

gold, and looked as graceful and at the same time as powerful a youth as Germany could produce. He had just girt on his sword, and held in his hand his velvet cap with its heron's feather fastened by a precious jewel, as he said to himself,

"I must go and wake poor Herbert; the child I fear ought hardly to thank me for my many infringements on his sleep." He had scarcely spoken the words, when the door opened, and in tripped his favourite page to whom he referred. He too was gaily dressed, and all ready, and laughingly exclaimed, 'Ha! my master, up already? You will never once give me an opportunity of discharging my office of a faithful page, and helping you to rise. This morning I thought to have been first. Good morning, however, for a fine morning it is!'

"It seems to have come on purpose for us," said the Count: 'but let us hasten down. For depend upon it, good Father Bernard is as early as either of us, and is by this time ready in the chapel. Hark! there is the bell for Mass.'

"So down they went: Herbert, an orphan boy of fifteen, blooming and frolicsome as any page, holding the Count's hand and leaping down the stairs. But, when he came to the chapel, he most gravely threw off his sword, and, going to the chancel, knelt behind Father Bernard, and devoutly served his mass. That ended, they proceeded to the hall, where a most substantial breakfast awaited them, to which they did full justice. The court-yard of the castle was, in the meantime, a scene of boisterous activity—esquires and huntsmen, falconers and grooms, all talking and laughing at once; fiery steeds pawing the ground, and deep-toned hounds baying in their eagerness to start for the chase, made a pretty hubbub, you may suppose.

"The Count, therefore, gave them orders to hasten forward to the place appointed for their day's sport, a forest at some miles' distance from the castle, and get all ready to begin as soon as he and Herbert should arrive. Not long after, Rodolph mounted his splendid charger, caparisoned most richly, as became his rank, and Herbert vaulted into the saddle of a beautiful palfrey and came to his side. They dashed over the pavement of the court, passed under the vaulted gateway, and descended the hill.

"Thou knowest, Herbert," said the Count, as they rode together, 'wherefore I have chosen Ahrberg as the scene of our sport.'

"I can guess," said Herbert, archly, 'you wish to make a double profit—refresh the body and enrich the soul. You intend, of course, to visit the holy hermitess, Marie, and ask her prayers.'

"I do, my boy, and wilt thou come with me?"

'I would sooner lose the best stroke in the chase than miss it. I always feel better after her kind words and blessing. But listen! what is that sound?'

"They were now almost in sight of the place of their sport, and could hear the cheerful voice of men and dogs; but Rodolph reined up his steed, listened for a moment, and replied—'It is only the tinkle of a sheep-bell on the mountain path above us.'

'They proceeded a few steps, and both stopped again.

"It cannot be," said Herbert, 'its sound is too regular, and, hush! methinks I hear the sound of voices with it.'

"'Tis HE! 'tis HE!' exclaimed Rodolph, and both instinctively turned their horses, and waited at the point where the upper path joined the road.

"There they sprang from their saddles, and knelt uncovered, and lowly bowed. A poor country curate, feeble with years, in surplice and stole, was bearing the adorable Sacrament of our Lord's Body, as the Viaticum, to a poor cottager far among the mountains. His sole attendant was a little clerk in his surplice too, bearing a lantern with a lighted taper and a bell, and answering to his prayers. When they reached the spot where the knight and his page was kneeling, and holding their horses' bridles, they would have passed by. But Rodolph could not think of this; but, reverently addressing the minister of God, insisted upon his mounting his steed, and helped him to do so. Then having asked him whither he was going, he took the bridle in one hand, and holding his bonnet in the other, gently and carefully led the horse over the wild and rugged path. The chase and its allurements were at once forgotten; for Rodolph found greater delight in waiting on his own Lord. Herbert, as may be supposed, followed the good example; and placing the boy upon his palfrey, led him in like manner.

"After a long and weary walk, they reached the hut of a poor woodman, far removed from human habitations. They entered in; and the nobleman and his page knelt down, and most devoutly followed all the solemn rites by which the Church assists her children in their last struggle, but principally that heavenly banquet which strengthens and refreshes them. When all was finished they arose, and the count slipped his purse of gold into the hands of the good woman of the house. The priest now thanked him for his edifying attendance, and was wishing him a good journey, when Rodolph interrupted him.

"Not so, reverend sir, but I must e'en con-