

Poetry.

The Dying Girl.

"My mother I, oh, mother,  
Draw closer still and near,  
Till you lie the glorious martyr,  
That's dropping on my ear.  
Music, rich and rare and soft,  
In chaunted air and tone,  
And white-robed angel, fair and bright,  
Are standing on our floor."  
"Tis but the rushing wind, my child—  
The meaning of the breeze;  
'Tis but the wind that's driving wild  
Against the leafy trees.  
Oh! let me chide your clay-cold hands,  
And soothe your aching head,  
My love, it is your mother stands  
Beside your weary bed."  
"Oh, no! no! 'tis not the rain  
I hear tonight, my mother—  
Ah! brighter in the angel's train,  
I see our infant brother.  
He hid me as my little prayer,  
You taught me years ago,  
Oh, mother, let me see your face,  
And kiss me 'fore I go."  
The mother stooped and kissed her love,  
And pressed another—  
The poor soul floated far above,  
And joined in angel brother.  
—From the German of Ulund.

Miscellaneous.

The Clergyman's Adventure.

PRUSSIAN STORY.

On a dreary autumn day in the reign of Frederick William, a heavy travelling carriage was slowly lumbering along the muddy road from Potsdam to Berlin. Within it was one person only, who took no heed of the slowness of the travelling; but, leaning back in a corner, was arranging a multiplicity of papers contained in a small portfolio and making notes in a pocket book. Since he was dressed in a plain dark military uniform it was fair to suppose that this gentleman belonged to the Prussian army, but to which grade of it nobody could determine, as all tokens of rank had been removed. A chilly November evening was closing in, and though the rain had for some time ceased, the darkness of cloud flying through the sky gave warning that a "weeping" darkness was at hand. The road grew heavier and heavier, at least so it should have seemed to a foot traveller who was ploughing his way through the mire; and so doubtless it did seem to the carriage horse, who floundered along as slowly that the pedestrian whom they had overtaken, kept easily by the side of the coach, the occupant of which, looking out of the window and perceiving the stranger, called out in rather an authoritative tone of voice:

"Hallo! young man whether are you bound the stormy looking night?"

"That is more than I can tell you, not being at home in this part of the world. My wish is to reach Berlin; but if I find a resting place before I get there, to that I am bound, for I am weary."

"I should think you must have two hours walk before you," was the unsatisfactory remark that followed.

"The young man made no reply, and after a short pause the stranger said—

"If it seems you to rest a few minutes in the carriage for a few minutes you are welcome to do so, Herr Wally's your name."

"My name is Heinrich Meyer," replied the young man, "one of those who wisely never releases the small benefit because the larger one is not to be obtained."

"From inside the window the next question put to Heinrich was—

"What are you going to Berlin for?"

"To hunt for some cousins," was the answer.

"And pray who may they be?" asked the unknown.

"Well, to tell you the truth, I have not an idea who they are, or where to look for them. Indeed, it is more than doubtful whether I have so much as an acquaintance in Berlin, much less a relation."

The questioner, looking amused and astonished and he said—

"Surely there must be some other motive for your going to Berlin, or what could have put this idea into your head?"

"Why," replied Heinrich, "I have just become a clergyman, without the smallest chance of getting anything to do in my neighborhood. I have no relative to help me, and not quite money enough to find me in necessities."

"But," said the Prussian, "what on earth has this to do with cousins in Berlin?"

"Well, now, who knows! I am my fellow-students, have got good appointments, and whenever I asked them to let me know how it was done, the answer always was, 'a cousin gave it to me,' or 'I got it through the interest of a cousin who lives at Berlin.' Now, as I find none of these useful cousins live in the country, I must go without their help or else hunt for them in Berlin."

This was all said in a comical, dry way, so that his listener could not refrain from laughing but made no comment. However, he pulled a piece of paper, and began to write upon it. When he had finished he turned round to Heinrich, saying that he observed he had been smoking, and that he felt inclined to do the same, but had forgotten to bring tinder with him. Could Herr Meyer oblige him with a light?

"Certainly, with great pleasure," was the prompt reply; and Heinrich, taking a tinder-box out of his wallet, immediately began to strike a light. Now, the evening was damp—so damp that there seemed little enough prospect of the tinder's lighting; moreover, the wind blew the sparks out almost before they fell.

