

to rise, but failing, set up a despairing howl. I could not help them and there they remained where they soon froze to death. My feelings, as I turned and left them, may be better imagined than described. Continuing on our way we reached the fort at 10 p. m., having stopped twice to refresh ourselves with water. We travelled the 70 miles in 20 hours, on snowshoes, with the thermometer at 65° below zero and without a mouthful to eat. But this old travellers are prepared to do at any time and do not take credit to themselves for having accomplished anything extraordinary.

The Story of the "Moonlight Sonata"

HOW BEETHOVEN COMPOSED IT.

"WE all know the story of that night when Beethoven, despairing, with the world against him, beggarly poor, wandered with his friend by the River Rhine, and expressed how completely hopeless had grown his life. "No one understands or cares for me," he cried—"I have genius and am treated as an outcast. I have a heart and none to love. I hate myself, I hate the world, and I wish it were all over, and forever."

Then we see him, as they leave the river side and pass down the narrow street, suddenly pause and stand still, listening to the faint notes of a worn piano that strike on the night air from an invisible source. He recognizes in the music a part from his own symphony in F., played with wonderful feeling and expression, and immediately the man is changed; himself, his cares and the world are for the time alike forgotten—lost in the soul of the musician and artist.

He hurries forward, followed by his friend, until he is opposite the mean dwelling from whence the sounds proceed, then turning he simply says, "Follow me!" and without even knocking, lifts the latch and enters. The room before them is plain to shabbiness. In one cor-

ner stands an old harpischord, and seated by it is the slender form of a girl, with long, golden hair falling over her shoulders. Off to one side, near a rough board table on which a candle is dimly burning, is seated a pale young man, making shoes. Both start as the master and his friend enter, not knowing what to make of the intrusion. Beethoven is first to speak. "Pardon me"—he says. "I heard music and was tempted to enter. I am a musician."

After some further conversation during which he learns that the girl is blind, we see him at the instrument and his hands wandering over the keys in an improvisation that might have thrilled the hearts of emperors. On, on he plays, lost in his theme, until the candle burns low, goes out, and the room is unlit save by the moonlight that streams in through the window, and falls in a silver flood over the calm, inspired face of the composer, and white keys of the instrument. What a tableau it must have presented, in that chill, dark room, when their souls listened, silent and awed, to the strains of passionate tenderness and gradations of melody that fell from the master's fingers. We can almost see the blind girl with her form bent forward, her sightless orbs wide open, lips apart, and breath abated, drinking in the music whose like the world, perchance, has never since heard. Beethoven at length pauses, his head droops on his breast, his hands rest on his knees and his mind becomes lost in meditation. The young shoemaker goes forward, touches him reverently and asks: "Wonderful man, who and what are you?" Beethoven does not reply at first, but on the question being repeated, smiles, and turning to the piano plays the opening bar from his symphony in F.

From the lips of brother and sister—for such they are—breaks the cry "Beethoven!" and covering his hands with kisses they beg him to play once more.

Turning again to the piano he looks out at the sky and stars a moment and says: "I will improvise a sonata to the moonlight." Then commences the opening bars of that weird, beautiful composition, known to the world as the "Moonlight Sonata."