

hero's daughters was ample, and they offered Attalus some; but the idea of horse-meat made him shudder, and he knew it was an idolatrous festival, and so he refused to taste, and only tried to satisfy his hunger with some bread that had been left from the mid-day meal. When the bowl was emptied by the help of the slave in charge of the horses, Valhild made another expedition and procured some strong ale, whereof they all drank, and then listened sleepily to the shouts and songs with which the rude banquet was being finished.

All slept where they were, for it was too late to travel through the forest, where there might be wolves to carry off stragglers, and it was a beautiful night of early autumn, with a round red moon shining over them. Attalus, though very sleepy, roused himself to gaze at it, recollect his grandfather and St. Patrick, and say his prayers and the "Breastplate" before he finally composed himself among the heather and cranberries for his night's rest.

The horns were sounding their harsh reveille when he awoke with a start to see the sky through the trees golden with the sunrise. Every one was stirring, and the cavalcade was soon on its way home. Valhild, however, insisted on riding alone and letting Attalus ride with Roswitha. "She was a poor, feeble, weeping child, who would never be a Velleda, and she was only fit to ride with the craven Roman pledge, who would never be brave if he shrank from gallant horse-flesh."

But Roswitha was more thoughtful, and as she sat in front of Attalus she asked him why he would not eat horse flesh. "Christians never do—real Christians," he said.

"Real Christians?" she said—"do real Christians kneel and say what thou saidst last night?"

"Didst thou hear me? I thought thou wast asleep."

"Valhild was. I was not. It was Latin, was it not? And to whom didst thou speak?"

"To my God, the One God, in whose name thou wast baptized!"

"Tell me," said Roswitha—"I love a tale," and through that forest ride Attalus poured into her ears the great story of the Christian faith as he knew it. And as in that ride, and in other quiet hours, he talked to Roswitha, who listened with eager ears, he thought of young St. Patrick, and was glad that the Frankish tongue came to him freely enough to make him able to be understood by the gentle-natured girl, who was really a baptized Christian though ignorant of the faith.

"Where is Roswitha?" asked Frau Bernhild. "She can keep Hundbert quiet while I broil these kidneys for thy father. Thou only lettest him get into the fire between my feet."

"Roswitha? I think she is out by the stream with Atli," returned Valhild.

"She is forever with that little dog of a pledge," muttered the mother.

"Ay," said Valhild; "he has bewitched her, as it seems to me, with some of his Roman arts."

"I will go and see what they are about," exclaimed the mother. "If he puts those feeble-hearted Gaulish notions into her, and teaches her his miserable fashions, what brave Frank will have her to wife?"

Frau Bernhild, with Hundbert following her, made her way, guided by Valhild, to a sort of cave which the brook had in times of flood filled up with sand. On this Attalus had traced with a stick the shapes which looked weird and awful to the Frank lady, but which Roswitha was endeavoring to imitate, while she said after him, "B O S, *bos—ochs* : M U S, *mus—maus*."

With a sort of howl or shriek the lady fell on them. "Little wretch of a pledge! is this the way thou practisest thy spells on my daughter? Frey, Grim, and all guard thee, my child, and blast his plans!"

"They are no spells, mother," said Roswitha; "he was only teaching me to read and write."

"Read and write, thou senseless maid! who dost thou think will ever wed thee, if thou takest up with such bond-slave's foolery? Rub out the witch words this instant, and come and mind the fit business for a Freiherr's daughter, not run after this scum of a slave." There was no resisting the argument of the lady's powerful fists, which she was ready to apply to both the offenders, and while Valhild and Hundbert danced upon the letters, and Attalus crept out of the way, Roswitha was dragged off by her mother to the accompaniment of a sharp scolding, by no means diminished by her venturing to say something about not fearing Frey, for a Christian had renounced Odin and all his folks.

"Hold thy peace, thou wicked child; name not the All-father by his own name, or he will visit on thee thy daring words toward him and his."

Bernhild had herself called Odin Grim, for his name was held sacred; and Roswitha was musing whether the All-father was the same as Atli's One God, or whether he were really Odin and an idol. She hardly heard the growls with which her mother was murmuring at Hundrik's having brought home the little Roman wretch to poison and bewitch her daughters.

The next morning Attalus was roughly roused from sleep by Bodo, a big hard-handed man, who acted as a sort of steward or foreman to the household; and he was told he was to go out with the rest and herd the horses.

"I?" exclaimed Attalus, sitting up. "But that is thrall's work. I am no thrall."

"Art not?" said Bodo, flourishing his whip. "That thou wilt soon see."

"I am a freeman. I belong to my grandfather, Senator and Bishop, and to King Hil-