ILLO.

Not yet, my General
O hold him! hold him!

WALLENSTEIN.

Leave me.

MAX.

Do it not;
Not yet! This rash and bloody deed has thrown them
Into a frenzy-fit—allow them time—

WALLENST.

Away! too long already have I loiter'd.
They are emboldened to these outrages,
Beholding not my face. They shall behold
My countenance, shall hear my voice—
Are they not *my* troops? Am I not their General,
And their long-fear'd commander? Let me see
Whether indeed they do no longer know
That countenance, which was their sun in battle!
From the balcony (mark!) I show myself
To these rebellious forces, and at once
Revolt is mounded, and the high-swoln current
Shrinks back into the old bed of obedience.

[*Exit* WALLENSTEIN; ILLO, TERZKY, *and* BUTLER *follow*.]

SCENE XXI

COUNTESS, DUCHESS, MAX *and* THEKLA

COUNTESS (*to the* DUCHESS).

Let them but see him—there is hope still, sister.

DUCHESS.

Hope! I have none!

MAX (*who during the last scene has been standing at a distance, in a visible struggle of feelings, advances*).

This can I not endure.
With most determined soul did I come hither;
My purposed action seem'd unblamable
To my own conscience—and I must stand here
Like one abhorr'd, a hard inhuman being:
Yea, loaded with the curse of all I love!
Must see all whom I love in this sore anguish,
Whom I with one word can make happy—O!
My heart revolts within me, and two voices
Make themselves audible within my bosom.
My soul's benighted; I no longer can
Distinguish the right track. O, well and truly
Didst thou say, father, I relied too much
On my own heart. My mind moves to and fro—
know not what to do.

COUNTESS.

What! you know not?
Does not your own heart tell you? O! then I
Will tell it you. Your father is a traitor,
A frightful traitor to us—he has plotted
Against our General's life, has plunged us all
In misery—and you're his son! 'Tis yours
To make the *amends*—Make you the son's fidelity
Outweigh the father's treason, that the name
Of Piccolomini be not a proverb
Of infamy, a common form of cursing
To the posterity of Wallenstein.

MAX.

Where is that voice of truth which I dare follow!
It speaks no longer in *my* heart. We all
But utter what our passionate wishes dictate:
O that an angel would descend from heaven,
And scoop for me the right, the uncorrupted,
With a pure hand from the pure fount of Light!

[*His eyes glance on* THEKLA.]

What other angel seek I? To this heart,
To this unerring heart, will I submit it;
Will ask thy love, which has the power to bless
The happy man alone, averted ever
From the disquieted and guilty—*canst* thou
Still love me, if I stay? Say that thou canst,
And I am the Duke's—

COUNTESS.

Think, niece—

MAX.

Think, nothing, Thekla!
Speak what thou *feelest*.

COUNTESS.

Think upon your father.

MAX.

I did not question thee, as Friedland's daughter.
Thee, the beloved and the unerring god
Within thy heart, I question. What's at stake?
Not whether diadem of royalty
Be to be won or not—that mightst thou *think* on.
Thy friend, and his soul's quiet, are at stake:
The fortune of a thousand gallant men,
Who will all follow me; shall I forswear
My oath and duty to the Emperor?
Say, shall I send into Octavio's camp
The parricidal ball? For when the ball
Has left its cannon, and is on its flight,
It is no longer a dead instrument!
It lives, a spirit passes into it,
The avenging furies seize possession of it,
And with sure malice guide it the worst way.

THEIKLA.

O! Max—

MAX (*interrupting her*).

Nay, not precipitately either, Thekla,
I understand thee. To thy noble heart
The hardest duty might appear the highest.
The human, not the great part, would I act
Even from my childhood to this present hour.
Think what the Duke has done—for me, how loved me
And think, too, how my father has repaid him.
O likewise the free lovely impulses
Of hospitality, the pious friend's
Faithful attachment, these, too, are a holy
Religion to the heart; and heavily
The shudderings of nature do avenge
Themselves on the barbarian that insults them.
Lay all upon the balance, all—then speak,
And let thy heart decide it.

THEKLA.

O, thy own
Hath long ago decided. Follow thou
Thy heart's first feeling—

COUNTESS.

Oh! ill-fated woman.

THEKLA.

Is it possible that that can be the right,
The which thy tender heart did not at first
Detect and seize with instant impulse? Go,
Fulfil thy duty! I should ever love thee
What'er thou hadst chosen, thou wouldst still have acted
Nobly and worthy of thee—but repentance
Shall ne'er disturb thy soul's fair peace.

MAX.

Then I
Must leave thee, must part from thee!

THEKLA.

Being faithful
To thine own self, thou art faithful, too, to me;
If our fates part, our hearts remain united.
A bloody hatred will divide forever
The houses Piccolomini and Friedland;
But we belong not to our houses. Go!
Quick! quick! and separate thy righteous cause
From our unholy and unblessèd one!
The curse of Heaven lies upon our head:
'Tis dedicate to ruin. Even me
My father's guilt drags with it to perdition.
Mourn not for me:
My destiny will quickly be decided.

[MAX *clasps her in his arms in extreme emotion. There is heard from behind the scenes a loud, wild, long continued cry*, Vivat Ferdinandus! *accompanied by warlike instruments*. MAX *and* THEKLA *remain without motion in each other's embraces*.]

SCENE XXII

To the above enter TERZKY

COUNTESS (*meeting him*).

What meant that cry? What was it?

TERZKY.

All is lost!

COUNTESS.

What! they regarded not his countenance?

TERZKY.

'Twas all in vain.

DUCHESS.

They shouted Vivat!—

TERZKY.

To the Emperor.

COUNTESS.

The traitors!

TERZIBY.

Nay! he was not permitted
Even to address them. Soon as he began,
With deafening noise of warlike instruments
They drown'd his words. But here he comes.

SCENE XXIII

To these enter WALLENSTEIN, *accompanied by* ILLO *and* BUTLER

WALLENSTEIN (*as he enters*).

Terzky!

TERZKY.

My General!

WALLENSTEIN.

Let our regiments hold themselves
In readiness to march; for we shall leave
Pilsen ere evening.

[*Exit* TERZKY.]

Butler!

BUTLER.

Yes, my General.

WALLENST.

The Governor of Egra is your friend
And countryman. Write to him instantly
By a post-courier. He must be advised,
That we are with him early on the morrow.
You follow us yourself, your regiment with you.

BUTLER.

It shall be done, my General!

WALLENSTEIN (*steps between* MAX *and* THEKLA, *who have remained during this time in each other's arms*).

Part!

MAX.

O God!

[Cuirassiers *enter with drawn swords, and assemble in the background. At the same time there are heard from below some spirited passages out of the Pappenheim March, which seem to address* MAX.]

WALLENSTEIN (*to the Cuirassiers*).

Here he is, he is at liberty: I keep him
No longer.

[*He turns away, and stands so that* MAX *cannot pass by him nor approach the* PRINCESS.]

MAX.

Thou know'st that I have not yet learnt to live
Without thee! I go forth into a desert,
Leaving my all behind me. O do not turn
Thine eyes away from me! O once more show me
Thy ever dear and honor'd countenance!

[MAX *attempts to take his hand, but is repelled; he turns to the* COUNTESS.]

Is there no eye that has a look of pity for me?

[*The* COUNTESS *turns away from him; he turns to the* DUCHESS.]

My mother!

DUCHESS.

Go where duty calls you. Haply
The time may come, when you may prove to us
A true friend, a good angel at the throne
Of the Emperor.

MAX.

You give me hope; you would not
Suffer me wholly to despair. No! no!
Mine is a certain misery. Thanks to Heaven!
That offers me a means of ending it.

[*The military music begins again. The stage fills more and more with armed men*. MAX *sees* BUTLER *and addresses him*.]

And you here, Colonel Butler—and will you
Not follow me? Well, then! remain more faithful
To your new lord than you have proved yourself
To the Emperor. Come, Butler! promise me,
Give me your hand upon it, that you'll be
The guardian of his life, its shield, its watchman.
He is attainted, and his princely head
Fair booty for each slave that trades in murder.
Now he doth need the faithful eye of friendship,
And those whom here I see—

[*Casting suspicious looks on* ILLO *and* BUTLER.]

ILLO.

Go—seek for traitors
In Gallas', in your father's quarters. Here

Is only one. Away! away! and free us
From his detested sight! Away!

[MAX *attempts once more to approach* THEKLA. WALLENSTEIN *prevents him*. MAX *stands irresolute, and in apparent anguish. In the mean time the stage fills more and more; and the horns sound from below louder and louder, and each time after a shorter interval*.]

MAX.

Blow! blow! O were it but the Swedish trumpets,
And all the naked swords, which I see here,
Were plunged into my breast! What purpose you?
You come to tear me from this place! Beware,
Ye drive me not to desperation. Do it not!
Ye may repent it!

[*The stage is entirely filled with armed men*.]

Yet more! weight upon weight to drag me down!
Think what ye're doing. It is not well done
To choose a man despairing for your leader;
You tear me from my happiness. Well, then,
I dedicate your souls to vengeance. Mark!
For your own ruin you have chosen me:
Who goes with me, must be prepared to perish.

[*He turns to the background, there ensues a sudden and violent movement among the Cuirassiers; they surround him, and carry him off in wild tumult*. WALLENSTEIN_ remains immovable_. THEKLA *sinks into her mother's arms. The curtain falls. The music becomes loud and overpowering, and passes into a complete war march—the orchestra joins it and continues during the interval between the second and third Act*.]

ACT IV

SCENE I

The Burgomaster's House at Egra

BUTLER (*just arrived*).

Here then he is, by his destiny conducted.
Here, Friedland! and no farther! From Bohemia
Thy meteor rose, traversed the sky awhile,
And here upon the borders of Bohemia
Must sink.

Thou hast foresworn the ancient colors,
Blind man! yet trustest to thy ancient fortunes.
Profaner of the altar and the hearth,
Against thy Emperor and fellow citizens
Thou mean'st to wage the war. Friedland, beware—
The evil spirit of revenge impels thee—
Beware thou, that revenge destroy thee not!

SCENE II

BUTLER *and* GORDON

GORDON.

Is it you?
How my heart sinks! The Duke a fugitive traitor!
His princely head attainted! O my God!
[Tell me, General, I implore thee, tell me
In full, of all these sad events at Pilsen.]

BUTLER.

You have received the letter which I sent you
By a post-courier?

GORDON.

Yes: and in obedience to it
Open'd the stronghold to him without scruple,
For an imperial letter orders me
To follow your commands implicitly.
But yet forgive me! when even now I saw

The Duke himself my scruples recommenced;
For truly, not like an attainted man,
Into this town did Friedland make his entrance;
His wonted majesty beam'd from his brow,
And calm, as in the days when all was right,
Did he receive from me the accounts of office.
'Tis said that fallen pride learns condescension;
But sparing and with dignity the Duke
Weigh'd every syllable of approbation,
As masters praise a servant who has done
His duty and no more.

BUTLER.

'Tis all precisely
As I related in my letter. Friedland
Has sold the army to the enemy,
And pledged himself to give up Prague and Egra.
On this report the regiments all forsook him,
The five excepted that belong to Terzky,
And which have follow'd him, as thou hast seen
The sentence of attainder is pass'd on him,
And every loyal subject is required
To give him in to justice, dead or living.

GORDON.

A traitor to the Emperor! Such a noble!
Of such high talents! What is human greatness!
I often said, this can't end happily.
His might, his greatness, and his obscure power
Are but a cover'd pit-fall. The human being
May not be trusted to self-government.
The clear and written law, the deep trod foot-marks
Of ancient custom, are all necessary
To keep him in the road of faith and duty.
The authority intrusted to this man
Was unexampled and unnatural,
It placed him on a level with his Emperor,
Till the proud soul unlearn'd submission. Woe is me!

I mourn for him! for where he fell, I deem
Might none stand firm. Alas! dear General,
We in our lucky mediocrity
Have ne'er experienced, cannot calculate,
What dangerous wishes such a height may breed
In the heart of such a man.

BUTLER.

Spare your laments
Till he need sympathy; for at this present
He is still mighty, and still formidable.
The Swedes advance to Egra by forced marches,
And quickly will the junction be accomplish'd.
This must not be! The Duke must never leave
This stronghold on free footing; for I have
Pledged life and honor here to hold him prisoner,
And your assistance 'tis on which I calculate.

GORDON.

O that I had not lived to see this day!
From his hand I received this dignity;
He did himself intrust this stronghold to me,
Which I am now required to make his dungeon.
We subalterns have no will of our own:
The free, the mighty man alone may listen
To the fair impulse of his human nature.
Ah! we are but the poor tools of the law,
Obedience the sole virtue we dare aim at!

BUTLER.

Nay! let it not afflict you, that your power
Is circumscribed. Much liberty, much error!
The narrow path of duty is securest.

GORDON.

And all then have deserted him you say?
He has built up the luck of many thousands;

For kingly was his spirit: his full hand
Was ever open! Many a one from dust

[*With a sly glance on* BUTLER.]

Hath he selected, from the very dust
Hath raised him into dignity and honor,
And yet no friend, not one friend hath he purchased,
Whose heart beats true to him in the evil hour.

BUTLER.

Here's one, I see.

GORDON.

I have enjoy'd from him
No grace or favor. I could almost doubt
If ever in his greatness he once thought on
An old friend of his youth. For still my office
Kept me at a distance from him; and when first
He to this citadel appointed me,
He was sincere and serious in his duty.
I do not then abuse his confidence,
If I preserve my fealty in that
Which to my fealty was first delivered.

BUTLER.

Say, then, will you fulfil th' attainder on him,
[And lend your aid to take him in arrest?]

GORDON (*pauses, reflecting—then as in deep dejection*).

If it be so—if all be as you say—
If he've betray'd the Emperor, his master,
Have sold the troops, have purposed to deliver
The strongholds of the country to the enemy—
Yea, truly!—there is no redemption for him
Yet it is hard that me the lot should destine
To be the instrument of his perdition;

For we were pages at the court of Bergau
At the same period; but I was the senior.

BUTLER.

I have heard so—

GORDON.

'Tis full thirty years since then,
A youth who scarce had seen his twentieth year
Was Wallenstein, when he and I were friends.
Yet even then he had a daring soul:
His frame of mind was serious and severe
Beyond his years: his dreams were of great objects,
He walk'd amidst us of a silent spirit,
Communing with himself; yet I have known him
Transported on a sudden into utterance
Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendor,
His soul reveal'd itself, and he spake so
That we look'd round perplex 'd upon each other,
Not knowing whether it were craziness,
Or whether it were a god that spoke in him.

BUTLER.

But was it where he fell two-story-high
From a window-ledge, on which he had fallen asleep
And rose up free from injury? From this day
(It is reported) he betrayed clear marks
Of a distemper'd fancy.

GORDON.

He became
Doubtless more self-enwrapt and melancholy;
He made himself a Catholic.[30] Marvelously
His marvelous preservation had transform'd him.
Thenceforth he held himself for an exempted
And privileged being, and, as if he were
Incapable of dizziness or fall,

He ran along the unsteady rope of life.
But now our destinies drove us asunder,
He paced with rapid step the way of greatness,
Was Count, and Prince, Duke-regent, and Dictator—
And now is all, all this too little for him;
He stretches forth his hands for a king's crown,
And plunges in unfathomable ruin.

BUTLER.

No more, he comes.

SCENE III

To these enter WALLENSTEIN, *in conversation with the* BURGOMASTER *of Egra*.

WALLENST.

You were at one time a free town. I see,
Ye bear the half eagle in your city arms.
Why the *half* eagle only?

BURGOMASTER.

We were free,
But for these last two hundred years has Egra
Remain'd in pledge to the Bohemian crown;
Therefore we bear the half eagle, the other half
Being cancell'd till the empire ransom us,
If ever that should be.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye merit freedom.
Only be firm and dauntless. Lend your ears
To no designing whispering court-minions.
What may your imposts be?

BURGOMASTER.

So heavy that
We totter under them. The garrison
Lives at our costs.

WALLENSTEIN.

I will relieve you. Tell me,
There are some Protestants among you still

[*The* BURGOMASTER *hesitates*.]

Yes, yes; I know it. Many lie conceal'd
Within these walls—confess now—you your self—

[*Fixes his eye on him. The* BURGOMASTER *alarmed*.]

Be not alarm'd. I hate the Jesuits.
Could my will have determined it, they had
Been long ago expell'd the empire. Trust me—
Mass-book or bible, 'tis all one to me.
Of that the world has had sufficient proof.
I built a church for the Reform'd in Glogau
At my own instance. Harkye, Burgomaster!
What is your name?

BURGOMASTER.

Pachhalbel, may it please you.

WALLENST.

Harkye!—
But let it go no further, what I now
Disclose to you in confidence.

[*Laying his hand on the* BURGOMASTER'S *shoulder with a certain solemnity*.]

The times
Draw near to their fulfilment, Burgomaster!
The high will fall, the low will be exalted.

Harkye! But keep it to yourself! The end
Approaches of the Spanish double monarchy—
A new arrangement is at hand. You saw
The three moons that appear'd at once in the Heaven.

BURGOM.

With wonder and affright!

WALLENSTEIN.

Whereof did two
Strangely transform themselves to bloody daggers,
And only one, the middle moon, remained
Steady and clear.

BURGOMASTER.

We applied it to the Turks.

WALLENST.

The Turks! That all?—I tell you, that two empires
Will set in blood, in the East and in the West,
And Luth'ranism alone remain.

[*Observing* GORDON *and* BUTLER.]

I' faith,
'Twas a smart cannonading that we heard
This evening, as we journey'd hitherward;
'Twas on our left hand. Did you hear it here?

GORDON.

Distinctly. The wind brought it from the south.

BUTLER.

It seem'd to came from Weiden or from Neustadt.

WALLENST.

'Tis likely. That's the route the Swedes are taking.
How strong is the garrison?

GORDON.

Not quite two hundred
Competent men, the rest are invalids.

WALLENST.

Good! And how many in the vale of Jochim?

GORDON.

Two hundred harquebusiers have I sent thither
To fortify the posts against the Swedes.

WALLENST.

Good! I commend your foresight. At the works too
You have done somewhat?

GORDON.

Two additional batteries
I caused to be run up. They were needless.
The Rhinegrave presses hard upon us, General!

WALLENST.

You have been watchful in your Emperor's service.
I am content with you, Lieutenant-Colonel.

[*To* BUTLER.]

Release the outposts in the vale of Jochim
With all the stations in the enemy's route.

[*To* GORDON.]

Governor, in your faithful hands I leave
My wife, my daughter, and my sister. I

Shall make no stay here, and wait but the arrival
Of letters to take leave of you, together
With all the regiments.

SCENE IV

To these enter COUNT TERZKY

TERZKY.

Joy, General; joy! I bring you welcome tidings.

WALLENST.

And what may they be?

TERZKY.

There has been an engagement
At Neustadt; the Swedes gain'd the victory.

WALLENST.

From whence did you receive the intelligence?

TERZKY.

A countryman from Tirschenreut convey'd it.
Soon after sunrise did the fight begin!
A troop of the Imperialists from Tachau
Had forced their way into the Swedish camp;
The cannonade continued full two hours;
There were left dead upon the field a thousand
Imperialists, together with their Colonel;
Further than this he did not know.

WALLENSTEIN.

How came
Imperial troops at Neustadt? Altringer,
But yesterday, stood sixty miles from there.
Count Gallas' force collects at Frauenberg,

And have not the full complement. Is it possible
That Suys perchance had ventured so far onward?
It cannot be.

TERZKY.

We shall soon know the whole,
For here comes Illo, full of haste, and joyous.

SCENE V

To these enter ILLO

ILLO (*to* WALLENSTEIN).

A courier, Duke! he wishes to speak with thee.

TERZKY (*eagerly*).

Does he bring confirmation of the victory?

WALLENSTEIN (*at the same time*).

What does he bring? Whence comes he?

ILLO.

From the Rhinegrave
And what he brings I can announce to you
Beforehand. Seven leagues distant are the Swedes;
At Neustadt did Max Piccolomini
Throw himself on them with the cavalry;
A murderous fight took place! o'erpower'd by numbers
The Pappenheimers all, with Max their leader,

[WALLENSTEIN *shudders and turns pale*.]

Were left dead on the field.

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause, in a low voice*).

Where is the messenger? Conduct me to him.

[WALLENSTEIN *is going, when* LADY NEUBRUNN *rushes into the room. Some servants follow her and run across the stage*.]

NEUBR.

Help! Help!

ILLO *and* TERZKY (*at the same time*).

What now?

NEUBRUNN.

The Princess!

WALTENSTEIN *and* TERZKY.

Does she know it?

NEUBRUNN *(at the same time with them*).

She is dying!

[*Hurries off the stage, when* WALLENSTEIN *and* TERZKY *follow her*.]

SCENE VI

BUTLER *and* GORDON

GORDON.

What's this?

BUTLER.

She has lost the man she loved—Young Piccolomini who fell in the battle.

GORDON.

Unfortunate Lady!

BUTLER.

You have heard what Illo
Reporteth, that the Swedes are conquerors,
And marching hitherward.

GORDON.

Too well I heard it.

BUTLER.

They are twelve regiments strong, and there are five
Close by us to protect the Duke. We have
Only my single regiment; and the garrison
Is not two hundred strong.

GORDON.

'Tis even so.

BUTLER.

It is not possible with such small force
To hold in custody a man like him.

GORDON.

I grant it.

BUTLER.

Soon the numbers would disarm us,
And liberate him.

GORDON.

It were to be fear 'd.

BUTLER (*after a pause*).

Know, I am warranty for the event;
With my head have I pledged myself for his,
Must make my word good, cost it what it will,

And if alive we cannot hold him prisoner,
Why—death makes all things certain!

GORDON.

Butler! What?
Do I understand you? Gracious God! *You* could—

BUTLER.

He must not live.

GORDON.

And *you* can do the deed!

BUTLER.

Either you or I. This morning was his last.

GORDON.

You would assassinate him!

BUTLER.

'Tis my purpose.

GORDON.

Who leans with his whole confidence upon you!

BUTLER.

Such is his evil destiny!

GORDON.

Your General!
The sacred person of your General!

BUTLER.

My General he *has been*.

GORDON.

That 'tis only
A "*has been*" washes out no villiany.
And without judgment pass'd?

BUTLER.

The execution
Is here instead of judgment.

GORDON.

This were murder,
Not justice. The most guilty should be heard.

BUTLER.

His guilt is clear, the Emperor has pass'd judgment,
And we but execute his will.

GORDON.

We should not
Hurry to realize a bloody sentence;
A word may be recall'd, a life can never be.

BUTLER.

Dispatch in service pleases sovereigns.

GORDON.

No honest man's ambitious to press forward
To the hangman's service.

BUTLER.

And no brave man loses
His color at a daring enterprise.

GORDON.

A brave man hazards life, but not his conscience.

BUTLER.

What then? Shall he go forth anew to kindle
The unextinguishable flame of war?

GORDON.

Seize him, and hold him prisoner—do not kill him.

BUTLER.

Had not the Emperor's army been defeated,
I might have done so.—But 'tis now past by.

GORDON.

O, wherefore open'd I the stronghold to him?

BUTLER.

His destiny and not the place destroys him.

GORDON.

Upon these ramparts, as beseem'd a soldier,
I had fallen, defending the Emperor's citadel!

BUTLER.

Yes, and a thousand gallant men have perish'd.

GORDON.

Doing their duty—that adorns the man!
But murder's a black deed, and nature curses it.

BUTLER (*brings out a paper*).

Here is the manifesto which commands us
To gain possession of his person. See—
It is addressed to you as well as me.
Are you content to take the consequences,
If through our fault he escape to the enemy?

GORDON.

I?—Gracious God!

BUTLER.

Take it on yourself
Come of it what may; on you I lay it.

GORDON.

O God in heaven!

BUTLER.

Can you advise aught else
Wherewith to execute the Emperor's purpose?
Say if you can. For I desire his fall,
Not his destruction.

GORDON.

Merciful heaven! what must be
I see as clear as you. Yet still the heart
Within my bosom beats with other feelings!

BUTLER.

Mine is of harder stuff! Necessity
In her rough school hath steel'd me. And this Illo,
And Terzky likewise, they must not survive him.

GORDON.

I feel no pang for these. Their own bad hearts
Impell'd them, not the influence of the stars.
'Twas they who strew'd the seeds of evil passions
In his calm breast, and with officious villiany
Water'd and nursed the pois'nous plants. May they
Receive their earnests to the uttermost mite!

BUTLER.

And their death shall precede his!
We meant to have taken them alive this evening
Amid the merry-making of a feast,
And keep them prisoners in the citadel.
But this makes shorter work. I go this instant
To give the necessary orders.

SCENE VII

To these enter ILLO *and* TERZKY

TERZKY.

Our luck is on the turn. Tomorrow come
The Swedes—twelve thousand gallant warriors, Illo,
Then straightwise for Vienna. Cheerily, friend!
What! meet such news with such a moody face?

ILLO.

It lies with us at present to prescribe
Laws, and take vengeance on those worthless traitors,
Those skulking cowards that deserted us;
One has already done his bitter penance,
The Piccolomini: be his the fate
Of all who wish us evil! This flies sure
To the old man's heart; he has his whole life long
Fretted and toil'd to raise his ancient house
From a Count's title to the name of prince;
And now must seek a grave for his only son.

BUTLER.

'Twas pity, though! A youth of such heroic
And gentle temperament! The Duke himself,
'Twas easily seen, how near it went to his heart.

ILLO.

Hark ye, old friend! That is the very point
That never pleased me in our General—
He ever gave the preference to the Italians.
Yea, at this very moment, by my soul!
He'd gladly see us all dead ten times over,
Could he thereby recall his friend to life.

TERZKY.

Hush, hush! Let the dead rest! This evening's business
Is, who can fairly drink the other down—
Your regiment, Illo! gives the entertainment.
Come! we will keep a merry carnival—
The night for once be day, and 'mid full glasses
Will we expect the Swedish avant-garde.

ILLO.

Yes, let us be of good cheer for today,
For there's hot work before us, friends! This sword
Shall have no rest, till it be bathed to the hilt
In Austrian blood.

GORDON.

Shame, shame! what talk is this
My Lord Field-Marshal? Wherefore foam you so
Against your Emperor?

BUTLER.

Hope not too much
From this first victory. Bethink you, sirs!
How rapidly the wheel of Fortune turns;
The Emperor still is formidably strong.

ILLO.

The Emperor has soldiers, no commander,
For this King Ferdinand of Hungary
Is but a tyro. Gallas? He's no luck,

And was of old the ruiner of armies.
And then this viper, this Octavio,
Is excellent at stabbing in the back,
But ne'er meets Friedland in the open field.

TERZKY.

Trust me, my friends, it cannot but succeed;
Fortune, we know, can ne'er forsake the Duke!
And only under Wallenstein can Austria
Be conqueror.

ILLO.

The Duke will soon assemble
A mighty army: all comes crowding, streaming
To banners, dedicate by destiny
To fame and prosperous fortune. I behold
Old times come back again! he will become
Once more the mighty Lord which he has been.
How will the fools, who've now deserted him,
Look then? I can't but laugh to think of them,
For lands will he present to all his friends,
And like a King and Emperor reward
True services; but we've the nearest claims.

[*To* GORDON.]

You will not be forgotten, Governor!
He'll take you from this nest, and bid you shine
In higher station: your fidelity
Well merits it.

GORDON.

I am content already
And wish to climb no higher; where great height is,
The fall must needs be great. "Great height, great depth."

ILLO.

Here you have no more business, for tomorrow
The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.
Come, Terzky, it is supper-time. What think you?
Nay, shall we have the town illuminated
In honor of the Swede? And who refuses
To do it is a Spaniard and a traitor.

TERZKY.

Nay! nay! not that, it will not please the Duke—

ILLO.

What! we are masters here; no soul shall dare
Avow himself Imperial where we've the rule.
Gordon! good night, and for the last time, take
A fair leave of the place. Send out patroles
To make secure, the watch-word may be alter'd
At the stroke of ten; deliver in the keys
To the Duke himself, and then you've quit for ever
Your wardship of the gates, for on tomorrow
The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.

TERZKY (*as he is going, to* BUTLER).

You come, though, to the castle?

BUTLER.

At the right time.

[*Exeunt* TERZKY *and* ILLO.]

SCENE VIII

GORDON *and* BUTLER

GORDON (*looking after them*).

Unhappy men! How free from all foreboding!
They rush into the outspread net of murder
In the blind drunkenness of victory;
I have no pity for their fate. This Illo,
This overflowing and foolhardy villain,
That would fain bathe himself in his Emperor's blood.—

BUTLER.

Do as he order'd you. Send round patroles,
Take measures for the citadel's security;
When they are within I close the castle-gate
That nothing may transpire.

GORDON (*with earnest anxiety*).

Oh! haste not so!
Nay, stop; first tell me—

BUTLER.

You have heard already,
Tomorrow to the Swedes belongs. This night
Alone is ours. They make good expedition,
But we will make still greater. Fare you well.

GORDON.

Ah! your looks tell me nothing good. Nay, Butler,
I pray you, promise me!

BUTLER.

The sun has set;
A fateful evening doth descend upon us,
And brings on their long night! Their evil stars
Deliver them unarm'd into our hands,
And from their drunken dream of golden fortunes
The dagger at their heart shall rouse them. Well,
The Duke was ever a great calculator;
His fellow-men were figures on his chess-board,
To move and station, as his game required.

Other men's honor, dignity, good name,
Did he shift like pawns, and make no conscience of;
Still calculating, calculating still;
And yet at last his calculation proves
Erroneous; the whole game is lost; and lo!
His own life will be found among the forfeits.

GORDON.

O think not of his errors now! remember
His greatness, his munificence; think on all
The lovely features of his character,
On all the noble exploits of his life,
And let them, like an angel's arm, unseen,
Arrest the lifted sword.

BUTLER.

It is too late.
I suffer not myself to feel compassion;
Dark thoughts and bloody are my *duty* now:

[*Grasping* GORDON's *hand*.]

Gordon! 'tis not my hatred (I pretend not
To love the Duke, and have no cause to love him),
Yet 'tis not now my hatred that impels me
To be his murderer. 'Tis his evil fate.
Hostile concurrences of many events
Control and subjugate me to the office.
In vain the human being meditates
Free action. He is but the wire-work'd[31] puppet
Of the blind Power, which out of its own choice
Creates for him a dread necessity.
What too would it avail him, if there were
A something pleading for him in my heart—
Still I must kill him.

GORDON.

If your heart speak to you,
Follow its impulse. 'Tis the voice of God.
Think you your fortunes will grow prosperous
Bedew'd with blood—his blood? Believe it not!

BUTLER.

You know not. Ask not! Wherefore should it happen
That the Swedes gain'd the victory, and hasten
With such forced marches hitherward? Fain would I
Have given him to the Emperor's mercy. Gordon!
I do not wish his blood—But I must ransom
The honor of my word—it lies in pledge—
And he must die, or—

[*Passionately grasping* GORDON's *hand*.]

Listen then, and know,
I am *dishonor'd* if the Duke escape us.

GORDON.

O! to save such a man—

BUTLER.

What!

GORDON.

It is worth
A sacrifice. Come, friend! Be noble-minded!
Our own heart, and not other men's opinions,
Forms our true honor.

BUTLER (*with a cold and haughty air*).

He is a great Lord,
This Duke—and I am but of mean importance.
This is what you would say! Wherein concerns it
The world at large, you mean to hint to me,

Whether the man of low extraction keeps
Or blemishes his honor—
So that the man of princely rank be saved?
We all do stamp our value on ourselves:
The price we challenge for ourselves is given us.
There does not live on earth the man so station'd
That I despise myself, compared with him.
Man is made great or little by his own will;
Because I am true to mine, therefore he dies.

GORDON.

I am endeavoring to move a rock.
Thou hadst a mother, yet no human feelings.
I cannot hinder you, but may some God
Rescue him from you!

[*Exit* GORDON.]

BUTLER[32] (*alone*).

I treasured my good name all my life long;
The Duke has cheated me of life's best jewel,
So that I blush before this poor weak Gordon!
He prizes above all his fealty;
His conscious soul accuses him of nothing;
In opposition to his own soft heart
He subjugates himself to an iron duty.
Me in a weaker moment passion warp'd;
I stand beside him, and must feel myself
The worse man of the two. What, though the world
Is ignorant of my purposed treason, yet
One man does know it, and can prove it too—
High-minded Piccolomini!
There lives the man who can dishonor me!
This ignominy blood alone can cleanse!
Duke Friedland, thou or I—Into my own hands
Fortune delivers me—The dearest thing a man has is himself.

SCENE IX

A Gothic and gloomy Apartment at the DUCHESS FRIEDLAND'S. THEKLA *on a seat, pale, her eyes closed. The* DUCHESS *and* LADY NEUBRUNN *busied about her*. WALLENSTEIN *and the* COUNTESS *in conversation*.

WALLENST.

How knew she it so soon?

COUNTESS.

She seems to have
Foreboded some misfortune. The report
Of an engagement, in the which had fallen
A colonel of the Imperial army, frighten'd her.
I saw it instantly. She flew to meet
The Swedish courier, and with sudden questioning
Soon wrested from him the disastrous secret.
Too late we missed her, hasten'd after her,
We found her lying in his arms, all pale
And in a swoon.

WALLENSTEIN.

A heavy, heavy blow!
And she so unprepared! Poor child! how is it?

[*Turning to the* DUCHESS.]

Is she coming to herself?

DUCHESS.

Her eyes are opening.

COUNTESS.

She lives!

THEKLA (*looking around her*).

Where am I?

WALLENSTEIN (*steps to her, raising her up in his arms*).

Come, cheer'ly, Thekla! be my own brave girl!
See, there's thy loving mother. Thou art in
Thy father's arms.

THEKLA (*standing up*).

Where is he? Is he gone?

DUCHESS.

Who gone, my daughter?

THEKLA.

He—the man who utter'd
That word of misery.

DUCHESS.

O! think not of it,
My Thekla!

WALLENSTEIN.

Give her sorrow leave to talk!
Let her complain—mingle your tears with hers,
For she hath suffer'd a deep anguish; but
She'll rise superior to it, for my Thekla
Hath all her father's unsubdued heart.

THEKLA.

I am not ill. See, I have power to stand.
Why does my mother weep? Have I alarm'd her?
It is gone by—I recollect myself—

[*She casts her eyes round the room, as seeking some one.*]

Where is he? Please you, do not hide him from me.
You see I have strength enough: now I will hear him.

DUCHESS.

No; never shall this messenger of evil
Enter again into thy presence, Thekla!

THEKLA.

My father—

WALLENSTEIN.

Dearest daughter!

THEKLA.

I'm not weak—
Shortly I shall be quite myself again.
You'll grant me one request?

WALLENSTEIN.

Name it, my daughter.

THEKLA.

Permit the stranger to be called to me,
And grant me leave that by myself I may
Hear his report and question him.

DUCHESS.

No, never!

COUNTESS.

'Tis not advisable—assent not to it.

WALLENST.

Hush! Wherefore wouldst thou speak with him, my daughter?

THEKLA.

Knowing the whole, I shall be more collected;
I will not be deceived. My mother wishes
Only to spare me. I will not be spared—

The worst is said already: I can hear
Nothing of deeper anguish!

COUNTESS *and* DUCHESS.

Do it not.

THEKLA.

The horror overpower'd me by surprise.
My heart betray'd me in the stranger's presence:
He was a witness of my weakness, yea,
I sank into his arms; and that has shamed me.
I must replace myself in his esteem,
And I must speak with him, perforce, that he,
The stranger, may not think ungently of me.

WALLENST.

I see she is in the right, and am inclined
To grant her this request of hers. Go, call him.

[LADY NEUBRUNN *goes to call him*.]

DUCHESS.

But I, thy mother, will be present—

THEKLA.

'Twere
More pleasing to me, if alone I saw him;
Trust me, I shall behave myself the more
Collectedly.

WALLENSTEIN.

Permit her own will.
Leave her alone with him: for there are sorrows
Where of necessity the soul must be
Its own support. A strong heart will rely
On its own strength alone. In her own bosom,
Not in her mother's arms, must she collect

The strength to rise superior to this blow.
It is mine own brave girl. I'll have her treated
Not as a woman, but the heroine. [*Going*.]

COUNTESS (*detaining him*).

Where art thou going? I heard Terzky say
That 'tis *thy* purpose to depart from hence
Tomorrow early, but to leave us here.

WALLENST.

Yes, ye stay here, placed under the protection
Of gallant men.

COUNTESS.

O take us with you, brother.
Leave us not in this gloomy solitude
To brood o'er anxious thoughts. The mists of doubt
Magnify evils to a shape of horror.

WALLENST.

Who speaks of evil? I entreat you, sister,
Use words of better omen.

COUNTESS.

Then take us with you.
O leave us not behind you in a place
That forces us to such sad omens. Heavy
And sick within me is my heart—
These walls breathe on me, like a church-yard vault.
I cannot tell you, brother, how this place
Doth go against my nature. Take us with you.
Come, sister, join you your entreaty! Niece,
Yours too. We all entreat you, take us with you!

WALLENST.

The place's evil omens will I change,
Making it that which shields and shelters for me
My best beloved.

LADY NEUBRUNN (*returning*).

The Swedish officer.

WALLENST.

Leave her alone with him.

DUCHESS (*to* THEKLA, *who starts and shivers*).

There—pale as death! Child, 'tis impossible
That thou shouldst speak with him. Follow thy mother.

THEKLA.

The Lady Neubrunn then may stay with me.

[*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* COUNTESS.]

SCENE X

THEKLA, *the* SWEDISH CAPTAIN, LADY NEUBRUNN

CAPTAIN (*respectfully approaching her*).

Princess—I must entreat your gentle pardon—
My inconsiderate rash speech. How could I—

THEKLA (*with dignity*).

You have beheld me in my agony.
A most distressful accident occasion'd
You from a stranger to become at once
My confidant.

CAPTAIN.

I fear you hate my presence,
For my tongue spake a melancholy word.

THEKLA.

The fault is mine. Myself did wrest it from you.
The horror which came o'er me interrupted
Your tale at its commencement. May it please you,
Continue it to the end.

CAPTAIN.

Princess, 'twill
Renew your anguish.

THEKLA.

I am firm—
I *will* be firm. Well—how began the engagement?

CAPTAIN.

We lay, expecting no attack, at Neustadt,
Intrench'd but insecurely in our camp,
When toward evening rose a cloud of dust
From the wood thitherward; our vanguard fled
Into the camp, and sounded the alarm.
Scarce had we mounted ere the Pappenheimers,
Their horses at full speed, broke through the lines,
And leapt the trenches; but their heedless courage
Had borne them onward far before the others—
The infantry were still at distance, only
The Pappenheimers follow'd daringly
Their daring leader—

[THEKLA *betrays agitation in her gestures. The officer pauses till she makes a sign to him to proceed*.]

CAPTAIN.

Both in van and flanks
With our whole cavalry we now received them;
Back to the trenches drove them, where the foot
Stretch'd out a solid ridge of pikes to meet them.
They neither could advance, nor yet retreat;
And as they stood on every side wedged in,
The Rhinegrave to their leader call'd aloud,
Inviting a surrender; but their leader,
Young Piccolomini—

[THEKLA, *as giddy, grasps a chair*.] Known by his plume, And his long hair, gave signal for the trenches; Himself leapt first: the regiment all plunged after. His charger, by a halbert gored, rear'd up, Flung him with violence off, and over him The horses, now no longer to be curbed— [THEKLA, *who has accompanied the last speech with all the marks of increasing agony, trembles through her whole frame, and is falling. The* LADY NEUBRUNN *runs to her, and receives her in her arms.]*

NEUBR.

My dearest lady—

CAPTAIN.

I retire.

THEKLA.

'Tis over.
Proceed to the conclusion.

CAPTAIN.

Wild despair
Inspired the troops with frenzy when they saw
Their leader perish; every thought of rescue
Was spurned; they fought like wounded tigers; their
Frantic resistance roused our soldiery;
A murderous fight took place, nor was the contest
Finish'd before their last man fell.

THEKLA (*faltering*).

And where—
Where is—You have not told me all.

CAPTAIN *(after a pause*).

This morning
We buried him. Twelve youths of noblest birth
Did bear him to interment; the whole army
Follow'd the bier. A laurel deck'd his coffin;
The sword of the deceased was placed upon it,
In mark of honor, by the Rhinegrave's self.
Nor tears were wanting; for there are among us
Many, who had themselves experienced
The greatness of his mind and gentle manners;
All were affected at his fate. The Rhinegrave
Would willingly have saved him; but himself
Made vain the attempt—'tis said he wish'd to
die.

NEUBRUNN *(to* THEKLA, *who has hidden her countenance*).

Look up, my dearest lady—

THEKLA.

Where is his grave?

CAPTAIN.

At Neustadt, lady; in a cloister church
Are his remains deposited, until
We can receive directions from his father.

THEKLA.

What is the cloister's name?

CAPTAIN.

Saint Catherine's.

THEKLA.

And how far is it thither?

CAPTAIN.

Near twelve leagues.

THEKLA.

And which the way?

CAPTAIN.

You go by Tirschenreut
And Falkenberg through our advanced posts.

THEKLA.

Who
Is their commander?

CAPTAIN.

Colonel Seckendorf. [THEKLA *steps to the table, and takes a ring from a casket.]*

THEKLA.

You have beheld me in my agony,
And shown a feeling heart. Please you, accept
[Giving him the ring.]
A small memorial of this hour. Now go!

CAPTAIN *(confusedly).*

Princess—

[THEKLA *silently makes signs to him to go, and turns from him. The* CAPTAIN *lingers, and is about to speak*. LADY NEUBRUNN *repeats the signal, and he retires.]*

SCENE XI

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN

THEKLA *(falls on* LADY NEUBRUNN's *neck*).

Now, gentle Neubrunn, show me the affection
Which thou hast ever promised—prove thyself
My own true friend and faithful fellow-pilgrim.
This night we must away!

NEUBRUNN.

Away! and whither?

THEKLA.

Whither! There is but one place in the world.
Thither, where he lies buried! To his coffin!

NEUBR.

What would you do there?

THEKLA.

What do there?
That wouldst thou not have ask'd, hadst thou e'er loved.
There, there is all that still remains of him!
That single spot is the whole earth to me.

NEUBR.

That place of death—

THEKLA.

Is now the only place
Where life yet dwells for me: detain me not!
Come and make preparations; let us think
Of means to fly from hence.

NEUBRUNN.

Your father's rage—

THEKLA.

That time is past—
And now I fear no human being's rage.

NEUBR.

The sentence of the world! The tongue of calumny!

THEKLA.

Whom am I seeking? Him who is no more?
Am I then hastening to the arms—O God!
I haste but to the grave of the beloved.

NEUBR.

And we alone, two helpless feeble women?

THEKLA.

We will take weapons: my arm shall protect thee.

NEUBR.

In the dark night-time?

THEKLA.

Darkness will conceal us.

NEUBR.

This rough tempestuous night—

THEKLA.

Had he a soft bed
Under the hoofs of his war-horses?

NEUBRUNN.

Heaven!
And then the many posts of the enemy.

THEKLA.

They are human beings. Misery travels free
Through the whole earth.

NEUBRUNN.

The journey's weary length—

THEKLA.

The pilgrim, traveling to a distant shrine
Of hope and healing, doth not count the leagues.

NEUBR.

How can we pass the gates?

THEKLA.

Gold opens them.
Go, do but go.

NEUBRUNN.

Should we be recognized—

THEKLA.

In a despairing woman, a poor fugitive,
Will no one seek the daughter of Duke Friedland.

NEUBR.

And where procure we horses for our flight?

THEKLA.

My equerry procures them. Go and fetch him.

NEUBR.

Dares he, without the knowledge of his lord?

THEKLA.

He will. Go, only go. Delay no longer.

NEUBR.

Dear lady! and your mother?

THEKLA.

Oh! my mother!

NEUBR.

So much as she has suffer'd too already;
Your tender mother—Ah! how ill prepared
For this last anguish!

THEKLA.

Woe is me! my mother!

[Pauses.]

Go instantly.

NEUBRUNN.

But think what you are doing!

THEKLA.

What *can* be thought, already has been thought.

NEUBR.

And being there, what purpose you to do?

THEKLA.

There a Divinity will prompt my soul.

NEUBR.

Your heart, dear lady, is disquieted!
And this is not the way that leads to quiet.

THEKLA.

To a deep quiet, such as he has found.
It draws me on, I know not what to name it,
Resistless does it draw me to his grave.
There will my heart be eased, my tears will flow.
O hasten, make no further questioning!
There is no rest for me till I have left
These walls—they fall in on me—a dim power
Drives me from hence—Oh mercy! What a feeling!
What pale and hollow forms are those! They fill,
They crowd the place! I have no longer room here!
Mercy! Still more! More still! The hideous swarm,
They press on me; they chase me from these walls—
Those hollow, bodiless forms of living men!

NEUBR.

You frighten me so, lady, that no longer
I dare stay here myself. I go and call
Rosenberg instantly. [Exit LADY NEUBRUNN.]

SCENE XII

THEKLA.

His spirit 'tis that calls me: 'tis the troop
Of his true followers, who offer'd up
Themselves to avenge his death: and they accuse me
Of an ignoble loitering—*they* would not
Forsake their leader even in his death—*they* died for him,
And shall I live?—
For me too was that laurel-garland twined
That decks his bier. Life is an empty casket.
I throw it from me. O! my only hope
To die beneath the hoofs of trampling steeds—
That is the lot of heroes upon earth!

[*Exit* THEKLA.[33]]

[*The Curtain drops.*]

SCENE XIII

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN, *and* ROSENBERG

NEUBR.

He is here lady, and he will procure them.

THEKLA.

Wilt thou provide us horses, Rosenberg?

ROSENB.

I will, my lady.

THEKLA.

And go with us as well?

ROSENB.

To the world's end, my lady.

THEKLA.

But consider,
Thou never canst return unto the Duke.

ROSENB.

I will remain with thee.

THEKLA.

I will reward thee,
And will commend thee to another master,
Canst thou unseen conduct us from the castle?

ROSENB.

I can.

THEKLA.

When can I go?

ROSENBERG.

This very hour.
But wither would you, Lady?

THEKLA.

To—Tell him, Neubrunn.

NEUBR.

To Neustadt.

ROSENBERG.

So;—I leave you to get ready.

[*Exit.*]

NEUBR.

O see, your mother comes.

THEKLA.

Indeed! O Heav'n!

SCENE XIV

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN, *the* DUCHESS

DUCHESS.

He's gone! I find thee more composed, my child.

THEKLA.

I am so, mother; let me only now
Retire to rest, and Neubrunn here be with me.
I want repose.

DUCHESS.

My Thekla, thou shalt have it. I leave thee now consoled, since I can calm Thy father's heart.

THEKLA.

Good night, beloved mother! *(Falling on her neck and embracing her with deep emotion)*.

DUCHESS.

Thou scarcely art composed e'en now, my daughter.
Thou tremblest strongly, and I feel thy heart
Beat audibly on mine.

THEKLA. Sleep will appease
Its beating: now good night, good night, dear mother.

(As she withdraws from her mother's arms the curtain falls).

ACT V

SCENE I

Butler's Chamber.

BUTLER *and* MAJOR GERALDIN

BUTLER.

Find me twelve strong dragoons, arm them with pikes,
For there must be no firing—
Conceal them somewhere near the banquet-room,
And soon as the dessert is served up, rush all in
And cry—"Who is loyal to the Emperor!"
I will overturn the table—while you attack
Illo and Terzky and dispatch them both.
The castle-palace is well barr'd and guarded,
That no intelligence of this proceeding
May make its way to the Duke. Go instantly;
Have you yet sent for Captain Devereux
And the Macdonald?—

GERALDIN.

They'll be here anon.

[*Exit* GERALDIN.]

BUTLER.

Here's no room for delay. The citizens
Declare for him, a dizzy drunken spirit
Possesses the whole town. They see in the Duke
A Prince of peace, a founder of new ages
And golden times. Arms too have been given out
By the town-council, and a hundred citizens
Have volunteered themselves to stand on guard.
Dispatch! then, be the word; for enemies
Threaten us from without and from within.

SCENE II

BUTLER, CAPTAIN DEVEREUX, *and* MACDONALD

MACDON.

Here we are, General.

DEVEREUX.

What's to be the watchword?

BUTLER.

Long live the Emperor!

BOTH *(recoiling).*

How?

BUTLER.

Live the House of Austria.

DEVEREUX.

Have we not sworn fidelity to Friedland?

MACDON.

Have we not march'd to this place to protect him?

BUTLER.

Protect a traitor, and his country's enemy?

DEVEREUX.

Why, yes! in his name you administer'd
Our oath.

MACDONALD.

And follow'd him yourself to Egra.

BUTLER.

I did it the more surely to destroy him.

DEVEREUX.

So then!

MACDONALD.

An alter'd case!

BUTLER (*to* DEVEREUX).

Thou wretched man,
So easily leavest thou thy oath and colors?

DEVEREUX.

The devil!—I but follow'd your example,
If you could prove a villain, why not we?

MACDON.

We've nought to do with *thinking*—that's your business.
You are our General, and give out the orders;
We follow you, though the track lead to hell.

BUTLER *(appeased)*.

Good then! we know each other.

MACDONALD.

I should hope so.

DEVEREUX.

Soldiers of fortune are we—who bids most,
He has us.

MACDONALD.

'Tis e'en so!

BUTLER.

Well, for the present
Ye must remain honest and faithful soldiers.

DEVEREUX.

We wish no other.

BUTLER.

Ay, and make your fortunes.

MACRON.

That is still better.
Listen!

BOTH.

We attend.

BUTLER.

It is the Emperor's will and ordinance
To seize the person of the Prince-Duke Friedland,
Alive or dead.

DEVEREUX.

It runs so in the letter.

MACRON.

Alive or dead-these were the very words.

BUTLER.

And he shall be rewarded from the State
In land and gold, who proffers aid thereto.

DEVEREUX.

Ay! that sounds well. The *words* sound always well
That travel hither from the Court. Yes! yes!
We know already what Court-words import.
A golden chain perhaps in sign of favor,
Or an old charger, or a parchment patent,
And such like—The Prince-Duke pays better.

MACDONALD.

Yes
The Duke's a splendid paymaster.

BUTLER.

All over
With that, my friends! His lucky stars are set.

MACDON.

And is that certain?

BUTLER.

You have my word for it.

DEVEREUX.

His lucky fortunes all past by?

BUTLER.

Forever
He is as poor as we.

MACDONALD.

As poor as we?

DEVEREUX.

Macdonald, we'll desert him.

BUTLER.

We'll desert him?
Full twenty thousand have done that already;
We must do more, my countrymen! In short—
We—we must kill him.

BOTH *(starting back*).

Kill him!

BUTLER.

Yes, must kill him;
And for that purpose have I chosen you.

BOTH.

Us!

BUTLER.

You, Captain Devereux, and thee, Macdonald.

DEVEREUX *(after a pause)*.

Choose you some other.

BUTLER.

What! art dastardly?
Thou, with full thirty lives to answer for—
Thou conscientious of a sudden?

DEVEREUX.

Nay
To assassinate our Lord and General—

MACDON.

To whom we've sworn a soldier's oath

BUTLER.

The oath
Is null, for Friedland is a traitor.

DEVEREUX.

No, no! it is too bad!

MACDONALD.

Yes, by my soul!
It is too bad. One has a conscience too—

DEVEREUX.

If it were not our Chieftain, who so long
Has issued the commands, and claim'd our duty—

BUTLER.

Is that the objection?

DEVEREUX.

Were it my own father,
And the Emperor's service should demand it of me,
It might be done perhaps—But we are soldiers,
And to assassinate our Chief Commander—
That is a sin, a foul abomination,
From which no monk or confessor absolves us.

BUTLER.

I am your Pope, and give you absolution.
Determine quickly!

DEVEREUX.

'Twill not do.

MACDONALD.

'Twont do!

BUTLER.

Well, off then! and—send Pestalutz to me.

DEVEREUX *(hesitates).*

The Pestalutz—

MACDONALD.

What may you want with him?

BUTLER.

If you reject it, we can find enough—

DEVEREUX.

Nay, if he must fall, we may earn the bounty
As well as any other. What think you,
Brother Macdonald?

MACDONALD.

Why, if he must fall,
And will fall, and it can't be otherwise,
One would not give place to this Pestalutz.

DEVEREUX *(after some reflection).*

When do you purpose he should fall?

BUTLER.

This night.
Tomorrow will the Swedes be at our gates.

DEVEREUX.

You take upon you all the consequences

BUTLER.

I take the whole upon me.

DEVEREUX.

And it is
The Emperor's will, his express absolute will?
For we have instances, that folks may like
The murder, and yet hang the murderer.

BUTLER.

The manifesto says—"alive or dead."
Alive—'tis not possible—you see it is not.

DEVEREUX.

Well, dead then! dead! But how can we come at him?
The town is filled with Terzky's soldiery.

MACDON.

Ay! and then Terzky still remains, and Illo—

BUTLER.

With these you shall begin—you understand me?

DEVEREUX.

How! And must they too perish?

BUTLER.

They the first.

MACDON.

Hear, Devereux! A bloody evening this.

DEVEREUX.

Have you a man for that? Commission me—

BUTLER.

'Tis given in trust to Major Geraldin;
This is a carnival night, and there's a feast
Given at the castle—there we shall surprise them,
And hew them down. The Pestalutz and Lesley
Have that commission. Soon as that is finish'd—

DEVEREUX.

Hear, General! It will be all one to you—
Hark ye, let me exchange with Geraldin.

BUTLER.

'Twill be the lesser danger with the Duke.

DEVEREUX.

Danger! The Devil! What do you think me, General?
'Tis the Duke's eye, and not his sword, I fear.

BUTLER.

What can his eye do to thee?

DEVEREUX.

Death and hell!
Thou know'st that I'm no milksop, General!
But 'tis not eight days since the Duke did send me
Twenty gold pieces for this good warm coat
Which I have on! and then for him to see me
Standing before him with the pike, his murderer,
That eye of his looking upon this coat—
Why—why—the devil fetch me! I'm no milksop!

BUTLER.

The Duke presented thee this good warm coat,
And thou, a needy wight, hast pangs of conscience
To run him through the body in return?
A coat that is far better and far warmer
Did the Emperor give to him, the Prince's mantle.
How doth he thank the Emperor? With revolt,
And treason.

DEVEREUX.

That is true. The devil take
Such thinkers! I'll dispatch him.

BUTLER.

And would'st quiet
Thy conscience, thou hast nought to do but simply
Pull off the coat; so canst thou do the deed
With light heart and good spirits.

DEVEREUX.

You are right,
That did not strike me. I'll pull off the coat—
So there's an end of it.

MACDONALD.

Yes, but there's another
Point to be thought of.

BUTLER.

And what's that, Macdonald?

MACDON.

What avails sword or dagger against *him?*
He is not to be wounded—he is—

BUTLER (*starting up*).

What?

MACDON.

Safe against shot, and stab, and flesh! Hard frozen,
Secured and warranted by the black art!
His body is impenetrable, I tell you.

DEVEREUX.

In Ingolstadt there was just such another:
His whole skin was the same as steel; at last
We were obliged to beat him down with gun-stocks.

MACDON.

Hear what I'll do.

DEVEREUX.

Well.

MACDONALD.

In the cloister here
There's a Dominican, my countryman.
I'll make him dip my sword and pike for me
In holy water, and say over them
One of his strongest blessings. That's probatum!
Nothing can stand 'gainst that.

BUTLER.

So do, Macdonald!
But now go and select from out the regiment
Twenty or thirty able-bodied fellows,
And let them take the oaths to the Emperor.
Then when it strikes eleven, when the first rounds
Are pass'd, conduct them silently as may be
To the house—I will myself be not far off.

DEVEREUX.

But how do we get through Hartschier and Gordon,
That stand on guard there in the inner chamber?

BUTLER.

I have made myself acquainted with the place,
I lead you through a back door that's defended
By one man only. Me my rank and office
Give access to the Duke at every hour.
I'll go before you—with one poniard-stroke
Cut Hartschier's windpipe, and make way for you.

DEVEREUX.

And when we are there, by what means shall we gain
The Duke's bed-chamber, without his alarming
The servants of the Court? For he has here
A numerous company of followers.

BUTLER.

The attendants fill the right wing: he hates bustle,
And lodges in the left wing quite alone.

DEVEREUX.

Were it well over—hey, Macdonald? I
Feel queerly on the occasion, devil knows!

MACDON.

And I too. 'Tis too great a personage.
People will hold us for a brace of villains.

BUTLER.

In plenty, honor, splendor—you may safely
Laugh at the people's babble.

DEVEREUX.

If the business
Squares with one's honor—if that be quite certain—

BUTLER.

Set your hearts quite at ease. Ye save for Ferdinand
His crown and empire. The reward can be
No small one.

DEVEREUX.

And 'tis his purpose to dethrone the Emperor?

BUTLER.

Yes!—Yes!—to rob him of his crown and life.

DEVEREUX.

And he must fall by the executioner's hands,
Should we deliver him up to the Emperor
Alive?

BUTLER.

It were his certain destiny.

DEVEREUX.

Well! Well! Come then, Macdonald, he shall not
Lie long in pain.

[*Exeunt* BUTLER *through one door*, MACDONALD *and* DEVEREUX *through the other*.]

SCENE III

A Saloon, terminated by a Gallery which extends far into the background.

WALLENSTEIN *Sitting at a table. The* SWEDISH CAPTAIN *standing before him*.

WALLENST.

Commend me to your lord. I sympathize
In his good fortune; and if you have seen me
Deficient in the expressions; of that joy,
Which such a victory might well demand,
Attribute it to no lack of good will,
For henceforth are our fortunes one. Farewell,
And for your trouble take my thanks. Tomorrow
The citadel shall be surrendered to you
On your arrival.

[*The* SWEDISH CAPTAIN *retires*. WALLENSTEIN *sits lost in thought, his eyes fixed vacantly, and his head sustained by his hand. The* COUNTESS TERZKY *enters, stands before him for awhile, unobserved by him; at length he starts, sees her and recollects himself.*]

WALLENST.

Comest thou from her? Is she restored? How is she?

COUNTESS.

My sister tells me, she was more collected
After her conversation with the Swede.
She has now retired to rest.

WALLENSTEIN.

The pang will soften;
She will shed tears.

COUNTESS.

I find thee alter'd too,
My brother! After such a victory
I had expected to have found in thee
A cheerful spirit. O remain *thou* firm!
Sustain, uphold us! For our light thou art,
Our sun.

WALLENSTEIN.

Be quiet. I ail nothing. Where's Thy husband?

COUNTESS.

At a banquet—he and Illo.

WALLENSTEIN *(rises and strides across the saloon)*.

The night's far spent. Betake thee to thy chamber.

COUNTESS.

Bid me not go, O let me stay with thee!

WALLENSTEIN *(moves to the window)*.

There is a busy motion in the Heaven,
The wind doth chase the flag upon the tower,
Fast sweep the clouds, the sickle[34] of the moon,
Struggling, darts snatches of uncertain light;
No form of star is visible! That one
White stain of light, that single glimmering yonder,
Is from Cassiopeia, and therein
Is Jupiter.

(*A pause*).

But now The blackness of the troubled element hides him! [*He sinks into profound melancholy, and looks vacantly into the distance*.]

COUNTESS (*looks on him mournfully, then grasps his hand*).

What art thou brooding on?

WALLENSTEIN.

Methinks,
If I but saw him, 'twould be well with me.
He is the star of my nativity,

And often marvelously hath his aspect
Shot strength into my heart.

COUNTESS.

Thou'lt see him again.

WALLENSTEIN *(remains for a while, with, absent mind, then assumes a livelier manner, and turning suddenly to the* COUNTESS).

See him again? O never, never again!

COUNTESS.

How?

WALLENSTEIN.

He is gone—is dust.

COUNTESS.

Whom meanest thou, then?

WALLENST.

He, the more fortunate! yea, he hath finish'd!
For him there is no longer any future,
His life is bright—bright without spot it *was*,
And cannot cease to be. No ominous hour
Knocks at his door with tidings of mishap;
Far off is he, above desire and fear;
No more submitted to the change and chance
Of the unsteady planets. O 'tis well
With him! but who knows what the coming hour
Veil'd in thick darkness brings for us?

COUNTESS.

Thou speakest
Of Piccolomini. What was his death?
The courier had just left thee as I came.

[WALLENSTEIN *by a motion of his hand makes signs to her to be silent.*]

Turn not thine eyes upon the backward view,
Let us look forward into sunny days,
Welcome with joyous heart the victory,
Forget what it has cost thee. Not today,
For the first time, thy friend was to thee dead;
To thee he died, when first he parted from thee.

WALLENST.

This anguish will be wearied down,[35] I know;
What pang is permanent with man? From the highest,
As from the vilest thing of every day,
He learns to wean himself: for the strong hours
Conquer him. Yet I feel what I have lost
In him. The bloom is vanish'd from my life;
For O! he stood beside me, like my youth,
Transform'd for me the real to a dream,
Clothing the palpable and the familiar
With golden exhalations of the dawn.
Whatever fortunes wait my future toils,
The *beautiful* is vanish'd—and returns not.

COUNTESS.

O be not treacherous to thy own power.
Thy heart is rich enough to vivify
Itself. Thou lovest and prizest virtues in him,
The which thyself didst plant, thyself unfold.

WALLENSTEIN *(stepping to the door*).

Who interrupts us now at this late hour?
It is the Governor. He brings the keys
Of the Citadel. 'Tis midnight. Leave me, sister!

COUNTESS.

O 'tis so hard to me this night to leave thee—
A boding fear possesses me!

WALLENSTEIN.

Fear! Wherefore?

COUNTESS.

Shouldst thou depart this night, and we at waking
Never more find thee!

WALLENSTEIN.

Fancies!

COUNTESS.

O my soul
Has long been weigh'd down by these dark fore-bodings,
And if I combat and repel them waking,
They will crush down upon my heart in dreams.
I saw thee yesternight with thy first wife
Sit at a banquet, gorgeously attired.

WALLENST.

This was a dream of favorable omen,
That marriage being the founder of my fortunes.

COUNTESS.

Today I dreamt that I was seeking thee
In thy own chamber. As I enter'd, lo!
It was no more a chamber: the Chartreuse
At Gitschin 'twas, which thou thyself hast founded,
And where it is thy will that thou should'st be
Interr'd.

WALLENSTEIN.

