THE SELF−SEER.

Dinah Maria Craik

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CHAPTER I.

Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how poor a thing is man! —*WORDSWORTH.*

HERMAN WALDHOF was indulging in a love−reverie. He sat, leaning his chin upon his hand, in an easy, careless, *dolce far niente* attitude, before a large mirror.

His eyes were earnestly fixed, Narcissus−like, upon himself imaged therein.

Many said that young Herman Waldhof was the handsomest man in Leipzic, and Herman himself was scarcely disposed to deny the fact. It had been forced upon his notice so often during the last five−and−twenty years, that at length he took it for granted. Yet he was too high−minded to be very vain. He bore his honours as a monarch does his crown, conscious of the dignity which Fortune has bestowed, and therefore taking no pains to assert what must be obvious to all. But in the earnest look which Herman directed towards his mirror there was a deeper feeling than mere vanity. He loved; he hoped, yet hardly believed, that he was beloved again; and in the reflected features opposite to him might be read a look of doubt and anxious inquiry.

When one loves, how quickly does this feeling come! how does the mirror, which was before hardly noticed, or made only the resort of idle vanity, become like an adviser—a friend! We wish to see ourselves with the eyes of the beloved. We wish to know, without flattery, what we really are. We gaze with a feeling of lingering fondness, in which vanity has no share, on those features which we would fain believe are fair and precious in another's sight. Ah, thence proceeds all their charm in our own! Thus, as the young lover tossed back the dark clustering curls, looked wistfully into the depths of the large eyes, and noted the graceful curves of the beautiful mouth, trying to criticise the well−known face which met his view with the indifference of a perfect stranger—his heart was full, not of himself, but of **her**.

A knock at the door made the young man instinctively turn his back to the mirror and take up a book, but he could not keep down the colour that **would** rise to his very forehead, at being discovered in the unmanly act of examining himself in the glass. Even though the discoverer was his friend and companion from boyhood, Leuthold Auerbach.

"Are you studying, or only dreaming, Herman?" said the newcomer, in those sweet, low tones, so rarely heard in a man's voice, which are always the index of an eminently sensitive and gifted mind, which attract in a moment, and are the dearest heart−music in the world.

Herman answered the question with a faint laugh,—

"Doing both, I believe. But, I have a charge against thee, good friend, and from a fair one to whom thou wouldst not willingly give cause of anger. I was last night at the old professor's, and the Lady Hilda"—the young man's colour deepened a little as he uttered the name—"Hilda asked why thou wert not there too."

"Did she so?" Leuthold said.

Herman was too much engrossed by his own feelings, or he would have seen the sudden paleness, the quivering lip, the involuntary clench of the hands, that his words brought to Leuthold. Alas! he, too, loved; but love to him was no joy, only hopeless pain.

"What shall I say in thy defence, false knight, when I see her to−morrow?" Herman continued.

"Again!" muttered Leuthold.

There was a sore pang at his heart, but he repressed it, and said, calmly,—

"The Lady Hilda is ever kind; she always was, since the days when I was a poor student in her father's house. Tell her I was ill, or I would have come."

"Thou art not well now, poor friend!" said Herman, turning round, and laying his hand on his friend's shoulder. "Pale as ever—no, now thou art crimson! Why, Leuthold, thou hast been studying far too much."

"It may be; a student must do so if he would attain his end. I am not like thee, Herman,—young, rich, handsome."

"Thou art quite as young," interrupted the other, "though thou dost not look so; and as rich, for thou hast enough for thy wants, which is more than I often have for mine, I candidly confess. As to being handsome— But, pshaw! what nonsense is this! I am so anxious, so full of thought, I cannot jest any more. Leuthold, thou shouldst

pity me!"

"Pity **thee**!" said the student. "Thee—the pride of Leipzic, admired by all, loved by—"

"Oh, Leuthold, I know not that Hilda loves me! Last night I thought her so cold, and there sat beside her that young Graf von P—, and she listened to him; she spoke fondly—"

"I do not believe it," gravely answered Leuthold. "Hilda is too sincere, too pure−hearted, to sport with any one's feelings thus."

The lover clung eagerly to the willing belief.

"Ah, well, I might be wrong, but love is full of vagaries,—my whole soul is wrapped up in her! Tell me, Leuthold, thou who hast known her heart from childhood, whom she regards as a brother, am I such an one as Hilda would love?"

And Herman looked fixedly at his friend, to whom each unconscious word came like a barbed arrow. Yet not a muscle of Leuthold's face quivered beneath the gaze; he grew strong through the intensity of the love which had made of his heart not a home to abide in, but a tomb wherein it must be buried for evermore. It gave no outward sign, no more than the poor clay resting under a green grave.

"Thou askest more than I can answer, dear Herman," said Leuthold. "But think what thou art!"

"Oh, that I could see myself!" cried the impetuous young man. "Oh, that I could see myself as any other man—how I look, how I speak, how I act! Do you know what I was so mad as to be doing but now?" he added, colouring deeply. "Playing pranks before the mirror, and trying to judge of my own face as I would that of the fool Von P—, or any stranger! Oh, if I could see myself as I really am,—most of all as I appear in Hilda's eyes! Is there no spell, no magic, that will give me my desire? Surely, Leuthold, thou who hast studied the deep secrets of alchemy, who hast beheld the great Helvetius face to face, must know something!"

"Speak not of these things," answered the student, solemnly. "To those who live in the world, in its gay realities, the inner world of mystery is not open. Yet if it were as thou sayest,—if we could gain this knowledge—I, too, would desire it equally. And it may be so," continued Leuthold, with wild and kindling eyes; "who knows! The more I study, the more I see that wisdom is unfathomable."

He rose up and paced the room with an energy that made his slight figure dilate, until it seemed in the twilight to grow to a giant's size. Deeper and deeper gathered the shadows in the large, lofty room: it was a noble hall, which the wealth of Herman Waldhof had gained from its old baronial owners, whose ancestors seemed to frown from the walls upon the new possessor. The twilight faded, and all became wrapped in gloom. Herman watched the dim figure of Leuthold as he moved backwards and forwards, utterly unconscious of his friend's presence; sometimes murmuring, in a sort of monotonous chant, rhymes in a strange tongue, and then again maintaining a total silence. At last Herman, in the darkness, could only hear his footsteps resounding at measured intervals on the oaken floor.

All this time the young man never moved. Gay−hearted as he seemed, Herman was deeply tinctured with the belief in supernatural things, which was called forth by the mysterious acts and words of many wise men of the middle ages. On his friend Leuthold, whom he knew to be deeply read in the lore of the cabalists and alchemists, he ever looked with most reverent awe.

At last a touch on his arm made Herman start, and the student's voice—but so low and changed, that it seemed almost unearthly—fell on his ear:—

"It will be accomplished; wait and see: they are coming!" whispered Leuthold.

Overpowered with terror, Herman would have fled, but his friend held him with a grasp that seemed like that of an iron band.

"Weak man, wouldst thou shrink?" sternly cried the student.

"I shrink from meeting those thou hast called up—the fiends—the demons!"

"They are no demons, they are good spirits. Know, Herman, that each man born into the world has a guardian angel given him, which must attend him from birth until death. To the common herd of mankind, who eat and sleep, toil and rest, marry and die, without a thought beyond the petty round of daily life, this spirit is no more than an inward voice, the voice of conscience. But to those on whom God has bestowed His glorious gift of genius—a spark of His own divine essence—the angel of their being is far nearer; a presence that may be felt. The more they cultivate this inner sense, the stronger it becomes, until they see with the open eyes of the soul, and hear with its angel−ears.

"I, even I," continued Leuthold, while his voice rung through the gloom like the voice of an unseen spirit—"I, even I, in my poverty, in my loneliness, in my despair, have seen my Angel standing beside me, whispering comfort and wisdom and joy, such as no earthly sorrows could take away. And now, by the power of my will and my faith, I have again brought this celestial guardian; and not only mine, but thine! Listen, they are coming!"

"And I!" cried Herman, in deadly fear.

"Thou mayest hear, thou canst not see them. Kneel, cover thy face, and pray. Think of all pure and holy things, of thy love on earth, of thy trust in heaven. Remember, one evil thought will drive from thee these blessed spirits. Herman, they come—they come!"

Herman listened to a sound which he rather felt than heard; it was like the step of one beloved coming nearer and nearer, each soft foot−fall sending a thrill to heart. And then he perceived that Leuthold had unclasped his hand, but that Another was beside him. He fancied his hair was stirred by a soft breath, such as he had felt in dreams—dreams of Hilda, and it seemed that this angel−breath penetrated to his inmost heart, filling it with child−like purity and peace.

He was roused from this trance by the deep solemn tones of Leuthold, and knew that his friend was addressing no mortal, but the Angel of which he had spoken. With serene earnestness the student lifted up his voice, and told all his heart's desire to the mysterious Presences that were with them in the room. He spoke not in slavish fear, but like one who, with a lofty and awful joy, holds communion with those who, though superior, are drawn to him by love, until they speak as friend to friend.

And he was answered. From the silence came forth a voice—not human, and yet like humanity in its sweetness. Much of what it said was inexplicable to Herman, whose whole life had been spent in worldly delights, and who knew not the joys which the soul feels when retiring into communion with itself, and those essences to which it is akin. But Leuthold understood all.

"Listen," said the Angel, "O thou who art my care! Man's is a double existence. Ever following his spirit, as the shadow follows his body, is a second self. It is not his soul, but only the reflection of it, like the faint arch within the rainbow, or the giant mountain−shadows which mimic men. Generally this phantasm is inseparable from the reality which produces it; but at times man has been suffered to behold the reflex of himself; and often, too, has this second self appeared to those to whom the man was dear, a dim spectre of prophetic woe."

"I know it, I know it!" cried Leuthold, mournfully. "Even the night before death took my mother from me, as we sat together in the twilight, I saw a Shadow like herself come and sit opposite to us! And she knew it was a sign, and went in and lay down calmly to rest—a rest that was eternal." He paused—his silence showing on what a deep and tender nature had fallen this first wound. "But, Angel, I would not thus see the phantom of myself; I desire to behold my living form as with the eye of a spirit. Canst thou grant this?"

"Only thus. Thou must thyself become the attendant shadow; must abstract thy mind for a season from all earthly things, until it becomes, as in dreams, separate from the body. Then thy spirit, or that portion of it which is active in dreams, may float over its living self, and behold, for a time, all that thou dost and all that thou art, even like a disembodied soul. But know, for each day in which thou thus gainest thy desire, a year will be taken from thy mortal life."

"Even so—that would add to the boon," said Leuthold, softly. "But, Herman, life is bright to thee, wilt thou consent likewise?"

Herman shuddered and bowed his face lower to the earth, as he felt the invisible breath beside him form itself into a voice. But it was not like the one which had spoken to Leuthold—it sounded faint and indistinct.

"Once only in thy life mayest thou hear thy angel's voice, Herman! and once only is this faculty permitted to thee. Wouldst thou for a single day behold thyself?"

"I would—I would!" muttered Herman; and as he spoke the whole chamber was flooded with the light of the moon, as she broke through the edge of a dark cloud. He lifted up his head, but saw only his friend, who, pale and almost insensible, leaned against the wall, like one just awakened out of a dream.

CHAPTER II.

Let me behold my outward self, and look
Within my spirit as within a book.
What there is writ? Full many a mingled line
Wise, foolish, fair, final, earthly, and divine.
Some shine out clear, on some dark sin−blots fall;
But love's calm eye of mercy readeth all.

HERMAN rose up at dawn on the morrow, forgetting all the strange excitement which he had gone through. It had passed from his memory like a dream. He leaped out through his low window into the glad daylight, walked through his beautiful domain, heard the birds singing a blithe welcome to the morning, saw the sunshine resting upon the noble old hall, until it looked almost as if it had renewed its youth. He felt to the full the happiness of life. All the fantastic imaginings of night had vanished with the coming of daylight.

Existence was in every way a reality to Herman Waldhof. He was the embodiment of youth in its full enjoyment of the present, keenly alive to every delight of sense, and revelling in life as a happy certainty of tangible bliss, quite distinct from the enthusiastic visions of the dreamer. A young man, full of health and gaiety—bound by no ties, save those he chose to forge for himself—rich, though, as he had said, his wishes often outran his wealth;—until the shadow of love fell over him, Herman had never known a care. Yet his love, though it had made him more thoughtful, brought with it no real sorrow, but only those few faint doubts which nourish and strengthen as April rain. Love without such would be like the spring without showers.

Waldhof bounded through his fields, exulting in the bright day, and in his own happiness. He called his huntsmen around him, and made ready for the chase. It would serve to beguile the tedious hours until the lover could again seek the presence of his beloved. But before he set out, he rode with his companions through the street where Hilda dwelt. A goodly troop of young men they were, but there were none so noble in bearing as Herman Waldhof. He knew it, too; and as he passed Hilda's window, he felt almost glad that the horseman who rode beside him was the Graf von P—, a small and ungainly man, badly mounted. As Herman made his own fine charger curvet, and, doffing his hat, let the sunshine rest on his curling hair, a smile of proud delight curved his lips. For he saw through the lattice two fair eyes, which lingered not on the Graf von P—, but on himself.

