

want to keep dry, and everything they want to put out of their hands in the course of the day. Heinrich at least was wont to turn this furnace to every possible convenience. It was his writing-desk, for there were his ink-stand and portfolio with note-paper. It was a supplement to his coach-house, for there lay his whip and a bridle, and his spurs. It also was a part of his library, for there were his almanack, and his farming-book, and—his Bible.

The Duke, when returning from a drive and seated down to rest in Heinrich's parlour, would now and then take the Bible from under its dusty cover, and read a page or two.

"Ah! your grace, that's the true book," Heinrich would say, with a smile; "happy are those who understand it."

"I believe so," the Duke would answer.

But when Heinrich was at the stable and happened to meet with the Duke's coachman, he used to put quite different strings upon his harp.

The conversation then carried on used to end in a bitter quarrel. But once upon a time the Duke happened to witness it when he was standing near the stable, the door of which was open. And he thought he must put a stop to that sort of thing.

Now, from the first time the Duke had taken the Bible from Heinrich's furnace, and read a page or two of it, he had felt so deeply concerned in its contents that he had bought a copy of that holy book for himself, and read it diligently. This had made him love the Bible, and it is believed that the conversion of the dynasty of Wurtemberg to the Protestant creed may be traced to the Duke's visits to the Black Forest.

"I say, Heinrich," said the Duke, when standing one afternoon near the furnace, and laying his hand upon the edge of its cover. "I say, this concern seems to be in great need of repair."

"True, your grace," answered Heinrich, with an air of destitution; "but your grace will condescend so much as to perceive that it is a great expenditure for us poor farmers of the Black Forest to procure a new one. I always feel ashamed when your grace honours me with a visit to my parlour because of that old ugly furnace. I wish——"

"What do you wish?"

"Why, your grace, I saw a splendid iron furnace the other day when in town, and I thought——"

"What did you think? Speak out your mind."

"Why, it was absurd, of course—but I thought—I thought——"

"You thought that it would be a fair thing for you if I would give you an iron furnace. Isn't that what you mean to say?"

Heinrich bowed with a smile.

"Well," continued the Duke, "I will give you one, but one with a pointed cover. I mean not such a flat cover, like this; but a furnace with a pyramidal cover ending in a point, like a church-steeple."

Heinrich was quite delighted, but took the liberty of asking why his grace was so bent upon that shape.

"Because," answered the Duke, "you then will not be able to put your Bible upon it, which is lying buried under the dust as if it were only a piece of rubbish."

"Ah, your grace, please to understand that I am reading it every day."

"Do you, indeed? How, then, can it be so dusty?"

"Because your grace perceives that every day there comes so much fresh dust upon it from this nasty brick furnace."

"Very well, I will send you the iron stove—but mind, read your Bible. You may put it upon the shelf over there."

"I will do so, your grace. You are too generous, indeed."

"I want to take a trip on horseback; see if all is ready."

Heinrich strode off to the stable. Meanwhile, the Duke took a gold louis d'or out of his pocket and put it into the Bible at page 224. Then he put the Bible in its usual place. Now, at page 224 was the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans.

Three weeks elapsed, and the Duke prepared for his departure. The Bible was lying at its usual place as dusty as ever.

"Had you not a dispute with Joachim about idolatry the other day?" asked the Duke, standing as usual near the furnace.

"Why, your grace," answered Heinrich, "we had a little bit of discussion about religion. But we are good friends nevertheless. He is a fine fellow, Joachim is."

"Still you think he is an idolater."

"Ay—well—of course—your grace will be pleased to understand——"

"Well, speak your mind. You believe Joachim to be an idolater because he kneels down before images, which I must confess he does."

The tone in which the Duke spoke these words was so kind that Heinrich felt encouraged to agree that he considered Joachim as an idolater.

"But how do you know that kneeling before the images of men and women is idolatry?" asked the Duke.

"The Bible, which is God's own word, tells me so," answered Heinrich.

"Where does the Bible say so?"

"At different places, your grace. Indeed, almost at every page."

"Could you tell me one such passage?"

"I can," answered Heinrich; and he repeated the second commandment of the law of Moses.

"Ah, that's from the Old Testament," quoth the Duke, "and you must agree that there are many commandments of the Jewish law which some may think not now applicable. Do you know any passage from the New Testament?"

Heinrich reflected for a while.

"I see," said the Duke, "your memory is not faithful to you just now. I thought you knew much."