Thy soul is busy with these thoughts.

COUNTESS.

What! dost thou not believe that oft in dreams
A voice of warning speaks prophetic to us?

WALTENST.

There is no doubt that there exist such voices;
Yet I would not call *them*
Voices of warning that announce to us
Only the inevitable. As the sun,
Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image
In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits
Of great events stride on before the events,
And in today already walks tomorrow.
That which we read of the fourth Henry's death
Did ever vex and haunt me like a tale
Of my own future destiny. The king
Felt in his breast the phantom of the knife,
Long ere Ravaillac arm'd himself therewith.
His quiet mind forsook him: the phantasma
Started him in his Louvre, chased him forth
Into the open air: like funeral knells
Sounded that coronation festival;
And still with boding sense he heard the tread
Of those feet that even then were seeking him
Throughout the streets of Paris.

COUNTESS.

And to *thee*
The voice within thy soul bodes nothing?

WALLENSTEIN.

Nothing.
Be wholly tranquil.

COUNTESS.

And another time
I hasten'd after thee, and thou ran'st from me
Through a long suite, through many a spacious hall.
There seem'd no end of it: doors creak'd and clapp'd;
I follow'd panting, but could not o'ertake thee;
When on a sudden did I feel myself

Grasp'd from behind—the hand was cold that grasped me—
'Twas thou, and thou didst kiss me, and there seem'd
A crimson covering to envelop us.

WALLENST. That is the crimson tapestry of my chamber.

COUNTESS *(gazing on him).*
If it should come to that—if I should see thee,
Who standest now before me in the fulness
Of life—

[She falls on his breast and weeps.]

WALLENST.

The Emperor's proclamation weighs upon thee—
Alphabets wound not—and he finds no hands.

COUNTESS.

If he *should* find them, my resolve is taken—
I bear about me my support and refuge.

[*Exit* COUNTESS.]

SCENE IV

WALLENSTEIN, GORDON

WALLENST.

All quiet in the town?

GORDON.

The town is quiet.

WALLENST.

I hear a boisterous music! and the Castle
Is lighted up. Who are the revellers?

GORDON.

There is a banquet given at the Castle
To the Count Terzky and Field Marshal Illo.

WALLENST.

In honor of the victory—This tribe
Can show their joy in nothing else but feasting.

[*Rings. The* GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *enters*.]

Unrobe me. I will lay me down to sleep.

[WALLENSTEIN *takes the keys from* GORDON.]

So we are guarded from all enemies,
And shut in with sure friends;
For all must cheat me, or a face like this

[*Fixing his eye on* GORDON.]

Was ne'er a hypocrite's mask.

[*The* GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *takes off his mantle, collar, and scarf.*]

WALLENSTEIN.

Take care—what is that?

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER.

The golden chain is snapped in two.

WALLENST.

Well, it has lasted long enough. Here—give it.

[*He takes and looks at the chain*.]

'Twas the first present of the Emperor.
He hung it round me in the war of Friule,
He being then Archduke; and I have worn it
Till now from habit—

From superstition, if you will. Belike,
It was to be a talisman to me;
And while I wore it on my neck in faith,
It was to chain to me all my life long
The volatile fortune, whose first pledge it was—
Well, be it so! Henceforward a new fortune
Must spring up for me; for the potency
Of this charm is dissolved.

[GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *retires with the vestments*. WALLENSTEIN *rises, takes a stride across the room, and stands at last before* GORDON *in a posture of meditation*.]

How the old time returns upon me! I
Behold myself once more at Burgau, where
We two were Pages of the Court together.
We oftentimes disputed: thy intention
Was ever good; but thou wert wont to play
The Moralist and Preacher, and wouldst rail at me—
That I strove after things too high for me,
Giving my faith to bold unlawful dreams,
And still extol to me the golden mean—
Thy wisdom hath been proved a thriftless friend
To thy own self. See, it has made thee early
A superannuated man, and (but
That my munificent stars will intervene)
Would let thee in some miserable corner
Go out like an untended lamp.

GORDON.

My Prince!
With light heart the poor fisher moors his boat,
And watches from the shore the lofty ship
Stranded amid the storm.

WALLENSTEIN.

Art thou already
In harbor then, old man? Well! I am not.

The unconquer'd spirit drives me o'er life's billows;
My planks still firm, my canvas swelling proudly.
Hope is my goddess still, and Youth my inmate;
And while we stand thus front to front almost
I might presume to say that the swift years
Have passed by powerless o'er my unblanched hair.

[He moves with long strides across the Saloon, and remains on the opposite side over against GORDON.]

Who now persists in calling Fortune false?
To me she has proved faithful; with fond love
Took me from out the common ranks of men,
And like a mother goddess, with strong arm
Carried me swiftly up the steps of life.
Nothing is common in my destiny,
Nor in the furrows of my hand. Who dares
Interpret then my life for me as 'twere
One of the undistinguishable many?
True, in this present moment I appear
Fallen low indeed; but I shall rise again.
The high flood will soon follow on this ebb;
The fountain of my fortune, which now stops
Repress'd and bound by some malicious star,
Will soon in joy play forth from all its pipes.

GORDON.

And yet remember I the good old proverb,
"Let the night come before we praise the day."
I would be slow from long-continued fortune
To gather hope: for Hope is the companion
Given to the unfortunate by pitying Heaven.
Fear hovers round the head of prosperous men;
For still unsteady are the scales of fate.

WALLENSTEIN *(smiling*).

I hear the very Gordon that of old
Was wont to preach, now once more preaching;
I know well that all sublunary things
Are still the vassals of vicissitude.
The unpropitious gods demand their tribute;
This long ago the ancient Pagans knew:
And therefore of their own accord they offer'd
To themselves injuries, so to atone
The jealousy of their divinities:
And human sacrifices bled to Typhon.

[*After a pause, serious, and in a more subdued manner.*]

I too have sacrificed to him—For me
There fell the dearest friend, and through my fault
He fell! No joy from favorable fortune
Can overweight the anguish of this stroke.
The envy of my destiny is glutted
Life pays for life. On his pure head the lightning
Was drawn off which would else have shatter'd *me*.

SCENE V

To these enter SENI

WALLENST.

Is not that Seni! and beside himself,
If one may trust his looks? What brings thee hither
At this late hour, Baptista?

SENI.

Terror, Duke!
On thy account.

WALLENSTEIN.

What now?

SENI.

Flee ere the day break!
Trust not thy person to the Swedes!

WALLENSTEIN.

What now
Is in thy thoughts?

SENI (*with louder voice*).

Trust not thy person to the Swedes.

WALLENSTEIN.

What is it, then?

SENI (*still more urgently*).

O wait not the arrival of these Swedes!
An evil near at hand is threatening thee
From false friends. All the signs stand full of horror!
Near, near at hand the net-work of perdition—
Yea, even now 'tis being cast around thee!

WALLENST.

Baptista, thou art dreaming!—Fear befools thee.

SENI.

Believe not that an empty fear deludes me.
Come, read it in the planetary aspects;
Read it thyself that ruin threatens thee
From false friends.

WALLENSTEIN.

From the falseness of my friends
Has risen the whole of my unprosperous fortunes.
The warning should have come before! At present
I need no revelation from the stars
To know that.

SENI.

Come and see! trust thine own eyes!
A fearful sign stands in the house of life—
An enemy; a fiend lurks close behind
The radiance of thy planet.—O be warn'd!
Deliver not up thyself to these heathens,
To wage a war against our holy church.

WALLENSTEIN (*laughing gently*).

The oracle rails that way! Yes, yes! Now
I recollect. This junction with the Swedes
Did never please thee—lay thyself to sleep,
Baptista! Signs like these I do not fear.

GORDON (*who during the whole of this dialogue has shown marks of extreme agitation, and now turns to* WALLENSTEIN).

My Duke and General! May I dare presume?

WALLENST.

Speak freely.

[Illustration: WALLENSTEIN WARNED BY HIS FRIENDS
As performed at the Municipal Theatre, Hamburg, 1906]

GORDON.

What if 'twere no mere creation
Of fear, if God's high providence vouchsafed
To interpose its aid for your deliverance,
And made that mouth its organ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye're both feverish!
How can mishap come to me from the Swedes!
They sought this junction with me—'tis their interest.

GORDON *(with difficulty suppressing his emotion)*.

But what if the arrival of these Swedes—
What if this were the very thing that wing'd
The ruin that is flying to your temples?

[*Flings himself at his feet*.]

There is yet time, my Prince.

SENI.

O hear him! hear him!

GORDON *(rises)*.

The Rhinegrave's still far off. Give but the orders,
This citadel shall close its gates upon him.
If then he will besiege us, let him try it.
But this I say; he'll find his own destruction
With his whole force before these ramparts, sooner
Than weary down the valor of our spirit.
He shall experience what a band of heroes,
Inspirited by an heroic leader,
Is able to perform. And if indeed
It be thy serious wish to make amend
For that which thou hast done amiss—this, this
Will touch and reconcile the Emperor,
Who gladly turns his heart to thoughts of mercy
And Friedland, who returns repentant to him,
Will stand yet higher in his Emperor's favor
Than e'er he stood when he had never fallen.

WALLENSTEIN (*contemplates him with surprise, remains awhile, betraying strong emotion*).

Gordon—your zeal and fervor lead you far.
Well, well—an old friend has a privilege.
Blood, Gordon, has been flowing. Never, never
Can the Emperor pardon me; and if he could,
Yet I—I never could let myself be pardon'd.
Had I foreknown what now has taken place,
That he, my dearest friend, would fall for me

My first death-offering; and had the heart
Spoken to me, as now it has done—Gordon,
It may be, I might have bethought myself;
It may be too, I might not. Might or might not
Is now an idle question. All too seriously
Has it begun to end in nothing, Gordon!
Let it then have its course.

[*Stepping to the window.*]

All dark and silent-at the castle too
All is now hush'd—Light me, Chamberlain!

[*The* GROOM OF THE CHAMBER, *who had entered during the last dialogue, and had been standing at a distance and listening to it with visible expressions of the deepest interest, advances in extreme agitation, and throws himself at the* DUKE'S *feet.*]

And thou too! But I know why thou dost wish
My reconcilement with the Emperor.
Poor man! he hath a small estate in Carinthia,
And fears it will be forfeited because
He's in my service. Am I then so poor
That I no longer can indemnify
My servants? Well! to no one I employ
Means of compulsion. If 'tis thy belief
That fortune has fled from me, go! forsake me.
This night for the last time mayst thou unrobe me,
And then go over to thy Emperor.
Gordon, good night! I think to make a long
Sleep of it: for the struggle and the turmoil
Of this last day or two was great. May't please you!
Take care that they awake me not too early.

[*Exit* WALLENSTEIN, *the* GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *lighting him.*SENI *follows,* GORDON *remains on the darkened stage, following the* DUKE *with his eye, till he disappears at the farther end of the gallery: then by his gestures the old man expresses the depth of his anguish and stands leaning against a pillar.*]

SCENE VI

GORDON, BUTLER (*at first behind the scenes*)

BUTLER (*not yet come into view of the stage*).

Here stand in silence till I give the signal.

GORDON (*starts up*).

'Tis he! he has already brought the murderers.

BUTLER.

The lights are out. All lies in profound sleep.

GORDON. What shall I do? Shall I attempt to save him?
Shall I call up the house? alarm the guards?

BUTLER (*appears, but scarcely on the stage*).

A light gleams hither from the corridor.
It leads directly to the Duke's bed-chamber.

GORDON.

But then I break my oath to the Emperor;
If he escape and strengthen the enemy,
Do I not hereby call down on my head
All the dread consequences?

BUTLER (*stepping forward*).

Hark! Who speaks there?

GORDON.

'Tis better, I resign it to the hands
Of Providence. For what am I, that I
Should take upon myself so great a deed?
I have not murdered him, if he be murder'd;
But all his rescue were *my* act and deed;

Mine—and whatever be the consequences,
I must sustain them.

BUTLER (*advances*).

I should know that voice.

GORDON.

Butler!

BUTLER.

'Tis Gordon. What do *you* want here?
Was it so late then, when the Duke dismiss'd you?

GORDON.

Your hand bound up and in a scarf?

BUTLER.

'Tis wounded.
That Illo fought as he were frantic, till
At last we threw him on the ground.

GORDON (*shuddering*). Both dead?

BUTLER.

Is he in bed?

GORDON.

Ah, Butler!

BUTLER.

Is he? speak.

GORDON.

He shall *not* perish! Not through you! The Heaven
Refuses *your* arm. See—'tis wounded!—

BUTLER.

There is no need of my arm.

GORDON.

The most guilty
Have perish'd, and enough is given to justice.

[*The* GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *advances from the Gallery with his finger on his mouth commanding silence*.]

GORDON.

He sleeps! O murder not the holy sleep!

BUTLER.

No! he shall die awake.

[*Is going*.]

GORDON.

His heart still cleaves
To earthly things: he's not prepared to step
Into the presence of his God!

BUTLER (*going*).

God's merciful!

GORDON (*holds him*).

Grant him but this night's respite.

BUTLER (*hurrying off*)

The next moment
May ruin all.

GORDON *(holds him still*).

One hour!—

BUTLER. Unhold me! What
Can that short respite profit him?

[Illustration: DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN Karl von Piloty]

GORDON.

O—Time
Works miracles. In one hour many thousands
Of grains of sand run out; and quick as they,
Thought follows thought within the human soul.
Only one hour! *Your* heart may change its purpose,
His heart may change its purpose—some new tidings
May come; some fortunate event, decisive,
May fall from Heaven and rescue him. O what
May not one hour achieve!

BUTLER.

You but remind me,
How precious every minute is!

[*He stamps on the floor*.]

SCENE VII

To these enter MACDONALD *and* DEVEREUX, *with the* HALBERDIERS

GORDON (*throwing himself between him and them*).

No, monster!
First over my dead body thou shalt tread.
I will not live to see the accursed deed!

BUTLER (*forcing him out of the way*).

Weak-hearted dotard!

[*Trumpets are heard in the distance*.]

DEVEREUX *and* MACDONALD.

Hark! the Swedish trumpets! The Swedes before the ramparts! Let us hasten!

GORDON (*rushes out*).

O, God of mercy!

BUTLER (*calling after him*).

Governor, to your post!

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER (*hurries in*).

Who dares make larum here? Hush! The Duke sleeps.

DEVEREUX (*with loud harsh voice*).

Friend, it is time now to make larum.

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER.

Help! Murder!

BUTLER.

Down with him!

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER (*run through the body by* DEVEREUX, *falls at the entrance of the Gallery*).

Jesus Maria!

BUTLER.

Burst the doors open.

[*They rush over the body into the Gallery—two doors are heard to crash one after the other.—Voices, deadened by the distance—clash of arms—then all at once a profound silence.*]

SCENE VIII

COUNTESS TERZKY (*with a light*).

Her bed-chamber is empty; she herself
Is nowhere to be found! The Neubrunn too,
Who watch'd by her, is missing. If she should
Be flown—but whither flown? We must call up
Every soul in the house. How will the Duke
Bear up against these worst bad tidings? O
If that my husband now were but return'd
Home from the banquet!—Hark! I wonder whether
The Duke is still awake! I thought I heard
Voices and tread of feet here! I will go
And listen at the door. Hark! what is that?
'Tis hastening up the steps!

SCENE IX

COUNTESS, GORDON

GORDON (*rushes in out of breath*).

'Tis a mistake!
'Tis not the Swedes—Ye must proceed no further
Butler!—O God! where is he?

GORDON (*observing the* COUNTESS).

Countess! Say—

COUNTESS.

You are come then from the castle? Where's my husband?

GORDON (*in an agony of affright)*.

Your husband!—Ask not!—To the Duke—

COUNTESS.

Not till
You have discover'd to me—

GORDON.

On this moment
Does the world hang. For God's sake! to the Duke.
While we are speaking—

[*Calling loudly*.]

Butler! Butler! God!

COUNTESS.

Why, he is at the castle with my husband.

[BUTLER *comes from the Gallery*.]

GORDON.

'Twas a mistake—'Tis not the Swedes—it is
The Imperialists' Lieutenant-General
Has sent me hither—will be here himself
Instantly.—You must not proceed.

BUTLER.

He comes
Too late.

[GORDON *dashes himself against the wall*.]

GORDON.

O God of mercy!

COUNTESS.

What too late?
Who will be here himself? Octavio
In Egra? Treason! Treason!—Where's the
Duke?

[*She rushes to the Gallery*.]

SCENE X

Servants run across the Stage, full of terror. The whole Scene must be spoken entirely without pauses.

SENI (*from the Gallery*).

A bloody, frightful deed!

COUNTESS.

What is it, Seni?

PAGE (*from the Gallery*).

O piteous sight!

[*Other servants hasten in with torches*.]

COUNTESS.

What is it? For God's sake!

SENI.

And do you ask?
Within, the Duke lies murder'd—and your husband
Assassinated at the Castle.

[*The* COUNTESS *stands motionless*.]

FEMALE SERVANT (*rushing across the stage*).

Help! help! the Duchess!

BURGOMASTER (*enters*).

What mean these confused
Loud cries that wake the sleepers of this house?

GORDON.

Your house is cursed to all eternity.
In your house doth the Duke lie murder'd!

BURGOMASTER (*rushing out*).

Heaven forbid!

1ST SERV.

Fly! fly! they murder us all!

SECOND SERVANT (*carrying silver plate*).

That way! the lower Passages are block'd up.

VOICE (*from behind the Scene*).

Make room for the Lieutenant-General!

[*At these words the* COUNTESS *starts from her stupor, collects herself, and retires suddenly*.]

VOICE (*from behind the Scene*).

Keep back the people! Guard the door!

SCENE XI

To these enter OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI *with all his train. At the same time* DEVEREUX *and* MACDONALD *enter from out the Corridor with the Halberdiers*.—WALLENSTEIN'S *dead body is carried over the back part of the stage, wrapped in a piece of crimson tapestry*.

OCTAVIO (*entering abruptly*).

It must not be! It is not possible! Butler! Gordon! I'll not believe it. Say no!

[GORDON, *without answering, points with his hand to the body of* WALLENSTEIN *as it is carried over the back of the stage*. OCTAVIO *looks that way, and stands overpowered with horror*.]

DEVEREUX (*to* BUTLER).

Here is the golden fleece—the Duke's Sword—

MACRON.

Is it your order—

BUTLER (*pointing to* OCTAVIO).

Here stands he who now
Hath the sole power to issue orders.

[DEVEREUx *and* MACDONALD *retire with marks of obeisance. One drops away after the other, till only* BUTLER, OCTAVIO, *and* GORDON *remain on the stage.]*

OCTAVIO (*turning to* BUTLER).

Was that my purpose, Butler, when we parted?
O God of Justice!
To thee I lift my hand! I am not guilty
Of this foul deed.

BUTLER.

Your *hand* is pure. You have
Avail'd yourself of mine.

OCTAVIO.

Merciless man!
Thus to abuse the orders of thy Lord—
And stain thy Emperor's holy name with murder,
With bloody, most accursed assassination!

BUTLER (*calmly*).

I've but fulfilled the Emperor's own sentence.

OCTAVIO.

O curse of Kings,
Infusing a dread life into their words,
And linking to the sudden transient thought
The unchanging irrevocable deed.
Was there necessity for such an eager
Dispatch? Couldst thou not grant the merciful

A time for mercy? Time is man's good Angel.
To leave no interval between the sentence,
And the fulfilment of it, doth beseem
God only, the immutable!

BUTLER.

For what
Rail you against me? What is my offense?
The Empire from a fearful enemy
Have I deliver'd, and expect reward;
The single difference betwixt you and me
Is this: you placed the arrow in the bow:
I pull'd the string. You sow'd blood, and yet stand
Astonish'd that blood is come up. I always
Knew what I did, and therefore no result
Hath power to frighten or surprise my spirit.
Have you aught else to order; for this instant
I make my best speed to Vienna; place
My bleeding sword before my Emperor's throne,
And hope to gain the applause which undelaying
And punctual obedience may demand
From a just judge.

[*Exit* BUTLER.]

SCENE XII

To these enter the COUNTESS TERZKY, *pale and disordered. Her utterance is slow and feeble, and unimpassioned*.

OCTAVIO (*meeting her*).

O, Countess Terzky! These are the results
Of luckless unblest deeds.

COUNTESS.

They are the fruits
Of your contrivances. The Duke is dead,
My husband too is dead, the Duchess struggles

In the pangs of death, my niece has disappear'd,
This house of splendor, and of princely glory,
Doth now stand desolated: the affrighted servants
Rush forth through all its doors. I am the last
Therein; I shut it up, and here deliver
The keys.

OCTAVIO (*with a deep anguish*).

O Countess! my house, too, is desolate.

COUNTESS.

Who next is to be murder'd? Who is next
To be maltreated? Lo! the Duke is dead,
The Emperor's vengeance may be pacified!
Spare the old servants; let not their fidelity
Be imputed to the faithful as a crime—
The evil destiny surprised my brother
Too suddenly: he could not think on them.

OCTAVIO.

Speak not of vengeance! Speak not of maltreatment!
The Emperor is appeased; the heavy fault
Hath heavily been expiated—nothing
Descended from the father to the daughter,
Except his glory and his services.
The Empress honors your adversity,
Takes part in your afflictions, opens to you
Her motherly arms! Therefore, no farther fears;
Yield yourself up in hope and confidence
To the Imperial Grace!

COUNTESS. (*with her eye raised to heaven*).

To the grace and mercy of a greater Master
Do I yield up myself. Where shall the body
Of the Duke have its place of final rest?
In the Chartreuse, which he himself did found
At Gitschin, rests the Countess Wallenstein;

And by her side, to whom he was indebted
For his first fortunes, gratefully he wish'd
He might sometime repose in death! O let him
Be buried there. And likewise, for my husband's
Remains, I ask the like grace. The Emperor
Is now the proprietor of all our castles.
This sure may well be granted us—one sepulchre
Beside the sepulchres of our forefathers!

OCTAVIO.

Countess, you tremble, you turn pale!

COUNTESS *(re-assembles all her powers, and speaks with energy and dignity)*.

You think
More worthily of me than to believe
I would survive the downfall of my house.
We did not hold ourselves too mean to grasp
After a monarch's crown—the crown did fate
Deny, but not the feeling and the spirit
That to the crown belong! We deem a
Courageous death more worthy of our free station
Than a dishonor'd life.—I have taken poison.

OCTAVIO.

Help! Help! Support her!

COUNTESS.

Nay, it is too late,
In a few moments is my fate accomplish'd.

[*Exit* COUNTESS.]

GORDON.

O house of death and horrors!

[*An* OFFICER *enters, and brings a letter with the great seal*. GORDON *steps forward and meets him.*]

What is this?
It is the Imperial Seal.

[*He reads the address, and delivers the letter to* OCTAVIO *with a look of reproach, and with an emphasis on the word.*]

To the *Prince* Piccolomini.

[OCTAVIO, *with his whole frame expressive of sudden anguish, raises his eyes to heaven*.]

[*The Curtain drops.*]

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 22: Thomas: The Life and Works of Schiller, p. 330.]

[Footnote 23: Permission The Macmillan Co., New York, and G. Bell & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 24: A great stone near Lützen, since called the Swede's Stone, the body of their great king having been found at the foot of it, after the battle in which he lost his life.]

[Footnote 25: Could I have hazarded such a Germanism as the use of the word after-world, for posterity—"Es spreche Welt und *Nachwelt* meinen Namen" might have been rendered with more literal fidelity:—Let world and after-world speak out my name, etc.]

[Footnote 26: I have not ventured to affront the fastidious delicacy of our age with a literal translation of this line,

werth
Die Eingeweide schaudernd aufzureger.]

[Footnote 27: Anspessade, in German Gefreiter, a soldier inferior to a corporal, but above the sentinels. The German name implies that he is exempt from mounting guard.]

[Footnote 28: I have here ventured to omit a considerable number of lines. I fear that I should not have done amiss, had I taken this liberty more frequently. It is, however, incumbent on me to give the original, with a literal translation.

Weh denen, die auf Dich vertraun, an Dich
Die sichre Hütte illres Glückes lehnen,
Gelockt von deiner geistlichen Gestalt.
Schnell unverhofft, bei nächtlich stiller Weile
Gährts in dem tückschen Feuerschlunde, ladet
Sich aus mit tobender Gewalt, und weg
Treibt über alle Pflanzungen der Menschen
Der Wilde Strom in grausender Zerstörung.

WALLENSTEIN.

Du schilderst deines Vaters Herz. Wie Du's
Beschreibst, so ist's in seinem Eingeweide,
In dieser schwarzen Heuchlers Brust gestaltet.
O, mich hat Höllenkunst getäuscht! Mir sandte
Der Abgrund den verflecktesten der Geister,
Den Lügenkundigsten herauf, and stellt' ihn
Als Freund an meiner Seite. Wer vermag
Der Hölle Macht zu widerstehn! Ich zog
Den Basilisken auf an meinem Busen,
Mit meinem Herzblut nährt ich ihn, er sog
Sich schwelgend voll an meiner Liebe Brüsten,
Ich hatte nimmer Arges gegen ihn,
Weit offen liess ich des Gedankens Thore,
Und warf die Schlüssel weiser Vorsicht weg,
Am Sternenhimmel, etc.

LITERAL TRANSLATION

Alas! for those who place their confidence on thee, against thee lean the secure hut of their happiness, allured by thy hospitable form. Suddenly, unexpectedly, in a moment still as night, there is a fermentation in the treacherous gulf of fire; it discharges itself with raging force, and away over all the plantations of men drives the wild stream in frightful devastation.—WALLENSTEIN. Thou art portraying thy father's heart; as thou describest, even so is it shaped in his entrails, in this black hypocrite's breast. O, the art of hell has deceived me! The Abyss sent up to me the

most spotted of the spirits, the most skilful in lies, and placed him as a friend by my side. Who may withstand the power of hell? I took the basilisk to my bosom, with my heart's blood I nourished him; he sucked himself glutfull at the breasts of my love. I never harbored evil toward him; wide open did I leave the door of my thoughts; I threw away the key of wise foresight. In the starry heaven, etc.—We find a difficulty in believing this to have been written by Schiller.]

[Footnote 29: This is a poor and inadequate translation of the affectionate simplicity of the original—

Sie alle waren Fremdlinge; *Du* warst
Das Kind des Hauses.

Indeed the whole speech is in the best style of Massinger. *O si sic omnia!*]

[Footnote 30: It appears that the account of his conversion being caused by such a fall, and other stories of his juvenile character, are not well authenticated.]

[Footnote 31: We doubt the propriety of putting so blasphemous a statement in the mouth of any character.—T.]

[Footnote 32: This soliloquy, which, according to the former arrangement; constituted the whole of Scene IX., and concluded the Fourth Act, is omitted in all the printed German editions. It seems probable that it existed in the original manuscript from which Mr. Coleridge translated.—Ed.]

[Footnote 33: The soliloquy of Thekla consists in the original of six-and-twenty lines, twenty of which are in rhymes of irregular recurrence. I thought it prudent to abridge it. Indeed the whole scene between Thekla and Lady Neubrunn might, perhaps have been omitted without injury to the play.—C.]

[Footnote 34: These four lines are expressed in the original with exquisite felicity—

Am Himmel ist geschäftige Bewegung.
Des Thurmes Fahne jagt der Wind, schnell geht
Der Wolken Zug, die *Mondessichel wankt*,
Und durch die Nacht zuckt ungewisse Helle.

The word "moon-sickle," reminds me of a passage in Harris, as quoted by Johnson, under the word "falcated." "The enlightened part of the moon appears in the form of a

sickle or reaping-hook, which is while she is moving from the conjunction to the opposition, or from the new moon to the full: but from full to a new again, the enlightened part appears gibbous, and the dark *falcated*."

The words "wanken" and "schweben" are not easily translated. The English words, by which we attempt to render them, are either vulgar or pedantic, or not of sufficiently general application. So "der Wolken Zug"—literally, The Draft, the Procession of clouds; freely—The Masses of the Clouds sweep onward in swift *stream*.]

[Footnote 35: A very inadequate translation of the original—

Verschmerzen werd' ich diesen Schlag, das weiss ich,
Denn was verschmerzte nicht der Mensch!

LITERALLY.

I shall *grieve down* this blow, of that I'm conscious:
What does not man grieve down?]

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION TO WILLIAM TELL

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William Tell is the last complete drama written by Schiller, finished February 18, 1804, in the author's forty-fifth year and something over a year before his death. After this he completed only a pageant, *The Homage of the Arts*, although he was occupied with many plans for other plays, including *Demetrius*, founded on the career of the Russian pretender of this name, of which he left the first act. *William Tell* is the last of Schiller's five great dramas, a series beginning with *Wallenstein*, written within nine years, constituting, along with his ballads and many other poems, the work of what is called his "third period." This period was preceded by Schiller's chief prose works and the historical and philosophical studies preparatory thereto, together with considerable

reading of Greek and English classics, notably Homer and Shakespeare. The influence of his historical and critical studies and of this reading is evident in the dramas: *Wallenstein, Maria Stuart, The Maid of Orleans, The Bride of Messina, William Tell*. But of these, *William Tell* stands apart in several ways.

For all of them Schiller made careful preliminary studies, but for none in such detail as for *Tell*. He had not only a remote historical material to deal with, but also a land and customs which he had never seen and which nevertheless he wished to present with great fidelity. His chief source was the Swiss chronicler Tschudi, of the sixteenth century, from whom he took not only the main features of his action, but many touches of scenery and much actual phraseology. In addition he studied the Swiss historian Johannes von Mueller, maps and natural histories of Switzerland, and received also some oral notes from Goethe, to whom, in fact, he owed the original suggestion of dramatizing the story of William Tell.

Unlike the other dramas of Schiller's last period, *William Tell* has no plot in the technical dramatic sense. There is no snare of circumstances laid which forces a hero, after vain attempts to elude or unloose it, to tear his way out at the cost of more or less innocent lives. We see the representatives of three small, freedom-loving democracies pushed beyond endurance by the outrages of tyranny, pledging mutual support in resisting these encroachments upon their liberties, and carrying out a successful resistance, aided by the wholly fortuitous assassination of the tyrannical emperor. We see, as a single instance of these oppressions, the arrogant caprice of the bailiff Gessler in demanding homage to the Austrian hat, his jealousy of the freeman Tell expressed in imposing as a penalty for neglected obeisance the shooting of an apple from his little son's head, the successful meeting of this test, and in turn Tell's vengeance through the exercise of this same prowess in shooting Gessler as he rides home through the Hohle Gasse. Mingled with these elements we see the patriotic support of the common people by a native noblewoman, Bertha von Brunneck, and her successful effort to win to this cause, through his love for her, the young Baron von Rudenz, whose uncle Attinghausen, always loyal to his people, hears in dying the news of his nephew's conversion, while with his last breath he prophesies the triumph of liberty. These three threads are woven into a single pattern through the element of the common cause. This is the unity of the action, which many critics have found wanting in the play. Moreover these three plans of action coöperate, if not by deliberate foresight, yet by coincidence of time and purpose, and in some measure by common personages.

The theme of *William Tell* had been used as early as the sixteenth century in one of the early popular pageants with which the modern German drama begins. These pageants occupied the whole of several days in presentation and employed, including all supernumeraries, as high as three hundred people. Schiller knew the old Tell Play and imbibed something of its spirit. He uses masses of populace in *William Tell* as in no other of his plays except the *Camp* of the *Wallenstein* trilogy. It may be that the influence of the old popular play together with the nature of his material led him to dispense here with the unity of action, the plot, and the expression of tragic guilt, which may be found in all his other later plays.

Along with keen appreciation, such as A.W. Schlegel's comment: "Imbued with the poetry of history, with a treatment true to nature and genuine, and, considering the poet's unfamiliarity with the country, astonishingly correct in local color," *William Tell* met from the first much adverse criticism. This applied first of all to the looseness of connection already cited between the various elements of the action, and further, to the supposed superfluousness of the Parricide episode in the Fifth Act, to the alleged unnaturalness of Tell's long speeches and to the ignoble nature of his assault upon Gessler from ambush. The last was given the poet in the legend of Tell, which in general he took over with pious reverence as authentic history. The Parricide episode was introduced, partly because it was actually there in history and helped to complete the victory of the peasants' cause, partly in order to give a better color to Tell's own act, as being less prompted by selfish considerations. The criticism of Tell's speeches, whether his pithy, epigrammatic sentences in Act I, Scenes 1 and 3, and elsewhere, or his long monologue in Act IV, Scene 3, applies to the whole constitution of the conventional stage with just as much validity against Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and *Hamlet* as against *William Tell*. True, it is not plausible that Tell recited 100 lines of beautiful poetry while lying in wait for Gessler; neither is it likely that Prince Hamlet talked to himself in pentameters.

In general this play is more objective than Schiller's other plays, and this was a quality which he admired in Goethe's work and strove for in his own. Despite the technical criticisms, we find that the play is filled with beautiful descriptions and noble sentiments nobly expressed. On the stage most of the scenes are exceedingly fascinating and effective. These beauties are quite sufficient to hide the lack of unity, and the total effect with the majority of the people is a high esthetic and ethical gratification. The play has remained one of the most popular pieces on the German stage and has had an incalculable effect in the cultivation of national feeling.

* * * * *

WILLIAM TELL

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

HERMANN GESSLER, *Governor of Schwytz and Uri*.

WERNER, *Baron of Attinghausen, free noble of Switzerland*.

ULRICH VON RUDENZ, *his Nephew*.

WERNER STAUFFACHER, }
CONRAD HUNN, }
HANS AUF DER MAUER, }
JORG IM HOFE, } *People of Schwytz*.
ULRICH DER SCHMIDT, }
JOST VON WEILER, }
ITEL REDING, }

WALTER FÜRST,
WILLIAM TELL, }
RÖSSELMANN, *the Priest*,}
PETERMANN, *Sacristan*, } *of Uri*.
KUONI, *Herdsman*, }
WERNI, *Huntsman*, }
RUODI, *Fisherman*, }

ARNOLD OF MELCHTHAL,
CONRAD BAUMGARTEN, }
MEYER VON SARNEN, }
STRUTH VON WINKELRIED, } *of Unterwald*.
KLAUS VON DER FLUE, }
BURKHART AM BUHEL, }
ARNOLD VON SEWA, }

PFEIFFER OF LUCERNE.

KUNZ OF GERSAU.

JENNI, *Fisherman's son*.

SEPPI, *Herdsman's son*.

GERTRUDE, *Stauffacher's wife*.

HEDWIG, *wife of Tell, daughter of Fürst*.

BERTHA OF BRUNECK, *a rich heiress*.

ARMGART, }
MECHTHILD, }
ELSBETH, } *Peasant women*.
HILDEGARD, }

WALTER, } *Tell's Sons*.
WILLIAM, }

FRIESSHARDT, } *Soldiers*.
LEUTHOLD, }

RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, *Gessler's master of the horse*.

JOHANNES PARRICIDA, *Duke of Suabia*.

STUSSI, *Overseer*.

THE MAYOR OF URI.

A COURIER.

MASTER STONEMASON, COMPANION AND WORKMEN.

TASKMASTER.

A CRIER.

MONKS OF THE ORDER OF CHARITY.

HORSEMEN OF GESSLER AND LANDENDERG.

MANY PEASANTS; MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE WALDSTETTEN.

WILLIAM TELL (1804)[36]

TRANSLATED BY SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B, LL.D.

ACT I

SCENE I

A high rocky shore of the lake of Lucerne opposite Schwytz. The lake makes a bend into the land; a hut stands at a short distance from the shore; the fisher boy is rowing about in his boat. Beyond the lake are seen the green meadows, the hamlets and farms of Schwytz, lying in the clear sunshine. On the left are observed the peaks of the Hacken, surrounded with clouds; to the right, and in the remote distance, appear the Glaciers. The Ranz des Vaches, and the tinkling of cattle bells, continue for some time after the rising of the curtain.

FISHER BOY (*sings in his boat*) *Melody of the Ranz des Vaches*

The smile-dimpled lake woo'd to bathe in its deep,
A boy on its green shore had laid him to sleep;
Then heard he a melody
Floating along,
Sweet as the notes
Of an angel's song.
And as thrilling with pleasure he wakes from his rest,
The waters are rippling over his breast;
And a voice from the deep cries,
"With me thou must go,
I charm the young shepherd,
I lure him below."

HERDSMAN (*on the mountains*) *Air—Variation of the Ranz des Vaches*

Farewell, ye green meadows,
Farewell, sunny shore,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is o'er.
We go to the hills, but you'll see us again,
When the cuckoo calls, and the merry birds sing,

When the flowers bloom afresh in glade and in glen,
And the brooks sparkle bright in the sunshine of Spring.
Farewell, ye green meadows,
Farewell, sunny shore,
The herdsman must leave you,
The summer is o'er.

CHAMOIS HUNTER (*appearing on the top of a cliff*)
Second Variation of the Ranz des Vaches

On the heights peals the thunder, and trembles the bridge,
The huntsman bounds on by the dizzying ridge.
Undaunted he hies him
O'er ice-covered wild,
Where leaf never budded,
Nor Spring ever smiled;
And beneath him an ocean of mist, where his eye
No longer the dwellings of man can espy;
Through the parting clouds only
The earth can be seen;
Far down 'neath the vapor
The meadows of green.

[*A change comes over the landscape. A rumbling, cracking noise is heard among the mountains. Shadows of clouds sweep across the scene*.]

[RUODI, *the fisherman, comes out of his cottage*. WERNI, *the huntsman, descends from the rocks*. KUONI, *the shepherd, enters, with a milkpail on his shoulders, followed by* SEPPI, *his assistant*.]

RUODI.

Come, Jenni, bustle, get the boat on shore.
The grizzly Vale-King[37] comes, the Glaciers moan,
The Mytenstein[38] is drawing on his hood,
And from the Stormcleft chilly blows the wind;
The storm will burst, before we know what's what.

KUONI.

'Twill rain ere long; my sheep browse eagerly,
And Watcher there is scraping up the earth.

WERNI.

The fish are leaping, and the water-hen
Keeps diving up and down. A storm is brewing.

KUONI. (*to his boy*).

Look, Seppi, if the beasts be all in sight.

SEPPI.

There goes brown Liesel, I can hear her bells.

KUONI.

Then all are safe; she ever ranges farthest.

RUODI.

You've a fine chime of bells there, master herdsman.

WERNI.

And likely cattle, too. Are they your own?

KUONI.

I'm not so rich. They are the noble lord's
Of Attinghaus, and told off to my care.

RUODI.

How gracefully yon heifer bears her ribbon!

KUONI.

Ay, well she knows she's leader of the herd,
And, take it from her, she'd refuse to feed.

RUODI.

You're joking now. A beast devoid of reason—

WERNI.

Easily said. But beasts have reason, too—
And that we know, we chamois-hunters, well.
They never turn to feed—sagacious creatures!
Till they have placed a sentinel ahead,
Who pricks his ears whenever we approach,
And gives alarm with clear and piercing pipe.

RUODI. (*to the shepherd*).

Are you for home?

KUONI.

The Alp is grazed quite bare.

WERNI.

A safe return, my friend!

KUONI.

The same to you!
Men come not always back from tracks like yours.

RUODI.

But who comes here, running at topmost speed?

WERNI.

I know the man; 'tis Baumgart of Alzellen.

KONRAD BAUMGARTEN (*rushing in breathless*).

For God's sake, ferryman, your boat!

RUODI.

How now?
Why all this haste?

BAUM.

Cast off! My life's at stake!
Set me across!

KUONI.

Why, what's the matter, friend?

WERNI.

Who are pursuing you? First tell us that.

BAUM. (*to the fisherman*).

Quick, quick, man, quick! they're close upon my heels!
It is the Viceroy's men are after me;
If they should overtake me, I am lost.

RUODI.

Why are the troopers in pursuit of you?

BAUM.

First make me safe and then I'll tell you all.

WERNI.

There's blood upon your garments—how is, this?

BAUM.

The Imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg—

KUONI.

How! What! The Wolfshot?[39] Is it he pursues you?

BAUM.

He'll ne'er hurt man again; I've settled him.

ALL (*starting back*).

Now, God forgive you, what is this you've done!

BAUM.

What every free man in my place had done.
Mine own good household right I have enforced
'Gainst him that would have wrong'd my wife—my honor.

KUONI.

How! Wronged you in your honor, did he so?

BAUM.

That he did not fulfil his foul desire,
Is due to God and to my trusty axe.

WERNI.

And you have cleft his skull then, with your axe?

KUONI.

O, tell us all! You've time enough, and more,
While he is getting out the boat there from the beach.

BAUM.

When I was in the forest felling timber,
My wife came running out in mortal fear.
"The Seneschal," she said, "was in my house,
Had order'd her to get a bath prepared,
And thereupon had ta'en unseemly freedoms,
From which she rid herself, and flew to me."
Arm'd as I was, I sought him, and my axe
Has given his bath a bloody benison.

WERNI.

And you did well; no man can blame the deed.

KUONi.

The tyrant! Now he has his just reward!
We men of Unterwald have owed it long.

BAUM.

The deed got wind, and now they're in pursuit.
Heavens! whilst we speak, the time is flying fast.

[*It begins to thunder*.]

KUONI.

Quick, ferryman, and set the good man over.

RUODI.

Impossible! a storm is close at hand,
Wait till it pass! You must.

BAUM.

Almighty heavens!
I cannot wait; the least delay is death.

KUONI (*to the fisherman*).

Push out—God with you! We should help our neighbors;
The like misfortune may betide us all.

[*Thunder and the roaring of the wind*.]

RUODI.

The south wind's up![40] See how the lake is rising!
I cannot steer against both wind and wave.

BAUM. (*clasping him by the knees*).

God so help you as now you pity me!

WERNI.

His life's at stake. Have pity on him, man!

KUONI.

He is a father: has a wife and children.

[*Repeated peals of thunder*.]

RUODI.

What! and have I not, then, a life to lose,
A wife and child at home as well as he?
See how the breakers foam, and toss, and whirl,
And the lake eddies up from all its depths!
Right gladly would I save the worthy man,
But 'tis impossible, as you must see.

BAUM. (*still kneeling*).

Then must I fall into the tyrant's hands,
And with the shore of safety close in sight!
Yonder it lies! My eyes can see it clear,
My very voice can echo to its shores.
There is the boat to carry me across,
Yet must I lie here helpless and forlorn.

KUONI.

Look! who comes here?

RUODI.

'Tis Tell, ay, Tell, of Bürglen.[41]

[*Enter* TELL *with a crossbow*.]

TELL.

What man is he that here implores for aid?

KUONI.

He is from Alzellen, and to guard his honor
From touch of foulest shame, has slain the Wolf-shot,
The Imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg.
The Viceroy's troopers are upon his heels;
He begs the ferryman to take him over,
But frightened at the storm he says he won't.

RUODI.

Well, there is Tell can steer as well as I,
He'll be my judge, if it be possible.

[*Violent peals of thunder—the lake becomes more tempestuous*.]

Am I to plunge into the jaws of hell?
I should be mad to dare the desperate act.

TELL.

The brave man thinks upon himself the last.
Put trust in God, and help him in his need!

RUODI.

Safe in the port, 'tis easy to advise.
There is the boat, and there the lake! Try you!

TELL.

The lake may pity, but the Viceroy never.
Come, risk it, man!

SHEPHERD *and* HUNTSMAN.

O save him! save him! save him!

RUODI.

Though 'twere my brother, or my darling child,
I would not go. 'Tis Simon and Jude's day;
The lake is up, and calling for its victim.

TELL.

Nought's to be done with idle talking here.
Each moment's precious; the man must be help'd;
Say, boatman, will you venture?

RUODI.

No; not I.

TELL.

In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will,
With my poor strength, see what is to be done!

KUONI.

Ha, gallant Tell!

WERNI.

That's like a huntsman true.

BAUM.

You are my angel, my preserver, Tell.

TELL.

I may preserve you from the Viceroy's power,
But from the tempest's rage another must.
Yet better 'tis you fall into God's hands,
Than into those of men.

[*To the herdsman*.]

Herdsman, do thou
Console my wife if I should come to grief.
I could not choose but do as I have done.

[*He leaps into the boat*.]

KUONI (*to the fisherman*).

A pretty man to keep a ferry, truly!
What Tell could risk, you dared not venture on.

RUODI.

Far better men would never cope with Tell.
There's no two such as he 'mong all our hills.

WERNI (*who has ascended a rock*).

Now he is off. God help thee, gallant sailor!
Look how the little boat reels on the waves!

KUONI. (*on the shore*).

There! they have swept clean over it. And now
'Tis out of sight. Yet stay, there 'tis again!
Stoutly he stems the breakers, noble fellow!

SEPPI.

Here come the troopers hard as they can ride!

KUONI.

Heavens! so they do! Why, that was help, indeed.

[*Enter a troop of horsemen*.]

1ST H.

Give up the murderer! You have him here!

2D H.

This way he came! 'Tis useless to conceal him!

RUODI *and* KUONI.

Whom do you mean?

1ST H. (*discovering the boat*).

The devil! What do I see?

WERNI (*from above*).

Is't he in yonder boat ye seek? Ride on,
If you lay to, you may o'ertake him yet.

2D H.

Curse on you, he's escaped!

1ST H. (*to the shepherd and fisherman*).

You help'd him off,
And you shall pay for it! Fall on their herds!
Down with the cottage! burn it! beat it down!

[*They rush off.*]

SEPPI (*hurrying after them*).

Oh my poor lambs!

KUONI (*following him*).

Unhappy me, my herds!

WERNI.

The tyrants!

RUODI (*wringing his hands*).
Righteous Heaven! Oh, when will come
Deliverance to this doom-devoted land?

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II

A lime tree in front of STAUFFACHER's *house at Steinen, in Schwytz, upon the public road, near a bridge*.

WERNER STAUFFACHER, *and* PFEIFFER, *of Lucerne, enter into conversation*.

PFEIFF.

Ay, ay, friend Stauffacher, as I have said,
Swear not to Austria, if you can help it.
Hold by the Empire stoutly as of yore,
And God preserve you in your ancient freedom!

[*Presses his hand warmly and is going*.]

STAUFF.

Wait till my mistress comes. Now do! You are
My guest in Schwytz—I in Lucerne am yours.

PFEIFF.

Thanks! thanks! But I must reach Gersau today.
Whatever grievances your rulers' pride
And grasping avarice may yet inflict,
Bear them in patience—soon a change may come.
Another Emperor may mount the throne.
But Austria's once, and you are hers forever.

[*Exit*.]

[STAUFFACHER *sits down sorrowfully upon a bench under the lime tree. Gertrude, his wife, enters, and finds him in this posture. She places herself near him, and looks at him for some time in silence*.]

GERT.

So sad, my love! I scarcely know thee now.
For many a day in silence I have mark'd
A moody sorrow furrowing thy brow.
Some silent grief is weighing on thy heart.
Trust it to me. I am thy faithful wife,
And I demand my half of all thy cares.

[STAUFFACHER *gives her his hand and is silent*.]

Tell me what can oppress thy spirits thus?
Thy toil is blest—the world goes well with thee—

Our barns are full—our cattle, many a score;
Our handsome team of well-fed horses, too,
Brought from the mountain pastures safely home,
To winter in their comfortable stalls.
There stands thy house—no nobleman's more fair!
'Tis newly built with timber of the best,
All grooved and fitted with the nicest skill;
Its many glistening windows tell of comfort!
'Tis quarter'd o'er with scutcheons of all hues,
And proverbs sage, which passing travelers
Linger to read and ponder o'er their meaning.

STAUFF.

The house is strongly built, and handsomely,
But, ah! the ground on which we built it quakes.

GERT.

Tell me, dear Werner, what you mean by that?

STAUFF.

No later gone than yesterday, I sat
Beneath this linden, thinking with delight,
How fairly all was finished, when from Küssnacht
The Viceroy and his men came riding by.
Before this house he halted in surprise:
At once I rose, and, as beseemed his rank,
Advanced respectfully to greet the lord
To whom the Emperor delegates his power,
As judge supreme within our Canton here.
"Who is the owner of this house?" he asked,
With mischief in his thoughts, for well he knew.
With prompt decision, thus I answered him:
"The Emperor, your grace—my lord and yours,
And held by me in fief." On this he answered,
"I am the Emperor's vice-regent here,
And will not that each peasant churl should build
At his own pleasure, bearing him as freely

As though he were the master in the land.
I shall make bold to put a stop to this!"
So saying, he, with menaces, rode off,
And left me musing with a heavy heart
On the fell purpose that his words betray'd.

GERT.

My own dear lord and husband! Wilt thou take
A word of honest counsel from thy wife?
I boast to be the noble Iberg's child,
A man of wide experience. Many a time,
As we sat spinning in the winter nights,
My sisters and myself, the people's chiefs
Were wont to gather round our father's hearth,
To read the old imperial charters, and
To hold sage converse on the country's weal.
Then heedfully I listened, marking well
What now the wise man thought, the good man wished,
And garner'd up their wisdom in my heart.
Hear then, and mark me well; for thou wilt see,
I long have known the grief that weighs thee down.
The Viceroy hates thee, fain would injure thee,
For thou past cross'd his wish to bend the Swiss
In homage to this upstart house of princes,
And kept them staunch, like their good sires of old,
In true allegiance to the Empire. Say,
Is't not so, Werner? Tell me, am I wrong?

STAUFF.

'Tis even so. For this doth Gessler hate me.

GERT.

He burns with envy, too, to see thee living
Happy and free on thine ancestral soil,
For he is landless. From the Emperor's self
Thou hold'st in fief the lands thy fathers left thee.
There's not a prince i' the Empire that can show

A better title to his heritage;
For thou hast over thee no lord but one,
And he the mightiest of all Christian kings.
Gessler, we know, is but a younger son,
His only wealth the knightly cloak he wears;
He therefore views an honest man's good fortune
With a malignant and a jealous eye.
Long has he sworn to compass thy destruction.
As yet thou art uninjured. Wilt thou wait
Till he may safely give his malice vent?
A wise man would anticipate the blow.

STAUFF.

What's to be done?

[Illustration: STAUFFACHER AND HIS WIFE GERTRUDE As performed at the Royal Theatre, Dresden, 1906.]

GERT.

Now hear what I advise.
Thou knowest well, how here with us in Schwytz
All worthy men are groaning underneath
This Gessler's grasping, grinding tyranny.
Doubt not the men of Unterwald as well,
And Uri, too, are chafing like ourselves,
At this oppressive and heart-wearying yoke.
For there, across the lake, the Landenberg
Wields the same iron rule as Gessler here—
No fishing-boat comes over to our side,
But brings the tidings of some new encroachment,
Some fresh outrage, more grievous than the last.
Then it were well that some of you—true men—
Men sound at heart, should secretly devise,
How best to shake this hateful thraldom off.
Full sure I am that God would not desert you,
But lend His favor to the righteous cause.
Hast thou no friend in Uri, one to whom
Thou frankly may'st unbosom all thy thoughts?

STAUFF.

I know full many a gallant fellow there,
And nobles, too—great men, of high repute,
In whom I can repose unbounded trust.

[*Rising*.]

Wife! What a storm of wild and perilous thoughts
Hast thou stirr'd up within my tranquil breast!
The darkest musings of my bosom thou
Hast dragg'd to light, and placed them full before me;
And what I scarce dared harbor e'en in thought,
Thou speakest plainly out with fearless tongue.
But has thou weigh'd well what thou urgest thus?
Discord will come, and the fierce clang of arms,
To scare this valley's long unbroken peace,
If we, a feeble shepherd race, shall dare
Him to the fight that lords it o'er the world.
Ev'n now they only wait some fair pretext
For setting loose their savage warrior hordes,
To scourge and ravage this devoted land,
To lord it o'er us with the victor's rights,
And, 'neath the show of lawful chastisement,
Despoil us of our chartered liberties.

GERT.

You, too, are men; can wield a battle axe
As well as they. God ne'er deserts the brave.

STAUFF.

Oh wife! a horrid, ruthless fiend is war,
That smites at once the shepherd and his flock.

GERT.

Whate'er great Heaven inflicts, we must endure;
But wrong is what no noble heart will bear.

STAUFF.

This house—thy pride—war, unrelenting war
Will burn it down.

GERT.

And did I think this heart
Enslaved and fettered to the things of earth,
With my own hand I'd hurl the kindling torch.

STAUFF.

Thou hast faith in human kindness, wife; but war
Spares not the tender infant in its cradle.

GERT.

There is a Friend to innocence in heaven.
Send your gaze forward, Werner—not behind.

STAUFF.

We men may die like men, with sword in hand;
But oh, what fate, my Gertrude, may be thine?

GERT.

None are so weak, but one last choice is left.
A spring from yonder bridge and I am free!

STAUFF. (*embracing her*).

Well may he fight for hearth and home, that clasps
A heart so rare as thine against his own!
What are the host of Emperors to him?
Gertrude, farewell! I will to Uri straight.
There lives my worthy comrade, Walter Fürst;
His thoughts and mine upon these times are one.
There, too, resides the noble Banneret
Of Attinghaus. High though of blood he be,
He loves the people, honors their old customs.
With both of these I will take counsel how

To rid us bravely of our country's foe.
Farewell! and while I am away, bear thou
A watchful eye in management at home.
The pilgrim journeying to the house of God,
And holy friar, collecting for his cloister,
To these give liberally from purse and garner.
Stauffacher's house would not be hid. Right out
Upon the public way it stands, and offers
To all that pass a hospitable roof.

[*While they are retiring*, TELL *enters with* BAUMGARTEN.]

TELL.

Now, then, you have no further need of me.
Enter yon house. 'Tis Werner Stauffacher's,
A man that is a father to distress.
See, there he is, himself! Come, follow me.

[*They retire up. Scene changes*.]

SCENE III

A common near Altdorf. On an eminence in the background a Castle in progress of erection, and so far advanced that the outline of the whole may be distinguished. The back part is finished: men are working at the front. Scaffolding, on which the workmen are going up and down. A slater is seen upon the highest part of the roof. All is bustle and activity.

TASKMASTER, MASON, WORKMAN *and* LABORERS

TASK. (*with a stick, urging on the workmen*).

Up, up! You've rested long enough. To work!
The stones here! Now the mortar, and the lime!
And let his lordship see the work advanced,
When next he comes. These fellows crawl like snails!

[*To two laborers, with loads*.]

What! call ye that a load? Go, double it.
Is this the way ye earn your wages, laggards?

1ST. W.

'Tis very hard that we must bear the stones,
To make a keep and dungeon for ourselves!

TASK.

What's that you mutter? 'Tis a worthless race,
For nothing fit but just to milk their cows,
And saunter idly up and down the hills.

OLD MAN (*sinks down exhausted*).

I can no more.

TASK. (*shaking him*).

Up, up, old man, to work!

1ST. W.

Have you no bowels of compassion, thus
To press so hard upon a poor old man
That scarce can drag his feeble limbs along?

MASTER MASON *and* WORKMEN.

Shame, shame upon you—shame! It cries to heaven.

TASK.

Mind your own business. I but do my duty.

1ST W.

Pray, Master, what's to be the name of this
Same castle, when 'tis built?

TASK.

The Keep of Uri;
For by it we shall keep you in subjection.

WORK.

The Keep of Uri?

TASK.

Well, why laugh at that?

2D W.

Keep Uri, will you, with this paltry place!

1ST W.

How many molehills such as that must first
Be piled up each on each, ere you make
A mountain equal to the least in Uri?

[TASKMASTER *retires up the stage*.]

MAS. M.

I'll drown the mallet in the deepest lake,
That served my hand on this accursed pile.

[*Enter* TELL *and* STAUFFACHER.]

STAUFF.

O, that I had not lived to see this sight!

TELL.

Here 'tis not good to be. Let us proceed.

STAUFF.

Am I in Uri—Uri, freedom's home?

MAS. M.

O, Sir, if you could only see the vaults
Beneath these towers. The man that tenants them
Will ne'er hear cock crow more.

STAUFF.

O God! O God!

MASON.

Look at these ramparts and these buttresses,
That seem as they were built to last forever.

TELL.

What hands have built, my friend, hands can destroy.

[*Pointing to the mountains*.]

That home of freedom God hath built for us.

[*A drum is heard. People enter bearing a cap upon a pole, followed by a crier. Women and children thronging tumultuously after them*.]

1ST W.

What means the drum? Give heed!

MASON.

Why, here's a mumming!
And look, the cap—what can they mean by that?

CRIER.

In the Emperor's name, give ear!

WORK.

Hush! silence! hush!

CRIER.

Ye men of Uri, ye do see this cap!
It will be set upon a lofty pole
In Altdorf, in the market place: and this
Is the Lord Governor's good will and pleasure;
The cap shall have like honor as himself,
All do it reverence with bended knee,

And head uncovered; thus the King will know
Who are his true and loyal subjects here;
His life and goods are forfeit to the crown
That shall refuse obedience to the order.

[*The people burst out into laughter. The drum beats and the procession passes on*.]

1ST W.

A strange device to fall upon indeed:
Do reverence to a cap! A pretty farce!
Heard ever mortal anything like this?

MAS. M.

Down to a cap on bended knee, forsooth!
Rare jesting this with men of sober sense!

1ST W.

Nay, an it were the imperial crown! A cap!
Merely the cap of Austria! I've seen it
Hanging above the throne in Gessler's hall.

MASON.

The cap of Austria? Mark that! A snare
To get us into Austria's power, by Heaven!

WORK.

No freeborn man will stoop to such disgrace.

MAS. M.

Come—to our comrades, and advise with them;

[*They retire up*.]

TELL (*to* STAUFFACHER).

You see how matters stand! Farewell, my friend!

STAUFF.

Whither away? Oh, leave us not so soon.

TELL.

They look for me at home. So fare ye well.

STAUFF.

My heart's so full, and has so much to tell you.

TELL.

Words will not make a heart that's heavy light.

STAUFF.

Yet words may possibly conduct to deeds.

TELL.

Endure in silence! We can do no more.

STAUFF.

But shall we bear what is not to be borne?

TELL.

Impetuous rulers have the shortest reigns.
When the fierce south wind rises from his chasms,
Men cover up their fires, the ships in haste
Make for the harbor, and the mighty spirit
Sweeps o'er the earth, and leaves no trace behind.
Let every man live quietly at home;
Peace to the peaceful rarely is denied.

STAUFF.

And is it thus you view our grievances?

TELL.

The serpent stings not till it is provoked;
Let them alone; they'll weary of themselves,
When they shall see we are not to be roused.

STAUFF.

Much might be done—did we stand fast together.

TELL.

When the ship founders, he will best escape
Who seeks no other's safety but his own.

STAUFF.

And you desert the common cause so coldly?

TELL.

A man can safely count but on himself!

STAUFF.

Nay, even the weak grow strong by union.

TELL.

But the strong man is strongest when alone.

STAUFF.

So, then, your country cannot count on you,
If in despair she rise against her foes.

TELL.

Tell rescues the lost sheep from yawning gulfs:
Is he a man, then, to desert his friends?
Yet, whatsoe'er you do, spare me from council!
I was not born to ponder and select;
But when your course of action is resolved,
Then call on Tell: you shall not find him fail.

[*Exeunt severally. A sudden tumult is heard around the scaffolding*.]

MASON (*running in*).

What's wrong?

FIRST WORKMAN (*running forward*).

The slater's fallen from the roof.

BERTHA (*rushing in*).

Heavens! Is he dashed to pieces? Save him, help!
If help be possible, save him! Here is gold.

[*Throws her trinkets among the people*.]

MASON.

Hence with your gold—your universal charm,
And remedy for ill! When you have torn
Fathers from children, husbands from their wives,
And scattered woe and wail throughout the land,
You think with gold to compensate for all.
Hence! Till we saw you, we were happy men;
With you came misery and dark despair.

BERTHA (*to the* TASKMASTER, *who has returned*).

Lives he?

[TASKMASTER *shakes his head*.]

Ill-omened towers, with curses built,
And doomed with curses to be tenanted!

[*Exit*.]

SCENE IV

The house of WALTER FÜRST. WALTER FÜRST *and* ARNOLD VON MELCHTHAL *enter simultaneously at different sides*.

MELCH.

Good Walter Fürst

FÜRST.

If we should be surprised!
Stay where you are. We are beset with spies.

MELCH.

Have you no news for me from Unterwald?
What of my father? 'Tis not to be borne
Thus to be pent up like a felon here!
What have I done so heinous that I must
Skulk here in hiding, like a murderer?
I only laid my staff across the fists
Of the pert varlet, when before my eyes,
By order of the governor, he tried
To drive away my handsome team of oxen.

FÜRST.

You are too rash by far. He did no more
Than what the governor had ordered him.
You had transgress'd, and therefore should have paid
The penalty, however hard, in silence.

MELCH.

Was I to brook the fellow's saucy gibe—
"That if the peasant must have bread to eat,
Why, let him go and draw the plough himself?"
It cut me to the very soul to see
My oxen, noble creatures, when the knave
Unyoked them from the plough. As though they felt
The wrong, they lowed and butted with their horns.
On this I could contain myself no longer,
And, overcome by passion, struck him down.

FÜRST.

O, we old men can scarce command ourselves!
And can we wonder youth breaks out of bounds?

MELCH.

I'm only sorry for my father's sake!
To be away from him, that needs so much
My fostering care! The governor detests him,
Because, whene'er occasion served, he has
Stood stoutly up for right and liberty.
Therefore they'll bear him hard—the poor old man!
And there is none to shield him from their grip.
Come what come may, I must go home again.

FÜRST.

Compose yourself, and wait in patience till
We get some tidings o'er from Unterwald.
Away I away! I hear a knock! Perhaps
A message from the Viceroy! Get thee in!
You are not safe from Landenberger's[42] arm
In Uri, for these tyrants pull together.

MELCH.

They teach us Switzers what *we* ought to do.

FÜRST.

Away! I'll call you when the coast is clear.

[MELCHTHAL *retires*.]

Unhappy youth! I dare not tell him all
The evil that my boding heart predicts!
Who's there? The door ne'er opens, but I look
For tidings of mishap. Suspicion lurks
With darkling treachery in every nook.
Even to our inmost rooms they force their way,

These myrmidons of power; and soon we'll need
To fasten bolts and bars upon our doors.

[*He opens the door, and steps back in surprise as* WERNER STAUFFACHER *enters*.]

What do I see? You, Werner? Now, by Heaven!
A valued guest, indeed. No man e'er set
His foot across this threshold, more esteem'd,
Welcome! thrice welcome, Werner, to my roof!
What brings you here? What seek you here in Uri?