"I wonder," thought the young man, "how I appear to−day in Hilda's sight?"

As the idea crossed his mind, it seemed that his steed dashed wildly along, confusing all his faculties. His eyes grew dazzled with the motion caused by passing swiftly through the air, and he hardly knew what affected him, until he woke out of a kind of stupor. He felt himself floating through the air as one does in dreams; but his personal identity was gone. He glided along as bodiless as a winged thought, and yet he clearly distinguished everything around him as when he had been gifted with corporeal senses. He was floating amidst the trees of a wild forest, he heard the ringing music of the horn, and beneath him gallopped a troop of gay huntsmen. One among them was remarkable for personal beauty and agility. He sat his steed with the grace and firmness of a young Greek warrior, and his joyous laugh resounded through the forest as if he had been the light−hearted Actæon of old. In this youth, so apparently happy, so beautiful in person, the hovering spirit of Herman Waldhof recognised himself. His wish had been attained.

Like a cloud in the air the Shadow floated over the merry troop, and followed them through the glades of the forest. It beheld its corporeal self—the man who was Herman Waldhof; it scanned his features with keen inquiry. They were as perfect in form as the mirror had always reflected them; but now, when agitated by the play of expression, there was a vague deficiency—a want of that inexpressible charm which sometimes makes the most ordinary face enchanting by the inward beauty of the mind. Herman's features were as unchangeable in their expression as those of the Apollo Belvidere—if you sought anything beyond, you might as well seek it in that marble. The Shadow into which a portion of the young man's soul had fled, retained enough of its mortal nature to feel this want and deplore it, and turned its observation to other qualities of its second self.

Most noble was the bearing of the young huntsman, but still an unprejudiced eye might distinguish in his manly form too much of strength and too little of grace. He was an incipient Hercules, who might become in

middle age anything but lithe and active. Winning he was in manner, and yet, both in that and in his tone of voice, was apparent an occasional harshness that in an inferior would have been most unpleasing, but which was disregarded in the wealthy and fascinating Herman Waldhof. His companions treated him as a privileged person, bore with his haughtiness, and laughed at his jests, even when directed against themselves.

"We shall find no game to−day," said Herman, with a shade of annoyance perceptible in his tone.

"You have driven it far into the inner forest with your constant hunts, Waldhof," answered one of the young men. "Truly, all we huntsmen ought to be very grateful for a whole year's amusement at your cost."

"Oh, 'tis nothing," returned Herman. "I love the chase, therefore I follow it. Having plenty of horses and every other appurtenance of wealth, I can oblige my friends and please myself with their society at the same time. By−the−by, Von P—, why did you not go to my stable? My grooms would have better provided you than with that sorry steed of yours?"

The Graf von P— turned crimson with vexation.

"A poor nobleman is sometimes worse off than a rich commoner, but he is not the less proud. With all thanks for his courtesy, Herr Waldhof will excuse my preferring my own horse."

"Just as you like!" answered the young man, carelessly, totally unconscious of the pain he had caused; but the Shadow of his being saw in that passing incident, an ostentation for which the open−handed generosity of youth could not atone, and a thoughtlessness of others which showed selfishness lurking in the depths of an otherwise frank and kindly nature. A superficial observer might not notice these things, but one who could read the inner foldings of the human heart would at once recognise them as blemishes in the character of Herman Waldhof.

The young huntsmen rode merrily on, and the prey was found. Now all the ardour of the chase began. Exulting in his dauntless courage, Herman was the foremost in all dangerous exploits. His eyes flashed, his colour heightened, and his voice rang out merrily. More than once he dashed between the enraged boar and one of the assailants, thereby perilling his own life, and preserving that of another fellow−creature. And then they all cried, "how generous, how heroic was the young Herman Waldhof!" and the dim Shadow which followed him rejoiced triumphantly in the praise of its other self.

The hunted boar turned at bay, and the crisis of the sport arrived. All drew back, and left the master of the chase to perform the crowning exploit. It was an honour which Herman had ever claimed as a right. He glanced proudly round and spurred his horse, poising his spear with a firm, bold hand. But, in a moment, another horseman dashed forward, and despatching the wild beast, turned exultingly to claim the final honours of the chase. It was the Graf von P—!

Instantly the beaming face of Herman was darkened by a thunder−cloud of anger, until the features that were before so beautiful grew almost hideous in their wrathful disdain. He was about to plunge his horse forward, and direct his reeking spear—not against the dead boar, but the living man—had not a murmur from the other huntsmen arrested him.

"It was not right of Von P—!" "Herman should have slain the boar!" said various of his friends.

"Have I done aught to anger Herr Waldhof?" observed the surprised nobleman.

"You have insulted me!" angrily exclaimed his rival. "I am the lord of the forest: it is my place, not yours, to despatch the beast. Look to yourself, my lord! Herman Waldhof is the equal of any Graf in Germany."

"I am a stranger—I know not your customs. If I have erred in courtesy, I regret it," answered the young nobleman, with an unmoved dignity that turned the tide of opinion in his favour. Herman rode homewards; and as the hovering spirit looked down upon him, it saw how evil passions had marred the fairest characteristics of nature; and how a stranger, beholding him a prey to violent and angry feeling, would see no trace of the noble youth who had been so lately the admiration of every eye.

On his journey home the Shadow accompanied him, and watched the gradual dispersion of bitterness from a nature that never retained evil long. And as the hour drew nigh that was to bring him to Hilda, every trace of wrathful emotion was swept away under the soothing influence of his love. Apparently, he thought of Hilda—he closed his eyes, and called up her dear face to his memory—he imagined how she would welcome him, what he should say to her, and what she would answer: and in these delicious love−reveries an inexpressible sweetness became diffused over his face. When the shadowy Self followed him to the presence of his love, it exulted over his grace and beauty.

Hilda was not, like her lover, perfect in form and face. A passing eye might have overlooked her, but those

who loved her thought her fair, and all loved her who knew her. A painter would have adored her soft brown eyes and lovely hair, and a musician would have said her voice was the sweetest in the world; and yet neither might have called Hilda beautiful. It was the atmosphere of love and purity in which she moved, investing all her looks, words, and deeds, with an irresistible charm, that made her the ideal of perfect womanhood.

She rose up and welcomed her lover—in her heart of hearts she knew that he **was** her lover, though no formal words had passed between them. Yet with a maidenly reserve she shut up in her heart the secret consciousness which made its chiefest joy. Herman thought her tone was cold—that her hand touched his with a careless pressure: he did not know that at the sound of his horse's approach, a few moments before, those little hands had been pressed wildly upon the throbbing heart, and then spread over the fair, blushing face, that would fain hide even from the dumb walls its radiant yet timid happiness.

Herman came and sat by his beloved; the ever attendant Shadow watched him, as he talked in a tone low and gentle. How winning he could be at will!—truly it was no marvel that Hilda loved him! He spoke of common things, of his day's sport, and then, with a frankness that showed in a golden light all the higher qualities of his nature, he confessed to Hilda the incident which had annoyed him. Perhaps mingled with this sincerity was a consciousness that the story would come best from his own lips, and that Hilda would seek to palliate a fault so candidly acknowledged, thus restoring him to his own good opinion, which he had well−nigh lost.

But Hilda listened without a word of praise or extenuation. She could not trust her voice, lest it should betray the love that was so nigh overflowing, and yet had no warrant for its utterance. And perhaps, too, she felt a woman's pain that a shadow of error should dim the brightness of her idol.

"I have heard of this before," she said.

"Who told you? Who dared speak ill of me to you?" cried the young man, and the dark cloud of anger again came over him. The Shadow saw, and fled back troubled.

Hilda lifted her eyes to his with a look of pained surprise, mingled with reproach. "We will talk no more of this," she answered, gently.

Her look and tone calmed her lover in a moment.

"Do not chide me, fair and dear maiden," replied he. "I was in error, perhaps not so much as they say and as you imagine, but still I am willing to acknow. ledge aught that you please."

His words were humble, yet there was pride in their tone, as if he expected them to be contradicted immediately; but this the truthful spirit of the young girl would not do. She loved him well; and love, which made all his good qualities shine in her eyes with double lustre, rendered her proportionately quicksighted to his failings.

"Herr Waldhof," said Hilda, gravely, "I ask no confession if caused alone by your **friendship**"—the innocent hypocrisy of those dear lips!—"your friendship for me. It was not right of you to be so angry with the Graf Von P—, who meant you no disrespect. Besides, as your friend, he—"

"**My** friend! the poor, cowardly creature **my** friend! Say your own, rather, if so you mean!" cried the lover, hardly suppressing his jealous indignation.

Hilda's womanly pride was roused.

"As you will," she answered, with a quivering lip and heightened colour. "I am not used to discussions so warm as this, therefore, Herr Waldhof, I will bid you adieu, as I believe my father desires your presence."

She lightly touched the hand which, in his mortification, the young man scarcely held out to her, and, with a step of maidenly dignity, glided from the room.

With a sense of the deepest abasement, the shadowy Presence looked down upon its other self, as the young man paced the room in violent emotion, raving against Hilda, his rival, and the whole world.

"She loves me not! she scorns me! she pleads in behalf of the wretch Von P—!" he muttered. "Not one gentle feeling is in her heart for me, or she would not have spoken thus!"

Oh, self−deceiver, blinded by anger! could thine eye but have pierced into the next chamber, and seen that weeping girl who passed from thee but now with so firm a step; couldst thou have known the anguish that came with the discovery of one fault in thee, and yet the love which would fain wash it all away with pardoning tears, and defend thee against the whole world!

Herman leaped on his horse, nor stayed his frantic speed until he reached his own home. He locked himself up in his chamber, and sank down exhausted. Long he remained in a state which seemed half−sleeping, half−waking,

until the morning birds aroused him. Then the whole charm was dispelled; the events of yesterday returned vividly to his memory: he became conscious of the double existence which had then been his, and knew—oh, with what bitterness came the knowledge!—that he had **beheld himself**.

CHAPTER III.

Lo, ye have souls immortal and sublime
To be made infinite in love and light,
And heavenly knowledge, if ye will but ope
The inner fountains, and the inner eyes,
And see the deep and full significance
The worth and wherefore of the life of man.—*C. MACKAY.*

LEUTHOLD watched from the window of the small room where he slept, ate, and studied, the merry troop of huntsmen go by. He saw, loftiest among them, the graceful head of his friend Herman. The clanging of the hoofs in the street below had disturbed him from his studies; and as he closed the window and turned away from the sunshine, the glittering dresses, and the sound of gay voices—the darkness and solitude of his own poor chamber struck him mournfully. He leaned his forehead against his open book, and tried to shut out from his view alike the brightness without and the gloom within—both were equally painful.

"How happy they seem! how gay!" thought the young man with sadness. "And I?—Well, let me calmly think what I am, and what I would fain be. Would I change with them?—become noble, and handsome, and rich as they; have no care but for the pleasures of life? Ah, but age will come; the strong limbs will grow feeble; the gay spirit become soured; the mind sink to a mere animal existence. Would I change with them, then? No!"

And the student strove to cheer himself with the consciousness of the high aim of life. He remembered that man's godlike mind is not given him to be cast aside like an useless thing, nor is he created to waste his existence in the passing pursuit of pleasure. While he pondered, he looked around on the dear companions of his loneliness—precious, though silent—his beloved books; and he envied not Herman Waldhof himself; save for that most priceless treasure, which the student would have died to gain—Hilda's love.

"How noble he looked as he passed her window!" thought Leuthold. "How dare I compare myself to him!" and the student gazed mournfully down upon his own slight, meagre limbs, and thin hands. "Oh, that I could die—that I could lose the memory of this bitter, hopeless love!" Bowing his head upon his knees, and forgetting his manhood, he gave way to the weakness of a nature which resembled a woman's in sensitiveness, and sobbed as in his childish days.

With the reaction of his feelings the young man grew calmer. "I will be patient—I will endure," continued he, pursuing the train of his thoughts. "The sunshine of life is not for me: I must train my spirit to live content in its shade. Why murmur, poor heart! the future will but be as the past. From my cradle life has been a solitude. I have never known the joy of being beloved!" But while Leuthold uttered this, a remorseful pang touched his heart, and a faint, spirit−like voice, seemed to fall on his ear,—"My son, my son, hast thou then forgotten me?"

The student threw himself on his knees, and cried, "Forgive me, oh, my mother, if this wild love for a moment shuts out the memory of thine! Pure and angelic spirit, comfort me now!" He clasped a crucifix, and remained muttering the habitual devotions of a religion, in which even the depths of his philosophical learning had not shaken his belief—it was too near his heart for any mere powers of intellect to overthrow it. Gradually a numbness oppressed his faculties; the realities around him faded into shadows, until he seemed to wake at last, like one who, dreaming, dreams he is roused from a dream. In that moment, the mysterious change for which he had longed passed over Leuthold; his spirit became divided, and beheld its bodily Self.