"Well, if your cousins are not more easily to be got at than your light is, I pity you, young man," was the sole remark to which the stranger condescended, as he watched Heinrich's labors and endeavors.

"Nil desperandum is my motto," answered the young man; and when the words were scarcely uttered the light had been struck. In his delight at succeeding Heinrich jumped up on the carriage seat, and leaning through the window, thrust the tinder eagerly in the direction of the gentleman's face.

"Hurra, sir, puff away!"

After a short pause, during which time the stranger had been puffing at his pipe, he removed it from his mouth, and addressed Heinrich in this way—

"I have been thinking over what you have been telling me, and perhaps, in an humble way, I might be able to assist you, and thus act the part of the cousin you are seeking. At all events, when you get to Berlin take this note," handing him the slip of paper on which he had been writing; "take this note to Marshal Gramow, who is somewhat of a friend of mine. But mind! Do exactly as I bid you, and do not, under any circumstances, let any one else see it. It will help you, I tell you, to get to Berlin."

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word; but he is rather eccentric, and the way he says about doing a kindness may perhaps seem strange to you. And now, he continued, as the road is improved, I must hurry on the horse, and so bid you good evening, hoping you will prosper in your new career."

As Heinrich began to express his thanks for the good wishes of his unknown friend, the signal was given to increase the speed of the horse, and before he had time to make any acknowledgments, he found himself alone again. The young man was not a little astonished at what had taken place, and as he gazed on the slip of paper, and as he wondered whether any good would come of it. These were the only words written on it—

"DEAR MARSHAL!—If you can forward the views of the bearer, Heinrich Meyer, you will oblige your friend. Let me know the result of the interview with him."

"Time will prove this, as it does all other things," thought Heinrich as he proceeded on his way. Somehow or other the road appeared less wearisome, and he felt less tired and fatigued, since receiving the paper. Hope was stronger within him than it had been for many a day, and quickening his pace he reached Berlin by nightfall.

The noise and bustle of the capital was new to him; and he had some little difficulty in making his way to an inn. He found one, at last, and after a frugal supper he retired to rest. After breakfast he went some time in searching for the residence of Gramow. The house was, however, at last gained, and having delivered his message to a servant, Heinrich awaited the result in the hall. In a few minutes the servant returned, and requested him, in a respectful manner, to follow him to the Marshal's presence. Arrived there he was received most courteously; and the Marshal made many inquiries as to his past life and future prospects; requested to be told the name of the village or town in which he had been educated; at which time he was living in Berlin, &c. But still no allusion was made either to the note or to the writer of it. The interview lasted about twenty minutes; at the end of which time the Marshal dismissed him, desiring that he would call again on that day fortnight.

At last the time appointed for his second visit to the Marshal arrived. His reception was again most favorable. The Marshal begged him to be seated at the table at which he was writing, and proceeded at the same time to business. Unfolding a drawer and bringing forth a small bundle of papers, he handed Heinrich, as he drew them forth, one by one, if he knew in whose handwriting the various inscriptions were.

Heinrich answered that, to the best of his belief, one was that of Herr Model, his former schoolmaster; another that of Doctor von Hummer, the principal of such a college as he called to mind.

"Quite right," remarked the Marshal; "and perhaps it may not surprise you to hear that I have written to these different gentlemen to inquire your character, that I may know with whom I have to deal, and not be deceived in the dark." As he said these words the Marshal fixed his eyes on Heinrich to see what effect they had, but the young man's countenance was unaltered; he evidently feared no evil report. "I feel bound," continued the Marshal, "to tell you that all they say of you is most favorable. Could I have had any other man to set upon their opinions. I have now to beg of you to follow me to a friend's house."

The Marshal descended a private staircase leading to the courtyard, crossing which he passed through a gate, and entered a narrow side street down which he conducted Heinrich, till they arrived at a private entrance, to the palace. Heinrich began to get exceedingly nervous; the conviction that this idea was not a mere trick of the imagination became stronger and stronger.

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No answer was returned as the Marshal continued to lead him through various galleries and apartments until at last they reached the door of one situated in a corner of a wing of the palace, where the marshal's knock was answered by a short "come in."

