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From the German.

VI.—THE BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION.

As soon as I had settled myself comfortably in my own pretty abode, I turned my attention to the school children. These were more like a herd of swine than like rational creatures. I began by accustoming them to shake hands with me when they entered the schoolroom; and whoever came unwashed was sent to the brook; for I insisted upon their feet, as well as their hands and face, being clean, and also upon their hair being combed. They laughed at me; but I begged the cure to stand by me, and I asked him to preach a sermon on the advantages of cleanliness. "That does not belong to religion, Mr. Schoolmaster," said he; "go and attend to your business." However, by dint of perseverance, I succeeded in my efforts.

"The clothing was next to be attended to.—The children were dressed in ragged garments; this I could not change, but I was determined that they should be clean; and I promised a reward to those whose clothes were the cleanest at the end of the week. I distributed needles, pins, pocket-knives, scissors, and other trifles, which I bought wholesale at the yearly fair in the neighboring town, and each received some reward for being tidy and clean. The cure and mayor, and in fact all the villagers, laughed at me; but I resolutely prosecuted my plans. We must first civilize the habits of men before we can succeed in educating them. With the help of these rewards I succeeded; and before a year passed, the children were cleaner than their parents. Then the elder people began to be ashamed, for their children's neatness was a reproach to them. When I went through the village, the young ones would leave their games in order to greet me. All loved me. They feared my censure, liked my gifts to them, and above all, were pleased with the stories I related for their amusement.

"All the village talked of my generosity;—and certainly I had spent much more than my fifty gulden during my first year at Hard. Two of the poorest little children were clothed at my expense; and all this was thought by the people to be done by unnatural means. A schoolmaster in the country was generally the poorest amongst many poor; no man with any property would have become a schoolmaster.

"My predecessors had received presents and money from the parents; I gave more away than all the parents put together. They knew not what to make of me. They said that I was a thief, who had come to live here upon stolen money. Meanwhile, the cure gave the president the highest certificate of me, annexing some remarks on my presents to the scholars; but as to give is not forbidden in the ten commandments, nothing was said, and I was at last elected schoolmaster for life.

VII.—PROGRESS OF THE REFORMATION.

Now that I was settled in office, my work became lighter to me. I divide my pupils into classes, and made the elder ones teachers to the younger; and thus all improved quickly. I bought yarn and knitting-needles for the little girls, taught them to knit, and gave them whatever they made for themselves. The parents were pleased with us; and I paid a poor woman in the village half my salary for instructing the girls in all kinds of female work. Before another year had passed, rags had disappeared from the school room; though in some of the children the love of dirtiness, inherited from their parents, seemed unconquerable.

Meanwhile the young men rapidly improved. I read aloud to them, and related stories; and an hour spent in this way was the reward for all who had been diligent. It is incredible with what curiosity they all pressed around me when, on a Sunday afternoon, I appointed them to meet at my house, in the wood, or in the meadows; all quitted their games; and even those who had long ago left school, repaired thither. I gave them a moral enveloped in a story; and while they thought they were simply amusing themselves, I undermined their prejudices, awakened their moral feelings, and increased their knowledge of the world.

The singing lessons did not cause less enjoyment. There were many of my pupils who had good voices. The singing-master in the next town assisted me, and they speedily improved.—But I could do nothing with regard to the singing at church, for all the elders of the congregation delighted in singing as loud as possible. I begged the cure to tell his flock that it would be much more agreeable if they did not roar at church.

"What does that mean?" said he. "I allow every one to cry to God as loud as he likes;—lukewarm singing makes lukewarm religion."

He told the peasants and their wives of my unchristian request, and they sang louder than ever. I now felt that I must be more circum-spect, for I saw plainly that I was not liked;

and that the washing, sewing, knitting, and singing, were looked upon as pernicious innovations; and that the cure and mayor fostered the dislike of the people—the former because I was not sufficiently submissive to his will; and the latter because I never spent a groschen at his inn, and because I amused the young men on a Sunday, instead of letting them drink at his ale-house.—Perhaps I should have been even more disliked, had not the youths, maidens, and children shown great affection for me; these hindered many from injuring me, and from them I received warning when anything was designed against me.

