

pect anything. Yes," he added, settling himself quietly in his chair, "yes, they are great fools. But—after all, that Parisian, whom I saw at Ribauville, —he was the real cause of the whole affair. The fellow had actually made me nervous. When he wanted to send me asleep as well as to rest, the thought instantly came into my mind, 'Stop, stop, Mathias; this sending you to sleep may be an invention of the devil, you might relate certain incidents of your past life. You must be cleverer than that, Mathias; you mustn't run your neck into a halter, you must be cleverer than that; ah, you must be cleverer than that. You'll die an old man yet, Mathias, and the most highly respectable in all the country round. You'll see your children happy in each other's love, and round your knees grandchildren will cluster. Then, after a while, they'll put a fine large stone over your grave and carve on it, letters of gold from top to bottom, describing your virtues, and say at last how calmly you sank to sleep in the peace of the Lord.' Only this"—and the mocking curl of the lip was gone, the mouth was close shut as if to show the immutability of his resolution. "Only this, Mathias,—as you dream and are apt to talk in your dreams, and poor dear Martha cannot help chattering like a magpie when the doctor's about—for the future, you'll sleep alone, in the room above, the door locked and the key safe under your pillow. They say walls have ears,—well, let them hear as much as they will!"

And taking another long pinch of snuff, the burgomaster rose from his chair, and began pacing the apartment. He was thinking. At length he stood still, and drew forth a bunch of keys from his pocket. "And now," he continued in a low voice, scarcely above a whisper, "and now to count the dowry of sweet Margaret—to be paid to our dear son-in-law," and the words came slowly as if with difficulty, "that our dear son-in-law may love us!"

Oh, what a sigh was there! Go on, burgomaster! Go to your desk, unlock it, and take from it your bag of gold. Empty the contents on the table, and pass your fingers gleefully through the shining pieces! You say there are three thousand crowns! 'Tis a great deal of money. How brightly those beautiful new louis glisten! Had I that bag full of gold, I could set up as a master saddler myself, instead of working in old Ferrus's shop, and that cross-grained old curmudgeon, Bertha Schwanthaler's father would not look so sour at me from behind his great choppin of beer which he sits drinking in the shady arbor of a Sunday afternoon, whilst Bertha and I are waltzing on the green just beyond. There would be no chance for young Ferrus then, whom I know to be an utter fool, not fit to be a cobbler, much less master saddler, and pretty Bertha's husband. But I suppose he will be both, for I have not the gold, and he has. Will you sell your bagful, burgomaster? Shall I take home with me the golden load? Yes, I may have it and welcome, if I will take the load from your conscience as well. No, burgomaster, no; keep your money. Not for ten times as much would I be laden with the cross that you must bear for ever and ever.

"Three thousand crowns," muttered the burgomaster, counting the pieces together, and doing them up into long rouleaux. "It's a fine dowry for Margaret—a fine dowry for the husband of Margaret. Those young folks are very lucky. No one gave me three thousand crowns to start in life with. I had to earn it all—to earn it all—to earn it all," and the gloomy tone of his voice suited well with the sombre expression of his features, as he forced the words out. "Well," he continued, "he's a clever fellow, is Fritz. Yes, not a Kelz, half deaf and half blind. No, no! he's a clever fellow is Fritz, and quite capable of getting on a right track. The first time I saw him I said to myself, 'You shall be my son-in-law, and then if anything should come to light, you'll hush it up for your own sake.'"

The dowry was almost counted. From time to time the burgomaster had stopped to examine some one piece particularly, weighing it well on the end of his finger, as if determined that his daughter and her husband should have good measure. This occupation lasted for some time, and now it was almost finished. Only about a score of louis lay scattered about on the table. One of these attracted Mathias' eye. He took it up and examined it more attentively.

"A piece of old gold," said he. Suddenly he cast it from him with a cry, and in a scarcely audible whisper, murmured, "That came from the girdle." The piece fell on the table, and Mathias's head sank on his breast. What thoughts were passing in that aching brain! Had the sight of that old dull louis taken him back to the time when he was poor and in debt! when his house was to be seized for rent! when his wife and their little baby were denied the comforts they sorely needed, because, forsooth, the innkeeper was poor and could not pay for them!—back to the time when the Jew had sought shelter from the storm in the *Gaststube* at the other end of the house, and brought with him the heavy girdle full of gold! to the time when Mathias had no weight on his conscience, when no bad dreams haunted his sleep at night, and no bells jangled in his ears by day! Yes, Mathias was young again. His hair was brown, his eye open and clear. There was no aching in his brain such as now throbbed and throbbed there. He was in debt, but he was not an—but Mathias raises his head. The past is gone,—let us no longer dwell upon it. There is enough to think of in the present.