STAUFFACHER (*shakes* FÜRST by *the hand*).

The olden times and olden Switzerland.

FÜRST.

You bring them with you. See how glad I am,
My heart leaps at the very sight of you.
Sit down—sit down, and tell me how you left
Your charming wife, fair Gertrude? Iberg's child,
And clever as her father. Not a man
That wends from Germany, by Meinrad's Cell,[43]
To Italy, but praises far and wide
Your house's hospitality. But say,
Have you come here direct from Flüelen,
And have you noticed nothing on your way,
Before you halted at my door?

STAUFFACHER (*sits down*).

I saw
A work in progress, as I came along,
I little thought to see—that likes me ill.

FÜRST.

O friend! you've lighted on my thought at once.

STAUFF.

Such things in Uri ne'er were known before.
Never was prison here in man's remembrance,
Nor ever any stronghold but the grave.

FÜRST.

You name it well. It is the grave of freedom.

STAUFF.

Friend, Walter Fürst, I will be plain with you.
No idle curiosity it is
That brings me here, but heavy cares. I left
Thraldom at home, and thraldom meets me here.
Our wrongs, e'en now, are more than we can bear,
And who shall tell us where they are to end?
From eldest time the Switzer has been free,
Accustom'd only to the mildest rule.
Such things as now we suffer ne'er were known,
Since herdsman first drove cattle to the hills.

FÜRST.

Yes, our oppressions are unparallel'd!
Why, even our own good lord of Attinghaus,
Who lived in olden times, himself declares
They are no longer to be tamely borne.

STAUFF.

In Unterwalden yonder 'tis the same;
And bloody has the retribution been.
The imperial Seneschal, the Wolfshot, who
At Rossberg dwelt, long'd for forbidden fruit—
Baumgarten's wife, that lives at Alzellen,
He tried to make a victim to his lust,
On which the husband slew him with his age.

FÜRST.

O, Heaven is just in all its judgments still!
Baumgarten, say you? A most worthy man.
Has he escaped, and is he safely hid?

STAUFF.

Your son-in-law conveyed him o'er the lake,
And he lies hidden in my house at Steinen.
He brought the tidings with him of a thing
That has been done at Sarnen, worse than all,
A thing to make the very heart run blood!

FÜRST (*attentively*).

Say on. What is it?

STAUFF.

There dwells in Melchthal, then,
Just as you enter by the road from Kerns,
An upright man, named Henry of the Halden,
A man of weight and influence in the Diet.

FÜRST.

Who knows him not? But what of him? Proceed!

STAUFF.

The Landenberg, to punish some offense
Committed by the old man's son, it seems,
Had given command to take the youth's best pair
Of oxen from his plough; on which the lad
Struck down the messenger and took to flight.

FÜRST.

But the old father—tell me, what of him?

STAUFF.

The Landenberg sent for him, and required
He should produce his son upon the spot;
And when the old man protested, and with truth,
That he knew nothing of the fugitive,
The tyrant call'd his torturers.

FÜRST (*springs up and tries to lead him to the other side*).

Hush, no more!

STAUFFACHER (*with increasing warmth*).

"And though thy son," he cried, "has 'scaped me now,
I have thee fast, and thou shalt feel my vengeance."
With that they flung the old man to the ground,
And plunged the pointed steel into his eyes.

FÜRST.

Merciful Heaven!

MELCHTHAL (*rushing out*).
Into his eyes, his eyes?

STAUFFACHER (*addresses himself in astonishment to* WALTER FÜRST).

Who is this youth?

MELCHTHAL (*grasping him convulsively*).
Into his eyes? Speak, speak!

FÜRST.

O, miserable hour!

STAUFF.

Who is it, tell me!

[STAUFFACHER *makes a sign to him*.]

It is his son! All-righteous Heaven!

MELCH.

And I
Must be from thence! What! into both his eyes?

FÜRST.

Be calm, be calm; and bear it like a man!

MELCH.

And all for me—for my mad wilful folly!
Blind, did you say? Quite blind—and both his eyes?

STAUFF.

Ev'n so. 'The fountain of his sight is quench'd,
He ne'er will see the blessed sunshine more.

FÜRST.

Oh, spare his anguish!

MELCH.

Never, never more!

[*Presses his hands upon his eyes and is silent for some moments: then turning from one to the other speaks in a subdued tone, broken by sobs.*]

O the eye's light, of all the gifts of Heaven,
The dearest, best! From light all beings live—
Each fair created thing—the very plants
Turn with a joyful transport to the light,
And he—he must drag on through all his days
In endless darkness! Never more for him
The sunny meads shall glow, the flow'rets bloom;
Nor shall he more behold the roseate tints
Of the iced mountain top! To die is nothing.
But to have life, and not have sight—oh, that
Is misery indeed! Why do you look

So piteously at me? I have two eyes,
Yet to my poor blind father can give neither!
No, not one gleam of that great sea of light,
That with its dazzling splendor floods my gaze.

STAUFF.

Ah, I must swell the measure of your grief,
Instead of soothing it. The worst, alas!
Remains to tell. They've stripp'd him of his all;
Naught have they left him, save his staff, on which,
Blind, and in rags, he moves from door to door.

MELCH.

Naught but his staff to the old eyeless man!
Stripp'd of his all—even of the light of day,
The common blessing of the meanest wretch?
Tell me no more of patience, of concealment!
Oh, what a base and coward thing am I,
That on mine own security I thought
And took no care of thine! Thy precious head
Left as a pledge within the tyrant's grasp!
Hence, craven-hearted prudence, hence! And all
My thoughts be vengeance, and the despot's blood!
I'll seek him straight—no power shall stay me now—
And at his hands demand my father's eyes.
I'll beard him 'mid a thousand myrmidons!
What's life to me, if in his heart's best blood
I cool the fever of this mighty anguish.

[*He is going*.]

FÜRST.

Stay, this is madness, Melchthal! What avails
Your single arm against his power? He sits
At Sarnen high within his lordly keep,
And, safe within its battlemented walls,
May laugh to scorn your unavailing rage.

MELCH.

And though he sat within the icy domes
Of yon far Schreckhorn—ay, or higher, where,
Veil'd since eternity, the Jungfrau soars,
Still to the tyrant would I make my way;
With twenty comrades minded like myself,
I'd lay his fastness level with the earth!
And if none follow me, and if you all,
In terror for your homesteads and your herds,
Bow in submission to the tyrant's yoke,
Round me I'll call the herdsmen on the hills,
And there beneath heaven's free and boundless roof,
Where men still feel as men, and hearts are true,
Proclaim aloud this foul enormity!

STAUFFACHER (*to* FÜRST).

The measure's full—and are we then to wait
Till some extremity—

MELCH.

Peace! What extremity
Remains for us to dread? What, when our eyes
No longer in their sockets are secure?
Heavens! Are we helpless? Wherefore did we learn
To bend the cross-bow—wield the battle-axe?
What living creature but in its despair,
Finds for itself a weapon of defence?
The baited stag will turn, and with the show
Of his dread antlers hold the hounds at bay;
The chamois drags the huntsman down th' abyss;
The very ox, the partner of man's toil,
The sharer of his roof, that meekly bends
The strength of his huge neck beneath the yoke,
Springs up, if he's provoked, whets his strong horn,
And tosses his tormentor to the clouds.

FÜRST.

If the three Cantons thought as we three do,
Something might, then, be done, with good effect.

STAUFF.

When Uri calls, when Unterwald replies,
Schwytz will be mindful of her ancient league.[44]

MELCH.

I've many friends in Unterwald, and none
That would not gladly venture life and limb,
If fairly back'd and aided by the rest.
Oh! sage and reverend fathers of this land,
Here do I stand before your riper years,
An unskill'd youth, who in the Diet must
Into respectful silence hush his voice.
Yet do not, for that I am young, and want
Experience, slight my counsel and my words.
'Tis not the wantonness of youthful blood
That fires my spirit; but a pang so deep
That e'en the flinty rocks must pity me.
You, too, are fathers, heads of families,
And you must wish to have a virtuous son,
To reverence your gray hairs, and shield your eyes
With pious and affectionate regard.
Do not, I pray, because in limb and fortune
You still are unassail'd, and still your eyes
Revolve undimm'd and sparkling in their spheres—
Oh, do not, therefore, disregard our wrongs!
Above you, also, hangs the tyrant's sword.
You, too, have striven to alienate the land
From Austria. This was all my father's crime:
You share his guilt, and *may* his punishment.

STAUFFACHER (*to* FÜRST).

Do thou resolve! I am prepared to follow.

FÜRST.

First let us learn what steps the noble lords
Von Sillinen and Attinghaus propose.
Their names would rally thousands to the cause.

MELCH.

Is there a name within the Forest Mountains
That carries more respect than yours—and yours?
On names like these the people build their trust
In time of need—such names are household words.
Rich was your heritage of manly worth,
And richly have you added to its stores.
What need of nobles? Let us do the work
Ourselves. Yes, though we have to stand alone,
We shall be able to maintain our rights.

STAUFF.

The nobles' wrongs are not so great as ours.
The torrent, that lays waste the lower grounds,
Hath not ascended to the uplands yet.
But let them see the country once in arms,
They'll not refuse to lend a helping hand.

FÜRST.

Were there an umpire 'twixt ourselves and Austria,
Justice and law might then decide our quarrel.
But our oppressor is our Emperor too,
And judge supreme. 'Tis God must help us, then,
And our own arm! Be yours the task to rouse
The men of Schwytz; I'll rally friends in Uri.
But whom are we to send to Unterwald?

MELCH.

Thither send me. Whom should it more concern?

FÜRST.

No, Melchthal, no; you are my guest, and I
Must answer for your safety.

MELCH.

Let me go.
I know each forest track and mountain path;
Friends too, I'll find, be sure, on every hand,
To give me willing shelter from the foe.

STAUFF.

Nay, let him go; no traitors harbor there:
For tyranny is so abhorred in Unterwald,
No tools can there be found to work her will.
In the low valleys, too, the Alzeller
Will gain confederates, and rouse the country.

MELCH.

But how shall we communicate, and not
Awaken the suspicion of the tyrants?

STAUFF.

Might we not meet at Brunnen or at Treib,
Where merchant vessels with their cargoes come?

FÜRST.

We must not go so openly to work.
Hear my opinion. On the lake's left bank,
As we sail hence to Brunnen, right against
The Mytenstein, deep-hidden in the wood
A meadow lies, by shepherds called the Rootli,
Because the wood has been uprooted there.
'Tis where our Canton bound'ries verge on yours;—

[*To* MELCHTHAL.]

Your boat will carry you across from Schwytz.

[*To* STAUFFACHER.]

Thither by lonely by-paths let us wend
At midnight, and deliberate o'er our plans.
Let each bring with him there ten trusty men,
All one at heart with us; and then we may
Consult together for the general weal,
And, with God's guidance, fix what next to do.

STAUFF.

So let it be. And now your true right hand!
Yours, too, young man! and as we now three men
Among ourselves thus knit our hands together
In all sincerity and truth, e'en so
Shall we three Cantons, too, together stand
In victory and defeat, in life and death.

FÜRST *and* MELCHTHAL.

In life and death.

[*They hold their hands clasped together for some moments in silence*.]

MELCH.

Alas, my old blind father!
The day of freedom, that thou canst not see.
But thou shalt hear it, when from Alp to Alp
The beacon fires throw up their flaming signs,
And the proud castles of the tyrants fall,
Into thy cottage shall the Switzer burst,
Bear the glad tidings to thine ear, and o'er
Thy darken'd way shall Freedom's radiance pour.

* * * * *

ACT II

SCENE I

The Mansion of the BARON of ATTINGHAUSEN. *A Gothic Hall, decorated with escutcheons and helmets*. The BARON, *a gray-headed man, eighty-five years old, tall and of a commanding mien, clad in a furred pelisse, and leaning on a staff tipped with chamois horn*. KUONI *and six hinds standing round him with rakes and scythes*. ULRICH of RUDENZ *enters in the costume of a Knight*.

RUDENZ.

Uncle, I'm here! Your will?

ATTINGHAUSEN.

First let me share,
After the ancient custom of our house,
The morning cup, with these my faithful servants!

[*He drinks from a cup, which is then passed round*.]

Time was, I stood myself in field and wood,
With mine own eyes directing all their toil,
Even as my banner led them in the fight;
Now I am only fit to play the steward:
And, if the genial sun come not to me,
I can no longer seek it on the hills.
Thus slowly, in an ever narrowing sphere,
I move on to the narrowest and the last,
Where all life's pulses cease. I now am but
The shadow of my former self, and that
Is fading fast—'twill soon be but a name.

KUONI (*offering* RUDENZ *the cup*).

A pledge, young master!

[RUDENZ *hesitates to take the cup*.]

Nay, Sir, drink it off.
One cup, one heart! You know our proverb, Sir?

ATTING.

Go, children, and at eve, when work is done,
We'll meet and talk the country's business over.

[*Exeunt Servants*.]

Belted and plumed, and all thy bravery on!
Thou art for Altdorf—for the castle, boy?

RUDENZ.

Yes, uncle. Longer may I not delay—

ATTINGHAUSEN (*sitting down*).

Why in such haste? Say, are thy youthful hours
Doled in such niggard measure, that thou must
Be chary of them to thy aged uncle?

RUDENZ.

I see my presence is not needed here;
I am but as a stranger in this house.

ATTINGHAUSEN (*gazes fixedly at him for a considerable time*).

Ay, pity 'tis thou art! Alas, that home
To thee has grown so strange! Oh, Uly! Uly!
I scarce do know thee now, thus deck'd in silks,
The peacock's feather[45] flaunting in thy cap,
And purple mantle round thy shoulders flung;
Thou look'st upon the peasant with disdain;
And tak'st his honest greeting with a blush.

RUDENZ.

All honor due to him I gladly pay,
But must deny the right he would usurp.

ATTING.

The sore displeasure of its monarch rests
Upon our land, and every true man's heart
Is full of sadness for the grievous wrongs
We suffer from our tyrants. Thou alone
Art all unmoved amid the general grief.
Abandoning thy friends, thou tak'st thy stand
Beside thy country's foes, and, as in scorn
Of our distress, pursuest giddy joys,
Courting the smiles of princes all the while
Thy country bleeds beneath their cruel scourge.

RUDENZ.

The land is sore oppress'd, I know it, uncle.
But why? Who plunged it into this distress?
A word, one little easy word, might buy
Instant deliverance from all our ills,
And win the good will of the Emperor.
Woe unto those who seal the people's eyes,
And make them adverse to their country's good—
The men, who, for their own vile selfish ends,
Are seeking to prevent the Forest States
From swearing fealty to Austria's House,
As all the countries round about have done.
It fits their humor well, to take their seats
Amid the nobles on the Herrenbank;[46]
They'll have the Kaiser for their lord, forsooth—
That is to say, they'll have no lord at all.

ATTING.

Must I hear this, and from thy lips, rash boy!

RUDENZ.

You urged me to this answer. Hear me out.
What, uncle, is the character you've stoop'd
To fill contentedly through life? Have you
No higher pride than in these lonely wilds

To be the Landamman or Banneret,[47]
The petty chieftain of a shepherd race?
How! Were it not a far more glorious choice,
To bend in homage to our royal lord,
And swell the princely splendors of his court,
Than sit at home, the peer of your own vassals,
And share the judgment-seat with vulgar clowns?

ATTING.

Ah, Uly, Uly; all too well I see,
The tempter's voice has caught thy willing ear,
And pour'd its subtle poison in thy heart.

RUDENZ.

Yes, I conceal it not. It doth offend
My inmost soul, to hear the stranger's gibes,
That taunt us with the name of "Peasant Nobles!"
Think you the heart that's stirring here can brook,
While all the young nobility around
Are reaping honor under Habsburg's banner,
That I should loiter, in inglorious ease,
Here on the heritage my fathers left,
And, in the dull routine of vulgar toil,
Lose all life's glorious spring? In other lands
Great deeds are done. A world of fair renown
Beyond these mountains stirs in martial pomp.
My helm and shield are rusting in the hall;
The martial trumpet's spirit-stirring blast,
The herald's call, inviting to the lists,
Rouse not the echoes of these vales, where naught
Save cowherd's horn and cattle bell is heard,
In one unvarying dull monotony.

ATTING.

Deluded boy, seduced by empty show!
Despise the land that gave thee birth! Ashamed
Of the good ancient customs of thy sires!

The day will come, when thou, with burning tears,
Wilt long for home, and for thy native hills,
And that dear melody of tuneful herds,
Which now, in proud disgust, thou dost despise!
A day when wistful pangs shall shake thy heart,
Hearing their music in a foreign land.
Oh! potent is the spell that binds to home!
No, no, the cold, false world is not for thee.
At the proud court, with thy true heart, thou wilt
Forever feel a stranger among strangers.
The world asks virtues of far other stamp
Than thou hast learned within these simple vales.
But go—go thither—barter thy free soul,
Take land in fief, be minion to a prince,
Where thou might'st be lord paramount, and prince
Of all thine own unburden'd heritage!
O, Uly, Uly, stay among thy people!
Go not to Altdorf. Oh, abandon not
The sacred cause of thy wrong'd native land!
I am the last of all my race. My name
Ends with me. Yonder hang my helm and shield;
They will be buried with me in the grave.[48]
And must I think, when yielding up my breath,
That thou but wait'st the closing of mine eyes,
To stoop thy knee to this new feudal court,
And take in vassalage from Austria's hands
The noble lands, which I from God received,
Free and unfetter'd as the mountain air!

RUDENZ.

'Tis vain for us to strive against the king.
The world pertains to him. Shall we alone,
In mad presumptuous obstinacy, strive
To break that mighty chain of lands, which he
Hath drawn around us with his giant grasp?
His are the markets, his the courts—his, too,
The highways; nay, the very carrier's horse,
That traffics on the Gotthardt, pays him toll.

By his dominions, as within a net,
We are inclosed, and girded round about—
And will the Empire shield us? Say, can it
Protect itself 'gainst Austria's growing power?
To God, and not to emperors must we look!
What store can on their promises be placed,
When they, to meet their own necessities,
Can pawn, and even alienate the towns
That flee for shelter 'neath the Eagle's wings?[49]
No, uncle! It is wise and wholesome prudence,
In times like these, when faction's all abroad,
To vow attachment to some mighty chief.
The imperial crown's transferred from line to line.[50]
It has no memory for faithful service
But to secure the favor of these great
Hereditary masters, were to sow
Seed for a future harvest.

ATTINGHAUSEN.

Art so wise?
Wilt thou see clearer than thy noble sires,
Who battled for fair freedom's priceless gem
With life, and fortune, and heroic arm?
Sail down the lake to Lucern, there inquire
How Austria's thraldom weighs the Cantons down.
Soon she will come to count our sheep, our cattle,
To portion out the Alps, e'en to their peaks,
And in our own free woods to hinder us
From striking down the eagle or the stag;
To set her tolls on every bridge and gate,
Impoverish us, to swell her lust of sway,
And drain our dearest blood to feed her wars.
No, if our blood must flow, let it be shed
In our own cause! We purchase liberty
More cheaply far than bondage.

RUDENZ.

What can we,
A shepherd race, against great Albert's hosts?

ATTING.

Learn, foolish boy, to know this shepherd race!
I know them, I have led them on in fight—
I saw them in the battle of Favenz.
What! Austria try, forsooth, to force on us
A yoke we are determined not to bear!
Oh, learn to feel from what a stock thou'rt sprung;
Cast not, for tinsel trash and idle show,
The precious jewel of thy worth away.
To be the chieftain of a free born race,
Bound to thee only by their unbought love,
Ready to stand—to fight—to die with thee,
Be that thy pride, be that thy noblest boast!
Knit to thy heart the ties of kindred—home—
Cling to the land, the dear land of thy sires,
Grapple to that with thy whole heart and soul!
Thy power is rooted deep and strongly here,
But in yon stranger world thou'lt stand alone,
A trembling reed beat down by every blast.
Oh come! 'tis long since we have seen thee, Uly!
Tarry but this one day. Only today!
Go not to Altdorf. Wilt thou? Not today!
For this one day, bestow thee on thy friends.

[*Takes his hand*.]

RUDENZ.

I gave my word. Unhand me! I am bound.

ATTING. (*drops his hand and says sternly*).

Bound, didst thou say? Oh yes, unhappy boy,
Thou art indeed. But not by word or oath.
'Tis by the silken mesh of love thou'rt bound.

[RUDENZ *turns away*.]

Ay, hide thee, as thou wilt. 'Tis she, I know,
Bertha of Bruneck, draws thee to the court;
'Tis she that chains thee to the Emperor's service.
Thou think'st to win the noble knightly maid
By thy apostacy. Be not deceived.
She is held out before thee as a lure;
But never meant for innocence like thine.

RUDENZ.

No more, I've heard enough. So fare you well.

[Exit.]

ATTING.

Stay, Uly! Stay! Rash boy, he's gone! I can
Nor hold him back, nor save him from destruction.
And so the Wolfshot has deserted us;
Others will follow his example soon.
This foreign witchery, sweeping o'er our hills,
Tears with its potent spell our youth away.
O luckless hour, when men and manners strange
Into these calm and happy valleys came,
To warp our primitive and guileless ways!
The new is pressing on with might. The old,
The good, the simple, all fleet fast away.
New times come on. A race is springing up
That think not as their fathers thought before!
What do I hear? All, all are in the grave
With whom erewhile I moved, and held converse;
My age has long been laid beneath the sod
Happy the man, who may not live to see
What shall be done by those that follow me!

SCENE II

A meadow surrounded by high rocks and wooded ground. On the rocks are tracks, with rails and ladders, by which the peasants are afterward seen descending. In the background the lake is observed, and over it a moon rainbow in the early part of the scene. The prospect is closed by lofty mountains, with glaciers rising behind them. The stage is dark, but the lake and glaciers glisten in the moonlight.

MELCHTHAL, BAUMGARTEN, WINKELRIED, MEYER VON SARNEN BURKHART AM BUHEL, ARNOLD VON SEWA, KLAUS VON DER FLUE, *and four other peasants, all armed.*

MELCHTHAL *(behind the scenes).*

The mountain pass is open. Follow me!
I see the rock, and little cross upon it:
This is the spot; here is the Rootli.

[They enter with torches.]

WINKELRIED.

Hark!

SEWA.

The coast is clear.

MEYER.

None of our comrades come?
We are the first, we Unterwaldeners.

MELCH.

How far is't i' the night?

BAUMGARTEN.

The beacon watch
Upon the Selisberg has just called two.

[A bell is heard at a distance.]

MEYER.

Hush! Hark!

BUHEL.

The forest chapel's matin bell
Chimes clearly o'er the lake from Switzerland.

VON F.

The air is clear and bears the sound so far.

MELCH.

Go, you and you, and light some broken boughs,
Let's bid them welcome with a cheerful blaze.

[Two peasants exeunt.]

SEWA.

The moon shines fair tonight. Beneath its beams
The lake reposes, bright as burnish'd steel.

BUHEL. They'll have an easy passage.

WINK. *(pointing to the lake*).

Ha! look there!
Do you see nothing?

MEYER.

Ay, indeed, I do!
A rainbow in the middle of the night.

MELCH.

Formed by the bright reflection of the moon!

VON F.

A sign most strange and wonderful, indeed!
Many there be who ne'er have seen the like.

SEWA.

'Tis doubled, see, a paler one above!

BAUM.

A boat is gliding yonder right beneath it.

MELCH.

That must be Werner Stauffacher! I knew
The worthy patriot would not tarry long.

[Goes with BAUMGARTEN *toward the shore*.]

MEYER.

The Uri men are like to be the last.

BUHEL.

They're forced to take a winding circuit through
The mountains; for the Viceroy's spies are out.

[In the meanwhile the two peasants have kindled a fire in the centre of the stage.] MELCHTHAL *(on the shore)*.

Who's there? The word?

STAUFFACHER *(from below*).

Friends of the country.

[All retire up the stage, toward the party landing from the boat. Enter STAUFFACHER, ITEL REDING, HANS AUF DER MAUER, JORG IM HOFE, CONRAD HUNN, ULRICH DER SCHMIDT, JOST VON WEILER, *and three other peasants, armed.]*

ALL.

Welcome!

[While the rest remain behind exchanging greetings, MELCHTHAL *Comes forward with* STAUFFACHER.]

MELCH.

Oh worthy Stauffacher, I've look'd but now
On him who could not look on me again;
I've laid my hands upon his rayless eyes,
And on their vacant orbits sworn a vow
Of vengeance, only to be cool'd in blood.

STAUFF.

Speak not of vengeance. We are here, to meet
The threatened evil, not to avenge the past.
Now tell me what you've done, and what secured,
To aid the common cause in Unterwald.
How stand the peasantry disposed, and how
Yourself escaped the wiles of treachery?

MELCH.

Through the Surenen's fearful mountain chain,
Where dreary ice-fields stretch on every side,
And sound is none save the hoarse vulture's cry,
I reach'd the Alpine pasture, where the herds
From Uri and from Engelberg resort,
And turn their cattle forth to graze in common.
Still as I went along, I slaked my thirst
With the coarse oozings of the glacier heights
That thro' the crevices come foaming down,
And turned to rest me in the herdsmen's cots,[51]
Where I was host and guest, until I gain'd
The cheerful homes and social haunts of men.
Already through these distant vales had spread
The rumor of this last atrocity;
And wheresoe'er I went, at every door,
Kind words saluted me and gentle looks.
I found these simple spirits all in arms
Against our rulers' tyrannous encroachments.
For as their Alps through each succeeding year
Yield the same roots—their streams flow ever on
In the same channels—nay, the clouds and winds

The selfsame course unalterably pursue,
So have old customs there, from sire to son,
Been handed down, unchanging and unchanged;
Nor will they brook to swerve or turn aside
From the fixed even tenor of their life.
With grasp of their hard hands they welcomed me—
Took from the walls their rusty falchions down—
And from their eyes the soul of valor flash'd
With joyful lustre, as I spoke those names,
Sacred to every peasant in the mountains,
Your own and Walter Fürst's. Whate'er your voice
Should dictate as the right, they swore to do;
And you they swore to follow e'en to death.
—So sped I on from house to house, secure
In the guest's sacred privilege;—and when
I reached at last the valley of my home,
Where dwell my kinsmen, scatter'd far and near—
And when I found my father, stript and blind,
Upon the stranger's straw, fed by the alms
Of charity—

STAUFFACHER.

Great heavens!

MELCHTHAL.

Yet wept I not!
No—not in weak and unavailing tears
Spent I the force of my fierce burning anguish;
Deep in my bosom, like some precious treasure,
I lock'd it fast, and thought on deeds alone.
Through every winding of the hills I crept—
No valley so remote but I explored it;
Nay, at the very glacier's ice-clad base,
I sought and found the homes of living men;
And still, where'er my wandering footsteps turn'd,
The selfsame hatred of these tyrants met me.
For even there, at vegetation's verge,
Where the numb'd earth is barren of all fruits,

Their grasping hands had been for plunder thrust.
Into the hearts of all this honest race
The story of my wrongs struck deep, and now
They, to a man, are ours; both heart and hand.

STAUFF.

Great things, indeed, you've wrought in little time.

MELCH.

I did still more than this. The fortresses,
Rossberg and Sarnen, are the country's dread;
For from behind their adamantine walls
The foe, like eagle from his eyrie swoops,
And, safe himself, spreads havoc o'er the land.
With my own eyes I wish'd to weigh its strength,
So went to Sarnen, and explored the castle.

STAUFF.

How! Venture even into the tiger's den?

MELCH.

Disguised in pilgrim's weeds I entered it;
I saw the Viceroy feasting at his board—
Judge if I'm master of myself or no!
I saw the tyrant, and I slew him not!

STAUFF.

Fortune, indeed, upon your boldness smiled.

[Meanwhile the others have arrived and join MELCHTHAL *and* STAUFFACHER.]

Yet tell me now, I pray, who are the friends,
The worthy men, who came along with you
Make me acquainted with them, that we may
Speak frankly, man to man, and heart to heart.

MEYER.

In the three Cantons, who, sir, knows not you?
Meyer of Sarnen is my name; and this
Is Struth of Winkelried, my sister's son.

STAUFF.

No unknown name. A Winkelried it was
Who slew the dragon in the fen at Weiler,
And lost his life in the encounter, too.

WINK.

That, Master Stauffacher, was my grandfather.

MELCHTHAL *(pointing to two peasants)*.

These two are men who till the cloister lands
Of Engelberg, and live behind the forest.
You'll not think ill of them, because they're serfs,
And sit not free upon the soil, like us;
They love the land, and bear a good repute.

STAUFFACHER *(to them)*.

Give me your hands. He has good cause for thanks
That to no man his body's service owes.
But worth is worth, no matter where 'tis found.

HUNN.

That is Herr Reding, sir, our old Landamman;

MEYER.

I know him well. I am at law with him
About a piece of ancient heritage.
Herr Reding, we are enemies in court—
Here we are one.

[Shakes his hand.]

STAUFFACHER.

That's well and bravely said.

WINK. Listen! They come. The horn of Uri! Hark!

[On the right and left armed men are seen descending the rocks with torches.]

MAUER.

Look, is not that the holy man of God?
A worthy priest! The terrors of the night,
And the way's pains and perils scare not him,
A faithful shepherd caring for his flock.
BAUM. The Sacrist follows him, and Walter Fürst.
But where is Tell? I do not see him there.

[WALTER FÜRST, RÖSSELMANN *the Pastor*, PETERMANN *the Sacrist*, KUONI *the Shepherd* WERNI *the Huntsman*, RUODI *the Fisherman, and other countrymen, thirty-three in all, advance and take their places round the fire.]*

FÜRST.

Thus must we, on the soil our fathers left us,
Creep forth by stealth to meet like murderers,
And in the night, that should her mantle lend
Only to, crime and black conspiracy,
Assert our own good rights which yet are clear
As is the radiance of the noonday sun.

MELCH.

So be it. What is hatch'd in gloom of night
Shall free and boldly meet the morning light.

RÖSSEL.

Confederates! Listen to the words which God
Inspires my heart withal. Here we are met,
To represent the general weal. In us
Are all the people of the land convened.
Then let us hold the Diet, as of old,
And as we're wont in peaceful times to do.

The time's necessity be our excuse,
If there be aught informal in this meeting.
Still, wheresoe'er men strike for justice, there
Is God, and now beneath His heav'n we stand.

STAUFF.

'Tis well advised.—Let us, then, hold the Diet,
According to our ancient usages.—
Though it be night, there's sunshine in our cause.

MELCH.

Few though our numbers be, the hearts are here
Of the whole people; here the BEST are met.

HUNN.

The ancient books may not be near at hand,
Yet are they graven in our inmost hearts.

RÖSSEL.

'Tis well. And now, then, let a ring be formed,
And plant the swords of power within the ground.[52]

MAUER.

Let the Landamman step into his place,
And by his side his secretaries stand.

SACRIST.

There are three Cantons here. Which hath the right
To give the head to the united Council?
Schwytz may contest that dignity with Uri;
We Unterwald'ners enter not the field.

MELCH.

We stand aside. We are but suppliants here,
Invoking aid from our more potent friends.

STAUFF.

Let Uri have the sword. Her banner takes,
In battle, the precedence of our own.

FÜRST.

Schwytz, then, must share the honor of the sword;
For she's the honored ancestor of all.

RÖSSEL.

Let me arrange this generous controversy.
Uri shall lead in battle—Schwytz in Council.

FÜRST *(gives* STAUFFACHER *his hand)*.

Then take your place.

STAUFFACHER.

Not I. Some older man.

HOFE.

Ulrich, the Smith, is the most aged here.

MAUER.

A worthy man, but not a freeman; no!
—No bondman can be judge in Switzerland.

STAUFF.

Is not Herr Reding here, our old Landamman!
Where can we find a worthier man than he?

FÜRST.

Let him be Amman and the Diet's chief!
You that agree with me, hold up your hands!

[All hold up their right hands.]

REDING *(stepping into the centre)*.

I cannot lay my hands upon the books;
But by yon everlasting stars I swear,
Never to swerve from justice and the right.

[The two swords are placed before him, and a circle formed; Schwytz in the centre, Uri on his right, Unterwald on his left.]

REDING *(resting on his battle sword)*.

Why, at the hour when spirits walk the earth,
Meet the three Cantons of the mountains here,
Upon the lake's inhospitable shore?
What may the purport be of this new league
We here contract beneath the starry heaven?

STAUFFACHER *(entering the circle*).

'Tis no new league that here we now contract;
But one our fathers framed, in ancient times,
We purpose to renew! For know, confederates,
Though mountain ridge and lake divide our bounds,
And each Canton by its own laws is ruled,
Yet are we but one race, born of one blood,
And all are children of one common home.

WINK.

Is then the burden of our legends true,
That we came hither from a distant land?
Oh, tell us what you know, that our new league
May reap fresh vigor from the leagues of old.

STAUFF.

Hear, then, what aged herdsmen tell. There dwelt
A mighty people in the land that lies
Back to the north. The scourge of famine came;
And in this strait 'twas publicly resolved
That each tenth man, on whom the lot might fall,
Should leave the country. They obey'd—and forth,
With loud lamentings, men and women went,

A mighty host; and to the south moved on,
Cutting their way through Germany by the sword,
Until they gained these pine-clad hills of ours;
Nor stopp'd they ever on their forward course,
Till at the shaggy dell they halted where
The Müta flows through its luxuriant meads.
No trace of human creature met their eye,
Save one poor hut upon the desert shore,
Where dwelt a lonely man, and kept the ferry.
A tempest raged—the lake rose mountains high
And barr'd their further progress. Thereupon
They view'd the country—found it rich in wood,
Discover'd goodly springs, and felt as they
Were in their own dear native land once more.
Then they resolved to settle on the spot;
Erected there the ancient town of Schwytz;
And many a day of toil had they to clear
The tangled brake and forest's spreading roots.
Meanwhile their numbers grew, the soil became
Unequal to sustain them, and they cross'd
To the black mountain, far as Weissland, where,
Conceal'd behind eternal walls of ice,
Another people speak another tongue.
They built the village of Stanz, beside the Kernwald;
The village Altdorf, in the vale of Reuss;
Yet, ever mindful of their parent stem,
The men of Schwytz, from all the stranger race
That since that time have settled in the land,
Each other recognize. Their hearts still know,
And beat fraternally to kindred blood.

[Extends his hand right and left.]

MAUER.

Ay, we are all one heart, one blood, one race!

ALL *(joining hands).*

We are one people, and will act as one.

STAUFF.

The nations round us bear a foreign yoke;
For they have to the conqueror succumbed.
Nay, e'en within our frontiers may be found
Some, that owe villein service to a lord,
A race of bonded serfs from sire to son.
But we, the genuine race of ancient Swiss,
Have kept our freedom from the first till now.
Never to princes have we bow'd the knee;
Freely we sought protection of the Empire.

RÖSSEL.

Freely we sought it—freely it was given.
'Tis so set down in Emperor Frederick's charter.

STAUFF.

For the most free have still some feudal lord.
There must be still a chief, a judge supreme,
To whom appeal may lie, in case of strife.
And therefore was it that our sires allow'd,
For what they had recover'd from the waste,
This honor to the Emperor, the lord
Of all the German and Italian soil;
And, like the other free men of his realm,
Engaged to aid him with their swords in war;
The free man's duty this alone should be,
To guard the Empire that keeps guard for him.

MELCH.

He's but a slave that would acknowledge more.

STAUFF.

They followed, when the Heribann[53] went forth,
The imperial standard, and they fought its battles!
To Italy they march'd in arms, to place
The Cæsars' crown upon the Emperor's head.
But still at home they ruled themselves in peace

By their own laws and ancient usages.
The Emperor's only right was to adjudge
The penalty of death; he therefore named
Some mighty noble as his delegate,
That had no stake or interest in the land,
Who was call'd in, when doom was to be pass'd,
And, in the face of day, pronounced decree,
Clear and distinctly, fearing no man's hate.
What traces here, that we are bondsmen? Speak,
If there be any can gainsay my words!

HOFE.

No! You have spoken but the simple truth;
We never stoop'd beneath a tyrant's yoke.

STAUFF.

Even to the Emperor we did not submit,
When he gave judgment 'gainst us for the church;
For when the Abbey of Einsiedlen claimed
The Alp our fathers and ourselves had grazed,
And showed an ancient charter which bestowed
The land on them as being ownerless—
For our existence there had been concealed—
What was our answer? This: "The grant is void.
No Emperor can bestow what is our own
And if the Empire shall deny our rights,
We can, within our mountains, right ourselves!"
Thus spake our fathers! And shall we endure
The shame and infamy of this new yoke,
And from the vassal brook what never king
Dared, in his plenitude of power, attempt?
This soil we have created for ourselves,
By the hard labor of our hands; we've changed
The giant forest, that was erst the haunt
Of savage bears, into a home for man;
Extirpated the dragon's brood, that wont
To rise, distent with venom, from the swamps;
Rent the thick misty canopy that hung

Its blighting vapors on the dreary waste;
Blasted the solid rock; across the chasm
Thrown the firm bridge for the wayfaring man.
By the possession of a thousand years
The soil is ours. And shall an alien lord,
Himself a vassal, dare to venture here,
Insult us by our own hearth fires—attempt
To forge the chains of bondage for our hands,
And do us shame on our own proper soil?
Is there no help against such wrong as this?

[Great sensation among the people.]

Yes! there's a limit to the despot's power!
When the oppress'd for justice looks in vain,
When his sore burden may no more be borne,
With fearless heart he makes appeal to Heaven,
And thence brings down his everlasting rights,
Which there abide, inalienably his,
And indestructible as are the stars.
Nature's primeval state returns again,
Where man stands hostile to his fellow man;
And if all other means shall fail his need,
One last resource remains—his own good sword.
Our dearest treasures call to us for aid
Against the oppressor's violence; we stand
For country, home, for wives, for children here!

ALL *(clashing their swords)*.

Here stand we for our homes, our wives, and children.

RÖSSELMANN *(stepping into the circle)*.

Bethink ye well, before ye draw the sword.
Some peaceful compromise may yet be made;
Speak but one word, and at your feet you'll see
The men who now oppress you. Take the terms
That have been often tendered you; renounce
The Empire, and to Austria swear allegiance!

MAUER.

What says the priest? To Austria allegiance?

BUHEL.

Hearken not to him!

WINKELRIED.

'Tis a traitor's counsel,
His country's foe!

REDING.

Peace, peace, confederates!

SEWA.

Homage to Austria, after wrongs like these!

FLUE.

Shall Austria extort from us by force
What we denied to kindness and entreaty?

MEYER.

Then should we all be slaves, deservedly.

MAUER.

Yes! Let him forfeit all a Switzer's rights,
Who talks of yielding thus to Austria's yoke!
I stand on this, Landamman. Let this be
The foremost of our laws!

MELCHTHAL.

Even so! Whoe'er
Shall talk of bearing Austria's yoke, let him
Of all his rights and honors be despoiled,
No man thenceforth receive him at his hearth!

ALL *(raising their right hands)*.

Agreed! Be this the law!

REDING *(after a pause)*.

The law it is.

RÖSSEL.

Now you are free—this law hath made you free.
Never shall Austria obtain by force
What she has fail'd to gain by friendly suit.

WEIL.

On with the order of the day! Proceed!

REDING.

Confederates! Have all gentler means been tried?
Perchance the Emp'ror knows not of our wrongs;
It may not be his will we suffer thus
Were it not well to make one last attempt,
And lay our grievances before the throne,
Ere we unsheath the sword? Force is at best
A fearful thing e'en in a righteous cause;
God only helps, when man can help no more.

STAUFFACHER (*to* KONRAD HUNN).

Here you can give us information. Speak!

HUNN.

I was at Rheinfeld, at the Emperor's Court,
Deputed by the Cantons to complain
Of the oppressions of these governors,
And of our liberties the charter claim
Which each new king till now has ratified.
I found the envoys there of many a town,
From Suabia and the valley of the Rhine,
Who all received their parchments as they wish'd,
And straight went home again with merry heart.

But me, your envoy, they to the council sent,
Where I with empty cheer was soon dismiss'd.
"The Emperor at present was engaged;
Some other time he would attend to us!"
I turn'd away, and passing through the hall,
With heavy heart, in a recess I saw
The Grand Duke John[54] in tears, and by his side
The noble lords of Wart and Tegerfeld,
Who beckon'd me, and said, "Redress yourselves.
Expect not justice from the Emperor.
Does he not plunder his own brother's child,
And keep from him his just inheritance?"
The Duke claims his maternal property,
Urging he's now of age, and 'tis full time
That he should rule his people and estates
What is the answer made to him? The king
Places a chaplet on his head; "Behold
The fitting ornament," he cries, "of youth!"

MAUER.

You hear. Expect not from the Emperor
Or right or justice! Then redress yourselves!

REDING.

No other course is left us. Now, advise
What plan most likely to insure success.

FÜRST.

To shake a thraldom off that we abhor,
To keep our ancient rights inviolate,
As we received them from our fathers—this,
Not lawless innovation, is our aim.
Let Cæsar still retain what is his due;
And he that is a vassal, let him pay
The service he is sworn to faithfully.

MEYER.

I hold my land of Austria in fief.

FÜRST.

Continue, then, to pay your feudal dues.

WEIT.

I'm tenant of the lords of Rappersweil.

FÜRST.

Continue, then, to pay them rent and tithe.

RÖSSEL.

Of Zurich's Abbess humble vassal I.

FÜRST.

Give to the cloister what the cloister claims.

STAUFF.

The Empire only is my feudal lord.

FÜRST.

What needs must be, we'll do, but nothing more.
We'll drive these tyrants and their minions hence,
And raze their towering strongholds to the ground,
Yet shed, if possible, no drop of blood.
Let the Emperor see that we were driven to cast
The sacred duties of respect away;
And when he finds we keep within our bounds,
His wrath, belike, may yield to policy;
For truly is that nation to be fear'd
That, arms in hand, is temperate in its wrath.

REDING.

But prithee tell us how may this be done
The enemy is arm'd as well as we,
And, rest assured, he will not yield in peace.

STAUFF.

He will, whene'er he sees us up in arms;
We shall surprise him, ere he is prepared.

MEYER.

Easily said, but not so easily done.
Two strongholds dominate the country—they
Protect the foe, and should the king invade us,
Our task would then be dangerous indeed.
Rossberg and Sarnen both must be secured,
Before a sword is drawn in either Canton.

STAUFF.

Should we delay, the foe would soon be warned.
We are too numerous for secrecy.

MEYER.

There is no traitor in the Forest States.

RÖSSEL.

But even zeal may heedlessly betray.

FÜRST.

Delay it no longer, and the keep at Altdorf
Will be complete—the governor secure.

MEYER.

You think but of yourselves.

SACRISTAN.

You're unjust!

MEYER.

Unjust! said you? Dares Uri taunt us so?

REDING.

Peace, on your oath!

SACRISTAN.

If Schwytz be leagued with Uri,
Why, then, indeed, we must perforce be dumb.

REDING.

And let me tell you, in the Diet's name,
Your hasty spirit much disturbs the peace.
Stand we not all for the same common cause?

WINK.

What, if till Christmas we delay? 'Tis then
The custom for the serfs to throng the castle,
Bringing the governor their annual gifts.
Thus may some ten or twelve selected men
Assemble unobserved, within its walls,
Bearing about their persons pikes of steel
Which may be quickly mounted upon staves;
For arms are not admitted to the fort.
The rest can fill the neighb'ring wood, prepared
To sally forth upon a trumpet's blast,
Soon as their comrades have secured the gate;
And thus the castle will with ease be ours.

MELCH.

The Rossberg I will undertake to scale.
I have a sweetheart in the garrison,
Whom with some tender words I could persuade
To lower me at night a hempen ladder.
Once up, my friends will not be long behind.

REDING.

Are all resolved in favor of delay?

[The majority raise their hands.]

STAUFFACHER *(counting them).*

Twenty to twelve is the majority.

FÜRST.

If on the appointed day the castles fall,
From mountain on to mountain we shall speed
The fiery signal: in the capital
Of every Canton quickly rouse the Landsturm.[55]
Then, when these tyrants see our martial front,
Believe me, they will never make so bold
As risk the conflict, but will gladly take
Safe conduct forth beyond our boundaries.

STAUFF.

Not so with Gessler. He will make a stand.
Surrounded with his dread array of horse,
Blood will be shed before he quits the field,
And even expell'd he'd still be terrible.
'Tis hard, nay, dangerous, to spare his life.

BAUM.

Place me where'er a life is to be lost;
I owe my life to Tell, and cheerfully
Will pledge it for my country. I have clear'd.
My honor, and my heart is now at rest.

REDING.

Counsel will come with circumstance. Be patient!
Something must still be to the moment left.
Yet, while by night we hold our Diet here,
The morning, see, has on the mountain tops

Kindled her glowing beacon. Let us part,
Ere the broad sun surprise us.

FÜRST.

Do not fear.
The night wanes slowly from these vales of ours.

[All have involuntarily taken off their caps, and contemplate the breaking of day, absorbed in silence.]

RÖSSEL.

By this fair light which greeteth us, before
Those other nations, that, beneath us far,
In noisome cities pent, draw painful breath,
Swear we the oath of our confederacy!
A band of brothers true we swear to be,
Never to part in danger or in death!

[They repeat his words with three fingers raised.]

We swear we will be free, as were our sires,
And sooner die than live in slavery!

[All repeat as before.]

We swear, to put our trust in God Most High,
And not to quail before the might of man!

[All repeat as before, and embrace one another.]

STAUFF.

Now every man pursue his several way
Back to his friends, his kindred, and his home.
Let the herd winter up his flock, and gain
In secret friends for this great league of ours!
What for a time must be endured, endure,
And let the reckoning of the tyrants grow,
Till the great day arrive when they shall pay
The general and particular debt at once.

Let every man control his own just rage,
And nurse his vengeance for the public wrongs:
For he whom selfish interests now engage
Defrauds the general weal of what to it belongs.

[As they are going off in profound silence, in three different directions, the orchestra plays a solemn air. The empty scene remains open for some time, showing the rays of the sun rising over the Glaciers.]

[ILLUSTRATION: THE OATH ON THE RÜTLI As performed at the Royal Theatre, Dresden 1906.]

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ACT III

SCENE I

Court before TELL'S *house*. TELL *with an axe*. HEDWIG *engaged in her domestic duties*. WALTER *and* WILLIAM *in the background, playing with a little cross-bow.*

(WALTER Sings).

With his cross-bow, and his quiver,
The huntsman speeds his way,
Over mountain, dale, and river,
At the dawning of the day.
As the eagle, on wild pinion,
Is the king in realms of air,
So the hunter claims dominion
Over crag and forest lair.
Far as ever bow can carry,
Thro' the trackless airy space,
All he sees he makes his quarry,
Soaring bird and beast of chase.

WILLIAM *(runs forward).*

My string has snapt! Oh, father, mend it, do!

TELL.

Not I; a true-born archer helps himself.

[Boys retire.]

HEDWIG.

The boys begin to use the bow betimes.

TELL.

'Tis early practice only makes the master.

HEDWIG.

Ah! Would to heaven they never learnt the art!

TELL.

But they shall learn it, wife, in all its points.
Whoe'er would carve an independent way
Through life, must learn to ward or plant a blow.

HEDWIG.

Alas, alas! and they will never rest
Contentedly at home.

TELL.

No more can I!
I was not framed by nature for a shepherd.
My restless spirit ever yearns for change;
I only feel the flush and joy of life
If I can start fresh quarry every day.

HEDWIG.

Heedless the while of all your wife's alarms,
As she sits watching through long hours at home.
For my soul sinks with terror at the tales
The servants tell about the risks you run;

Whene'er we part, my trembling heart forebodes
That you will ne'er come back to me again.
I see you on the frozen mountain steeps,
Missing, perchance, your leap from crag to crag.
I see the chamois, with a wild rebound,
Drag you down with him o'er the precipice.
I see the avalanche close o'er your head,
The treacherous ice give way, and you sink down
Entombed alive within its hideous gulf.
Ah! in a hundred varying forms does death
Pursue the Alpine huntsman on his course.
That way of life can surely ne'er be blessed,
Where life and limb are perill'd every hour.

TELL.

The man that bears a quick and steady eye,
And trusts in God, and his own lusty thews,
Passes, with scarce a scar, through every danger.
The mountain cannot awe the mountain child.

[Having finished his work he lays aside his tools.]

And now, methinks, the door will hold awhile—
Axe in the house oft saves the carpenter.

[Takes his cap.]

HEDWIG.

Whither away?

TELL.

To Altdorf, to your father.

HEDWIG.

You have some dangerous enterprise in view?
Confess!

TELL.

Why think you so?

HEDWIG.

Some scheme's on foot
Against the governors. There was a Diet
Held on the Rootli—that I know—and you
Are one of the confederacy, I'm sure.

TELL.

I was not there. Yet will I not hold back,
Whene'er my country calls me to her aid.

HEDWIG.

Wherever danger is, will you be placed.
On you, as ever, will the burden fall.

[ILLUSTRATION]

TELL.

Each man shall have the post that fits his powers.

HEDWIG.

You took—ay, 'mid the thickest of the storm—
The man of Unterwald across the lake.
'Tis marvel you escaped. Had you no thought
Of wife and children, then?

TELL.

Dear wife, I had;
And therefore saved the father for his children.

HEDWIG.

To brave the lake in all its wrath! 'Twas not
To put your trust in God! 'Twas tempting Him.

TELL.

Little will he that's over cautious do.

HEDWIG.

Yes, you've a kind and helping hand for all
But be in straits, and who will lend you aid?

TELL.

God grant I ne'er may stand in need of it!

[Takes up his cross-bow and arrows.]

HEDWIG.

Why take your cross-bow with you? leave it here.

TELL.

I want my right hand, when I want my bow.

[The boys return.]

WALTER.

Where, father, are you going?

TELL.

To grand-dad, boy—
To Altdorf. Will you go?

WALTER. Ay, that I will!

HEDWIG.

The Viceroy's there just now. Go not to Altdorf!

TELL.

He leaves today.

HEDWIG.

Then let him first be gone,
Cross not his path.—You know he bears us grudge.

TELL.

His ill-will cannot greatly injure me.
I do what's right, and care for no man's hate.

HEDWIG.

'Tis those who do what's right, whom most he hates.

TELL.

Because he cannot reach them. Me, I ween,
His knightship will be glad to leave in peace.

HEDWIG.

Ay!—Are you sure of that?

TELL.

Not long ago,
As I was hunting through the wild ravines
Of Shechenthal, untrod by mortal foot—
There, as I took my solitary way
Along a shelving ledge of rocks, where 'twas
Impossible to step on either side;
For high above rose, like a giant wall,
The precipice's side, and far below
The Shechen thunder'd o'er its rifted bed;—

[*The boys press toward him, looking upon him with excited curiosity.]*

There, face to face, I met the Viceroy. He
Alone with me—and I myself alone—
Mere man to man, and near us the abyss,
And when his lordship had perused my face,
And knew the man he had severely fined
On some most trivial ground, not long before,

And saw me, with my sturdy bow in hand,
Come striding toward him, his cheek grew pale,
His knees refused their office, and I thought
He would have sunk against the mountain side.
Then, touch'd with pity for him, I advanced,
Respectfully, and said "'Tis I, my lord."
But ne'er a sound could he compel his lips
To frame in answer. Only with his hand
He beckoned me in silence to proceed.
So I pass'd on, and sent his train to seek him.

HEDWIG.

He trembled, then, before you? Woe the while
You saw his weakness; that he'll ne'er forgive.

TELL.

I shun him, therefore, and he'll not seek me.

HEDWIG.

But stay away today. Go hunt instead!

TELL.

What do you fear?

HEDWIG.

I am uneasy. Stay!

TELL.

Why thus distress yourself without a cause?

HEDWIG.

Because there is no cause. Tell, Tell! stay here!

TELL.

Dear wife, I gave my promise I would go.

HEDWIG.

Must you—then go. But leave the boys with me.

WALTER.

No, mother dear, I go with father, I.

HEDWIG.

How, Walter! will you leave your mother then?

WALTER.

I'll bring you pretty things from grandpa.

[Exit with his father.]

WILLIAM.

Mother, I'll stay with you!

HEDWIG *(embracing him*).

Yes, yes! thou art
My own dear child. Thou'rt all that's left to me.

[She goes to the gate of the court and looks anxiously after TELL *and her son for a considerable time.]*

SCENE II

A retired part of the Forest.-Brooks dashing in spray over the rocks.

Enter BERTHA *in a hunting dress. Immediately afterward* RUDENZ

BERTHA.

He follows me. Now, then, to speak my mind!

RUDENZ *(entering hastily).*

At length, dear lady, we have met alone
In this wild dell, with rocks on every side,

No jealous eye can watch our interview.
Now let my heart throw off this weary silence.

BERTHA.

But are you sure they will not follow us?

RUDENZ.

See, yonder goes the chase! Now, then, or never!
I must avail me of this precious chance—
Must hear my doom decided by thy lips,
Though it should part me from thy side forever.
Oh, do not arm that gentle face of thine
With looks so stern and harsh! Who—who am I,
That dare aspire so high, as unto thee?
Fame hath not stamp'd me yet; nor may I take
My place amid the courtly throng of knights,
That, crown'd with glory's lustre, woo thy smiles.
Nothing have I to offer but a heart
That overflows with truth and love for thee.

BERTHA *(sternly and with severity)*.

And dare you speak to me of love—of truth!
You, that are faithless to your nearest ties!
You, that are Austria's slave-bartered and sold
To her—an alien, and your country's tyrant!

RUDENZ.

How! This reproach from thee! Whom do I seek,
On Austria's side, my own beloved, but thee?

BERTHA.

Think you to find me in the traitor's ranks?
Now, as I live, I'd rather give my hand
To Gessler's self, all despot though he be,
Than to the Switzer who forgets his birth,
And stoops to be a tyrant's servile tool.

RUDENZ.

Oh heaven, what words are these?

BERTHA.

Say! what can lie
Nearer the good man's heart than friends and kindred!
What dearer duty to a noble soul
Than to protect weak suffering innocence,
And vindicate the rights of the oppress'd?
My very soul bleeds for your countrymen.
I suffer with them, for I needs must love them;
They are so gentle, yet so full of power;
They draw my whole heart to them. Every day
I look upon them with increased esteem.
But you, whom nature and your knightly vow
Have given them as their natural protector,
Yet who desert them and abet their foes
In forging shackles for your native land,
You—you incense and wound me to the core.
It tries me to the utmost not to hate you.

RUDENZ.

Is not my country's welfare all my wish?
What seek I for her but to purchase peace
'Neath Austria's potent sceptre?

BERTHA.

Bondage, rather!
You would drive freedom from the last stronghold
That yet remains for her upon the earth.
The people know their own true int'rests better:
Their simple natures are not warp'd by show.
But round your head a tangling net is wound.

RUDENZ.

Bertha, you hate me—you despise me!

BERTHA.

Nay!
And if I did, 'twere better for my peace.
But to see him despised and despicable—
The man whom one might love—

RUDENZ.

Oh, Bertha. You
Show me the pinnacle of heavenly bliss,
Then, in a moment, hurl me to despair!

BERTHA.

No, no! the noble is not all extinct
Within you. It but slumbers—I will rouse it.
It must have cost you many a fiery struggle
To crush the virtues of your race within you.
But, heaven be praised, 'tis mightier than yourself,
And you are noble in your own despite!

RUDENZ.

You trust me, then? Oh, Bertha, with thy love
What might I not become!

BERTHA.

Be only that
For which your own high nature destin'd you.
Fill the position you were born to fill;—
Stand by your people and your native land,
And battle for your sacred rights!

RUDENZ.

Alas!
How can I win you—how can you be mine,
If I take arms against the Emperor?
Will not your potent kinsmen interpose
To dictate the disposal of your hand?

BERTHA.

All my estates lie in the Forest Cantons;
And I am free, when Switzerland is free.

RUDENZ.

Oh! what a prospect, Bertha, hast thou shown me!

BERTHA.

Hope not to win my hand by Austria's grace;
Fain would they lay their grasp on my estates
To swell the vast domains which now they hold.
The selfsame lust of conquest, that would rob
You of your liberty, endangers mine.
Ob, friend, I'm mark'd for sacrifice;—to be
The guerdon of some parasite, perchance!
They'll drag me hence to the Imperial court,
That hateful haunt of falsehood and intrigue,
And marriage bonds I loathe await me there.
Love, love alone—your love can rescue me.

RUDENZ.

And thou couldst be content, love, to live here?
In my own native land to be my own?
Oh, Bertha, all the yearnings of my soul
For this great world and its tumultuous strife—
What were they, but a yearning after thee?
In glory's path I sought for thee alone,
And all my thirst of fame was only love.
But if in this calm vale thou canst abide
With me, and bid earth's pomps and pride adieu,
Then is the goal of my ambition won;
And the rough tide of the tempestuous world
May dash and rave around these firm-set hills!
No wandering wishes more have I to send
Forth to the busy scene that stirs beyond.
Then may these rocks, that girdle us, extend
Their giant walls impenetrably round,

And this sequestered happy vale alone
Look up to heaven, and be my paradise!

BERTHA.

Now art thou all my fancy dream'd of thee!
My trust has not been given to thee in vain.

RUDENZ.

Away, ye idle phantoms of my folly;
In mine own home I'll find my happiness.
Here, where the gladsome boy to manhood grew,
Where ev'ry brook, and tree, and mountain peak,
Teems with remembrances of happy hours,
In mine own native land thou wilt be mine.
Ah, I have ever loved it well, I feel
How poor without it were all earthly joys.

BERTHA.

Where should we look for happiness on earth,
If not in this dear land of innocence—
Here, where old truth hath its familiar home?
Where fraud and guile are strangers, envy ne'er
Shall dim the sparkling fountain of our bliss,
And ever bright the hours shall o'er us glide.
There do I see thee, in true manly worth,
The foremost of the free and of thy peers,
Revered with homage pure and unconstrain'd,
Wielding a power that kings might envy thee.

RUDENZ.

And thee I see, thy sex's crowning gem,
With thy sweet woman's grace and wakeful love,
Building a heaven for me within my home,
And, as the spring-time scatters forth her flowers,
Adorning with thy charms my path of life,
And spreading joy and sunshine all around.

BERTHA.

And this it was, dear friend, that caused my grief,
To see thee blast this life's supremest bliss
With thine own hand. Ah! what had been my fate,
Had I been forced to follow some proud lord,
Some ruthless despot, to his gloomy keep!
Here are no keeps, here are no bastion'd walls
To part me from a people I can bless.

RUDENZ.

Yet, how to free myself; to loose the coils
Which I have madly twined around my head?

BERTHA.

Tear them asunder with a man's resolve.
Whate'er ensue, firm by thy people stand!
It is thy post by birth.

[*Hunting horns are heard in the distance*.]

But hark! The chase!
Farewell—'tis needful we should part—away!
Fight for thy land; thou fightest for thy love.
One foe fills all our souls with dread; the blow
That makes one free, emancipates us all.

[*Exeunt severally*.]

SCENE III

A meadow near Altdorf. Trees in the foreground. At the back of the stage a cap upon a pole. The prospect is bounded by the Bannberg, which is surmounted by a snow-capped mountain.

FRIESSHARDT *and* LEUTHOLD *on guard*

FRIESS.

We keep our watch in vain. Zounds! not a soul
Will pass and do obeisance to the cap.
But yesterday the place swarm'd like a fair;
Now the old green looks like a desert, quite,
Since yonder scarecrow hung upon the pole.

LEUTH.

Only the vilest rabble show themselves,
And wave their tattered caps in mockery at us.
All honest citizens would sooner make
A weary circuit over half the town,
Than bend their backs before our master's cap.

FRIESS.

They were obliged to pass this way at noon,
As they were coming from the Council House.
I counted then upon a famous catch,
For no one thought of bowing to the cap,
But Rösselmann, the priest, was even with me:
Coming just then from some sick man, he takes
His stand before the pole—lifts up the Host—
The Sacrist, too, must tinkle with his bell—
When down they dropp'd on knee—myself and all—
In reverence to the Host, but not the cap.

LEUTH.

Hark ye, companion, I've a shrewd suspicion,
Our post's no better than the pillory.
It is a burning shame, a trooper should
Stand sentinel before an empty cap,
And every honest fellow must despise us.
To do obeisance to a cap, too! Faith,
I never heard an order so absurd!

FRIESS.

Why not, an't please you, to an empty cap?
You've duck'd, I'm sure, to many an empty sconce.

[HILDEGARD, MECHTHILD, *and* ELSBETH *enter with their children, and station themselves around the pole*.]

LEUTH.

And you are a time-serving sneak that takes
Delight in bringing honest folks to harm.
For my part, he that likes may pass the cap:—
I'll shut my eyes and take no note of him.

MECH.

There hangs the Viceroy! Your obeisance, children!

ELSBETH.

I would to God he'd go, and leave his cap!
The country would be none the worse for it.

FRIESSHARDT (*driving them away*).

Out of the way! Confounded pack of gossips!
Who sent for you? Go, send your husbands here,
If they have courage to defy the order.

[TELL *enters with his cross-bow, leading his son* WALTER *by the hand. They pass the hat without noticing it, and advance to the front of the stage*.]

WALTER (*pointing to the Bannberg*).

Father, is't true, that on the mountain there
The trees, if wounded with a hatchet, bleed?

TELL.

Who says so, boy?

WALTER.

The master herdsman, father!
He tells us there's a charm upon the trees,
And if a man shall injure them, the hand
That struck the blow will grow from out the grave.

TELL.

There is a charm about them—that's the truth.
Dost see those glaciers yonder—those white horns—
That seem to melt away into the sky?

WALTER.

They are the peaks that thunder so at night,
And send the avalanches down upon us.

TELL.

They are; and Altdorf long ago had been
Submerged beneath these avalanches' weight,
Did not the forest there above the town
Stand like a bulwark to arrest their fall.

WALTER (*after musing a little*).

And are there countries with no mountains, father?

TELL.

Yes, if we travel downward from our heights,
And keep descending where the rivers go,
We reach, a wide and level country, where
Our mountain torrents brawl and foam no more,
And fair large rivers glide serenely on.
All quarters of the heaven may there be scann'd
Without impediment. The corn grows there
In broad and lovely fields, and all the land
Is like a garden fair to look upon.

WALTER.

But, father, tell me, wherefore haste we not
Away to this delightful land, instead
Of toiling here and struggling as we do?

TELL.

The land is fair and bountiful as Heaven;
But they who till it never may enjoy
The fruits of what they sow.

WALTER.

