

capered about me, and used all those little arts and graces she considers most effectual on such occasions.

"Don't be angry *please*, Mephisto, he's such a nice man, and has a wife and family to support, all girl-babies, just imagine what an inflection, and yet he bears it like a man; besides, he gave me a lot of useful information."

"But, my dear, if you give money to every man with a wife and family, we shall soon have to retire to the obscurity of a four-pair-back. What information did he give you?"

"Oh! he told me about the water being so low, and that we should be stranded opposite Konigstein, and then he said he would do his best to save us, and could the ladies swim?"

"I can't see the necessity of swimming in water that doesn't cover the bed of the river," I replied, with an attempt to suppress a smile.

Presently we approached Schandau, where we intended landing, and as I saw the vivid green sward stretching along the borders of the river, I asked Tim to tell me the legend from which the town received its name.

"Oh!" she replied indolently, and as if she were making up, "there was a fight on those meadows once, and a man was killed by his friend, so he said 'Schande,' which is high Dutch for 'it's a shame'; and then his wound hurting him, he said 'ow,' and so the place has been called Schandau ever since."

Which was a very fair burlesque of the story.

The next day we wandered into the woods and the luxuriance of early autumn, the cool soft beds of vivid green moss, the sweet penetrating scent of the pine needles, but, above all, the singing, lulling sound of the wind in the upper branches of the fir-trees, produced such a soothing impression on my mental mechanism, that I told Tim I felt in the mood to write a poem; she advised me not, said these were the times when people were most dangerous, and it was then they should be locked up and fed through a hole in the wall, not when they had abstracted some trifle its owner was better without, so I suppressed my poem for the good of my fellow-men, as the school-boy did his measles out of consideration for the other scholars. It's a pity Tim always happens to be with me when I am in a poetical vein. There was another occasion when, if I had only had pen and paper, and Tim had let me alone, I might have—well, it does not become me to say what I might have done. We had been climbing through woods, and emerged suddenly upon an open plateau, which seemed in another world, so remote from every sign and sound of life. The air was simply divine in its purity and freshness, and its sun-laden breeze came to meet us, fanned our hot cheeks and foreheads, and caressed and kissed us like a long lost friend. I was moved, and as Tim herself seemed somewhat overcome, I said humbly that I wanted to write a poem very badly, and had she a pencil and scrap of paper about with her anywhere? She inquired with a look such as grandmamma casts over her spectacles at the infant terrible of the family, if I supposed she carried note-books in her hair? I explained that I was simply quivering with inspiration. She said I might do that if I liked, but not to come too near her—the shivers or the quivers might be catching.

Early the next morning Tim looked up

the excursions in the neighborhood, and wanted to combine them in one day's march, but I summoned the landlady who assured us Tim's plan would give any ordinary tourist hard labour for a week, so we sketched out a route that we thought would be satisfactory. Our landlady smiled significantly and asked if the ladies were good walkers? That audacious Tim answered that we were champion pedestrians, and had walked our four miles an hour and kept it up forty-eight hours on end, "many and many's the time," explained Tim, with earnest emphasis, and fixing the poor woman with what I call her "take your affidavit of it" gaze. If this was a "white one," poor Tim was punished for it with swelled feet and aching bones long before we got back that evening.

Things went pleasantly enough till we came to the three hundred odd steps leading to the "Brand;" half-way up we were both panting more than became professionals, but by dint of interchanged sarcasms and recourse to the benches provided for the debilitated tourist we reached the "Brand," and were rewarded by the sight of all Saxon Switzerland lying in sunlit beauty at our feet. Of course there was a restaurant here, and of course Tim wanted something to eat; I compromised with cakes and ale, and while partaking of these, we were able to observe the very peculiar character of the rocky formation of the country before us, which gives the scenery so picturesque, and in places, so wierd and almost unnatural an appearance. Nature is here in her most compliant mood; she has dashed the rocks to pieces, and piled them up again in fantastic groups; she has raised stone plateaux high above the surface of the earth and nicely smoothed and rounded them off at the top, so that they cry out to be fortified, and she has burst out into queer rocky shapes, as to the Prebisch Thor and sacks of meal, which are, as it were, ready-made sagas in stone. Indeed, nature is here almost too compliant, for she seems to have broken up her grand primeval rocks with too single an eye to the advantage of guides and hotel-keepers. As Tim says when she is by way of being transcendental, what we need most, is to repose upon immensity, "and you can't do that on spikes of rock," concludes she in her daring criticism.