The form which engarmented that pure and noble soul was not beautiful. The Shadow looked down upon Leuthold as he knelt, and thought how mean was the figure of the student—diminutive, stooping, though not actually deformed. The face was sallow; the features irregular; and when in repose, ordinary and inexpressive. The sole redeeming portions of the face were a high, broad forehead, and large, soft, gray eyes, shaded by lashes as long and silken as a woman's. But it could not be denied that, as he appeared now, scarce a trace of personal beauty did the student possess.

Leuthold rose, put aside his books, and went out into the streets of Leipsic. The invisible Shadow followed him, and watched him as he moved. His slight, low figure would have passed unnoticed through the crowd of a great city; but here in Leipsic, which was for ages the stronghold of learning, there were many to whom Leuthold

Auerbach was known, as one whose wisdom surpassed his years. Not a few, both of the old whose companionship he sought, and the young who came to him for instruction, doffed their hats as he passed. The pleasant smile of recognition lighted up his face, and the Shadow saw that his step grew firmer, and even his stature seemed to rise, with a consciousness that he was respected by those whose respect was grateful to him.

He went on to the great hall of Leipsic, where students and professors were accustomed to meet for discussion, and to give and receive instruction. It was a high day, and within those walls were collected many of the learned from all parts of Germany. As Leuthold passed through the division where sat the younger of the company, many of them his own pupils, he heard a murmur of respectful congratulation. His eye brightened, and his lips relaxed into a smile almost as bright as Herman's. The Spirit felt—phantom as it was—as if a sunbeam of gladness had shot through its airy being.

"We have been looking for you, Herr Auerbach," said one of the young men. "The great doctor from Cologne has mentioned you with praise; and our professor has chosen you to deliver the harangue, as being the most learned of the students of Leipsic."

Leuthold's cheek flushed with pleasure; and he walked with a dignified step to the upper end of the hall, where the learned conclave awaited him. There he heard that the fame of Leuthold of Leipsic had reached to distant cities. Many, whose heads were white with long years of study, came forward to press with friendly grasp the hand of the young man. He, in self−possessed yet modest humility, which gave a gracefulness to his whole deportment, received their congratulations and praise.

"They told me I should see a plain, common− look− ing young man," whispered the great *savant* of Cologne. I do not find him so. His manner is dignified yet retiring; his countenance beams with intellect."

"You are right. He has the beauty of a noble mind. I am proud of my pupil," answered the professor, who was Hilda's father.

The Shadow heard, and its airy essence thrilled with joy.

Now, from amidst the crowded assembly, rose the voice of Leuthold Auerbach. It was low and tremulous at first, as if oppressed by the dead silence around; but as the speaker advanced it became firm. Already we have said that Leuthold possessed that irresistible charm—a low, clear, and melodious voice. These exquisite tones were now like music, accompanying the deep wisdom which they uttered. Leuthold was not an impassioned orator; with him all feelings lay deep, giving an outward calmness to all he said and did; therefore his words now were more those of a sage who reasoned for a great truth, than of a young man who poured forth his emotions in flowery eloquence. But the clearness and earnestness of his own mind communicated itself to his speech, and thence to the heart as well as to the intellect of the multitude, who listened as it were one man. When he concluded, first a deep silence, more expressive than applause, and then a shout of congratulation that made the hall re−echo, proclaimed the triumph of the student

Almost overpowered, Leuthold sank back, and his friends crowded round him. Foremost among them was the learned professor, who had been his teacher in the days of his early youth.

"You must come home with me to−day," said the kindly old man. "Hilda will rejoice to hear of your success."

The Shadow looked down upon itself, and saw that Leuthold's face glowed with rapture, and his very lips trembled with emotion.

"I am weary now, my kind master," answered he, taking the professor's hand affectionately; "but I will come to−night—yes! tell **her** I will come to−night," he repeated, almost unconsciously.

Still under the influence of the joy which gave beauty to his whole appearance, Leuthold took his way homeward. He sat a long time in his quiet room—it hardly looked so lonely as it had done in the morning, and he himself appeared no longer the pale and drooping student, who had knelt in despair before the crucifix. He rested his head on his hand, and the ever present Phantom watched. It was a face that any man might have looked on with reverence, any woman with love. As the day wore on, he heard the troop of huntsmen go by on their return: but they gave him no pain; he did not even move to watch them. When evening came, he wrapped himself in his cloak, and went out to visit Hilda. Ere he reached the door a horseman galloped furiously past him. Leuthold turned, and saw that it was Herman, his dark hair flying in the wind, and his whole mien disordered.

"Poor Herman! he is annoyed; perhaps he has been unsuccessful at the chase, in which he delights so much," thought the student; and in his simple and gentle nature, Leuthold almost reproached himself for being happy while his friend was not so. But he remembered Herman no longer when he entered Hilda's dwelling.

It was a small, pleasant chamber, into which he passed; how well he knew every nook of it! There, night after night, in the long winter evenings, the motherless, lonely youth had been made welcome by his kind old master; and the little Hilda had joyfully welcomed a playfellow who was so much gentler than her own wild brothers. There, as years went on, the young man had listened to the evening instructions of the professor, while Hilda, now growing womanly and reserved, but kind and sisterly still, sat by. Leuthold glanced lovingly towards the corner where she used to work, the lamp shining on her smooth brown hair, and her quick−moving fingers. Oh, how happy were those days! Musing thus, the student waited for the entrance of his beloved.

Hilda came at last. She met him cordially, took his hand in both hers—the poor Leuthold, how he trembled at the touch!—and told him how glad she was of his triumph that day.

"My father is proud of you, Leuthold; we are all proud of you. You must not forget us when you are a great man!" said Hilda, with a frank and pleasant smile.

The student looked at her with his whole soul in his eyes—those beautiful gray eyes! He leaned over her as she sat, and became absorbed in the bliss of her presence. They talked, as they always did, of things that both loved, of the future that was opening before their young life; she with the open−hearted kindliness of her nature, conversing with a dear friend; and he drinking in love ineffable from her every word and look. The Shadow hovered over him, and perceived how that the magic of love gave new music to his voice, and new eloquence to his tongue; how it lighted up his face, and made his homely features almost divine with the radiance of a commanding intellect, and a heart full of all that is pure and good in man. The spirit beheld, and gloried in itself.

Hilda talked to Leuthold with the kindly earnestness of a heart which had nothing to conceal—alas for him, not even the sweet secret of love! She praised him, she spoke of his coming career of fame, and, more glorious still than fame, the proud delight of a life spent in the soul's true vocation—that of adding to the wisdom of past ages, and of so carrying one's own lamp, be it great or small, that future generations may grow wiser and better through its guiding radiance.

"You are gentle as well as wise, Leuthold," said the maiden. "You will go through life happy and beloved. All is well with you."

Her voice had a softened tone, almost sad; and her whole manner was subdued—for while speaking to Leuthold, she was thinking of one dearer. The student was deceived by her kind words, the tremulousiness of her voice, the sudden changing of her cheek, her troubled and anxious air. He believed—oh, the madness of the dream!—that there was yet hope for him, that in time he might be loved even as he loved.

He mentioned Herman; but she who in happiness would have blushed and trembled at the chance hearing of the beloved name, now in her sorrow could listen to it unmoved. No outward sign of love for his rival came to dim the young man's hope.

"I saw Waldhof on my way hither, and thought he would have been with you to−night," continued Lenthold.

"He came, but soon departed," said Hilda, calmly; and the student dared ask no more. Could it be that Herman Waldhof had returned an unsuccessful wooer? And if so, why? The bare idea made the heart of him who loved so madly throb with added violence. He was too noble to rejoice at the sorrow of his friend; and yet human nature is weak, and Love is a king who conquers all other feelings. That Hilda should be free—that he might dare to seek her love! The thought overpowered him; and, as the Shadow of his soul read all these conflicting feelings in the face of the student, it became troubled likewise.

"What ails thee, Leuthold?" said Hilda, kindly, as she noticed his agitated countenance. "Thy hand is burning, too!" and the touch of her soft cool fingers thrilled to his heart. "Dear friend," she added, "I must send thee away. Go home and sleep—this day's happiness is too much for thee."

"It is—it is too much," passionately cried the student. He dared not trust himself with another word or look, but, bidding Hilda a hurried adieu, he went out.

In the cool night, beneath the quiet stars, his frenzy passed away; a soft dreaminess overpowered him, and the spell was ended. Leuthold knew that his desire had been fulfilled; clearly and distinctly his natural self remembered all that the Shadow had beheld. The knowledge gave him no false pride; but a delicious consciousness of what he was in himself and how he was regarded by others, crept into his heart, and imparted to it courage, firmness, and peace. The timid, self−abased student now knew his own worth, and became brave.

CHAPTER IV.

"Sorrow, there seemeth more of thee in life
Than we can bear, and live; and yet we hear."*—LOWELL.*

"What is good for a bootless bene?"*—WORDSWORTH.*

READER, hast thou ever known one of those happy moments when thy soul suddenly passes out of darkness into light—when, after wearily walking in gloom, the sun of some long−shrouded joy gleams through the mist, and thy tears are dried up like dew−drops in the morning. Life becomes pleasant to thee—all things look beautiful in thine eyes, as in those of a blind man who has just received sight; thou rememberest no more the time of darkness, but goest forth rejoicing in the unhoped−for light.

Thus it was with Leuthold, when at sunrise he awoke. How sweet was the waking! First, there came the dim memory of some inexplicable happiness, and then a name rose to his lips. The remembrance of his love—day by day his earliest waking thought—came upon him with a full tide of recollection. But there was a change. The young man rose up and looked out on the daylight; never had it before seemed so fair. His eyes grew dim with overpowering bliss; he stretched out his arms, as if he would embrace the whole world in the fulness of his joy; he murmured the name of her he loved, adding to it those words which he had never yet dared to utter—"Mine **own**! mine **own**!"

Alas! alas! for the love that can thus deceive itself!

Leuthold went to his books, but his ideas wandered. What had philosophy to do with love? Sometimes a painful thought of Herman flitted across his mind. If Hilda loved him not, how wretched he must be!

"But he will forget it in time. Herman's love is not like mine," murmured the student. "He has many joys; I only one—but that passing all others!"

Again came Hilda's image; and the young lover gave himself up to a sweet reverie. He pictured his future life; he conjured up the vision of a home, calm, peaceful, where he might follow the pursuits he loved, and become learned and honoured among men. He thought how proudly the professor would give his daughter to one who deserved to win her; and, mingled with the idea of the old man, came that of childhood; of sweet young faces crowding round him; of fame to be reaped for them, that they might rejoice in their father's name when he was in the dust; and above all, the image of Hilda, in wifehood, in motherhood, in still fair and still−beloved old age. How they twain would glide together through life! not living as the worldly do—as if this existence were all—but ever looking upwards together, firmly believing that those who are one in love, and one in heart and mind, whatever be the after destiny of the soul, will never be divided.

All day Leuthold could not drive away the blissful dream. It nestled close to his heart, and would not go; it followed him when he went out into the busy streets; it coloured everything with its own rosy light. The faces he met seemed to peer into his, as if divining the secret of his happiness. Only one fear oppressed him—lest he might perchance see Herman. But the day passed and Herman came not. In the evening Leuthold went out into the open country, where he thought no prying eyes could behold his joy. Yet, even there, the clouds as they passed over him seemed to form themselves into the semblance of Hilda's face, and the little birds as they sang almost "syllabled her name." All nature to Leuthold was full of love.

As he walked dreamily along, a step overtook him, his hand was warmly grasped, and Herman stood before him.

"Why, you are sauntering like a man asleep!" said young Waldhof.

Leuthold changed colour, and looked anxiously at his friend. Herman's face was not without some traces of agitation; but there was no sorrow there.

"I have sought for you everywhere," continued the other. "I have much to tell, Leuthold."

"Have you, too, attained your desire?" asked Leuthold, hurriedly. "Have the angels we beheld that night—"

"I dreamed a dream, but I have forgotten it now, save for what it taught me. Oh, Leuthold, I have had a bitter lesson, but it has ended in joy—Hilda loves me!"

There are strokes so terrible, so stunning, that the heart within us seems to turn to ice, and that is all. A thunderbolt sometimes slays without an outward wound. Thus it was with Leuthold. His life's hope was shattered, but no visible token betrayed the death−stroke within.

Herman drew his friend's arm within his own, and they sat down under a tree. There, with his face turned away from Leuthold, the young man told the whole story of his anger, and its punishment.

"This morning," he cried, "I knew myself as I had never known before. I was humbled to the dust. I longed to throw myself at Hilda's feet, and say, 'Hate me, despise me; I deserve it. I am not worthy to look upon thee, and yet I love thee!'"

"And thou didst say so, Herman?" said the student very calmly.

"Yes, best Leuthold; my good angel was with me: I poured out my heart before her in its shame, in its humility, and she contemned it not. She forgave me for my love's sake. Listen to what she said—every one of her sweet words is written on my heart. 'Thou art very thoughtless, Herman—thou art full of faults—thou art not half so gentle as Leuthold; and yet I love thee—only thee.' And then she laid her dear arms round my neck.—Why, Leuthold, how thou shiverest!"

"The wind is cold—very cold," muttered the unfortunate student.

