

be one who cannot take such a journey, and pass a month or two without the society of persons whom he would define as ladies and gentlemen, he had better be warned at once, and move on, not setting foot within the Lion d'Or at Granpere.

Michel Voss, the landlord, in person was at the time a tall, stout, active, and very handsome man, about fifty years of age. As his son was already twenty-five—and was known to be so throughout the commune—people were sure that Michel Voss was fifty or thereabouts; but there was very little in his appearance to indicate so many years. He was fat and burly to be sure; but then he was not fat to lethargy, or burly with any sign of slowness. There was still the spring of youth in his footstep, and when there was some weight to be lifted, some heavy timber to be thrust here or there, some huge lumbering vehicle to be hoisted in or out, there was no arm about the place so strong as that of the master. His short, dark, curly hair—that was always kept clipped round his head—was beginning to show a tinge of grey, but the huge moustache on his upper lip was still of a thorough brown, as was also the small morsel of beard which he wore upon his chin. He had bright, sharp, brown eyes, a nose slightly beaked, and a large mouth. He was on the whole a man of good temper, just with all, and one who loved those who belonged to him; but he chose to be master in his own house, and was apt to think that his superior years enabled him to know what younger people wanted better than they would know themselves. He was loved in his house and respected in his village; but there was something in the beak of his nose and the brightness of his eye which was apt to make those around him afraid of him. And indeed Michel Voss could lose his temper and become an angry man.

Our landlord had been twice married. By his first wife he had now living a single son, George Voss, who at the time of our tale had already reached his twenty-fifth year. George, however, did not at this time live under his father's roof, having taken service for a time with the landlady of another inn at Colmar. George Voss was known to be a clever young man; many in those parts declared that he was much more so than his father; and when he became clerk at the Poste in Colmar, and after a year or two had taken into his hands almost the