Live they not free,
As you do, on the land their fathers left them?

TELL.

The fields are all the bishop's or the king's.

WALTER.

But they may freely hunt among the woods?

TELL.

The game is all the monarch's—bird and beast.

WALTER.

But they, at least, may surely fish the streams?

TELL.

Stream, lake, and sea, all to the king belong.

WALTER.

Who is this king, of whom they're so afraid?

TELL.

He is the man who fosters and protects them.

WALTER.

Have they not courage to protect themselves?

TELL.

The neighbor there dare not his neighbor trust.

WALTER.

I should want breathing room in such a land.
I'd rather dwell beneath the avalanches.

TELL.

'Tis better, child, to have these glacier peaks
Behind one's back than evil-minded men!

[*They are about to pass on*.]

WALTER.

See, father, see the cap on yonder pole!

TELL.

What is the cap to us? Come, let's begone.

[*As he is going*, FRIESSHARDT, *presenting his pike, stops him*.]

FRIESS.

Stand, I command you, in the Emperor's name!

TELL (*seizing the pike*).

What would ye? Wherefore do ye stop me thus?

FRIESS.

You've broke the mandate, and with us must go.

LEUTH.

You have not done obeisance to the cap.

TELL.

Friend, let me go.

FRIESS.

Away, away to prison!

WALTER.

Father to prison? Help!

[*Calling to the side scene*.]

This way, you men!
Good people, help! They're dragging him to prison!

[RÖSSELMANN *the Priest, and the* SACRISTAN, *with three other men, enter*.]

SACRIST.

What's here amiss?

RÖSSELMANN.

Why do you seize this man?

FRIESS.

He is an enemy of the King—a traitor.

TELL (*seizing him with violence*).

A traitor, I?

RÖSSELMANN.

Friend, thou art wrong. 'Tis Tell,
An honest man, and worthy citizen.

WALTER (*descries* FÜRST *and runs up to him*).

Grandfather, help, they want to seize my father!

FRIESS. Away to prison!

FÜRST (*running in*).

Stay, I offer bail.
For God's sake, Tell, what is the matter here?

[MELCHTHAL *and* STAUFFACHER *enter*.]

LEUTH.

He has contemn'd the Viceroy's sovereign power,
Refusing flatly to acknowledge it.

STAUFF.

Has Tell done this?

MELCHTHAL.

Villain, you know 'tis false!

LEUTH.

He has not made obeisance to the cap.

FÜRST.

And shall for this to prison? Come, my friend,
Take my security, and let him go.

FRIESS.

Keep your security for yourself—you'll need it.
We only do our duty. Hence with him.

MELCHTHAL (*to the country people*).

This is too bad—shall we stand by and see
Him dragged away before our very eyes?

SACRIST.

We are the strongest. Friends, endure it not,
Our countrymen will back us to a man.

FRIESS.

Who dares the governor's commands?

OTHER THREE PEASANTS (*running in*).

We'll help you. What's the matter? Down with them!

[HILDEGARD, MECHTHILD *and* ELSBETH *return*.]

TELL.

Go, go, good people, I can help myself.
Think you, had I a mind to use my strength,
These pikes of theirs should daunt me?

MELCHTHAL (*to* FRIESSHARDT).

Only try—
Try from our midst to force him, if you dare.

FÜRST *and* STAUFFACHER.

Peace, peace, friends!

FRIESSHARDT (*loudly*).

Riot! Insurrection, ho!

[*Hunting-horns without*.]

WOMEN.

The Governor!

FRIESSHARDT *(raising his voice*).

Rebellion! Mutiny!

STAUFF.

Roar till you burst, knave!

RÖSSELMANN *and* MELCHTHAL.

Will you hold your tongue?

FRIESSHARDT (*calling still louder*).

Help, help, I say, the servants of the law!

FÜRST.

The Viceroy here! Then we shall smart for this!

[*Enter* GESSLER *on horseback, with a falcon on his wrist*: RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, BERTHA, *and* RUDENZ, *and a numerous train of armed attendants, who form a circle of lances round the whole stage*.]

HARRAS.

Room for the Viceroy!

GESSLER.

Drive the clowns apart.
Why throng the people thus? Who calls for help?

[*General silence*.]

[Illustration: TELL AND GESSLER As performed at the Royal Theatre, Dresden, 1906.]

Who was it? I *will* know.

[FRIESSHARDT *steps forward*.]

And who art thou?
And why hast thou this man in custody?

[*Gives his falcon to an attendant*.]

FRIESS.

Dread sir, I am a soldier of your guard,
And station'd sentinel beside the cap;
This man I apprehended in the act
Of passing it without obeisance due;
So as you ordered, I arrested him,
Whereupon to rescue him the people tried.

GESSLER (*after a pause*).

And do you, Tell, so lightly hold your King,
And me, who act as his vice-regent here,
That you refuse obeisance to the cap,
I hung aloft to test your loyalty?
I read in this a disaffected spirit.

TELL.

Pardon me, good my lord! The action sprung
From inadvertence—not from disrespect.
Were I discreet, I were not William Tell.
Forgive me now—I'll not offend again.

GESSLER (*after a pause*).

I hear, Tell, you're a master with the bow—
From every rival bear the palm away.

WALTER.

That's very truth, sir! At a hundred yards
He'll shoot an apple for you off the tree.

GESSLER.

Is that boy thine, Tell?

TELL.

Yes, my gracious lord.

GESSLER.

Hast any more of them?

TELL.

Two boys, my lord.

GESSLER.

And, of the two, which dost thou love the most?

TELL.

Sir, both the boys are dear to me alike.

GESSLER.

Then, Tell, since at a hundred yards thou canst
Bring down the apple from the tree, thou shalt
Approve thy skill before me. Take thy bow—

Thou hast it there at hand—make ready, then,
To shoot an apple from the stripling's head!
But take this counsel—look well to thine aim,
See, that thou hit'st the apple at the first,
For, shouldst thou miss, thy head shall pay the forfeit.

[*All give signs of horror*.]

TELL.

What monstrous thing, my lord, is this you ask?
What I from the head of mine own child!—No, no!
It cannot be, kind sir, you meant not that—
God, in His grace, forbid! You could not ask
A father seriously to do that thing!

GESSLER.

Thou art to shoot an apple from his head!
I do desire—command it so.

TELL.

What, I!
Level my cross-bow at the darling head
Of mine own child? No—rather let me die!

GESSLER.

Or thou must shoot, or with thee dies the boy.

TELL.

Shall I become the murderer of my child!
You have no children, sir—you do not know
The tender throbbings of a father's heart.

GESSLER.

How now, Tell, on a sudden so discreet?
I had been told thou wert a visionary—
A wanderer from the paths of common men.
Thou lov'st the marvelous. So have I now

Cull'd out for thee a task of special daring.
Another man might pause and hesitate;—
Thou dashest at it, heart and soul, at once.

BERTHA.

Oh, do not jest, my lord, with these poor souls!
See, how they tremble, and how pale they look,
So little used are they to hear thee jest.

GESSLER.

Who tells thee that I jest?

[*Grasping a branch above his head*.]

Here is the apple.
Room there, I say! And let him take his distance—
Just eighty paces—as the custom is—
Not an inch more or less! It was his boast
That at a hundred he could hit his man.
Now, archer, to your task, and look you miss not!

HARRAS.

Heavens! this grows serious—down, boy, on your knees,
And beg the governor to spare your life.

FÜRST (*aside to* MELCHTHAL, *who can scarcely restrain his indignation*).

Command yourself—be calm, I beg of you!

BERTHA (*to the governor*).

Let this suffice you, sir! It is inhuman
To trifle with a father's anguish thus.
Although this wretched man had forfeited
Both life and limb for such a slight offence,
Already has he suffer'd tenfold death.
Send him away uninjured to his home;

He'll know thee well in future; and this hour
He and his children's children will remember.

GESSLER.

Open a way there—quick! Why this delay?
Thy life is forfeited; I might dispatch thee,
And see, I graciously repose thy fate
Upon the skill of thine own practised hand.
No cause has he to say his doom is harsh
Who's made the master of his destiny.
Thou boastest thine unerring aim. 'Tis well!
Now is the fitting time to show thy skill;
The mark is worthy and the prize is great.
To hit the bull's eye in the target;—that
Can many another do as well as thou;
But he, methinks, is master of his craft,
Who can at all times on his skill rely,
Nor lets his heart disturb or eye or hand.

FÜRST.

My lord, we bow to your authority;
But oh, let justice yield to mercy here.
Take half my property, nay, take it all,
But spare a father this unnatural doom!

WALTER.

Grandfather, do not kneel to that bad man!
Say, where am I to stand? I do not fear;
My father strikes the bird upon the wing,
And will not miss now when 'twould harm his boy!

STAUFF.

Does the child's innocence not touch your heart?

RÖSSEL.

Bethink you, sir, there is a God in heaven,
To whom you must account for all your deeds.

GESSLER (*pointing to the boy*).

Bind him to yonder lime tree!

WALTER.

What! Bind me?
No, I will not be bound! I will be still,
Still as a lamb—nor even draw my breath!
But if you bind me, I cannot be still.
Then I shall writhe and struggle with my bonds.

HARRAS.

But let your eyes at least be bandaged, boy!

WALTER.

And why my eyes? No! Do you think I fear
An arrow from my father's hand? Not I!
I'll wait it firmly, nor so much as wink!
Quick, father, show them what thy bow can do.
He doubts thy skill—he thinks to ruin us.
Shoot then and hit, though but to spite the tyrant!

[*He goes to the lime tree, and an apple is placed on his head*.]

MELCHTHAL (*to the country people*).

What! Is this outrage to be perpetrated
Before our very eyes? Where is our oath?

STAUFF.

Resist we cannot! Weapons we have none,
And see the wood of lances round us! See!

MELCH.

Oh! would to heaven that we had struck at once!
God pardon those who counsell'd the delay!

GESSLER (*to* TELL).

Now to your task! Men bear not arms for naught.
To carry deadly tools is dangerous,
And on the archer oft his shaft recoils.
This right these haughty peasant churls assume
Trenches upon their master's privileges:
None should be armed but those who bear command.
It pleases you to carry bow and bolt;—
Well—be it so. I will prescribe the mark.

TELL (*bends the bow, and fixes the arrow*).

A lane there! Room!

STAUFFACHER.

What, Tell? You would—no, no!
You shake—your hand's unsteady—your knees tremble.

TELL (*letting the bow sink down*).

There's something swims before mine eyes!

WOMEN.

Great Heaven!

TELL. Release me from this shot! Here is my heart!

[*Tears open his breast*.]

Summon your troopers—let them strike me down!

GESSLER.

'Tis not thy life I want—I want the shot.
Thy talent's universal! Nothing daunts thee!
The rudder thou canst handle like the bow!
No storms affright thee, when a life's at stake.
Now, savior, help thyself—thou savest all!

[TELL *stands fearfully agitated by contending emotions, his hands moving convulsively, and his eyes turning alternately to the governor and Heaven. Suddenly*

he takes a second arrow from his quiver, and sticks it in his belt. The governor notes all he does.]

WALTER (*beneath the lime tree*).

Shoot, father, shoot! fear not!

TELL.

It must be!

[*Collects himself and levels the bow*.]

RUDENZ (*who all the while has been standing in a state of violent excitement, and has with difficulty restrained himself, advances*).

My lord, you will not urge this matter further;
You will not. It was surely but a test.
You've gained your object. Rigor push'd too far
Is sure to miss its aim, however good,
As snaps the bow that's all too straitly bent.

GESSLER.

Peace, till your counsel's ask'd for!

RUDENZ.

I will speak!
Ay, and I dare! I reverence my king;
But acts like these must make his name abhorr'd.
He sanctions not this cruelty. I dare
Avouch the fact. And you outstep your powers
In handling thus my harmless countrymen.

GESSLER.

Ha! thou grow'st, bold, methinks!

RUDENZ.

I have been dumb
To all the oppressions I was doomed to see.
I've closed mine eyes to shut them from my view,

Bade my rebellious, swelling heart be still,
And pent its struggles down within my breast.
But to be silent longer, were to be
A traitor to my king and country both.

BERTHA (*casting herself between him and the governor*).

Oh Heavens! you but exasperate his rage!

RUDENZ.

My people I forsook—renounced my kindred—
Broke all the ties of nature, that I might
Attach myself to you. I madly thought
That I should best advance the general weal
By adding sinews to the Emperor's power.
The scales have fallen from mine eyes—I see
The fearful precipice on which I stand.
You've led my youthful judgment far astray—
Deceived my honest heart. With best intent,
I had well-nigh achiev'd my country's ruin.

GESSLER.

Audacious boy, this language to thy lord?

RUDENZ.

The Emperor is my lord, not you! I'm free
As you by birth, and I can cope with you
In every virtue that beseems a knight.
And if you stood not here in that King's name,
Which I respect e'en where 'tis most abused,
I'd throw my gauntlet down, and you should give
An answer to my gage in knightly sort.
Ay, beckon to your troopers! Here I stand;
But not like these

[*Pointing to the people*.]

—unarmed. I have a sword,
And he that stirs one step—

STAUFFACHER (*exclaims*).

The apple's down!

[*While the attention of the crowd has been directed to the spot where* BERTHA *had cast herself between* RUDENZ *and* GESSLER, TELL *has shot*.]

RÖSSEL.

The boy's alive!

MANY VOICES.

The apple has been struck!

[WALTER FÜRST *staggers and is about to fall*. BERTHA *supports him*.]

GESSLER (*astonished*).

How? Has he shot? The madman!

BERTHA.

Worthy father!
Pray you, compose yourself. The boy's alive.

WALTER (*runs in with the apple*).

Here is the apple, father! Well I knew
You would not harm your boy.

[TELL *stands with his body bent forward, as if still following the arrow. His bow drops from his hand. When he sees the boy advancing, he hastens to meet him with open arms, and embracing him passionately sinks down with him quite exhausted. All crowd round them deeply affected*.]

BERTHA.

Oh, ye kind Heavens!

FÜRST (*to father and son*).

My children, my dear children!

STAUFFACHER.

God be praised!

LEUTH.

Almighty powers! That was a shot indeed!
It will be talked of to the end of time.

HARRAS.

This feat of Tell, the archer, will be told
Long as these mountains stand upon their base.

[*Hands the apple to* GESSLER.]

GESSLER.

By Heaven! the apple's cleft right through the core.
It was a master shot, I must allow.

RÖSSEL.

The shot was good. But woe to him who drove
The man to tempt his God by such a feat!

STAUFF.

Cheer up, Tell, rise! You've nobly freed yourself,
And now may go in quiet to your home.

RÖSSEL.

Come, to the mother let us bear her son!

[*They are about to lead him off*.]

GESSLER.

A word, Tell.

TELL. Sir, your pleasure?

GESSLER.

Thou didst place
A second arrow in thy belt—nay, nay!
I saw it well. Thy purpose with it? Speak!

TELL (*confused*).

It is a custom with all archers, sir.

GESSLER.

No, Tell, I cannot let that answer pass.
There was some other motive, well I know.
Frankly and cheerfully confess the truth;—
Whate'er it be, I promise thee thy life.
Wherefore the second arrow?

TELL.

Well, my lord,
Since you have promised not to take my life,
I will, without reserve, declare the truth.

[*He draws the arrow from his belt, and fixes his eyes sternly upon the governor*.]

If that my hand had struck my darling child,
This second arrow I had aimed at you,
And, be assured, I should not then have miss'd.

GESSLER.

Well, Tell, I promised thou shouldst have thy life;
I gave my knightly word, and I will keep it.
Yet, as I know the malice of thy thoughts,
I'll have thee carried hence, and safely penn'd,
Where neither sun nor moon shall reach thine eyes.
Thus from thy arrows I shall be secure.
Seize on him, guards, and bind him!

[*They bind him*.]

STAUFFACHER.

How, my lord—
How can you treat in such a way a man
On whom God's hand has plainly been reveal'd?

GESSLER.

Well, let us see if it will save him twice!
Remove him to my ship; I'll follow straight;
At Küssnacht I will see him safely lodged.

RÖSSEL.

You dare not do't. Nor durst the Emperor's self
So violate our dearest chartered rights.

GESSLER.

Where are they? Has the Emp'ror confirm'd them?
He never has. And only by obedience
May you that favor hope to win from him.
You are all rebels 'gainst the Emp'ror's power—
And bear a desperate and rebellious spirit.
I know you all—I see you through and through.
Him do I single from amongst you now,
But in his guilt you all participate.
If you are wise, be silent and obey!

[*Exit, followed by* BERTHA, RUDENZ, HARRAS, *and attendants*. FRIESSHARDT *and* LEUTHOLD *remain*.]

FÜRST (*in violent anguish*).

All's over now! He is resolved to bring
Destruction on myself and all my house.

STAUFFACHER (*to* TELL).

Oh, why did you provoke the tyrant's rage?

TELL.

Let him be calm who feels the pangs I felt.

STAUFF.

Alas! alas! Our every hope is gone. With you we all are fettered and enchain'd.

COUNTRY PEOPLE (*surrounding* TELL).

Our last remaining comfort goes with you!

LEUTHOLD (*approaching him*).

I'm sorry for you, Tell, but must obey.

TELL.

Farewell!

WALTER TELL (*clinging to him in great agony*).

Oh, father, father, father dear!

TELL (*pointing to Heaven*).

Thy father is on high—appeal to Him!

STAUFF.

Have you no message, Tell, to send your wife?

TELL (*clasping the boy passionately to his breast*).

The boy's uninjured; God will succor me!

[*Tears himself suddenly away, and follows the soldiers of the guard*.]

ACT IV

SCENE I

Eastern shore of the Lake of Lucerne; rugged and singularly shaped rocks close the prospect to the west. The lake is agitated, violent roaring and rushing of wind, with thunder and lightning at intervals.

KUNZ OF GERSAU, FISHERMAN *and* BOY

KUNZ.

I saw it with these eyes! Believe me, friend,
It happen'd all precisely as I've said.

FISHER.

How! Tell a prisoner, and to Küssnacht borne?
The best man in the land, the bravest arm,
Had we for liberty to strike a blow!

KUNZ.

The Viceroy takes him up the lake in person:
They were about to go on board, as I
Started from Flüelen; but the gathering storm,
That drove me here to land so suddenly,
May well have hindered them from setting out.

FISHER.

Our Tell in chains, and in the Viceroy's power!
O, trust me, Gessler will entomb him where
He never more shall see the light of day;
For, Tell once free, the tyrant well might dread
The just revenge of one so deeply wrong'd.

KUNZ.

The old Landamman, too—von Attinghaus—
They say, is lying at the point of death.

FISHER.

Then the last anchor of our hopes gives way!
He was the only man that dared to raise
His voice in favor of the people's rights.

KUNZ.

The storm grows worse and worse. So, fare ye well!
I'll go and seek out quarters in the village.
There's not a chance of getting off today.

[*Exit*.]

FISHER.

Tell dragg'd to prison, and the Baron dead!
Now, tyranny, exalt thy brazen front—
Throw every shame aside! Truth's voice is dumb!
The eye that watch'd for us, in darkness closed,
The arm that should have struck thee down, in chains!

BOY.

'Tis hailing hard—come, let us to the hut!
This is no weather to be out in, father!

FISHER.

Rage on, ye winds! Ye lightnings, flash your fires!
Burst, ye swollen clouds! Ye cataracts of Heaven,
Descend, and drown the country! In the germ
Destroy the generations yet unborn!
Ye savage elements, be lords of all!
Return, ye bears: ye ancient wolves, return
To this wide howling waste! The land is yours.
Who would live here, when liberty is gone!

BOY.

Hark! How the wind whistles, and the whirlpool roars,
I never saw a storm so fierce as this!

FISHER.

To level at the head of his own child!
Never had father such command before.
And shall not nature, rising in wild wrath,
Revolt against the deed? I should not marvel,

Though to the lake these rocks should bow their heads,
Though yonder pinnacles, yon towers of ice,
That, since creation's dawn, have known no thaw,
Should, from their lofty summits, melt away
Though yonder mountains, yon primeval cliffs,
Should topple down, and a new deluge whelm
Beneath its waves all living men's abodes!

[*Bells heard*.]

BOY.

Hark, they are ringing on the mountain, yonder!
They surely see some vessel in distress.
And toll the bell that we may pray for it.

[*Ascends a rock*.]

FISHER.

Woe to the bark that now pursues its course,
Rock'd in the cradle of these storm-tost waves!
Nor helm nor steersman here can aught avail;
The storm is master. Man is like a ball,
Toss'd 'twixt the winds and billows. Far or near,
No haven offers him its friendly shelter!
Without one ledge to grasp, the sheer smooth rocks
Look down inhospitably on his despair,
And only tender him their flinty breasts.

BOY (*calling from above*).

Father, a ship: from Flüelen bearing down.

FISHER.

Heaven pity the poor wretches! When the storm
Is once entangled in this strait of ours,
It rages like some savage beast of prey,
Struggling against its cage's iron bars!
Howling, it seeks an outlet—all in vain;

For the rocks hedge it round on every side,
Walling the narrow gorge as high as Heaven.

[*He ascends a cliff*.]

BOY.

It is the Governor of Uri's ship;
By its red poop I know it, and the flag.

FISHER.

Judgments of Heaven! Yes, it is he himself,
It is the Governor! Yonder he sails,
And with him bears the burden of his crimes.
The avenger's arm has not been slow to strike!
Now over him he knows a mightier lord.
These waves yield no obedience to his voice.
These rocks bow not their heads before his cap.
Boy, do not pray; stay not the Judge's arm!

BOY.

I pray not for the Governor, I pray
For Tell who's with him there on board the ship.

FISHER.

Alas, ye blind, unreasoning elements!
Must ye, in punishing one guilty head,
Destroy the vessel and the pilot too?

BOY.

See, see, they've clear'd the Buggisgrat;[56] but now
The blast, rebounding from the Devil's Minster,[56]
Has driven them back on the Great Axenberg.[56]
I cannot see them now.

FISHERMAN.

The Hakmesser[56]
Is there, that's founder'd many a gallant ship.

If they should fail to double that with skill,
Their bark will go to pieces on the rocks
That hide their jagged peaks below the lake.
The best of pilots, boy, they have on board.
If man could save them, Tell is just the man,
But he is manacled both hand and foot.

[*Enter* WILLIAM TELL, *with his cross-bow. He enters precipitately, looks wildly round, and testifies the most violent agitation. When he reaches the centre of the stage, he throws himself upon his knees, and stretches out his hands, first toward the earth, then toward Heaven*.]

BOY (*observing him*).

See, father! A man on's knees, who can it be?

FISHER.

He clutches at the earth with both his hands,
And looks as though he were beside himself.

BOY (*advancing*).

What do I see? Come father, come and look!

FISHERMAN (*approaches*).

Who is it? God in Heaven! What! William Tell!
How came you hither? Speak, Tell!

BOY.

Were you not
In yonder ship, a prisoner, and in chains?

FISHER.

Were they not carrying you to Küssnacht, Tell?

TELL *(rising).*

I am released.

FISHERMAN *and* BOY.

Released, oh miracle!

BOY.

Whence came you here

TELL.

From yonder vessel!

FISHERMAN.

What?

BOY.

Where is the Viceroy?

TELL.

Drifting on the waves.

FISHER.

Is't possible? But you! How are you here? How 'scaped you from your fetters and the storm?

TELL.

By God's most gracious providence. Attend.

FISHERMAN *and* BOY.

Say on, say on!

TELL.

You know what passed at Altdorf.

FISHER.

I do—say on!

TELL.

How I was seized and bound,
And order'd by the governor to Küssnacht.

FISHER.

And how at Flüelen he embarked with you.
All this we know. Say, how have you escaped?

TELL.

I lay on deck, fast bound with cords, disarm'd,
In utter hopelessness. I did not think
Again to see the gladsome light of day,
Nor the dear faces of my wife and boys,
And eyed disconsolate the waste of waters.—

FISHER.

Oh, wretched man!

TELL.

Then we put forth; the Viceroy,
Rudolph der Harras, and their suite. My bow
And quiver lay astern beside the helm;
And just as we had reached the corner, near
The little Axen,[57] Heaven ordain'd it so,
That from the Gotthardt's gorge, a hurricane
Swept down upon us with such headlong force
That every oarsman's heart within him sank,
And all on board look'd for a watery grave.
Then heard I one of the attendant train,
Turning to Gessler, in this wise accost him:
"You see our danger, and your own, my lord,
And that we hover on the verge of death.
The boatmen there are powerless from fear,
Nor are they confident what course to take;—
Now, here is Tell, a stout and fearless man,
And knows to steer with more than common skill;
How if we should avail ourselves of him

In this emergency?" The Viceroy then
Address'd me thus: "If thou wilt undertake
To bring us through this tempest safely, Tell,
I might consent to free thee from thy bonds."
I answer'd, "Yes, my lord; so help me God,
I'll see what can be done." On this they loosed
The cords that bound me, and I took my place
Beside the helm, and steered as best I could,
Yet ever eyed my shooting gear askance,
And kept a watchful eye upon the shore,
To find some point where I might leap to land:
And when I had descried a shelving crag,
That jutted, smooth atop into the lake—

FISHER.

I know it. At the foot of the Great Axen;
So steep it looks, I never could have dreamt
That from a boat a man could leap to it.

TELL.

I bade the men to row with all their force
Until we came before the shelving ledge.
For there, I said, the danger will be past!
Stoutly they pull'd, and soon we near'd the point;
One prayer to God for His assisting grace,
And, straining every muscle, I brought round
The vessel's stern close to the rocky wall;
Then snatching up my weapons, with a bound
I swung myself upon the flattened shelf,
And with my feet thrust off, with all my might,
The puny bark into the watery hell.
There let it drift about, as Heaven ordains!
Thus am I here, deliver'd from the might
Of the dread storm, and man's more dreadful still.

FISHER.

Tell, Tell, the Lord has manifestly wrought
A miracle in thy behalf! I scarce
Can credit my own eyes. But tell me, now,
Whither you propose to betake yourself?
For you will be in peril, should perchance
The Viceroy 'scape this tempest with his life.

TELL.

I heard him say, as I lay bound on board,
At Brunnen he proposed to disembark,
And, crossing Schwytz, convey me to his castle.

FISHER.

Means he to go by land?

TELL.

So he intends.

FISHER.

Oh, then conceal yourself without delay!
Not twice will Heaven release you from his grasp.

TELL.

Which is the nearest way to Arth and Küssnacht?

FISHER.

The public road leads by the way of Steinen,
But there's a nearer road, and more retired,
That goes by Lowerz, which my boy can show you.

TELL (*gives his hand*).

May Heaven reward your kindness! Fare ye well.

[*As he is going, he comes back*.]

Did not you also take the oath at Rootli?
I heard your name, methinks.

FISHERMAN.

Yes, I was there,
And took the oath of the confederacy.

TELL.

Then do me this one favor: speed to Bürglen—
My wife is anxious at my absence—tell her
That I am, free, and in secure concealment.

FISHER.

But whither shall I tell her you have fled?

TELL.

You'll find her father with her, and some more,
Who took the oath with you upon the Rootli;
Bid them resolute and strong of heart—
For Tell is free and master of his arm;
They shall hear further news of me ere long.

FISHER.

What have you, then, in view? Come, tell me frankly!

TELL.

When once 'tis *done*, 'twill be in every mouth.

[*Exit*.]

FISHER.

Show him the way, boy. Heaven be his support!
Whate'er he has resolved, he'll execute.

[*Exit*.]

SCENE II

Baronial mansion of Attinghausen. The BARON *upon a couch dying*. WALTER FÜRST, STAUFFACHER, MELCHTHAL, *and* BAUMGARTEN *attending round him*, WALTER TELL *kneeling before the dying man*.

FÜRST.

All now is over with him. He is gone.

STAUFF.

He lies not like one dead. The feather, see,
Moves on his lips! His sleep is very calm,
And on his features plays a placid smile.

[BAUMGARTEN *goes to the door and speaks with some one*.]

FÜRST.

Who's there?

BAUMGARTEN (*returning*).

Tell's wife, your daughter, she insists
That she must speak with you, and see her boy.

[WALTER TELL *rises*.]

FÜRST.

I who need comfort—can I comfort her?
Does every sorrow centre on my head?

HEDWIG (*forcing her way in*).

Where is my child? unhand me! I must see him.

STAUFF.

Be calm! Reflect, you're in the house of death!

HEDWIG (*falling upon her boy's neck*).

My Walter! Oh, he yet is mine!

WALTER.

Dear mother!

HEDWIG.

And, is it surely so? Art thou unhurt?

[*Gazing at him with anxious tenderness*.]

And is it possible he aim'd at thee?
How could he do it? Oh, he has no heart—
And he could wing an arrow at his child!

FÜRST.

His soul was rack'd with anguish when he did it.
No choice was left him but to shoot or die!

HEDWIG.

Oh, if he had a father's heart, he would
Have sooner perish'd by a thousand deaths!

STAUFF.

You should be grateful for God's gracious care,
That ordered things so well.

HEDWIG.

Can I forget
What might have been the issue. God in Heaven,
Were I to live for centuries, I still
Should see my boy tied up—his father's mark—
And still the shaft would quiver in my heart.

MELCH.

You know not how the Viceroy taunted him!

HEDWIG.

Oh, ruthless heart of man! Offend his pride,
And reason in his breast forsakes her seat;

In his blind wrath he'll stake upon a cast
A child's existence, and a mother's heart!

BAUM.

Is then your husband's fate not hard enough,
That you embitter it by such reproaches?
Have you no feeling for his sufferings?

HEDWIG (*turning to him and gazing full upon him*).

Hast thou tears only for thy friend's distress?
Say, where were you when he—my noble Tell—
Was bound in chains? Where was your friendship then?
The shameful wrong was done before your eyes;
Patient you stood, and let your friend be dragg'd,
Ay, from your very hands. Did ever Tell
Act thus to you? Did he stand whining by,
When on your heels the Viceroy's horsemen press'd,
And full before you roared the storm-toss'd lake?
Oh not with idle tears his pity show'd!
Into the boat he sprang, forgot his home,
His wife, his children, and delivered thee!

FÜRST.

It had been madness to attempt his rescue,
Unarmed, and few in numbers as we were.

HEDWIG (*casting herself upon his bosom*).

Oh, father, and thou, too, hast lost my Tell!
The country—all have lost him! All lament
His loss; and, oh, how he must pine for us!
Heaven keep his soul from sinking to despair!
No friend's consoling voice can penetrate
His dreary dungeon walls. Should he fall sick!
Ah! In the vapors of the murky vault
He must fall sick. Even as the Alpine rose
Grows pale and withers in the swampy air,
There is no life for him but in the sun

And in the breath of Heaven's fresh-blowing airs.
Imprison'd! Liberty to him is breath;
He cannot live in the rank dungeon air!

STAUFF.

Pray you be calm! And hand in hand we'll all
Combine to burst his prison doors.

HEDWIG.

He gone,
What have you power to do? While Tell was free,
There still, indeed, was hope—weak innocence
Had still a friend, and the oppress'd a stay.
Tell saved you all! You cannot all combined
Release him from his cruel prison bonds.

[*The* BARON *wakes*.]

BAUM.

Hush, hush! He starts!

ATTINGHAUSEN (*sitting up*).

Where is he?

STAUFFACHER.

Who?

ATTINGHAUSEN.

He leaves me—
In my last moments he abandons me.

STAUFF.

He means his nephew. Have they sent for him?

FÜRST.

He has been summoned. Cheer'ly, sir! Take comfort!
He has found his heart at last, and is our own.

ATTING.

Say, has he spoken for his native land?

STAUFF.

Ay, like a hero!

ATTINGHAUSEN.

Wherefore comes he not,
That he may take my blessing ere I die?
I feel my life fast ebbing to a close.

STAUFF.

Nay, talk not thus, dear sir! This last short sleep
Has much refresh'd you, and your eye is bright.

ATTING.

Life is but pain, and that has left me now;
My sufferings, like my hopes, have pass'd away.

[*Observing the boy*.]

What boy is that?

FÜRST.

Bless him. Oh, good my lord!
He is my grandson, and is fatherless.

[HEDWIG *kneels with the boy before the dying man*.]

ATTING.

And fatherless—I leave you all, ay, all!
Oh, wretched fate, that these old eyes should see
My country's ruin, as they close in death!
Must I attain the utmost verge of life,
To feel my hopes go with me to the grave?

STAUFFACHER (*to* FÜRST).

Shall he depart 'mid grief and gloom like this?
Shall not his parting moments be illumed
By hope's inspiring beams? My noble lord,
Raise up your drooping spirit! We are not
Forsaken quite—past all deliverance.

ATTING.

Who shall deliver you?

FÜRST.

Ourselves. For know,
The Cantons three are to each other pledged,
To hunt the tyrants from the land. The league
Has been concluded, and a sacred oath
Confirms our union. Ere another year
Begins its circling course—the blow shall fall.
In a free land your ashes shall repose.

ATTING.

The league concluded! Is it really so?

MELCH.

On one day shall the Cantons rise together.
All is prepared to strike—and to this hour
The secret closely kept, though hundreds share it;
The ground is hollow 'neath the tyrants' feet;
Their days of rule are number'd, and ere long
No trace will of their hateful sway be left.

ATTING.

Ay, but their castles, how to master them?

MELCH.

On the same day they, too, are doom'd to fall.

ATTING.

And are the nobles parties to this league?

STAUFF.

We trust to their assistance, should we need it;
As yet the peasantry alone have sworn.

ATTING. (*raising himself up in great astonishment*).

And have the peasantry dared such a deed
On their own charge, without the nobles' aid—
Relied so much on their own proper strength?
Nay then, indeed, they want our help no more;
We may go down to death cheer'd by the thought
That after us the majesty of man
Will live, and be maintain'd by other hands.

[*He lays his hand upon the head of the child who is kneeling before him*.]

From this boy's head, whereon the apple lay,
Your new and better liberty shall spring;
The old is crumbling down—the times are changing—
And from the ruins blooms a fairer life.

STAUFFACHER (*to* FÜRST).

See, see, what splendor streams around his eye!
This is not Nature's last expiring flame,
It is the beam of renovated life.

ATTING.

From their old towers the nobles are descending,
And swearing in the towns the civic oath.
In Uechtland and Thurgau the work's begun;
The noble Berne lifts her commanding head,
And Freyburg is a stronghold of the free;
The stirring Zurich calls her guilds to arms;—
And now, behold!—the ancient might of kings
Is shiver'd 'gainst her everlasting walls.

[*He speaks what follows with a prophetic tone; his utterance rising into enthusiasm*.]

I see the princes and their haughty peers,
Clad all in steel, come striding on to crush
A harmless shepherd race with mailèd hand.
Desp'rate the conflict: 'tis for life or death;
And many a pass will tell to after years
Of glorious victories sealed in foemen's blood.[58]
The peasant throws himself with naked breast,
A willing victim on their serried spears;
They yield—the flower of chivalry's cut down,
And Freedom waves her conquering banner high.

[*Grasps the hands of* WALTER FÜRST *and* STAUFFACHER.]

Hold fast together, then—forever fast!
Let freedom's haunts be one in heart and mind!
Set watches on your mountain tops, that league
May answer league, when comes the hour to strike.
Be one—be one—be one—

[*He falls back upon the cushion. His lifeless hands continue to grasp those of* FÜRST *and* STAUFFACHER, *who regard him for some moments in silence, and then retire, overcome with sorrow. Meanwhile the servants have quietly pressed into the chamber, testifying different degrees of grief. Some kneel down beside him and weep on his body: while this scene is passing, the castle bell tolls*.]

RUDENZ (*entering hurriedly*).

Lives he? Oh say, can he still hear my voice?

[Illustration: DEATH OF ATTINGHAUSEN *From the Painting by Wilhelm von Kaulbach*]

FÜRST (*averting his face*).

You are our seignior and protector now;
Henceforth this castle bears another name.

RUDENZ (*gazing at the body with deep emotion*).

Oh, God! Is my repentance, then, too late?
Could he not live some few brief moments more,

To see the change that has come o'er my heart?
Oh, I was deaf to his true counselling voice,
While yet he walked on earth. Now he is gone—
Gone, and for ever—leaving me the debt—
The heavy debt I owe him—undischarged!
Oh, tell me! did he part in anger with me?

STAUFF.

When dying, he was told what you had done,
And bless'd the valor that inspired your words!

RUDENZ (*kneeling down beside the dead body*).

Yes, sacred relics of a man beloved!
Thou lifeless corpse! Here, on thy death-cold hand,
Do I abjure all foreign ties for ever!
And to my country's cause devote myself.
I am a Switzer, and will act as one,
With my whole heart and soul.

[*Rises*.]

Mourn for our friend,
Our common parent, yet be not dismay'd!
'Tis not alone his lands that I inherit—
His heart—his spirit, have devolved on me;
And my young arm shall execute the task,
Which in his hoary age he could not pay.
Give me your hands, ye venerable sires!
Thine, Melchthal, too! Nay, do not hesitate,
Nor from me turn distrustfully away.
Accept my plighted vow—my knightly oath!

FÜRST.

Give him your hands, my friends! A heart like his,
That sees and owns its error, claims our trust.

MELCH.

You ever held the peasantry in scorn;
What surety have we, that you mean us fair?

RUDENZ.

Oh, think not of the error of my youth!

STAUFFACHER (*to* MELCHTHAL).

Be one! They were our father's latest words.
See they be not forgotten!

MELCHTHAL.

Take my hand—
peasant's hand—and with it, noble sir,
The gage and the assurance of a man!
Without us, sir, what would the nobles be?
Our order is more ancient, too, than yours!

RUDENZ.

I honor it—will shield it with my sword!

MELCH.

The arm, my lord, that tames the stubborn earth,
And makes its bosom blossom with increase,
Can also shield its owner's breast at need.

RUDENZ.

Then you shall shield my breast, and I will yours,
Thus each be strengthen'd by the other's strength.
Yet wherefore talk we, while our native land
Is still to alien tyranny a prey?
First let us sweep the foemen from the soil,
Then reconcile our difference in peace!

[*After a moment's pause*.]

How! You are silent! Not a word for me?
And have I yet no title to your trust?—
Then must I force my way, despite your will,
Into the League you secretly have form'd.
You've held a Diet on the Rootli—I
Know this—know all that was transacted there;
And though not trusted with your secret, I
Have kept it closely like a sacred pledge.
Trust me—I never was my country's foe,
Nor would I ever have against you stood!
Yet you did wrong—to put your rising off.
Time presses! We must strike, and swiftly too!
Already Tell is lost through your delay.

STAUFF.

We swore that we should wait till Christmastide.

RUDENZ.

I was not there—I did not take the oath.
If you delay, I will not!

MELCHTHAL.

What! You would—

RUDENZ.

I count me now among the country's chiefs,
And my first duty is to guard your rights.

FÜRST.

Your nearest and your holiest duty is
Within the earth to lay these dear remains.

RUDENZ.

When we have set the country free, we'll place
Our fresh victorious wreaths upon his bier.
Oh, my dear friends, 'tis not your cause alone!—
with the tyrants have a cause to fight,

That more concerns myself. My Bertha's gone,
Has disappear'd—been carried off by stealth—
Stolen from amongst us by their ruffian hands!

STAUFF.

So fell an outrage has the tyrant dared
Against a lady free and nobly born?

RUDENZ.

Alas! my friends, I promised help to you,
And I must first implore it for myself!
She that I love, is stolen—is forced away,
And who knows where she's by the tyrant hid,
Or with what outrages his ruffian crew
May force her into nuptials she detests?
Forsake me not!—Oh, help me to her rescue!
She loves you! Well, oh well, has she deserved,
That all should rush to arms in her behalf!

STAUFF.

What course do you propose?

RUDENZ.

Alas! I know not.
In the dark mystery that shrouds her fate—
In the dread agony of this suspense,
Where I can grasp at naught of certainty—
One single ray of comfort beams upon me.
From out the ruins of the tyrant's power
Alone can she be rescued from the grave.
Their strongholds must be levell'd, every one,
Ere we can penetrate her dungeon walls.

MELCH.

Come, lead us on! We follow! Why defer
Until tomorrow what today may do?
Tell's arm was free when we at Rootli swore.

This foul enormity was yet undone.
And change of circumstance brings change of vow;
Who such a coward as to waver still?

RUDENZ (*to* WALTER FÜRST).

Meanwhile to arms, and wait in readiness
The fiery signal on the mountain tops!
For swifter than a boat can scour the lake
Shall you have tidings of our victory;
And when you see the welcome flames ascend,
Then, like the lightning, swoop upon the foe,
And lay the despots and their creatures low!

SCENE III

The pass near Küssnacht, sloping down from behind, with rocks on either side. The travelers are visible upon the heights, before they appear on the stage. Rocks all around the stage. Upon one of the foremost a projecting cliff overgrown with brushwood.

TELL (*enters with his cross-bow*).

Through this ravine he needs must come. There is
No other way to Küssnacht. Here I'll do it!
The ground is everything I could desire.
Yon elder bush will hide me from his view,
And from that point my shaft is sure to hit.
The straitness of the gorge forbids pursuit.
Now, Gessler, balance thine account with Heaven!
Thou must away from earth—thy sand is run.
Quiet and harmless was the life I led,
My bow was bent on forest game alone;
No thoughts of murder rested on my soul.
But thou hast scared me from my dream of peace;
The milk of human kindness thou hast turn'd
To rankling poison in my breast, and made
Appalling deeds familiar to my soul.

He who could make his own child's head his mark,
Can speed his arrow to his foeman's heart.
My boys, poor innocents, my loyal wife,
Must be protected, tyrant, from thy rage!
When last I drew my bow—with trembling hand—
And thou, with fiendishly remorseless glee
Forced me to level at my own boy's head,
When I, imploring pity, writhed before thee,
Then in the anguish of my soul, I vow'd
A fearful oath, which met God's ear alone,
That when my bow next wing'd an arrow's flight,
Its aim should be thy heart. The vow I made,
Amid the hellish torments of that moment,
I hold a sacred debt, and I will pay it.
Thou art my lord, my Emperor's delegate;
Yet would the Emperor not have stretch'd his power
So far as thou halt done. He sent thee here
To deal forth law—stern law—for he is wroth,
But not to wanton with unbridled will
In every cruelty, with fiend-like joy:—
There lives a God to punish and avenge.
Come forth, thou bringer once of bitter pangs,
My precious jewel now—my chiefest treasure—
A mark I'll set thee, which the cry of grief
Could never penetrate—but thou shalt pierce it—
And thou, my trusty bow-string, that so oft
For sport has served me faithfully and well,
Desert me not in this dread hour of need—
Only be true this once, my own good cord,
That hast so often wing'd the biting shaft:—
For shouldst thou fly successless from my hand,
I have no second to send after thee.

[*Travelers pass over the stage*.]

I'll sit me down upon this bench of stone,
Hewn for the way-worn traveler's brief repose—
For here there is no home. Men hurry past
Each other, with quick step and careless look,

Nor stay to question of their grief. Here goes
The merchant, all anxiety—the pilgrim,
With scantly furnished scrip—the pious monk,
The scowling robber, and the jovial player,
The carrier with his heavy-laden horse
That comes to us from the far haunts of men;
For every road conducts to the world's end.
They all push onward—every man intent
On his own several business—mine is murder.

[*Sits down*.]

Time was, my dearest children, when with joy
You hail'd your father's safe return to home
From his long mountain toils; for, when he came,
He ever brought with him some little gift—
A lovely Alpine flower—a curious bird—
Or elf-bolt, such as on the hills are found.
But now he goes in quest of other game,
Sits in this gorge, with murder in his thoughts,
And for his enemy's life-blood lies in wait.
But still it is of you alone he thinks,
Dear children. 'Tis to guard your innocence,
To shield you from the tyrant's fell revenge,
He bends his bow to do a deed of blood!

[*Rises*.]

Well—I am watching for a noble prey!
Does not the huntsman, with unflinching heart,
Roam for whole days, when winter frosts are keen,
Leap at the risk of death from rock to rock—
And climb the jagged, slippery steeps, to which
His limbs are glued by his own streaming blood—
And all to hunt a wretched chamois down?
A far more precious prize is now my aim—
The heart of that dire foe, who seeks my life.

[*Sprightly music heard in the distance, which comes gradually nearer*.]

From my first years of boyhood I have used
The bow—been practised in the archer's feats;
The bull's eye many a time my shafts have hit,
And many a goodly prize have I brought home
From competitions. But this day I'll make
My master-shot, and win what's best to win
In the whole circuit of our mountain range.

[*A bridal party passes over the stage, and goes up the pass*. TELL *gazes at it, leaning on his bow. He is joined by* STUSSI *the Ranger*.]

STUSSI.

There goes the cloister bailiff's bridal train
Of Mörlischachen. A rich fellow he!
And has some half score pastures on the Alps.
He goes to fetch his bride from Imisee.
At Küssnacht there will be high feast tonight.
Come with us—ev'ry honest man is asked.

TELL.

A gloomy guest fits not a wedding feast.

STUSSI.

If you've a trouble, dash it from your heart!
Take what Heaven sends! The times are heavy now,
And we must snatch at pleasure as it flies.
Here 'tis a bridal, there a burial.

TELL.

And oft the one close on the other treads.

STUSSI.

So runs the world we live in. Everywhere
Mischance befalls and misery enough.
In Glarus there has been a landslip, and
A whole side of the Glärnisch has fallen in.

TELL.

How! Do the very hills begin to quake?
There is stability for naught on earth.

STUSSI.

Of strange things, too, we hear from other parts.
I spoke with one but now, from Baden come,
Who said a knight was on his way to court,
And, as he rode along, a swarm of wasps
Surrounded him, and settling on his horse,
So fiercely stung the beast, that it fell dead,
And he proceeded to the court on foot.

TELL.

The weak are also furnish'd with a sting.

ARMGART (*enters with several children, and places herself at the entrance of the pass*).

STUSSI.

'Tis thought to bode disaster to the land—
Some horrid deeds against the course of nature.

TELL.

Why, every day brings forth such fearful deeds;
There needs no prodigy to herald them.

STUSSI.

Ay, happy he, who tills his field in peace,
And sits at home untroubled with his kin.

TELL.

The very meekest cannot be at peace
If his ill neighbor will not let him rest.

[TELL *looks frequently with restless expectation toward the top of the pass*.]

STUSSI.

So fare you well! You're waiting someone here?

TELL.

I am.

STUSSI.

God speed you safely to your home!
You are from Uri, are you not? His grace
The governor's expected thence today.

TRAVELER (*entering*).

Look not to see the governor today.
The streams are flooded by the heavy rains,
And all the bridges have been swept away.

[TELL *rises*.]

ARMGART (*coming forward*).

Gessler not coming?

STUSSI.

Want you aught with him?

ARMGART.

Alas, I do!

STUSSI.

Why then, thus place yourself
Where you obstruct his passage down the pass?

ARMGART.

Here he cannot escape me. He *must* hear me.

FRIESSHARDT (*coming hastily down the pass and calls upon the stage*).

Make way, make way! My lord, the governor,
Is close behind me, riding down the pass.

[*Exit* TELL.]

ARMGART (*excitedly*).

The Viceroy comes!

[*She goes toward the pass with her children*. GESSLER *and* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS *appear on horseback at the upper end of the pass*.]

STUSSI (*to* FRIESSHARDT).

How got ye through the stream,
When all the bridges have been carried down?

FRIESS.

We've fought, friend, with the tempest on the lake;
An Alpine torrent's nothing after that.

STUSSI.

How! Were you out, then, in that dreadful storm?

FRIESS.

We were! I'll not forget it while I live.

STUSSI.

Stay, speak—

FRIESS.

I can't—must to the castle haste,
And tell them, that the governor's at hand.

[*Exit*.]

STUSSI.

If honest men, now, had been in the ship,
It had gone down with every soul on board:—
Some folks are proof 'gainst fire and water both.

[*Looking round*.]

Where has the huntsman gone with whom I spoke?

[*Exit*.]

Enter GESSLER *and* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS *on horseback*

GESSLER.

Say what you will; I am the Emperor's liege,
And how to please him my first thought must be.
He did not send me here to fawn and cringe,
And coax these boors into good humor. No!
Obedience he must have. The struggle's this:
Is king or peasant to be sovereign here?

ARMGART.

Now is the moment! Now for my petition!

GESSLER.

'Twas not in sport that I set up the cap
In Altdorf—or to try the people's hearts—
All this I knew before. I set it up
That they might learn to bend those stubborn necks
They carry far too proudly—and I placed
What well I knew their pride could never brook
Full in the road, which they perforce must pass,
That, when their eye fell on it, they might call
That lord to mind whom they too much forget.

HARRAS.

But surely, sir, the people have some rights—

GESSLER.

This is no time to settle what they are.
Great projects are at work, and hatching now.
The Imperial house seeks to extend its power.
Those vast designs of conquest which the sire
Has gloriously begun, the son will end.
This petty nation is a stumbling-block—
One way or other, it must be put down.

[*They are about to pass on*. ARMGART *throws herself down before* GESSLER.]

ARMGART.

Mercy, lord governor! Oh, pardon, pardon!

GESSLER.

Why do you cross me on the public road?
Stand back, I say.

ARMGART.

My husband lies in prison;
My wretched orphans cry for bread. Have pity,
Pity, my lord, upon our sore distress!

HARRAS.

Who are you? and your husband, what is he?

ARMGART.

A poor wild hay-man of the Rigiberg,
Kind sir, who on the brow of the abyss,
Mows the unowner'd grass from craggy shelves,
To which the very cattle dare not climb.

HARRAS (*to* GESSLER).

By Heaven! a sad and pitiable life!
I pray you set the wretched fellow free.

How great soever may be his offence,
His horrid trade is punishment enough.

[*To* ARMGART.]

You shall have justice. To the castle bring
Your suit. This is no place to deal with it.

ARMGART.

No, no, I will not stir from where I stand,
Until your grace gives me my husband back.
Six months already has he been shut up,
And waits the sentence of a judge in vain.

GESSLER.

How! would you force me, woman? Hence! Begone!

ARMGART.

Justice, my lord! Ay, justice! Thou are judge,
Vice-regent of the Emperor—of Heaven.
Then do thy duty—as thou hopest for justice
From Him who rules above, show it to us!

GESSLER.

Hence! Drive this insolent rabble from my sight!

ARMGART (*seizing his horse's reins*).

No, no, by Heaven, I've nothing more to lose.—
Thou stir'st not, Viceroy, from this spot, until
Thou dost me fullest justice. Knit thy brows,
And roll thine eyes—I fear not. Our distress
Is so extreme, so boundless, that we care
No longer for thine anger.

GESSLER.

Woman, hence!
Give way, or else my horse shall ride you down.

ARMGART.

Well, let it!—there—

[*Throws her children and herself upon the ground before him*.]

Here on the ground I lie,
I and my children. Let the wretched orphans
Be trodden by thy horse into the dust!
It will not be the worst that thou hast done.

HARRAS.

Are you mad, woman?

ARMGART (*continuing with vehemence*).

Many a day thou hast
Trampled the Emperor's lands beneath thy feet.
Oh, I am but a woman! Were I man,
I'd find some better thing to do, than here
Lie grovelling in the dust.

[*The music of the bridal party is again heard from the top of the pass, but more softly*.]

GESSLER.

Where are my knaves?
Drag her away, lest I forget myself,
And do some deed I may repent me of.

HARRAS.

My lord, the servants cannot force their way;
The pass is block'd up by a bridal train.

GESSLER.

Too mild a ruler am I to this people,
Their tongues are all too bold—nor have they yet
Been tamed to due submission, as they shall be.
I must take order for the remedy;

I will subdue this stubborn mood of theirs,
This braggart spirit of freedom I will crush,
I will proclaim a new law through the land;
I will—

[*An arrow pierces him—he puts his hand on his heart, and is about to sink—with a feeble voice*.]

Oh God, have mercy on my soul!

HARRAs.

My lord! my lord! Oh God! What's this? Whence came it?

ARMGART (*starts up*).

Dead, dead! He reels, he falls! 'Tis in his heart!

HARRAS (*springs from his horse*).

Horror of horrors! Heavenly powers! Sir knight,
Address yourself for mercy to your God!
You are a dying man.

GESSLER.

That shot was Tell's.

[*He slides from his horse into the arms of* RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, *who lays him down upon the beach*. TELL *appears above upon the rocks*.]

TELL.

Thou know'st the marksman—I, and I alone.
Now are our homesteads free, and innocence
From thee is safe: thou'lt be our curse no more.

[TELL *disappears. People rush in*.]

STUSSI.

What is the matter? Tell me what has happen'd?

ARMGART.

The Viceroy's shot—pierced by a cross-bow bolt!

PEOPLE (*running in*).

Who has been shot?

[*While the foremost of the marriage party are coming on the stage, the hindmost are still upon the heights. The music continues*.]

HARRAS.

He's bleeding fast to death.
Away, for help—pursue the murderer!
Unhappy man, is this to be your end?
You would not listen to my warning words.

STUSSI.

By Heaven, his cheek is pale! Life's ebbing fast.

MANY VOICES.

Who did the deed?

HARRAS.

What! Are the people mad,
That they make music to a murder? Silence!

[*Music breaks off suddenly. People continue to flock in*.]

Speak, if you can, my lord. Have you no charge
To trust me with?

[GESSLER *makes signs with his hand, which he repeats with vehemence, when he finds they are not understood*.]

Where shall I take you to?
To Küssnacht? What you say I can't make out.
Oh, do not grow impatient! Leave all thought
Of earthly things and make your peace with Heaven.

[*The whole marriage party gather round the dying man*.]

STUSSI.

See there! how pale he grows! Death's gathering now
About his heart—his eyes grow dim and glazed.

ARMGART (*holds up a child*).

Look, children, how a tyrant dies!

HARRAS.

Mad hag!
Have you no touch of feeling, that your eyes
Gloat on a sight so horrible as this?
Help me—take hold. What, will not one assist
To pull the torturing arrow from his breast?

WOMEN.

What! touch the man whom God's own hand has struck!

HARRAS.

All curses light on you! [*Draws his sword*.]

STUSSI (*seizes his arm*).

Gently, sir knight!
Your power is at end. 'Twere best forbear.
Our country's foe has fallen. We will brook
No further violence. We are free men.

ALL.

The country's free.

HARRAS.

And is it come to this?
Fear and obedience at an end so soon?

[*To the soldiers of the guard who are thronging in*.]

You see, my friends, the bloody piece of work
Has here been done. 'Tis now too late for help,
And to pursue the murderer were vain.
We've other things to think of. On to Küssnacht,
And let us save that fortress for the king!
For in a moment such as this, all ties
Of order, fealty and faith are rent,
And we can trust to no man's loyalty.

[*As he is going out with the soldiers, six* FRATRES MISERICORDIÆ *appear*.]

ARMGART.

Here comes the brotherhood of mercy. Room!

STUSSI.

The victim's slain, and now the ravens stoop.

BROTHERS OF MERCY (*form a semicircle round the body, and sing in solemn tones).*

Death hurries on with hasty stride,
No respite man from him may gain,

He cuts him down, when life's full tide
Is throbbing strong in every vein.
Prepared or not the call to hear,
He must before his Judge appear.

[*While they are repeating the two last lines, the curtain falls*.]

ACT V

SCENE I

A common near Altdorf. In the background to the right the Keep of Uri, with the scaffold still standing, as in the Third Scene of the first Act. To the left, the view opens upon numerous mountains, on all of which signal fires are burning. Day is breaking, and distant bells are heard ringing in several directions.

RUODI, KUONI, WERNI, MASTER MASON, *and many other country people, also women and children*.

RUODI.

See there! The beacons on the mountain heights!

MASON.

Hark how the bells above the forest toll!

RUODI.

The enemy's routed.

MASON.

And the forts are storm'd.

RUODI.

And we of Uri, do we still endure
Upon our native soil the tyrant's keep?
Are we the last to strike for liberty?

MASON.

Shall the yoke stand, that was to curb our necks?
Up! Tear it to the ground!

ALL.

Down, down with it!

RUODI.

Where is the Stier of Uri?

URI.

Here. What would ye?

RUODI.

Up to your tower, and wind us such a blast
As shall resound afar, from peak to peak;

Rousing the echoes of each glen and hill,
To rally swiftly all the mountain men!

[*Exit* STIER OF URI—*Enter* WALTER FÜRST.]

FÜRST.

Stay, stay, my friends! As yet we have not learn'd
What has been done in Unterwald and Schwytz.
Let's wait till we receive intelligence!

RUODI.

Wait, wait for what? The accursed tyrant's dead.
And on us freedom's glorious day has dawn'd!

MASON.

How! Are these flaming signals not enough,
That blaze on every mountain top around?

RUODI.

Come all, fall to—come, men and women, all!
Destroy the scaffold! Burst the arches! Down,
Down with the walls, let not a stone remain!

MASON.

Come, comrades, come! We built it, and we know
How best to hurl it down.

ALL.

Come! Down with it!

[*They fall upon the building on every side*.]

FÜRST.

The floodgate's burst. They're not to be restrained.

[*Enter* MELCHTHAL *and* BAUMGARTEN.]

MELCH.

What! Stands the fortress still, when Sarnen lies
In ashes, and the Rossberg's in our hands?

FÜRST.

You, Melchthal, here? D'ye bring us liberty?
Are all the Cantons from our tyrants freed?

MELCH.

We've swept them from the soil. Rejoice, my friend,
Now, at this very moment, while we speak,
There's not one tyrant left in Switzerland!

FÜRST.

How did you get the forts into your power?

MELCH.

Rudenz it was who by a bold assault
With manly valor mastered Sarnen's keep.
The Rossberg I had storm'd the night before.
But hear what chanced! Scarce had we driven the foe
Forth from the keep, and given it to the flames,
That now rose crackling upwards to the skies,
When from the blaze rush'd Diethelm, Gessler's page,
Exclaiming, "Lady Bertha will be burnt!"

FÜRST.

Good heavens!

[*The beams of the scaffold are heard falling*.]

MELCH.

'Twas she herself. Here had she been
By Gessler's orders secretly immured.
Up sprang Rudenz in frenzy. For even now
The beams and massive posts were crashing down,

And through the stifling smoke the piteous shrieks
Of the unhappy lady.

FÜRST.

Is she saved?

MELCH.

'Twas not a time to hesitate or pause!
Had he been but our baron, and no more,
We should have been most chary of our lives;
But he was our confederate, and Bertha
Honor'd the people. So, without a thought,
We risk'd the worst, and rush'd into the flames.

FÜRST.

But is she saved?

MELCH.

She is. Rudenz and I
Bore her between us from the blazing pile,
With crashing timbers toppling all around.
And when she had revived, the danger past,
And raised her eyes to look upon the sun,
The baron fell upon my breast; and then
A silent vow between us two was sworn,
A vow that, welded in yon furnace heat,
Will last through ev'ry shock of time and fate.

FÜRST.

Where is the Landenberg?

MELCHTHAL.

Across the Brünig.
'Twas not my fault he bore his sight away,
He who had robb'd my father of his eyes!
He fled—I followed—overtook him soon,

And dragg'd him to my father's feet. The sword
Already quiver'd o'er the caitiff's head,
When from the pity of the blind old man,
He wrung the life which, craven-like, he begged.
He swore URPHEDE,[59] never to return
He'll keep his oath, for he has felt our arm.

FÜRST.

Oh, well for you, you have not stain'd with blood
Our spotless victory!

CHILDREN (*running across the stage with fragments of wood*).

We're free! we're free!

FÜRST.

Oh! what a joyous scene! These children will
Remember it when all their heads are gray.

[*Girls bring in the cap upon a pole. The whole stage is filled with people*.]

RUODI.

Here is the cap, to which we were to bow!

BAUM.

What shall we do with it? Do you decide!

FÜRST.

Heavens! 'Twas beneath this cap my grandson stood!

SEVERAL VOICES.

Destroy the emblem of the tyrant's power!
Let it be burnt!

FÜRST.

No. Rather be preserved;
'Twas once the instrument of despots—now
'Twill of our freedom be a lasting sign.

[*Peasants, men, women, and children, some standing, others sitting upon the beams of the shattered scaffold, all picturesquely grouped, in a large semicircle*.]

MELCH.

Thus now, my friends, with light and merry hearts,
We stand upon the wreck of tyranny;
And gloriously the work has been fulfilled
Which we at Rootli pledged ourselves to do.

FÜRST.

No, not fulfilled. The work is but begun:
Courage and concord firm, we need them both;
For, be assured, the king will make all speed,
To avenge his Viceroy's death, and reinstate,
By force of arms, the tyrant we've expell'd.

MELCH.

Why let him come, with all his armaments!
The foe's expelled that press'd us from within;
The foe without we are prepared to meet?

RUODI.

The passes to our Cantons are but few;
These with our bodies we will block, we will!

BAUM.

Knit are we by a league will ne'er be rent,
And all his armies shall not make us quail.

[*Enter* RÖSSELMANN *and* STAUFFACHER.]

RÖSSELMANN (*speaking as he enters*).

These are the awful judgments of the Lord!

PEASANT.

What is the matter?

RÖSSELMANN.

In what times we live!

FÜRST.

Say on, what is't? Ha, Werner, is it you?
What tidings?

PEASANT.

What's the matter?

RÖSSELMANN.

Hear and wonder!

STAUFF.

We are released from one great cause of dread.

RÖSSEL.

The Emperor is murdered.

FÜRST.

Gracious Heaven!

[PEASANTS *rise up and throng round* STAUFFACHER.]

ALL.

Murder'd!—the Emp'ror? What! The Emp'ror! Hear!

MELCH.

Impossible! How came you by the news?

STAUFF.

'Tis true! Near Bruck, by the assassin's hand,
King Albert fell. A most trustworthy man,
John Müller, from Schaffhausen, brought the news.

FÜRST.

Who dared commit so horrible a deed?

STAUFF.

The doer makes the deed more dreadful still;
It was his nephew, his own brother's son,
Duke John of Austria, who struck the blow.

MELCH.

What drove him to so dire a parricide?

STAUFF.

The Emp'ror kept his patrimony back,
Despite his urgent importunities;
'Twas said, he meant to keep it for himself,
And with a mitre to appease the duke.
However this may be, the duke gave ear
To the ill counsel of his friends in arms;
And with the noble lords, Von Eschenbach,
Von Tegerfeld, Von Wart and Palm, resolved,
Since his demands for justice were despised,
With his own hands to take revenge at least.

FÜRST.

But say—the dreadful deed, how was it done?

STAUFF.

