

man, and collared him. "Not if we know it," exclaimed he; "you'll have the wolves for bedfellows to-night, I reckon. Come along, my fine fellow." As he spoke he turned his back towards the baron, with the intention of dragging his victim towards the door. The baron's little grey eye twinkled, and his whole frame quivered with suppressed emotion, which after the lapse of a moment, vented itself into a kick, and such a kick! Not one of your Varsoviana flourishes, but a kick that employed every muscle from hip to toe and drove the worthy steward up against the door, like a ball from a catapult. Misfortune never came singly, and so Mynhear Klootz found with regard to the kick, for it was followed without loss of time, by several dozen others, as like it as possible, from the baron's heavy boots. Wounded lions proverbially come badly off and Fritz and Carl, who had suffered from many an act of petty tyranny on the part of the steward, thought that they could not do better than follow their master's example, which they did to such good purpose, that when the unfortunate Klootz did escape from the cottage at last, I don't believe he could have had any oz sacrum left.

After having executed this little act of poetical justice, the baron and his servants visited the other cottages, in all of which they were received with dread, and dismissed with blessings. Having completed his tour of charity, the baron returned home to breakfast, feeling more really contented than he had been for many a long year. He found Bertha, who had not risen when he started, in a considerable state of anxiety as to what he could possibly have been doing. In answer to her inquiries he told her with a roughness he was far from feeling, to mind her own business. The gentle eyes filled with tears at the harshness of the reply; perceiving which, the baron was beyond measure distressed, and chucked her under the chin in what was meant to be of a very conciliatory manner. Eh! what, my pretty? tears? No, surely. Bertha must forgive her old father. I didn't mean it, you know, my pet; and yet, on second thought, yes I did, too. Bertha's face was overcast again. My little girl thinks she has no business anywhere, oh! is that it? Well, then, my pet, sup-

pose you make it your business to write a note to young Carl von Sempach, and say I'm afraid I was rather rude to him yesterday, but if he'll look over it, and come and take a snug family dinner and a slice of pudding with us to-day—Why pa, you don't mean—yes, I do really believe you do—The baron's eyes were winking nineteen to the dozen. Why, you dear, dear, dear old pa! And at the imminent risk of upsetting the breakfast table, Bertha rushed at the baron, and flinging two soft white arms about his neck! kissed him—oh! how she did kiss him. I shouldn't have thought, myself, she could possibly have any left for Carl; but I dare say Bertha attended to his interests in that respect somehow.

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Well, Carl came to dinner, and the baron was, not very many years after, promoted to the dignity of a grandpa, and a very jolly old grandpa he made. Is that all you want to know?

About Klootz? Well Klootz got over the kicking, but he was dismissed from the baron's service; and on examination of his accounts, it was discovered that he had been in the habit of robbing the baron of nearly a third of his yearly income, which he had to refund; and with the money he was thus compelled to disgorge, the baron built new cottages for his tenants, and stocked their farms. Nor was he the poorer in the end, for his tenants worked with the energy of gratitude, and he was soon many times the richer than when the goblin visited him on that Christmas eve.

And was the goblin ever explained? Certainly not. How dare you have the impertinence to suppose such a thing? An empty bottle, covered with cobwebs, was found the next morning in the turret-chamber, which the baron at first imagined must be the bottle from which the goblin produced his magic wine; but as it was found on examination, to be labelled Old Jamaica Rum, of course that could not have had anything to do with it. However it was, the baron never thoroughly enjoyed any other wine after it; and as he did not henceforth get drunk, on an average more than two nights a week, or swear more than eight oaths a day, I think King Christmas may be considered to have measurably reformed him. And he always main-