A rumor was now spread by the women of Hard, which everywhere found credence, and which caused me to be feared by all. They said that I was a sorcerer, or something of that kind. When a cow gave blue milk, or when anything was stolen or lost, people came to me, and begged me to tell them, by means of the cards, who or what had caused these events.—They attributed the good condition of my three acres to supernatural means, though they saw me weeding and digging the land. I saw that the old people were not to be disabused of this idea; my only hope rested in the children, when who had begun to value the trouble I had taken with them. About five years after I came to Hard, to cure, who had always opposed me in everything, came to me one morning, and, after flattering me, offered me his cook in marriage. I refused, perhaps too indignantly; and he, in revenge, wrote to the president, accusing me of practices of the worst kind. I defended myself, and with such success, that the cure's conduct was inquired into, and he was found guilty of the very crimes he had imputed to me. He was dismissed, and another cure, of the name of Bode, took his place. He was quite a different man to his predecessor; pious, gentle, and charitable. He supported me in all my efforts, and tried to improve his flock; but his sermons were not liked. The people said he was not of the true religion; for he did not preach incomprehensibilities, as the cure Plock had done.—They praised the latter, lamented his loss, and said that there would never be such another man in Hard.

VIII.—THE COLONY.

"Just at this time a certain Baron Zebra arrived at Hard. He had just come into possession of a large and beautiful wood, consisting of beech, oak, and birch-trees, which lay in the parish of Hard, and which he wished to sell, because he lived at a great distance. The government refused to buy it, because no wood was required in the neighborhood, and there was no navigable river near by which timber could be conveyed to a distance. The baron offered it to the people of Hard, as the wood lay very conveniently for them; but they were very poor, and had wood enough; besides, if by any chance their stock failed, they made no scruple of stealing it from the baron. They therefore refused to buy it, unless he would lower the price from nine to five thousand gulden.

"The baron wished for advice on the subject; and the cure recommended him to speak to me, as I understood the affairs of the village better than any one else. He came to me; and it suddenly occurred to me to buy it myself. My plan was ready directly. The baron said he would take six thousand gulden for it, if I could procure purchasers. I explained to him that I wished to buy the wood upon speculation, and that I would pay him half the sum down, if he would allow the other half to remain, for which I would pay interest. He looked round my schoolroom, and then stared at me with surprise; he, however, agreed to my proposition, and the terms of purchase were legally drawn up. I took the eight thousand gulden from the bank, the interest of which the orphan daughter of my guardian had hitherto received, paid for her education out of my income, and gave the baron the sum agreed upon.

The people talked loudly enough now. No one doubted my being in possession of unheard-of riches; but the old people laughed at my speculation. I let them laugh. I procured the necessary implements, built a large kiln, had the wood cut down, and every piece converted into ashes. I had meditated great designs.

My best friend in Hard was a young and poor peasant, named Lebrecht, whom I had often assisted in the management his children, and I handed over my school to him. He was confirmed in the situation by the school-commission; and I, only reserving to myself the privilege of relating stories as formerly, left the school-house, and built myself a hut in the wood, in order to be near my workmen. They also built huts there;—and we lived very like much American backwoodsmen. The peasants shook their heads at my foolish undertaking. One acre of wood after another of wood was changed into ashes; and in a twelvemonth some hundred acres were laid bare. The potash thus procured found a ready sale, and was sent far and wide. From the produce of half the forest I gained enough money

to pay the remainder of the purchase-money; and besides possessing the land, I had now a large capital in my hands.

I built a small house upon my land, with stabling and barns, bought cattle, laid out the land in fields and meadows, and carried on farming as well as my potash manufactory. I discovered not far from my house a mineral spring; and as there were no baths near Hard, I built an inn, and published in all the newspapers the medicinal properties of the waters, the beauty of the neighborhood, and the accommodation for visitors.—Many people came; and in a year or two I was obliged to add a wing to the hotel.

I gave the management of the baths to an honest and diligent family. My capital increased rapidly. I divided three hundred acres into several parts, and built dwellings; for I had wood and limestone in abundance; and as soon as a house was ready, I placed a farmer therein. I chose those who were skilful in their business, and made the leases as advantageous to my tenants as possible. I became in fact, the law-giver to my colonists. These found so much advantage in settling on my land, that they would not willingly disobey me; and my unyielding severity towards certain faults soon banished them from my empire, for all feared my displeasure. Look there, dear Rodern; all those buildings behind us on the hill, fourteen in number, are the extent of my colony.

IX.—ELEVATION OF RANK.

Among the strangers who yearly visited the baths were many of high rank with whom I became acquainted. Had I been dressed as they were, my knowledge would not have attracted any attention; but in my peasant's frock, I appeared to them a very clever and admirable man. I was supposed to be enormously rich; and, after the death of the old village mayor, was named his successor. In fact, my elevation of rank gave me as much joy as being chosen governor or minister of state would have done in former days. Now I had attained my purpose, and my wishes were accomplished. I knew the ingratitude of the inhabitants of Hard. What else could be expected from such idle, mean-spirited ignorant people? I must have made them human, before I could expect noble feelings from them.