"Then take my cloak. Come—we will sit no longer here: thou art not so strong as I," answered the other, as with unwonted gentleness of manner he led his friend homeward. Happy love had given all his better feelings freer play.

"I sometimes think it strange that thou shouldst never have loved Hilda," said Herman, as they walked on slowly, "or that she should not have loved thee."

"Loved **me**!—me!" repeated Leuthold.

"Yes, it might have been. I was almost jealous of thee when Hilda spoke so warmly of thee this morning, and I told her so. But she only smiled, and said thou hadst never dreamed of such a thing—that thou wert as a brother to her, and hadst never loved aught except thy books. But the time will come, Leuthold—Hilda says so—when thou, too, wilt know the bliss of happy love. Thou shouldst have heard her praise thee, ay, even beyond myself. And then she described the sort of damsel that would win thy hard heart—beautiful as an angel, gentle as a dove. Ha! ha! Leuthold, dost hear?" laughed the gay−hearted young man.

Leuthold laughed too. So strong was his self−control that the keenest ear could not have distinguished a discordant tone in that awful mirth. The friendly darkness hid the convulsions of his features, the clench of his hands, the torturing pain that seemed as if a fiend's clutch were at his throat; and Leuthold conquered. But angels would have looked down and wept over him who struggled so fearfully with himself, that in the contest life was almost riven asunder. At his own door the student parted from Herman, kindly, cheerfully, as usual; nay, listened to the careless footstep of the young man as he passed down the street, humming a light ditty, half−playful, half−tender, for it was of love. The sounds died away, and Leuthold was alone.

Let us not depict the anguish of that first hour of terrible awakening from the dream of a lifetime. They to whom love is but the crowning link of many sweet bonds, the last nectar−drop in a cup already running over with all life's other blessings, can never know what it is to those who have nought else. Such love—the love of years—is not merely the chief aim of life; it is life itself. What must the rending be? We cannot paint—we dare not! God help those who have thus lost all!

A night of agony passed, and Leuthold had striven with his own soul, until he had taught it that most blessed of lessons—to endure. In the silence and gloom a spirit−hand had been laid upon his heart, and its wild beatings grew still. A spirit−voice had breathed in his ear, "Peace, peace! others, too, have suffered and found rest." Then Leuthold answered in his soul—"Yes, I know, in the grave." But the voice replied, solemnly and reproachfully—"And in life, too, there is peace. Thinkest thou that the All−good would send His children on earth for cureless sorrow? There is no grief so heavy that it cannot be borne, until patience becomes in the end calmness and peace." And the gnawing pain in the student's heart ceased: he grovelled no longer on the floor of his chamber, wrestling with his despair, but looked upward to the sky. It was still and clear, but all starless; and Leuthold thought it was an image of his own future. As he looked, the horizon brightened, and his tearless, burning eyes beheld the coming dawn. Then he knew that there is no night so long and dreary but morning will come at last. The fountains of his heart were unsealed—tears came, and they soothed him. He laid down, and slept a sleep as calm as if angels watched around his pillow. It might have been so—who knows?

While many of the dwellers in Leipsic were yet sleeping, Leuthold Auerbach went forth from his native town, as he resolved, for ever! He left kindly tokens for all whom he regarded; but he bade farewell to none. No one knew of his going until he had departed; and he gave no clue as to whither he was journeying. Perhaps be hardly knew himself; but he felt that he could not stay at Leipsic. A restless desire for wandering took possession of him. He seemed as though he could not breathe until he had shut out from his eyes, heart, and mind, those scenes where he had been at once so happy and so wretched—until he had placed the wide world between him and his lost hope.

As before said, he went away without one adieu even to Hilda. He could not look again upon her beloved face, knowing that all hope was lost for ever. Against his reason—almost against his conviction—one faint ray had clung to his heart during these long years of hidden love: all was dark now. Ere long he knew that the total cessation of a flickering hope is far easiest to bear,—at least after a time; but this truth he had yet to learn. Now, his only strength seemed to consist in flying far away from the spectre of a vanished joy.

Leuthold passed by the dwelling of Hilda, and his heart melted. In all his agony was mingled no anger against her. She loved him not, but she had not deceived him: he had beguiled himself. She was still the angel of his life, the unconscious origin of all that was pure and good in his nature, the awakener of his soul. Therein, her image shone unclouded still. In the lonely sunshine of early morning, Leuthold stood by her garden−gate; he pressed his lips to the cold stone where her hand had often rested in their many adieux, and prayed that she might be blessed through life, and happy in the love of him she had chosen.

While he lingered, he heard the trees rustling in the garden; a light footstep sounded along the walks; and a low singing was heard, that seemed to come from a heart overladen with its own happiness.

It was Hilda's voice. Leuthold could bear no more; he fled away—far, far, as if his feet were winged. The dream of his youth was ended for ever.

CHAPTER V.

"Look not mournfully into the Past; it returns no more; wisely improve the Present; and go forth into the shadowy Future without fear, and with a manly heart."
—LONGFELLOW.

THE high mass of Easter was being celebrated in Haarlem Cathedral. The deep−toned organ poured forth its volume of sound, the censers gave out their incense, and the priests murmured the low monotonous prayers of a religion whose mysterious beauty appeals to the heart, more than to the understanding. The cathedral was filled with kneeling worshippers of every rank. The rude boor from the Dutch marshes, but a few degrees superior to his barbarian ancestor, of whom the refined Tacitus scornfully writes; the rich citizen of Haarlem, who, contented with his wealth and ignorance, left the duties of religion and learning to the priests of his faith—a faith which he professed, but never attempted to comprehend—were both there; and, lastly, there were chance wanderers from all parts, who had come to witness the Easter celebration, and to hear the great organ of Haarlem.

Of all that worshipping crowd we shall particularize but two individuals, who knelt side by side, though chance alone had caused their propinquity, as they were perfect strangers to each other. One was far advanced in life, with phlegmatic, Dutch features, only redeemed from dulness by the acute expression of a quick, dark eye: he wore a burgher's dress, goodly enough, and carefully arranged. Beside him knelt the other—a man, whose age might have been within the middle cycle of life—from thirty to fifty. He had a dark, bronzed countenance, remarkable neither for beauty nor ugliness; hair, in which white streaks already had begun to mingle with the brown; and a stooping gait. His careless but not coarse attire, was travel−worn, and he worshipped like Jacob, "leaning on the top of his staff," one which had evidently sustained the wayfarer's steps through many a weary journey. He rested his hands upon it as he knelt, leaned his head against them, and seemed absorbed in thought. His musings were hardly devotional, for he fixed his large soft eyes on vacancy, and his compressed lips did not move, though all around him were heard the murmuring orisons of his fellow−worshippers.

When the sacred host was raised, the stranger's open eyes were still fixed upward; he declined not his head; his neighbour touched his elbow, whispering

"My good friend, thou art absorbed! thou forgettest thy prayers."

The other turned hastily round, looked at the old burgher's kindly face, and, with a murmured apology or acknowledgment, bent his head like the rest, until the holy emblem had passed by. When the service concluded, the old man said to his fellow−worshipper—

"I pray you pardon me for breaking in upon your thoughts just now; but it behoves all good Catholics to be doubly careful of every due rite, when these sinful doctrines of the man John Huss are abroad."

"I am beholden to you," answered the stranger, in a sweet, musical voice. It was the same which, years before, had rung with persuasive eloquence in the hall of Leipzic; had murmured its quiet words of concealed love at Hilda's side; had poured forth, in secret, its agony of wild despair. The stranger in the cathedral of Haarlem was Leuthold Auerbach.

Touched and interested—unconsciously, perhaps—by the melody of a voice that was irresistible, the old man, as they went out together, still continued the conversation.

"You seem a stranger here?"

"I entered Haarlem only yesterday."

"And you were admiring our cathedral? Is it not beautiful?" said the old man, with some degree of pride.

"It is the fairest I have yet seen, and I have travelled far and wide, and have found no rest for my feet," continued Leuthold, musingly, while a sad look passed over his face, not unmarked by his companion.

"Forgive an old man's rudeness," said the Dutchman, kindly; "but you seem weary, my friend; and if you are a stranger, and have no home—no ties in Haarlem—"

"None in the wide world!"

"Why, then, come home and stay with me, while your affairs detain you here. Ours is a cheerful house; my Lucia will be sure to welcome her father's guest; and I have half−a−dozen grandchildren, who will strive to amuse you. You might fare worse than in the home of old Laurentius Coster."

Leuthold met this unexpected hospitality with the cordiality it merited.

"But, Herr Coster," he said, smiling, "are you not rather venturesome in thus welcoming a stranger to your house?"

"I know not who you may be, whether rich or poor, noble or peasant," answered the hearty burgher. "I only need look in your face to see you are a good man, and that is all I care for. You are most welcome, provided you are not one of those abominable heretics."

Leuthold drew a crucifix from his bosom. "I am a good Catholic, I trust: as indeed you have already witnessed. I was once a student, and am still a humble follower of the learned sciences. My name is Leuthold Auerbach."

"Then welcome—thrice welcome!" cried Lauren− tius, grasping him warmly by the hand. "My instinct was true! Sir, I am a simple, unlearned man myself, but I have been honoured with the friendship of many of the wise and good. Your name is known to me as that of one whom a prince might be proud to welcome to his palace. Thrice welcome to my home, Herr Auerbach!"

Leuthold's breast thrilled with pleasure. The yearning desire for human sympathy yet dwelt there, and ever sprang up at the lightest touch, a pure fountain of love for all mankind. He had said to himself when, after the desolation that fell upon him, his heart revived a little,—as a wayside plant crushed by a heavy stone, after a time begins to put forth its small green leaves from amidst the ruins—he had said, "I will be strong, I will be patient. The world is very wide. I will not mourn for the loss of one all−engrossing love; my heart shall not be frozen by this despair, but shall abound the more in pure, unselfish, universal love—in divine charity."

And so he had wandered far and wide, in desert places, and among men whose very existence was unknown to civilized Europe. He had gone from the learned priests of Rome to the wild mountaineers of Hungary, and then again to the scarcely less barbarian inhabitants of the nooks and corners of his own German land. He had journeyed from city to city, everywhere following on the track of misery with the footstep of an angel of peace, regarding his learning only as an instrument of doing good. To the sick he was a physician; to the poor a comforter and adviser; to the guilty he spoke with a warning, yet pitying voice. When all these blessed him, when in their happiness he saw the fruit of his labours, then Leuthold remembered no more his own sorrow, but rejoiced that he was thus made an instrument of good on earth.

Laurentius and his guest took their way to the home of the former. As they went, Coster talked with the not unpleasing garrulousness of age; and Leuthold learned much of his new friend's early life. His father had been *custos* of the cathedral; and this office, after the fashion of those early times, had given to the family their surname. Laurentius recounted to his guest the passing incidents of a life whose course had been untroubled by any of those seasons of worldly care and mental suffering, which often stand as landmarks of bitterness in the history of finer moulded spirits. He had loved, in an easy, gentle, indifferent way; he had married, and outlived joy; he had lost his wife, and outlived sorrow. He spoke with a father's fondness of his only child, Lucia, who, with her husband and children, brightened his home in his old age.

"I have had a comfortable life, and have done as much good as my opportunities permitted," said the old man. "Last of all, I am content that my children should lay me in the shadow of the old cathedral towers, say a prayer for my soul, and forget me."

"And is this life? Is this all?" thought Leuthold, while he listened. "Have I no higher existence than this?" And his inmost soul answered,—"Yes, thou hast the true life within thee!" He felt it, and was content. "Yet," he murmured, "there is none on earth even to say the prayer of loving kindred for my soul's repose." But the inward voice replied,—"What matters it? if thou hast worked out thy mission on earth, thy good deeds, however secret, will be as thy soul's children: who will yet rise up and bless their father."

The dwelling of Laurentius Coster was situated on the shores of the lake of Haarlem, whose waters dashed up almost to the entrance, fertilizing a pleasant garden, which owed its beauty more to the hand of abundant Nature, than to the tasteful skill of its cultivator. The house was evidently occupied by a family whose wealth enabled them to consider luxury a necessity, inasmuch as the window of the large hall was of glass, while the other apertures for light were carefully covered with a thin wire−woven substance. Moreover, it had one tall chimney in the centre of the roof, above which the dense wood−smoke curled upwards, diffusing the pleasant odour of burning pine−faggots; and the roughness of the outer walls was concealed by festoons of ivy, which had been gracefully trained so as to cover the whole front of the low, one−storied dwelling.

Presently the garden rang with the welcoming shouts of a troop of children, who came bounding to meet their

grandfather. The boys danced round him with innumerable greetings and inquiries about Easter− gifts; while the eldest girl—a silent, demure−eyed little damsel of twelve years—quietly took away the old man's stick, and drew his arm through hers, making herself proud supporter of his steps.

"See what it is to be an old grandfather!" said Coster to Leuthold, who had hung back from the merry tribe of children. "Come, Lucia the Second," he continued, addressing his granddaughter, "you must be mistress of the house in your mother's absence, and welcome my friend here, whom I have brought from Haarlem."

