WHAT CAME OF A SURPRISE.

atir in our house, much myster. | carriage." jous running about, and secret working and thrusting of things into corners, and many whispered consulta-

There is one room in which we childglons. ren never ventured, where our mother sat with a couple of seamstresses making new dress for the gulf and new clothes for us boys against Christmas; ers for the boys were made in the family, instead of at a tailor's. Now and then, one of us would be called, and with our eyes bandaged, and mittens on our hands, led into the forbidden room for the trying on. The mittens er's, as the year previous my eldest er's, a s the year previous my eldest sister Lizette had felt about with her hands, to discover what sort of cloth her new dress was made of.

"De look at the child," said grandmother. "How clever she is! wait a minute, we will remedy that;" and from that time no child was allowed to enter the room without mittens.

But if the people had their secrets, we children had our secrets too. Before Christmas our earthen saving boxes were broken open, and what we hapsaied up through the year was taken out to ay presents. My father always t from each of us a lead pencil and a stick of ceiling wax: for we knew if we nave them to him at Christmas, we shald get them again on New Year's. Later my sisters used to present him with a apir of embroidered slippers, which he never wore, for after his death we found seven pairs in his cluset.

Then we got a new comb for Aunt granding ther. But the greater portion of our money would be left for mother, and here began our secrecy. For the other gifts were old-established cust ms, which never changed. When I had made up my mind and had purchased some fine thing of Meier the dew. on the express condition of changing it if it did not suit, for we were carefully trained in that respect. I would go in my delight straight to mother and say:---

something for Yule-rap." Then she would say, "Ah, don't tell

any one what it is." "No." I would say, "I tell nobody;

only I will tell you it is so and so." As I grew older I learned to keep silence, and when I came home from the high school for the Christmas holidays for the first time I was so secret about my present that not even Uncle Matthias could find it out. He came up to me when I was doing it up, using more paper, cord, and seating wax, than it was all worth.

"What have you there?" "Nothing much? But I see that you

have something much." "But you ought not to see it," I

"Is that a proper answer to your uncle?" and I got a sharp box on the

Now for some time I had not been used to that sort of thing, for I was Tertian, or third-form boy, and I asked him if he was aware that I was a Tertiin.

"More's the pity," said he. "I know you are a very foolish boy, but if you were the head of the whole school, our relations are not altered."

Well. I was angry and indignant; for a boy of fifteen has a lively sense of his own importance; but it was not pleasant to quarrel with him in earnest; so I soon cooled down.

"Well," he asked again quietly, "what have you got?"

"Uncle," said I, "I don't like to tell. I want to surprise my mother, and give her an unexpected pleasure."

"So, you want to surprise her! well, let me tell you then; I have been surprised several times in my life, and I would give all the surprises for a good pipe if tobacco. And as for the unexpected pleasures, my son, that other people prepare for us, they are too often only annoyances and vexations. What a sad time I had with Aunt Schaning! I knew that she had no snuff-box, and always helped herself ant of the horn: so at the fair last summer I thought I would give her an unexpected pleasure, and bought her a fine snuff-box. What did she do? she threw it at my head and called me an impertinent fellow. And then, my son, what pleasant surprises those were, when we had the lottery for the poor and I drew a spinning wheel, your mother a fine smoking cap with a gilt tassel, Frau Boetz a pair of leather breeches, and Herr Pastor a

little hand organ. "Yes, uncle," said I, "but Christmas is a very different thing, and no vexation can come of this."

"Don't be too sure of that," said he. "You have had the moral beforehand. Now I will tell you the story.

"Some years ago, when I was living in Parschen, the Herr Rathsherr Zarnekow was living in Gustrow with his wife, daughter, and sister-in-law. The three women folk used to go out driving every day in a little carriage with a seat behind. In front, on the little box, which was moveable, sat the coachman. Frau Rathsherr and her alster sat inside and her daughter rode bahind.

S CHRISTMAS time approach | 'Herr Rathaberr,' said he, 'somebody ed there was always a pleasant has atolen the box from our

"Well, the Herr Rathsherr was very angry, and went scolding up and down the room. Just at this moment his brother-in-law, the Herr Rathsherr Darlus from Parschen, drove up to the door. In those days the Parachen magistrates were mostly men of mature years, who had sowed their wild oats. but the Herr Rathsherr Darlus had for in those days the jackets and trous- still a great appetite for practical jokes.

