

religious principles and observances. the Protestant religion in that country had not come down, as it since has, into mere infidelity, but the severe principles of Calvinism were strictly in force.

Just at the confines of the two, in one place, were two villages, one on either side. The boundary line ran along the side of a hill, or rather, mountain, the Lucerne or Catholic territory occupying the higher or upper side. Upon this was situated the little village of Lichten, and a bright, cheery little place it was, looking straight up into the face of heaven, without any thing above it, while its clean and handsome church stood the highest of all, and its tall wooden spire shot clear up into the sky, and could be seen by all the country round for miles. And when they set the bell a-ringing in its little turret, though it was not large, it sent such a free and joyful peal across the valleys on every side, and rung so clear and sharp through the pure air, that every one knew it, and people used to say, 'there is some good thing or other now going on at Lichten.' But that little bell, what sad havoc it used to make on a Sunday morning with the good people of Dunkel, a village deep in the valley below, on the Protestant side of the frontier. It was surrounded by a pine wood, and looked very dismal from the sunny, laughing heights of Lichten. Its inhabitants were very strict in their religious observances; most particularly so in their keeping of the sabbath. They allowed no noise whatever to be made on it; but that piercing, noisy little bell of Lichten, which began early in the morning, and continued to ring at intervals through the day, could not be kept out. The inhabitants hated it, and the church it swung upon, and all who obeyed it. Hence, never was an inhabitant of one village known to visit the other; there was no intercourse between them. The good curate of Lichten used to tell his people to have nothing to say to their neighbours, beyond what kindness and civility might require, lest they might hear, and become corrupted by pernicious doctrines, and exhorted all to pray for them, that they might be brought to the truth; the minister of Dunkel was constantly preaching against the superstitions of popery, described the horrible practices which he said were performed in its churches, and bade his people fly from all intercourse with the idolators (as he called them) lest they should become partakers in their plagues.

One of the richest men in the village of Dunkel was Gottlob Stein, like all the other inhabitants of the district, and his father before him, a possessor and cultivator of land. He had been left a widower with two sons: the eldest had received the name of John, out of veneration for Calvin, of whom Gottlob was a great admirer, and was generally called by the familiar German form of that name, Hans, by which we likewise will call him. He was, at the time of which we write, about fifteen years old, but had a spirit and activity fit for a youth at least three

years older. He could run against any boy of his age or size; he joined in the chase of the chamois or wild goat, bounding after it from crag to crag as nimbly as it, and bringing it down with infallible aim. He loved to roam over the fields, and would sing as blithely as the lark in the sky. He was quite the little hero of Dunkel, loved by every one; for he was a fine tempered, gay, and kind-hearted boy, with a cheerful open look and bright eyes. But no one loved him like his little brother, five years younger than he, a sweet gentle child, of weak frame and delicate health, who seldom left the house, unless Hans on a fine day led him, or rather carried him, to some green spot, where he would weave garlands of meadow-flowers, while Hans sung for him, or frolicked about him: for if with men he seemed a man, with little Wilhelm he was a very child. And it was well for Hans that he had a brother at home to love; for his father was a severe stern man; a religionist of a dark school; just in his dealings, but not often merciful; respected consequently, but not much loved. He ruled his little household with austere rule; only upon his younger child was he seen to smile, or heard to lavish soft words. The principal visitor and only guest at his house was the clergyman, or as he was called, Pastor Grabstimme, a young man, tall and gaunt, with pale face and hard features, eloquent and fluent in words, which were generally employed upon gloomy and fearful themes.

It is customary in Switzerland, when the snow melts, to send the cattle to the hills, and lower mountains; and wooden huts called 'chalis' are erected for their accommodation, in the various pasture-grounds. The fine weather was now come, and Gottlob and the pastor, who never liked Hans much, agreed that he was now old enough to look after the cattle at pasture, and announced to him that after next sabbath he must be prepared to undertake this duty. How delighted was the poor boy at the news! Now he should be at liberty to stroll about the fields, and sing at pleasure without any one to chide him and churl him at every turn. And when the day came, right merrily did he run, frisking and gamboling up the mountain's side, to his father's pasture-ground. This went up just to the boundary of the canton, touching on that belonging to the village of Lichten. But after he had amused himself for some time, he began to think that it would be rather lonely to stay there all day, and the next, without some playmate or companion. While thus engaged in thought, he heard a clear, but soft and gentle voice singing at a little distance. He listened, and the words sounded more like a hymn, than like his own wild mountain or patriotic songs. He looked, and he saw that the strain proceeded from a boy of apparently his own age, from the village of Lichten, who sat on a mossy piece of rock, with a book on his knees, from which he looked up as he sang. Nothing could be gentler