

they seem to live and breathe and speak; and for a few moments, man is brought face to face with something mightier than this lower life.

Till thirty years ago, Suldén was a *terra incognita*. The inhabitants, consisting only of some twenty-five families,* lived simply and contentedly on milk, cheese and spring water. So lonely was it that a spot not far away was known by the name of *Am Ende der Welt* (At the world's end), and it is said that the bears came into the huts as unbidden but not forbidden guests, to share the frugal meal. The good Curé Eller, himself a son of the mountains, received the few chance guests, and then he and his sisters, Philomena and Kathi, opened a homelike hostel for the travellers who began to recognise Suldén as an admirable starting-point for mountain excursions. The Alpine clubs of the Prague and Düsseldorf sections have done a capital piece of work in marking out paths to the leading features of the mountain group, and building the huts where the traveller can spend the night. Then, on the track of the mountaineers, followed guests for health or pleasure, and the large new hotel in which we were built by Otto Schmid in 1892 to 1893. A sister hotel of greater pretensions was built about the same time in the adjoining valley of Trafoi. The special curiosity of Trafoi is a sacred spring pouring itself forth by three openings in the breasts of the images of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin and St. John.

The Suldén Hotel accommodates about two hundred guests, and is generally well

* See *Suldén Trafoi*, by Th. Cristomannos (Innsbruck).

filled for seven weeks in the summer, closing early in September. The charges are not high; the *pension* is about seven francs a day, and the cuisine and service are good. The dining-room here and at Trafoi is a spacious, airy hall, with an open roof of polished pine. From one of its beams hangs a stuffed eagle with outspread wings, grasping in its claws a mossy branch gemmed with small electric lights like diamond fungi. The waitresses are Swiss girls in a pretty costume, and are neat and obliging. Among the guests, came the Princess Stéfanie, in simple, workmanlike costume, and ascended the rough path on foot, disdaining the mule that followed behind, laden with the warm wraps of her party. He had hoped to bear the weight of a princess, but had to content himself with a kindly pat on the nose from her royal hand. As the people stood round to salute her as she left, it was interesting to see the guides, in their rough but picturesque dress, form an inner group around her carriage, as much as to say, "We are the children of the soil here, and we claim the right to approach our own princess." The loyalty of the Tyrolese to the Austrian house has proved itself for centuries; "true to the death" are they, and they had a good right to the gracious bow their royal lady gave them.

The people of Suldén are a simple and pious race. None meets another without the salutation *Grüss Gott!* and on every road at intervals one sees a crucifix under a protecting board, which the passer-by salutes with a sign of reverence. On the green slope beneath the pines not far from the hotel, we noticed with interest and amusement the figure of one little

saint perched on a tree-stump in a shabby wooden niche, a flat stone acting as a roof. He was of wood and painted, and his garb was that of a priest. His face was very melancholy, all the more because the rain had washed the black from his biretta all down his cheek, and one arm—broken off—was stuck in absurdly by his ear. We found he was St. John Nepomuck, the Bohemian saint, and the cause of his transplantation from Bohemia was amusing. St. Joseph is the patron of the Tyrol, and was appealed to for help in a time of flood, but as his response to the appeal was unsatisfactory, St. John Nepomuck was added as a second patron, being supposed—from the fact of his having been drowned in the Moldau—to be well versed in matters concerning inundations, and to have special power to avert them. If successful, he deserves more gratitude than he would seem to get, judging from his poor little effigy.

When the time of departure came, it was hard to say good-bye to those quiet glades beneath the pines; those living, dancing streams; those ever-new aspects of the snow. The day was lowering; clouds had rolled across the mountains in masses, lying softly on grey ledges of rock, curling over the pine-woods; and at last settling down into an obdurate mist, "till on the valley," as an Austrian gentleman obligingly informed us. So in this veil of mist and cloud we left our sweet Tyrolese abiding-place; and soon the great hotels would be closed and the visitors gone, and silence and snow would settle on the land.

ANNE MERCIER.

