

"There, now, the good-for-nothing creature is going to bowl; that's the finishing stroke! Hush, you player's brat"—she raised her hand threateningly. The frightened child hid her head under the bed clothes.

"Oh, mamma, dear mamma!" she whispered, "where are you? Take me into your bed—I'm so afraid—I'll be very good, and go to sleep at once. I've saved something for you, mamma; I didn't eat them all—Fay has something for you, dear mamma. Or just let me hold your hand and I'll stay in my little bed and—"

"Will you be quiet!" called Frederica, furiously, running to the child's bed. She did not move again, only from time to time the sound of a suppressed sob came from under the bed-clothes.

The old cook was sleeping the sleep of the just long before the poor child, with its little heart full of terrified longings, ceased to cry softly for its dead mother.

CHAPTER V.

Hellwig was a merchant. Heir of a considerable fortune, he had increased his property by various commercial enterprises, but failing health compelled him to retire from the business world to the quiet life of his native town. There the name of Hellwig was a prominent one. From time immemorial the family had been highly esteemed, and for generations some office of honor in the place had always been filled by a representative of the respected name. The most beautiful garden outside of the gates, and the handsomest house on the market-place, had been owned by the family as long as anybody could remember. The house stood at the corner of the market-place and a steep street, its stately front projecting in a sweeping curve. Year in and year out snow-white curtains hung behind the window-panes of the two upper stories. Only thrice in a twelvemonth, always a few days before the great festivals, they disappeared, while the rooms were swept and dusted. Then the huge brazen dragons' head on the roof, through which the water poured from the gutters down upon the pavement below, and the birds flying by, peered in at the garnered treasures of the old merchant's house, and saw the old-fashioned magnificence of the apartments—the tall cabinets of costly inlaid, with glittering locks and handles, the rich silk damask covering of the down cushions of sofas and chairs, the long venetian mirrors built into the walls and reaching from floor to ceiling, and, in the guest chambers, the beds, whose linen exhaled a strong odor of lavender.

These apartments were not occupied. It had never been the custom of the Hellwig family to rent any portion of their spacious house.

A stately, solemn silence had always pervaded the upper stories of the mansion, only interrupted by a brilliant wedding or baptism, and from time to time, in the lapse of the year, by the echoing footsteps of the mistress of the house, who kept her stores of silver, linen, and china here.

Frau Hellwig had come to the house when a child of twelve. The Hellwigs were her relatives, and received her when her parents, dying within a short time of each other, left their children penniless. The young girl had a hard life with her old aunt, a stern, proud woman, and Hellwig, the only son, at first pitied the orphan, a pity which later became converted into love. His mother resolutely opposed his choice, and there were many unpleasant conflicts, but the young man finally had his way and married Brigitta. He had mistaken the girl's sullen silence for maidenly decorum, her coldness of heart for strength of mind, her obstinacy for firmness of character—and marriage shut him out from the paradise he had expected. In a short time the kindly natured man felt

crushed beneath the iron hand of a despotic disposition, and, where he had hoped for grateful devotion, suddenly encountered the grossest selfishness.

His wife blessed him with two sons—little Nathanael, and his brother John, eight years older. The latter, when a lad of eleven, had been sent to one of Hellwig's relations, a professor and principal of a large school for boys, near the Rhine.

Such were Hellwig's family relations at the time he took the juggler's child into his house. He had been deeply moved by the terrible event he had witnessed, and could not forget the pleading, unutterably sorrowful expression of the hapless woman as, standing in her house, she humbly received his thaler. His kind heart ached at the thought that perhaps his home had had been the last one where she had been made to feel the sting of the contempt bestowed on her lowly position in life. So when the Pole told him his dying wife's last request, he hastily offered to take the child himself. Not until he entered the dark street with the unhappy father's last agonizing farewell yet echoing in his ears, and the little one, passing her arms closer around his neck, asked for her mother, did he think of the opposition that probably awaited him at home; but he relied upon the loveliness of the little girl, and, above all, the fact that no daughter had been given to his own marriage. Spite of all his bitter experiences, he yet had no thorough conception of his wife's character, or he would have turned back at once and restored the child to her father's arms.

If the relation between Hellwig and his wife had hitherto been anything but warm, since the orphan's entrance into their household granite walls seemed to have risen between the pair. True, everything in the house pursued its former course. Several times each day the mistress made her customary round of inspection through the whole establishment; her step was not light, and to a sensitive or timid ear there was something most annoying to the nerves in the firm, heavy tread. Her right hand constantly glided over furniture, window-sills and balusters. The lady had an uncontrollable desire, almost a mania, for passing her large, white hand, with its flat finger-tips and broad nails, over everything, and then carefully examined the palm to see if any speck of dust or stray filament of cobweb were sticking to it.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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The fifth annual convention of the German Catholic societies of the diocese of Hartford, Conn., will be held in that city on July 30.



A Bright Lad,

Ten years of age, but who declines to give his name to the public makes this authorized, confidential statement to us:

"When I was one year old, my mamma died of consumption. The doctor said that I, too, would soon die and all our neighbors thought that even if I did not die, I would never be able to walk, because I was so weak and puny. A gathering formed and broke under my arm. I hurt my finger and it gathered and I rev out pieces of bone. If I hurt myself so as to break the skin, it was sure to become a running sore. I had to take lots of medicine, but nothing has done me so much good as Ayer's Sarsaparilla. It has made me well and strong."—T. D. M., Norcatur, Kans.

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