

door opens I will advance; I will know where each one shall sit; I will make a sign to Katel to approach and attend; it is very good! Then the glasses to the right, they are for the Bordeaux, to commence with; at the middle there is the Rudesheim, and after that the Johannisberg de Capuchins. All these come in their order and have their own time; the oil caster on the chimney, the salt and pepper on the table—nothing shall be forgotten, I flatter myself. Ah, the wine! It must be getting too warm. We will refresh it with a bath under the pump, except the Bordeaux, which should not be drank cold. And now for my part, I must wash and shave and put on my maroon redingote. So it goes, Kobus! Ah! ah! ah! what a feast it will be! And outdoors there is a superb sun. Not a minute to lose."

Fritz went out; in passing the kitchen he saw Katel warming the Bordeaux and refreshing the other wines. He was ready and entered the room singing very low. "Tra ri ro, the autumn gads the ground, you, you, you."

The good odor of the soup filled all the crevices of the mansion, and the grand frenzel of the Beuf Rouge entered to uncover the service; for the old cook, Katel, could not be in the kitchen and dining room at the same time.

The half hour sounded from the clock of St. Landolphe and the guests arrived together.

There is nothing more agreeable in this world below than to sit down with three or four friends before a well served table, spread in the antique dining room of one's ancestors, there to gravely attach your napkin beneath your chin, plunge your spoon into a good crayfish soup, and pass your guests their plates. It makes one happy to commence such a dinner, with the windows open and looking out where nature is smiling under the blue sky of autumn.

And when you take the great knife with its horn handle and cut through the foundation slices of mutton, or with the silver trowel delicately divide the whole length of a superb jellied pike—its mouth filled with parsley—with what an air of satisfaction the others regard you! Then, when you reach behind your chair into the bowl for another bottle and place it between your knees to draw out the cork without disturbing the wine, they laugh, thinking, "What good thing is coming now" Ah! let me tell you, it is a great pleasure to treat one's old friends and to think that in this way will recommence, year after year, these good dinners till the final summons comes that calls us from all mundane things. And when at the fifth or sixth bottle one's face animates with grateful acknowledgment the All Provider, who heaps over us his benediction—while another celebrates the glory of old Germany, of its ham, of its pates, of its noble wine—when Kaspar, softened,

craves pardon of Michel for having had a grudge against him, which Michel never suspected; and when Christian, his head resting on his shoulders, laughs very low, dreaming of Father Bischoff—now more than ten years dead, and whom he had forgotten—while some talked of the chase, others of music—and all together—stopping every now and then to break into great bursts of laughter—it is then that every little thing becomes a source of happiness, and paradise, the true paradise, returns again to earth.

Very well! That was precisely the state of things in the house of Fritz Kobus about twilight.

At this moment the old David Sichel entered, and one might easily imagine the cries of enthusiasm he received.

"Ah, David! There is David—he has come! Good! good!"

The old rabbi cast sardonic glances on the tarts cut in different shapes, on the broken pates, on the emptied bottles, and, comprehending the stage of revelry the fete had reached, he laughed under his beard.

"Ha, David!" cried Kobus, "there is yet time: ten minutes more and I would have sent the guard after you. You have already lost half an hour. There's your chair, old fellow; sit down. What a shame that you can't taste this pate; it is delicious!"

"Yes," said the grand Frederick, "but it is ham; he dare not taste it. Heaven made all these good things—these hams, this venison, these sauces—for us."

"And indigestion, also," said David, laughing a little maliciously. "How many times did your father, Johann Schultz, repeat to me that same thing! It is a pleasantry of the family which passes from father to son, like the pointed peruke and the velvet breeches with two buckles. All that does not prevent me from saying that if your father had less love for these same sauces, this ham, and this venison, he would be as well and strong as I. But, as for you other 'Schande,' you won't listen to anything, and sometimes the one and sometimes the other of you are taken like rats in a trap because they loved lard."

"Ah! Do you see?" cried Kobus. "The old 'poche Israel' pretends to be afraid of indigestion, whereas it is really the law of Moses which prevents him from eating with us."

"Hold your tongue," interrupted David, speaking through his nose. "I give that reason for those who cannot understand better reasons. Let that suffice for you. It is a good enough reason for a sergeant of the Landwehr who is brave enough to let a peasant run away with his boots. There is as much danger in indigestion as there is in an Ales-tian pitchfork."

Then a great burst of laughter arose on all sides, and the grand Frederick, lifting his