The little maiden drooped her head, and cast down her eyes, half shyly, half with a childish coquetry; then, without lifting up her long eyelashes, she put her hand in Leuthold's, and said,—

"You are very welcome, and I hope you will stay a long time here."

"That will I gladly," answered Leuthold, as he stooped down and kissed the sweet, blushing face; and then, still holding Lucia's hand, he entered the house of Laurentius with a feeling of home−happiness long unknown to the lonely wanderer.

CHAPTER VI.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing leave behind us
Footsteps on the sands of time,—
Footprints that, perchance, another,
Sailing o'er Life's troubled main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again."*LONGFELLOW.*

WEEKS, months passed, and Leuthold of Leipsic still remained an honoured guest in the family of Laurentius Coster. There was a patriarchal simplicity therein which was most soothing to the spirit of the wanderer. The children loved him, for he became alternately their teacher and their playfellow; the mother—a worthy Dutch matron, to whom her home was her whole world—regarded him kindly, as a harmless, gentle personage, who ate little and spoke less; and the old man himself, after vainly trying to delight his own peculiar faculty of hero−worship by treating Leuthold with the cumbrous respect due to a great man, at last suffered him to remain unnoticed, and, unencumbered with the burden of his fame, nestle in the family nook as he best loved.

When Leuthold spoke of continuing his journeyings, it was with a lingering and almost sorrowful tone, which was echoed by all the family. John and Peter, the two elder boys, loudly protested against his departure; and little Lucia tearfully raised her soft dove's eyes, which had now learned to peep from under their lashes, even in the presence of the great Herr Auerbach.

"Do you not love us, that you wish to go?" said the child, wistfully. "You know that we love you—I more than all. Why will you not stay?"

It is so sweet to hear the language of affection, even from a child. Leuthold's eyes grew dim, while he took the gentle pleader on his knee.

"You love me, dear child! Does any one then, love **me**?"

"After such a frank declaration from this young damsel, what more can you wish?" said the grandfather, merrily. "But come, Herr Auerbach, tell me whither you would go, and whom it is that you prefer to us? I thought you had no home−ties."

"I have no closer ties in the wide world than here," answered Leuthold. "It seems to be my fortune to drift through life like a chance sea−weed, and never find a resting−place. I have been happy here, and now I go forth to fulfil my wandering destiny."

"Thou shalt not go forth at all, my son," cried the old man, his tone of respect merging into that of affection. "Listen to what this little maiden says, and stay with us. If thou art too proud to be received as a brother in a household which is honoured by thy presence, at least thou wilt not refuse to aid in governing these wild boys, who ought to esteem it their greatest happiness to have been instructed by the learned doctor Leuthold Auerbach. Therefore stay, my son,—if I may call thee so."

Leuthold clasped the hand of Coster, and the compact was sealed, without a word, save Lucia's joyful exclamation—

"Ah, now you will believe that we love you!"

And she sat down at his feet, looking up in his face with eyes that spoke more than her words—eyes in which a woman's soul was dawning through the unconscious innocence of the child.

"Herr Auerbach," said the eldest boy, after a long and whispered consultation, "now you are one of the family, we must put your name among our list of carvings. How do you spell 'Leuthold?'"

His question being answered, the boy began to consult with his brothers.

"An L and an H," mused the younger, John; "they will be hard to cut. Grandfather, you must cut them for us, as you did in the tree."

And he brought out a large box filled with letters of all sizes rudely carved in bark, some separately, others united in long strips, forming the names of the family.

"Now you shall see how cleverly we can write without using a pen, and what a quantity we can do at a time," said Peter. "Come, dear master!" The "good master," or the "dear master," was Leuthold's appellation in the family.

The boy led him to a rude sort of press, and showed him how, by placing these blackened letters upon white paper, impressions were taken of the names of the household.

"We call this our printing," said the boy, proudly, as he noticed Leuthold's surprise and curiosity. "We have done all our own names, and you shall soon see yours write itself in the same way. Once we did a whole sentence—it was, *Ave Maria, ora pro nobis*: it looked so pretty."

"And who found out these curious playthings?" asked the "good master."

"It was our grandfather who cut the first letter for us to copy out of the bark of a beech−tree, as we were walking in the wood. Then Peter took an impression of it, and we saw how it would save the trouble of writing, and be much prettier. But you do not bear, good master," said the boy, as Leuthold sat musingly with the letters in his hand, apparently absorbed in deep reflection.

In the child's plaything the man of thought and far−seeing intellect perceived, though dimly, the origin of a mighty power, which in coming ages would sway the world to its centre. He saw how learning might be scattered far and wide—how the work of a lifetime might come to be transcribed in a day—and thus the blessing of knowledge be diffused to an extent of which he had never before dreamed. These possibilities, though vague, came upon the man of science with a force which he could feel, but not define. A sudden light flashed upon Leuthold, impelling him to work out the great idea which had arisen out of one of those strange accidents which we call chance, but which are destiny.

Laurentius Coster was one of those men who seem sent into the world, the unconscious instruments of some great good, yet who never dream of their mission, and accomplish it more through seeming fate than by the resolute agency of their own will. How little did the simple−minded old man imagine, when cutting out playthings for his grandchildren, that he was paving the way for the glorious footsteps of freedom, of science, of literature;—that the name which, in his unlearned humility, he deemed would soon be forgotten, was to be transmitted from generation to generation as that of the inventor of printing.

Leuthold Auerbach spent a long night of meditation, and then he sought Laurentius, and told him, with earnest enthusiasm, of what was passing in his mind. But the placid and rather phlegmatic Dutchman was perfectly unmoved. He could not believe that from a thing so trifling—a childish toy—should spring effects so great as Leuthold foretold. The master drew him to the window.

"Look," he cried in his energy, "look at that noble tree, in whose branches the birds rest and the breezes play—it was once a small seed trodden under foot! But a hand found it, planted it, and behold it now! So is the beginning of every new science; it is discovered—a tiny seed, planted, sometimes intentionally, sometimes by what men foolishly call "chance;" it takes root and grows, and none can hinder it. Remember that a few grains of sand acci− dentally mingled and thrown into the fire by a careless workman's hand produced the clear, beautiful substance now forming your window; and who knows where the marvels of this art of glass−making may end? It makes things distinct to the eye like a new sense. Perchance, one day through it we may behold the far−off mysteries of the stars. And so it will be with this discovery of thine, Laurentius."

"Thou art sanguine, dear Leuthold," said the old man, with a half−incredulous but gentle smile, as he listened to the excited tones of his friend. "What good dost thou imagine this printing will produce?"

"Hast thou never considered that it will multiply writing without end?—that those rare and precious works which it takes a man's life to copy may be made no longer the sole luxury of the rich?—that the same power by which these children print a name or a prayer could be made to produce a whole volume? Oh, Laurentius, if thou couldst see into the future as I do—see thy name emblazoned by fame—see thy children honoured, and, above all, see the good which thou hast left behind on earth! How blessed such a life must be!"

Coster, moved and touched by the earnestness of Leuthold, seemed more than half convinced.

"Well, dear master, what dost thou wish me to do for the furtherance of this great end? I will do all for thy sake."

"Not for mine, but thine own—or, rather for the sake of the whole world!" cried the enthusiastic philosopher.

And then he explained to his surprised and wondering hearer various plans which the ingenuity of a man of science could make applicable to the new invention.

"It is strange—it is wonderful!" said Laurentius, musing, as improvements which had never struck him before were suggested by the master; and slowly the idea began to dawn upon the good Fleming that this passing amusement of his might indeed turn out a wonderful discovery. He was like a man who had picked up a pebble, which some hand more skilful than his own had polished, and found therein a precious gem. Yet, like the same self−gratified seeker, he never remembered that he had only found it as a common stone, and that, for all he knew of its value, it might have remained a common stone for ever, had not a wiser head than his own brought the treasure to light.

Laurentius gave himself up to delight and pride. He was at last convinced of the after−success of his discovery, and as it steadily advanced, owing to the skilful wisdom of Leuthold, the learned of Haarlem began to see it too. Coster was now honoured as the inventor of a marvellous art, and men began to talk of him as the honest burgher had never been talked of before. When the first rudely−printed book appeared, the joy of the old man knew no bounds. He looked at it, turned over and over again the coarsely−formed but still legible pages, until his aged eyes swam with tears.

"Can it be I—I, Laurentius Coster, who have done all this,—who have found out what seems like magic?" cried he.

And then he embraced his daughter, and took his grandchildren on his knee, making them spell it over letter by letter.

"My boys, my dear John and Peter," he said, "I am old: I shall not live to rejoice in the work of my hands; but you will see it. Yes, my children, you will not forget your old grandfather when he is gone—the world will not suffer you. Ah, me! to think that my poor name should indeed be remembered for ages as having done all this! Children, you will one day be proud that you are descended from Laurentius Coster."

"Grandfather," murmured Lucia, "you are so happy with us that you forget Leuthold. See how silent and grave he stands."

"Ah, yes! come here, my dear Leuthold—my good friend," cried the old man, whose heart was opened to the whole world. "You were the first to tell me what I had done, and you shall not be forgotten. You shall share my fortune with these children, and be a rich man all your life!"

Leuthold smiled, with a gentle negative motion of the head; he then complained of weariness, and retired. In his solitude he sat, and pondered over thoughts half−pleasing, half−sad.

"It is even so," mused he. "I have laboured, and others will reap the fruit of my labours. This old man's name will be honoured, while mine will be mentioned no more. I shall pass away like a wandering breeze, or like a breaking wave. Yet what matters it? The winged breeze has left behind it a precious seed—the wave has wafted a pearl ashore. The work of both is done."

CHAPTER VII.

"He stood beside me,
The embodied image of the brightest dream,
It like a dawn heralds the day of life.
The shadow of his presence made my world
A Paradise. All familiar things he touched,
All common words he spake, became to me
Like forms and sounds of a diviner world."*SHELLEY.*

THE poets liken life to a hurrying river—a journey swift, and yet weary—a changing day. They call Time an enemy, a destroyer: at times a beloved friend, but that is only in the bitter irony of sorrow. The fact is, that passing Life and changing Time are only outward show. The true souls who walk the earth,—and there are many, thank God! whatever cold−hearted sceptics may say of humanity—never really change, nor grow old. They only ripen in wisdom and in all good things, and become more fit for the heavenly harvest. In those who are of a com−moner mould, the wearing body weighs down the mind, and the heart grows old with the frame; but the true angel−spirits are ever young.

Thus Leuthold Auerbach, when the ominous shadow of forty years was nigh overtaking him, was as young in heart as he had been at twenty−five. His eye yet brightened at the sight of all beautiful things; his voice had its old gentle tone; and though his figure was bent still lower, and Time, the enemy, had laid his hand on the noble forehead and clustering hair, until every curve of the finely−formed head was bare to the eye of the observer, still Leuthold Auerbach was not an old man. Nature, ever even−handed, sometimes atones to those whose want of beauty makes them look old in youth, by tenderly keeping off the harsher tokens of age. Had the Self−seer exercised his gift, now long unused, he would have marvelled that fifteen years should have passed over him and left so few traces behind.

The "good master"—he still kept that name—sat one day with his pupils, now growing into manhood. John and Peter were busily engaged in carving types, for all the secrets of his invention were wisely kept by Laurentius within his own family. They were the sole depositaries of the first mysteries of printing, except a servant, Geinsfleicht, who afterwards carried the secret with him to Mentz, and there promulgated it as his own discovery. The old man wandered up and down the room: now looking over the young workmen, now giving, orders to his servant, who was busy with the press, and then glancing with pride and pleasure to the various testimonies of his success that adorned the room, in the shape of printed leaves.

'"Tis useless, grandfather," at last cried John, throwing down his block, "I cannot cut these letters; and as I am the best workman here, no one else can. You must get some wood−carver, and run the chance of his keeping our secret. I will be troubled no longer."

"Ah, you were ever an impatient boy," said the grandfather, shaking his head in despair. "Leuthold, dear master, what shall we do?"

"The boy speaks wisely, though be meant it not," answered Leuthold. "The work is beyond his skill—it requires an experienced hand."

"And whom among the carvers in Haarlem can we trust?—they are a wild, unprincipled set, who would steal our secret and fly. Come, Lucia," he continued, as the door opened, and a young girl entered, "thou hast more sense than either of thy brothers; tell us how we are to get this work finished, which John has so angrily given up?"

Lucia raised her eyes with the same look which was peculiar to her in childhood: all else was changed with her. The round, chubby features had become more regular; the form had reached the full height of womanhood; childish prettiness was merged into beauty—beauty rendered still more loveable by the mind that shone through it. Lucia at seventeen was, indeed, the perfection of girlhood; thoughtful, serene, yet with a world of feeling that almost amounted to passion, slumbering in the deep blue eyes, in the tremulous lips.

"I do not wonder that John could not carve this delicate work," she said.

"Ay, that is the thing! and whom can we trust, my child? A first−rate carver would refuse the task, and of those wild young men that Peter brings here, there is not one who is honest."

"Yes, grandfather, there is," answered the girl. "No one can speak evil of George Surlan, the woodcarver from Ulin."