" 'Of what use is it while I am only playing Rathsherr to put on a long face and pretend to be wise; ' so he went on cracking his jokes at the expense of other people.

"He was full of the pleasure of seeking his friends again, and the Herr Rathsherr Zarnekow was full of vexation about the stelen bex. When the women folk came in they were half glad at seeing their brother, and half sorry at not seeing the box. Their riding must be given up for the present; there was no place for the coachman; for that he should sit behind with the daughter was not to be thought of. They talked about the matter for a while, and at last all went out to look at the carriage. The Herr Darius looked very carefully at the place where the box fitted on, and thought to himself, that would be a fine Christmas present to make my sister.' He was going to R stock on business, and could attend to the mat-

"After supper the two men talked over their city affairs ... the new fire ongines, the jail, how often the streets should be swept, and how far the magistrates could interfere. When the two conneilmen had settled all affairs to schaning and a new warm hood for their satisfaction they went to bed and slept the sleep of the just.

"So the Herr Darius went to Rostock, and after five or six days he came back, and had a great box on the back of his carriage, and his brotherin-law Larnekow asked, "What have you in that great box?'

"Herr Darius thought this a great chance for a joke, and answered. 'Eh, just think of it! there was a fellow in Rostock with wild beasts, and he had a giraffe which had just died; and as Mother, I am going to give you I thought it would please our head master, I have brought the skin and bones for his cabinet of natural-history specimens in the high school. I

thought a giraffe would be such a good beginning; and he thought to himself, What a surprise it will be when they open the box out of curiosity, to see the giraffe and discover the carriage box! ' "But the Herr Zarnekow was not so

curious about giraffes, and when Herr Darius had gone off the next morning. and had taken particular care to leave passed through the entry, and seeing it there exclaimed' ---

"God bless me! there, Darius has gone off and forgotten his giraffe! Fika, run out and see if there is any way of sending it to Parschen!

"An opportunity was soon found, and Herr Zarnekow said to the carrier, No letter is necessary; my compliments to Herr Darius, and I send him his giraffe.

"As the carriage drew up to the Herr Rathsherr Darius's door in Parschen, and the carrier was taking down the box from the wagon, old Bohn the goldsmith stood by and asked: ---

... What is in that hox? "'A giraffe,' said the carrier.

"And Bohn the goldsmith told it to Frendenthaler the Jew, and Freudenthaler the Jew to Stand the distiller, and Stand the distiller to Hugendorp the baker, and an hour had not passed before the whole city was informed that Herr Rathsherr Darius had purchased a giraffe. Meanwhile Herr Darius was returning from the Council, and as he turned into the street where he lived, old Jochen Hugendorp, standing at his door, said Good merning, Herr Rathsherr; your giraffe has come! '

" What the devil! ' thought the Herr Rathsherr. When he came to his own house there was old Bohn the goldsmith, who said, 'Herr Rathsherr, when you let the giraffe out of the box, let us see the beast.'

"The Herr Rathsherr suspected the state of things, and when he opened the door, sure enough! there stood his giraffe box.

"What a blockhead of a brother inlaw! 'cried he. 'I wanted to give him a pleasant surprise, and he has mademe alaughing-stock toall the people. Throw the confounded thing out of the house! '

"Frau Darius now sent to make inquiries of the shop-keepers if there was any opportunities of sending to Gustrow and Rostock; she had a box to send to Gustrow and a lot of empty wine-bottles to Rostock. The maid soon returned, saying, 'Herr Zichurius sends his compliments, and Luakenborg the carrier is going to-morrow to Gustrow and Rostock, and if Frau Rathsherr will trust him with the

business he will attend to it.' "So that was settled, and as the carrier was starting off the next morning, the shopkeeper, Zichurius, said to him: "Well, and the Frau Rathsherr's box?

"'Yest' laughed the carrier, 'the box

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with the giraffe! I know! The Frau Ratheberr herself teld me. A droll piece of business, Herr Zichurius!'