Mathias raised his head, but kept his eyes

from the piece of gold, though he stretched out his hand towards it. Instinctively he seemed to distinguish it from the rest. He raised it and conveyed it mechanically towards the bag, gazing furtively round the room the while, as if fearful of spies and watchers. He had opened the sack, and was just about to drop the gold in, when a thought struck him. Seizing the bag in one hand, the money in the other, he held them at arm's length apart. "No, no!" he cried, "not for them." How inexpressibly soft and tender the words were, "Not for them, for me!"

He uttered no groan as he placed the blood-stained gold in his own pocket, and moved towards the desk to get another piece to replace it. Willingly would the weary heart have poured forth sighs and moans to ease it of its choking burden. It was not to be. He had begun,—he must go on.

Mathias stood by the table, half leaning, half sitting on the great high-backed chair. He was thinking.

"That girdle," murmured he, "did us a good turn. Without it, without it, we were ruined! Yes, in another week the bailiff Ott would have driven up in his sledge. In another week we should have been houseless, homeless, penniless, turned out into the snow to starve. But," and he smiled a ghastly, bitter, sickly smile, "we were prepared. We had the money. Martha's uncle Martin died and left us a great legacy. If Martha only knew the legacy he left us! Poor Martha!" And the weary head sank again. Suddenly it rose. Mathias stood erect. He listened. "Bells! bells!" he muttered, and held his hands to his ears. "Bells! bells! Oh! they must come from the mill." He rushed to the door and flung it open, shouting in a harsh, coarse voice, for Jeanne. The little kitchen-maid entered, decked out in her Sunday finery, the innocent girlish face wearing a look of wonder at the gruff summons.

"Is there any one at the mill?" asked Mathias, roughly.

"No, Burgomaster."

"Why, don't you hear the sound of bells?"

"No, Burgomaster, I hear nothing."

"Strange," he murmured to himself; "it's gone now." Then he added aloud: "What are you doing?"

"I was reading, Burgomaster."

"Ghost stories, eh?"

"Oh no, Burgomaster, I was reading such a strange story; about a band of robbers being discovered after twenty-three had passed. They lived in a little village in Switzerland, and the whole history of their murders was brought to light through the blade of an old knife having been found in a blacksmith's shop, hidden away under a pile of rusty iron. They captured all of them at once: the mother, two sons, and the grandfather. They were tried, and then hanged side by side. Look, Burgomaster, there's the picture," and Jeanne held the book up for her master to admire. He dashed it angrily to the ground.

"Have you nothing better to do?" he asked, then, without waiting for an answer, he added, "Go, go!"

The girl picked up her book and retired, sorely puzzled at her master's strange conduct. "What's got into his head," thought she, as she entered her kitchen. At that moment, however, Kobel passed her window, and the little maid's thoughts ran on something else.

"Not like that," ejaculated Mathias, fiercely, "not like that, am I to be caught." Then hearing a tap at the casement, he added, "It's Fritz. Come in, Fritz, come in," and sweeping the remainder of the gold into the bag, he locked it up in his desk, and turned to shake hands with the quartermaster.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHY THE QUARTERMASTER CAME LATE.

"Well, burgomaster," cried Fritz, as he entered, "I hope you are better!"

"Oh, I am well, Fritz!" returned Mathias, in a boisterously merry tone; "I'm well. What do you think I've been doing while Martha and Margaret were at church? Can't you guess, eh?"

"Not I," rejoined the young man. "Well, I've been counting Margaret's dowry—in good sounding louis d'ors. There's always a great pleasure in looking at the gold you have earned, even if one has to pay it away again. It recalls memories of one's youth, of hard work, of good conduct—ay, and of good luck, sometimes. I saw all my early days passing in review before me, and I thought to myself, 'All this money is of no use to me, it's true; but it will make my children happy. It has been gained by hard work. Not a piece has a stain upon it. It will bring them no curse, but a blessing!' And the thought softened my heart, Fritz, until I could have shed tears—and I'm not fond of that." And the burgomaster pressed his future son-in-law's hand, who returned his grasp firmly and heartily.

"I quite agree with you, burgomaster," said the young man. "Money gained by honest labour is the only profitable wealth after all. It is the good seed which in time is sure to bring a rich harvest."

