

fore their father's guest. Ruttler had found it difficult to obtain sponsors for his children, and had usually depended upon the good offices of some neighbors, or even upon some chance passer. For the youngest no godfather had been chosen, and the stranger proposed to act as sponsor for the infant, calling her Gabrielle, and giving one hundred florins for the christening feast, to which he invited himself. Ruttler hesitated to take the sum. "Come, come," said the stranger, "when you know me better, you will see that I am not unworthy to share your sorrows. I perceive a violin in your shop, bring it to me, here, at this table, I have a sudden idea, which I must commit to paper." Ruttler quickly took down the violin, and handed it to the stranger, whose skill awoke such wonderful sounds, that the street was soon filled with listeners. A number of distinguished persons recognising the artist by his melody, stopped their carriages. But he, completely occupied by his composition, did not notice the eager crowd that surrounded Ruttler's shop, and, on finishing his writing, put the paper into his pocket, gave his address to Ruttler, intimating that he should expect to be at the christening. Three days elapsed; and the stranger came no more. In vain Ruttler's children placed the stool before their father's door. On the third day, several persons dressed in black, with mournful countenances, stopped, and sadly contemplated the humble seat. Ruttler then determined to make some inquiries as to the fate of his former guest. He went to the house to which the stranger addressed him. The door was hung in black; a coffin was surrounded by an immense quantity of wax-lights; a throng of artists, grandees, scientific and literary men lamented the sorrowful event that had taken place. The truth, for the first time, flashed across Ruttler's mind; he learned, with astonishment, that he whose funeral obsequies were on the point of celebration—his guest, the proposed godfather of his child—was Mozart! Mozart, who, seated on the rude stool, was composing his requiem! the last effort of "Germany's expiring Swan." It is said that Ruttler's establishment became much frequented, and he was thus able to provide handsomely for his children. The youngest was named Gabrielle, as Mozart had desired, and the violin on which the great composer had played, served as the marriage portion of his god-daughter. It was afterwards sold for four thousand florins, with the seat on which Moz-