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A SPIRITUAL SONG.

FROM THE GERMAN OF NOVALIS.

Translated by George MacDonald.

When in hours of fear and falling,
All but quite our heart despairs;
When, with sickness driven to wailing,
Anguish at our bosom tears;
When our loved ones we remember;
All their grief and trouble rue;
And the clouds of our December
Let no beam of hope shine through;

Then, oh then! God bends him o'er us;
Then his love grows very clear;
Long we heavenward then—before us
Lo, his angel standing near!
Fresh the cup of life he reaches;
Whispers courage, comfort new;
Nor in vain our prayer beseeches
Rest for the beloved too.

BAUM, THE CORNET-PLAYER.

In the old University Theatre of B— there was once an orchestra of surpassing strength and brilliancy. Its principal performer and its strongest stay was an old-fashioned white-haired gentleman, who was fastidiously ancient in his dress and deportment. He was a pianist, and he was blind. He was also a part proprietor of the theatre. His name was Krömer. He always wore a blue coat with large brass buttons, a wide collar which half enveloped his closely-cropped head, and an amplitude of flowing skirts which, when the wind was high, made a sail of such persuasive power that his thin legs could hardly hold their own against it. His neck-cloth was always large and purely white. Golden seals depended from his yellow vest, and he carried a cane which bore a silken tassel and a serpent in carnelian.

In his younger days people had told him that he resembled Burr, for his face was excellent, his chin sharp, and his complexion beautifully clear. He often sighed that custom forbade him a wig, and as a compensation he brushed his thick hair straight up from his forehead, and even in his sixtieth year steadfastly continued to be a dandy. He occupied choice apartments with his daughter, the bright remnant of a large family, and upon the whole lived a happy life until the thought of a son-in-law arose to disturb his peace of mind and to plague his ambition.

His sad infirmity had early demanded that he should have a companion in the busy streets through which he was obliged to pass on his way to the theatre, and the skillful cornet-player, Frederic Baum, at once offered his perpetual services, for he lodged in the same house. These services were gratefully accepted, and for several years the two men tramped backwards and forwards between their homes and their places of work, walking arm-in-arm; Frederic tenderly supporting his cornet-case, and Krömer constantly tapping the walk in front with the iron ferule of his cane.

Baum was an ugly man. His eyes were gray, his nose was large and red, and the constant blowing upon his difficult instrument had raised the puffs of muscles and flesh which resembled the effects of drink, though a more abstemious man than Baum ever lived.

All the unhandsome attributes of Baum's person were, however, thickly gilded; one soon forgot his unhappy eye and dismal face, and learned to sum him up from what they heard rather than from what they saw; and the result was generally favorable to Baum, for he had a rich voice and a graceful tongue.

Krömer's daughter gradually became a beautiful woman, and it began to dawn upon the father that he had now another duty to perform besides thrumming upon his piano in the orchestra.

Baum, being in full possession of his sight, had marked the advance of Krömer's daughter upon the stage, and had formed the natural plan of marrying her, though as yet he kept his hopes tight within his own bosom. He was by no means sure that his path to Margaret's affections would be the clearest that man had traveled, and he contented himself at the outset with treating her with the most scrupulous respect.

With Krömer, however, he kept on with his



"A PRETTY NOSEGAY."

ter success. Baum was a careful man, and he therefore set himself to the task of discovering the true state of his friend's affairs before he made any real onslaught upon the wayward affections of the daughter.

The revelations were pleasing in the highest degree. The old gentleman had made excellent profits out of his music, and had fingered the keys of his mighty piano to some substantial good. Baum was delighted, and the sole subject of conversation between the two men now became lands and bonds, and the pleasures of the orchestra faded into the background.

But Krömer's mind often reverted to his daughter; she was now twenty-one, and was fit to be married. She cared little or nothing for company, and seemed happiest when she could find some new pleasure or comfort for her father. Krömer knew that this was a mistake, and so he began to cast about him for a candidate for his treasure. He determined to call in the aid of that keen reasoner and clear seer, his friend Baum.

Therefore, in consequence of an arrangement made between them, Baum presented himself in the apartments of Krömer on a pleasant evening after the performance at the theatre. It was moonlight, and the lofty parlor which constituted the main apartment of Krömer's suite had no other illumination. Upon a table in an embrasure of a long window stood a large decanter and a pair of long-stemmed glasses.

Krömer felt the brilliant glow upon his face and was silent, while Baum quietly contemplated a picture made by a beautiful church-spire opposite.

Presently Baum reached for one of the glasses and began to turn it around and around in his fingers, for he began to reflect upon the subject of his visit. Nervousness filled him to the brim as he asked himself what right he had to expect that Krömer would pitch upon him, and still he could bring no one else to his mind who had ever met the notice of either the old gentleman or his daughter. Now his hope arose and now it sank.