"Yes, yes," added the burgomaster, with a preoccupied air. "I counted the money this morning, so that all might be ready on Martha's return from the mass, when I wish to have the contract signed."

"To-day!" asked Fritz, in eager astonishment.

"Yes, to-day!" reiterated Mathias. "The

sooner it is done the better. I hate putting off things to the morrow. Once decided upon, why adjourn the settlement of the business from day to day! It shows a great want of character; and men ought to have character."

"Well, burgomaster, nothing could be more agreeable to me; but Margaret—"

"Margaret loves you."

"Ah, she does!"

"And my wife considers you already as her son. So why should not the affair be settled at once? The dowry is ready. I hope my boy," Mathias added, laying his hand on Fritz's shoulder; "I hope, my boy, you will be satisfied."

"Well, burgomaster," responded the young man, looking up ingenuously into his elder's face, "you know I do not bring much."

"You bring courage, my boy," responded Mathias warmly and feelingly; "courage and good conduct. I will take care of the rest. And now," he added, seating himself before the stove, "let us talk of other matters. You are late to-day. I suppose you were busy. Margaret waited for you as long as she could, but her mother became impatient, so, at last, she was obliged to go without you."

"Ah," responded Fritz, as he unbuckled his sword and seated himself opposite Mathias; "it was a very curious thing that detained me. Would you believe it, burgomaster, I was reading old depositions from five o'clock till ten. The hours flew by, but the more I read, the more I wished to read."

"And what was the subject of these depositions, then?"

"The murder of that Polish Jew."

Mathias trembled, but checked himself instantly. Fritz had noticed nothing. He talked on unconsciously.

"Father Trinkvelt told me the story on Christmas Eve, whilst we were waiting for you, burgomaster. It seems to me very remarkable that nothing was ever discovered."

"No doubt, no doubt," said Mathias abstractedly.

And the young man, full of his theme, talked on, heedless of his companion. "Ah, the murderer must have been a clever fellow. When one thinks that the deed was committed in the open air, and that he had every one against him, judges, gendarmes, police, and all—and yet that nothing was discovered, it seems to me positively astounding."

"Yes," interposed Mathias, "he was not a fool."

"A fool!" re-echoed Fritz; "not he. He would have made one of the cleverest gendarmes in the department."

"Do you really think so?" asked the burgomaster, with an air of interest.

"I am sure of it. For there are so many ways of detecting criminals, and so few escape, that to commit a crime like this, and yet go unpunished, showed that he must have possessed extraordinary address."

"I quite agree with you, Fritz; and what you say shows your good sense. I have always thought that it required a thousand times more address for a rogue to escape the gendarmes than for the gendarmes to detect a rogue. And for a very good reason. He has all the world against him."

"Clearly."

"And besides, when a man has committed a crime, and by it gained money, and for awhile escapes detection, he gets emboldened by impunity. He becomes like a gambler, and tries his second and his third throw. He finds it very agreeable to have money without working for it, so he goes on and on until he is caught. I should think it needs a great deal of courage to resist the first success in crime."

"You are quite right, burgomaster; and no doubt the author of that dreadful tragedy possessed the courage you speak of. He evidently stopped after his first success. But what is most astonishing to me is, that no trace was ever found of the corpse of the murdered man. Now do you know what my idea is?"

"No, no—but what was your idea?" And Mathias, taking the young man's arm, began pacing the room with him.

"Well, you must know at that time there were a great many limekilns in the neighbourhood of Waechem. Now it is my notion that the murderer, to destroy all traces of his crime, threw the body of the Jew into one of these kilns, and only by accident neglected to destroy the cloak and the cap. Old Kelz, my predecessor, evidently never thought of that."

"Very likely,—very likely," drawled out the burgomaster, stopping in the middle of the room. "Do you know that idea certainly never occurred to me. You're the first who ever suggested it."

"And this idea leads to many others. Now suppose—suppose inquiry were to be made amongst those persons who were burning lime at that time!"

What excited the burgomaster so terribly? Fierce he broke forth, with a wild hysteric laugh, "Take care, Fritz, take care. Why, I myself—I myself had a limekiln burning at the time the crime was committed."

"What you, burgomaster, you?"

And the two burst out into a loud laugh together. The idea of suspecting the honourable burgomaster of such a deed! No, no, the notion was too ridiculous!

(To be continued.)

A NEW sixpenny journal is about to appear in London called the *Anchor*.

