

the butler bought all the specimens I had found near the Rosenlawi and gave me seventeen batz for them; thanks to which I have been able to give you this feast,—and there is some left," added he, striking his pocket and making a metallic clinking noise. And as Ulrich expressed his joy, "Bah! this is nothing, child," said Uncle Job, lowering his voice: "if you only knew what I saw yesterday on the top of a rock bared by the melting snow:—a nest of true rock crystal! I suspected it at once from seeing how the shelfy surface rose. I hit it with a stone and it rang like a bell touched by its clapper."

"And you were able to secure this treasure?"

"Not yet; do you think it is to be got so easily? No, no; the nest is hidden in the side of the rock just over the abyss, but with a rope man can go wherever bird can. To-morrow I shall return there. By the way, Hans, in crossing the Wengern Alp, I saw some chamois tracks, above Upigel: I could show you the spot."

"Thank you; but I know of others," replied Hans.

"These were *many*," observed Uncle Job, "and you know the Wengern Alp is an easy ground for hunting."

"I do not seek easy grounds," objected Hans dryly; then with a sneer at his cousin, he added, "I suppose formerly such a case would have tempted Ulrich."

"You suppose right, Hans, for it tempts me even now," replied the carver; "you will give *me* all the information, Uncle Job, and to-morrow I will set out in search for them."

"You?" cried Hans standing up, "By my soul! Are you speaking seriously?"

"Sufficiently so as to ask Uncle Job

to give me back my hunting suit that I left at his house."

"Is it true?" cried the old man, "you will give up your wood-carving to come back to the mountain?"

"I will try."

"Then you are not going to Merengen again to-night?"

"To-night, if you will let me, I will sleep under your roof."

"And to-morrow?"

"To-morrow you will return me my rifle, and point out to me where you saw the tracks on the Wengern-Alp."

The old man rose quickly from the table.

"Be it so," said he: "God be praised; the child comes back to us. Did you hear what he means to do, Aunt Trina?"

"A puff of wind blows words away," replied the old grandmother, coldly; "let us see actions."

"We *shall* see them," cried the crystal-seeker; "by my soul, he must recover a taste for a free life. This night I shall pray our Heavenly Father to bring to his gun the finest emperor of chamois."

"Yes," exclaimed Ulrich, seizing the old man's hand. "Ah! pray for that Uncle Job; for such a happiness I would give the best part of my life."

Ulrich cast a glance at Freneli, which was not lost upon Hans, whose brow lowered and his lips became compressed; but he remained silent.

Ulrich took leave and went away with Uncle Job. Then fixing upon Freneli a look so searching as to make her blush and cast down her eyes, Hans nodded his head, as a man would whose doubts are all cleared away, took up his gun, and silently left the hut.

(Concluded next month.)