The king was riding down from Stein to Baden.
Upon his way to join the court at Rheinfeld—
With him a train of high-born gentlemen,
And the young Princes John and Leopold;
And when they'd reach'd the ferry of the Reuss,
The assassins forced their way into the boat,
To separate the Emperor from his suite.
His highness landed, and was riding on
Across a fresh plough'd field—where once, they say,
A mighty city stood in Pagan times—

With Habsburg's ancient turrets full in sight,
That was the cradle of his princely race.
When Duke John plunged a dagger in his throat,
Palm ran him thro' the body with his lance,
And Eschenbach, to end him, clove his skull;
So down he sank, all weltering in his blood,
On his own soil, by his own kinsmen slain.
Those on the opposite bank beheld the deed,
But, parted by the stream, could only raise
An unavailing cry of loud lament.
A poor old woman, sitting by the way,
Raised him, and on her breast he bled to death.

MELCH.

Thus has he dug his own untimely grave,
Who sought insatiably to grasp at all.

STAUFF.

The country round is fill'd with dire alarm,
The passes are blockaded everywhere,
And sentinels on ev'ry frontier set;
E'en ancient Zurich barricades her gates,
That have stood open for these thirty years,
Dreading the murd'rers and th' avengers more.
For cruel Agnes comes, the Hungarian queen,
By all her sex's tenderness untouch'd,
Arm'd with the thunders of the ban, to wreak
Dire vengeance for her parent's royal blood
On the whole race of those that murder'd him—
Their servants, children, children's children—yea,
Upon the stones that built their castle walls.
Deep has she sworn a vow to immolate
Whole generations on her father's tomb,
And bathe in blood as in the dew of May.

MELCH.

Is't known which way the murderers have fled?

STAUFF.

No sooner had they done the deed, than they
Took flight each following a different route,
And parted ne'er to see each other more.
Duke John must still be wand'ring in the mountains.

FÜRST.

And thus their crime has borne no fruit for them.
Revenge bears never fruit. Itself, it is
The dreadful food it feeds on; its delight
Is murder—its satiety despair.

STAUFF.

The assassins reap no profit by their crime;
But we shall pluck with unpolluted hands
The teeming fruits of their most bloody deed.
For we are ransomed from our heaviest fear;
The direst foe of liberty has fallen,
And, 'tis reported, that the crown will pass
From Habsburg's house into another line;
The Empire is determined to assert
Its old prerogative of choice, I hear.

FÜRST *and several others*.

Is any named?

STAUFFACHER.

The Count of Luxembourg's
Already chosen by the general voice.

FÜRST.

'Tis well we stood so staunchly by the Empire!
Now we may hope for justice, and with cause.

STAUFF.

The Emperor will need some valiant friends. He will 'gainst Austria's vengeance be our shield.

[*The peasantry embrace. Enter* SACRISTAN *with Imperial messenger*.]

SACRIST.

Here are the worthy chiefs of Switzerland!

RÖSSELMANN *and several others*.

Sacrist, what news?

SACRISTAN.

A courier brings this letter.

ALL (*to* WALTER FÜRST).

Open and read it.

FÜRST (*reading*).

"To the worthy men
Of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwald, the Queen
Elizabeth sends grace and all good wishes!"

MANY VOICES.

What wants the queen with us? Her reign is done.

FÜRST (*reads*).

"In the great grief and doleful widowhood,
In which the bloody exit of her lord
Has plunged the queen, still in her mind she bears
The ancient faith and love of Switzerland."

MELCH.

She ne'er did that in her prosperity.

RÖSSEL.

Hush, let us hear!

FÜRST (*reads*).

"And she is well assured,
Her people will in due abhorrence hold
The perpetrators of this damnèd deed.
On the three Cantons, therefore, she relies,
That they in nowise lend the murderers aid;
But rather, that they loyally assist,
To give them up to the avenger's hand,
Remembering the love and grace which they
Of old received from Rudolph's royal house."

[*Symptoms of dissatisfaction among the peasantry*.]

MANY VOICES.

The love and grace!

STAUFF.

Grace from the father we, indeed, received,
But what have we to boast of from the song
Did he confirm the charter of our freedom,
As all preceding emperors had done?
Did he judge righteous judgment, or afford
Shelter, or stay, to innocence oppress'd?
Nay, did he e'en give audience to the men
We sent to lay our grievances before him?
Not one of all these things did the king do,
And had we not ourselves achieved our rights
By our own stalwart hands, the wrongs we bore
Had never touch'd him. Gratitude to him!
Within these vales he sowed no seeds of that;
He stood upon an eminence—he might
Have been a very father to his people,
But all his aim and pleasure was to raise

Himself and his own house: and now may those
Whom he has aggrandized, lament for him;

FÜRST.

We will not triumph in his fall, nor now
Recall to mind the wrongs that we endured.
Far be't from us! Yet, that we should avenge
The sovereign's death, who never did us good,
And hunt down those who ne'er molested us,
Becomes us not, nor is our duty. Love
Must be a tribute free, and unconstrain'd;
From all enforced duties death absolves,
And unto him we owe no further debt.

MELCH.

And if the queen laments within her bower,
Accusing Heaven in sorrow's wild despair;
Here see a people, from its anguish freed,
To that same Heav'n send up its thankful praise.
Who would reap tears must sow the seeds of love.

[*Exit the Imperial Courier*.]

STAUFFACHER (*to the people*).

But where is Tell? Shall he, our freedom's founder,
Alone be absent from our festival?
He did the most—endured the worst of all.
Come—to his dwelling let us all repair,
And bid the Savior of our country hail!

[*Exeunt omnes*.]

SCENE II

Interior of TELL's *cottage. A fire burning on the hearth. The open door shows the scene outside.*

HEDWIG, WALTER, *and* WILLIAM

HEDWIG.

My own dear boys! your father comes today;
He lives, is free, and we, and all are free;
The country owes its liberty to him!

WALTER.

And I, too, mother, bore my part in it!
I must be named with him. My father's shaft
Ran my life close, but yet I never flinch'd.

HEDWIG (*embracing him*).

Yes, yes, thou art restored to me again!
Twice have I seen thee given to my sad eyes,
Twice suffered all a mother's pangs for thee!
But this is past—I have you both, boys, both!
And your dear father will be back today.

[*A monk appears at the door*.]

WILLIAM.

See, mother, yonder stands a holy friar;
He comes for alms, no doubt.

HEDWIG.

Go lead him in,
That we may give him cheer, and make him feel
That he has come into the house of joy.

[*Exit and returns immediately with a cup*.]

WILLIAM (*to the monk*).

Come in, good man. Mother will give you food!

WALTER.

Come in and rest, then go refresh'd away!

MONK (*glancing round in terror, with unquiet looks*).

Where am I? In what country? Tell me.

WALTER.

How!
Are you bewildered, that you know not where?
You are at Bürglen, in the land of Uri,
Just at the entrance of the Shechenthal.

MONK. (*to* HEDWIG).

Are you alone? Your husband, is he here?

HEDWIG.

I am expecting him. But what ails you, man?
There's something in your looks, that omens ill!
Whoe'er you be, you are in want—take that.

[*Offers him the cup*.]

MONK.

Howe'er my sinking heart may yearn for food,
Nought will I taste till you have promised first—

HEDWIG.

Touch not my garments, come not near me, monk!
You must stand farther back, if I'm to hear you.

MONK.

Oh, by this hearth's bright hospitable blaze,
By your dear children's heads, which I embrace—

[*Grasps the boys*.]

HEDWIG.

Stand back, I say! What is your purpose, man?
Back from my boys! You are no monk,—no, no,

Beneath the robe you wear peace should abide,
But peace abides not in such looks as yours.

MONK.

I am the wretchedest of living men.

HEDWIG.

The heart is never deaf to wretchedness;
But your look freezes up my inmost soul.

WALTER (*springs up*).

Mother, here's father!

HEDWIG.

Oh, my God!

[*Is about to follow, trembles and stops*.]

WILLIAM (*running after his brother*).

My father!

WALTER (*without*).

Here, here once more!

WILLIAM (*without*).

My father, my dear father!

TELL (*without*).

Yes, here once more! Where is your mother, boys?

[*They enter*.]

WALTER.

There at the door she stands, and can no further,
She trembles so with terror and with joy.

TELL.

Oh Hedwidg, Hedwig, mother of my children!
God has been kind and helpful in our woes.
No tyrant's hand shall e'er divide us more.

HEDWIG (*falling on his neck*).

Oh, Tell, what anguish have I borne for thee!

[*Monk becomes attentive*.]

TELL.

Forget it now, and live for joy alone!
I'm here again with you! This is my cot!
I stand again upon mine own hearth stone!

WILLIAM.

But, father, where's your cross-bow? Not with you?

TELL.

Thou shalt not ever see it more, my boy.
Within a holy shrine it has been placed,
And in the chase shall ne'er be used again.

HEDWIG.
Oh, Tell! Tell!

[*Steps back, dropping his hand*.]

TELL.
What alarms thee, dearest wife?

HEDWIG. How—how dost thou return to me? This hand—
Dare I take hold of it? This hand—Oh God!

TELL (*with firmness and animation*).

Has shielded you and set my country free;
Freely I raise it in the face of Heaven.

[MONK *gives a sudden start—he looks at him*.]

Who is this friar here?

HEDWIG.

Ah, I forgot him;
Speak thou with him; I shudder at his presence.

MONK (*stepping nearer*).

Are you the Tell who slew the governor?

TELL.

Yes, I am he. I hide the fact from no man.

MONK.

And you are Tell! Ah! it is God's own hand,
That hath conducted me beneath your roof.

TELL (*examining him closely*).

You are no monk. Who are you?

MONK.

You have slain
The governor, who did you wrong. I, too,
Have slain a foe, who robb'd me of my rights.
He was no less your enemy than mine.
I've rid the land of him.

TELL (*drawing back*).

You are—oh, horror!
In—children, children—in, without a word,
Go, my dear wife! Go! Go! Unhappy man,
You should be—

HEDWIG.

Heav'ns, who is it?

TELL.

Do not ask.
Away! away! the children must not hear it.
Out of the house—away! You must not rest
'Neath the same roof with this unhappy man!

HEDWIG.

Alas! What is it? Come.

[*Exit with the children*.]

TELL (*to the* MONK).

You are the Duke
Of Austria—I know it. You have slain
The Emperor, your uncle, and liege lord.

JOHN.

He robb'd me of my patrimony.

TELL.

How!
Slain him—your king, your uncle! And the earth
Still bears you! And the sun still shines on you!

JOHN.

Tell, hear me, ere you—

TELL.

Reeking with the blood
Of him that was your Emperor, your kinsman,
Dare you set foot within my spotless house,
Dare to a honest man to show your face,
And claim the rites of hospitality?

JOHN.

I hoped to find compassion at your hands.
You took, like me, revenge upon your foe!

TELL.

Unhappy man! Dare you confound the crime
Of blood-imbued ambition with the act
Forced on a father in mere self-defence?
Have you to shield your children's darling heads,
To guard your fireside's sanctuary—ward off
The last, the direst doom from all you loved?
To Heaven I raise my unpolluted hands,
To curse your act and you! I have avenged
That holy nature which you have profaned.
I have no part with you. You murdered, I
Have shielded all that was most dear to me.

JOHN.

You cast me off to comfortless despair!

TELL.

I shrink with horror while I talk with you.
Hence, on the dread career you have begun,
Cease to pollute the home of innocence!

[JOHN *turns to depart.*]

JOHN.

I cannot and I will not live this life!

TELL.

And yet my soul bleeds for you. Gracious Heaven,
So young, of such a noble line, the grandson
Of Rudolph, once my lord and emperor,
An outcast—murderer—standing at my door,
The poor man's door—a suppliant, in despair!

[*Covers his face.*]

JOHN.

If you have power to weep, oh let my fate
Move your compassion—it is horrible!
I am—say, rather was—a prince. I might
Have been most happy, had I only curb'd
The impatience of my passionate desires:
But envy gnaw'd my heart—I saw the youth
Of mine own cousin Leopold endow'd
With honor, and enrich'd with broad domains,
The while myself, of equal age with him,
In abject slavish nonage was kept back.

TELL.

Unhappy man, your uncle knew you well,
When from you land and subjects he withheld!
You, by your mad and desperate act have set
A fearful seal upon his wise resolve.
Where are the bloody partners of your crime?

JOHN.

Where'er the avenging furies may have borne them;
I have not seen them since the luckless deed.

TELL.

Know you the Empire's ban is out—that you
Are interdicted to your friends, and given
An outlaw'd victim to your enemies!

JOHN.

Therefore I shun all public thoroughfares,
And venture not to knock at any door—
I turn my footsteps to the wilds, and through
The mountains roam, a terror to myself.
From mine own self I shrink with horror back,

If in a brook I see my ill-starr'd form.
If you have pity or a human heart—

[*Falls down before him*.]

TELL.

Stand up, stand up! I say.

JOHN.

Not till you give
Your hand in promise of assistance to me.

TELL.

Can I assist you? Can a sinful man?
Yet get ye up—how black soe'er your crime—
You are a man. I, too, am one. From Tell
Shall no one part uncomforted. I will
Do all that lies within my power.

DUKE JOHN (*springs up and grasps him ardently by the hand*).

Oh, Tell,
You save me from the terrors of despair.

TELL.

Let go my hand! You must away. You cannot
Remain here undiscover'd, and, discover'd,
You cannot count on succor. Which way, then,
Would you be going? Where do you hope to find
A place of rest?

DUKE JOHN.

Alas! I know not where.

TELL.

Hear, then, what Heaven unto my heart suggests.
You must to Italy—to Saint Peter's City—

There cast yourself at the Pope's feet—confess
Your guilt to him, and ease your laden soul!

JOHN.

Will he not to the avengers yield me up?

TELL.

Whate'er he does, accept it as from God.

JOHN.

But how am I to reach that unknown land?
I have no knowledge of the way, and dare not
Attach myself to other travelers.

TELL.

I will describe the road, so mark me well!
You must ascend, keeping along the Reuss,
Which from the mountains dashes wildly down.

DUKE JOHN (*in alarm*).

What! See the Reuss? The witness of my deed!

TELL.

The road you take lies through the river's gorge,
And many a cross proclaims where travelers
Have been by avalanches done to death.

JOHN.

I have no fear for nature's terrors, so
I can appease the torments of my soul.

TELL.

At every cross, kneel down and expiate
Your crime with burning penitential tears—
And if you 'scape the perils of the pass,
And are not whelm'd beneath the drifted snows,

That from the frozen peaks come sweeping down,
You'll reach the bridge that's drench'd with drizzling spray.
Then if it give not way beneath your guilt,
When you have left it safely in your rear,
Before you frowns the gloomy Gate of Rocks,
Where never sun did shine. Proceed through this,
And you will reach a bright and gladsome vale.
Yet must you hurry on with hasty steps,
You must not linger in the haunts of peace.

JOHN.

O Rudolph, Rudolph, royal grandsire! thus
Thy grandson first sets foot within thy realms!

TELL.

Ascending still, you gain the Gotthardt's heights,
Where are the tarns, the everlasting tarns,
That from the streams of Heaven itself are fed,
There to the German soil you bid farewell;
And thence, with swift descent, another stream
Leads you to Italy, your promised land.

[*Ranz des Vaches sounded on Alp-horns is heard without*.]

But I hear voices! Hence!

HEDWIG (*hurrying in*).

Where art thou, Tell?
My father comes, and in exulting bands
All the confederates approach.

DUKE JOHN (*covering himself*).

Woe's me!
I dare not tarry 'mong these happy men!

TELL.

Go, dearest wife, and give this man to eat.
Spare not your bounty; for his road is long,
And one where shelter will be hard to find.
Quick—they approach!

HEDWIG.

Who is he?

TELL.

Do not ask!
And when he quits you, turn your eyes away,
So that they do not see which way he goes.

[DUKE JOHN *advances hastily toward* TELL, *but he beckons him aside and goes out. When both have left the stage, the scene changes*.]

SCENE III

The whole valley before TELL's *house, the heights which inclose it occupied by peasants, grouped into tableaux. Some are seen crossing a lofty bridge, which crosses the Shechen*. WALTER FÜRST *with the two boys,* WERNER *and* STAUFFACHER, *come forward. Others throng after them. When* TELL *appears, all receive him with loud cheers.*

ALL.

Long live brave Tell, our shield, our Savior!

[*While those in front are crowding round* TELL, *and embracing him,* RUDENZ *and* BERTHA *appear. The former salutes the peasantry, the latter embraces* HEDWIG. *The music front the mountains continues to play. When it has stopped,* BERTHA *steps into the centre of the crowd*.]

BERTHA.

Peasants! Confederates! Into your league
Receive me, who was happily the first

That found deliverance in the land of freedom.
To your brave hands I now intrust my rights.
Will you protect me as your citizen?

PEASANTS.

Ay, that we will, with life and goods!

BERTHA. 'Tis well!

And now to him (*turning to* RUDENZ) I frankly give my hand.
A free Swiss maiden to a free Swiss man!

RUDENZ.

And from this moment all my serfs are free!

[*Music, and the curtain falls*.]

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 36: Permission The Macmillan Co., New York, and G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 37: The German is, *Thalvogt*, Ruler of the Valley—the name given figuratively to a dense gray mist which the south wind sweeps into the valleys from the mountain tops. It is well known as the precursor of stormy weather.]

[Footnote 38: A steep rock, standing on the north of Rütli, and nearly opposite to Brumen.]

[Footnote 39: In German, *Wolfenschiessen*—a young man of noble family, and a native of Unterwalden, who attached himself to the House of Austria, and was appointed *Burvogt*, or Seneschal, of the Castle of Rossberg. He was killed by Baumgarten in the manner, and for the cause, mentioned in the text.]

[Footnote 40: Literally, The *Föhn* is loose! "When," says Müller, in his History of Switzerland, "the wind called the Föhn is high, the navigation of the lake becomes extremely dangerous. Such is its vehemence that the laws of the country require that the fires shall be extinguished in the houses while it lasts, and the night watches are

doubled. The inhabitants lay heavy stones upon the roofs of their houses, to prevent their being blown away."]

[Footnote 41: Bürglen, the birthplace and residence of Tell. A chapel, erected in 1522, remains on the spot formerly occupied by his house.]

[Footnote 42: Berenger von Landenberg, a man of noble family in Thurgau, and Governor of Unterwald, infamous for his cruelties to the Swiss, and particularly to the venerable Henry of the Halden. He was slain at the battle of Morgarten, in 1315.]

[Footnote 43: A cell built in the 9th century, by Meinrad, Count of Hohenzollern, the founder of the Convent of Einsiedeln, subsequently alluded to in the text.]

[Footnote 44: The League, or Bond, of the Three Cantons was of very ancient origin. They met and renewed it from time to time, especially when their liberties were threatened with danger. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the end of the 13th century, when Albert, of Austria, became Emperor, and when, possibly, for the first time, the Bond was reduced to writing. As it is important to the understanding of many passages of the play, a translation is subjoined of the oldest known document relating to it. The original, which is in Latin and German, is dated in August, 1291, and is under the seals of the whole of the men of Schwytz, the commonalty of the vale of Uri and the whole of the men of the upper and lower vales of Stanz.

THE BOND.

Be it known to every one, that the men of the Dale of Uri, the Community of Schwytz, as also the men of the mountains of Unterwald, in consideration of the evil times, have full confidently bound themselves, and sworn to help each other with all their power and might, property and people, against all who shall do violence to them, or any of them. That is our Ancient Bond.

Whoever hath a Seignior, let him obey according to the conditions of his service.

We are agreed to receive into these dales no Judge, who is not a countryman and indweller, or who hath bought his place.

Every controversy amongst the sworn confederates shall be determined by some of the sagest of their number, and if any one shall challenge their judgment, then shall he be constrained to obey it by the rest.

Whoever intentionally or deceitfully kills another, shall be executed, and whoever shelters him shall be banished.

Whoever burns the property of another shall no longer be regarded as a countryman, and whoever shelters him shall make good the damage done.

Whoever injures another, or robs him, and hath property in our country, shall make satisfaction out of the same.

No one shall distrain a debtor without a judge, nor any one who is not his debtor, or the surety for such debtor.

Every one in these dales shall submit to the judge, or we, the sworn confederates, all will take satisfaction for all the injury occasioned by his contumacy. And if in any internal division the one party will not accept justice, all the rest shall help the other party. These decrees shall, God willing, endure eternally for our general advantage.]

[Footnote 45: The Austrian knights were in the habit of wearing a plum of peacocks' feathers in their helmets. After the overthrow of the Austrian dominion in Switzerland, it was made highly penal to wear the peacock's feather at any public assembly there.]

[Footnote 46: The bench reserved for the nobility.]

[Footnote 47: The Landamman was an officer chosen by the Swiss Gemeinde, or Diet, to preside over them. The Banneret was an officer intrusted with the keeping of the State Banner and such others as were taken in battle.]

[Footnote 48: According to the custom by which, when the last male descendent of a noble family died, his sword, helmet, and shield, were buried with him.]

[Footnote 49: This frequently occurred. But in the event of an imperial city being mortgaged for the purpose of raising money, it lost its freedom, and was considered as put out of the realm.]

[Footnote 50: An allusion to the circumstance of the Imperial Crown not being hereditary, but conferred by election on one of the Counts of the Empire.]

[Footnote 51: These are the cots, or shealings, erected by the herdsmen for shelter while pasturing their herds on the mountains during the summer. These are left deserted in winter, during which period Melchthal's journey was taken.]

[Footnote 52: It was the custom at the meetings of the Landes Gemeinde, or Diet, to set swords upright in the ground as emblems of authority.]

[Footnote 53: The Heribann was a muster of warriors similar to the *arrière ban* of France.]

[Footnote 54: A The Duke of Suabia, who soon afterward assassinated his uncle for withholding his patrimony from him.]

[Footnote 55: A sort of national militia.]

[Footnote 56: Rocks on shore of Lake Lucerne.]

[Footnote 57: An allusion to the gallant self-devotion of Arnold Struthan of Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach [9th July, 1386], who broke the Austrian phalanx by rushing on their lances, grasping as many of them as he could reach, and concentrating them upon his breast. The confederates rushed forward through the gap thus opened by the sacrifice of their comrade, broke and cut down their enemy's ranks, and soon became the masters of the field. "Dear and faithful confederates, I will open you a passage. Protect my wife and children," were the words of Winkelried, as he rushed to death.]

[Footnote 58: The URPHEDE was an oath of peculiar force. When a man, who was at feud with another, invaded his lands and was worsted, he often made terms with his enemy by swearing the *Urphede*, by which he bound himself to depart, and never to return with a hostile intention.]

* * * * *

THE HOMAGE OF THE ARTS

A MASQUE

Dedicated in all reverence to her Imperial Highness, the Crown Princess of Weimar, MARIA PAULOWNA, Grand-Duchess of Russia, and produced at the Court Theatre in Weimar, November 12, 1804.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

A FATHER. A MOTHER. A YOUTH. A MAIDEN. CHORUS OF COUNTRY PEOPLE. GENIUS. THE SEVEN ARTS.

The scene is laid in a country place. In the centre of the stage, an orange-tree, laden with fruit and bedecked with ribbons. The country people are setting it firmly in the earth, while maidens and children, on each side, hold it erect by means of garlands of flowers.

THE HOMAGE OF THE ARTS (1804)

TRANSLATED BY A. I. DU P. COLEMAN, A.M.

Professor of English Literature, College of the City of New York

THE FATHER

Blossom, blossom, bountiful tree
With thy golden apples gay,
Which from lands so far away
We have brought for ours to see!
Fullest fruitage ever bearing,
May thy branches ne'er decay!

ALL

Blossom, blossom, bountiful tree,
Shooting upward strong and free!

THE YOUTH

With the fragrant bloom united,
Proudly hang the golden store!
May it stand by storms unblighted,
May it grow from more to more!

ALL

May it stand by storms unblighted,
May it grow from more to more!

THE MOTHER

Mother Earth, O hear my word!
Guard the tender nursling now.
Thou that lead'st the speckled herd,
God of the fields, to thee we bow!

THE MAIDEN

Gentle Dryads, guard its growing,
Guard it, guard it, Pan most high!
Mountain nymphs, your gifts bestowing,
Shield it when the storms are blowing—
Bid their fury pass it by!

ALL

Gentle Dryads, guard its growing,
Guard it, guard it, Pan most high!

THE YOUTH

May kind skies smile down upon it,
Always clear and always blue!
Sun, send out thy softest radiance!
Feed it, Earth, with all thy dew!

ALL

Sun, send out thy softest radiance!
Feed it, Earth, with all thy dew!

THE FATHER

Joy, sweet joy, and life new-springing
May'st thou still to all be bringing—
Joy it was that set thee here.
May thy gifts of nectar gather

Children's children, like their father,
And all bless thee for thy cheer!

ALL

Joy, sweet joy, and life new-springing
May'st thou still to all be bringing—
Joy it was that set thee here!

[*They dance in picturesque groups around the tree. The orchestral music accompanies the dance, and gradually passes into a more elevated style, as there appear in the background from above* GENIUS *and the Goddesses of the Seven Arts. The country people retire to the sides of the stage*, GENIUS *comes down to the centre, with* PAINTING, SCULPTURE, *and* ARCHITECTURE *on his right*, POETRY, DRAMA, MUSIC, *and* DANCING *on his left*.]

[Illustration: THE HOMAGE OF THE ARTS HERM. MISDICEMUS]

THE ARTS

We come from a far land—
Still wandering, roaming
From people to people,
From ages to ages;
We are seeking a home that shall always endure—
In peaceful possession
To find our expression,
In stillness creating,
No power abating—
Yet we still seek in vain for a dwelling secure.

THE YOUTH

Who are these my eyes behold,
Like a troop of fairies nigh—
Forms whose beauty ne'er was told!
Beats my heart, I know not why!

GENIUS

Where weapons are clashing
And trumpets are blown,

Where hearts are with hate and with madness o'erflowing,
Where mortals are wand'ring, their goal never knowing,
Thence turn we our footsteps, in haste to be gone.

ARTS

We hate the deceivers,
Despisers of heaven;
We seek among mortals
Who to virtue are given.
Where pure hearts have welcome
To give to a friend,
We will build habitations
To dwell without end.

THE MAIDEN

What is this strange feeling?
What can it betoken?
By some hidden power my nature is moved,
They call to my heart like the friends I have loved—
Yet never before with these strangers I've spoken.

THE COUNTRY PEOPLE

What is this strange feeling?
What can it betoken?

GENIUS

Ah, but yonder see I mortals,
Come to revel with delight.
Look—with ribbons and with garlands
Richly is the tree bedight!
Surely joy their bosom fills—

[*To the country people*.]

Tell me what it is you do.

THE FATHER

Shepherds are we of these hills,
And a feast we keep, 'tis true.

GENIUS

What the feast? I fain would hear!

THE MOTHER

In honor of our lady dear,
Great as good, and good as great,
Who, to bless our humble vale,
From her high imperial station
Has descended—her we hail!

THE YOUTH

For her charms our jubilation,
Kindness like the sun's warm rays!

GENIUS

Wherefore do you plant a tree?

THE YOUTH

Ah, it comes of foreign race,
And its heart toward home is yearning;
That is why we fear its turning
From its new abiding-place.

GENIUS

That is why you plant it deep,
With the soil its roots encase,
That its blessings you may keep
In its new abiding-place?

THE MAIDEN

To her native land that bind her
Many, many are the ties—

All that she has left behind her
In her childhood's paradise:
All her mother's fond embraces,
And the love of noble brothers,
And her sisters' tender bosoms.
Can we then in equal measures,
Can the world, supply a price
For such pleasures,
For such treasures?

GENIUS

Love can reach to any distance,
Is not bound by far or near.
As the fire is undiminished
When another flame is kindled
With its heat, to glow more clear,
So that has no tie to bind her,
Which of old she held most dear:
Though she has left love behind her,
She will find love dwelling here.

THE MOTHER

She has come from halls of state,
Rich with gold and crystal sheen;
Can our hills please one so great,
Where for gold we boast but sunshine,
And our wealth is meadows green?

GENIUS

In a heart of princely kind
Much is hidden from your sense.
Know, then, that a noble mind
Puts the greatness into living,
Never needs to draw it thence.

THE YOUTH

Oh, lovely strangers, teach us to retain her!
Oh, teach us to find favor in her sight!
We long with perfumed garlands to enchain her
Within our homeland, never to take flight.

GENIUS

A noble heart soon finds itself at home—
Creates, in stillness working, its own world:
And as the tree takes hold upon the earth
With eager grasping roots, and soon is fast,
So will a great and doubly royal nature
By its own noble deeds take hold on life.
Love's tender ties soon knit themselves anew—
For where is happiness, there too is home!

ALL THE COUNTRY PEOPLE

Oh, handsome stranger, say how we may chain her,
The fairest, in our quiet vale retain her!

GENIUS

Courage! The help you seek is nigh at hand.
All is not strange to her in this new land.
Me she will know, and my attendant train,
When we have made our names and office plain.

[GENIUS *comes forward. The Seven Arts follow him and form a semi-circle about him. As they do so, they display their attributes, which until this moment have been concealed beneath their robes*.]

GENIUS (*addressing the Crown Princess*)

Lo, I am Genius—beauty's lord alone—
And these that follow me the sister Arts.
'Tis we that deck the altar and the throne;
We crown the work that springs from human hearts.
Long have we dealt with thine imperial line;
And she, the noble dame that gave thee birth,

With spotless hand a dedicated shrine
Still keeps for us, a sacred spot of earth.
We follow thee obedient to her sending;
For happiness through us finds perfect ending.

ARCHITECTURE (*a mural crown on her head, a golden ship in her right hand*)

By Neva's flood thou saw'st me sit at home:
Thy great forefather called me to his side—
And there I built for him a second Rome;
Through me it grew to be an empire's pride.
A paradise of stately pleasure-grounds
Arose beneath the magic of my wand;
And now the busy hum of life resounds
Where once a desert stretched on every hand.
The thunder of the cannon of thy fleet
Alarms the hoary Neptune in his ancient seat.

SCULPTURE (*a small image of victory in her hand*)

Me too hast thou beheld with wondering eyes,
That did the old Olympian world restore.
Upon a cliff that age and storm defies
Its mighty image stands for evermore.

(*Shows the Victory*)

Lo, Victory's image, by my fingers shaped!
Thy lordly brother grasps it in his hand:
And round her form his conquering banners draped,
See Alexander bear her through the land!
I strive, but end with lifeless imitation—
He builds of savage hordes a mighty nation.

PAINTING

And me, most noble, thou wilt know again—
The fond creator of depicted form;
Know very life in all its colors plain
Upon my canvas glowing fresh and warm.
Yea, through the eyes I can deceive the heart,

My skill can cheat the senses without wronging
And still the beating of the lover's heart—
Present the very face for which he's longing:
Wide as the poles asunder though they go,
They are not quite alone, my help who know.

POETRY

Through farthest space I fly on soaring pinion;
I know no limits; naught disputes my rule
Or bids me stay. I hold supreme dominion
O'er realms of thought—the Word my winged tool.
All things that move in heaven above, on earth,
Are to my penetrating eyes displayed—
Though in the secret depths they have their birth.
No bar across the poet's path is laid.
But I have found, in all my age-long quest,
Naught fairer than a pure soul in a lovely breast.

MUSIC (*with the lyre*)

The might of tones that tremble on the strings,
Thou know'st it well—for thou canst wield it too.
What fills the quivering heart when music sings
Can find in me alone its utterance true.
A sweet enchantment plays on every sense
When my harmonious flood has reached its height—
Until the enraptured soul would fain go hence
And from the lips, soft sighing, take its flight.
Where I set up my ladder, built of sound,
A way to scale the dizziest heights is found.

DANCING (*with the cymbals*)

In solemn stillness brooding, the Divine
Is by a silent soul perceived at rest:
Yet life and youth for gladsome motion pine—
They must expression find, must thus be blest.
Led by soft beauty's chain, they follow me
To lose themselves within the sinuous maze.

On Zephyr's wings I raise the body free;
In dancing steps I teach symmetric grace.
Grace is the gift I bear within my hand;
All things that move I lead with magic wand.

DRAMA (*with the double mask*)

The mask of Janus have I in my keeping—
On one side sorrow, on the other joy;
For man must alternate 'twixt bliss and weeping,
And with the dark is mixed a light alloy.
In all its deeps profound, its dizzy heights,
Life's tale before thine eyes I can unroll,
And make thee turn, richer for these great sights,
Into the peaceful silence of thy soul.
Who the whole world in one wide view surveys,
In his own heart no civil strife dismays.

GENIUS

And all of us who here appear before you,
Majestic sisterhood of noble arts,
For leave to serve you, Princess, would implore you:
Do but command, and we will play our parts.
As Theban walls obeyed the lyre's sweet sounding,
So here the senseless stone shall live at thine—
A world of beauty rise, thine eyes astounding.

ARCHITECTURE

Tall columns stand in well-proportioned line.

SCULPTURE

The marble shape beneath the mallet's blow.

PAINTING

Fresh life upon the painted canvas show.

MUSIC

For thee the stream of harmonies shall spring.

DANCING

Light dances follow close the vibrant string.
DRAMA

The whole world'll pass 'fore thee on the stage.

POETRY

And fancy with her magic equipage
Shall bear thee, ravished, to the fields on high.

PAINTING

And as the magic rainbow in the sky
Conjures its colors from the gorgeous sun,
So will we, each for all, and all as one,
With mystic sevenfold wealth of pageantry,
Weave for thee, Lady, life's great tapestry.

ALL THE ARTS (*embracing one another*)

For strength must wed with strength, and so impart
Beauty to life and life to forms of art.

* * * * *

HISTORY AND LITERATURE

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR—THE LAST CAMPAIGNS OF GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS (1792)[59]

TRANSLATED BY THE REV. A. J. W. MORRISON, M.A.

The glorious battle of Leipzig effected a great change in the conduct of Gustavus Adolphus, as well as in the opinion which both friends and foes entertained of him. Successfully had he confronted the greatest general of the age, and had matched the strength of his tactics and the courage of his Swedes against the elite of the imperial army, the most experienced troops in Europe. From this moment he felt a firm

confidence in his own powers—self-confidence has always been the parent of great actions. In all his subsequent operations more boldness and decision are observable; greater determination, even amidst the most unfavorable circumstances, a more lofty tone toward his adversaries, a more dignified bearing toward his allies, and even in his clemency, something of the forbearance of a conqueror. His natural courage was further heightened by the pious ardor of his imagination. He saw in his own cause that of heaven, and in the defeat of Tilly beheld the decisive interference of Providence against his enemies, and in himself the instrument of divine vengeance. Leaving his crown and his country far behind, he advanced on the wings of victory into the heart of Germany, which for centuries had seen no foreign conqueror within its bosom. The warlike spirit of its inhabitants, the vigilance of its numerous princes, the artful confederation of its states, the number of its strong castles, its many and broad rivers, had long restrained the ambition of its neighbors; and frequently as its extensive frontier had been attacked, its interior had been free from hostile invasion. The Empire had hitherto enjoyed the equivocal privilege of being its own enemy, though invincible from without. Even now, it was merely the disunion of its members, and the intolerance of religious zeal, that paved the way for the Swedish invader. The bond of union between the states, which alone had rendered the Empire invincible, was now dissolved; and Gustavus derived from Germany itself the power by which he subdued it. With as much courage as prudence, he availed himself of all that the favorable moment afforded; and equally at home in the cabinet and the field, he tore asunder the web of the artful policy, with as much ease, as he shattered walls with the thunder of his cannon. Uninterruptedly he pursued his conquests from one end of Germany to the other, without breaking the line of posts which commanded a secure retreat at any moment; and whether on the banks of the Rhine, or at the mouth of the Lech, alike maintaining his communication with his hereditary dominions.

[Illustration: GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS]

The consternation of the Emperor and the League at Tilly's defeat at Leipzig, was scarcely greater than the surprise and embarrassment of the allies of the King of Sweden at his unexpected success. It was beyond both their expectations and their wishes. Annihilated in a moment was that formidable army which, while it checked his progress and set bounds to his ambition, rendered him in some measure dependent on themselves. He now stood in the heart of Germany, alone, without a rival or without an adversary who was a match for him. Nothing could stop his progress, or check his pretensions, if the intoxication of success should tempt him to abuse his victory. If formerly they had dreaded the Emperor's irresistible power, there was no less cause now to fear everything for the Empire from the violence of a foreign

conqueror, and for the Catholic Church from the religious zeal of a Protestant king. The distrust and jealousy of some of the combined powers, which a stronger fear of the Emperor had for a time repressed, now revived; and scarcely had Gustavus Adolphus merited, by his courage and success, their confidence, when they began covertly to circumvent all his plans. Through a continual struggle with the arts of enemies, and the distrust of his own allies, must his victories henceforth be won; yet resolution, penetration, and prudence made their way through all impediments. But while his success excited the jealousy of his more powerful allies, France and Saxony, it gave courage to the weaker, and emboldened them openly to declare their sentiments and join his party. Those who could neither vie with Gustavus Adolphus in importance, nor suffer from his ambition, expected the more from the magnanimity of their powerful ally, who enriched them with the spoils of their enemies and protected them against the oppression of their stronger neighbors. His strength covered their weakness, and, inconsiderable in themselves, they acquired weight and influence from their union with the Swedish hero. This was the case with most of the free cities, and particularly with the weaker Protestant states. It was these that introduced the king into the heart of Germany; these covered his rear, supplied his troops with necessaries, received them into their fortresses, while they exposed their own lives in his battles. His prudent regard to their national pride, his popular deportment, some brilliant acts of justice, and his respect for the laws, were so many ties by which he bound the German Protestants to his cause; while the crying atrocities of the Imperialists, the Spaniards, and the troops of Lorraine, powerfully contributed to set his own conduct and that of his army in a favorable light.

If Gustavus Adolphus owed his success chiefly to his own genius, at the same time, it must be owned, he was greatly favored by fortune and by circumstances. Two great advantages gave him a decided superiority over the enemy. While he removed the scene of war into the lands of the League, drew their youth as recruits, enriched himself with booty, and used the revenues of their fugitive princes as his own, he at once took from the enemy the means of effectual resistance and maintained an expensive war with little cost to himself. And, moreover, while his opponents, the princes of the League, divided among themselves, and governed by different and often conflicting interests, acted without unanimity, and therefore without energy; while their generals were deficient in authority, their troops in obedience, the operations of their scattered armies without concert; while the general was separated from the lawgiver and the statesman—these several functions were united in Gustavus Adolphus, the only source from which authority flowed, the sole object to which the eye of the warrior turned, the soul of his party, the inventor as well as the executor of

his plans. In him, therefore, the Protestants had a centre of unity and harmony, which was altogether wanting to their opponents. No wonder, then, if favored by such advantages, at the head of such an army, with such a genius to direct it, and guided by such political prudence, Gustavus Adolphus was irresistible.

With the sword in one hand and mercy in the other, he traversed Germany as a conqueror, a lawgiver, and a judge, in as short a time almost as the tourist of pleasure. The keys of towns and fortresses were delivered to him, as if to the native sovereign. No fortress was inaccessible; no river checked his victorious career. He conquered by the very terror of his name. The Swedish standards were planted along the whole stream of the Main: the Lower Palatinate was free, the troops of Spain and Lorraine had fled across the Rhine and the Moselle. The Swedes and Hessians poured like a torrent into the territories of Mentz, of Würtzburg, and Bamberg, and three fugitive bishops, at a distance from their sees, suffered dearly for their unfortunate attachment to the Emperor. It was now the turn for Maximilian, the leader of the League, to feel in his own dominions the miseries he had inflicted upon others. Neither the terrible fate of his allies, nor the peaceful overtures of Gustavus, who, in the midst of conquest, ever held out the hand of friendship, could conquer the obstinacy of this prince. The torrent of war now poured into Bavaria. Like the banks of the Rhine, those of the Lecke and the Donau were crowded with Swedish troops. Creeping into his fortresses, the defeated Elector abandoned to the ravages of the foe his dominions, hitherto unscathed by war, and on which the bigoted violence of the Bavarians seemed to invite retaliation. Munich itself opened its gates to the invincible monarch, and the fugitive Palatine, Frederick V., in the forsaken residence of his rival, consoled himself for a time for the loss of his dominions.

While Gustavus Adolphus was extending his conquests in the south, his generals and allies were gaining similar triumphs in the other provinces. Lower Saxony shook off the yoke of Austria, the enemy abandoned Mecklenburg, and the imperial garrisons retired from the banks of the Weser and the Elbe. In Westphalia and the Upper Rhine, William, Landgrave of Hesse, rendered himself formidable; the Duke of Weimar in Thuringia, and the French in the Electorate of Treves; while to the eastward the whole kingdom of Bohemia was conquered by the Saxons. The Turks were preparing to attack Hungary, and in the heart of Austria a dangerous insurrection was threatened. In vain did the Emperor look around to the courts of Europe for support; in vain did he summon the Spaniards to his assistance, for the bravery of the Flemings afforded them ample employment beyond the Rhine; in vain did he call upon the Roman court and the whole church to come to his rescue. The offended Pope sported, in pompous processions and idle anathemas, with the embarrassments of

Ferdinand, and instead of the desired subsidy he was shown the devastation of Mantua.

On all sides of his extensive monarchy hostile arms surrounded him. With the states of the League, now overrun by the enemy, those ramparts were thrown down, behind which Austria had so long defended herself, and the embers of war were now smoldering upon her unguarded frontiers tiers. His most zealous allies were disarmed; Maximilian of Bavaria, his firmest support, was scarce able to defend himself. His armies, weakened by desertion and repeated defeat, and dispirited by continued misfortunes had unlearnt, under beaten generals, that warlike impetuosity which, as it is the consequence, so it is the guarantee of success. The danger was extreme, and extraordinary means alone could raise the imperial power from the degradation into which it was fallen.

The most urgent want was that of a general; and the only one from whom he could hope for the revival of his former splendor had been removed from his command by an envious cabal. So low had the Emperor now fallen that he was forced to make the most humiliating proposals to his injured subject and servant, and meanly to press upon the imperious Duke of Friedland the acceptance of the powers which no less meanly had been taken from him. A new spirit began from this moment to animate the expiring body of Austria; and a sudden change in the aspect of affairs bespoke the firm hand which guided them. To the absolute King of Sweden, a general equally absolute was now opposed; and one victorious hero was confronted with another. Both armies were again to engage in the doubtful struggle; and the prize of victory, already almost secured in the hands of Gustavus Adolphus, was to be the object of another and a severer trial. The storm of war gathered around Nuremberg; before its walls the hostile armies encamped, gazing on each other with dread and respect, longing for, and yet shrinking from, the moment that was to close them together in the shock of battle. The eyes of Europe turned to the scene in curiosity and alarm, while Nuremberg, in dismay, expected soon to lend its name to a more decisive battle than that of Leipzig. Suddenly the clouds broke, and the storm rolled away from Franconia, to burst upon the plains of Saxony. Near Lützen fell the thunder that had menaced Nuremberg; the victory, half lost, was purchased by the death of the king. Fortune, which had never forsaken him in his lifetime, favored the King of Sweden even in his death, with the rare privilege of falling in the fulness of his glory and an untarnished fame. By a timely death, his protecting genius rescued him from the inevitable fate of man—that of forgetting moderation in the intoxication of success, and justice in the plenitude of power. It may be doubted whether, had he lived longer, he would still have deserved the tears which Germany shed over his grave, or maintained his title to

the admiration with which posterity regards him as the first and only *just* conqueror that the world has produced. The untimely fall of their great leader seemed to threaten the ruin of his party; but to the Power which rules the world, no loss of a single man is irreparable. As the helm of war dropped from the hand of the falling hero, it was seized by two great statesmen, Oxenstiern and Richelieu. Destiny still pursued its relentless course, and for full sixteen years longer the flames of war blazed over the ashes of the long-forgotten king and soldier.

I may now be permitted to take a cursory retrospect of Gustavus Adolphus in his victorious career; glance at the scene in which he alone was the great actor; and then, when Austria becomes reduced to extremity by the successes of the Swedes, and by a series of disasters is driven to the most humiliating and desperate expedients, to return to the history of the Emperor.

As soon as the plan of operations had been concerted at Halle, between the King of Sweden and the Elector of Saxony; as soon as the alliance had been concluded with the neighboring princes of Weimar and Anhalt, and preparations made for the recovery of the bishopric of Magdeburg, the king began his march into the empire. He had here no despicable foe to contend with. Within the empire, the Emperor was still powerful; throughout Franconia, Swabia, and the Palatinate, imperial garrisons were posted, with whom the possession of every place of importance must be disputed sword in hand. On the Rhine he was opposed by the Spaniards, who had overrun the territory of the banished Elector Palatine, seized all its strong places, and would everywhere dispute with him the passage over the river. In his rear was Tilly, who was fast recruiting his force, and would soon be joined by the auxiliaries from Lorraine. Every Papist presented an inveterate foe, while his connection with France did not leave him at liberty to act with freedom against the Roman Catholics. Gustavus had foreseen all these obstacles, and at the same time the means by which they were to be overcome. The strength of the Imperialists was broken and divided among different garrisons, while he would bring against them one by one his whole united force. If he was to be opposed by the fanaticism of the Roman Catholics, and the awe in which the lesser states regarded the Emperor's power, he might depend on the active support of the Protestants, and their hatred to Austrian oppression. The ravages of the Imperialists and Spanish troops also powerfully aided him in these quarters where the ill-treated husbandman and citizen alike sighed for a deliverer, and where the mere change of yoke seemed to promise a relief. Emissaries were dispatched to gain over to the Swedish side the principal free cities, particularly Nuremberg and Frankfort. The first that lay in the king's march, and which he could not leave unoccupied in his rear, was Erfurt. Here the Protestant party among the

citizens opened to him, without a blow, the gates of the town and the citadel. From the inhabitants of this, as of every important place which afterward submitted, he exacted an oath of allegiance, while he secured its possession by a sufficient garrison. To his ally, Duke William of Weimar, he intrusted the command of an army to be raised in Thuringia. He also left his queen in Erfurt, and promised to increase its privileges. The Swedish army now crossed the Thuringian forest in two columns, by Gotha and Arnstadt, and having delivered, in its march, the county of Henneberg from the Imperialists, formed a junction on the third day near Koenigshofen, on the frontiers of Franconia.

Francis, Bishop of Würtzburg, the bitter enemy of the Protestants, and the most zealous member of the League, was the first to feel the indignation of Gustavus Adolphus. A few threats gained for the Swedes possession of his fortress of Koenigshofen, and with it the key of the whole province. At the news of this rapid conquest, dismay seized all the Roman Catholic towns of the circle. The Bishops of Würtzburg and Bamberg trembled in their castles; they already saw their sees tottering, their churches profaned, and their religion degraded. The malice of his enemies had circulated the most frightful representations of the persecuting spirit and the mode of warfare pursued by the Swedish king and his soldiers, which neither the repeated assurances of the king, nor the most splendid examples of humanity and toleration, ever entirely effaced. Many feared to suffer at the hands of another what in similar circumstances they were conscious of inflicting themselves. Many of the richest Roman Catholics hastened to secure by flight their property, their religion, and their persons, from the sanguinary fanaticism of the Swedes. The bishop himself set the example. In the midst of the alarm, which his bigoted zeal had caused, he abandoned his dominions, and fled to Paris, to excite, if possible, the French ministry against the common enemy of religion.

The further progress of Gustavus Adolphus in the ecclesiastical territories agreed with this brilliant commencement. Schweinfurt, and soon afterward Würtzburg, abandoned by their Imperial garrisons, surrendered; but Marienberg he was obliged to carry by storm. In this place, which was believed to be impregnable, the enemy had collected a large store of provisions and ammunition, all of which fell into the hands of the Swedes. The king found a valuable prize in the library of the Jesuits, which he sent to Upsal, while his soldiers found a still more agreeable one in the prelate's well-filled cellars; his treasures the bishop had in good time removed. The whole bishopric followed the example of the capital, and submitted to the Swedes. The king compelled all the bishop's subjects to swear allegiance to himself; and, in the absence of the lawful sovereign, appointed a regency, one-half of whose members were Protestants.

In every Roman Catholic town which Gustavus took, he opened the churches to the Protestant people, but without retaliating on the Papists the cruelties which they had practised on the former. On such only as sword in hand refused to submit, were the fearful rights of war enforced; and for the occasional acts of violence committed by a few of the more lawless soldiers, in the blind rage of the first attack, their humane leader is not justly responsible. Those who were peaceably disposed, or defenceless, were treated with mildness. It was a sacred principle of Gustavus to spare the blood of his enemies, as well as that of his own troops.

On the first news of the Swedish irruption, the Bishop of Würtzburg, without regarding the treaty which he had entered into with the King of Sweden, had earnestly pressed the general of the League to hasten to the assistance of the bishopric. That defeated commander had, in the meantime, collected on the Weser the shattered remnant of his army, reinforced himself from the garrisons of Lower Saxony, and effected a junction in Hesse with Altringer and Fugger, who commanded under him. Again at the head of a considerable force, Tilly burned with impatience to wipe out the stain of his first defeat by a splendid victory. From his camp at Fulda, whither he had marched with his army, he earnestly requested permission from the Duke of Bavaria to give battle to Gustavus Adolphus. But, in the event of Tilly's defeat, the League had no second army to fall back upon, and Maximilian was too cautious to risk again the fate of his party on a single battle. With tears in his eyes, Tilly read the commands of his superior, which compelled him to inactivity. Thus his march to Franconia was delayed, and Gustavus Adolphus gained time to overrun the whole bishopric. It was in vain that Tilly, reinforced at Aschaffenburg by a body of 12,000 men from Lorraine, marched with an overwhelming force to the relief of Würtzburg. The town and citadel were already in the hands of the Swedes, and Maximilian of Bavaria was generally blamed (and not without cause, perhaps) for having, by his scruples, occasioned the loss of the bishopric. Commanded to avoid a battle, Tilly contented himself with checking the farther advance of the enemy; but he could save only a few of the towns from the impetuosity of the Swedes. Baffled in an attempt to reinforce the weak garrison of Hanau, which it was highly important to the Swedes to gain, he crossed the Main, near Seligenstadt, and took the direction of the Bergstrasse, to protect the Palatinate from the conqueror.

Tilly, however, was not the sole enemy whom Gustavus Adolphus met in Franconia and drove before him. Charles, Duke of Lorraine, celebrated in the annals of the time for his unsteadiness of character, his vain projects, and his misfortunes, ventured to raise a weak arm against the Swedish hero, in the hope of obtaining from the Emperor the electoral dignity. Deaf to the suggestions of a rational policy, he listened only to

the dictates of heated ambition; by supporting the Emperor he exasperated France, his formidable neighbor; and in the pursuit of a visionary phantom in another country, left undefended his own dominions, which were instantly overrun by a French army. Austria willingly conceded to him, as well as to the other princes of the League, the honor of being ruined in her cause. Intoxicated with vain hopes, this prince collected a force of 17,000 men, which he proposed to lead in person against the Swedes. If these troops were deficient in discipline and courage, they were at least attractive by the splendor of their accoutrements; and however sparing they were of their prowess against the foe, they were liberal enough with it against the defenceless citizens and peasantry whom they were summoned to defend. Against the bravery and the formidable discipline of the Swedes this splendidly attired army, however, made no long stand. On the first advance of the Swedish cavalry a panic seized them, and they were driven without difficulty from their cantonments in Würtzburg; the defeat of a few regiments occasioned a general rout, and the scattered remnant sought a covert from the Swedish valor in the towns beyond the Rhine. Loaded with shame and ridicule, the duke hurried home by Strasburg, too fortunate in escaping, by a submissive written apology, the indignation of his conqueror, who had first beaten him out of the field and then called upon him to account for his hostilities. It is related upon this occasion that, in a village on the Rhine a peasant struck the horse of the duke as he rode past, exclaiming, "Haste, Sir, you must go quicker to escape the great King of Sweden!"

The example of his neighbors' misfortunes had taught the Bishop of Bamberg prudence. To avert the plundering of his territories, he made offers of peace, though these were intended only to delay the king's course till the arrival of assistance. Gustavus Adolphus, too honorable himself to suspect dishonesty in another, readily accepted the bishop's proposals and named the conditions on which he was willing to save his territories from hostile treatment. He was the more inclined to peace, as he had no time to lose in the conquest of Bamberg, and his other designs called him to the Rhine. The rapidity with which he followed up these plans cost him the loss of those pecuniary supplies which, by a longer residence in Franconia, he might easily have extorted from the weak and terrified bishop. This artful prelate broke off the negotiation the instant the storm of war passed away from his own territories. No sooner had Gustavus marched onward than he threw himself under the protection of Tilly, and received the troops of the Emperor into the very towns and fortresses which shortly before he had shown himself ready to open to the Swedes. By this stratagem, however, he delayed only for a brief interval the ruin of his bishopric. A Swedish general who had been left in Franconia, undertook to punish the perfidy of the bishop;

and the ecclesiastical territory became the seat of war, and was ravaged alike by friends and foes.

The formidable presence of the Imperialists had hitherto been a check upon the Franconian States; but their retreat, and the humane conduct of the Swedish king, emboldened the nobility and other inhabitants of this circle to declare in his favor. Nuremberg joyfully committed itself to his protection; and the Franconian nobles were won to his cause by flattering proclamations, in which he condescended to apologize for his hostile appearance in their dominions. The fertility of Franconia, and the rigorous honesty of the Swedish soldiers in their dealings with the inhabitants, brought abundance to the camp of the king. The high esteem which the nobility of the circle felt for Gustavus, the respect and admiration with which they regarded his brilliant exploits, the promises of rich booty which the service of this monarch held out, greatly facilitated the recruiting of his troops; a step which was made necessary by detaching so many garrisons from the main body. At the sound of his drums, recruits flocked to his standard from all quarters.

The king had scarcely spent more time in conquering Franconia than he would have required to cross it. He now left behind him Gustavus Horn, one of his best generals, with a force of 8,000 men, to complete and retain his conquest. He himself with his main army, reinforced by the late recruits, hastened toward the Rhine in order to secure this frontier of the empire from the Spaniards, to disarm the ecclesiastical electors, and to obtain from their fertile territories new resources for the prosecution of the war. Following the course of the Main, he subjected, in the course of his march, Seligenstadt, Aschaffenburg, Steinheim, the whole territory on both sides of the river. The imperial garrisons seldom awaited his approach, and never attempted resistance. In the meanwhile one of his colonels had been fortunate enough to take by surprise the town and citadel of Hanau, for whose preservation Tilly had shown such anxiety. Eager to be free of the oppressive burden of the Imperialists, the Count of Hanau gladly placed himself under the milder yoke of the King of Sweden. Gustavus Adolphus now turned his whole attention to Frankfort, for it was his constant maxim to cover his rear by the friendship and possession of the more important towns. Frankfort was among the free cities which, even from Saxony, he had endeavored to prepare for his reception; and he now called upon it, by a summons from Offenbach, to allow him free passage and to admit a Swedish garrison. Willingly would this city have dispensed with the necessity of choosing between the King of Sweden and the Emperor; for, whatever party they might embrace, the inhabitants had a like reason to fear for their privileges and trade. The Emperor's vengeance would certainly fall heavily upon them, if they were in a hurry to submit to the King of Sweden, and

afterward he should prove unable to protect his adherents in Germany. But still more ruinous for them would be the displeasure of an irresistible conqueror, who, with a formidable army, was already before their gates, and who might punish their opposition by the ruin of their commerce and prosperity. In vain did their deputies plead the danger which menaced their fairs, their privileges, perhaps their constitution itself, if, by espousing the party of the Swedes, they were to incur the Emperor's displeasure. Gustavus Adolphus expressed to them his astonishment that, when the liberties of Germany and the Protestant religion were at stake, the citizens of Frankfort should talk of their annual fairs, and postpone for temporal interests the great cause of their country and their conscience. He had, he continued, in a menacing tone, found the keys of every town and fortress, from the Isle of Rugen to the Main, and knew also where to find a key to Frankfort; the safety of Germany, and the freedom of the Protestant Church, were, he assured them, the sole objects of his invasion; conscious of the justice of his cause, he was determined not to allow any obstacle to impede his progress. "The inhabitants of Frankfort, he was well aware, wished to stretch out only a finger to him, but he must have the whole hand in order to have something to grasp." At the head of the army, he closely followed the deputies as they carried back his answer, and in order of battle awaited, near Saxenhausen, the decision of the council.

If Frankfort hesitated to submit to the Swedes, it was solely from fear of the Emperor; their own inclinations did not allow them a moment to doubt between the oppressor of Germany and its protector. The menacing preparations amidst which Gustavus Adolphus now compelled them to decide, would lessen the guilt of their revolt in the eyes of the Emperor, and by an appearance of compulsion justify the step which they willingly took. The gates were therefore opened to the King of Sweden, who marched his army through this imperial town in magnificent procession and in admirable order. A garrison of 600 men was left in Saxenhausen; while the king himself advanced the same evening, with the rest of his army, against the town of Höchst in Mentz, which surrendered to him before night.

While Gustavus was thus extending his conquests along the Main, fortune crowned also the efforts of his generals and allies in the north of Germany. Rostock, Wismar, and Doemitz, the only strong places in the Duchy of Mecklenburg which still sighed under the yoke of the Imperialists, were recovered by their legitimate sovereign, the Duke John Albert, under the Swedish general, Achatius Tott. In vain did the imperial general, Wolf Count von Mansfeld, endeavor to recover from the Swedes the territories of Halberstadt, of which they had taken possession immediately upon the victory of Leipzic; he was even compelled to leave Magdeburg itself in their hands. The Swedish general, Banner, who with 8,000 men remained upon the Elbe, closely

blockaded that city, and had defeated several imperial regiments which had been sent to its relief. Count Mansfeld defended it in person with great resolution; but his garrison being too weak to oppose for any length of time the numerous force of the besiegers, he was already about to surrender on conditions, when Pappenheim advanced to his assistance, and gave employment elsewhere to the Swedish arms. Magdeburg, however, or rather the wretched huts that peeped out miserably from among the ruins of that once great town, was afterward voluntarily abandoned by the Imperialists and immediately taken possession of by the Swedes.

Even Lower Saxony, encouraged by the progress of the king, ventured to raise its head from the disasters of the unfortunate Danish war. They held a congress at Hamburg, and resolved upon raising three regiments, which they hoped would be sufficient to free them from the oppressive garrisons of the Imperialists. The Bishop of Bremen, a relation of Gustavus Adolphus, was not content even with this; but assembled troops of his own, and terrified the unfortunate monks and priests of the neighborhood, but was quickly compelled by the imperial general, Count Gronsfeld, to lay down his arms. Even George, Duke of Lüneburg, formerly a colonel in the Emperor's service, embraced the party of Gustavus, for whom he raised several regiments, and by occupying the attention of the Imperialists in Lower Saxony, materially assisted him.

But more important service was rendered to the king by the Landgrave William of Hesse Cassel, whose victorious arms struck with terror the greater part of Westphalia and Lower Saxony, the bishopric of Fulda, and even the Electorate of Cologne. It has been already stated that immediately after the conclusion of the alliance between the Landgrave and Gustavus Adolphus at Werben, two imperial generals, Fugger and Altringer, were ordered by Tilly to march into Hesse, to punish the Landgrave for his revolt from the Emperor. But this prince had as firmly withstood the arms of his enemies, as his subjects had the proclamations of Tilly inciting them to rebellion, and the battle of Leipzic presently relieved him of their presence. He availed himself of their absence with courage and resolution; in a short time, Vach, Müinden and Hoexter surrendered to him, while his rapid advance alarmed the bishoprics of Fulda, Paderborn, and the ecclesiastical territories which bordered on Hesse. The terrified states hastened by a speedy submission to set limits to his progress, and by considerable contributions to purchase exemption from plunder. After these successful enterprises, the Landgrave united his victorious army with that of Gustavus Adolphus, and concerted with him at Frankfort their future plan of operations.

In this city, a number of princes and ambassadors were assembled to congratulate Gustavus on his success, and either to conciliate his favor or to appease his indignation. Among them was the fugitive King of Bohemia, the Palatine Frederick V., who had hastened from Holland to throw himself into the arms of his avenger and protector. Gustavus gave him the unprofitable honor of greeting him as a crowned head, and endeavored, by a respectful sympathy, to soften his sense of his misfortunes. But great as the advantages were, which Frederick had promised himself from the power and good fortune of his protector; and high as were the expectations he had built on his justice and magnanimity, the chance of this unfortunate prince's reinstatement in his kingdom was as distant as ever. The inactivity and contradictory policies of the English court had abated the zeal of Gustavus Adolphus, and an irritability which he could not always repress made him on this occasion forget the glorious vocation of protector of the oppressed, in which, on his invasion of Germany, he had so loudly announced himself.

The terrors of the king's irresistible strength, and the near prospect of his vengeance, had also compelled George, Landgrave of Hesse Darmstadt, to a timely submission. His connection with the Emperor, and his indifference to the Protestant cause, were no secret to the king, but he was satisfied with laughing at so impotent an enemy. As the Landgrave knew his own strength and the political situation of Germany so little as to offer himself as mediator between the contending parties, Gustavus used jestingly to call him the peacemaker. He was frequently heard to say, when at play he was winning from the Landgrave, "that the money afforded double satisfaction, as it was Imperial coin." To his affinity with the Elector of Saxony, whom Gustavus had cause to treat with forbearance, the Landgrave was indebted for the favorable terms he obtained from the king, who contented himself with the surrender of his fortress of Rüsselheim and his promise of observing a strict neutrality during the war. The Counts of Westerwald and Wetterau also visited the king in Frankfort, to offer him their assistance against the Spaniards, and to conclude an alliance, which was afterward of great service to him. The town of Frankfort itself had reason to rejoice at the presence of this monarch, who took their commerce under his protection, and by the most effectual measures restored the fairs, which had been greatly interrupted by the war.