"What! merry George, the Master−singer, who steals away old hearts and young with his laughing eyes and his gay ditties?"

"He is good as well as merry, grandfather. I am sure you might trust him. And he is a favourite of the master's, too," said Lucia, for the first time lifting her eyes to Leuthold's face.

The two boys burst into a loud laugh.

"You like George because he took your head as a model for one of his carved angels, sister. How vain girls are!" cried John, maliciously.

Lucia glanced towards the master, whose penetrating gaze was fixed on her countenance. She saw it, and blushed deeply.

"It is not so, indeed!" she murmured. "You must not think so ill of me." And she suddenly took Leuthold's hand with a child−like air, as if deprecating reproach.

"Lucia is never vain," said Leuthold, gently, as he drew her towards him with the frank familiarity which ever marked his intercourse with the whole family, and smoothed her beautiful fair hair, as a father or elder brother might have done. It was a token of regard that was customary between them; and yet Lucia seemed to tremble and change colour, even while a smile of radiant happiness hovered round her lips.

"Merry George might have known we were talking about him," cried John, who had taken refuge at the window, in a sullen fit. "Look, there he is, coming hither! Now, grandfather, you can put him in my place, as Lucia answers for his honesty so boldly."

"What shall we do, good friend?" said the old man, irresolutely, turning to Leuthold, who was, though Laurentius never suspected the fact, the ruler of all his actions, having over him the inevitable influence of a strong mind over a weak one.

"I think," said the master, "that George would answer thy purpose, Laurentius. Lucia has spoken truly; he is a clever and honest youth, the son of a worthy father, whom I once knew well. Thou mayst indeed trust him."

"The master is always right. I will go and fetch George hither," said Peter; and meeting no opposition, he departed.

Presently George Surlan entered. He was a youth slenderly and gracefully formed, which caused him to look much younger than he really was. His dress was that of a student, but light and gay, and he wore on his shoulder a sort of badge, being a rude representation of King David playing the harp. This was the distinctive mark of the order of Master−singers, a brotherhood which rose up in Germany after the Minne−singers had passed away, and which united the musical character of the latter with many rules and rites approaching to masonic. To this fraternity of minstrels, which included men of all ranks, and was at one time almost universal over Germany, the young wood−carver belonged.

The Master−singer lifted his cap from his fair curls, and looked with much surprise round the room, which was, according to report, the scene of Coster's mysterious and secret labours. He made a respectful reverence to the old man, and to Leuthold, and then, as his quick eye caught that of the young maiden, it brightened with pleasure.

"They tell me you are a true upright youth, as well as a good carver," abruptly began Laurentius. "I have sent for you to aid us, George Surlan, and I am going to trust you with a great secret. Herr Auerbach says I may."

The young man looked gratefully towards the master, and replied—

"He shall have no cause to repent his goodness. What can I do?"

And thereupon Laurentius began, in a long harangue, to explain the necessity of secresy, and the solemn promise that he would be expected to make regarding the work he was to do. The Master−singer listened rather impatiently; but Leuthold took advantage of a pause in the discourse to explain all succinctly.

"Thou must promise to keep the secret, and I know thou didst never fail in thy word. I answer for thee, and so does this child it seems," said Leuthold, smiling at Lucia.

"Then I will engage to do anything in the wide world," cried George Surlan, earnestly, clasping the master's hand, though his beaming eyes sought the sweet face of Lucia.

She answered him with a frank and kindly smile; but she did not droop her long lashes—she did not blush. Alas! while the young man's whole soul was laid at her feet—while he watched her every movement with the

lingering fondness that only springs from love, she looked carelessly on him, unconscious of the treasure thus thrown away. To the dreaming maiden, wholly absorbed in her inner world of romance, there was but one on earth who appeared noble, wise, worthy to be the ideal of girlhood's wildest devotion. That one was Leuthold Auerbach.

Woman's love is far more spiritualized than man's, inasmuch as it is often entirely independent of outward beauty. A true−hearted woman's nature is full of the quality called hero−worship, and this, mingled with the all−pervading necessity of loving, causes her to be swayed irresistibly by the power of superior intellect. How many a fanciful girl has lavished a world of fondness upon some poet−idol, whom perhaps her eyes have never beheld, and whom yet she regards with a vague adoration, which, though only ideal, needs but a touch to exalt it into the intensity of human love! How often, too, do we see some beautiful and high−minded woman pour out the whole riches of her affection upon one to whom Nature has given nothing but the great spell to win it all—a noble soul! She passes over all external disadvantages of age or person. She sees but the immortal spirit dwelling therein; and it is ever beautiful, ever young. Her soul is bowed down before it in joyful humility; and where she worships she loves too, with an earnestness, intensity, and purity, which shadow dimly forth that which the angels bear to Divinity itself.

Therefore let it not be thought strange if Leuthold had thus unconsciously awakened such deep and absorbing feelings in the heart of a young girl like Lucia. The world scoffs at the romance of girlhood. Nay, women themselves, grown sedate and matronly, come in time to look back deridingly on themselves, and say how young and foolish they were once. And yet this first fresh dream is one of the few realities of life, not the less vivid and true because we outgrow it in time. Others treading after us, again pass through that sunny region, and when we turn and see them with their innocent romance and their single−hearted trust, we remember our own old days, and think that there was some truth in those dreams after all.

Sweet, maidenly, and yet high−souled Lucia, with the heart of a woman and the spirit of a child, our eyes grow dim while we picture thee: how thou didst grow up like a pure lily among meaner flowers, and feel gradually the carelessness of childhood merge into the dreams of girlhood; how thou didst love to sit alone, to trace dim regions in cloudland, to listen to invisible music in the wind, to watch the stars, until they seemed mysterious eyes looking down on thee, while vague feelings of delicious sadness stole over thee, and thy tears flowed, though not for sorrow! Poor child! who didst ask of the winds, the clouds, the stars, what was the strange power that so moved thee, and understoodest not the answer that they bore,—"Maiden, it is Love!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"Love is sweet,
Given or returned."—*SHELLEY.*

THE story of love is everywhere the same. Why should we enlarge on the passing daily events in this Flemish home of four hundred years ago? Human hearts beat now as they did then, and are alike swayed by doubts, and fears, and hopes, with love reigning above all. Thou, youth of modern days, sighing in vain for some cold−hearted damsel; thou, dreaming maiden, who worshippest one above all, calling this feeling respect, admiration—anything but love; and thou, calm philosopher, who hast suffered and found peace, and art no more of the world,—ye may see in these visions of the past but the reflex of your own selves.

Day after day glided on, and all was outward calm in the dwelling of Laurentius Coster. The young Master−singer became an inmate of the family, and all were glad of this. George Surlan brought sunshine wherever he went, with his blithe spirit and kindly heart. He was not one of your moody, sentimental lovers, always sighing and pining; still less was he addicted to those fantastic moods which modern poetry has made so interesting, ever changing from gloomy misanthropy to hollow mirth. Though he loved Lucia as the apple of his eye, and though as yet he loved in vain, still he did not lose hope. It was his happiness to be near her, to render her all those kindly offices which brothers scorn. When she walked through her well−tended garden and received the daily gift of flowers, or found all sorts of beautifully carved ornaments in her room, as if by magic, Lucia thanked her friend with a pleasant smile, never dreaming in her innocence of the love he bore her. Poor George! he tried to be contented with such a light guerdon, and consoled himself with the thought that perhaps Lucia was too young to love any one, and a still untouched heart might surely be won in time; but, after a season, he learned how vain was that comfort. Thus it chanced that the discovery came.

Usually, in the long winter evenings, the family gathered together in the large hall. Very solemn these meetings had used to be, while Laurentius held forth to the sleepy children on the events of his young days, intermingled with horrible modern stories of the deeds of Ziska and John Huss, whose histories had reached the good city of Haarlem with all the embellishments of a fairy tale. When Leuthold came, these stories were discontinued, and, in their stead, the master's low sweet voice might be heard, telling various tales learned in his journeyings far and wide, of good deeds done in humble homes, of noble heroism that the world knew not, of suffering endured and wrong overcome—all that could lead young spirits onward in the right path. At such times the little Lucia always sat at Leuthold's feet, with his hand resting on her curls; and, as she grew older, she still kept her place beside him. But the soft eyes were less often raised to his face, and she usually listened in silence, her fingers busied with some piece of maiden's work. Now and then, when Leuthold turned and saw her thus, a vision of the long−vanished past flitted across his mind; but when, at a sudden pause in the tale, he saw the enthusiastic girl listening with clasped hands and heaving breast, the passing fancy vanished. Lucia was not the calm, reserved Hilda. More beautiful—perchance more winning: but unlike that ideal of his youth's love.

When, alternating with Leuthold's stories, came the fantastic lays of the young Master−singer, Lucia at first did not like the change; but gradually, as the musician's own feelings deepened, his songs took a serious tone. His mirthful ditties were transformed into the breathing of love, a lore new as pleasant to the maiden; for Lelthold, in all his histories, never touched on that one subject. How could he? So while the minstrel poured out his feelings under a thin veil, his strains touched Lucia, and she listened with an intense interest, which gave new inspiration to the Master−singer.

One night George sang an old German tale:

"There was once a young princess, whom many kings and knights wooed. It was in the ancient times of Scandinavian warfare, when the strongest arm and the fiercest spirit were highest esteemed by men. Some of her suitors brought precious furs, and laid them at her feet in token of their prowess in the chase; others came in their bright ringing armour, and showed her treasures of gold; and a few cast before her, with fierce looks, the heads of slain enemies, to be the footstool of a conqueror's bride. But when the maiden turned away from all, their love grew into anger, and they all joined in hate towards the king her father, and would have driven him from his throne. Then there stood before the crownless king a counsellor of whom no one had dreamed,—a poor and wise

man, who had dwelt in the palace all his days unnoticed and uncared for, and he said to the monarch,—

"'My hand is feeble, and has never grasped a spear, yet I can tell the stars in their courses. My voice is low, it has never been heard in battle, yet it can teach men wisdom. My body is frail, but I have strength in my soul. Let me go forth among thy people, and teach them how to overcome the might of the enemy.'

"Then the wise man went forth, and his words were like thunders, and he ruled the hearts of men at his will, until the foe was conquered and the land was at rest. The king said unto him,—

"'Thou shalt have the reward which is greatest of all; thou shalt be my son, O poor wise man!'

"But the other answered,—

"'How can it be? I am lowly in form; my youth is gone by; I have neither strength to fight, nor beauty to win love. The princess will not cast her eyes on me.'

"And he looked sorrowfully to where the throned maiden sat in her loveliness, as one would look at the sphered moon, in hopeless adoration. Then the princess came down from her seat; her breast heaved, her cheek burned, but it was not with pride; and she said softly to him,—

"'Thou art very wise, but thou knowest not the secrets of a woman's heart. When the strong men came and laid their tributes before me, I thought of a voice that had taught me in my childhood; and I turned from them as from the warring beasts of the field. When the noble and beautiful bent before me, a face was in my sight more dear than all. Dost thou know my heart now?' And when he gazed, dumb and pale as death with overpowering joy, the maiden laid her arms round his neck and whispered, 'Let me love thee, thou noblest of all. If thou art poor, I will be thy riches; if thou art growing old, I will bring back thy youth. To me thou art all fair, all young; thou art my glory, my delight, my pride!'"

The minstrel paused in his song, and glanced at Lucia. She sat—her head bent forward, her quivering lips pale with emotion, and her eyes fixed with a look full of the deepest and most adoring love—not, alas! on him who sang, but—on Leuthold! In another moment she had burst into tears, and fled from the room.

"Thou shouldst not sing such doleful ballads to poor simple maidens, George," said Laurentius, reproachfully. "Doubtless the child was terrified at thy horrible tales of war and battle and human heads as footstools. 'T is very wrong; is it not, Leuthold?"

The master lifted up his head; he, too, had listened with a moved heart to the tale of love—it had spoken to him of the long−buried, mournful past. George Surlan noticed that his face was paler than ordinary, and that tears glistened on his eyelashes. The young lover's bosom was rent with jealousy. He dashed his instrument to the floor, and went out into the garden.

"Now that boy is angry, too," querulously cried old Laurentius. "What must be done with these wild young spirits? Go after him, dear Leuthold, and bring him hither again."

But George would not come. The master found him walking hastily by the side of the lake. His anger had passed away, but was succeeded by sadness. It sat strangely enough on that bright face, hitherto full of the unclouded gaiety of youth. Leuthold was touched to the heart: in a moment he penetrated the young man's love−secret; and his tone, which he had meant to make calm and severe, now grew gentle and almost tremulous in its sympathy.

"What ails thee, George?" he said, laying his hand on the Master−singer's arm. "Why wert thou angry, and why art thou now so sad?"

"It is nothing—nothing! Let me alone!" and George turned away angrily; but he met the calm, earnest eyes of Leuthold, and the storm was lulled. "Leave me, good master; I will return to the house soon."

But Leuthold still kept his hold, and spoke gently and gravely,—

"George Sarlan, when I stood by thy father's deathbed at Ulm, he prayed me to watch over thee, and told thee always to listen to my words. Dear George, wilt thou hear me, when I tell thee what I read in thy heart now?"