"Well, take good care of it, then, said the shopkeeper, and the carrier drove off. The Herr Rathsherr was thoroughly vexed over his giraffe, and his poor wife had to suffer from his it passed off, and the Fran Rathsherr perplexity was sitting one pay in quiet content

over her coffee and saying to herself :--" 'Thank Heaven! that unlucky business is over,' when the door opened door. and the post-boy brought in two letone for herself, and both from Res. clothes over it. tock.

"The Fran opened hers, and as she glanced at it, her hands fell down on her lap and she ejaculated, Good Heavens! what is this:

"The wine merchant in Rastock wrote to say that the wine-lottles had arrived safely: alsea box, which the carrier asserted cent; ined a giraffe. and he wanted to know what he should the box? I asked. do with it.

"She was walking up and down the room in despair, when I, your Uncle-Matthias, happened in, and she came to me crying:---

"'Uncle Matthias!'-f.r everylody uncled me, even then ... what shall I dof what shall I dof. Do you know where that miserable giraffe is now!" " 'In Guetrow,' said I.

"'Ne, in Restock,' and told me the whole story, saying that if her hushand knew of this new blunder, he would be perfectly wild with rage, and she would not have a moment's peace. Then she began to weep bitterly.

"I had to turn my face away, or I could not keep from laughing. Then I tried to comfort her.

" Never mind, the giraffe shall arrive at his destination yet. I am going to Rostock to-morrow, and if you will trust the matter to me, I will see the confounded giraffe safely delivered to Herr Zarnekow when I come back to Gustrow. fo-day is Tuesday; next Frithere in the nick of time."

"Well, she was very glad and very thankful, and when Herr Darius came the box behind him, Herr Zarnekow in and said Good evening she made signs to me not to breathe a word to him, and gave him his letter from Rostock. He read the letter, and then smote angrily on the table with his

"The deal take the old lawsuit! I must go again to Rostock t -morrow," " 'That is very convenient,' said 1. I am going to Rostock also: we can travel together.'

"So we arranged it, and next morning we were off. When we came to Gustrow I said:---

... Will you not go round to your brother-in-law's while the horses are resting?

" 'No,' he said, getting angry, 'my brother-in-law is a blockhead, and his women folk are not a bit better: I wanted to give him a pleasant surprise, and he has made me a laughingstock.

"'Ah!' said I, because of the giraffe:'

"'Hold your torgue!' said he: 'I will hear nothing more of it. My brother-in-law has the box by this time, and I shall not give him a chance to

"We arrived at Resteck and put up at the Sun. I had number 8 and he had number 9, I went out to attend to some business, and first to wine-merchant Ahlers. "Good-day, said Ahlers, said I, for

I knew him very well; you got a box the other day from Fran Rathsherr Darius of Parschen!

"'Yes,' said he, laughing, 'with the girasse in it.' "Exactly,' said I; 'send it up to me

at the Sun to-morrow morning. I am in number 8.' "'All right,' said he, 'but if the

beast were alive when he came, he must be dead by this time, for we have not fed him.' " 'No matter,' said 'I, and went

"When I came back late in the evening to my quarters and was going up

to my room the waiter said:---"No, sir; this way; you sleep in number 9. The Herr Rathsherr's bed was too short for him and he exchanged with you.'

"'Very well,' said I, thinking no harm; 'what a tall fellow he is!' and I went to bed and slept till morning.



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"I was sitting up drinking my coffee, when I heard a great uprour in the passage, and as I put my head out the door from curiosity, there was Herr Darius running about in his shirt, scolding and raving and toaming with rage; while two workmen stood by with a large box, twirling their caps ill-temper, but after two or three days and scratching their heads in great

> "What is it?" said !. " 'That cursed giraffe!' cried he: and sprang into his room and slammed the

"I beckoned the carriers to bring ters, one for the Herr Rathsherr and the box to me, and threw the ted-

> "It was not long before the Herr Rathsherr came into my room, and innocently sitting down on the girtile lox, began scolding these people and everybody else. It was all a contrived plan, and he knew his friends in Larschen who had managed it, but he would be even with them.

> "What did you tell them to do with

"I told the fellows to throw it in the Warnow."

"Then make yourself easy about it It is probably there by this time."

"We talked about other things, and when I saw he was going, I said, 'Perhaps you had better sit on a chair; you might break through the cover on that box.

