

of the day. To the Burgomaster they wished to give the information, if not through the official mouth of the city Captain, at least through the Lady Burgomaster, who, without the aid of any secret police, uninterruptedly kept a genuine night and day Chronicle of Herbesheim. The women always brought her the history of passing events after Divine Worship on Sunday afternoon. To the party, Herr Bantes promised to come as soon as dark, as he had some business to transact with the people of his manufactory; for he was in the habit of having his workmen come to him on Sunday afternoon. He thought, as he was despatching the last workman, that he should soon be on his way to the party, when suddenly the piercing cry of a woman was heard. Herr Bantes and the workmen were violently frightened. All again was profoundly still.

"See what has happened there, Paul!" said Herr Bantes to the workman. He went, and in a few minutes returned with an entirely changed countenance. Speaking in a tremulous and scarcely audible voice, he said to Herr Bantes:

"Some one wishes to see you."

"Show him in here, then!" said Herr Bantes angrily.

Paul opened the door, and a stranger walked slowly in. He was a tall thin man in a black dress. His appearance indeed was highly pleasing; he had fine features, but his complexion was extremely pale; and through the folds of his black neck-kerchief his skin showed still more livid and death-like. His clean fine linen which showed under his waistcoat, was white as driven snow—the glistening rings,—the *hauteur* visible in his appearance—betokened a man of high standing. Herr Bantes stared at the unknown. He saw the Dead Guest before his eyes; but he turned as well as he could, and bowing with a frightened civility to the new-comer, said to the workman:

"Paul, remain here—I have something more to tell you."

"It gives me great pleasure, Herr Bantes, to make your acquaintance," said the stranger softly and slowly; "I should have made my visit in the morning, had I not required repose after the fatigue of my journey, and had I not feared to trouble you and your family with my untimely arrival."

"I feel myself much honored," said Herr Bantes, with some embarrassment; "but"—Here an involuntary horror seized him. He could scarcely trust his eyes. However he gave the stranger a chair, wishing him at the same time a hundred miles off. The stranger bowed slowly as he took the proffered seat, and said:

"You do not know me; but no doubt you can guess who I am."

It seemed to Herr Bantes as though his hair bristled up straight on end under his wig. He courteously shook his head, but anxiously and with a constrained civility, said:

"I have not the honor of your acquaintance."

"I am Iahn, the son of your old friend," said the Dead Guest in a louder tone, and he smiled on the old man—a smile that chilled his heart's blood.

"Have you no letters from my old friend?" inquired Herr Bantes.

The stranger unfolded a magnificent letter case, and handed him a letter therefrom. It contained a few lines of the ordinary compliments, and the request that Herr Bantes would facilitate the bearer in every thing to overcome the heart of his destined bride. The signature resembled the handwriting of the old Banker; yet it appeared to him somewhat different. Herr Bantes read it over and over again in order to gain time for deliberation. Conflict and contradiction ruled his mind. He wished as an enlightened man to master the involuntary terror that he felt on thinking that before him sat the renowned Dead Guest; but much as he wished it, he could not convince himself that the son of his friend could so perfectly resemble in face and figure the celebrated Guest of the well known legend. Here were no thoughts of imagination, nor of hazard. He rose quickly, and begging the stranger's pardon, he said he must look for his spectacles, his eyes being somewhat dim; and then withdrew in his embarrassment only for the purpose of regaining his presence of mind. As Herr Bantes went into the neighboring room, Paul seized the lock of another door. The Dead Guest turned slowly towards Paul—but with a spring he was out of the room; and he did not come back till he heard Herr Bantes coming from the next room. Herr Bantes in the short time he had been absent had formed a desperate resolution. Uncertain as yet as to the character of the guest before him, he did not wish to place Frederika in danger. He approached him, not entirely without palpitation, and said with a shrug of regret:

"Listen, my most worthy Herr Von Iahn; I entertain for your person all the esteem possible. However the most fatal events for you have happened, which I could not foresee. You have done us much honor in paying us so early a visit. Since I wrote to my friend, your father, an intrigue between my daughter and the commander of this garrison, betrothal,—and its accompaniments,—have taken place. This I first perceived a few days since. The Captain is my foster son, and was once my ward. What could