The brow of the Master−singer crimsoned, but he said nothing. Leuthold went on:—

"Thou hast a secret there. Thou art wroth at the careless words of Laurentius, because thou lovest our sweet Lucia."

"**Our** sweet Lucia!" repeated the young man, bitterly. "Yes, I do love Lucia—thy Lucia!"

"I have thought so—I have wished so—and I am sure she loves thee," answered Leuthold, unconscious of the other's meaning.

"Thou art very generous, master. Why art thou so certain of the maiden's heart?"

"Does she not always smile upon thee? Did she not weep at thy song? I saw not her face, but I knew it was so. Surely she loves thee, George?"

"Oh, dear master, have pity on me; thou wilt drive me mad.!" cried the other, impetuously. "Thou wert ever kind; why dost thou taunt me thus? Lucia loves me not, and thou knowest it too well."

"Nay! Whom but thee could this timid maiden love, who has been brought up like a young bird in its hidden nest?"

"Thee—thee, Leuthold Auerbach. Lucia loves thee!"

The red blood rushed to the master's face, and then faded away into a mournful smile.

"Thou art dreaming, poor boy!" he said, gently. "Throughout life I have never known the blessing of woman's love: it was not for me! and now that I am growing old, that this fair blooming child should love one like me—seest thou not it is impossible?"

George looked amazed.

"And can it be that thou knewest it not?—that thou dost not love her?"

"I love my sweet pupil, who has been unto me like a young sister—a daughter! I never had a dream so wild as this."

"Then thou lovest another, or thou hast loved. Tell me all, dear master," eagerly cried the young man. But he imagined not the effect his words would produce on Leuthold, who staggered as if struck by a sudden blow, and leaned against a tree for support. George Surlan, terrified and awed, could not utter a word. At last the master said slowly, and with effort,—

"Speak of this no more. Let it vanish alike from thy memory and from thy tongue. It is a secret between my own heart and God. Now leave me."

The young musician, deeply touched, pressed his hand and departed. Leuthold stood alone by the shore of the gloomy lake. A thick mist had crept over it; the chill penetrated every fibre of his slight, delicate frame, but he felt it not. The long−slumbering feelings of human passion had once more awoke in him, and he trembled beneath their power. His soul was an autumn tree, through whose boughs the same breezes which had once only produced pleasant music, now pass,—tearing to the earth the same leaves with which they had erst harmlessly played. The ideal of love which he had vainly set up in youth again revived in Leuthold's spirit. Not that another filled the place of Hilda, but his soul thrilled to the sweetness of being for the first time the object of woman's love.

The words of George Surlan, "Lucia loves thee—only thee," rang in the ears of Leuthold with a strange melody. He began to think over the words, the looks of the young maiden, since she had grown from childhood unto girlhood; her unvarying tenderness; her silent attention to all his comforts, even to the commonest things; her care for all things he loved; the deep sympathy, mingled with reverence, with which she strove to teach her own mind to follow his in its wildest flights. All these things dawned upon him in a new light, with a sweetness of which he was himself hardly conscious.

Oh, ye lonely−hearted ones, into whose darkness has suddenly broken a cheering ray—on whom the unlooked−for sense of being loved has stolen like a pleasant perfume in the desert—deem him not faithless to the one only true love that the human heart can feel! Scorn him not, if in Leuthold's dreams that night the bitter memories of the past grew less keen; that the forms of Hilda, the hopelessly beloved one, and of Lucia, the young, devoted dreamer, mingled into one.

CHAPTER IX.

"To suffer woes that Hope thinks infinite,
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night,
To love and bear, to hope till Hope create
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates,—
This is thy glory!*SHELLEY.*

LONG ere the twilight of a winter morning dawned, Leuthold arose, and, lighting his lamp, strove to banish by study the wayward fantasies of the night. But it was in vain. A haunting spirit had been raised within him which no such power could lay. His thoughts turned still to that hope of Lucia's love which had so suddenly risen up in his imagination. To drive it away he thought of himself—of the twenty years' barrier between that fair young maiden and the man over whom time and sorrow had laid such a heavy hand. But still the moaning wind seemed to breathe, in Lucia's voice, the words of that old lay—"Let me love thee, and I will bring back thy youth."

Again, as in a time long gone by, there came to Leuthold the wild yearning to behold himself—to exercise the strange gift which had once so strongly influenced his life. The angel of his destiny seemed once more near him, and thoughts and feelings deadened during his life of action in the world without, again thronged upon the mind of the dreamer. The Self−seer felt upon him the warning of his coming power.

"O thou Ruler of my fate!" cried Leuthold, "thou readest my heart—all its weakness, all its strength. Thou seest that it is not through vain desire or selfish pride that I seek to know myself as I am. It might be that my desolate heart would be gladdened and grow young in the sunshine of woman's love; a wife's hand might smooth away the furrows of this brow; children's kisses bring back the roses of these pale lips; I might yet live the life I pictured in youth's dreams, and die at peace in my own household! But if not, oh, let me understand my own spirit, and do that which is right in the sight of the Spirit who governs all."

As the Self−seer, in the earnestness of his concentrated soul, prayed thus, the lamp died away and his chamber grew dark. The wind rose, and the waves of the lake under his window gave forth a hollow murmur which lulled his senses. Gradually torpor oppressed him, and he felt no more, until in the misty daylight the divided soul beheld its other Self, wrapped in the peaceful, child−like repose, into which Leuthold had sunk when the spell came upon him.

Once more, after a lapse of time which on earth would be numbered as the fourth of a man's life, the shadowy Essence looked upon its bodily form—the immortal and unchangeable spirit beheld what was perishable as the flowers of the field. Even as we view a fading garment did the Presence look upon the lineaments of its earthly being. The face was not yet disfigured by age, because evil passions had never stained it; but the freshness of youth was not there. Even greater than the tokens of natural decay were the signs of quick−coming decline produced by the restlessness of the ever−active mind. When once age came it would not be with slow crawl, but with lightning footstep.

As the low red sunbeam fell on his face, Leuthold awoke. The Shadow followed him as he descended to the general hall. His step grew firm, and a brightness was in his eye that resembled the student of Leipsic in years gone by. George Surlan met the master, with a silent, expressive grasp of the hand, and an affectionate, inquiring gaze; but as Leuthold, with a passing answer, turned away from him, the Phantom read in his troubled air the conflict that had already begun in that soul, hitherto so calm, so clear; and a painful thrill quivered through its pure and spiritual being.

When Lucia, timidly, and yet with inconceivable tenderness, took the master's hand, she was startled by the earnestness of his look. It betrayed a sudden awakening to the power of her beauty, a something of passion for the woman mingled with affection towards the child. That day she did not linger at her place by Leuthold's side, but went away to the farthest nook, though she felt that his eyes followed her even there. The Spirit saw it too, and mourned that its bodily eyes could no longer meet those of the young wood−carver, who plied his work in silence and hopeless pain.

As the day advanced Leuthold grew more restless. He went to the shore of the lake and wandered about, sometimes idly watching the dusky clouds that careered over the sky in the majesty of winter's storms, and then

again walking with his eyes cast down in deep meditation. The Spirit hovered over him, and listened to the voice within his soul, and which cried louder the more it was suppressed.

"My heart is still young," Leuthold murmured, "though my years are gathering fast behind me. What matters that? If Lucia loves me, why should I count my years? But then her love is the love of a child; will it endure, when my frame is shattered and my mind enfeebled, while she is still blooming and fair? Shall I clasp her to me, then, with chilling fetters of duty, when the romance of love has of necessity died out—when I am old and she is young—bound together like the living and the dead? Would this be a meet return for her love? No, such love is not for me; I will forget the dream."

But while he endeavoured to grow firm, the Shadow saw that the struggle threw the feebleness of added years over Leuthold's frame. Again he spoke, but only in his heart; his lips were dumb.

"I am sinful; I think only of myself, and remember not him who struggles with hopeless love. Shame! that I should dream of piercing another's breast with the same arrow that almost drank the life−blood of my own! And yet, if Lucia loves me—. But I will think no more."

And Leuthold with a troubled eye gazed over the dark lake, whose tossing waves seemed restless as his own spirit. A little boat, in which he often loved to glide over its surface, lay fastened to the willows at his feet, heaving idly to and fro. An irresistible desire made him enter it, and he was soon skimming over the wide lake alone. The ever−attendant Shadow beheld his face as he sat watching the waves, which grew higher and whiter, until the tiny vessel danced upon them like a feather. The clouds thickened, and their gloom was reflected in Leuthold's countenance. Its expression was that of passionless, hopeless desolation, mingled with a stern will, that seemed to set the elements themselves at defiance. Darker and darker grew the waves, the wintry night came down, and the lake boiled like a caldron. The boat was drifted, Leuthold knew not whither, but still he sat immoveable; he heard voices uttering his name, but he thought they were only the spirits of the tempest calling him on to death. At last a wave rose; it curled higher, higher; it broke, and the little boat went down.

When Leuthold awoke to life he found himself in his own chamber, with kind and well−known faces bending over him. One, dearest and kindest of all, seemed to him like an angel from the world beyond the grave. He lifted his heavy eyelids and closed them again, but not before a cry of joy had rung in his ears: it was the voice of Lucia.

"He lives! he lives! Leuthold! **my** Leuthold!" she murmured; and, half−dreaming as he was, the master felt her warm tears falling one after the other on his hand—on his brow.

"Lucia! **my** Lucia!" he was about to echo; when he heard a heavy sigh, and saw in the face of George Surlan the most agonised despair. At once the knowledge of all he had learned in his double existence came upon the Self−seer, and with it rushed back memories of his own youth. The noble heart which had suffered so much, refused to inflict on that of another a like pang. The moment passed by, and the victory was won—won, before he learned, as he did soon after, that he had been near the horrible death of drowning—that it was George Surlan who saved him.

During the long days and weeks of sickness that succeeded, that sweet, loving face was continually hovering near him. He knew that one word of his would awaken Lucia to the full consciousness of feelings now scarce developed, would enrich him with the whole treasure of her young love. Yet he never breathed that word. He pondered how he might cause the dream of girlhood to remain a dream for ever, nor deepen into the intensity of woman's love.

One day, as they sat alone together, Leuthold said to the maiden, who had been lavishing on him various gentle offices, now continued more through habit than necessity,—

"Thou art a tender nurse, Lucia,—almost like a grown woman, as thou wilt be soon, dear child. And yet it seems but a day since I came hither, and the little girl bade me welcome so shyly. How pleasant it has been for me to find a home so full of love!"

"Was that love new to thee, good master?" answered the girl. "Did not every one love thee as we?"

A deep sadness overspread Leuthold's face.

"Dear child," he said, "there is in every heart some hidden sorrow. I have never spoken of my youth, because there fell on it a dark shadow that will never pass away."

"Thou hast told me of thy mother—of her death."

"There are griefs worse than death, Lucia."

The girl's lips trembled, and she turned away her face as she said,—

"There is a sorrow of which I have heard in old tales—of which George sings—the sorrow of love."

"Even so," returned Leuthold; and his voice sunk almost inaudibly, as if he were talking to himself rather than to her. "I loved; for years this love was the dream of my boyhood, the strength of my manhood, my hope, my joy, my very life,—and it was in vain."

"Did she die?" asked Lucia, in tones as low as his own.

"Yes, to me; for she loved me not. Therefore has my life been lonely, and will be to the end."

"Not so!" tremblingly murmured Lucia. "A change may come. Thou mayst yet find some true loving heart which will be precious in thy sight."

"Lucia," answered the master, "there are two kinds of love,—the early dream of fancy, which passes away like morning dew; and the deep, earnest passion, strengthened year after year until it has become one with life itself—which can never change. As I have lived, so I shall die, true to that lost, yet most precious love of old."

Leuthold had nerved himself thus far; he had, with desperate calmness, laid bare his heart, and the secret of his life had for the first time passed his lips. He could say no more; he covered his face with his hands, and leaned back exhausted. He did not see—perhaps it was well he did not—the changes in Lucia's face. She grew deadly pale, and pressed her hand upon her heart, as though there was a sharp pain there. In that moment her girlish air−palace crumbled into dust, the bubble burst, the dream was gone! Womanly dignity, not unmixed with shame, came to give her strength; and when she again looked up, her whole mien was changed.

"I thank thee, dear master, for thus trusting me, though I am only a child. The tale of thy sorrows shall never pass my lips."

"Be it so, dear Lucia," the master answered, in a faint tone. "Only let it rest in thy memory; and when, in thy coming years of womanhood, a true heart lays at thy feet its whole wealth of love, cast it not from thee. Now, my child, leave me, for I am weary and sad, and I would fain rest awhile."

Lucia rose, and silently arranged the cushions of his chair, as she had done since his sickness. She looked one moment with intense love on the pale, sunken face that lay back with closed eyes on the pillow, and said, softly,—

"The Virgin and all good saints comfort thee, my friend, my teacher, my more than father!"

Leuthold felt her warm lips rest for a moment on his forehead, like the kiss of a spirit in his dreams, and Lucia was gone.

