

immediate contact with his Maker, where natural fortresses dwarf by comparison the strongest defences of armies, the inhabitants will not wear with complacency the yoke of the Conqueror.

"The hills rock-ribbed and ancient as the Sun," are here in all their majesty. Sheltered in these valleys, and behind these ramparts the Swiss have for centuries resisted invasion and defied conquest. Switzerland furnishes a fitting setting for this, the last and best of Schiller's plays. No other part of our globe presents a panorama so astonishing, so surprising a diversity of landscapes, with ever changing features. No where else do such extremes meet, where eternal Alpine snows are fringed by green and luxuriant pastures, where enormous ice-bergs rise above valleys breathing aromatic odors and enjoying an Italian spring. Here in the mighty crescent of the Alps is the birth-place of the glacier and the avalanche, and hence too, streams are welled forth by the genial warmth of nature to supply romantic lakes and give fertility to the soil.

Such was the environment of the people and the hero described in Schiller's drama. The story of Tell, which was universally believed for centuries, and which has been reproduced by Schiller, is in brief as follows: In 1298, Albert of Austria became Emperor, but, wishing to build up his own kingdom at the expense of the Empire, he proposed to the three small forest Cantons of Uri, Schwytz and Unterwalden, situated in the heart of the Alps, to exchange their direct dependence on the Empire for the more powerful and permanent protection of the House of Austria. But, the free and contented foresters viewed distrustfully the advances of the Emperor. They knew too well the value of their own freedom to barter it for Austrian protection, and replied that their only wish was to be left in the condition of their forefathers, and asked for the appointment of imperial commissaries instead of the officers that Albert had set over them in violation of established rights. The Emperor sent them two land-vogts, men of imperious temper, who indulged their personal pride by a haughty deportment and ruled the people in an arbitrary manner. Remonstrances and complaints only added to their burdens. Fines were imposed, fortresses were built, and freemen were imprisoned by these despots. At Neidorf, Gessler caused a hat to be set upon a pole as a symbol of the sovereign power of Austria, and all who passed by were to do it homage.

At this juncture Wilhelm Tell becomes prominent. He refused to do homage, and for this was compelled under penalty of death to shoot at an apple on the head of his son at a distance of 100 yards. Tell cleft the apple in twain to the astonishment of the tyrant who had not expected such a specimen of skill and fortune. On being asked by Gessler what the second arrow in his quiver was for, Tell replied, "Gessler, had I shot my boy the