The Swedish army was now reinforced by ten thousand Hessians, which the Landgrave of Casse commanded. Gustavus Adolphus had already invested Königstein; Kostheim and Flörsheim surrendered after a short siege; he was in command of the Main; and transports were preparing with all speed at Höchst to carry his troops across the Rhine. These preparations filled the Elector of Mentz, Anselm

Casimir, with consternation; and he no longer doubted but that the storm of war would next fall upon him. As a partisan of the Emperor, and one of the most active members of the League, he could expect no better treatment than his confederates, the Bishops of Würtzburg and Bamberg, had already experienced. The situation of his territories upon the Rhine made it necessary for the enemy to secure them, while their fertility afforded an irresistible temptation to a necessitous army. Miscalculating his own strength and that of his adversaries, the Elector flattered himself that he was able to repel force by force, and weary out the valor of the Swedes by the strength of his fortresses. He ordered the fortifications of his capital to be repaired with all diligence, provided it with every necessary for sustaining a long siege, and received into the town a garrison of 2,000 Spaniards, under Don Philip de Sylva. To prevent the approach of the Swedish transports, he endeavored to close the mouth of the Main by driving piles and sinking large heaps of stones and vessels. He himself, however, accompanied by the Bishop of Worms, and carrying with him his most precious effects, took refuge in Cologne, and abandoned his capital and territories to the rapacity of a tyrannical garrison. But these preparations, which bespoke less of true courage than of weak and overweening confidence, did not prevent the Swedes from marching against Mentz and making serious preparations for an attack upon the city. While one body of their troops poured into the Rheingau, routed the Spaniards who remained there, and levied contributions on the inhabitants, another laid the Roman Catholic towns in Westerwald and Wetterau under similar contributions. The main army had encamped at Cassel, opposite Mentz; and Bernhard, Duke of Weimar, made himself master of the Mäusethurm and the Castle of Ehrenfels, on the other side of the Rhine. Gustavus was now actively preparing to cross the river and to blockade the town on the land side, when the movements of Tilly in Franconia suddenly called him from the siege, and obtained for the Elector a short repose.

The danger of Nuremberg, which, during the absence of Gustavus Adolphus on the Rhine, Tilly had made a show of besieging, and, in the event of resistance, threatened with the cruel fate of Magdeburg, occasioned the king suddenly to retire from before Mentz. Lest he should expose himself a second time to the reproaches of Germany, and the disgrace of abandoning a confederate city to a ferocious enemy, he hastened to its relief by forced marches. On his arrival at Frankfort, however, he heard of its spirited resistance, and of the retreat of Tilly, and lost not a moment in prosecuting his designs against Mentz. Failing in an attempt to cross the Rhine at Cassel, under the cannon of the besieged, he directed his march toward the Bergstrasse, with a view of approaching the town from an opposite quarter. Here he quickly made himself master of all the places of importance, and at Stockstadt, between Gernsheim and

Oppenheim, appeared a second time upon the banks of the Rhine. The whole of the Bergstrasse was abandoned by the Spaniards, who endeavored obstinately to defend the other bank of the river. For this purpose, they had burned or sunk all the vessels in the neighborhood, and arranged a formidable force on the banks, in case the king should attempt the passage at that place.

On this occasion, the king's impetuosity exposed him to great danger of falling into the hands of the enemy. In order to reconnoitre the opposite bank, he crossed the river in a small boat; he had scarcely landed when he was attacked by a party of Spanish horse, from whose hands he saved himself only by a precipitate retreat. Having at last, with the assistance of the neighboring fishermen, succeeded in procuring a few transport, he dispatched two of them across the river, bearing Count Brahe and 300 Swedes. Scarcely had this officer time to intrench himself on the opposite bank, when he was attacked by 14 squadrons of Spanish dragoons and cuirassiers. Superior as the enemy was in numbers, Count Brahe, with his small force, bravely defended himself, and gained time for the king to support him with fresh troops. The Spaniards at last retired with the loss of 600 men, some taking refuge in Oppenheim, and others in Mentz. A lion of marble on a high pillar, holding a naked sword in his paw, and a helmet on his head, was erected seventy years after the event, to point out to the traveler the spot where the immortal monarch crossed the great river of Germany.

Gustavus Adolphus now conveyed his artillery and the greater part of his troops over the river, and laid siege to Oppenheim, which, after a brave resistance, was, on December 8, 1631, carried by storm. Five hundred Spaniards, who had so courageously defended the place, fell indiscriminately a sacrifice to the fury of the Swedes. The crossing of the Rhine by Gustavus struck terror into the Spaniards and Lorrainers, who had thought themselves protected by the river from the vengeance of the Swedes. Rapid flight was now their only security; every place incapable of an effectual defence was immediately abandoned. After a long train of outrages on the defenceless citizens, the troops of Lorraine evacuated Worms, which, before their departure, they treated with wanton cruelty. The Spaniards hastened to shut themselves up in Frankenthal, where they hoped to defy the victorious arms of Gustavus Adolphus.

The king lost no time in prosecuting his designs against Mentz, into which the flower of the Spanish troops had thrown themselves. While he advanced on the left bank of the Rhine, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel moved forward on the other, reducing several strong places on his march. The besieged Spaniards, though hemmed in on both sides, displayed at first a bold determination, and threw, for several days, a

shower of bombs into the Swedish camp, which cost the king many of his bravest soldiers. But notwithstanding, the Swedes continually gained ground, and had at last advanced so close to the ditch that they prepared seriously for storming the place. The courage of the besieged now began to droop. They trembled before the furious impetuosity of the Swedish soldiers, of which Marienberg, in Würtzburg, had afforded so fearful an example. The same dreadful fate awaited Mentz, if taken by storm; and the enemy might even be easily tempted to revenge the carnage of Magdeburg on this rich and magnificent residence of a Roman Catholic prince. To save the town, rather than their own lives, the Spanish garrison capitulated on the fourth day, and obtained from the magnanimity of Gustavus a safe conduct to Luxemburg; the greater part of them, however, following the example of many others, enlisted in the service of Sweden.

On the 13th of December, 1631, the king made his entry into the conquered town, and fixed his quarters in the palace of the Elector. Eighty pieces of cannon fell into his hands, and the citizens were obliged to redeem their property from pillage by a payment of 80,000 florins. The benefits of this redemption did not extend to the Jews and the clergy, who were obliged to make large and separate contributions for themselves. The library of the Elector was seized by the king as his share, and presented by him to his chancellor, Oxenstiern, who intended it for the Academy of Westerrah, but the vessel in which it was shipped to Sweden foundered at sea.

After the loss of Mentz, misfortune still pursued the Spaniards on the Rhine. Shortly before the capture of that city, the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel had taken Falkenstein and Reifenberg, and the fortress of Köningstein surrendered to the Hessians. The Rhinegrave, Otto Louis, one of the king's generals, defeated nine Spanish squadrons who were on their march for Frankenthal, and made himself master of the most important towns upon the Rhine, from Boppart to Bacharach. After the capture of the fortress of Braunfels, which was effected by the Count of Wetterau, with the coöperation of the Swedes, the Spaniards quickly lost every place in Wetterau, while in the Palatine they retained few places besides Frankenthal. Landau and Kronweisenberg openly declared for the Swedes; Spires offered troops for the king's service; Mannheim was gained through the prudence of the Duke Bernard of Weimar and the negligence of its governor, who, for this misconduct, was tried before the council of war, at Heidelberg, and beheaded.

The king had protracted the campaign into the depth of winter, and the severity of the season was perhaps one cause of the advantage his soldiers gained over those of the enemy. But the exhausted troops now stood in need of the repose of winter

quarters, which, after the surrender of Mentz, Gustavus assigned to them in its neighborhood. He himself employed the interval of inactivity in the field, which the season of the year enjoined, in arranging, with his chancellor, the affairs of his cabinet, in treating for a neutrality with some of his enemies, and adjusting some political disputes which had sprung up with a neighboring ally. He chose the city of Mentz for his winter quarters, and the settlement of these state affairs, and showed a greater partiality for this town than seemed consistent with the interests of the German princes, or the shortness of his visit to the Empire. Not content with strongly fortifying it, he erected at the opposite angle which the Main forms with the Rhine, a new citadel, which was named Gustavusburg from its founder, but which is better known under the title of Pfaffenraub or Pfaffenzwang.[60]

While Gustavus Adolphus made himself master of the Rhine, and threatened the three neighboring electorates with his victorious arms, his vigilant enemies in Paris and St. Germain's made use of every artifice to deprive him of the support of France, and, if possible, to involve him in a war with that power. By his sudden and equivocal march to the Rhine, he had surprised his friends, and furnished his enemies with the means of exciting a distrust of his intentions. After the conquest of Würtzburg, and of the greater part of Franconia, the road into Bavaria and Austria lay open to him through Bamberg and the Upper Palatinate; and the expectation was as general, as it was natural, that he would not delay to attack the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria in the very centre of their power, and, by the reduction of his two principal enemies, bring the war immediately to an end. But to the surprise of both parties, Gustavus left the path which general expectation had thus marked out for him; and instead of advancing to the right, turned to the left, to make the less important and more innocent princes of the Rhine feel his power, while he gave time to his more formidable opponents to recruit their strength. Nothing but the paramount design of reinstating the unfortunate Palatine, Frederick V., in the possession of his territories, by the expulsion of the Spaniards, could seem to account for this strange step; and the belief that Gustavus was about to effect that restoration silenced for a while the suspicions of his friends and the calumnies of his enemies. But the Lower Palatinate was now almost entirely cleared of the enemy; and yet Gustavus continued to form new schemes of conquest on the Rhine, and to withhold the reconquered country from the Palatine, its rightful owner. In vain did the English ambassador remind him of what justice demanded, and what his own solemn engagement made a duty of honor; Gustavus replied to these demands with bitter complaints of the inactivity of the English court, and prepared to carry his victorious standard into Alsace, and even into Lorraine.

A distrust of the Swedish monarch was now loud and open, while the malice of his enemies busily circulated the most injurious reports as to his intentions. Richelieu, the minister of Louis XIII., had long witnessed with anxiety the king's progress toward the French frontier, and the suspicious temper of Louis rendered him but too accessible to the evil surmises which the occasion gave rise to. France was at this time involved in a civil war with her Protestant subjects, and the fear was not altogether groundless that the approach of a victorious monarch of their party might revive their drooping spirit, and encourage them to a more desperate resistance. This might be the case, even if Gustavus Adolphus was far from showing a disposition to encourage them, or to act unfaithfully toward his ally, the King of France. But the vindictive Bishop of Würtzburg, who was anxious to avenge the loss of his dominions, the envenomed rhetoric of the Jesuits and the active zeal of the Bavarian minister, represented this dreaded alliance between the Huguenots and the Swedes as an undoubted fact, and filled the timid mind of Louis with the most alarming fears. Not merely chimerical politicians, but many of the best informed Roman Catholics, fully believed that the king was on the point of breaking into the heart of France, to make common cause with the Huguenots, and to overturn the Catholic religion within the kingdom. Fanatical zealots already saw him, with his army, crossing the Alps, and dethroning the Vice-regent of Christ in Italy. Such reports no doubt soon refute themselves; yet it cannot be denied that Gustavus, by his manoeuvres on the Rhine, gave a dangerous handle to the malice of his enemies, and in some measure justified the suspicion that he directed his arms, not so much against the Emperor and the Duke of Bavaria, as against the Roman Catholic religion itself.

The general clamor of discontent which the Jesuits raised in all the Catholic courts against the alliance between France and the enemy of the church, at last compelled Cardinal Richelieu to take a decisive step for the security of his religion, and at once to convince the Roman Catholic world of the zeal of France, and of the selfish policy of the ecclesiastical states of Germany. Convinced that the views of the King of Sweden, like his own, aimed solely at the humiliation of the power of Austria, he hesitated not to promise to the princes of the League, on the part of Sweden, a complete neutrality, immediately they abandoned their alliance with the Emperor and withdrew their troops. Whatever the resolution these princes should adopt, Richelieu would equally attain his object. By their separation from the Austrian interest, Ferdinand would be exposed to the combined attack of France and Sweden; and Gustavus Adolphus, freed from his other enemies in Germany, would be able to direct his undivided force against the hereditary dominions of Austria. In that event, the fall of Austria was inevitable, and this great object of Richelieu's policy would be gained

without injury to the church. If, on the other hand, the princes of the League persisted in their opposition and adhered to the Austrian alliance, the result would indeed be more doubtful, but still France would have sufficiently proved to all Europe the sincerity of her attachment to the Catholic cause, and performed her duty as a member of the Roman Church. The princes of the League would then appear the sole authors of those evils, which the continuance of the war would unavoidably bring upon the Roman Catholics of Germany; they alone, by their wilful and obstinate adherence to the Emperor, would frustrate the measures employed for their protection, involve the church in danger, and themselves in ruin.

Richelieu pursued this plan with greater zeal, the more he was embarrassed by the repeated demands of the Elector of Bavaria for assistance from France; for this prince, as already stated, when he first began to entertain suspicion of the Emperor, entered immediately into a secret alliance with France, by which, in the event of any change in the Emperor's sentiments, he hoped to secure the possession of the Palatinate. But though the origin of the treaty clearly showed against what enemy it was directed, Maximilian now thought proper to make use of it against the King of Sweden, and did not hesitate to demand from France that assistance against her ally which she had simply promised against Austria. Richelieu, embarrassed by this conflicting alliance with two hostile powers, had no resource left but to endeavor to put a speedy termination to their hostilities; and as little inclined to sacrifice Bavaria, as he was disabled, by his treaty with Sweden, from assisting it, he set himself, with all diligence, to bring about a neutrality as the only means of fulfilling his obligations to both. For this purpose, the Marquis of Breze was sent, as his plenipotentiary, to the King of Sweden at Mentz, to learn his sentiments on this point, and to procure from him favorable conditions for the allied princes. But if Louis XIII. had powerful motives for wishing for this neutrality, Gustavus Adolphus had as grave reasons for desiring the contrary. Convinced by numerous proofs that the hatred of the princes of the League to the Protestant religion was invincible, their aversion to the foreign power of the Swedes inextinguishable, and their attachment to the House of Austria irrevocable, he apprehended less danger from their open hostility than from a neutrality which was so little in unison with their real inclinations; and, moreover, as he was constrained to carry on the war in Germany at the expense of the enemy, he manifestly sustained great loss if he diminished their number without increasing that of his friends. It was not surprising, therefore, if Gustavus evinced little inclination to purchase the neutrality of the League, by which he was likely to gain so little, at the expense of the advantages he had already obtained.

The conditions, accordingly, upon which he offered to adopt the neutrality toward Bavaria were severe, and suited to these views. He required of the whole League a full and entire cessation from all hostilities; the recall of their troops from the imperial army, from the conquered towns, and from all the Protestant countries; the reduction of their military force; the exclusion of the imperial armies from their territories, and from supplies either of men, provisions, or ammunition. Hard as the conditions were, which the victor thus imposed upon the vanquished, the French mediator flattered himself he should be able to induce the Elector of Bavaria to accept them. In order to give time for an accommodation, Gustavus had agreed to a cessation of hostilities for a fortnight. But at the very time when this monarch was receiving from the French agents repeated assurances of the favorable progress of the negotiation, an intercepted letter from the Elector to Pappenheim, the imperial general in Westphalia, revealed the perfidy of that prince, as having no other object in view by the whole negotiation than to gain time for his measures of defence. Far from intending to fetter his military operations by a truce with Sweden, the artful prince hastened his preparations, and employed the leisure which his enemy afforded him, in making the most active dispositions for resistance. The negotiation accordingly failed, and served only to increase the animosity of the Bavarians and the Swedes.

Tilly's augmented force, with which he threatened to overrun Franconia, urgently required the king's presence in that circle; but it was necessary to expel previously the Spaniards from the Rhine, and to cut off their means of invading Germany from the Netherlands. With this view, Gustavus Adolphus had made an offer of neutrality to the Elector of Treves, Philip von Zeltern, on condition that the fortress of Hermanstein should be delivered up to him, and a free passage granted to his troops through Coblentz. But unwillingly as the Elector had beheld the Spaniards within his territories, he was still less disposed to commit his estates to the suspicious protection of a heretic, and to make the Swedish conqueror master of his destinies. Too weak to maintain his independence between two such powerful competitors, he took refuge in the protection of France. With his usual prudence, Richelieu profited by the embarrassments of this prince to augment the power of France, and to gain for her an important ally on the German frontier. A numerous French army was dispatched to protect the territory of Treves, and a French garrison was received into Ehrenbreitstein. But the object which had moved the Elector to this bold step was not completely gained, for the offended pride of Gustavus Adolphus was not appeased till he had obtained a free passage for his troops through Treves.

Pending these negotiations with Treves and France, the king's generals had entirely cleared the territory of Mentz of the Spanish garrisons, and Gustavus himself

completed the conquest of this district by the capture of Kreutznach. To protect these conquests, the chancellor Oxenstiern was left with a division of the army upon the Middle Rhine, while the main body, under the king himself, began its march against the enemy in Franconia.

The possession of this circle had, in the meantime, been disputed with variable success between Count Tilly and the Swedish General Horn, whom Gustavus had left there with 8,000 men; and the Bishopric of Bamberg, in particular, was at once the prize and the scene of their struggle. Called away to the Rhine by his other projects, the king had left to his general the chastisement of the bishop, whose perfidy had excited his indignation, and the activity of Horn justified the choice. In a short time, he subdued the greater part of the bishopric; and the capital itself, abandoned by its imperial garrison, was carried by storm. The banished bishop urgently demanded assistance from the Elector of Bavaria, who was at length persuaded to put an end to Tilly's inactivity. Fully empowered by his master's order to restore the bishop to his possessions, this general collected his troops, who were scattered over the Upper Palatinate, and with an army of 20,000 men advanced upon Bamberg. Firmly resolved to maintain his conquest even against this overwhelming force, Horn awaited the enemy within the walls of Bamberg; but was obliged to yield to the vanguard of Tilly what he had thought to be able to dispute with his whole army. A panic which suddenly seized his troops, and which no presence of mind of their general could check, opened the gates to the enemy, and it was with difficulty that the troops, baggage, and artillery were saved. The reconquest of Bamberg was the fruit of this victory; but Tilly, with all his activity, was unable to overtake the Swedish general, who retired in good order behind the Main. The king's appearance in Franconia, and his junction with Gustavus Horn at Kitzingen, put a stop to Tilly's conquests, and compelled him to provide for his own safety by a rapid retreat.

The king made a general review of his troops at Aschaffenburg. After his junction with Gustavus Horn, Banner, and Duke William of Weimar, they amounted to nearly 40,000 men. His progress through Franconia was uninterrupted; for Tilly, far too weak to encounter an enemy so superior in numbers, had retreated, by rapid marches, toward the Danube. Bohemia and Bavaria were now equally near to the king, and, uncertain whither his victorious course might be directed, Maximilian could form no immediate resolution. The choice, of the king, and the fate of both provinces, now depended on the road that should be left open to Count Tilly. It was dangerous, during the approach of so formidable an enemy, to leave Bavaria undefended, in order to protect Austria; still more dangerous, by receiving Tilly into Bavaria, to draw thither the enemy also, and to render it the seat of a destructive war. The cares of the

sovereign finally overcame the scruples of the statesman, and Tilly received orders, at all hazards, to cover the frontiers of Bavaria with his army.

Nuremberg received with triumphant joy the protector of the Protestant religion and German freedom, and the enthusiasm of the citizens expressed itself on his arrival in loud transports of admiration and joy. Even Gustavus could not contain his astonishment, to see himself in this city, which was the very centre of Germany, where he had never expected to be able to penetrate. The noble appearance of his person completed the impression produced by his glorious exploits, and the condescension with which he received the congratulations of this free city won all hearts. He now confirmed the alliance he had concluded with it on the shores of the Baltic, and excited the citizens to zealous activity and fraternal unity against the common enemy. After a short stay in Nuremberg, he followed his army to the Danube, and appeared unexpectedly before the frontier town of Donauwerth. A numerous Bavarian garrison defended the place; and their commander, Rodolph Maximilian, Duke of Saxe Lauenburg, showed at first a resolute determination to defend it till the arrival of Tilly. But the vigor with which Gustavus Adolphus prosecuted the siege soon compelled him to take measures for a speedy and secure retreat, which amidst a tremendous fire from the Swedish artillery he successfully executed.

The conquest of Donauwerth opened to the king the further side of the Danube, and now the small river Lech alone separated him from Bavaria. The immediate danger of his dominions aroused all Maximilian's activity; and however little he had hitherto disturbed the enemy's progress to his frontier, he now determined to dispute as resolutely the remainder of their course. On the opposite bank of the Lech, near the small town of Rain, Tilly occupied a strongly fortified camp, which, surrounded by three rivers, bade defiance to all attack. All the bridges over the Lech were destroyed; the whole course of the stream protected by strong garrisons as far as Augsburg; and that town itself, which had long betrayed its impatience to follow the example of Nuremberg and Frankfort, secured by a Bavarian garrison, and the disarming of its inhabitants. The Elector himself, with all the troops he could collect, threw himself into Tilly's camp, as if all his hopes centred on this single point, and here the good fortune of the Swedes was to suffer shipwreck forever.

Gustavus Adolphus, after subduing the whole territory of Augsburg, on his own side of the river, and opening to his troops a rich supply of necessaries from that quarter, soon appeared on the bank opposite the Bavarian intrenchments. It was now the month of March, when the river, swollen by frequent rains and the melting of the

snow from the mountains of the Tyrol, flowed full and rapid between its steep banks. Its boiling current threatened the rash assailants with certain destruction, while from the opposite side the enemy's cannon showed their murderous mouths. If, in despite of the fury both of fire and water, they should accomplish this almost impossible passage, a fresh and vigorous enemy awaited the exhausted troops in an impregnable camp; and when they needed repose and refreshment they must prepare for battle. With exhausted powers they must ascend the hostile intrenchments, whose strength seemed to bid defiance to every assault. A defeat sustained upon this shore would be attended with inevitable destruction, since the same stream which impeded their advance would also cut off their retreat, if fortune should abandon them.

The Swedish council of war, which the king now assembled, strongly urged upon him all these considerations, in order to deter him from this dangerous undertaking. The most intrepid were appalled, and a troop of honorable warriors, who had grown gray in the field, did not hesitate to express their alarm. But the king's resolution was fixed. "What!" said he to Gustavus Horn, who spoke for the rest, "have we crossed the Baltic, and so many great rivers of Germany, and shall we now be checked by a brook like the Lech?" Gustavus had already, at a great personal risk, reconnoitred the whole country, and discovered that his own side of the river was higher than the other, and consequently gave a considerable advantage to the fire of the Swedish artillery over that of the enemy. With great presence of mind he determined to profit by this circumstance. At the point where the left bank of the Lech forms an angle with the right, he immediately caused three batteries to be erected, from which 72 field-pieces maintained a cross fire upon the enemy. While this tremendous cannonade drove the Bavarians from the opposite bank, he caused to be erected a bridge over the river with all possible rapidity. A thick smoke, kept up by burning wood and wet straw, concealed for some time the progress of the work from the enemy, while the continued thunder of the cannon overpowered the noise of the axes. He kept alive by his own example the courage of his troops, and discharged more than 60 cannon with his own hand. The cannonade was returned by the Bavarians with equal vivacity for two hours, though with less effect, as the Swedish batteries swept the lower opposite bank, while their height served as a breast-work to their own troops. In vain, therefore, did the Bavarians attempt to destroy these works; the superior fire of the Swedes threw them into disorder, and the bridge was completed under their very eyes. On this dreadful day, Tilly did everything in his power to encourage his troops; and no danger could drive him from the bank. At length he found the death which he sought—a cannon ball shattered his leg; and Altringer, his brave companion-in-arms, was, soon after, dangerously wounded in the head. Deprived of the animating presence of their

two generals, the Bavarians gave way at last, and Maximilian, in spite of his own judgment, was driven to adopt a pusillanimous resolve. Overcome by the persuasions of the dying Tilly, whose wonted firmness was overpowered by the near approach of death, he gave up his impregnable position for lost; and the discovery by the Swedes of a ford, by which their cavalry were on the point of passing, accelerated his inglorious retreat. The same night, before a single soldier of the enemy had crossed the Lech, he broke up his camp, and, without giving time for the king to harass him in his march, retreated in good order to Neuburg and Ingolstadt. With astonishment did Gustavus Adolphus, who completed the passage of the river on the following day, behold the hostile camp abandoned: and the Elector's flight surprised him still more, when he saw the strength of the position he had quitted. "Had I been the Bavarian," said he, "though a cannon ball had carried away my beard and chin, never would I have abandoned a position like this, and laid open my territory to my enemies."

Bavaria now lay exposed to the conqueror; and, for the first time, the tide of war, which had hitherto only beat against its frontier, now flowed over its long spared and fertile fields. Before, however, the king proceeded to the conquest of these provinces, he delivered the town of Augsburg from the yoke of Bavaria; exacted an oath of allegiance from the citizens; and to secure its observance, left a garrison in the town. He then advanced, by rapid marches, against Ingolstadt, in order, by the capture of this important fortress, which the Elector covered with the greater part of his army, to secure his conquest in Bavaria, and obtain a firm footing on the Danube.

Shortly after the appearance of the Swedish King before Ingolstadt, the wounded Tilly, after experiencing the caprice of unstable fortune, terminated his career within the walls of that town. Conquered by the superior generalship of Gustavus Adolphus, he lost, at the close of his days, all the laurels of his earlier victories, and appeased, by a series of misfortunes, the demands of justice, and the avenging manes of Magdeburg. In his death, the Imperial army and that of the League sustained an irreparable loss; the Roman Catholic religion was deprived of its most zealous defender, and Maximilian of Bavaria of the most faithful of his servants, who sealed his fidelity by his death, and even in his dying moments fulfilled the duties of a general. His last message to the Elector was an urgent advice to take possession of Ratisbon, in order to maintain the command of the Danube, and to keep open the communication with Bohemia.

With the confidence which was the natural fruit of so many victories, Gustavus Adolphus commenced the siege of Ingolstadt, hoping to gain the town by the fury of his first assault. But the strength of its fortifications, and the bravery of its garrison,

presented obstacles greater than any he had had to encounter since the battle of Breitenfeld, and the walls of Ingolstadt were near putting an end to his career. While reconnoitering the works, a 24-pounder killed his horse under him, and he fell to the ground, while almost immediately afterward another ball struck his favorite, the young Margrave of Baden, by his side. With perfect self-possession the king rose, and quieted the fears of his troops by immediately mounting another horse.

The occupation of Ratisbon by the Bavarians, who, by the advice of Tilly, had surprised this town by stratagem, and placed in it a strong garrison, quickly changed the king's plan of operations. He had flattered himself with the hope of gaining this town, which favored the Protestant cause, and to find in it an ally as devoted to him as Nuremberg, Augsburg, and Frankfort. Its seizure by the Bavarians seemed to postpone for a long time the fulfilment of his favorite project of making himself master of the Danube, and cutting off his adversaries' supplies from Bohemia. He suddenly raised the siege of Ingoldstadt, before which he had wasted both his time and his troops, and penetrated into the interior of Bavaria, in order to draw the Elector into that quarter for the defence of his territories, and thus to strip the Danube of its defenders.

The whole country, as far as Munich, now lay open to the conqueror. Mosburg, Landshut, and the whole territory of Freysingen, submitted; nothing could resist his arms. But if he met with no regular force to oppose his progress, he had to contend against a still more implacable enemy in the heart of every Bavarian—religious fanaticism. Soldiers who did not believe in the Pope were, in this country, a new and unheard-of phenomenon; the blind zeal of the priests represented them to the peasantry as monsters, the children of hell, and their leader as Antichrist. No wonder, then, if they thought themselves released from all the ties of nature and humanity toward this brood of Satan, and justified in committing the most savage atrocities upon them. Woe to the Swedish soldier who fell into their hands! All the torments which inventive malice could devise were exercised upon these unhappy victims; and the sight of their mangled bodies exasperated the army to a fearful retaliation. Gustavus Adolphus, alone, sullied the lustre of his heroic character by no act of revenge; and the aversion which the Bavarians felt toward his religion, far from making him depart from the obligations of humanity toward that unfortunate people, seemed to impose upon him the stricter duty to honor his religion by a more constant clemency.

The approach of the king spread terror and consternation in the capital, which, stripped of its defenders, and abandoned by its principal inhabitants, placed all its hopes in the magnanimity of the conqueror. By an unconditional and voluntary

surrender, it hoped to disarm his vengeance, and sent deputies even to Freysingen to lay at his feet the keys of the city. Strongly as the king might have been tempted by the inhumanity of the Bavarians, and the hostility of their sovereign, to make a dreadful use of the rights of victory; pressed as he was by Germans to avenge the fate of Magdeburg on the capital of its destroyer, this great prince scorned this mean revenge; and the very helplessness of his enemies disarmed his severity. Contented with the more noble triumph of conducting the Palatine Frederick with the pomp of a victor into the very palace of the prince who had been the chief instrument of his ruin and the usurper of his territories, he heightened the brilliancy of his triumphal entry by the brighter splendor of moderation and clemency.

The king found in Munich only a forsaken palace, for the Elector's treasures had been transported to Werfen. The magnificence of the building astonished him; and he asked the guide who showed the apartments, who was the architect. "No other," replied he, "than the Elector himself."—"I wish," said the King, "I had this architect to send to Stockholm." "That," he was answered, "the architect will take care to prevent." When the arsenal was examined, they found nothing but carriages, stripped of their cannon. The latter had been so artfully concealed under the floor that no traces of them remained; and but for the treachery of a workman, the deceit would not have been detected. "Rise up from the dead," said the King, "and come to judgment." The floor was pulled up, and 140 pieces of cannon discovered, some of extraordinary calibre, which had been principally taken in the Palatinate and Bohemia. A treasure of 30,000 gold ducats, concealed in one of the largest, completed the pleasure which the King received from this valuable acquisition.

A far more welcome spectacle still would have been the Bavarian army itself; for his march into the heart of Bavaria had been undertaken chiefly with the view of luring them from their intrenchments. In this expectation he was disappointed. No enemy appeared; no entreaties, however urgent, on the part of his subjects, could induce the Elector to risk the remainder of his army to the chances of a battle. Shut up in Ratisbon, he awaited the reinforcements which Wallenstein was bringing from Bohemia; and endeavored, in the meantime, to amuse his enemy and keep him inactive, by reviving the negotiation for a neutrality. But the King's distrust, too often and too justly excited by his previous conduct, frustrated this design; and the intentional delay of Wallenstein abandoned Bavaria to the Swedes.

Thus far had Gustavus advanced from victory to victory, without meeting with an enemy able to cope with him. A part of Bavaria and Swabia, the Bishoprics of Franconia, the Lower Palatinate, and the Archbishopric of Mentz, lay conquered in his

rear. An uninterrupted career of conquest had conducted him to the threshold of Austria; and the most brilliant success had fully justified the plan of operations which he had formed after the battle of Breitenfeld. If he had not succeeded to his wish in promoting a confederacy among the Protestant States, he had at least disarmed or weakened the League, carried on the war chiefly at its expense, lessened the Emperor's resources, emboldened the weaker States, and while he laid under contribution the allies of the Emperor, forced a way through their territories into Austria itself. Where arms were unavailing, the greatest service was rendered by the friendship of the free cities, whose affections he had gained, by the double ties of policy and religion; and, as long as he should maintain his superiority in the field, he might reckon on every thing from their zeal. By his conquests on the Rhine, the Spaniards were cut off from the Lower Palatinate, even if the state of the war in the Netherlands left them at liberty to interfere in the affairs of Germany. The Duke of Lorraine, too, after his unfortunate campaign, had been glad to adopt a neutrality. Even the numerous garrisons he had left behind him, in his progress through Germany, had not diminished his army; and, fresh and vigorous as when he first began his march, he now stood in the centre of Bavaria, determined and prepared to carry the war into the heart of Austria.

While Gustavus Adolphus thus maintained his superiority within the Empire, fortune, in another quarter, had been no less favorable to his ally, the Elector of Saxony. By the arrangement concerted between these princes at Halle, after the battle of Leipzig, the conquest of Bohemia was intrusted to the Elector of Saxony, while the King reserved for himself the attack upon the territories of the League. The first fruits which the Elector reaped from the battle of Breitenfeld was the reconquest of Leipzic, which was shortly followed by the expulsion of the Austrian garrisons from the entire circle. Reinforced by the troops who deserted to him from the hostile garrisons, the Saxon General, Arnheim, marched toward Lusatia, which had been overrun by an Imperial General, Rudolph von Tiefenbach, in order to chastise the Elector for embracing the cause of the enemy. He had already commenced in this weakly defended province the usual course of devastation, taken several towns, and terrified Dresden itself by his approach, when his destructive progress was suddenly stopped by an express mandate from the Emperor to spare the possessions of the King of Saxony.

Ferdinand had perceived too late the errors of that policy which reduced the Elector of Saxony to extremities and forcibly drove this powerful monarch into an alliance with Sweden. By moderation, equally ill-timed, he now wished to repair if possible the consequences of his haughtiness; and thus committed a second error in

endeavoring to repair the first. To deprive his enemy of so powerful an ally, he had opened, through the intervention of Spain, a negotiation with the Elector; and in order to facilitate an accommodation, Tiefenbach was ordered immediately to retire from Saxony. But these concessions of the Emperor, far from producing the desired effect, only revealed to the Elector the embarrassment of his adversary and his own importance, and emboldened him the more to prosecute the advantages he had already obtained. How could he, moreover, without becoming chargeable with the most shameful ingratitude, abandon an ally to whom he had given the most solemn assurances of fidelity, and to whom he was indebted for the preservation of his dominions and even of his Electoral dignity?

The Saxon army, now relieved from the necessity of marching into Lusatia, advanced toward Bohemia, where a combination of favorable circumstances seemed to insure them an easy victory. In his kingdom, the first scene of this fatal war, the flames of dissension still smoldered beneath the ashes, while the discontent of the inhabitants was fomented by daily acts of oppression and tyranny. On every side, this unfortunate country showed signs of a mournful change. Whole districts had changed their proprietors, and groaned under the hated yoke of Roman Catholic masters, whom the favor of the Emperor and the Jesuits had enriched with the plunder and possessions of the exiled Protestants. Others, taking advantage themselves of the general distress, had purchased, at a low rate, the confiscated estates. The blood of the most eminent champions of liberty had been shed upon the scaffold; and such as by a timely flight avoided that fate, were wandering in misery far from their native land, while the obsequious slaves of despotism enjoyed their patrimony. Still more insupportable than the oppression of these petty tyrants, was the restraint of conscience which was imposed without distinction on all the Protestants of that kingdom. No external danger, no opposition on the part of the nation, however steadfast, not even the fearful lessons of past experience, could check in the Jesuits the rage of proselytism; where fair means were ineffectual, recourse was had to military force to bring the deluded wanderers within the pale of the church. The inhabitants of Joachimsthal, on the frontiers between Bohemia and Meissen, were the chief sufferers from this violence. Two imperial commissaries, accompanied by as many Jesuits and supported by fifteen musketeers, made their appearance in this peaceful valley to preach the gospel to the heretics. Where the rhetoric of the former was ineffectual, the forcibly quartering the latter upon the houses, and threats of banishment and fines were tried. But on this occasion, the good cause prevailed, and the bold resistance of this small district compelled the Emperor disgracefully to recall his mandate of conversion. The example of the court had, however, afforded a precedent to the

Roman Catholics of the Empire, and seemed to justify every act of oppression which their insolence tempted them to wreak upon the Protestants. It is not surprising, then, if this persecuted party was favorable to a revolution and saw with pleasure their deliverers on the frontiers.

The Saxon army was already on its march toward Prague; the imperial garrisons everywhere retired before them. Schloeckenau, Tetschen, Aussig, Leutmeritz, soon fell into the enemy's hands, and every Roman Catholic place was abandoned to plunder. Consternation seized all the Papists of the Empire; and conscious of the outrages which they themselves had committed on the Protestants, they did not venture to abide the vengeful arrival of a Protestant army. All the Roman Catholics, who had anything to lose, fled hastily from the country to the capital, which again they presently abandoned. Prague was unprepared for an attack, and was too weakly garrisoned to sustain a long siege. Too late had the Emperor resolved to despatch Field-Marshal Tiefenbach to the defence of this capital. Before the imperial orders could reach the head-quarters of that general, in Silesia, the Saxons were already close to Prague, the Protestant inhabitants of which showed little zeal, while the weakness of the garrison left no room to hope a long resistance. In this fearful state of embarrassment, the Roman Catholics of Prague looked for security to Wallenstein, who now lived in that city as a private individual. But far from lending his military experience, and the weight of his name, toward its defence, he seized the favorable opportunity to satiate his thirst for revenge. If he did not actually invite the Saxons to Prague, at least his conduct facilitated its capture. Though unprepared, the town might still hold out until succors could arrive; and an imperial colonel, Count Maradas, showed serious intentions of undertaking its defence. But without command and authority, and having no support but his own zeal and courage, he did not dare to venture upon such a step without the advice of a superior. He therefore consulted the Duke of Friedland, whose approbation might supply the want of authority from the Emperor and to whom the Bohemian generals were referred by an express edict of the court in the last extremity. He, however, artfully excused himself on the plea of holding no official appointment and his long retirement from the political world; while he weakened the resolution of the subalterns by the scruples which he suggested and painted in the strongest colors. At last, to render the consternation general and complete, he quitted the capital with his whole court, however little he had to fear from its capture; and the city was lost, because, by his departure, he showed that he despaired of its safety. His example was followed by all the Roman Catholic nobility, the generals with their troops, the clergy, and all the officers of the crown. All night the people were employed in saving their persons and effects. The roads to Vienna

were crowded with fugitives, who scarcely recovered from their consternation till they reached the imperial city. Maradas himself, despairing of the safety of Prague, followed the rest, and led his small detachment to Tabor, where he awaited the event.

[Illustration: WALLENSTEIN VAN DYCK]

Profound silence reigned in Prague, when the Saxons next morning appeared before it; no preparations were made for defence; not a single shot from the walls announced an intention of resistance. On the contrary, a crowd of spectators from the town, allured by curiosity, came flocking round to behold the foreign army; and the peaceful confidence with which they advanced, resembled a friendly salutation more than a hostile reception. From the concurrent reports of these people, the Swedes learned that the town had been deserted by the troops, and that the government had fled to Budweiss. This unexpected and inexplicable absence of resistance excited Arnheim's distrust the more, as the speedy approach of the Silesian succors was no secret to him, and as he knew that the Saxon army was too indifferently provided with materials for undertaking a siege and by far too weak in numbers to attempt to take the place by storm. Apprehensive of stratagem, he redoubled his vigilance; and he continued in this conviction until Wallenstein's house-steward, whom he discovered among the crowd, confirmed to him this intelligence. "The town is ours without a blow!" exclaimed he in astonishment to his officers, and immediately summoned it by a trumpeter.

The citizens of Prague, thus shamefully abandoned by their defenders, had long taken their resolution; all that they had to do was to secure their properties and liberties by an advantageous capitulation. No sooner was the treaty signed by the Saxon general, in his master's name, than the gates were opened, without further opposition; and upon the 11th of November, 1631, the army made their triumphal entry. The Elector soon after followed in person, to receive the homage of those whom he had newly taken under his protection; for it was only in the character of protector that the three towns of Prague had surrendered to him. Their allegiance to the Austrian monarchy was not to be dissolved by the step they had taken. In proportion as the Papists' apprehensions of reprisals on the part of the Protestants had been exaggerated, so was their surprise great at the moderation of the Elector and the discipline of his troops. Field-Marshal Arnheim plainly evinced, on this occasion, his respect for Wallenstein. Not content with sparing his estates on his march, he now placed guards over his palace, in Prague, to prevent the plunder of any of his effects. The Roman Catholics of the town were allowed the fullest liberty of conscience; and of all the churches they had wrested from the Protestants, four only were now taken back from them. From this general indulgence none was excluded but the Jesuits, who

were generally considered as the authors of all past grievances and thus banished the kingdom.

John George belied not the submission and dependence with which the terror of the imperial name inspired him; nor did he indulge at Prague in a course of conduct which would assuredly have been pursued against himself at Dresden by imperial generals, such as Tilly or Wallenstein. He carefully distinguished between the enemy with whom he was at war, and the head of the Empire, to whom he owed obedience. He did not venture to touch the household furniture of the latter, while, without scruple, he appropriated and transported to Dresden the cannon of the former. He did not take up his residence in the imperial palace, but in the house of Lichtenstein, being too modest to use the apartments of one whom he had deprived of a kingdom. Had this trait been related of a great man, and a hero, it would irresistibly excite our admiration; but the character of this prince leaves us in doubt whether such moderation ought to be ascribed to a noble self-command or to the littleness of a weak mind which even good fortune could not embolden and liberty itself could not strip of its habituated fetters.

The surrender of Prague, which was quickly followed by that of most of the other towns, effected a great and sudden change in Bohemia. Many of the Protestant nobility, who had hitherto been wandering about in misery, now returned to their native country; and Count Thurn, the famous author of the Bohemian insurrection, enjoyed the triumph of returning as a conqueror to the scene of his crime and his condemnation. Over the very bridge where the heads of his adherents, exposed to view, held out a fearful picture of the fate which had threatened himself, he now made his triumphal entry; and to remove these ghastly objects was his first care. The exiles again took possession of their properties, without thinking of recompensing for the purchase money the present possessors, who had mostly taken to flight. Even though they had received a price for their estates, they seized on everything which had once been their own; and many had reason to rejoice at the economy of the late possessors. The lands and cattle had greatly improved in their hands; the apartments were now decorated with the most costly furniture; the cellars, which had been left empty, were richly filled; the stables supplied; the magazines stored with provisions. But distrusting the constancy of that good fortune, which had so unexpectedly smiled upon them, they hastened to get rid of these insecure possessions, and to convert their immovable into transferable property.

The presence of the Saxons inspired all the Protestants of the kingdom with courage; and, both in the country and the capital, crowds flocked to the newly opened Protestant churches. Many, whom fear alone had retained in their adherence to

Popery, now openly professed the new doctrine; and many of the late converts to Roman Catholicism gladly renounced a compulsory persuasion, to follow the earlier conviction of their conscience. All the moderation of the new regency could not restrain the manifestation of that just displeasure which this persecuted people felt against their oppressors. They made a fearful and cruel use of their newly recovered rights; and, in many parts of the kingdom, their hatred of the religion which they had been compelled to profess, could be satiated only by the blood of its adherents.

Meantime the succors which the imperial generals, Goetz and Tiefenbach, were conducting from Silesia, had entered Bohemia, where they were joined by some of Tilly's regiments from the Upper Palatinate. In order to disperse them before they should receive any further reinforcement, Arnheim advanced with part of his army from Prague, and made a vigorous attack on their intrenchments near Limburg, on the Elbe. After a severe action, not without great loss, he drove the enemy from their fortified camp and forced them, by his heavy fire, to recross the Elbe and to destroy the bridge which they had built over that river. Nevertheless, the Imperialists obtained the advantage in several skirmishes, and the Croats pushed their incursions to the very gates of Prague. Brilliant and promising as the opening of the Bohemian campaign had been, the issue by no means satisfied the expectations of Gustavus Adolphus. Instead of vigorously following up their advantages, by forcing a passage to the Swedish army through the conquered country, and then, with it, attacking the imperial power in its centre, the Saxons weakened themselves in a war of skirmishes, in which they were not always successful, while they lost the time which should have been devoted to greater undertakings. But the Elector's subsequent conduct betrayed the motives which had prevented him from pushing his advantage over the Emperor, and by consistent measures promoting the plans of the King of Sweden.

The Emperor had now lost the greater part of Bohemia, and the Saxons were advancing against Austria, while the Swedish monarch was rapidly moving to the same point through Franconia, Swabia, and Bavaria. A long war had exhausted the strength of the Austrian monarchy, wasted the country, and diminished its armies. The renown of its victories was no more, as well as the confidence inspired by constant success; its troops had lost the obedience and discipline to which those of the Swedish monarch owed all their superiority in the field. The confederates of the Emperor were disarmed, or their fidelity shaken by the danger which threatened themselves. Even Maximilian of Bavaria, Austria's most powerful ally, seemed disposed to yield to the seductive proposition of neutrality; while his suspicious alliance with France had long been a subject of apprehension to the Emperor. The bishop of Würtzburg and Bamberg, the Elector of Mentz, and the Duke of Lorraine, were either expelled from

their territories or threatened with immediate attack; Treves had placed itself under the protection of France. The bravery of the Hollanders gave full employment to the Spanish arms in the Netherlands; while Gustavus had driven them from the Rhine. Poland was still fettered by the truce which subsisted between that country and Sweden. The Hungarian frontier was threatened by the Transylvania Prince, Ragotsky, a successor of Bethlem Gabor and the inheritor of his restless mind; while the Porte was making great preparation to profit by the favorable conjuncture for aggression. Most of the Protestant states, encouraged by their protector's success, were openly and actively declaring against the Emperor. All the resources which had been obtained by the violent and oppressive extortions of Tilly and Wallenstein were exhausted; all these depôts, magazines, and rallying-points were now lost to the Emperor; and the war could no longer be carried on as before at the cost of others. To complete his embarrassment, a dangerous insurrection broke out in the territory of the Ens, where the ill-timed religious zeal of the government had provoked the Protestants to resistance; and thus fanaticism lit its torch within the empire, while a foreign enemy was already on its frontier. After so long a continuance of good fortune, such brilliant victories and extensive conquests, such fruitless effusion of blood, the Emperor saw himself a second time on the brink of that abyss into which he was so near falling at the commencement of his reign. If Bavaria should embrace the neutrality; if Saxony should resist the tempting offers he had held out; and France resolve to attack the Spanish power at the same time in the Netherlands, in Italy and in Catalonia, the ruin of Austria would be complete; the allied powers would divide its spoils, and the political system of Germany would undergo a total change.

The chain of these disasters began with the battle of Breitenfeld, the unfortunate issue of which plainly revealed the long decided decline of the Austrian power, whose weakness had hitherto been concealed under the dazzling glitter of a grand name. The chief cause of the Swedes' superiority in the field was evidently to be ascribed to the unlimited power of their leader, who concentrated in himself the whole strength of his party; and, unfettered in his enterprises by any higher authority, was complete master of every favorable opportunity, could control all his means to the accomplishment of his ends, and was responsible to none but himself. But since Wallenstein's dismissal and Tilly's defeat, the very reverse of this course was pursued by the Emperor and the League. The generals wanted authority over their troops, and liberty of acting at their discretion; the soldiers were deficient in discipline and obedience; the scattered corps, in combined operation; the states, in attachment to the cause; the leaders lacked harmony among themselves, quickness to resolve, and firmness to execute. What gave the Emperor's enemy so decided an advantage over him was not so much their

superior power, as their manner of using it. The League and the Emperor did not want means, but a mind capable of directing them with energy and effect. Even had Count Tilly not lost his old renown, distrust of Bavaria would not have allowed the Emperor to place the fate of Austria in the hands of one who had never concealed his attachment to the Bavarian Elector. The urgent want which Ferdinand felt was for a general possessed of sufficient experience to form and to command an army and willing at the same time to dedicate his services, with blind devotion, to the Austrian monarchy.

This choice now occupied the attention of the Emperor's privy council and divided the opinions of its members. In order to oppose one monarch to another, and by the presence of their sovereign to animate the courage of the troops, Ferdinand, in the ardor of the moment, had offered himself to be the leader of his army; but little trouble was required to overturn a resolution which was the offspring of despair alone, and which yielded at once to calm reflection. But the situation which his dignity, and the duties of administration, prevented the Emperor from holding, might be filled by his son, a youth of talents and bravery, and of whom the subjects of Austria had already formed great expectations. Called by his birth to the defence of a monarchy, of whose crowns he wore two already, Ferdinand III., King of Hungary and Bohemia, united, with the natural dignity of heir to the throne, the respect of the army, and the attachment of the people, whose coöperation was indispensable to him in the conduct of the war. None but the beloved heir to the crown could venture to impose new burdens on a people already severely oppressed; his personal presence with the army could alone suppress the pernicious jealousies of the several leaders, and by the influence of his name restore the neglected discipline of the troops to its former vigor. If so young a leader was devoid of the maturity of judgment, prudence, and military experience which practice alone could impart, this deficiency might be supplied by a judicious choice of counsellors and assistants, who, under the cover of his name, might be vested with supreme authority.

But plausible as were the arguments with which a part of the ministry supported this plan, it was met by difficulties not less serious, arising from the distrust, perhaps even the jealousy, of the Emperor, and also from the desperate state of affairs. How dangerous was it to intrust the fate of the monarchy to a youth who was himself in need of counsel and support! How hazardous to oppose to the greatest general of his age, a tyro, whose fitness for so important a post had never yet been tested by experience; whose name, as yet unknown to fame, was far too powerless to inspire a dispirited army with the assurance of future victory! What a new burden on the country to support the state a royal leader was required to maintain, and which the

prejudices of the age considered as inseparable from his presence with the army! How serious a consideration for the prince himself, to commence his political career with an office which must make him the scourge of his people and the oppressor of the territories which he was hereafter to rule.

But not only was a general to be found for the army; an army must also be found for the general. Since the compulsory resignation of Wallenstein, the Emperor had defended himself more by the assistance of Bavaria and the League, than by his own armies; and it was this dependence on equivocal allies, which he was endeavoring to escape, by the appointment of a general of his own. But what possibility was there of raising an army out of nothing, without the all-powerful aid of gold and the inspiriting name of a victorious commander; above all, an army which, by its discipline, warlike spirit, and activity, should be fit to cope with the experienced troops of the northern conqueror? In all Europe, there was but one man equal to this, and that one had been mortally affronted.

The moment had at last arrived when more than ordinary satisfaction was to be done to the wounded pride of the Duke of Friedland. Fate itself had been his avenger, and an unbroken chain of disasters, which had assailed Austria from the day of his dismissal, had wrung from the Emperor the humiliating confession that with this general he had lost his right arm. Every defeat of his troops opened afresh this wound; every town which he lost revived in the mind of the deceived monarch the memory of his own weakness and ingratitude. It would have been well for him, if, in the offended general, he had only lost a leader of his troops, and a defender of his dominions; but he was destined to find in him an enemy, and the most dangerous of all, since he was least armed against the stroke of treason. Removed from the theatre of war and condemned to irksome inaction, while his rivals gathered laurels on the field of glory, the haughty duke had beheld these changes of fortune with affected composure, and concealed, under a glittering and theatrical pomp, the dark designs of his restless genius. Torn by burning passions within, while all without bespoke calmness and indifference, he brooded over projects of ambition and revenge, and slowly, but surely, advanced toward his end. All that he owed to the Emperor was effaced from his mind; what he himself had done for the Emperor was imprinted in burning characters on his memory. To his insatiable thirst for power, the Emperor's ingratitude was welcome, as it seemed to tear in pieces the record of past favors, to absolve him from every obligation toward his former benefactor. In the disguise of a righteous retaliation, the projects dictated by his ambition now appeared to him just and pure. In proportion as the external circle of his operations was narrowed, the world of hope expanded before him, and his dreamy imagination revelled in boundless projects,

which, in any mind but such as his, madness alone could have given birth to. His services had raised him to the proudest height which it was possible for a man, by his own efforts, to attain. Fortune had denied him nothing which the subject and the citizen could lawfully enjoy. Till the moment of his dismissal, his demands had met with no refusal, his ambition had met with no check; but the blow which, at the diet of Ratisbon, humbled him, showed him the difference between *original* and *deputed* power, the distance between the subject and his sovereign. Roused from the intoxication of his own greatness by this sudden reverse of fortune, he compared the authority which he had possessed with that which had deprived him of it; and his ambition marked the steps which it had yet to surmount upon the ladder of fortune. From the moment when he had so bitterly experienced the weight of sovereign power, his efforts were directed to attain it for himself; the wrong which he himself had suffered made him a robber. Had he not been outraged by injustice, he might have obediently moved in his orbit round the majesty of the throne, satisfied with the glory of being the brightest of its satellites. It was only when violently forced from its sphere, that his wandering star threw in disorder the system to which it belonged, and came in destructive collision with its sun.

Gustavus Adolphus had overrun the north of Germany; one place after another was lost; and at Leipzic the flower of the Austrian army had fallen. The intelligence of this defeat soon reached the ears of Wallenstein, who, in the retired obscurity of a private station in Prague, contemplated from a calm distance the tumult of war. The news, which filled the breasts of the Roman Catholics with dismay, announced to him the return of greatness and good fortune. For him was Gustavus Adolphus laboring. Scarcely had the king begun to gain reputation by his exploits, when Wallenstein lost not a moment to court his friendship and to make common cause with this successful enemy of Austria. The banished Count Thurn, who had long entered the service of Sweden, undertook to convey Wallenstein's congratulations to the king, and to invite him to a close alliance with the duke. Wallenstein required 15,000 men from the king; and with these, and the troops he himself engaged to raise, he undertook to conquer Bohemia and Moravia, to surprise Vienna, and drive his master, the Emperor, before him into Italy. Welcome as was this unexpected proposition, its extravagant promises were naturally calculated to excite suspicion. Gustavus Adolphus was too good a judge of merit to reject with coldness the offers of one who might be so important a friend. But when Wallenstein, encouraged by the favorable reception of his first message, renewed it after the battle of Breitenfeld, and pressed for a decisive answer, the prudent monarch hesitated to trust his reputation to the chimerical projects of so daring an adventurer and to commit so large a force to the honesty of a man who felt

no shame in openly avowing himself a traitor. He excused himself, therefore, on the plea of the weakness of his army which, if diminished by so large a detachment, would certainly suffer in its march through the empire; and thus, perhaps, by excess of caution, lost an opportunity of putting an immediate end to the war. He afterward endeavored to renew the negotiation; but the favorable moment was past, and Wallenstein's offended pride never forgave the first neglect.

But the king's hesitation, perhaps, only accelerated the breach, which their characters made inevitable sooner or later. Both framed by nature to give laws, not to receive them, they could not long have coöperated in an enterprise which eminently demanded mutual submission and sacrifice. Wallenstein was *nothing* where he was not *everything*; he must either act with unlimited power, or not at all. So cordially, too, did Gustavus dislike control that he had almost renounced his advantageous alliance with France, because it threatened to fetter his own independent judgment. Wallenstein was lost to a party, if he could not lead; the latter was, if possible, still less disposed to obey the instructions of another. If the pretensions of a rival would be so irksome to the Duke of Friedland, in the conduct of combined operations, in the division of the spoil they would be insupportable. The proud monarch might condescend to accept the assistance of a rebellious subject against the Emperor, and to reward his valuable services with regal munificence; but he never could so far lose sight of his own dignity, and the majesty of royalty, as to bestow the recompense which the extravagant ambition of Wallenstein demanded, and requite an act of treason, however useful, with a crown. In him, therefore, even if all Europe should tacitly acquiesce, Wallenstein had reason to expect the most decided and formidable opponent to his views on the Bohemian crown; and in all Europe he was the only one who could enforce his opposition. Constituted Dictator in Germany by Wallenstein himself, he might turn his arms against him, and consider himself bound by no obligations to one who was himself a traitor. There was no room for a Wallenstein under such an ally; and it was, apparently, this conviction, and not any supposed designs upon the imperial throne, that he alluded to, when, after the death of the King of Sweden, he exclaimed, "It is well for him and me that he is gone! The German Empire does not require two such leaders."

His first scheme of revenge on the house of Austria had indeed failed; but the purpose itself remained unalterable; the choice of means alone was changed. What he had failed in effecting with the King of Sweden, he hoped to obtain with less difficulty and more advantage from the Elector of Saxony. Him he was as certain of being able to bend to his views as he had always been doubtful of Gustavus Adolphus. Having always maintained a good understanding with his old friend Arnheim, he now

made use of him to bring about an alliance with Saxony, by which he hoped to render himself equally formidable to the Emperor and the King of Sweden. He had reason to expect that a scheme, which, if successful, would deprive the Swedish monarch of his influence in Germany, would be welcomed by the Elector of Saxony, who he knew was jealous of the power and offended at the lofty pretensions of Gustavus Adolphus. If he succeeded in separating Saxony from the Swedish alliance and in establishing, conjointly with that power, a third party in the Empire, the fate of the war would be placed in his hand; and by this single step he would succeed in gratifying his revenge against the Emperor, revenging the neglect of the Swedish monarch, and on the ruin of both raising the edifice of his own greatness.

But whatever course he might follow in the prosecution of his designs, he could not carry them into effect without an army entirely devoted to him. Such a force could not be secretly raised without its coming to the knowledge of the imperial court, where it would naturally excite suspicion and thus frustrate his design in the very outset. From the army, too, the rebellious purposes for which it was destined must be concealed till the very moment of execution, since it could scarcely be expected that they would at once be prepared to listen to the voice of a traitor and serve against their legitimate sovereign. Wallenstein, therefore, must raise it publicly and in the name of the Emperor, and be placed at its head, with unlimited authority, by the Emperor himself. But how could this be accomplished otherwise than by his being appointed to the command of the army and intrusted with full powers to conduct the war? Yet neither his pride nor his interest permitted him to sue in person for this post and as a suppliant to accept from the favor of the Emperor a limited power, when an unlimited authority might be extorted from his fears. In order to make himself the master of the terms on which he would resume the command of the army, his course was to wait until the post should be forced upon him. This was the advice he received from Arnheim, and this the end for which he labored with profound policy and restless activity.

Convinced that extreme necessity would alone conquer the Emperor's irresolution and render powerless the opposition of his bitter enemies, Bavaria and Spain, he henceforth occupied himself in promoting the success of the enemy and in increasing the embarrassments of his master. It was apparently by his instigation and advice that the Saxons, when on the route to Lusatia and Silesia, had turned their march toward Bohemia and overrun that defenceless kingdom, where their rapid conquests were partly the result of his measures. By the fears which he affected to entertain he paralyzed every effort at resistance; and his precipitate retreat caused the delivery of the capital to the enemy. At a conference with the Saxon general, which was held at Kaunitz under the pretext of negotiating for a peace, the seal was put to the

conspiracy, and the conquest of Bohemia was the first fruits of this mutual understanding. While Wallenstein was thus personally endeavoring to heighten the perplexities of Austria, and while the rapid movements of the Swedes upon the Rhine effectually promoted his designs, his friends and bribed adherents in Vienna uttered loud complaints of the public calamities and represented the dismissal of the general as the sole cause of all these misfortunes. "Had Wallenstein commanded, matters would never have come to this," exclaimed a thousand voices; while their opinions found supporters, even in the Emperor's privy council.

Their repeated remonstrances were not needed to convince the embarrassed Emperor of his general's merits and of his own error. His dependence on Bavaria and the League had soon become insupportable; but hitherto this dependence permitted him not to show his distrust, or irritate the Elector by the recall of Wallenstein. But now when his necessities grew every day more pressing, and the weakness of Bavaria more apparent, he could no longer hesitate to listen to friends of the duke, and to consider their overtures for his restoration to command. The immense riches Wallenstein possessed, the universal reputation he enjoyed, the rapidity with which six years before he had assembled an army of 40,000 men, the little expense at which he had maintained this formidable force, the actions he had performed at its head, and lastly, the zeal and fidelity he had displayed for his master's honor, still lived in the Emperor's recollection and made Wallenstein seem to him the ablest instrument to restore the balance between the belligerent powers, to save Austria, and preserve the Catholic religion. However sensibly the imperial pride might feel the humiliation, in being forced to make so unequivocal an admission of past errors and present necessity; however painful it was to descend to humble entreaties, from the height of imperial command; however doubtful the fidelity of so deeply injured and implacable a character; however loudly and urgently the Spanish minister and the Elector of Bavaria protested against this step, the immediate pressure of necessity finally overcame every other consideration, and the friends of the duke were empowered to consult him on the subject and to hold out the prospect of his restoration.

Informed of all that was transacted in the Emperor's cabinet to his advantage, Wallenstein possessed sufficient self-command to conceal his inward triumph and to assume the mask of indifference. The moment of vengeance was at last come, and his proud heart exulted in the prospect of repaying with interest the injuries of the Emperor. With artful eloquence, he expatiated upon the happy tranquillity of a private station, which had blessed him since his retirement from a political stage. Too long, he said, had he tasted the pleasures of ease and independence, to sacrifice to the vain phantom of glory the uncertain favor of princes. All his desire of power and

distinction were extinct: tranquillity and repose were now the sole object of his wishes. The better to conceal his real impatience, he declined the Emperor's invitation to the court, but at the same time, to facilitate the negotiations, came to Znaim in Moravia.

At first, it was proposed to limit the authority to be intrusted to him, by the presence of a superior, in order, by this expedient, to silence the objections of the Elector of Bavaria. The imperial deputies, Questenberg and Werdenberg, who, as old friends of the duke, had been employed in this delicate mission, were instructed to propose that the King of Hungary should remain with the army and learn the art of war under Wallenstein. But the very mention of his name threatened to put a period to the whole negotiation. "No! never," exclaimed Wallenstein, "will I submit to a colleague in my office. No—not even if it were God himself with whom I should have to share my command." But even when this obnoxious point was given up, Prince Eggenberg, the Emperor's minister and favorite, who had always been the steady friend and zealous champion of Wallenstein and was therefore expressly sent to him, exhausted his eloquence in vain to overcome the pretended reluctance of the duke. "The Emperor," he admitted, "had, in Wallenstein, thrown away the most costly jewel in his crown: but unwillingly and compulsorily only had he taken this step, which he had since deeply repented of; while his esteem for the duke had remained unaltered, his favor for him undiminished. Of these sentiments he now gave the most decisive proof, by reposing unlimited confidence in his fidelity and capacity to repair the mistakes of his predecessors and to change the whole aspect of affairs. It would be great and noble to sacrifice his just indignation to the good of his country; dignified and worthy of him to refute the evil calumny of his enemies by the double warmth of his zeal. This victory over himself," concluded the prince, "would crown his other unparalleled services to the Empire and render him the greatest man of his age."

These humiliating confessions and flattering assurances seemed at last to disarm the anger of the duke; but not before he had disburdened his heart of his reproaches against the Emperor, pompously dwelt upon his own services, and humbled to the utmost the monarch who solicited his assistance, did he condescend to listen to the attractive proposals of the minister. As if he yielded entirely to the force of their arguments, he condescended with a haughty reluctance to that which was the most ardent wish of his heart and deigned to favor the ambassadors with a ray of hope. But far from putting an end to the Emperor's embarrassments, by giving at once a full and unconditional consent, he only acceded to a part of his demands, that he might exalt the value of that which still remained, and was of most importance. He accepted the command, but only for three months; merely for the purpose of raising, but not of

leading, an army. He wished only to show his power and ability in its organization, and to display before the eyes of the Emperor the greatness of that assistance which he still retained in his hands. Convinced that an army raised by his name alone would, if deprived of its creator, soon sink again into nothing, he intended it to serve only as a decoy to draw more important concessions from his master. And yet Ferdinand congratulated himself, even in having gained so much as he had.