I carried on my design, assisted by the cure Bode and the schoolmaster Lebrecht. I continued my conversations with the youths of the village. I knew, from eight years' experience, all the sources of evil in the place, and I tried to stay them. One of the most important was the love of going to law. I made myself their attorney. I examined all the claims of the peasants, put an end to their quarrels by means of friendly advice, and from that time all the law-loving peasants came to me as judge. I was now so placed as to adjust all matters, and to frustrate all the endeavors of the country lawyers to produce quarrels. This was an unspeakably great advantage to the village. But, in the midst of all this, something happened of which I had often thought, but had never yet experienced—something which for some time turned my brain, and put all plans of reformation out of my head.

I was going one day with a load of potash to Berg, a market-town, about six miles distant, and where my agent lived. I had laid a sack of beans on the top of the load, and just as I entered Berg, it fell off. A boy who was passing saw the sack lying on the road, told me of my loss, and I took it upon my back, in order to carry it to the wagon. Just at that moment, a pretty, town-clad maiden passed me, and as I looked at her, a strange feeling came over me. My hat had fallen off, and having the sack on my back, I could not stoop to pick it up. She saw my dilemma, and kindly taking it up, gave it me. Whether I thanked her or not, I do not even know, but I followed my wagon into the town as if in a dream; I could not forget her smile.

I had a little bedroom at my agent's house always ready for me, for I was often obliged to remain all night at Berg. This day, however, I had finished my business early, and had intended to return home; but I could not resist remaining at Berg, in the hope of seeing the maiden again. I could not quit the window, and stood gazing into the street, until I was called to dinner. To my surprise, on joining the family at table, I found the maiden there. I sat in the place of honor, as usual, and she was opposite me. I could not eat. I saw only her black eyes instead of my food.

"Who is your visitor?" said I to my friend after she was gone.

"It is a poor girl that my sister, the cure's wife, has educated," replied my agent's wife.—"My brother-in-law is just dead, and as my sister is going to leave the vicarage, she sent this girl to me for a short time."

This answer pleased me much; but no part of it more than the word poor. "Then I may hope," thought I. I was not poor, nor very

ugly, and only two-and-thirty years old; but I was a potash manufacturer, and she an elegant city maiden. My spirit was troubled.

Soon after, in passing by the kitchen, I saw the maiden busy at the fire. Her kitchen apron made her more lovely than ever. My courage returned. In the evening I heard the sound of music as I sat in my own room: it was she playing on a miserable pianoforte. I entered the room whence the sounds came: she was alone, and her face became crimson when she saw me. I begged leave to tune the piano for her; and after I had done this, she played to me. Never had music so delighted me. She showed great taste and capability, and I felt as if in heaven. She was surprised that I knew anything of music, and that my language was not that of a common countryman.

"Are all the peasants in your neighborhood as educated as yourself, sir?" asked she, smilingly; at which I smiled in return.

I proposed a walk, and she consented. She looked more beautiful now; for the air changed the paleness and sorrowful expression of her features into cheerfulness, and almost merriment.—We sat together at supper, and afterwards spent an hour pleasantly at the piano.

I could not close my eyes that night. I remained the next day at Berg. I felt confused and embarrassed: my heart ached; and the third day, when I returned to Hard, I was really ill.

X.—THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE WORK.

All my business was now at a stand; at least my zeal was gone, for I thought of nothing but adorning my house. I bought an excellent piano, and made many additions to my furniture. The next week, when I went with my potash to Berg, I dressed myself more carefully; and when I saw the church spire of the town, my heart beat violently. My agent and his wife received me kindly, as usual, and the maiden greeted me as an old acquaintance; from her blushes I thought she was glad to see me. The piano was opened, and I whispered to her that I had bought an excellent one, and should like much to hear her play upon it. I dared not say more. We walked together, and talked upon every subject but one. I passed another sleepless night, stayed the next day, and when I bade her adieu, she said,

"Shall we see you again next week?"

"I promised to visit Berg the following Thursday, and left, reproaching myself that I had not had courage to say more. I wandered thro' my colony at Hard; I considered all I had done; but nothing pleased me. I could not contentedly say that all I done was good: there was something wanting—the consecration of my work by beauty and love.

I went to Berg as I had promised, and the kindness of my reception gave me courage.—During our walk, I told her how long the time had appeared since my last visit, and how much I had longed to see her again. She answered, innocently, that she was always glad to see me; that she was lonely there; and found no sympathy from those around her. I drew her arm within mine, and there was a long silence: for I had overstepped the boundaries of custom. She withdrew her arm; and I said, tremblingly,

"How can people be unsympathizing towards you?"

"I could say no more; we returned to the house; and I invited my agent and his family to pass a day at Hard.

"Mademoiselle Augusta must also go with us," said he; "she goes back next week to my sister-in-law." He showed me the letter, in which the day for her return was fixed. My happiness was gone.