As the door opened one glance sufficed to convince Heinrich that his friend in the mud and the king were one and the same person. The poor cousin seer, greatly confused, knelt before Frederic William and began faltering out contrite apologies.

"Rise young man," said the King; "you are not a common reason. How on earth could you guess who I was? I should not travel quietly if I meant to be everywhere recognized."

After re-assuring Heinrich, the King told him that he was prepared to do what he could to push him forward in the profession he had chosen.

"But first," he said, "I must hear you preach. On Sunday next, therefore, you shall preach before me; but mind! I shall choose the text. You may retire."

By the time Heinrich Meyer reached his room in the inn, he had learned the full meaning of the fact that he was to preach to the King. The fact was too clear, and all he could do was to set about preparing his sermon as soon as he should have been furnished with the text. For the remainder of the day he never stirred out; every step on the stair was to his ear the beating of the heart.

Nevertheless, evening and night passed, and the next day was far advanced, but still no text.

What was to be done? There were only two days before Sunday. He must go and consult the Marshal, but the latter could give him no further information. All he could do was to promise that, if the King sent the text through him, it should be forwarded with the utmost possible despatch.

That day and the next passed and yet Heinrich heard nothing from either the King or Marshal. Only an official intimation had been sent, as was customary, that he had been selected as the preacher on the following Sunday at the Chapel Royal.

Had it not been that Heinrich knew himself to possess no mean powers of oratory, and that he could even extemporize in case of emergency, he would certainly have run away from Berlin, and abjured his discovered cousin. As it was, he was abided by the course of events, and fortified himself by prayer and philosophy for the momentous hour.

Sunday morning arrived, but no text. Heinrich went to the church appointed, and was conducted to the seat always set apart for the preacher of the day. The King, with the royal family, occupied their accustomed places.

The prayers were ended, and no text. The organ pealed forth its solemn sounds, the preacher was led to the pulpit. The congregation were astonished, not only at his youthful years, but at his being an utter stranger.

The pulpit steps were gained, and the thought flashed across Heinrich's mind that

possibly he should find the text placed for him on the desk.

But, as he was on the point of mounting the stairs, an officer of the royal household delivered to him a folded piece of paper, saying, "His Majesty sends you the text."

After having opened the preliminary prayers the preacher opened the paper, and a verse from the book of Isaiah was written: "What was to be done? Heinrich deliberately examined the white sheet, and, after a short pause, held it before the congregation, saying—

"His Majesty has furnished the text for my sermon. But you may perceive that nothing whatever is upon this sheet of paper. 'Out of nothing God created the world.' I shall, therefore, take the creation for the subject of my discourse this morning."

In accordance with this declaration the preacher went through the whole of the first chapter of Genesis in a masterly way, his style being forcible and clear, and his fluency of language remarkable. His audience, accustomed to the King's recitations, were far more astonished at the dexterity with which the preacher had extricated himself from the difficulty, than at the dilemma in which he had been placed. At last the sermon was ended, the congregation dismissed, and Heinrich found himself in the sacristy, receiving the congratulations of several dignitaries of the church, who all praised him for his happy fortune.

Heinrich endeavored to express his amazement at the singular proceeding of the King, but was told he could only have arrived recently from the provinces, if he had not known that such vagaries were quite common to his Majesty. In the midst of the conversation a stranger arrived to conduct him to the royal presence. Being totally unaware what impression his sermon might have made upon the King, the cousin-seer rather dreaded the approaching audience. But Heinrich had scarcely crossed the threshold of the King's room when his Majesty, knowing an old friend, rolled up a paper and handed it to the young preacher's hand, exclaiming, "Hurra, my puff away! take this for the light you gave me!"

Then throwing himself back in a chair, he laughed heartily at the young preacher's look of surprise and confusion. The latter scarcely knew what reply to make or what to do, but just as he got up to go to his Majesty, the King interrupted him, saying, "Make no fine speeches; go home quietly and examine the contents of your paper. You came to Berlin to seek a cousin; you have found one who, if you go on steadily, will be a great blessing to you."

It is hardly necessary to add that the roll of paper contained a good appointment at the University of Berlin and made Heinrich Meyer one of the royal preachers—Household Words.

Jumpers.

A good high jumper will clear five feet, a first-rate one, five and a half, and an out-and-out among the first-rate, six feet.

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