Wallenstein did not long delay to fulfil those promises which all Germany regarded as chimerical, and which Gustavus Adolphus had considered as extravagant. But the foundation for the present enterprise had long been laid, and he only put in motion the machinery which for many years had been prepared for the purpose. Scarcely had the news spread of Wallenstein's levies, when, from every quarter of the Austrian monarchy, crowds of soldiers repaired to try their fortunes under this experienced general. Many, who had before fought under his standards, had been admiring eye-witnesses of his great actions and experienced his magnanimity, came forward from their retirement to share with him a second time both booty and glory. The greatness of the pay he promised attracted thousands, and the plentiful supplies the soldier was likely to enjoy at the cost of the peasant was to the latter an irresistible inducement to embrace the military life at once, rather than be the victim of its oppression. All the Austrian provinces were compelled to assist in the equipment. No class was exempt from taxation—no dignity or privilege from capitation. The Spanish court, as well as the King of Hungary, agreed to contribute a considerable sum. The ministers made large presents, while Wallenstein himself advanced $200,000 from his personal income to hasten the armament. The poorer officers he supported out of his own revenues; and, by his own example, by brilliant promotions and still more brilliant promises, he induced all, who were able, to raise troops at their own expense. Whoever raised a corps at his own cost was to be its commander. In the appointment of officers, religion made no difference. Riches, bravery, and experience were more regarded than creed. By this uniform treatment of different religious sects, and still more by his express declaration that his present levy had nothing to do with religion, the Protestant subjects of the Empire were tranquilized and reconciled to bear their share of the public burdens. The duke, at the same time, did not omit to treat, in his own name, with foreign states for men and money. He prevailed on the Duke of Lorraine, a second time, to espouse the cause of the Emperor. Poland was urged to supply him with Cossacks, and Italy with warlike necessaries. Before the three months were expired, the army which was assembled in Moravia, amounted to no less than 40,000 men, chiefly drawn from the unconquered parts of Bohemia, from Moravia, Silesia, and the German provinces of the House of Austria. What to every one had

appeared impracticable, Wallenstein, to the astonishment of all Europe, had in a short time effected. The charm of his name, his treasures, and his genius, had assembled thousands in arms, where before Austria had only looked for hundreds. Furnished, even to superfluity, with all necessaries, commanded by experienced officers, and inflamed by enthusiasm which assured itself of victory, this newly created army only awaited the signal of their leader to show themselves, by the bravery of their deeds, worthy of his choice. The duke had fulfilled his promise, and the troops were ready to take the field; he then retired and left to the Emperor to choose a commander. But it would have been as easy to raise a second army like the first as to find any other commander for it than Wallenstein. This promising army, the last hope of the Emperor, was nothing but an illusion, as soon as the charm was dissolved which had called it into existence; by Wallenstein it had been raised, and, without him, it sank like a creation of magic into its original nothingness. Its officers were either bound to him as his debtors, or, as his creditors, closely connected with his interests and the preservation of his power. The regiments he had intrusted to his own relations, creatures, and favorites. He, and he alone, could discharge to the troops the extravagant promises by which they had been lured into his service. His pledged word was the only security on which their bold expectations rested; a blind reliance on his omnipotence, the only tie which linked together in one common life and soul the various impulses of their zeal. There was an end of the good fortune of each individual, if he retired who alone was the voucher of its fulfilment.

However little Wallenstein was serious in his refusal, he successfully employed this means to terrify the Emperor into consenting to his extravagant conditions. The progress of the enemy every day increased the pressure of the Emperor's difficulties, while the remedy was also close at hand; a word from him might terminate the general embarrassment. Prince Eggenberg at length received orders, for the third and last time, at any cost and sacrifice, to induce his friend, Wallenstein, to accept the command.

He found him at Znaim in Moravia, pompously surrounded by the troops, the possession of which he made the Emperor so earnestly to long for. As a suppliant did the haughty subject receive the deputy of his sovereign. "He never could trust," he said, "to a restoration to command, which he owned to the Emperor's necessities and not to his sense of justice. He was now courted, because the danger had reached its height and safety was hoped for from his arm only; but his successful services would soon cause the servant to be forgotten, and the return of security would bring back renewed ingratitude. If he deceived the expectations formed of him, his long earned renown would be forfeited; even if he fulfilled them, his repose and happiness must be

sacrificed. Soon would envy be excited anew, and the dependent monarch would not hesitate, a second time, to make an offering of convenience to a servant whom he could now dispense with. Better for him at once, and voluntarily, to resign a post from which sooner or later the intrigues of his enemies would expel him. Security and content were to be found in the bosom of private life; and nothing but the wish to oblige the Emperor had induced him, reluctantly enough, to relinquish for a time his blissful repose."

Tired of this long farce, the minister at last assumed a serious tone and threatened the obstinate duke with the Emperor's resentment if he persisted in his refusal. "Low enough had the imperial dignity," he added, "stooped already; and yet, instead of exciting his magnanimity by its condescension, it had only flattered his pride and increased his obstinacy. If this sacrifice had been made in vain, he would not answer, but only that the suppliant might be converted into the sovereign and the monarch might not avenge his injured dignity on his rebellious subject. However greatly Ferdinand may have erred, the Emperor at least had a claim to obedience; the man might be mistaken, but the monarch could not confess his error. If the Duke of Friedland had suffered by an unjust decree, he might yet be recompensed for all his losses; the wound which it had itself inflicted, the hand of Majesty might heal. If he asked security for his person and his dignities, the Emperor's equity would refuse him no reasonable demand. Majesty contemned, admitted not of any atonement; disobedience to its commands cancelled the most brilliant services. The Emperor required his services, and as Emperor he demanded them. Whatever price Wallenstein might set upon them, the Emperor would readily agree to; but he demanded obedience, or the weight of his indignation should crush the refractory servant."

Wallenstein, whose extensive possessions within the Austrian monarchy were momentarily exposed to the power of the Emperor, was keenly sensible that this was no idle threat; yet it was not fear that at last overcame his affected reluctance. This imperious tone was of itself, to his mind, a plain proof of the weakness and despair which dictated it, while the Emperor's readiness to yield all his demands convinced him that he had attained the summit of his wishes. He now made a show of yielding to the persuasions of Eggenberg; and left him, in order to write down the conditions on which he accepted the command.

Not without apprehension, did the minister receive the writing in which the proudest of subjects had prescribed laws to the proudest of sovereigns. But however little confidence he had in the moderation of his friend, the extravagant contents of his writing surpassed even his worst expectations. Wallenstein required the uncontrolled

command over all the German armies of Austria and Spain, with unlimited powers to reward and punish. Neither the King of Hungary, nor the Emperor himself, were to appear in the army, still less to exercise any act of authority over it. No commission in the army, no pension or letter of grace, was to be granted by the Emperor without Wallenstein's approval. All the conquests and confiscations that should take place were to be placed entirely at Wallenstein's disposal, to the exclusion of every other tribunal. For his ordinary pay, an imperial hereditary estate was to be assigned him, with another of the conquered estates within the Empire for his extraordinary expenses. Every Austrian province was to be opened to him if he required it in case of retreat. He further demanded the assurance of the possession of the Duchy of Mecklenburg, in the event of a future peace; and a formal and timely intimation, if it should be deemed necessary a second time to deprive him of the command.

In vain the minister entreated him to moderate his demands, which, if granted, would deprive the Emperor of all authority over his own troops and make him absolutely dependent on his general. The value placed on his services had been too plainly manifested to prevent him dictating the price at which they were to be purchased. If the pressure of circumstances compelled the Emperor to grant these demands, it was more than a mere feeling of haughtiness and desire of revenge which induced the duke to make them. His plans of rebellion were formed, to their success; every one of the conditions for which Wallenstein stipulated in this treaty with the court was indispensable. Those plans required that the Emperor should be deprived of all authority in Germany and be placed at the mercy of his general; and this object would be attained the moment Ferdinand subscribed to the required conditions. The use which Wallenstein intended to make of his army (widely different indeed from that for which it was intrusted to him) brooked not of a divided power and still less of an authority superior to his own. To be the sole master of the will of his troops, he must also be the sole master of their destinies; insensibly to supplant his sovereign and to transfer permanently to his own person the rights of sovereignty, which were only lent to him for a time by a higher authority, he must cautiously keep the latter out of the view of the army. Hence his obstinate refusal to allow any prince of the house of Austria to be present with the army. The liberty of free disposal of all the conquered and confiscated estates in the Empire would also afford him fearful means of purchasing dependents and instruments of his plans, and of acting the dictator in Germany more absolutely than ever any Emperor did in time of peace. By the right to use any of the Austrian provinces as a place of refuge, in case of need, he had full power to hold the Emperor a prisoner by means of his own forces and within his own

dominions, to exhaust the strength and resources of these countries, and to undermine the power of Austria in its very foundation.

Whatever might be the issue, he had equally secured his own advantage by the conditions he had extorted from the Emperor. If circumstances proved favorable to his daring project, this treaty with the Emperor facilitated its execution; if, on the contrary, the course of things ran counter to it, it would at least afford him a brilliant compensation for the failure of his plans. But how could he consider an agreement valid which was extorted from his sovereign and based upon treason? How could he hope to bind the Emperor by a written agreement, in the face of a law which condemned to death every one who should have the presumption to impose conditions upon him? But this criminal was the most indispensable man in the Empire, and Ferdinand, well practised in dissimulation, granted him for the present all he required.

At last, then, the imperial army had found a commander-in-chief worthy of the name. Every other authority in the army, even that of the Emperor himself, ceased from the moment Wallenstein assumed the commander's baton, and every act was invalid which did not proceed from him. From the banks of the Danube, to those of the Weser and the Oder, was felt the life-giving dawning of this new star; a new spirit seemed to inspire the troops of the Emperor, a new epoch of the war began. The Papists form fresh hopes, the Protestant beholds with anxiety the changed course of affairs.

The greater the price at which the services of the new general had been purchased, the greater justly were the expectations from those which the court of the Emperor entertained. But the duke was in no hurry to fulfil these expectations. Already in the vicinity of Bohemia and at the head of a formidable force, he had but to show himself there in order to overpower the exhausted forces of the Saxons and brilliantly to commence his new career by the reconquest of that kingdom. But, contented with harassing the enemy with indecisive skirmishes of his Croats, he abandoned the best part of that kingdom to be plundered, and moved calmly forward in pursuit of his own selfish plans. His design was, not to conquer the Saxons, but to unite with them. Exclusively occupied with this important object, he remained inactive in the hope of conquering more surely by means of negotiation. He left no expedient untried, to detach this prince from the Swedish alliance; and Ferdinand himself, ever inclined to an accommodation with this prince, approved of this proceeding. But the great debt which Saxony owed to Sweden was as yet too freshly remembered to allow of such an act of perfidy; and even had the Elector been disposed to yield to the temptation, the equivocal character of Wallenstein and the bad character of Austrian policy precluded

any reliance in the integrity of its promises. Notorious already as a treacherous statesman, he acted faithlessly upon the very occasion when perhaps he intended to act honestly; and, moreover, was denied, by circumstances, the opportunity of proving the sincerity of his intentions, by the disclosure of his real motives.

He, therefore, unwillingly resolved to extort, by force of arms, what he could not obtain by negotiation. Suddenly assembling his troops, he appeared before Prague ere the Saxons had time to advance to its relief. After a short resistance, the treachery of some Capuchins opened the gates to one of his regiments; and the garrison, who had taken refuge in the citadel, soon laid down their arms upon disgraceful conditions. Master of the capital, he hoped to carry on more successfully his negotiations at the Saxon court; but even while he was renewing his proposals to Arnheim, he did not hesitate to give them weight by striking a decisive blow. He hastened to seize the narrow passes between Aussig and Pirna, with a view of cutting off the retreat of the Saxons into their own country; but the rapidity of Arnheim's operations fortunately extricated them from the danger. After the retreat of this general, Egra and Leutmeritz, the last strongholds of the Saxons, surrendered to the conqueror: and the whole kingdom was restored to its legitimate sovereign, in less time than it had been lost.

Wallenstein, less occupied with the interests of his master than with the furtherance of his own plans, now purposed to carry the war into Saxony, and by ravaging his territories, compel the Elector to enter into a private treaty with the Emperor, or rather with himself. But however little accustomed he was to make his will bend to circumstances, he now perceived the necessity of postponing his favorite scheme, for a time, to a more pressing emergency. While he was driving the Saxons from Bohemia, Gustavus Adolphus had been gaining the victories, already detailed, on the Rhine and the Danube, and carried the war through Franconia and Swabia to the frontiers of Bavaria. Maximilian, defeated on the Lech and deprived by death of Count Tilly, his best support, urgently solicited the Emperor to send with all speed the Duke of Friedland to his assistance from Bohemia, and, by the defence of Bavaria, to avert the danger from Austria itself. He also made the same request to Wallenstein, and entreated him, till he could himself come with the main force, to dispatch in the meantime a few regiments to his aid. Ferdinand seconded the request with all his influence, and one messenger after another was sent to Wallenstein, urging him to move toward the Danube.

It now appeared how completely the Emperor had sacrificed his authority in surrendering to another the supreme command of his troops. Indifferent to Maximilian's entreaties, and deaf to the Emperor's repeated commands, Wallenstein

remained inactive in Bohemia and abandoned the Elector to his fate. The remembrance of the evil service which Maximilian had rendered him with the Emperor, at the Diet at Ratisbon, was deeply engraved on the implacable mind of the duke, and the Elector's late attempts to prevent his reinstatement were no secret to him. The moment of revenging this affront had now arrived, and Maximilian was doomed to pay dearly for his folly in provoking the most revengeful of men. Wallenstein maintained that Bohemia ought not to be left exposed, and that Austria could not be better protected than by allowing the Swedish army to waste its strength before the Bavarian fortress. Thus, by the arm of the Swedes, he chastised his enemy; and, while one place after another fell into their hands, he allowed the Elector vainly to await his arrival in Ratisbon. It was only when the complete subjugation of Bohemia left him without excuse and the conquests of Gustavus Adolphus in Bavaria threatened Austria itself, that he yielded to the pressing entreaties of the Elector and the Emperor and determined to effect the long-expected union with the former; an event, which, according to the general anticipation of the Roman Catholics, would decide the fate of the campaign.

Gustavus Adolphus, too weak in numbers to cope even with Wallenstein's force alone, naturally dreaded the junction of such powerful armies, and the little energy he used to prevent it was the occasion of great surprise. Apparently he reckoned too much on the hatred which alienated the leaders and seemed to render their effectual coöperation improbable; when the event contradicted his views, it was too late to repair his error. On the first certain intelligence he received of their designs, he hastened to the Upper Palatinate for the purpose of intercepting the Elector: but the latter had already arrived there and the junction had been effected at Egra.

This frontier town had been chosen by Wallenstein for the scene of his triumph over his proud rival. Not content with having seen him, as it were, a suppliant at his feet, he imposed upon him the hard condition of leaving his territories in his rear exposed to the enemy, and declaring by this long march to meet him the necessity and distress to which he was reduced. Even to this humiliation the haughty prince patiently submitted. It had cost him a severe struggle to ask for protection of the man who, if his own wishes had been consulted, would never have had the power of granting it: but having once made up his mind to it, he was ready to bear all the annoyances which were inseparable from that resolve and sufficiently master of himself to put up with petty grievances when an important end was in view.

But whatever pains it had cost to effect this junction, it was equally difficult to settle the conditions on which it was to be maintained. The united army must be placed

under the command of one individual, if any object was to be gained by the union, and each general was equally averse to yield to the superior authority of the other. If Maximilian rested his claim on his electoral dignity, the nobleness of his descent, and his influence in the empire, Wallenstein's military renown, and the unlimited command conferred on him by the Emperor, gave an equally strong title to it. If it was deeply humiliating to the pride of the former to serve under an imperial subject, the idea of imposing laws on so imperious a spirit flattered in the same degree the haughtiness of Wallenstein. An obstinate dispute ensued, which, however, terminated in a mutual compromise to Wallenstein's advantage. To him was assigned the unlimited command of both armies, particularly in battle, while the Elector was deprived of all power of altering the order of battle, or even the route of the army. He retained only the bare right of punishing and rewarding his own troops and the free use of these when not acting in conjunction with the Imperialists.

After these preliminaries were settled, the two generals at last ventured upon an interview; but not until they had mutually promised to bury the past in oblivion, and all the outward formalities of a reconciliation had been settled. According to agreement, they publicly embraced in the sight of their troops, and made mutual professions of friendship, while in reality the hearts of both were overflowing with malice. Maximilian, well versed in dissimulation, had sufficient command over himself not to betray in a single feature his real feelings; but a malicious triumph sparkled in the eyes of Wallenstein, and the constraint which was visible in all his movements betrayed the violence of the emotion which overpowered his proud soul.

The combined Imperial and Bavarian armies amounted to nearly 60,000 men, chiefly veterans. Before this force the King of Sweden was not in a condition to keep the field. As his attempt to prevent their junction had failed, he commenced a rapid retreat into Franconia and waited there for some decisive movement on the part of the enemy, in order to form his own plans. The position of the combined armies between the frontiers of Saxony and Bavaria left it for some time doubtful whether they would remove the war into the former, or endeavor to drive the Swedes from the Danube and deliver Bavaria. Saxony had been stripped of troops by Arnheim, who was pursuing his conquests in Silesia; not without a secret design, it was generally supposed, of favoring the entrance of the Duke of Friedland into that electorate and of thus driving the irresolute John George into peace with the Emperor. Gustavus Adolphus himself, fully persuaded that Wallenstein's views were directed against Saxony, hastily dispatched a strong reinforcement to the assistance of his confederate, with the intention, as soon as circumstances would allow, of following with the main body. But the movements of Wallenstein's army soon led him to suspect that he himself was the

object of attack; and the Duke's march through the Upper Palatinate placed the matter beyond a doubt. The question now was, how to provide for his own security, and the prize was no longer his supremacy but his very existence. His fertile genius must now supply the means, not of conquest, but of preservation. The approach of the enemy had surprised him before he had time to concentrate his troops, which were scattered all over Germany, or to summon his allies to his aid. Too weak to meet the enemy in the field, he had no choice left but either to throw himself into Nuremberg and run the risk of being shut up in its walls, or to sacrifice that city and await a reinforcement under the cannon of Donauwerth. Indifferent to danger or difficulty, while he obeyed the call of humanity or honor, he chose the first without hesitation, firmly resolved to bury himself with his whole army under the ruins of Nuremberg rather than to purchase his own safety by the sacrifice of his confederates.

Measures were immediately taken to surround the city and suburbs with redoubts and to form an intrenched camp. Several thousand workmen immediately commenced this extensive work, and an heroic determination to hazard life and property in the common cause animated the inhabitants of Nuremberg. A trench, eight feet deep and twelve broad, surrounded the whole fortification; the lines were defended by redoubts and batteries, the gates by half moons. The river Pegnitz, which flows through Nuremberg, divided the whole camp into two semicircles whose communication was secured by several bridges. About three hundred pieces of cannon defended the town-walls and the intrenchments. The peasantry from the neighboring villages, and the inhabitants of Nuremberg, assisted the Swedish soldiers so zealously that on the seventh day the army was able to enter the camp, and, in a fortnight, this great work was completed.

While these operations were carried on without the walls, the magistrates of Nuremberg were busily occupied in filling the magazines with provisions and ammunition for a long siege. Measures were taken, at the same time, to secure the health of the inhabitants, which was likely to be endangered by the conflux of so many people; cleanliness was enforced by the strictest regulations. In order, if necessary, to support the King, the youth of the city were enlisted and trained to arms, the militia of the town considerably reinforced, and a new regiment raised, consisting of four-and-twenty names, according to the letters of the alphabet. Gustavus had, in the meantime, called to his assistance his allies, Duke William of Weimar, and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel; and ordered his generals on the Rhine, in Thuringia and Lower Saxony, to commence their march immediately and join him with their troops in Nuremberg. His army, which was encamped within the lines, did not amount to more than 16,000 men, scarcely a third of the enemy.

The Imperialists had, in the meantime, by slow marches, advanced to Neumark, where Wallenstein made a general review. At the sight of this formidable force, he could not refrain from indulging in a childish boast: "In four days," said he, "it will be shown whether I or the King of Sweden is to be master of the world." Yet, notwithstanding his superiority, he did nothing to fulfil his promise; and even let slip the opportunity of crushing his enemy when the latter had the hardihood to leave his lines to meet him. "Battles enough have been fought," was his answer to those who advised him to attack the King; "it is now time to try another method." Wallenstein's well-founded reputation required not any of those rash enterprises on which younger soldiers rush, in the hope of gaining a name. Satisfied that the enemy's despair would dearly sell a victory, while a defeat would irretrievably ruin the Emperor's affairs, he resolved to wear out the ardor of his opponent by a tedious blockade, and, by thus depriving him of every opportunity of availing himself of his impetuous bravery, take from him the very advantage which had hitherto rendered him invincible. Without making any attack, therefore, he erected a strong fortified camp on the other side of the Pegnitz, and opposite Nuremberg; and, by this well chosen position, cut off from the city and the camp of Gustavus all supplies from Franconia, Swabia, and Thuringia. Thus he held in siege at once the city and the King, and flattered himself with the hope of slowly, but surely, wearing out by famine and pestilence the courage of his opponent whom he had no wish to encounter in the field.

Little aware, however, of the resources and the strength of his adversary, Wallenstein had not taken sufficient precautions to avert from himself the fate he was designing for others. From the whole of the neighboring country, the peasantry had fled with their property; and what little provision remained must be obstinately contested with the Swedes. The King spared the magazines within the town, as long as it was possible to provision his army from without; and these forays produced constant skirmishes between the Croats and the Swedish cavalry, of which the surrounding country exhibited the most melancholy traces. The necessaries of life must be obtained sword in hand; and the foraging parties could not venture out without a numerous escort. And when this supply failed the town opened its magazines to the King, but Wallenstein had to support his troops from a distance. A large convoy from Bavaria was on its way to him, with an escort of a thousand men. Gustavus Adolphus having received intelligence of its approach, immediately sent out a regiment of cavalry to intercept it; and the darkness of the night favored the enterprise. The whole convoy, with the town in which it was, fell into the hands of the Swedes; the Imperial escort was broken up; about 1,200 cattle were carried off; and a thousand wagons, loaded with bread, which could not be brought away, were set on

fire. Seven regiments, which Wallenstein had sent forward to Altdorp to cover the entrance of the long and anxiously expected convoy, were attacked by the King, who had, in like manner, advanced to cover the retreat of his cavalry and routed after an obstinate action, being driven back into the Imperial camp with the loss of 400 men. So many checks and difficulties, and so firm and unexpected a resistance on the part of the King, made the Duke of Friedland repent that he had declined to hazard a battle. The strength of the Swedish camp rendered an attack impracticable; and the armed youth of Nuremberg served the King as a nursery from which he could supply his loss of troops. The want of provisions, which began to be felt in the Imperial camp as strongly as in the Swedish, rendered it uncertain which party would be first compelled to give way.

Fifteen days had the two armies now remained in view of each other, equally defended by inaccessible intrenchments, without attempting anything more than slight attacks and unimportant skirmishes. On both sides, infectious diseases, the natural consequences of bad food and a crowded population, had occasioned a greater loss than the sword. And this evil daily increased. But at length the long expected succor arrived in the Swedish camp; and by this strong reinforcement the King was now enabled to obey the dictates of his native courage and to break the chains which had hitherto fettered him.

In obedience to his requisitions, the Duke of Weimar had hastily drawn together a corps from the garrisons in Lower Saxony and Thuringia, which, at Schweinfurt in Franconia, was joined by four Saxon regiments, and at Kitzingen by the corps of the Rhine, which the Landgrave of Hesse and the Palatine of Birkenfeld dispatched to the relief of the King. The Chancellor, Oxenstiern, undertook to lead this force to its destination. After being joined at Windsheim by the Duke of Weimar himself and the Swedish General Banner, he advanced by rapid marches to Bruck and Eltersdorf, where he passed the Rednitz and reached the Swedish camp in safety. This reinforcement amounted to nearly 50,000 men, and was attended by a train of 60 pieces of cannon and 4,000 baggage wagons. Gustavus now saw himself at the head of an army of nearly 70,000 strong, without reckoning the militia of Nuremberg, which, in case of necessity, could bring into the field about 30,000 fighting men; a formidable force, opposed to another not less formidable. The war seemed at length compressed to the point of a single battle, which was to decide its fearful issue. With divided sympathies, Europe looked with anxiety upon this scene, where the whole strength of the two contending parties was fearfully drawn, as it were, to a focus.

If, before the arrival of the Swedish succor, a want of provisions had been felt, the evil was now fearfully increased to a dreadful height in both camps, for Wallenstein had also received reinforcements from Bavaria. Besides the 120,000 men confronting each other, and more than 50,000 horses, in the two armies, and besides the inhabitants of Nuremberg, whose number far exceeded the Swedish army, there were in the camp of Wallenstein about 15,000 women, with as many drivers, and nearly the same number in that of the Swedes. The custom of the time permitted the soldier to carry his family with him to the field; a number of prostitutes followed the Imperialists; while, with the view of preventing the excesses practised by the latter, Gustavus's care for the morals of his soldiers encouraged marriages. For the rising generation who had this camp for their home and country, regular military schools were established, which educated a race of excellent warriors by whom the army might recruit itself in the course of a long campaign. No wonder, then, if these wandering nations exhausted every territory in which they encamped, and by their immense consumption raised the necessaries of life to an exorbitant price. All the mills of Nuremberg were insufficient to grind the corn required for each day; and 15,000 pounds of bread, which were daily delivered by the town into the Swedish camp, excited, without allaying, the hunger of the soldiers. The laudable exertions of the magistrates of Nuremberg could not prevent the greater part of the horses from dying for want of forage, while the increasing mortality in the camp consigned more than a hundred men daily to the grave.

To put an end to these distresses, Gustavus Adolphus, relying on his numerical superiority, left his lines on the 25th day, forming before the enemy in order of battle, while he cannonaded the duke's camp from three batteries erected on the side of the Rednitz. But the duke remained immovable in his intrenchments, and contented himself with answering this challenge by a distant fire of cannon and musketry. His plan was to wear out the king by his inactivity, and by the force of famine to overcome his resolute determination; and neither the remonstrances of Maximilian and the impatience of his army, nor the ridicule of his opponent, could shake his purpose. Gustavus, deceived in his hope of forcing a battle, and compelled by his increasing necessities, now attempted impossibilities, and resolved to storm a position which art and nature had combined to render impregnable.

Intrusting his own camp to the militia of Nuremberg, on the fifty-eighth day of his encampment (the festival of St. Bartholomew), he advanced in full order of battle, and passing the Rednitz at Furth, easily drove the enemy's outposts before him. The main army of the Imperialists was posted on the steep heights between the Biber and the Rednitz, called the Old Fortress and Altenberg; while the camp itself, commanded by

these eminences, spread out immeasurably along the plain. On these heights the whole of the artillery was placed. Deep trenches surrounded inaccessible redoubts, while thick barricades, with pointed palisades, defended the approaches to the heights, from the summits of which Wallenstein calmly and securely discharged the lightnings of his artillery from amid the dark thunder-clouds of smoke. A destructive fire of musketry was maintained behind the breastworks, and a hundred pieces of cannon threatened the desperate assailant with certain destruction. Against this dangerous post Gustavus now directed his attack; five hundred musketeers, supported by a few infantry (for a greater number could not act in the narrow space), enjoyed the unenvied privilege of first throwing themselves into the open jaws of death. The assault was furious, the resistance obstinate. Exposed to the whole fire of the enemy's artillery, and infuriated by the prospect of inevitable death, these determined warriors rushed forward to storm the heights which, in an instant, converted into a flaming volcano, discharged on them a shower of shot. At the same moment, the heavy cavalry rushed forward into the openings which the artillery had made in the close ranks of the assailants, and divided them; till the intrepid band, conquered by the strength of nature and of man, took to flight, leaving a hundred dead upon the field. To Germans had Gustavus yielded this post of honor. Exasperated at their retreat, he now led on his Finlanders to the attack, thinking, by their northern courage, to shame the cowardice of the Germans. But they, also, after a similar hot reception, yielded to the superiority of the enemy; and a third regiment succeeded them to experience the same fate. This was replaced by a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth; so that, during a ten hours' action, every regiment was brought to the attack to retire with bloody loss from the contest. A thousand mangled bodies covered the field; yet Gustavus undauntedly maintained the attack, and Wallenstein held his position unshaken.

In the mean time, a sharp contest had taken place between the imperial cavalry and the left wing of the Swedes which was posted in a thicket on the Rednitz, with varying success but with equal intrepedity and loss on both sides. The Duke of Friedland and Prince Bernard of Weimar had each a horse shot under him; the king himself had the sole of his boot carried off by a cannon ball. The combat was maintained with undiminished obstinacy, till the approach of night separated the combatants. But the Swedes had advanced too far to retreat without hazard. While the king was seeking an officer to convey to the regiments the order to retreat, he met Colonel Hepburn, a brave Scotchman, whose native courage alone had drawn him from the camp to share in the dangers of the day. Offended with the king for having, not long before, preferred a younger officer for some post of danger, he had rashly vowed never again to draw his sword for the king. To him Gustavus now addressed himself, praising his

courage and requesting him to order the regiments to retreat. "Sire," replied the brave soldier, "it is the only service I cannot refuse to your Majesty; for it is a hazardous one"—and immediately hastened to carry the command. One of the heights above the old fortress had, in the heat of the action, been carried by the Duke of Weimar. It commanded the hills and the whole camp. But the heavy rain which fell during the night rendered it impossible to draw up the cannon; and this post, which had been gained with so much bloodshed, was also voluntarily abandoned. Diffident of fortune, which forsook him on this decisive day, the king did not venture the following morning to renew the attack with his exhausted troops; and vanquished for the first time, even because he was not victor, he led back his troops over the Rednitz. Two thousand dead which he left behind him on the field, testified to the extent of his loss; and the Duke of Friedland remained unconquered within his lines.

For fourteen days after this action, the two armies still continued in front of each other, each in the hope that the other would be the first to give way. Every day reduced their provisions, and, as scarcity became greater, the unbridled excesses of the furious soldiers exercised the wildest outrages on the peasantry. The increasing distress broke up all discipline and order in the Swedish camp; and the German regiments, in particular, distinguished themselves for the ravages they practised indiscriminately on friend and foe. The weak hand of a single individual could not check excesses, encouraged by the silence, if not the actual example, of the inferior officers. These shameful breaches of discipline, on the maintenance of which he had hitherto justly prided himself, severely pained the king; and the vehemence with which he reproached the German officers for their negligence, bespoke the liveliness of his emotion. "It is you yourselves, Germans," said he, "that rob your native country, and ruin your own confederates in the faith. As God is my judge, I abhor you, I loathe you; my heart sinks within me whenever I look upon you. Ye break my orders; ye are the cause that the world curses me, that the tears of poverty follow me, that complaints ring in my ear—'The King, our friend, does us more harm than even our worst enemies.' On your account I have stripped my own kingdom of its treasures, and spent upon you more than 40 tons of gold;[61] while from your German empire I have not received the least aid. I gave you a share of all that God had given to me; and had ye regarded my orders I would have gladly shared with you all my future acquisitions. Your want of discipline convinces me of your evil intentions, whatever cause I might otherwise have to applaud your bravery."

Nuremberg had exerted itself, almost beyond its power, to subsist for eleven weeks the vast crowd which was compressed within its boundaries; but its means were at length exhausted, and the king's more numerous party was obliged to determine on a

retreat. By the casualties of war and sickness, Nuremberg had lost more than 10,000 of its inhabitants, and Gustavus Adolphus nearly 20,000 of his soldiers. The fields around the city were trampled down, the villages were in ashes, the plundered peasantry lay faint and dying on the highways; foul odors infected the air, and bad food, the exhalations from so dense a population, and so many putrifying carcasses, together with the heat of the dog-days, produced a desolating pestilence which raged among men and beasts, and long after the retreat of both armies, continued to load the country with misery and distress. Affected by the general distress, and despairing of conquering the steady determination of the Duke of Friedland, the king broke up his camp on the 5th of September, leaving in Nuremberg a sufficient garrison. He advanced in full order of battle before the enemy, who remained motionless and did not attempt in the least to harass his retreat. His route lay by the Aisch and Windsheim toward Neustadt, where he halted five days to refresh his troops, and also to be near to Nuremberg in case the enemy should make an attempt upon the town. But Wallenstein, as exhausted as himself, had only awaited the retreat of the Swedes to commence his own. Five days afterward he broke up his camp at Zirndorf and set it on fire. A hundred columns of smoke, rising from all the burning villages in the neighborhood, announced his retreat and showed the city the fate it had escaped. His march, which was directed on Forchheim, was marked by the most frightful ravages; but he was too far advanced to be overtaken by the king. The latter now divided his army, which the exhausted country was unable to support, and leaving one division to protect Franconia, with the other he prosecuted in person his conquests in Bavaria. In the mean time, the imperial Bavarian army had marched into the Bishopric of Bamberg, where the Duke of Friedland a second time mustered his troops. He found this force, which so lately had amounted to 60,000 men, diminished by the sword, desertion, and disease, to about 24,000, and of these a fourth were Bavarians. Thus had the encampments before Nuremberg weakened both parties more than two great battles would have done, apparently without advancing the termination of the war, or satisfying, by any decisive result, the expectations of Europe. The king's conquests in Bavaria, were, it is true, checked for a time by this diversion before Nuremberg, and Austria itself secured against the danger of immediate invasion; but by the retreat of the king from that city, he was again left at full liberty to make Bavaria the seat of war. Indifferent toward the fate of that country, and weary of the restraint which his union with the Elector imposed upon him, the Duke of Friedland eagerly seized the opportunity of separating from this burdensome associate, and prosecuting, with renewed earnestness, his favorite plans. Still adhering to his purpose of detaching Saxony from its Swedish alliance, he selected that country for his winter quarters, hoping by his destructive presence to force the Elector the more readily into his views.

No conjuncture could be more favorable for his designs. The Saxons had invaded Silesia, where, reinforced by troops from Brandenburg and Sweden, they had gained several advantages over the Emperor's troops. Silesia would be saved by a diversion against the Elector in his own territories, and the attempt was the more easy as Saxony, left undefended during the war in Silesia, lay open on every side to attack. The pretext of rescuing from the enemy a hereditary dominion of Austria would silence the remonstrances of the Elector of Bavaria, and, under the mask of a patriotic zeal for the Emperor's interests, Maximilian might be sacrificed without much difficulty. By giving up the rich country of Bavaria to the Swedes, he hoped to be left unmolested by them in his enterprise against Saxony, while the increasing coldness between Gustavus and the Saxon Court gave him little reason to apprehend any extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of John George. Thus a second time abandoned by his artful protector, the Elector separated from Wallenstein at Bamberg, to protect his defenceless territory with the small remains of his troops, while the imperial army, under Wallenstein, directed its march through Bayreuth and Coburg toward the Thuringian Forest.

An imperial general, Holk, had previously been sent into Vogtland with 6,000 men, to waste this defenceless province with fire and sword; he was soon followed by Gallas, another of the Duke's generals, and an equally faithful instrument of his inhuman orders. Finally, Pappenheim, too, was recalled from Lower Saxony, to reinforce the diminished army of the duke and to complete the miseries of the devoted country. Ruined churches, villages in ashes, harvests wilfully destroyed, families plundered, and murdered peasants, marked the progress of these barbarians, under whose scourge the whole of Thuringia, Vogtland, and Meissen, lay defenceless. Yet this was but the prelude to greater sufferings with which Wallenstein himself, at the head of the main army, threatened Saxony. After having left behind him fearful monuments of his fury, in his march through Franconia and Thuringia, he arrived with his whole army in the Circle of Leipzic, and compelled the city, after a short resistance, to surrender. His design was to push on to Dresden, and by the conquest of the whole country to prescribe laws to the Elector. He had already approached the Mulda, threatening to overpower the Saxon army which had advanced as far as Torgau to meet him, when the King of Sweden's arrival at Erfurt gave an unexpected check to his operations. Placed between the Saxon and Swedish armies, which were likely to be further reinforced by the troops of George, Duke of Lüneburg, from Lower Saxony, he hastily retired upon Meresberg, to form a junction there with Count Pappenheim and to repel the further advance of the Swedes.

Gustavus Adolphus had witnessed, with great uneasiness, the arts employed by Spain and Austria to detach his allies from him. The more important his alliance with Saxony, the more anxiety the inconstant temper of John George caused him. Between himself and the Elector a sincere friendship could never subsist. A prince, proud of his political importance and accustomed to consider himself as the head of his party, could not see without annoyance the interference of a foreign power in the affairs of the Empire; and nothing but the extreme danger of his dominions could overcome the aversion with which he had long witnessed the progress of this unwelcome intruder. The increasing influence of the king in Germany, his authority with the Protestant states, the unambiguous proofs which he gave of his ambitious views, which were of a character calculated to excite the jealousies of all the states of the Empire, awakened in the Elector's breast a thousand anxieties, which the imperial emissaries did not fail skilfully to keep alive and cherish. Every arbitrary step on the part of the King, every demand, however reasonable, which he addressed to the princes of the Empire, was followed by bitter complaints from the Elector, which seemed to announce an approaching rupture. Even the generals of the two powers, whenever they were called upon to act in common, manifested the same jealousy as divided their leaders. John George's natural aversion to war, and a lingering attachment to Austria, favored the efforts of Arnheim, who, maintaining a constant correspondence with Wallenstein, labored incessantly to effect a private treaty between his master and the Emperor; and if his representatives were long disregarded, still the event proved that they were not altogether without effect.

Gustavus Adolphus, naturally apprehensive of the consequences which the defection of so powerful an ally would produce on his future prospects in Germany, spared no pains to avert so pernicious an event; and his remonstrances had hitherto had some effect upon the Elector. But the formidable power with which the Emperor seconded his seductive proposals, and the miseries which, in the case of hesitation, he threatened to accumulate upon Saxony, might at length overcome the resolution of the Elector, should he be left exposed to the vengeance of his enemies; while an indifference to the fate of so powerful a confederate would irreparably destroy the confidence of the other allies in their protector. This consideration induced the king a second time to yield to the pressing entreaties of the Elector and to sacrifice his own brilliant prospects to the safety of this ally. He had already resolved upon a second attack on Ingoldstadt; and the weakness of the Elector of Bavaria gave him hopes of soon forcing this exhausted enemy to accede to a neutrality. An insurrection of the peasantry in Upper Austria opened to him a passage into that country, and the capital might be in his possession before Wallenstein could have time to advance to its

defence. All these views he now gave up for the sake of an ally, who, neither by his services nor his fidelity was worthy of the sacrifices; who, on the pressing occasions of common good, had steadily adhered to his own selfish projects; and who was important, not for the services he was expected to render, but merely for the injuries he had it in his power to inflict. Is it possible, then, to refrain from indignation, when we know that, in this expedition, undertaken for the benefit of such an ally, the great king was destined to terminate his career?

Rapidly assembling his troops in Franconia, he followed the route of Wallenstein through Thuringia. Duke Bernard of Weimar, who had been dispatched to act against Pappenheim, joined the king at Armstadt, who now saw himself at the head of 20,000 veterans. At Erfurt he took leave of his queen, who was not to behold him save in his coffin at Weissenfels. Their anxious adieus seemed to forbode an eternal separation. He reached Naumburg on the 1st of November, 1632, before the corps, which the Duke of Friedland had dispatched for that purpose, could make itself master of that place. The inhabitants of the surrounding country flocked in crowds to look upon the hero, the avenger, the great king, who, a year before, had first appeared in that quarter, like a guardian angel. Shouts of joy everywhere attended his progress; the people knelt before him, and struggled for the honor of touching the sheath of his sword or the hem of his garment. The modest hero disliked this innocent tribute which a sincerely grateful and admiring multitude paid him. "Is it not," said he, "as if this people would make a God of me? Our affairs prosper, indeed; but I fear the vengeance of Heaven will punish me for this presumption, and soon enough reveal to this deluded multitude my human weakness and mortality!" How amiable does Gustavus appear before us at this moment, when about to leave us forever! Even in the plentitude of success, he honors an avenging Nemesis, declines that homage which is due only to the Immortal, and strengthens his title to our tears, the nearer the moment approaches that is to call them forth! In the mean time, the Duke of Friedland had determined to advance to meet the king, as far as Weissenfels, and, even at the hazard of a battle, to secure his winter-quarters in Saxony. His inactivity before Nuremberg had occasioned a suspicion that he was unwilling to measure his powers with those of the Hero of the North, and his hard-earned reputation would be at stake, if, a second time, he should decline a battle. His present superiority in numbers, though much less than what it was at the beginning of the siege of Nuremberg, was still enough to give him hopes of victory, if he could compel the king to give battle before his junction with the Saxons. But his present reliance was not so much in his numerical superiority as in the predictions of his astrologer Seni, who had read in the stars that the good fortune of the Swedish monarch would decline in the month of November. Besides,

between Naumburg and Weissenfels there was a range of narrow defiles formed by a long mountainous ridge, and also the river Saal which ran at their foot, along which the Swedes could not advance without difficulty, and which might, with the assistance of a few troops, be rendered almost impassable. If attacked there, the king would have no choice but either to penetrate with great danger through the defiles, or commence a laborious retreat through Thuringia, and to expose the greater part of his army to a march through a desert country entirely destitute of all necessary supplies. But the rapidity with which Gustavus Adolphus had taken possession of Naumburg disappointed this plan, and it was now Wallenstein himself who awaited the attack.

But in this expectation he was disappointed; for the king, instead of advancing to meet him at Weissenfels, made preparations for intrenching himself near Naumburg, with the intention of awaiting there the reinforcements which the Duke of Luneburg was bringing up. Undecided whether to advance against the king through the narrow passes between Weissenfels and Naumburg or to remain inactive in his camp, he called a council of war, in order to have the opinion of his most experienced generals. None of these thought it prudent to attack the king in his advantageous position. On the other hand, the preparations which the latter made to fortify his camp plainly showed that it was not his intention soon to abandon it. But the approach of winter rendered it impossible to prolong the campaign and by a continued encampment to exhaust the strength of the army, already so much in need of repose. All voices were in favor of immediately terminating the campaign, and the more so, as the important city of Cologne upon the Rhine was threatened by the Dutch, while the progress of the enemy in Westphalia and the Lower Rhine called for effective reinforcements in that quarter. Wallenstein yielded to the weight of these arguments, and, almost convinced that, at this season, he had no reason to apprehend an attack from the King, he put his troops into winter-quarters, but so that, if necessary, they might be rapidly assembled. Count Pappenheim was dispatched, with a great part of the army, to the assistance of Cologne, with orders to take possession, on his march, of the fortress of Moritzburg, in the territory of Halle. Different corps took up their winter-quarters in the neighboring towns, to watch, on all sides, the motions of the enemy. Count Colloredo guarded the castle of Weissenfels, and Wallenstein himself encamped with the remainder not far from Merseburg, between Flotzgaben and the Saal, from whence he purposed to march to Leipzic and to cut off the communication between the Saxons and the Swedish army.

Scarcely had Gustavus Adolphus been informed of Pappenheim's departure, when, suddenly breaking up his camp at Naumburg, he hastened with his whole force to attack the enemy, now weakened to one half. He advanced, by rapid marches, toward

Weissenfels, from whence the news of his arrival quickly reached the enemy and greatly astonished the Duke of Friedland. But a speedy resolution was now necessary; and the measures of Wallenstein were soon taken. Though he had little more than 12,000 men to oppose to the 20,000 of the enemy, he might hope to maintain his ground until the return of Pappenheim, who could not have advanced farther than Halle, five miles distant. Messengers were hastily dispatched to recall him, while Wallenstein moved forward into the wide plain between the Canal and Lützen, where lie awaited the King in full order of battle, and, by this position, cut off his communication with Leipzic and the Saxons auxiliaries.

Three cannon shots, fired by Count Colloredo from the castle of Weissenfels, announced the king's approach; and at this concerted signal, the light troops of the Duke of Friedland, under the command of the Croatian General Isolani, moved forward to possess themselves of the villages lying upon the Rippach. Their weak resistance did not impede the advance of the enemy, who crossed the Rippach, near the village of that name, and formed in line below Lützen, opposite the Imperialists. The high road which goes from Weissenfels to Leipzic is intersected between Lützen and Markranstadt by the canal which extends from Zeitz to Merseburg and unites the Elster with the Saal. On this canal rested the left wing of the Imperialists, and the right of the King of Sweden; but so that the cavalry of both extended themselves along the opposite side. To the northward, behind Lützen, was Wallenstein's right wing, and to the south of that town was posted the left wing of the Swedes; both armies fronted the high road, which ran between them and divided their order of battle; but the evening before the battle, Wallenstein, to the great disadvantage of his opponent, had possessed himself of this highway, deepened the trenches which ran along its sides, and planted them with musketeers, so as to make the crossing of it both difficult and dangerous. Behind these, again, was erected a battery of seven large pieces of cannon, to support the fire from the trenches; and at the windmills, close behind Lützen, fourteen smaller field-pieces were ranged on an eminence from which they could sweep the greater part of the plain. The infantry, divided into no more than five unwieldy brigades, was drawn up at the distance of 300 paces from the road, and the cavalry covered the flanks. All the baggage was sent to Leipzic that it might not impede the movements of the army; and the ammunition-wagons alone remained, which were placed in rear of the line. To conceal the weakness of the Imperialists, all the camp-followers and sutlers were mounted and posted on the left wing, but only until Pappenheim's troops arrived. These arrangements were made during the darkness of the night; and when the morning dawned all was ready for the reception of the enemy.

On the evening of the same day, Gustavus Adolphus appeared on the opposite plain and formed his troops in the order of attack. His disposition was the same as that which had been so successful the year before at Leipzic. Small squadrons of horse were interspersed among the divisions of the infantry, and troops of musketeers were placed here and there among the cavalry. The army was arranged in two lines, the canal on the right and in its rear, the high road in front, and the town on the left. In the centre the infantry was formed, under the command of Count Brahe; the cavalry on the wings; the artillery in front. To the German hero, Bernard, Duke of Weimar, was intrusted the command of the German cavalry of the left wing; while, on the right, the king led on the Swedes in person, in order to excite the emulation of the two nations to a noble competition. The second line was formed in the same manner; and behind these was placed the reserve, commanded by Henderson, a Scotchman.

In this position they awaited the eventful dawn of morning, to begin a contest which long delay, rather than the probability of decisive consequences, and the picked body, rather than the number of the combatants, was to render so terrible and remarkable. The strained expectation of Europe, so disappointed before Nuremberg, was now to be gratified on the plains of Lützen. During the whole course of the war, two such generals, so equally matched in renown and ability, had not before been pitted against each other. Never, as yet, had daring been cooled by so awful a hazard, or hope animated by so glorious a prize. Europe was next day to learn who was her greatest general—tomorrow the leader, who had hitherto been invincible, must acknowledge a victor. This morning was to place it beyond a doubt whether the victories of Gustavus at Leipzic and on the Lech were owing to his own military genius, or to the incompetency of his opponent; whether the services of Wallenstein were to vindicate the Emperor's choice and justify the high price at which they had been purchased. The victory was as yet doubtful, but certain were the labor and the bloodshed by which it must be earned. Every private in both armies felt a jealous share in their leader's reputation, and under every corslet beat the same emotions that inflamed the bosoms of the generals. Each army knew the enemy to which it was to be opposed: and the anxiety which each in vain attempted to repress was a convincing proof of their opponent's strength.

At last the fateful morning dawned; but an impenetrable fog, which spread over the plain, delayed the attack till noon. Kneeling in front of his lines, the king offered up his devotions; and the whole army, at the same moment dropping on their knees, burst into a moving hymn, accompanied by the military music. The king then mounted his horse, and clad only in a leathern doublet and surtout (for a wound he had formerly received prevented his wearing armor), rode along the ranks to animate the courage of

his troops with a joyful confidence, which, however, the foreboding presentiment of his own bosom contradicted. "God with us!" was the war-cry of the Swedes; "Jesus Maria!" that of the Imperialists. About eleven the fog began to disperse, and the enemy became visible. At the same moment Lützen was seen in flames, having been set on fire by command of the duke to prevent his being outflanked on that side. The charge was now sounded; the cavalry rushed upon the enemy, and the infantry advanced against the trenches.

Received by a tremendous fire of musketry and heavy artillery, these intrepid battalions maintained the attack with undaunted courage, till the enemy's musketeers abandoned their posts, the trenches were passed, the battery carried and turned against the enemy. They pressed forward with irresistible impetuosity; the first of the five imperial brigades was immediately routed, the second soon after, and the third put to flight. But here the genius of Wallenstein opposed itself to their progress. With the rapidity of lightning he was on the spot to rally his discomfited troops; and his powerful word was itself sufficient to stop the flight of the fugitives. Supported by three regiments of cavalry, the vanquished brigades, forming anew, faced the enemy and pressed vigorously into the broken ranks of the Swedes. A murderous conflict ensued. The nearness of the enemy left no room for fire-arms, the fury of the attack no time for loading; man was matched to man, the useless musket exchanged for the sword and pike, and science gave way to desperation. Overpowered by numbers, the wearied Swedes at last retire beyond the trenches; and the captured battery is again lost by the retreat. A thousand mangled bodies already strewed the plain, and as yet not a single step of ground had been won. In the meantime the king's right wing, led by himself, had fallen upon the enemy's left. The first impetuous shock of the heavy Finland cuirassiers dispersed the lightly-mounted Poles and Croats, who were posted here, and their disorderly flight spread terror and confusion among the rest of the cavalry. At this moment notice was brought the king that his infantry were retreating over the trenches, and also that his left wing, exposed to a severe fire from the enemy's cannon posted at the windmills, was beginning to give way. With rapid decision he committed to General Horn the pursuit of the enemy's left, while he flew, at the head of the regiment of Steinboek, to repair the disorder of his right wing. His noble charger bore him with the velocity of lightning across the trenches, but the squadrons that followed could not come on with the same speed, and only a few horsemen, among whom was Francis Albert, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg, were able to keep up with the king. He rode directly to the place where his infantry were most closely pressed, and while he was reconnoitering the enemy's line for an exposed point of attack, the shortness of his sight unfortunately led him too close to their

ranks. An imperial Gefreyter,[62] remarking that every one respectfully made way for him as he rode along, immediately ordered a musketeer to take aim at him. "Fire at him yonder," said he; "that must be a man of consequence." The soldier fired, and the king's left arm was shattered. At that moment his squadron came hurrying up, and a confused cry of "The king bleeds! the king is shot!" spread terror and consternation through all the ranks. "It is nothing—follow me," cried the king, collecting his whole strength; but overcome by pain and nearly fainting, he requested the Duke of Lauenburg, in French, to lead him unobserved out of the tumult. While the duke proceeded toward the right wing with the king, making a long circuit to keep this discouraging sight from the disordered infantry, his majesty received a second shot through the back, which deprived him of his remaining strength. "Brother," said he, with a dying voice, "I have enough! look only to your own life." At the same moment he fell from his horse pierced by several more shots; and abandoned by all his attendants, he breathed his last amidst the plundering hands of the Croats. His charger, flying without its rider and covered with blood, soon made known to the Swedish cavalry the fall of their king. They rushed madly forward to rescue his sacred remains from the hands of the enemy. A murderous conflict ensued over the body, till his mangled remains were buried beneath a heap of slain.

The mournful tidings soon ran through the Swedish army; but instead of destroying the courage of these brave troops, it but excited it into a new, a wild, and consuming flame. Life had lessened in value, now that the most sacred life of all was gone; death had no terrors for the lowly since the anointed head was not spared. With the fury of lions the Upland, Småland, Finland, East and West Gothland regiments rushed a second time upon the left wing of the enemy, which, already making but feeble resistance to General Horn, was now entirely beaten from the field. Bernard, Duke of Saxe-Weimar, gave to the bereaved Swedes a noble leader in his own person; and the spirit of Gustavus led his victorious squadrons anew. The left wing quickly formed again and vigorously pressed the right of the Imperialists. The artillery at the windmills, which had maintained so murderous a fire upon the Swedes, was captured and turned against the enemy. The centre, also, of the Swedish infantry, commanded by the duke and Knyphausen, advanced a second time against the trenches, which they successfully passed, and retook the battery of seven cannons. The attack was now renewed with redoubled fury upon the heavy battalions of the enemy's centre; their resistance became gradually less, and chance conspired with Swedish valor to complete the defeat. The imperial powder-wagons took fire, and, with a tremendous explosion, grenades and bombs filled the air. The enemy, now in confusion, thought they were attacked in the rear, while the Swedish brigades pressed them in front. Their

courage began to fail them. Their left wing was already beaten, their right wavering, and their artillery in the enemy's hands. The battle seemed to be almost decided; another moment would settle the fate of the day, when Pappenheim appeared on the field, with his cuirassiers and dragoons; all the advantages already gained were lost, and the battle was to be fought anew.

The order which recalled that general to Lützen had reached him in Halle, while his troops were still plundering the town. It was impossible to collect the scattered infantry with that rapidity which the urgency of the order and Pappenheim's impatience required. Without waiting for it, therefore, he ordered eight regiments of cavalry to mount; and at their head he galloped at full speed for Lützen, to share in the battle. He arrived in time to witness the flight of the imperial right wing, which Gustavus Horn was driving from the field, and to be at first involved in their rout. But with rapid presence of mind he rallied the flying troops, and led them once more against the enemy. Carried away by his wild bravery, and impatient to encounter the king who he supposed was at the head of this wing, he burst furiously upon the Swedish ranks, which, exhausted by victory, and inferior in numbers, were, after a noble resistance, overpowered by this fresh body of enemies. Pappenheim's unexpected appearance revived the drooping courage of the Imperialists, and the Duke of Friedland quickly availed himself of the favorable moment to re-form his line. The closely serried battalions of the Swedes were, after a tremendous conflict, again driven across the trenches; and the battery, which had been twice lost, was again rescued from their hands. The whole yellow regiment, the finest of all that distinguished themselves in this dreadful day, lay dead on the field, covering the ground almost in the same excellent order which, when alive, they maintained with such unyielding courage. The same fate befell another regiment of Blues, which Count Piccolomini attacked with the imperial cavalry and cut down after a desperate contest. Seven times did this intrepid general renew the attack; seven horses were shot under him, and he himself was pierced with six musket balls; yet he would not leave the field, until he was carried along in the general rout of the whole army. Wallenstein himself was seen riding through his ranks with cool intrepidity, amidst a shower of balls, assisting the distressed, encouraging the valiant with praise, and the wavering by his fearful glance. Around and close by him his men were falling thick, and his own mantle was perforated by several shots. But avenging destiny this day protected that breast for which another weapon was reserved; on the same field where the noble Gustavus expired, Wallenstein was not allowed to terminate his guilty career.

Less fortunate was Pappenheim, the Telamon of the army, the bravest soldier of Austria and the church. An ardent desire to encounter the king in person carried this

daring leader into the thickest of the fight, where he thought his noble opponent was most surely to be met. Gustavus had also expressed a wish to meet his brave antagonist, but these hostile wishes remained ungratified; death first brought together these two great heroes. Two musket-balls pierced the breast of Pappenheim; and his men forcibly carried him from the field. While they were conveying him to the rear, a murmur reached him that he whom he had sought lay dead upon the plain. When the truth of the report was confirmed to him, his look became brighter, his dying eye sparkled with a last gleam of joy. "I Tell the Duke of Friedland," said he, "that I lie without hope of life, but that I die happy, since I know that the implacable enemy of my religion has fallen on the same day."

With Pappenheim, the good fortune of the Imperialists departed. The cavalry of the left wing, already beaten, and only rallied by his exertions, no sooner missed their victorious leader than they gave up everything for lost and abandoned the field of battle in spiritless despair. The right wing fell into the same confusion, with the exception of a few regiments which the bravery of their colonels Götz, Terzky, Colloredo, and Piccolomini compelled to keep their ground. The Swedish infantry, with prompt determination, profited by the enemy's confusion. To fill up the gaps which death had made in the front line, they formed both lines into one, and with it made the final and decisive charge. A third time they crossed the trenches, and a third time they captured the battery. The sun was setting when the two lines closed. The strife grew hotter as it drew to an end; the last efforts of strength were mutually exerted, and skill and courage did their utmost to repair in these precious moments the fortune of the day. It was in vain; despair endows every one with superhuman strength; no one can conquer, no one will give way. The art of war seemed to exhaust its powers on one side, only to unfold some new and untried masterpiece of skill on the other. Night and darkness at last put at end to the fight, before the fury of the combatants was exhausted; and the contest ceased only when no one could any longer find an antagonist. Both armies separated, as if by tacit agreement; the trumpets sounded, and each party claiming the victory, quitted the field.

The artillery on both sides, as the horses could not be found, remained all night upon the field, at once the reward and the evidence of victory to him who should hold it. Wallenstein, in his haste to leave Leipzic and Saxony, forgot to remove his part. Not long after the battle was ended, Pappenheim's infantry, who had been unable to follow the rapid movements of their general and who amounted to six regiments, marched on the field, but the work was done. A few hours earlier, so considerable a reinforcement would perhaps have decided the day in favor of the Imperialists; and, even now, by remaining on the field, they might have saved the duke's artillery and

made a prize of that of the Swedes. But they had received no orders to act; and, uncertain as to the issue of the battle, they retired to Leipzic, where they hoped to join the main body.

The Duke of Friedland had retreated thither, and was followed on the morrow by the scattered remains of his army, without artillery, without colors, and almost without arms. The Duke of Weimar, it appears, after the toils of this bloody day, allowed the Swedish army some repose, between Lützen and Weissenfels, near enough to the field of battle to oppose any attempt the enemy might make to recover it. Of the two armies, more than 9,000 men lay dead; a still greater number were wounded, and, among the Imperialists, scarcely a man escaped from the field uninjured. The entire plain from Lützen to the Canal was strewed with the wounded, the dying, and the dead. Many of the principal nobility had fallen on both sides. Even the Abbot of Fulda, who had mingled in the combat as a spectator, paid for his curiosity and his ill-timed zeal with his life. History says nothing of prisoners; a further proof of the animosity of the combatants, who neither gave nor took quarter.

Pappenheim died the next day of his wounds at Leipzig; an irreparable loss to the imperial army, which this brave warrior had so often led on to victory. The battle of Prague, where together with Wallenstein, he was present as colonel, was the beginning of his heroic career. Dangerously wounded, with a few troops, he made an impetuous attack on a regiment of the enemy, and lay for several hours mixed with the dead upon the field, beneath the weight of his horse, till he was discovered by some of his own men in plundering. With a small force he defeated, in three different engagements, the rebels in Upper Austria, though 40,000 strong. At the battle of Leipzic, he for a long time delayed the defeat of Tilly by his bravery, and led the arms of the Emperor on the Elbe and the Weser to victory. The wild impetuous fire of his temperament, which no danger, however apparent, could cool, or impossibilities check, made him the most powerful arm of the imperial force, but unfitted him for acting at its head. The battle of Leipzic, if Tilly may be believed, was lost through his rash ardor. At the destruction of Magdeburg, his hands were deeply steeped in blood; war rendered savage and ferocious his disposition, which had been cultivated by youthful studies and various travels. On his forehead, two red streaks, like swords, were perceptible, with which nature had marked him at his very birth. Even in his later years these became visible, as often as his blood was stirred by passion; and superstition easily persuaded itself that the future destiny of the man was thus impressed upon the forehead of the child. As a faithful servant of the House of Austria, he had the strongest claims on the gratitude of both its lines, but he did not survive to enjoy the most brilliant proof of their regard. A messenger was already on

his way from Madrid, bearing to him the order of the Golden Fleece, when death overtook him at Leipzic.

Though *Te Deum*, in all Spanish and Austrian lands, was sung in honor of a victory, Wallenstein himself, by the haste with which he quitted Leipzic and, soon after, all Saxony, and by renouncing his original design of fixing there his winter-quarters, openly confessed his defeat. It is true he made one more feeble attempt to dispute, even in his flight, the honor of victory, by sending out his Croats next morning to the field; but the sight of the Swedish army drawn up in order of battle, immediately dispersed these flying bands, and Duke Bernard, by keeping possession of the field, and soon after by the capture of Leipzic, maintained indisputably his claim to the title of victor.

But it was a dear conquest, a dearer triumph! It was not till the fury of the contest was over that the full weight of the loss sustained was felt and the shout of triumph died away into a silent gloom of despair. He, who had led them to the charge, returned not with them: there he lay upon the field which he had won, mingled with the dead bodies of the common crowd. After a long and almost fruitless search, the corpse of the king was discovered, not far from the great stone, which, for a hundred years before, had stood between Lützen and the Canal, and which, from the memorable disaster of that day, still bears the name of the Stone of the Swede. Covered with blood and wounds so as scarcely to be recognized, trampled beneath the horses' hoofs, stripped by the rude hands of plunderers of its ornaments and clothes, his body was drawn from beneath a heap of dead, conveyed to Weissenfels, and there delivered up to the lamentations of his soldiers and the last embraces of his queen. The first tribute had been paid to revenge, and blood had atoned for the blood of the monarch; but now affection assumes its rights, and tears of grief must flow for the man. The universal sorrow absorbs all individual woes. The generals, still stupefied by the unexpected blow, stood speechless and motionless around his bier, and no one trusted himself enough to contemplate the full extent of their loss.

The Emperor, we are told by Khevenhuller, showed symptoms of deep, and apparently sincere feeling, at the sight of the king's doublet stained with blood, which had been stripped from him during the battle and carried to Vienna. "Willingly," said he, "would I have granted to the unfortunate prince a longer life and a safe return to his kingdom, had Germany been at peace." But when a trait, which is nothing more than a proof of a yet lingering humanity and which a mere regard to appearances and even self-love would have extorted from the most insensible, and the absence of which could exist only in the most inhuman heart, has, by a Roman Catholic writer of

modern times and acknowledged merit, been made the subject of the highest eulogium and compared with the magnanimous tears of Alexander for the fall of Darius, our distrust is excited of the other virtues of the writer's hero, and, what is still worse, of his own ideas of moral dignity. But even such praise, whatever its amount, is much for one whose memory his biographer has to clear from the suspicion of being privy to the assassination of a king.

It was scarcely to be expected that the strong leaning of mankind to the marvelous would leave to the common course of nature the glory of ending the career of Gustavus Adolphus. The death of so formidable a rival was too important an event for the Emperor not to excite in his bitter opponent a ready suspicion that what was so much to his interests was also the result of his instigation. For the execution, however, of this dark deed, the Emperor would require the aid of a foreign arm, and this it was generally believed he had found in Francis Albert, Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg. The rank of the latter permitted him a free access to the king's person, while at the same time it seemed to place him above the suspicion of so foul a deed. This prince, however, was in fact not incapable of this atrocity, and he had, moreover, sufficient motives for its commission.