THE PRIZE DESIGN.

CHAPTER II.

"He gave to misery—all he had—a tear;
He gained from Heaven—'twas all he
wished—a friend."

WHEN I entered my new abode the following morning, all my worldly goods were comprised in a small brown paper parcel, the few miserable bits of furniture in my garret having been seized by the landlord in lieu of rent.

I had scarcely said good-day to madame before I was introduced to my charges. The two little girls, who were twins, and the exact counterpart of their mother, shrieked long and loud as I approached them. In vain did I coax them, in vain did I stroke their yellow hair and by all the endearments possible try to win them to my side. They were obdurate, and their cries got more frequent and more pronounced.

"The poor little darlings are so timid," said their mother, "and they have a rooted dislike of strangers, especially such as are unprepossessing."

This was an unkind thrust, but I took it humbly enough.

"Perhaps," said I, checking back my tears, "when they know me better they will begin to dislike me less."

"There is no doubt about it, for, as I told you before, when properly treated they are simply angels."

As she spoke she produced from the cupboard cakes and sweetmeats, and the "angels," forgetting to shriek, were now fiercely quarrelling over a particular cake with a chocolate pyramid on the top. She looked on approvingly.

"You see," she said, "what spirits my dear ones possess. I have known them to quarrel all day long over a doll with a broken head

and one eye. Their importunity was admirable, Miss Clair, I do assure you. Now, Jim—"

I trembled at his name. If these spoilt and naughty children were the angels, what could I expect from Jim?

"Jim," continued madame, "has perhaps a little too much life. He is so fond of kicking, biting and scratching; but as we intend him for the army we do not curb his restlessness, for Jim is every inch a man."

Just as she finished speaking this young hero entered the room. Seeing his sisters eating cakes he pounced upon them, and with a ferocity and greed that shocked me, began stuffing his mouth and pockets with what remained of the cakes.

I was about to remonstrate with the boy on his gross ill-manners when madame stopped me precipitously.

"Miss Clair," she said, "you really must not interfere with my son's behaviour. All his little peculiarities of temperament demonstrate in him the soldier and the man."

My heart began to sink, but I answered never a word, and presently madame told me to go to my room to deposit my things there, as she wished me to begin lessons at once. She furthermore informed me that I should be expected to eat in the servants' hall, as during the children's meals my whole attention would be required for them.

I left her silently and sought my room. It was situated in a wing of the house newly built, but as yet unfinished. My apartment, which was of huge dimensions, was absolutely devoid of furniture, with the exception of a small iron bedstead stowed away in the corner. The floor was bare, and even the walls were unpainted and unpapered. The room overlooked the stables, and not a green leaf, nor flower, nor tree was visible.

For one moment my heart rebelled, and I thought, with something like regret, of my dark little garret with its red geranium and its friendly creeper. But I had no time for thought, for even as I undid my humble parcel Parker, the butler, knocked at the door and informed me that I was wanted downstairs.

I could see by the way in which the man addressed me that he disliked me, and I found out later that his unreasonable aversion had spread to every member of the servants' hall, so that at meal times I was either made the object of ridicule or treated as an utter nonentity.

At lessons with the children another disappointment awaited me. I found they knew scarcely anything, and my most strenuous exertions to impart knowledge met with continual failure.

Heaven knows that I tried hard, with patience and perseverance, to train their thoughts from frivolity to seriousness. I would intersperse my teaching with anecdotes, and recite poetry to them, trying to inculcate them with a love and enthusiasm for nature and art. Sometimes I think my enthusiasm impressed them a little. They would listen with wide open eyes and remain very still—but, alas! they never remembered anything the following day, so my labour was in vain. Jim was absolutely untractable; nothing interested him, nothing amused him, and even to this day I have upon me traces of his many kicks and blows.

The hours which were not spent in teaching were taken up with mending and housework. I never had a holiday, and I never had a moment to myself. I was working hard and conscientiously, but with so little result that I was many a time taken to task by madame for the ignorance of her children.

I had been in the service of Madame