He observed the calm face of Krömer from the corners of his eyes. The old gentleman sat with folded hands in the soft moonlight, smiling gently at his own conceit.

"My dearest friend Baum," said he finally in a deliberate whisper, but with the buoyancy of a man who has a treasured secret in reserve, "I trust you have a high idea of what we are about to decide. It is the welfare and happiness of my most lovely daughter. Reach me your hand over the table."

Baum did so reluctantly, for he felt that it was damp with perspiration, and that it was tremulous in spite of himself.

"Now let us go on rapidly," continued Krömer, readjusting himself. "I will mention several promising men, and you will be kind enough to say anything which strikes you concerning them; that is, if you know them; if not, you will say nothing. I have the peace of my daughter so nearly at heart that I will listen as closely to what you say as if you were an oracle."

"May I light a cigar before we commence?" asked Baum.

"Certainly," replied Krömer.

By this artifice Baum got his hand to himself and kept it. He also retired a few inches from

the table in order to be able to tremble without chance of discovery; that is, supposing Krömer should agitate him by what he was about to say.

Krömer began by calling the name of a certain rich cabinet-maker who lived over the way. Baum laughed immoderately at this mention, and another smile fitted even over the serious face of Krömer.

"I hardly wonder that you laugh, now that I think of it," said he. "It would indeed be an ill-judged thing to ask Margaret to be strictly light-hearted with a man who has the shape of an elephant and the soul of a fox. He is very rich, but he is also very ugly. No, the cabinet-maker will not do. What do you say to that young Frenchman who makes those ingenious artificial flowers?"

"He makes too many artificial flowers," replied Baum; "and he makes them too well. He is infatuated with his art, and labors at it incessantly. He would only use a wife to decorate as a milliner does a lay-figure. She would share his affection with his linen-roses and his foliage of Paris-green. That would not do."

"No, indeed," responded Krömer promptly; "I thought of that myself. To be the best of husbands one must not think wholly of business. What do you say of that stout young Englishman who imports linen?"

"Oh, he thinks too little of business. He is constantly off playing cricket on summer afternoons, and he will soon be poor."

"That's very true. To be a good husband one must not forget to work. Love requires as much money as misery does. Now I incline a little towards that popular romancist who writes so charmingly."

"Then you make an error, friend Krömer. He is not methodical. He believes in inspiration, and consequently he is generally out at the elbows. Besides that, he is lean."

"Yes, that is an objection," responded Krömer slowly. "A woman dislikes a lean man; and besides that, they are inclined to have poor tempers, and their love is as thin as their bodies. This reminds me of the malt-dealer in the next street. He knows Margaret, and I know she attracted him. I do not recall a bad quality there."

"Then you must be singularly misinformed," said Baum with anxiety; "for he is very stout, and he belongs to one of those third or fourth generations spoken of in the Bible."

"Good Heavens," exclaimed the other, "what do you tell me! Is there, then, no one of those I have mentioned who would be a fit husband for my daughter?"

"Not one," said Baum decidedly.

Krömer seemed to reflect for a while, and then he mentioned two other personages; but it happened that Baum had never heard of them, and so he was obliged to allow their names to pass without remark. His spirits rose. He felt sure that his own claims must have occurred to Krömer long before any of these, and he fancied the old gentleman was merely holding the announcement of his name in reserve as a shrewd mother secretes a toy from her child until his desire is aroused to such a pitch that he will enjoy the gift as it deserves.

What Krömer next said tended to increase his hope to a point which was nearly equivalent to certainty.

"We must not stray so far away, friend Baum. How often is it that mankind hunt abroad for rare virtues which have always lain under their noses at home. Now all we want is a sterling heart, a cheerful hand, and a clear conscience; and no one can persuade me that we cannot find them at hand if we look hard."

"I quite agree with you," replied Baum; "no doubt all these virtues, with the additional ones of a comfortable income and a fair amount of talent, not to say genius, are to be had for the mere asking."

"Ay, who knows," responded Krömer thoughtfully. "And besides, how much better it is to select one who has been for a long time under your notice, a friend of some years' standing, and in whose character you cannot pick a flaw."

"True," said Baum with a gasp; "very true."

"What is wealth or beauty," continued Krömer in a flush of generous enthusiasm; "what is wealth and beauty to the sublime qualities of a high ambition which never flags, an ardor which never fails, and a sincerity which never entertained the slightest savor of untruthfulness or double-dealing!"

"Ah, what indeed!" murmured Baum.

"I have met with one such case," said Krömer,