A SOUTHERN CASE OF WITCHCRAFT.

"If the town of Salem, in Massachusetts," said Bob Billingsby, "thinks she has had the onliest witches in this country, all I got to say about it is that she is simply mistaken. Now, there was old Brother McGraw and old Sister Hutton—"

Bob's story in short, was thus: Old Brother McGraw and old Sister Hutton were members of Philip's Bridge Church. Brother McGraw was a consistent member, but old Sister Hutton, to say the truth, was regarded somewhat as a heathen, and even addicted to witchcraft. A calf of Brother McGraw's, of uncommon promise, dwindled in spite of uncommon pains, and finally died, and the good man, persuaded in his mind that his neighbour, although a spiritual sister, had bewitched it, set out in his wrath for her house, and taking her by the head, gave her a violent wrench. Sister Hutton reported the case to the church; and at the Conference one Saturday, Brother McGraw, being mildly remonstrated with, went so far as to say that he would have to think about it. The Moderator blandly suggested to him to withdraw for a few moments, retire into the woods, reflect, and pray over the matter. He did so. On returning, the Moderator and the brethren were gratified to observe the calm regret that was visible upon his countenance. This Moderator was a man of power, both as to intellect and character. It was Silas Mercer. Then this dialogue ensued:

Mr. Mercer: "Well, Brother McGraw, I see you've returned, and I think you've come to a just conclusion in the matter about which you have been reflecting." He looked inquiringly at the aged brother, and the aged brother answered his inquiring look with meek silence. "I think you feel sorry, Brother McGraw," suggested Mr. M., in a kindly, leading tone.

"Yes, Brer Moderator," answered the aged brother, "very sorry; I'm very sorry."

Yet there was some gruffness in his tone, which led the Moderator to doubt the nature of his regret. "Brother McGraw," said he, "will you let the church know what sort of sorrow it is you feel? Is it a golly sorrow, Brother McGraw?"

Then the aged brother lifted high his head, looked the Moderator full in the face, and answered, "Brer Moderator, I'm sorry—I'm wery sorry—that I didn't break her neck!"—*Harper's Magazine*.

JOHN DENNIS AND GENERAL FLOYD.

Early in the late civil war, John Dennis, a full negro, believing himself fired with patriotic zeal, and able to serve his country, besought his master, a Georgian, and obtained permission to accompany a regiment from that State, which was soon placed under the command of General Floyd. The history of that campaign is well known. On the retreat John became homesick, and was allowed to depart. He had become well known to General Floyd and all his command. On his departure he went to take leave of the general, when the following dialogue was had:

General Floyd. "Well, John, you are going to leave us, eh?"

John. "Yes, Mars Floyd; it 'pears like I could do more good at home now dan bein' here; so I thought I'd go home and 'courage up our people to hold on."

General F. "That's right, John. But are you going to tell 'em that you left us when running from the Yankees?"

John. "No, sir; no, Mars Floyd, dat I ain't. You may 'pend upon my not tellin' nothin' to 'moralize dem people."

General F. "But how will you get around telling them, John?"

John. "Easy enough, Mars Floyd. It won't do to 'moralize dem people. I'm goin' to tell 'em dis—dat when I left da army it was in first-rate sperrits, and dat, owin' to de situation of de country and de way de land lay, we was a-al-vancin' back'ards, and de Yankees was a-retreatin' on to us."—*Harper's Magazine*.

HUMOROUS.

CORSETS, like men, are tight when on a bust.

A YOUNG lady in New York has appropriately named her dog Penny, because it was one sent to her.

WHEN a thief steals five cents he don't think half the time that some day perhaps old nickel get him.

"HONESTY is the best policy." But you have to pay the premiums in this world, and realize on your insurance in the next.

A MAN being tormented with corns kicked his foot through a window, and the pain was gone instantly.

MARK TWAIN says nothing seems to please a fly so much as to be taken for a huckleberry, and if it can be baked in a cake and palmed off on the unwary as a currant it dies happy.

IN a recent article on a fair in the locality, the editor of a Western paper says a brother editor took a valuable premium, but an unkind policeman made him put it right back where he took it from.

"I NEVER argyagin a success," said the lato Artemus Ward; "when I see a rattlesnake's head sticking out of a hole, I bear off to the left, and say to myself That hole belongs to that snake."

ORGAN FOR SALE.

From one of the best manufacturers of the Dominion. New, and an excellent instrument. Will be sold cheap. Apply at this office.