Francis Albert, the youngest of four sons of Francis II., Duke of Lauenburg, and related by the mother's side to the race of Vasa, had, in his early years, found a most friendly reception at the Swedish court. Some offence which he had committed against Gustavus Adolphus, in the queen's chamber, was, it is said, repaid by this fiery youth with a box on the ear; which, though immediately repented of, and amply apologized for, laid the foundation of an irreconcilable hate in the vindictive heart of the duke. Francis Albert subsequently entered the imperial service, where he rose to the command of a regiment, formed a close intimacy with Wallenstein, and condescended to be the instrument of a secret negotiation with the Saxon court, which did little honor to his rank. Without any sufficient cause being assigned, he suddenly quitted the Austrian service, and appeared in the king's camp at Nuremberg to offer his services as a volunteer. By his show of zeal for the Protestant cause, and a prepossessing and flattering deportment, he gained the heart of the king, who, warned in vain by Oxenstiern, continued to lavish his favor and friendship on this suspicious new comer. The battle of Lützen soon followed, in which Francis Albert, like an evil genius, kept close to the king's side and did not leave him till he fell. He owed, it was thought, his own safety amidst the fire of the enemy, to a green sash which he wore, the color of the Imperialists. He was at any rate the first to convey to his friend Wallenstein the intelligence of the king's death. After the battle, he exchanged the Swedish service for the Saxon; and, after the murder of Wallenstein, being charged

with being an accomplice of that general, he escaped the sword of justice only by abjuring his faith. His last appearance in life was as commander of an imperial army in Silesia, where he died of the wounds he had received before Schweidnitz. It requires some effort to believe in the innocence of a man, who had run through a career like this, of the act charged against him; but, however great may be the moral and physical possibility of his committing such a crime, it must still be allowed that there are no certain grounds for imputing it to him. Gustavus Adolphus, it is well known, exposed himself to danger, like the meanest soldier in his army, and where thousands fell, he, too, might naturally meet his death. How it reached him, remains indeed buried in mystery; but here, more than anywhere, does the maxim apply that where the ordinary course of things is fully sufficient to account for the fact, the honor of human nature ought not to be stained by any suspicion of moral atrocity.

But by whatever hand he fell, his extraordinary destiny must appear a great interposition of Providence. History, too often confined to the ungrateful task of analyzing the uniform play of human passions, is occasionally rewarded by the appearance of events which strike, like a hand from heaven, into the nicely adjusted machinery of human plans and carry the contemplative mind to a higher order of things. Of this kind is the sudden retirement of Gustavus Adolphus from the scene—stopping for a time the whole movement of the political machine and disappointing all the calculations of human prudence. Yesterday, the very soul, the great and animating principle of his own creation; today, struck unpitiably to the ground in the very midst of his eagle flight; untimely torn from a whole world of great designs and from the ripening harvest of his expectations, he left his bereaved party disconsolate; and the proud edifice of his past greatness sunk into ruins. The Protestant party had identified its hopes with its invincible leader, and scarcely can it now separate them from him; with him, they now fear all good fortune is buried. But it was no longer the benefactor of Germany who fell at Lützen; the beneficient part of his career Gustavus Adolphus had already terminated; and now the greatest service which he could render to the liberties of Germany was—to die. The all-engrossing power of an individual was at an end, but many came forward to essay their strength; the equivocal assistance of an over-powerful protector gave place to a more noble self-exertion on the part of the Estates; and those who were formerly the mere instruments of his aggrandizement now began to work for themselves. They now looked to their own exertions for the emancipation which could not be received without danger from the hand of the mighty; and the Swedish power, now incapable of sinking into the oppressor, was henceforth restricted to the more modest part of an ally.

The ambition of the Swedish monarch aspired unquestionably to establish a power within Germany and to attain a firm footing in the centre of the empire, which was inconsistent with the liberties of the Estates. His aim was the imperial crown; and this dignity, supported by his power and maintained by his energy and activity, would in his hands be liable to more abuse than had ever been feared from the House of Austria. Born in a foreign country, educated in the maxims of arbitrary power, and by principles and enthusiasm a determined enemy to Popery, he was ill qualified to maintain inviolate the constitution of the German States, or to respect their liberties. The coercive homage which Augsburg, with many other cities, was forced to pay to the Swedish crown, bespoke the conqueror rather than the protector of the empire; and this town, prouder of the title of a royal city than of the higher dignity of the freedom of the empire, flattered itself with the anticipation of becoming the capital of his future kingdom. His ill-disguised attempts upon the Electorate of Mentz, which he first intended to bestow upon the Elector of Brandenburg, as the dower of his daughter Christina, and afterward destined for his chancellor and friend Oxenstiern, evinced plainly what liberties he was disposed to take with the constitution of the empire. His allies, the Protestant princes, had claims on his gratitude, which could be satisfied only at the expense of their Roman Catholic neighbors, and particularly of the immediate Ecclesiastical Chapters; and it seems probable a plan was early formed for dividing the conquered provinces (after the precedent of the barbarian hordes who overran the German empire) as a common spoil, among the German and Swedish confederates. In his treatment of the Elector Palatine, he entirely belied the magnanimity of the hero, and forgot the sacred character of a protector. The Palatinate was in his hands, and the obligations both of justice and honor demanded its full and immediate restoration to the legitimate sovereign. But, by a subtlety unworthy of a great mind, and disgraceful to the honorable title of protector of the oppressed, he eluded that obligation. He treated the Palatinate as a conquest wrested from the enemy, and thought that this circumstance gave him a right to deal with it as he pleased. He surrendered it to the Elector as a favor, not as a debt; and that, too, as a Swedish fief, fettered by conditions which diminished half its value, and degraded this unfortunate prince into a humble vassal of Sweden. One of these conditions obliged the Elector, after the conclusion of the war, to furnish, along with the other princes, his contribution toward the maintenance of the Swedish army, a condition which plainly indicates the fate which, in the event of the ultimate success of the king, awaited Germany. His sudden disappearance secured the liberties of Germany and saved his reputation, while it probably spared him the mortification of seeing his own allies in arms against him and all the fruits of his victories torn from him by a disadvantageous peace. Saxony was already disposed to abandon him, Denmark

viewed his success with alarm and jealousy; and even France, the firmest and most potent of his allies, terrified at the rapid growth of his power and the imperious tone which he assumed, looked around for foreign alliances at the very moment he passed the Lech in order to check the progress of the Goths and restore to Europe the balance of power.

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FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 59: Permission The Macmillan Co., New York, and G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 60: Priests' plunder; alluding to the means by which the expense of its erection had been defrayed.]

[Footnote 61: A ton of gold in Sweden amounts to 100,000 rix dollars.]

[Footnote 62: Gefreyter, a person exempt from watching duty, nearly corresponding to the corporal.]

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ON THE USE OF THE CHORUS IN TRAGEDY (1803)[63]

TRANSLATED BY A. LODGE

A Poetical work must vindicate itself—if the execution be defective, little aid can be derived from commentaries.

On these grounds, I might safely leave the Chorus to be its own advocate, if we had ever seen it presented in an appropriate manner. But it must be remembered that a dramatic composition first assumes the character of a whole by means of representation on the stage. The Poet supplies only the words, to which, in a lyrical tragedy, music and rhythmical motion are essential accessories. It follows, then, that if the Chorus is deprived of accompaniments appealing so powerfully to the senses, it will appear a superfluity in the economy of the drama—mere hindrance to the development of the plot—destructive to the illusion of the scene and wearisome to the

spectators. To do justice to the Chorus, more especially if our aims in Poetry be of a grand and elevated character, we must transport ourselves from the actual to a possible stage. It is the privilege of Art to furnish for itself whatever is requisite, and the accidental deficiency of auxiliaries ought not to confine the plastic imagination of the Poet. He aspires to whatever is most dignified, he labors to realize the ideal in his own mind-though in the execution of his purpose he must needs accommodate himself to circumstances.

The assertion so commonly made, that the Public degrades Art, is not well founded. It is the artist that brings the Public to the level of his own conceptions; and, in every age in which Art has gone to decay, it has fallen through its professors. The People need feeling alone, and feeling they possess. They take their station before the curtain with an unvoiced longing, with a multifarious capacity. They bring with them an aptitude for what is highest—they derive the greatest pleasure from what is judicious and true; and if, with these powers of appreciation, they deign to be satisfied with inferior productions, still, if they have once tasted what is excellent, they will, in the end, insist on having it supplied to them.

It is sometimes objected that the Poet may labor according to an Ideal—that the critic may judge from ideas, but that mere executive art is subject to contingencies and depends for effect on the occasion. Managers will be obstinate; actors are bent on display—the audience is inattentive and unruly. Their object is relaxation, and they are disappointed if mental exertion be required, when they expected only amusement. But if the Theatre be made instrumental toward higher objects, the pleasure of the spectator will not be increased, but ennobled. It will be a diversion, but a poetical one. All Art is dedicated to pleasure, and there can be no higher and worthier end than to make men happy. The true Art is that which provides the highest degree of pleasure; and this consists in the abandonment of the spirit to the free play of all its faculties. Every one expects from the imaginative arts a certain emancipation from the bounds of reality: we are willing to give a scope to Fancy, and recreate ourselves with the possible. The man who expects it the least will nevertheless forget his ordinary pursuits, his every-day existence and individuality, and experience delight from uncommon incidents: if he be of a serious turn of mind, he will acknowledge on the stage that moral government of the world which he fails to discover in real life. But he is, at the same time, perfectly aware that all is an empty show, and that, in a true sense, he is feeding only on dreams. When he returns from the theatre to the world of realities, he is again compressed within its narrow bounds; he is its denizen as before—for it remains what it was, and in him nothing has been changed. What, then,

has he gained beyond a momentary illusive pleasure which vanished with the occasion?

It is because a passing recreation is alone desired that a mere show of truth is thought sufficient. I mean that probability or vraisemblance which is so highly esteemed, but which the commonest workers are able to substitute for the true.

Art has for its object not merely to afford a transient pleasure, to excite to a momentary dream of liberty; its aim is to make us absolutely free; and this it accomplishes by awakening, exercising, and perfecting in us a power to remove to an objective distance the sensible world (which otherwise only burdens us as rugged matter and presses us down with a brute influence); to transform it into the free working of our spirit, and thus acquire a dominion over the material by means of ideas. For the very reason also that true Art requires somewhat of the objective and real, it is not satisfied with a show of truth. It rears its ideal edifice on Truth itself—on the solid and deep foundations of Nature.

But how Art can be at once altogether ideal, yet in the strictest sense real; how it can entirely leave the actual, and yet harmonize with Nature, is a problem to the multitude; hence the distorted views which prevail in regard to poetical and plastic works for to ordinary judgments these two requisites seem to counteract each other.

It is commonly supposed that one may be attained by the sacrifice of the other—the result is a failure to arrive at either. One to whom Nature has given a true sensibility, but denied the plastic imaginative power, will be a faithful painter of the real; he will adapt casual appearances, but never catch the spirit of Nature. He will only reproduce to us the matter of the world, which, not being our own work, the product of our creative spirit, can never have the beneficent operation of Art, of which the essence is freedom. Serious, indeed, but unpleasing, is the cast of thought with which such an artist and poet dismisses us; we feel ourselves painfully thrust back into the narrow sphere of reality by means of the very art which ought to have emancipated us. On the other hand, a writer, endowed with a lively fancy, but destitute of warmth and individuality of feeling, will not concern himself in the least about truth; he will sport with the stuff of the world, and endeavor to surprise by whimsical combinations; and as his whole performance is nothing but foam and glitter, he will, it is true, engage the attention for a time, but build up and confirm nothing in the understanding. His playfulness is, like the gravity of the other, thoroughly unpoetical. To string together at will fantastical images, is not to travel into the realm of the ideal; and the imitative reproduction of the actual cannot be called the representation of nature. Both

requisites stand so little in contradiction to each other that they are rather one and the same thing; that Art is true only as it altogether forsakes the actual and becomes purely ideal. Nature herself is an idea of the mind, and is never presented to the senses. She lies under the veil of appearances, but is herself never apparent. To the art of the ideal alone is lent, or rather, absolutely given, the privilege to grasp the spirit of the All and bind it in a corporeal form.

Yet, in truth, even Art cannot present it to the senses, but by means of her creative power to the imaginative faculty alone; and it is thus that she becomes more true than all reality, and more real than all experience. It follows from these premises that the artist can use no single element taken from reality as he finds it—that his work must be ideal in all its parts, if it be designed to have, as it were, an intrinsic reality and to harmonize with nature.

What is true of Art and Poetry, in the abstract, holds good as to their various kinds; and we may apply what has been advanced to the subject of tragedy. In this department, it is still necessary to controvert the ordinary notion of the natural, with which poetry is altogether incompatible. A certain ideality has been allowed in painting, though, I fear, on grounds rather conventional than intrinsic; but in dramatic works what is desired is illusion, which, if it could be accomplished by means of the actual, would be, at best, a paltry deception. All the externals of a theatrical representation are opposed to this notion; all is merely a symbol of the real. The day itself in a theatre is an artificial one; the metrical dialogue is itself ideal; yet the conduct of the play must forsooth be real, and the general effect sacrificed to a part. Thus the French, who have utterly misconceived the spirit of the ancients, adopted on their stage the unities of time and place in the most common and empirical sense; as though there were any place but the bare ideal one, or any other time than the mere sequence of the incidents.

By the introduction of a metrical dialogue an important progress has been made toward the poetical Tragedy. A few lyrical dramas have been successful on the stage, and Poetry, by its own living energy, has triumphed over prevailing prejudices. But so long as these erroneous views are entertained little has been done—for it is not enough barely to tolerate as a poetic license that which is, in truth, the essence of all poetry. The introduction of the Chorus would be the last and decisive step; and if it only served this end, namely, to declare open and honorable warfare against naturalism in art, it would be for us a living wall which Tragedy had drawn around herself, to guard her from contact with the world of reality, and maintain her own ideal soil, her poetical freedom.

It is well known that the Greek tragedy had its origin in the Chorus; and though, in process of time, it became independent, still it may be said that poetically, and in spirit, the Chorus was the source of its existence, and that without these persevering supporters and witnesses of the incident a totally different order of poetry would have grown out of the drama. The abolition of the Chorus, and the debasement of this sensibly powerful organ into the characterless substitute of a confidant, is, by no means, such an improvement in tragedy as the French, and their imitators, would have it supposed to be.

The old Tragedy, which at first only concerned itself with gods, heroes and kings, introduced the Chorus as an essential accompaniment. The poets found it in nature, and for that reason employed it. It grew out of the poetical aspect of real life. In the new Tragedy it becomes an organ of art which aids in making the poetry prominent. The modern poet no longer finds the Chorus in nature; he must needs create and introduce it poetically; that is, he must resolve on such an adaptation of his story as will admit of its retrocession to those primitive times and to that simple form of life.

The Chorus thus renders more substantial service to the modern dramatist than to the old poet—and for this reason, that it transforms the commonplace actual world into the old poetical one; that it enables him to dispense with all that is repugnant to poetry, and conducts him back to the most simple, original, and genuine motives of action. The palaces of kings are in these days closed-courts of justice have been transferred from the gates of cities to the interior of buildings; writing has narrowed the province of speech; the people itself—the sensibly living mass—when it does not operate as brute force, has become a part of the civil polity, and thereby an abstract idea in our minds; the deities have returned within the bosoms of mankind. The poet must reopen the palaces—he must place courts of justice beneath the canopy of heaven—restore the gods, reproduce every extreme which the artificial frame of actual life has abolished—throw aside every factitious influence on the mind or condition of man which impedes the manifestation of his inward nature and primitive character, as the statuary rejects modern costume, and of all external circumstances adopts nothing but what is palpable in the highest of forms—that of humanity. But precisely as the painter throws around his figures draperies of ample volume, to fill up the space of his picture richly and gracefully, to arrange its several parts in harmonious masses, to give due play to color, which charms and refreshes the eye—and at once to envelop human forms in a spiritual veil, and make them visible—so the tragic poet inlays and entwines his rigidly contracted plot and the strong outlines of his characters with a tissue of lyrical magnificence, in which, as in flowing robes of purple, they move freely and nobly, with a sustained dignity and exalted repose.

In a higher organization, the material, or the elementary, need not be visible; the chemical color vanishes in the finer tints of the imaginative one. The material, however, has its peculiar effect, and may be included in an artistical com position. But it must deserve its place by animation, fulness and harmony, and give value to the ideal forms which it surrounds, instead of stifling them by its weight.

In respect of the pictorial art, this is obvious to ordinary apprehension, yet in poetry likewise, and in the tragical kind, which is our immediate subject, the same doctrine holds good. Whatever fascinates the senses alone is mere matter and the rude element of a work of art:—if it take the lead it will inevitably destroy the poetical—which lies at the exact medium between the ideal and the sensible. But man is so constituted that he is ever impatient to pass from what is fanciful to what is common; and reflection must, therefore, have its place even in tragedy. But to merit this place it must, by means of delivery, recover what it wants in actual life; for if the two elements of poetry, the ideal and the sensible, do not operate with an inward mutuality, they must at least act as allies—or poetry is out of the question. If the balance be not intrinsically perfect, the equipoise can be maintained only by an agitation of both scales.

This is what the Chorus effects in tragedy. It is, in itself, not an individual but a general conception; yet it is represented by a palpable body which appeals to the senses with an imposing grandeur. It forsakes the contracted sphere of the incidents to dilate itself over the past and future, over distant times and nations and general humanity, to deduce the grand results of life, and pronounce the lessons of wisdom. But all this it does with the full power of fancy—with a bold lyrical freedom which ascends, as with godlike step, to the topmost height of worldly things; and it effects it in conjunction with the whole sensible influence of melody and rhythm, in tones and movements.

The Chorus thus exercises a purifying influence on tragic poetry, insomuch as it keeps reflection apart from the incidents, and by this separation arms it with a poetical vigor; as the painter, by means of a rich drapery, changes the ordinary poverty of costume into a charm and an ornament.

But as the painter finds himself obliged to strengthen the tone of color of the living subject, in order to counter-balance the material influences—so the—lyrical effusions of the Chorus impose upon the poet the necessity of a proportionate elevation of his general diction. It is the Chorus alone which entitles the poet to employ this fulness of tone, which at once charms the senses, pervades the spirit, and expands the mind. This one giant form on his canvas obliges him to mount all his figures on the cothurnus,

and thus impart a tragical grandeur to his picture. If the Chorus be taken away, the diction of the tragedy must generally be lowered, or what is now great and majestic will appear forced and overstrained. The old Chorus introduced into the French tragedy would present it in all its poverty and reduce it to nothing; yet, without doubt, the same accomplishment would impart to Shakespeare's tragedy its true significance.

As the Chorus gives life to the language—so also it gives repose to the action; but it is that beautiful and lofty repose which is the characteristic of a true work of art. For the mind of the spectator ought to maintain its freedom through the most impassioned scenes; it should not be the mere prey of impressions, but calmly and severely detach itself from the emotions which it suffers. The commonplace objection made to the Chorus that it disturbs the illusion and blunts the edge of the feelings, is what constitutes its highest recommendation; for it is this blind force of the affections which the true artist deprecates this illusion is what he disdains to excite. If the strokes which Tragedy inflicts on our bosoms followed without respite—the passion would overpower the action. We should mix ourselves up with the subject-matter, and no longer stand above it. It is by holding asunder the different parts, and stepping between the passions with its composing views, that the Chorus restores to us our freedom, which would else be lost in the tempest. The characters of the drama need this intermission in order to collect themselves; for they are no real beings who obey the impulse of the moment, and merely represent individuals—but ideal persons and representatives of their species, who enunciate the deep things of Humanity.

Thus much on my attempt to revive the old Chorus on the tragic stage. It is true that choruses are not unknown to modern tragedy; but the Chorus of the Greek drama, as I have employed it—the Chorus, as a single ideal person, furthering and accompanying the whole plot—is of an entirely distinct character; and when, in discussion on the Greek tragedy, I hear mention made of choruses, I generally suspect the speaker's ignorance of his subject. In my view the Chorus has never been reproduced since the decline of the old tragedy.

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 63: Permission G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London, and The Macmillan Co., New York.]

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SCHILLER-GOETHE CORRESPONDENCE[64]

TRANSLATED BY L. DORA SCHMITZ

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Jena, August 23, 1794.

I yesterday received the welcome news that you had returned from your journey. We may therefore hope to see you among us again soon, which I, on my part, most heartily wish. My recent conversations with you have put the whole store of my ideas in motion, for they related to a subject which has actively engaged my thoughts for some years past. Many things upon which I could not come to a right understanding with myself have received new and unexpected light from the contemplation I have had of your mind (for so I must call the general impression of your ideas upon me). I needed the *object*, the body, for several of my speculative ideas, and you have put me on the track of finding it. Your calm and clear way of looking at things keeps you from getting on the by-roads into which speculation as well as arbitrary imagination—which merely follows its own bent—are so apt to lead one astray. Your correct intuition grasps all things, and that far more perfectly than what is laboriously sought for by analysis; and merely because this lies within you as a whole, is the wealth of your mind concealed from yourself. For, alas! we know only that which we can take to pieces. Minds like yours, therefore, seldom know how far they have penetrated and how little cause they have to borrow from philosophy, which, in fact, can learn only from them. Philosophy can merely dissect what is given it, but the giving itself is not the work of the analyzer but of genius, which combines things according to objective laws under the obscure but safe influence of pure reason.

[Illustration: MONUMENT TO GOETHE AND SCHILLER IN WEIMAR]

Although I have done so at a distance, I have long watched the course which your mind has pursued, and have observed, with ever renewed admiration, the path which you have marked out for yourself. You seek for the necessary in nature, but you seek it by the most difficult route—one which all weaker minds would take care to avoid. You look at Nature as a whole, when seeking to get light thrown upon her individual parts; you look for the explanation of the individual in the totality of her various manifestations. From the simple organism you ascend step by step to those that are more complex, in order, in the end, genetically to form the most complicate of all—

man—out of the materials of nature as a whole. By thus, as it were, imitating nature in creating him, you try to penetrate into his hidden structure. This is a great and truly heroic idea, which sufficiently shows how your mind keeps the whole wealth of its conceptions in one beautiful unity. You can never have expected that your life would suffice to attain such an end, but to have struck out such a path is worth more than reaching the end of any other; and you, like Achilles in the Iliad, made your choice between Phthia and immortality. Had you been born a Greek, or even an Italian, and had you from infancy been placed in the midst of choice natural surroundings and of an idealizing Art, your path would have been infinitely shortened, perhaps even have been rendered entirely superfluous. Had such been the case, you would, on your first perception of things, have taken up the form of the Necessary, and the grand style would have been developed in you with your first experience. But being born a German, and your Grecian spirit having been cast in this Northern mold, you had no other choice but either to become a Northern artist; or, by the help of the power of thought, to supply your imagination with what reality withheld from it, and thus, as it were, to produce a Greek from within by a reasoning process. At that period of life when the soul, surrounded by defective forms, constructs its own inward nature out of outward circumstances, you had already assumed a wild Northern nature, and your victorious genius, rising above its materials, then discovered this want from within, and became convinced of it from without through its acquaintance with Greek nature. You had then, in accordance with the better model which your developing mind created for itself, to correct your old and less perfect nature, and this could be effected only by following leading ideas. However, this *logical* direction which a reflecting mind is forced to pursue, is not very compatible with the *esthetic* state of mind by which alone a reflecting mind becomes creative. You, therefore, had one task more: for inasmuch as your mind had passed over from intuition to abstraction, so you had now to go back and retranslate ideas into intuitions, and to change thoughts into feelings; for it is only through the latter that genius can be productive.

It is somewhat in this manner that I imagine the course pursued by your mind, and whether I am right or not you will yourself know best. However, what you yourself can scarcely be aware of (as genius ever remains the greatest mystery to itself) is the beautiful harmony between your philosophical instinct and the purest results of your speculative reason. Upon a first view it does indeed seem as if there could not be any greater opposites than the speculative mind which proceeds from unity, and the intuitive mind which proceeds from variety. If, however, the former seeks experience with a pure and truthful spirit, and the latter seeks law with self-active and free power of thought, then the two cannot fail to meet each other half way. It is true that the

intuitive mind has only to deal with individuals, the speculative mind only with species. But if the intuitive mind is that of a genius and seeks the nature of the Necessary in experience, then individuals will be produced, it is true, but they will possess the character of the species; and again, if the speculative mind is that of a genius, and does not lose sight of experience when rising above it, then it will indeed produce species only, but with the possibility of individual life and with a well-founded relation to actual objects.

But I find that in place of sending you a letter I am writing an essay—pray excuse this, and ascribe it to the lively interest with which the subject has filled me; and should you not recognize your own image in this mirror, do not on that account flee from it, I pray. * * *

Diderot's work[65], especially the first part, is very interesting, and, considering the subject, is handled with edifying delicacy. I beg to be permitted to keep this book for a few days longer.

It would, I think, be well if we could now soon start the new periodical, and you would perhaps be kind enough to let the first number be opened with something of yours. I, therefore, take the liberty of asking you whether you would be willing to let your novel[66] appear in our journal in successive numbers? But whether you determine to let us have it or not, I should consider it a very great favor to be allowed to read it.

My friends and my wife commend themselves to your kind remembrance.

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GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

Ettersburg, August 27, 1794.

On the anniversary of my birthday, which took place this week, I could not have received a more acceptable gift than the letter in which you give the sum of my existence in so friendly a manner, and in which, by your sympathy, you encourage me to a more assiduous and active use of my powers.

Pure enjoyment and true usefulness can only be reciprocal, and it will be a pleasure to me to unfold to you at leisure what your conversation has been to me; how I, too, regard those days as an epoch in my life, and how contented I feel in having gone on my way without any particular encouragement; for it seems to me that, after so

unexpected a meeting, we cannot but wander on in life together. I have always prized the frank and rare earnestness which is displayed in all that you have written and done, and I may now claim to be made acquainted by yourself with the course taken by your own mind, more especially during these latter years. If we make it clear to each other to which point we have thus far attained, the better able we shall be to work on together without interruption.

All that relates to myself I will gladly communicate to you; for, being fully conscious that my undertaking far exceeds the measure of human capabilities and their earthly duration, I should like to deposit many things with you, and thereby not only preserve them but give them life.

Of what great advantage your sympathy will be to me you will yourself soon perceive, when, upon a closer acquaintance, you discover in me a kind of obscurity and hesitation which I cannot entirely master, although distinctly aware of their existence. Such phenomena, however, are often found in our natures, and we quietly submit to them as long as they do not become too tyrannical.

I hope to be able to spend some time with you soon, when we shall talk over many things.

Unfortunately, a few weeks before receiving your proposal, I had given my novel to Unger,[67] and the first proof sheets have already come to hand. I have more than once thought, during these last days, that it would have been very suitable for your periodical. It is the only thing I have by me of any size, and is a kind of problematical work such as the good Germans like.

I will send the first Book as soon as I get all the proof sheets. It is so long since it was written that, in the actual sense of the word, I may be said to be only the editor.

[Illustration:

The highest aim he reached
on soaring pinion
Closely allied to all we value most
Thus honor him! What life but scantily
To Genius yields, in full shall give Posterity.

Goethe on Schiller.]

If, among my projects, there were anything that would serve the purpose you mention, we should, I think, easily agree as to the most appropriate form to put it in, and there should be no delay in my working it out. Farewell, and remember me to your circle.

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SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Jena, August 31, 1794.

On my return from Weissenfels, where I met my friend Körner from Dresden, I received your last letter but one, the contents of which pleased me for two reasons; for I perceive from it that the view I took of your mind coincides with your own feelings, and that you were not displeased with the candor with which I allowed my heart to express itself. Our acquaintance, although it comes late, awakens in me many a delightful hope, and is to me another proof of how much better it often is to let chance have its way than to forestall it with too much officiousness. Great as my desire always was to become more closely acquainted with you than is possible between the spirit of a writer and his most attentive reader, I now clearly see that the very different paths upon which you and I have moved could not, with any advantage to ourselves, have brought us together sooner than at the present time. I now hope, however, that we may travel over the rest of our life's way together, and, moreover, do this with more than usual advantage to each other, inasmuch as the last travelers who join company on a long journey have always the most to say to each other.

Do not expect to find any great store of ideas in me; this is what I shall find in you. My need and endeavor are to make much out of little, and, when you once come to know my poverty in all so-called acquired knowledge, you will perhaps find that I have sometimes succeeded in doing this; for, the circle of my ideas being small, I can the more rapidly and the more frequently run through it; for that very reason I can use my small resources with more effect, and can, by means of form, produce that variety which is wanting in the subject-matter. You strive to simplify your great world of ideas; I seek variety for my small means. You have to govern a whole realm, I but a somewhat numerous family of ideas, which I would be heartily glad to be able to extend into a little world.

Your mind works intuitively to an extraordinary degree, and all your thinking powers appear, as it were, to have come to an agreement with your imagination to be their common representative. In reality, this is the most that a man can make of himself if only he succeeds in generalizing his perceptions and making his feelings his supreme law. This is what you have endeavored to do, and what in a great measure you have already attained. My understanding works more in a symbolizing method, and thus I hover, as a hybrid, between ideas and intentions, between law and feeling, between a technical mind and genius. This it is that, particularly in my earlier years, gave me a rather awkward appearance both in the field of speculation and in that of poetry; for the poetic mind generally got the better of me when I ought to have philosophized, and my philosophical mind when I wished to poetize. Even now it frequently enough happens that imagination intrudes upon my abstractions, and cold reason upon my poetical productions. If I could obtain such mastery over these two powers as to assign to each its limits, I might yet look forward to a happy fate; but, alas! just when I have begun to know and to use my moral powers rightly, illness seizes me and threatens to undermine my physical powers. I can scarcely hope to have time to complete any great and general mental revolution in myself; but I will do what I can, and when, at last, the building falls, I shall, perhaps, after all, have snatched from the ruins what was most worthy of being preserved.

You expressed a wish that I should speak of myself, and I have made use of the permission. I make these confessions to you in confidence, and venture to hope that you will receive them in a kindly spirit.

I shall today refrain from entering into details about your essay, which will at once lead our conversations on this subject upon the most fertile track. My own researches—entered upon by a different path—have led me to a result rather similar to that at which you have arrived, and in the accompanying papers you will perhaps find ideas which coincide with your own. I wrote them about a year and a half ago, for which reason, as well as on account of the occasion for which they were penned (they were intended for an indulgent friend), there is some excuse for their crudeness of form. These ideas have, indeed, since then, received in me a better foundation and greater precision, and this may possibly bring them much nearer to yours.

I cannot sufficiently regret that *Wilhelm Meister* is lost to our periodical. However, I hope that your fertile mind and friendly interest in our undertaking will give us some compensation for this loss, whereby the admirers of your genius will be double gainers. In the number of the *Thalia* which I herewith send you, you will find some ideas of Körner's on Declamation, which, I think, will please you.

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SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Jena, January 7, 1795.

Accept my best thanks for the copy of the novel you have sent me. The feeling which penetrates and takes hold of me with increasing force the further I read on in this work, I cannot better express in words than by calling it a delicious, inward sense of comfort, a feeling of mental and bodily well-being, and I will vouch that this will be the effect produced upon all readers.

This sense of comfort I account for from the calm clearness, smoothness, and transparency which pervade the whole of your work, and which leave nothing to disturb or to dissatisfy the mind, and the mind is not more excited than is necessary to fan and maintain a joyous life. Of the individual parts I shall say nothing till I have seen the Third Book, which I am looking forward to with longing.

I cannot express to you what a painful feeling it often is to me to pass from a work of this kind into one of a philosophical character. In the former all is so joyous, so alive, so harmoniously evolved, and so true to human life; in the latter all is so stern, so rigid, abstract, and so extremely unnatural; for all nature is synthesis, and philosophy but antithesis. I can, in fact, give proof of having been as true to nature in my speculations as is compatible with the idea of analysis; indeed, I have perhaps been more faithful to her than our Kantians would consider permissible or possible. But still I am no less fully conscious of the infinite difference between Life and Reasoning, and cannot, in such melancholy moments, help perceiving a want in my own nature which in happier hours I am forced to think of only as a natural duality of the thing itself. This much, however, is certain—the poet is the only true man, and the best philosopher is but a caricature in comparison with him.

I need scarcely assure you that I am in the utmost anxiety to know what you have to say to my philosophy of the Beautiful. As the Beautiful itself is derived from man as a whole, so my analysis of it is drawn from *my* own whole being, and I cannot but be deeply interested in knowing how this accords with yours.

Your presence here will be a source of nourishment both to my mind and my heart. Especially great is my longing to enjoy some poetical works in common with you.

[Illustration: Schiller on Goethe]

You promised to let me hear some of your epigrams when an opportunity occurred. It would be a great and additional pleasure to me if this could be done during your approaching visit to Jena, as it is still very uncertain when I may be able to get to W.

Just as I am about to close comes the welcome continuation of your *Meister*. A thousand thanks for it!

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GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

Weimar, November 21, 1795.

Today I received twenty-one of Propertius' elegies from Knebel and shall look them over carefully and then let the translator know where I find anything to object to; for, as he has given himself so much trouble, nothing ought, perhaps, to be altered without his sanction.

I wish you could induce Cotta to pay for this manuscript at once; it could easily be calculated how many sheets it would print. I have, it is true, no actual occasion to ask this, but it would look much better, would encourage energetic coöperation, and also help in making the good name of the *Horen* better known. A publisher has often enough to pay money in advance, so Cotta might surely once in a way pay upon the receipt of a manuscript. Knebel wants the Elegies to be divided into three contributions; I, too, think this the right proportion, and we should thus have the first three numbers of next year's *Horen* nicely adorned. I will see to it that you get them in proper time.

Have you seen Stolberg's abominable preface to his Platonic discourses? The disclosures he there makes are so insipid and intolerable that I feel very much inclined to step out and chastise him. It would be a very simple matter to hold up to view the senseless unreasonableness of this stupid set of people, if, in so doing, one had but a rational public on one's side; this would at the same time be a declaration of war against that superficiality which it has now become necessary to combat in every department of learning. The secret feuds of suppressing, misplacing, and misprinting, which it has carried on against us, have long deserved that this declaration should be held in honorable remembrance, and that continuously.

I find this doubly necessary and unavoidable in the case of my scientific works, which I am gradually getting into order. I intend to speak out my mind pretty frankly

against reviewers, journalists, collectors of magazines, and writers of abridgments, and, in a prelude or prolog, openly to declare myself against the public; in this instance, especially, I do not intend to allow any one's opposition or reticence to pass.

What do you say, for instance, to Lichtenberg, with whom I have had some correspondence about the optical subjects we spoke of, and with whom, besides, I am on pretty good terms, not even mentioning my essays in his new edition of Erxleben's Compendium, especially as a new edition of a compendium is surely issued in order to introduce the latest discoveries, and these gentlemen are usually quick enough in noting down everything in their interleaved books! How many different ways there are of dispatching a work like this, even though it were but done in a passing manner I However, at the present moment, my cunning brains cannot think of any one of these ways.

I am, at present, very far from being in anything like an esthetic or sentimental mood, so what is to become of my poor novel? Meanwhile, I am making use of my time as best I can, and my comfort is that, at so low an ebb, one may hope that the flood is about to return.

Your dear letter reached me safely, and I thank you for your sympathy, which I felt sure you would give me. In such cases one hardly knows what is best to do—to let grief take its natural course or to fortify oneself with the assistance which culture gives us. If one determines to follow the latter course—as I always do—one feels better merely for the moment, and. I have noticed that Nature always reasserts her rights in other ways.

The Sixth Book of my novel has made a good impression here also; to be sure, the poor reader never knows what he is about with works of this kind, for he does not consider that he would probably never take them up had not the author contrived to get the better of his thinking powers, his feelings, and his curiosity.

Your testimony in favor of my tale I prize very highly, and I shall henceforth work with more confidence at this species of composition.

The last volume of my novel cannot in any case appear before Michaelmas; it would be well if we could arrange the plans we lately discussed in reference to this.

My new story can, I think, hardly be ready by December, and, moreover, I can scarcely venture to pass on to it till I have, in some way or other, written something in explanation of the first. If, by December, I could write something of this kind neatly, I

should be very glad of thus being able to give you a contribution for next year's opening number. Farewell. May we long enjoy having around us those who are nearest and dearest to us. Toward New Year's I hope again to spend some time with you.

* * * * *

SCHILLER to GOETHE

Jena, July 2, 1796.

I have now run through all the eight Books of your novel, very hurriedly, it is true, but the subject-matter alone is so large that I could scarcely get through it in two days' reading. Properly speaking, therefore, I ought not to say anything about it even today, for the surprising and unparalleled variety which is therein *concealed*—in the strictest sense of the word—is overpowering. I confess that what I have as yet grasped correctly is but the *continuity*, not the *unity*, although I do not for a moment doubt that I shall become perfectly clear on this point also, if, as I think, in works of this kind, the continuity is more than half the unity.

As, under the circumstances, you cannot exactly expect to receive from me anything thoroughly satisfactory and yet wish to hear something, you must be content with a few remarks; these, however, are not altogether without value, inasmuch as they will tell of direct impressions. To make up for this, I promise you that our discussions about your novel shall continue throughout the month. To give an adequate and truly esthetic estimate of a whole work, as a work of art, is a serious undertaking. I shall devote the whole of the next four months to it, and that with pleasure. Besides this, it is one of the greatest blessings of my existence that I have lived to see this work of yours completed, that it has been written while my faculties are still in a state of growth, and that I may draw inspiration from this pure source; further, the beautiful relation that exists between us makes it seem to me a kind of religious duty to call your cause my own, and to develop all that is real in my nature so fully that my mind may become the clearest mirror of what exists beneath this covering, and that I may deserve the name of being your friend in the higher sense of the word. How vividly have I felt, at this time, that excellence is a power, that it can influence selfish natures only as a power, and that, as contrasted with excellence, there is no freedom but love!

I cannot say how much I have been moved by the truth, the beautiful vitality, and the simple fulness of your work. My agitation, it is true, is greater than it will be when I have completely mastered your subject, and that will be an important crisis in my

intellectual life; but yet this agitation is the effect of the Beautiful and only of the Beautiful, and is merely the result of my reason not having yet been able to master my feelings. I now quite understand what you meant by saying that it was the Beautiful, the True, that could often move you to tears. Calm and deep, clear and yet incomprehensible, like nature, your work makes its influence felt; it stands there, and even the smallest secondary incident shows the beautiful equanimity from which all has emanated.

[Illustration: SCHILLER RECITING FROM HIS WORKS TO HIS WEIMAR FRIENDS]

But I cannot, as yet, find words to describe these impressions, and, moreover, I must today confine myself to the Eighth Book. How well you have succeeded in bringing the large and widely extended circle, the different attitudes and scenes of the events, so closely together again! Your work may be compared to a beautiful planetary system; everything belongs together, and it is only the Italian figures which, like comets and as weirdly as they, connect the system with one that is more remote and larger. Further, these figures, as also Marianna and Aurelia, run wholly out of this system again, and, after having merely served to produce a poetical movement in it, separate themselves from it as foreign individuals. How beautifully conceived it is to derive what is practically monstrous and terribly pathetic in the fate of Mignon and the Harpist from what is theoretically monstrous, from the abortions of the understanding, so that nothing is thereby laid to the charge of pure and healthy nature! Senseless superstition alone gives birth to such monstrous fates as pursue Mignon and the Harpist. Even Aurelia's ruin is but the result of her own unnaturalness, her masculine nature. Toward Marianna alone could I accuse you of poetic selfishness. I could almost say she has been made a sacrifice to the novel, as the nature of the case would not permit of her being saved. Her fate, therefore, will ever draw forth bitter tears, while in the case of the three others the reader will gladly turn from what is individual to the idea of the whole.

Wilhelm's false relationship to Theresa is admirably conceived, motivated, and worked out, and still more admirably turned to account. Many a reader will at first be actually alarmed at it, for I can promise Theresa but few wellwishers; all the more beautiful is the way in which the reader is rescued from this state of uneasiness. I cannot imagine how this false relation could have been dissolved more tenderly, more delicately, or more nobly. How pleased Richardson and all his set would have been had you made a scene out of it and been highly indelicate in the display of delicate sentiments! I have but one little objection to raise: Theresa's courageous and

determined resistance to the person who wishes to rob her of her lover, even although the possibility is thereby reopened to her of possessing Lothar, is quite in accordance with nature, and is excellent; further, I think there are good reasons for Wilhelm's showing deep indignation and a certain amount of pain at the banterings of his fellowmen and of fate—but it seems to me that he ought to complain less deeply of the loss of a happiness which had already ceased to be anything of the kind to him. In Natalie's presence, as it seems to me, his regained freedom ought to be to him a greater happiness than he allows it to be. I am quite aware of the complication of this state of things and what is demanded by *delicatesse*, but, on the other hand, Natalie may in some measure be said to be hurt by this same *delicatesse* when, in her presence, Wilhelm is allowed to lament over the loss of Theresa.

One other thing I specially admire in the concatenation of the events is the great good which you have contrived to draw from Wilhelm's already-mentioned false relation to Theresa so as most speedily to bring about the true and desired end, the union of Natalie and Wilhelm. In no other manner could this end have been arrived at so well and so naturally as by the path you have pursued, although this very path threatened to lead from it. It can now be maintained, with the most perfect innocence and purity, that Wilhelm and Natalie belong to each other; and Theresa's letters to Natalie lead up to this beautifully. Such contrivances are of the greatest beauty, for they unite all that could be desired, nay, all that appeared wholly ununitable; they complicate, and yet carry the solution in themselves; they produce restlessness, and yet lead to repose; they succeed in reaching the goal, while appearing to be making every effort to keep from it.

Mignon's death, although we are prepared for it, affects one powerfully and deeply—so deeply, in fact, that many will think you quit the subject too abruptly. This, upon first reading it, was a very decided feeling in my own case; but, on reading it a second time, when surprise had subsided, I felt it less, and yet I fear that you may have, in this, gone a hair's breadth too far. Mignon, before her end, had begun to appear more womanly and softer, and thus to have become more interesting in herself; the repulsive heterogeneity of her nature had relaxed, and with this relaxation some of her impetuosity had likewise disappeared. Her last song, especially, melts one's heart to the most intense sympathy. Hence it strikes one as odd that, directly upon the affecting scene of her death, the doctor should make an experiment upon her corpse, and that this living being should so soon be able to forget the person, merely in order to regard her as the instrument of a scientific inquiry. It strikes one as being equally strange that Wilhelm—who, after all, is the cause of her death, and is aware of it—

should at that moment notice the instrument-case and be lost in the recollection of past scenes, when the present should have so wholly absorbed him.

You may, in this case also, justify yourself as having been quite true to nature, but I doubt whether you will be able to do this as regards the "sentimental" demands of your readers; and therefore—in order that nothing should interfere with the reader's acceptance of a scene which is so splendidly motivated and so well worked out—I would advise you to pay some attention to it.

Otherwise, I find everything you do with Mignon, when living as well as when dead, most uncommonly beautiful. This pure and poetic creature is specially and excellently qualified to have so poetical a funeral. In her isolated condition, her mysterious existence, her purity and innocence, she is so truly a representative of the period of life in which she stands that she moves one to a feeling of unmixed sadness and genuine human sorrow, for nothing but pure humanity was manifested in her. That which, in every other individual, would be inconsistent, nay, in a certain sense, revolting, is, in her, sublime and noble.

I should have liked to see the appearance of the Marquis in the family motivated by something more than his mere dilettanteism in art. He is too indispensable to the development, and the *need* of his interference might easily have been made more conspicuous than the inner necessity. You have yourself spoilt the reader by the arrangement of the rest of your work, and have justified him in making greater demands than can generally be required of novel writers. Could not the Marquis be made an old acquaintance of Lothar or of the Uncle, and his journey hither be more interwoven with the whole?

The end, as well as the whole history of the Harpist, excites the greatest interest. I have already said how excellent I find your thought of deriving the terrible destinies of the Harpist and of Mignon from religious extravagance. The priest's notion of describing a small transgression as monstrous, in order that a great crime—which he will not mention for humanity's sake—may be atoned for by it, is sublime of its kind and a worthy representative of this whole mode of thinking. You might perhaps make Sperate's story a little shorter still, as it comes in at the end where one is prone to hurry impatiently to the goal.

That the Harpist should prove to be Mignon's father, and that you yourself do not mention it or thrust it at the reader, makes the effect all the greater. One is forced to reflect upon the fact oneself, to recall to mind how close in life was the relation which

existed between these two mysterious natures, and to look down into an unfathomable depth of fate. But no more for today. My wife wishes to inclose a little note to tell you her impressions of your Eighth Book.

Farewell, my beloved, my esteemed friend! I am deeply moved when I think that that which we otherwise look for and rarely find in the far distance of favored antiquity lies so close to me in you. You need no longer be astonished that there are so few who are capable or worthy of understanding you. The wonderful naturalness, truth, and fluency of your description hide from the common herd of critics every thought of the difficulty, of the grandness of your art, and those who are capable of following the artist, who perceive the means by which the effects have been produced, will feel themselves so averse, so hostile toward the genial power which they there see in action, and find their needy selves in such straits, that they will angrily thrust the work from them, while in their hearts—though with *de mauvaise grace*—they are certain to be your liveliest worshippers.

* * * * *

GOETHE *to* SCHILLER Weimar, July 5, 1796.

As soon as I received your first letter I at once sat down to write to you; but verily your two following letters have come to me, in the midst of my truly worldly occupations, like two voices from another world to which I can do naught but listen. Pray continue to refresh and to encourage me! Your suggestions will enable me to finish the Eighth Book as soon as I am able again to take it in hand. I already possess the means to satisfy nearly every one of your suggestions, by which, moreover, even to my mind, the whole work becomes more connected at the points in question, and both truer and more pleasing. Do not become weary of telling me your opinion frankly, and keep the book a week longer. What you require of *Cellini* I shall meanwhile push forward; I shall also give you a sketch of what I still think of doing to my Eighth Book, and hence the last transcript shall be out of our hands by the beginning of August.

Your letters are now my sole recreation, and you must know how grateful I am to you for having so unexpectedly set my mind at ease about so many points. Farewell, and give my kind greetings to your dear wife.

* * * * *

GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

March 18, 1799.

I congratulate you with all my heart upon having finished your work; it has given me particular satisfaction, although I have, so to say, but tasted the outside of it, and that on a most disturbed morning. For stage purposes it is quite sufficiently developed; the new motives, which I did not know of, are very good and to the point.

If, at some future time, you could cut off a little from *The Piccolomini*, both pieces would be a priceless gift to the German stage, and they would have to be given throughout many a long year.

The last piece has, it is true, this great merit, that everything ceases to be political and becomes of purely human interest; nay, the historical element itself is but a light veil through which we have the purely human element shining forth. The effect upon the mind is neither interfered with nor disturbed.

I would certainly close with the monologue by the Princess, for it is, in any case, left to the imagination as to what becomes of her. It might perhaps be well, eventually, to have the Equerry introduced in the first piece.

The close of the whole with the address of the letter is, in reality, frightening, especially considering the tender state of one's feelings at the moment. It is doubtless an exceptional case to conclude with what is terrible after having exhausted all that was capable of rousing fear and pity.

I shall not add more, and can but say that I am delighted at the prospect of enjoying this work with you. I hope still to be able to start on Thursday. You shall know for certain on Wednesday; we will then read the play together, and I intend then to enjoy it in a thoroughly composed state of mind.

Farewell; take a rest now and let us both begin a new life during the vacation. My kind greetings to your dear wife, and think of me.

I do not intend, just yet, to boast of the work extorted from the Muses; it is still a great question whether it is worth anything; in any case, however, it may be regarded as preparatory.

* * * * *

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Jena, March 19, 1799.

I have for long dreaded the moment when I should be rid of my work, much as I wished for the time to come; and, in fact, I do feel my present freedom to be worse than the state of bondage I have hitherto been in. The mass which has formerly drawn and held me to it has now gone, and I feel as if I were hanging indefinitely in empty space. At the same time I feel also as if it were absolutely impossible for me ever to produce anything again; I shall not be at rest till I once more have my thoughts turned to some definite subject, with hope and inclination in view. When I again have some definite object before me, I shall be rid of the feeling of restlessness which at present is also drawing me off from smaller things I have in hand. When you come I mean to lay before you some tragic materials of my own invention, in order that I may not, in the first instance, make a mistake as regards subject. Inclination and necessity draw me toward subjects of pure fancy, not to historical ones, and toward such in which the interest is of a purely sentimental and human character; for of soldiers, heroes, and commanders, I am now heartily tired.

How I envy you your present activity—your latest! You are standing on the purest and sublimest poetic ground, in the most beautiful world of definite figures where everything is ready-made or can be re-made. You are, so to say, living in the home of poetry and being waited upon by the gods. During these last days I have again been looking into Homer, and there have read of the visit of Thetis to Vulcan with immense pleasure. There is, in the graceful description of a domestic visit such as we might receive any day, and in an account of any kind of handicraft, an infinity of material and form, and the Naïve shows the full nature of the Divine.

Your hope of being able to finish the *Achilleid* by August, or, at least, your believing it to be possible to do so, is to me inconceivable, notwithstanding all the proofs I have myself had of the rapidity with which you get through things, especially as you do not even reckon upon having April for work. I sincerely regret that you will lose this month; perhaps, however, you will be able to preserve your epic mood; if so, be sure not to allow theatrical cares to disturb you. I will gladly relieve you of whatever trouble I can in connection with *Wallenstein*.

A few days ago Imhof sent me the last two cantos of her poem, which have given me very great pleasure. The development is extremely refined and pure, and is accomplished by simple means and unusual elegance. When you come we will talk it over together.

I herewith return *The Piccolomini*, and beg you to let me have *Wallenstein's Camp*, which I wish likewise to have copied out, and shall then, at last, be able to send the three plays to Körner.

The box of groats has been called for and delivered up in your name to a Herr Meyer. You have, no doubt, already received it. Farewell. My wife sends kindest greetings. Tomorrow I hope to hear that we may expect you on Thursday.

* * * * *

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Weimar, July 30, 1800. The cheerful tone of your letter proves to me that things are going well with you in Jena, and I congratulate you that such is the case. I cannot boast the same of myself; the state of the barometer, which is so favorable to you, brings on my spasms, and I do not sleep well. Owing to this state of things, it was very welcome news to me to hear from Körner that he could not undertake the journey. I shall, therefore, not go to Lauchstedt, and shall thus have an unexpected gain in time and also in money; for, much as I should have liked to see him again, it would just at present have been a little inconvenient to me.

I congratulate you upon the progress you have made in your work. The liberty which you appear to be taking with the French original, I look upon as a good sign of the productive state of your mind, and also augur from this that the work will bring us a step further forward than *Mahomet* did. I am looking forward eagerly to seeing your work and to our discussions upon it.

If you carry out your idea respecting the choruses, we shall be making an important experiment on the stage. My piece, too, will, I hope, be so far advanced by the time you return that I may lay the finished sketch of it before you, in order to assure myself that you approve of it before I set about working it out. During the last few days I have likewise been engaged with the conclusion of my collection of poems. The stanzas on *Mahomet I* have also had printed in it. If you are curious to see them, Goepferdt could send you sheets R and S as soon as they have been printed off.

Kirms sent me a very welcome today, for which I send you my best thanks.

My wife sends kindest greetings. May you farewell and enjoy the gay variety of entertainments by which you are surrounded in Jena. Mellish passed through here yesterday, and has again taken up his abode in Doernburg. I hear a great deal about

the merry life they are leading in Wilhelmsthal, where the proceedings are evidently very Utopian. My sister-in-law met with a serious accident in the carriage, which broke in two; however, she herself was not hurt. Farewell.

* * * * *

GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

Jena, August I, 1800.

Tancred I laid aside yesterday morning. I have translated—and here and there a little more than this—the close of the second act and the third and fourth acts, with the exception of the close of the two latter. By this means, as I think, I have secured the worthier parts of the piece, to which I shall now have to add something of my own that is life-giving, so that the beginning and the end may become somewhat fuller than the original. The choruses will be very appropriate; however, I shall nevertheless have to act very cautiously so as not to injure the whole. Still, once being upon the path we have entered, I shall never regret working out and accomplishing this task.

Yesterday I attended to some business matters, and today solved a small difficulty in *Faust*; if I could remain here another fortnight it should assume quite a different appearance. However, I have unfortunately taken it into my head that my presence is required in Weimar, and I am going to sacrifice my dearest wish to this fancy.

In other ways, also, these last few days have not been unfruitful in many good things. We have long pondered over a *Bride in Sorrow*. Tieck, in his poetic journal, reminds me of an old marionette play called the *Hoellenbraul*, which I too remember to have seen in my young days. It is a pendent to *Faust*, or, rather, to *Don Juan*. An extremely vain and heartless girl, who has ruined her faithful lover, consents to accept an unknown stranger as her betrothed, and he, in the end, as a devil, carries her off with him—as she deserves. Ought we not to be able to find the idea for a bride in sorrow here—at least in this direction?

I have been reading a treatise of Baader's on the Pythagorean square in nature, or the four quarters of the globe. Whether it be that I have for some years past interested myself more in this species of writing, or that he has contrived to make his intentions clearer, the little work has pleased me and has served me as an introduction to his earlier writings; however, my faculties are still unable to comprehend all of the latter.

A student here, who is engaged with the anatomy of insects, dissected some very neatly and explained them to me, and I have thus made progress in this branch also, partly in knowledge of the subject itself, partly also in the treatment of it.

If a young man like this could have some definite object given him to work at, if only for four months, many very pleasant things might be the result. However, if I can come over here again before the time when certain cater-pillars change into chrysalies, I shall assuredly try to make use of his ability and dexterity. One might, indeed, easily do such things oneself, were it not that they would at once lead one over into an entirely different sphere. On Monday I shall be with you again, and shall have a number of things to bring with me and to relate.

Farewell meanwhile, and hold me in remembrance.

* * * * *

GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

Ober-Rossla, April 6, 1801.

I wish you all happiness upon your return to Weimar, and hope soon to see you again, either by your coming to pay me a visit or by my again repairing to town.

My stay here suits me very well, partly because I move about in the open air all day, partly because I am drawn down to the common objects of life, and thus there comes over me a certain feeling of nonchalance and indifference such as I have not known for a long time.

With regard to the questions contained in your last letter, I not only agree with your opinion, but go even further. I think that everything that is done by genius as genius, is done unconsciously. A person of genius can also act rationally, with reflection, from conviction, but this is all done, as it were, indirectly. No work of genius can be improved or be freed from its faults by reflection and its immediate results, but genius can, by means of reflection and action, be gradually raised to a degree that in the end shall produce exemplary works. The more genius a century possesses, the more are individual things advanced.

With regard to the great demands now made of the poet, I too am of the opinion that these will not readily call forth a poet. The art of poetry requires of the person who is to exercise it a certain good-natured kind of narrowness enamored of what is Real, behind which lies concealed what is Absolute. Demands made by criticism destroy the

innocent, productive state, and give us as genuine poetry—in place of poetry—something that is in fact no poetry at all, as unfortunately we have seen in our own day; and the same is the case with the kindred arts—nay, with Art in its widest sense.

This is my confession of faith, which otherwise does not make any further claims.

[Illustration: THE GOETHE AND SCHILLER ARCHIVES IN WEIMAR]

I expect much good from your latest work. It is well conceived, and, if you devote sufficient time to it, will round itself off of its own accord. *Faust* also has meanwhile had something done to it. I hope that soon the only thing wanting in the great gap will be the disputation; this, it is true, will have to be looked upon as a distinct piece of work, and one which will not be accomplished at a moment's notice.

The famous prize-question also has not been lost sight of during these days. In order to obtain an empiric foundation for my observations, I have commenced examining the character of the different European nations. In Link's *Travels* I have read a good deal more about Portugal, and shall now pass on to Spain. I am daily becoming more convinced how much more limited everything appears when such observations are made from within.

Ritter came to see me for a minute, and has, among other things, directed my attention again to the theory of colors. Herschel's new discoveries, which have been carried further and extended by our young naturalist, are very beautifully connected with that observation which I have frequently told you of—that Bolognian phosphorus does not receive any light on the yellow-red side of the spectrum, but certainly does so on the blue-red side. The physical colors are thereby identified with the chemical colors. The time and care which I have devoted to this subject give me the greatest advantage in judging of new observations, inasmuch as, in fact, I have thought out some new experiments which will carry the matter further still. I foresee that I shall this year write at least two or three chapters more in my theory of colors. I am anxious, some day soon, to show you the latest.

Would you care to come to me on Thursday with Professor Meyer? Please talk this over with him, and I will then write to him more fully on the subject. Meanwhile, farewell.

* * * * *

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

Weimar, August 18, 1802.

You can never be inactive, and what you call an unproductive mood most other people would consider time fully occupied. If only some subordinate genius—one of those very persons residing and presiding at the universities—would give the finishing touch to your scientific ideas, collect and edit them fairly, and, in this way, preserve them for the world! For, unfortunately, you yourself will always be putting off this business, because, as I think, what is actually didactic is not a part of your nature. You are, in reality, very well qualified for being appropriated and plundered by others during your own lifetime, as has already happened to you several times and would happen more frequently still if people understood their own advantage better.

If we had become acquainted with each other half a dozen years earlier than we did, I should have had time to master your scientific investigations; I should perhaps have sustained your inclination to give these important subjects their ultimate shape, and, in any case, should have honestly looked after what belonged to you.

I have lately been reading some notices on the elder Pliny, which have astonished me in regard to what a man can accomplish by putting time to good use. Compared with him, even Haller was a time-squanderer. But I am afraid that the immense amount of time he devoted to reading, making quotations and dictating, left him no proper time for independent reflection, and he seems to have applied all the activity of his mind to acquiring knowledge; for on one occasion he called his nephew severely to task for walking up and down the garden without having a book in his hand.

During these last days I have been hard at work with my play, and, moreover, not unsuccessfully; and I have never yet learned so much from any work of my own as from this. It is one I can more readily survey and also more readily manage; besides, it is a more grateful and enjoyable task to make a simple subject rich and full of substance than to limit one that is too rich and broad.

Otherwise, however, a variety of things are at present engaging my thoughts; and, as political affairs may also affect my circumstances, I am awaiting my fate not without anxiety. There are also other things which threaten to drag me out of my old position, and which, therefore, are not agreeable to me.

The repairs I am having made and other arrangements will, I hope, be finished this week; and when you return I shall be able to bid you welcome in a clean and pretty house. Farewell, and let me soon hear that you are coming back to us with a rich gift.

* * * * *

GOETHE *to* SCHILLER

Jena, December 13, 1803.

It was to be expected that I should be recalled when Madame de Stael came to Weimar. * * * If she comes to pay me a visit, she shall be well received, and, if I know of her coming four-and-twenty hours beforehand, a part of Loder's house shall be furnished for her use; she would find homely fare, but we should really meet and speak to each other, and she could remain as long as she liked. What I have to do here can be done at odd quarters of an hour, and the rest of my time I would place at her disposal; but to drive over in such weather as this, to have to dress, to be at court and in society, is utterly impossible. This I maintain as positively as was ever declared by yourself in similar circumstances.

Take this as a friendly guidance for your actions, for I desire nothing more than actually to see and to become acquainted with this remarkable and highly respected woman, and I wish for nothing so much as that she may care to take this drive of a couple of hours for my sake. On her journey she must have become accustomed to worse fare than she will find here. Arrange and manage these things with your gentle, friendly hand, and send me an express messenger at once, as soon as anything important occurs.

I wish you success in everything that your solitude produces, according as you yourself may wish and desire! I am rowing about in a foreign element, nay, I may say that I am merely paddling about in it, with loss to things without, and without satisfaction from within or toward within. But—as I am always learning more distinctly from Polygnotus and Homer—we have in reality to conceive hell as existing here; thus it may be considered to be also a life. A thousand farewells in a heavenly sense!

* * * * *

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

January 14, 1805.

I am very sorry to hear that your having to keep at home is not voluntary on your part. Unfortunately, we are none of us quite strong, and he who is of necessity forced to learn to put up with being ill has the best of it. I am very glad now that I formed a

determination and have commenced to occupy myself with a translation; thus these days of misery have, at all events, been put to some use, and I have lived and been active. During the next eight days I shall try to see whether I can put myself into the proper humor for my *Demetrius*, which, however, I fear I shall not be able to do. If it cannot be managed, I shall have to look up some other semi-mechanical work.

[Illustration: FACSIMILIE OF A LEAF FROM THE ALBUM OF SCHILLERS LETTERS TO CHARLOTTE VON LENGEFELD]

Herewith I send you what has been copied out. Tomorrow my Rudolph will get the whole finished.

Would you look over the first sheets, occasionally compare them with the original, and mark in pencil whatever you may have to suggest? I should like to have it ready as soon as possible, and before the rôles are copied out.

If the rôles are commenced day after tomorrow, we could have a reading-rehearsal next Sunday, and there would still be ten days before the thirtieth.

The Duke has given me permission to read the *Memoirs of Marmontel*, which you now have; therefore, please let me have them when you have finished with them.

The Grand Duchess yesterday again spoke with great interest about your late recital. She is looking forward to seeing and hearing many other things at your house.

Farewell; and let me, too, soon hear from you again. Should you not be in the humor to read the sheets through, please send them back to me, so that I can make use of the time for having them copied out.

* * * * *

SCHILLER *to* GOETHE

February 22, 1805.

It was pleasant to me to see a few lines in your handwriting, and it has again awakened my belief in the return of the old state of things—which I have at times quite despaired of. The two severe attacks which I have had within the space of seven months have shaken my system to its very foundation, and I shall have difficulty in recovering my strength.

It is true that my present attack seems to have been merely the general epidemic that is going about, but the fever in my case was so great, and it seized me when I was already in such a weak state, that I feel as if I had arisen from a most severe illness, and find it specially difficult to struggle against a certain listlessness which is the worst trouble in my case.

I am anxious to hear whether you have yet sent off the manuscript of *Rameau*. Goeschen has not written anything about it to me, and, in fact, for the last fortnight I have not heard of anything that is going on in the world.

I trust that things may daily and hourly improve with you and with me too, so that we may soon see each other in gladness.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 64: Permission The Macmillan Co., New York, and G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 65: Les Bijoux *Indiscrets.*]

[Footnote 66: Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.*]

[Footnote 67: A publisher in Berlin]

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