"What box?" he cried, springing up as if stung by an adder.

"Oh, your giraffe box!" and I pulled off the cover. He stood for a mo ment looking like a bull when a red cloth is shaken over it. Then he gave the box a vigorous kick,. 'Cursed giraffe nonsense!' and left the room.

"The whole day he was as shy of me as a cat of hot porridge. He will never ride home with me to-morrow, I thought.

" Besides, I had promised the Fran Rathsherr to take the box to Gustrow. and I knew if he found it was in the carriage he would not go a step: so I day is Christmas Eve, so it will get got the walter to place the box in black-wax linen and call our coachman. " : lochen, take the box, and if the

Herr Rathsherr asks what is in it, tell him a new English saddle which you are taking to Schregel at Modeļritz.

"The morning we started, and as we drove off in the darkness and mud he never said a word. But as near Hagen Sprenz we got down to rest the horses he caught sight of the black lox. He started and looked shyly, as if he had seen a goblin sitting behind. As I went into the house I noticed that he was asking Jochen about it. Jochen told the saddle story, and the Rathsherr was fairly good natured after that. The roads were so bad we did not get to Gustrow until night: so as we sat together at the tavern I finally said:---

"This is Christmas Eve."

Yes. " Are you going to see your broth-

er-in-law: " 'No,' said he shortly.

"Well, I will go myself, then. I am well acquainted with him, and on Christmas Eve I would rather be in a pleasant family circle than in a tavern.' "He did not like the idea of my goling there without him; so he said:---" Well, then, I will go with you for

a little while." "So we went. But previously I had said to Jochen, 'About eight o'clock you are to take the black box and put it in the hall at Herr Rathsherr Zarnekow's, and cry out as loud as you can, "Yule-rap!"

"When we reached Herr Zarnekow's the room was bright with candles, and the faces of the ladies and Herr Zarnekow bright with joy and hope, and even Herr Darius grew lighter of heart.

"But this did not lest long. Hardly had he begun to feel warm and comfortable when his brother-in-law laid his hand on his shoulder in a friendly

... Well, my dear brother in law, did you get your giraffe box all right? "Herr Darius looked at him doubtfully to see what he meant, but as he observed that his brother-in-law was perfectly honest, and that I looked quite innocent, he replied curtly:--"'Yes, yes, it was all right.'

"But then the ladies began to laugh and asked how the head master was pleased, whther the creature was stuffed, and how large he was; the poor Rathsherr was suffering torments, and pushed his chair back and forth and answered merely, 'Yes,' and 'No,' and

tore up his cigar in eplinters and threw them spitefully about him.

"After the presents were given, which put an end to his annoyance, a great bowl of punch was brought in, and cakes and nuts and apples, and we were all as happy and as jolly as could be. The Herr Rathsherr Zarnekow went up and down the room humming airs as he trimmed the candles, and laughing, whispered to me:---

"This is only the foretaste, the lest is to come: I have an agreeable surprise for my women folk!"

"And the Frau Rathsherr bent over to me: 'See how happy Zarnekow is! He will be happier by and by: we are going to surprise him with a Yule-rap.' "It was not long before the surprises

began, R'Yule-rap,' called somebody at the door, and shoved a great package done up in cloth in the door. It was addressed to the Herr Rathsherr: he opened it, and what did be find :--- a new carriage box.

"At first the Herr Rathsherr's face wore a rather doubtful expression, and he looked at the ladies like a cow at a new door, but an explanation occurred to him, and he said to himself. What rogues they are! They have spied out my present, and mean to baste me with my own drippings."

"A good joke!" he laughed aloud, and pleasantly; the ladies laughed too, and his sister in law said:---

" Zarnekow, you never thought that, did you?'

" Thought of it! I never thought of it! who did think of it, then? I thought

" Yes, said she, and we thought you had no idea of it, and it would be a surprise to you.

" For mel asked the Herr Rathsherr in astonishment.

" Yes, for you, said his daughter-" Yule-rap! was called at the door again, and just such another package was shoved in this time. For the Fran Rathsherr: Another box!

"The Herr Rathsherr looked at the ladies, then at me, and then at his brother-in-law, and pushed tack his smoking cap, and finally said:---Concluded on page or lit.

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