

white snow, which lay like a never-ending white lawn upon the ground, and glittered in myriad silver flakes upon the leaves of the sturdy evergreens. I'm afraid the baron had not had a very good night; at any rate, I know that he was wide awake at an hour long before his usual time of rising. He lay first on one side, and then on the other, and then by way of variety, turned on his back, with his magenta nose pointing perpendicularly toward the ceiling; but it was all of no use. Do what he would, he couldn't get to sleep, and at last, not long after daybreak, he tumbled out of bed, and proceeded to dress. Even after he was out of bed his fidgetiness continued. It did not strike him, until after he had got one boot on, that it would be a more natural proceeding to put his stockings on first; after which he caught himself in the act of trying to put his trousers on over his head (which, I may mention for the information of lady readers who, of course, cannot be expected to know anything about such matters, is not the mode generally adopted.) In a word, the baron's mind was evidently preoccupied; his whole air was that of a man who felt a strong impulse to do something or other, but could not quite make up his mind to it. At last, however, the good impulse conquered, and this wicked old baron, in the stillness of the calm bright Christmas morning, went down upon his knees and prayed. Stiff were his knees and slow his tongue, for neither had done such work for many a long day past, but I have read in the Book of the joy of the angels over a repenting sinner. There needs not much eloquence to pray the publican's prayer, and who shall say but there was gladness in heaven that Christmas morning.

The baron's appearance down stairs at such an early hour occasioned quite a commotion. Nor were the domestics reassured when the baron ordered a bullock to be killed and jointed instantly, and all the available provisions in the larder including sausage, to be packed up in baskets, with a good store of his own peculiar wine. One ancient retainer was heard to declare, with much pathos, that he feared master had gone "off his head." However, "off his head" or not they knew the baron must be obeyed;

and in an exceedingly short space of time, he sailed forth, accompanied by three servants carrying the baskets, and wondering what in the name of fortune their master would do next. He stopped at the cottage of Wilhelm which he visited with the goblin on the previous night. The labors of the fairies did not seem to have produced much lasting benefit, for the appearance of everything around was as wretched as could be. The poor family thought that the baron had come himself to turn them out of house and home; and the poor children huddled up timidly to their mother for protection, while the father attempted some words of entreaty for mercy. The pale, pinched features of the group, and their look of dread and wretchedness, were too much for the baron. "Eh! what! what do you mean, confound you! Turn you out! Of course not: I've brought you some breakfast. Here! Fritz—Carl; where are the knives? Now then, unpack, and don't be a week about it. Can't you see the people are hungry, ye villains? Here lend me the corkscrew." This last being a tool the baron was tolerably accustomed to, he had better success than with those of the fairy carpenters; and it was not long before the poor tenants were seated before a roaring fire, and doing justice with the appetite of starvation, to a substantial breakfast. The baron felt a queer sensation in the throat at the sight of the poor people's enjoyment, and had passed the back of his hand twice across his eyes when he thought no one was looking; but his emotion fairly rose to boiling point when the poor father, Wilhelm, with tears in his eyes, and about a quarter of a pound of beef in his mouth, sprang up from the table and threw himself at the baron's knees, invoking his blessings on him for his goodness. Get up, you audacious scoundrel! roared the baron. What the deuce do you mean by such conduct, eh! confound you! At this moment the door opened, and in walked Myntner Klutz, who had heard nothing of the baron's change of intention, and who, seeing Wilhelm at the baron's feet, and hearing the speaking, as he thought, in an angry tone, at once, jumped at the conclusion that Wilhelm was entreating for longer indulgence. He rushed at the unfortunate