Having finished our repast, we proceeded to view the aforesaid sacks of meal, which, according to tradition, were turned to stone by an irate friar who received ill-treatment from the giants formerly residing on the top of the Brand, and whose sole occupation was to brew beer and drink it with the help of a dog, a cat and a crocodile, who formed the rest of this extraordinary menage. As usual I had to inform Tim of the details of the legend, in which task I was helped by a burly countryman in a blouse. I enquired if those were the original, genuine and authentic sacks of which the legend speaks?

"Yes," he replied with so pronounced a Saxon accent that I had difficulty in following him, "There they stand, as God created them," thus evincing a decided bias to scepticism with respect to the traditions of the district.

We did not reach the place where we intended to dine till three, and then were in need of a long rest before going further. The place itself was conducive to indolence—a narrow space of verdure shut in by rocks where one would willingly remain indefinitely to dream away the time, cher-

ishing the idea that no world lay beyond its precincts.

After we had finished our portions, I sighed, and Tim asked me in the vernacular, what was up?

"Oh! nothing, only I wish it were all to begin over again."

"What, the walking?"

"No, the dinner. There is something particularly stimulating to the appetite in dining à-la-carte. Do you know, I can hardly believe there ever was a time when one could have a second helping without due consideration, and I look upon our present discipline as a punishment for all the good things refused—roast beef, tender and juicy, mutton chops, fit for the gods of Olympus, puddings, pies, cakes, jellies—"

I might have gone on indefinitely with painful reminiscences, had not Tim put her fingers in her ears and exclaimed,

"For goodness' sake! Mephisto, don't call up the ghosts of the past. Why, I remember the time when we used to sit down to three full meals a day, to say nothing of the tea-table on the lawn at five; even the servants—"

"This sounds very like the prodigal son," I remarked, "but suppose we have coffee to drown care, and here is something on the bill-of-fare that looks hopeful—apple-charlotte, shall I order it for two?"

"Esse," said Tim, lapsing into content and baby-talk at the same moment.

But it did not prove all our fancy painted it—it was decidedly stodgy. Tim made some remote allusions to the "Sorrows of Werther" and said she could understand the young man putting an end to himself. I confessed I could not see what that had to do with our pudding, and laboured on with the stodginess before me, halting miles behind Tim, who went on letting off brilliant little things with an utter disregard to my Anglo-Saxon inability to keep up with her little incapacity for measuring time. She went on ordering one cup of coffee after another until I told the waiter she would not require any more that afternoon. I hurried her up the steep incline leading to the "Hockstein," where Weber conceived the idea for his "Freischutz," and allowed her far less time than she needed for sentimentalizing—indeed, on our way through the "Polenzthal" back to Schandau we had no leisure for admiring the exquisite beauty that lay before us in the gathering twilight. I had been walking on, heroically endeavouring not to slacken my pace, when looking back, I perceived Tim sitting on a stone in a most dejected posture; I retraced my steps and asked her if she had sprained her ankle? No, she replied, but said she was going to rest on that *very* stone until she felt able to go on, and that there was no use wasting strength or argument. I didn't, but suggested dynamite and told her to hurry her bones—"vulgar," muttered Tim, and deigned no further reply, upon which I considered it polite to capitulate and bade her tell me when she was ready to go on. This course seemed to mollify her, and in ten minutes she said she could get on to the next nice stone.

"A pity they don't have lamp-posts on these country roads, Mephisto," she said, "a lamp-post is such a convenient thing to lean up against."

This speech shed a gleam into the moral depravity of Tim's past, across which, as her friend and chaperone, I feel in honour bound to draw the veil.

When we reached Schandau the shades