

the assembled miners. Martin Varasok again essayed, threw, but once more threw short.—Bereny then triumphantly grasped the bar, and strengthened by the excitement of several cups of his sparkling wine, hurled it in first-rate style beyond the mark, and was proclaimed winner of the prize, a small silver goblet.—Overpowered with vexation, his rival walked away. His father, who had watched the whole affair with some chagrin, followed Martin with hasty strides, and thus endeavoured to console him: "Come, cheer up, my boy. I don't care for the loss of my cause, nor mind you the defeat in your game. These are the ups and downs in life, the buckets that go to the bottom of the shaft come up again filled. But something else is on your mind, Martin."

"I will not complain," replied young Varasok, "though my heart is ready to burst!"

"What is it, boy?" said Johan.—Martin sighed, and uttered "Marie!"

"Well," rejoined his father, "Marie Schonborn is a good girl, and I always wished that, if you were rich enough to marry—"

"Marie," exclaimed Martin, "will never be my wife."

"Why, I should like to know?" inquired Varasok.

"Karl Bereny!" replied Martin.

"Karl Bereny again! What! has he insinuated himself there, too?"

"Yes," said Martin. "Her mother told me last night that Marie was to be Karl's wedded wife."

"Her mother is an old woman; what does the girl say herself, Martin?"

"Ah! father," sighed young Varasok, "I had hoped—I had fancied that I had perceived a tender joy sparkling in her eye when I have addressed her. My want of confidence, the infirmity of my temper, is the cause of my misery."

Johan paused, and muttered, "Marie Schonborn a jilt! I am an old miner, and have lived half my life under ground—but woman is woman. Compare Karl Bereny with my Martin Varasok!"

At this moment the shouts and laughter were borne across the plain on the gale—"Hark!" said Johan, "the wine has got into their heads, and I am just in the humour to break a pate or two, and if I once begin, I'll—But as I am sober, and they are not, poor beasts! I'll prudently put myself out of mischief."

Hereupon the father and son walked toward their own home.

Although the young men and women were dancing and frisking about merrily, and tuning up to concert pitch with Karl Bereny's libel supply, a knot of elderly persons were gathered round the cart, and several had begun their pipes, listening to Peter Patak's jokes and stories. Among them, with her ears wide open, was the wife of Varasok, a comely, healthy looking dame, but pre-eminently possessed with a foible of her sex, curiosity. Peter Patak had been informing his auditor of a rumour that one of the shafts of the mine was haunted; and, on being asked what business a ghost had in an iron mine, Peter said that was not the person to meddle with a specter business, he hoped that he might be picked up in pieces with pick-axes if he hadn't seen the ghost himself.

"Tush, Peter!" remarked the dame, "I saw your own light figure reflected in one of the pools!"

"Light figure!" replied Patak, placing his hands on his protuberant stomach. "Oh, I never reflect."

"Have any of the other miners seen a goblin?" inquired the dame.

"Johan Varasok, your lawful husband, has seen it; but he isn't a bit afraid of it."

"My husband, bless his heart! does not fear the devil himself, though I say it." Peter gave a gulp, and muttered, "he was a bold man when he married you, old lady."

The group now separated; the highly complimented wife of Johan Varasok wended her way home to prepare her husband's food before he started for his customary occupation at the mine. When she entered their well-ordered little cottage, she saw her good John sitting by the light of a flickering lamp, who danced the shadow of his sober head against the whitened wall.

"Well, Theresa," said Johan, glancing kindly at her, "I must be stirring; it is my turn to relieve the other gang of workmen. My bucket—I hope there is plenty in it. Put the loaves of millet bread in."

"Why, Johan," said the dame, tartly, "I can't eat all the victuals I put in your basket."

"How do you know I don't," replied Varasok. "I am in pretty good condition round about; I work hard, and require food and drink in proportion."

"That may be, Johan," responded his wife, "but why do you require a double portion of candles in your basket when you go to the mine? You don't eat them, I suppose?"

"No," said Johan, "they consume the