In the evening, as I sat by her at the piano, I said,

"Do you really leave us?" Her hands fell from the keys as she answered in the affirmative. I was gloomy and miserable; and when I bade her good-night, I kissed her hand, and the tears came into my eyes. I remained at Berg till Saturday, when the whole family accompanied me back to Hard.

When the beautiful girl sprang from the coach, and trod my land, then a change came over me, and I felt that my work was sanctified by beauty and love. The strength and energy of man can do much in the world. Woman sanctifies all his efforts by love. She wakes in him the sense of the beautiful, and crowns him with the victor's wreath of domestic happiness.

XI.—THE GREAT DAY OF REJOICING.

My guests took up their abode in the new hotel, and I gave orders that they should be made as comfortable as possible. The agent's wife made many comments on my house, and wanted to know why I did not live more luxuriously.

"I could do so as well as others," said I, not without a little vanity; "but I do not want luxuries to make me happy. I will do without them, in order to have enough to give to those who want."

My agent shook his head, and said, "You are a wonderful man!"

The maiden looked at me with sympathizing eyes, and was the only one who defended me. "Who wants luxuries where perfect neatness reigns?" said she. "Does the possession of mahogany tables, china cups, or silver spoons, add one iota to our happiness?"

I led my defender to the piano; I showed her various valuable little trifles; and at last conducted her into my garden. She looked round with delight, and exclaimed,

"How beautiful it is here!"

"And will you leave all this?" said I. "Do you think it will be as beautiful when you are gone?" She was silent. "Stay here," continued I; "you are loved here more than you will be anywhere else." Tears filled her eyes: she looked at me. "Stay," repeated I; "for without you I cannot be happy."

She saw my agitation, and answered, "I would willingly remain here. Here is true happiness!"

"Share it, then, with me," cried I. "You are an orphan, and there is no one to oppose your giving your hand and heart to me."

"Truly, I have no parents; I am very poor; but what I have promised I will fulfil. I will take no important step without the consent of my kind foster-mother, and also of one man whom I honor above all on the earth."

"Who is that man?" asked I, anxiously.

"The noblest in the world. My father died miserably, and had, by his indiscretion, made this man unhappy. I was forsaken by all, but this young man took pity on me. He chose me a guardian, and spent the little he had upon my education. I honor him as a father. He kept his residence secret from me, but my guardian knew where he was. I wrote two letters to thank him for all he had done, but I have received no answer. I will do nothing without his consent.

"What is his name? I will seek him, even if he be in America."

"Engelbert!" she replied.

I lost my speech; but at last I stammered, "are you Augusta Benz?"

"Yes," she replied, with much surprise.

I took her hand, led her to my desk, and showed her her two letters.

"How did you obtain these letters?" she asked.

"I am Engelbert, and your father was my guardian," I replied.

She sank on her knees at my feet, kissed my hand, and would not let me raise her up. "Let me be here," said she; "I have often wished to thank my benefactor."

"Will you leave me?" said I.

"Nobody but you has a right to control me," she replied. "What you command is my will." "And if I command nothing—if I were not Engelbert, and if Engelbert opposed us, would you leave me?"

"She turned her face to mine. It was the happiest moment of my life, for we were now betrothed.

"The agent and his wife were astonished when they heard all this. 'There is more than one Engelbert in the world,' said they: 'we should never have dreamt of this.'

"If I had heard your name at Berg," said Augusta, "I should have discovered you long ago; but you were only called 'Mayor' there."

"I took her through my colony, I related the history of my life, explained to her all my intentions, and confided to her all my thoughts. I declared she should not again leave Hard; and the cure Bode published the bans in the church next day. Augusta wrote to the cure's widow who had brought her up; and I added a few lines to her letter, saying that the sum should be paid as usual till her death. Augusta remained at the hotel. There was much to be done in my house, and she arranged everything according to her own taste. The following Sunday she entered my room, dressed in peasant's clothing. She laid aside her city elegancies, and appeared in the costume of a country maiden.—A fortnight after, the cure joined our hands at the altar.

XII.—A FORTUNATE MISFORTUNE.

Augusta now relieved me of my household cares, and I devoted my time to the business of the village. We had been married about two years, when one night, arising from carelessness in a house, the whole village fell a prey to the flames. All help was vain. The peasants stood looking on, stupefied and unable to move, while people from the neighboring villages hastened to our aid.

Only a few buildings remained. It was a great misfortune. The government hardly helped us at all; but still I hoped that good would arise out of this evil. I wrote to the government respecting the re-building of the village, and represented the possibility of avoiding such misfortunes in future, by obliging each landowner to build his house in the centre of his property.