

ing him able to walk to his mother's lodging, Fitz took leave of him and returned to the theatre.

The widow Senefelder inhabited a miserable apartment in an obscure part of the city. Want and misery were stamped on the innocent faces of the five little ones who surrounded her, and who, with one accord, rushed towards Aloise as he entered.

The eldest, a pretty girl about ten years old, drew them back, and putting her lips close to her brother's ear, whispered—

"Have you brought any supper, Aloise?"

"Here," said he, giving her the silver he had received.

"So much as that?" said the sister; "they must be much pleased to give you so many crowns."

"So much pleased, Marianne, that they have dismissed me."

"Then you are no longer an actor?" said one of the little boys. "So much the better. It is an ungodly profession, our curate says."

"Yes," rejoined another child, "but how shall we get money to buy bread, if Aloise does nothing?"

"Hush, hush," said Marianne; "don't let our dear mamma hear this bad news to-night. We will pray to God, who has taken papa to himself and perhaps He will send us some consolation."

Aloise was silent. He watched all night by his father's corpse, and the next morning followed it to the grave. Instead of returning home, he wandered idly through the streets, pursued by the still recurring question—"What can I do?" Night approached. He thought of returning to his mother, recalling how uneasy his absence would make her; but when he looked around he knew not where he was. In absence of mind, he had wandered far into the country, and the rushing of a river struck his ear. He approached its bank, and, overcome by fatigue and hunger, sank down upon the soft grass. For some time he watched the flowing water, till a dreadful idea entered his poor harrassed brain.

"Beneath that quiet wave," he thought, "all woes would soon be ended. I am no longer good for anything. I am only a burden to my mother, giving her another mouth to feed. I will therefore die, and all will be over!"

Aloise had been educated in sentiments of Christian piety; and now like a ray of light from heaven, the thought struck him that he was meditating a fearful crime. He shuddered, and kneeling down, prayed fervently to God for pardon.

While on his knees, his ideas became gradually confused, the water ceased to flow, and the stars to shine. Aloise slept.

When he opened his eyes, it was day-light. The scene around was gilded by the rising sun. He heard the pleasant singing of the birds, and his heart expanded with joy. He was still among the living—he had not accomplished his wicked resolution; and, falling again on his knees, he thanked God for his mercy. Notwithstanding his bodily weakness, he felt refreshed, and sat down for a few moments on the grass, to collect his thoughts, ere he set out on his return to the city.

While thus resting, his eyes fell on a smooth white chalk-stone, on which was traced the delicate semblance of a sprig of moss, with all its minute flowers and tender fibres. He remembered that the evening before, his tears had fallen on this stone, and moistened the sprig of moss which had probably fallen on it from the beak of some wandering bird. Now, the moss was no longer there, the wind having borne it away, but its impress remained so exquisitely traced on the smooth white surface of the stone, that the young German could not help being struck with the phenomenon,

"This means something," thought he. "I may have been led in mercy to this spot. I am a bad actor, a bad singer, but who knows? I may be reserved for something better."

Taking the stone in his hand, Aloise rose up and turned his steps homeward.

At the gate of the city, he met his little brother, whom his mother had sent to seek him. The child told him that an old uncle of their mother had come to see her on the morning of the burial and had given her a sum of money to relieve her wants.

"My God, I thank thee," said young Senefelder mentally. He did not then know that the stone which he held in hand, would cause him in a few days still greater emotions of thankfulness. At first he employed his discovery only in ornamenting the covers of caskets, snuff-boxes, &c.; but, one day it occurred to him to take off on wet paper the picture drawn on stone. The experiment succeeded, and lithography was discovered.

In time, Aloise brought the art to perfection. He studied chemistry for the purpose; and rich and happy were his prosperous family around him. He felt that he could never be sufficiently thankful for having outlived his design of self-destruction.

"Why should we ever despair?" he would say. "God can turn our pain into pleasure, and our bitterness into joy."