

*THE SAINT OF THE DRAGON'S DALE*

a "robber-knight" beside a redoubtable pixie? Likewise, what likelier place for pixies than those glades just before? Johann had not forgotten the wise tales of old grandame Elsa; and there it was,—the stone cross, where forty years ago the griping burgomaster Gottfried had been found lying stiff and cold, with purse untouched, and never a scar, save a little one behind his ear. "He had gone to meet the Devil, and the Devil had stolen his soul;" so said Father Georg in church. It was heresy to doubt it.

Johann was sure it was best to pray at the cross. He plumped on the wet grass, said two Aves and a Paternoster. At the last "Amen," whir!—went something off behind. A gnome? No; only a partridge. He trudged on happier. Now the glade was narrowing; the trees thickened, the brook sang over rocks and sands. One could see the slim trout shooting in the pools. Johann's stride lengthened. The forest closed all view. He crossed the stream on stepping-stones, and drew a long breath. "Only two hundred paces more!" It had ceased rain-