It was, though she knew it not, the last farewell on earth between these twain. At the dawn of morning Leuthold went forth, for the second time, a wanderer over the wide world. Old Laurentius heard;—talked of the ingratitude of man, and trembled for his precious secret; Lucia wept over the sorrow−worn spirit which could nowhere find rest; but George knew the truth, and remembered, with almost adoring reverence, the self−denying man who, in the midst of his own darkness, had made the path of others bright.

CHAPTER X.

"The wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

"My days, my friend, are almost gone;
My life has been approved,
And many love me: but by none
Am I enough beloved.*WORDSWORTH.*

GOOD reader, if thou lovest tales of deep mystery and exciting adventure, truly this is but a Barmecide's feast for thee! I have led thee along through the straight path of human life without any turnings or windings; thou hast had not a single maze of mystery to lose thyself in; not one precipice of horrible doubt to whose brink thou goest smiling, knowing well that thou wilt not be suffered to fall; I have not left thee to grope thy way in darkness through terrible scenes of sorrow, which are to end in a sudden burst of light; nor have I deluded thee with sunshine, until thou camest to the mouth of a cavern of eternal gloom. To drop the metaphor, this is a plain story of life; but more of the inner life of the heart, than the visible existence of man. And such are the truest and the deepest of all; for there is no romance of outward worldly fortunes like the history of the heart.

Therefore, reader, if thou lovest such, if thou hast gone thus far with me, and, perchance, on the way, some world−wide chords have been touched, which have found an echo in thine own heart, journey with me to the end.

Let us again pass unchronicled some years in Leuthold's life, and look upon him once more. He was returning from long wandering abroad, to his native Germany. Yes! the bent old man, with his thin gray hair and feeble steps, slow and tremulous in spite of the staff he held, was, indeed, the same Leuthold Auerbach, once the young student of Leipsic. He walked along like a man who had no care to hasten his journey, inasmuch as it led to no home. One always knows those happy travellers who have a place in view, towards which their steps are tending; they look different from the wayside loiterers, to whom all the world is the same.

As Leuthold journeyed, he stayed now and then to look at the bright summer sky and pleasant country around him, or to listen to the birds. At such times his eye lighted up with a spark of its olden fire. He had not lost all the blessed feelings of youth, his heart had not grown old, for he still loved and worshipped the beautiful in all things.

While he rested, the gay carol of a young man's voice reached his ear. It came nearer and nearer, and at last the singer emerged from a winding in the road. He seemed one of the race of wandering students so well known in Germany. His cap was set on his head with a careless jauntiness; his small bundle swung over his shoulder at the end of a stick; in his frank, handsome face, might be read youth, health, a light heart, and a gay temper; and his joyous ditty gave full confirmation of the same.

Leuthold watched him approach; and as the other perceived his fellow−traveller he stopped his song, doffing his cap with the instinctive respect of youth to age, which always betokens a good heart.

"Thou art very merry, my young friend," said Leuthold, smiling. "Pray do not cease that pleasant song. It does one good to hear it."

"Thanks, kind sir," answered the young man. "I assure you it does me good to sing it. It is quite a relief to be free to make a noise in this pleasant open country, after being a long time shut up in musty rooms."

"You are a student, then?"

"Oh, yes. I have been these two years at Heidelberg, and am now going home. I never wished to study—I hate such a dreary life; but my parents gave me the name of a learned man, and thought, dear good creatures, that I must perforce turn out learned, too. I fear they will be mistaken."

"And what is your name, my merry young sir?" asked Leuthold, who took a vague interest in the frank, pleasant face, as if he had seen it before; and felt reluctant to lose sight of it.

"'Tis one that sounds well—Leuthold Waldhof. But you seem to know it," said the young man, as his companion started from the fallen tree on which they had both been sitting, and looked eagerly in his face.

"Yes, I have heard it before."

"Indeed? Well, worthy sir, I was named after a learned man, whom my father and mother knew when they

were young. I have often heard my mother talk about him—how wise he was, and how good too. She made us love the name of Leuthold Auerbach!"

"Is he living now?" asked the old man's tremulous voice.

"Oh, no! surely not. He went away suddenly, a little before my father and mother were married, and they never heard of him more. He had just gained great honours for his learning; so grew tired of his dull native city—at least so my father used to say—and they looked for a long time to hear of his fame in some place or other. At last my mother said he must be dead, or he would not have forgotten them, and I have often seen her weep when she told us of him."

Leuthold drew his cloak over his face, and his thin fingers played convulsively with his stick. Alas, alas! that olden dream clung to him still. He could not look upon the son of Herman and Hilda.

"I am wearying you, good sir, with this long story," said the young student, eyeing him with somewhat of curiosity; "and you seem to have journeyed far to−day. Will you suffer me to bear you company awhile, and when you are rested we can go on together. A young man's arm may help you over this rough road."

As the youth spoke, his mother's soul looked out of the kind brown eyes—his mother's tone breathed in the softened voice; at least so it seemed to Leuthold. He gazed one moment in his face, and then fell on the neck of Hilda's son.

"Tell me of thy parents—of Leipsic—of my ancient home," cried the old man, almost weeping. "Tell me all, dear boy; for I am Leuthold Auerbach!"

Ere long the two who had so strangely met were sitting hand−in−hand, like old friends, while the unconscious youth described to Leuthold the home of Herman and Hilda—how they lived surrounded by their children, with every comfort that wealth could bestow, enjoying that household peace and unity which makes home a very paradise of love. The boy spoke of his mother, and the kindling of his eye told how dear Hilda was to her child.

"Is thy mother still as beautiful as she was?" murmured Leuthold.

"Beautiful!" answered the student, laughing. "Why, none of us ever thought of that: perhaps she might have been so once. My father says little Hilda is very like her, and she is an angel of a child. But our mother is so good, so tender—we love her so much."

"Yes, yes, all love her!" said the other, absently; his thoughts were wandering to the old nook in the professor's house, and the young maiden who sat there with her calm, sweet face, and her glossy hair.

"Whither art thou travelling, honoured friend?" asked the young man at last. "See! we have let the sun set upon our talk—hast thou far to go?"

"Yes!—no!—I cannot tell," muttered Leuthold "I hardly know whither chance may lead me," he added, with a faint smile; "I have long been a wanderer."

"Then thou shalt come home with me to my father's house; it will be so pleasant. How proud I shall feel to have found thee, and brought thee again to Leipsic!"

Leuthold half resisted the affectionate entreaty; even now his spirit shrank from reviving that bitter sorrow of old. But when the earnest boy pictured the welcome that awaited them, and especially how happy his mother would be, the old man yielded, and they journeyed on together.

They parted for the night—the elder Leuthold and his young namesake—more like father and son than like those who a few hours before had met as strangers. But in the still hours, when youth slumbers in happy dreams and age alone is wakeful, all the past came as vividly as yesterday to Leuthold's mind. It came, yet brought no pain. He was as one who re−treads at eventide scenes through which he has passed at morning. Now the dusky twilight is over all, veiling alike the rich valley and the gloomy rocks; he knows they were there once, but he sees them no longer, or only dim and indistinct. The whole landscape of life, with its sunshine and storm, its joy and pain, seems all peaceful now.

Leuthold thought, with a heart that throbbed no longer, of his early love. He pictured her as he would soon see her, in her calm happiness, a mother and wife; and he rejoiced that her gentle nature—which gave affectionate tears to the imagined memory of the dead— had never been pained by the knowledge of the hopeless sorrow of the living. His love for her had been unstained by one selfish feeling, and the balm of sanctified affection lay upon his heart, giving it peace at last.

As he mused his eye fell upon a letter which he had carried for some days in his bosom: it, too, brought blessed thoughts of trials passed, and duties fulfilled.

"My best friend, my dear master!" wrote George Surlan, "rejoice with me, for my Lucia is won! How happy we are in our dear home at Ulm—she loving me with all wife−like love, none the less precious because it required long and patient wooing, and was the growth of years. If thou couldst but see us now—see Lucia, the dreamy fantastic girl, transformed into the sedatest young matron in Ulm—save that at times she leaves her busy household cares, to laugh with her foolish husband, who has not grown wise yet, and has even stolen away some of her own wisdom to make her like himself. Yet she thinks him the greatest man that ever lived, always excepting thee, dear master. Thou knowest how Laurentius has lately passed away: Geinsfleicht broke the old man's heart. John and Peter are rich men now; but I do not envy them, I have my Lucia and my noble Art. If thou comest to Ulm, thou shalt see our cathedral rich in the work of my hands. Lucia says there could be no such wood−carvings anywhere; perhaps it is because she sees her own sweet face, and her husband's too, among the carved ornaments. What vanity in the little lady!—Dear master, forgive the foolishness of a happy heart that will bless thee while it beats."

Leuthold read for the twentieth time those joyful outpourings of content, and then laid down and slept as peacefully as a child.

Reader, thou hast not been deluded by the creation of fancy. If thou goest to Ulm, thou wilt see there, in the cathedral, wood−carvings so exquisite that thou wilt marvel that nought but the artist's name, "George Surlan," has descended to posterity. But among the saints, sybyls, and philosophers, which he has carved, are two heads, life−like and yet most beautiful, which tradition will tell thee are portraits of the artist and his wife. Lament not thou if the lapse of time has swept away all other memorials. These two silent images speak of youth and beauty—of divine Art and holy domestic Love, mingled in sweet union, Surely, though fame has remembered them not, happiest of the happy were George Surlan and his Lucia.

CONCLUSION.

"Thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathise with clay."—*TENNYSON.*

"Whether that lady's gentle mind
No longer with the form combined
I dare not guess! * * *

For love, and beauty, and delight,
There is no death nor change. Their might
Exceeds our organs, which endure
No light, being themselves obscure."—*SHELLEY.*

AFTER some days' journey Leuthold and young Waldhof arrived within sight of Leipsic. The boy gave full vent to the exuberance of his joy until they drew near, and then the faintest possible shadow fell upon his mirth. We all feel this, more or less, in coming home—a sense as if we hardly dare to be so happy. Young Leuthold did not marvel that his companion was graver than ordinary, and a native delicacy of feeling contributed to silence his tongue. Slowly and wearily the feet of the old man trod the road down which he had fled like the wind on that early morning, impelled by the agony of despairing love. The strength of youth was no more; but with it, too, had passed away youth's keen sense of sorrow. Leuthold would not now have recalled a single day of that olden time.

They stood before the garden where the last sound of Hilda's voice had rung upon his ear. It was all changed; the thick, shadowing trees were cut down—the green alleys which Hilda had loved so much,—and on the smooth lawn a troop of children were playing. The change smote upon Leuthold's heart: he would not have found a single tree altered in the dear old garden.

"That was my grandfather's house," said the young student. "Doubtless you find it changed. After his death my father cut down the elms, and then sold it."

"And thy mother—what said she?"

"Oh, she was quite satisfied that it was right, the trees made the house so gloomy with their thick branches. I believe she was glad of the change."

Hilda glad to see her ancient home despoiled—to see her lost father's dwelling in the hands of strangers! It was a trifling thing, but Leuthold was pained. For years, in his dreams, every turn in the long shady walks, every bush and tree, had been visited by him in memory—now even they were no more.

As they passed down the narrow street, Leuthold glanced up at the window of his own small room: the sanctuary of his spirit in those olden times. A long, gaudy flag flaunted out of the lattice; they were celebrating a great victory, and the town of Leipzic was bedizened like a conqueror's bride. Leuthold turned away, and looked up no more until he found himself at the abode of Herman.

"Father, father!" cried the joyful tones of the younger Waldhof, as they heard a loud and somewhat coarse voice above the yelping of innumerable hounds at the entrance of the domain, and saw a tall, heavily−made man lounging among various retainers.

"What! is't thou, my boy?" said the large man, laying his two hands on the youth's shoulders. "Glad to see thee again! How much learning hast brought from Heidelberg? As many ounces as thou hast grown inches? Thou wilt be a wise fellow, Leuthold! Ha! ha! ha!" And a laugh loud and long spoke the father's delight.

No way disconcerted, the student echoed his hoarse merriment in the silvery tones of youth, and then said, proud of his mysterious secret,—

"Guess, father, whom I have found and brought to see you."

Herr Waldhof glanced carelessly at the stranger. "Some master of thine, I suppose. He is very welcome. Give me thy hand, old man; we'll use thee well."

But Leuthold held the broad, brown hand in his, and said,—

"Hast thou forgotten me, Herman?"

There was no mistaking the low, sweet voice, which alone remained unchanged. Herman almost buried the slight frame of his old friend in his giant embrace, and shouted and laughed alternately, with joy at the recognition. Then he held Leuthold out at arm's length, and scanned him closely.

"Why, thou art grown an old man already! Never mind, we all change. How hast thou lived, and where? But thou must come and see Madame Waldhof."

"Madame Waldhof!" How strange it sounded. Yet Leuthold was glad that the dear name of Hilda was not uttered.

Herman and Leuthold passed through the long avenue together. Different as they had been in youth, the contrast was more striking than ever in age. Herman's full, broad face, spoke of the redundance of animal life. There was little intelligence in the large eyes, and the handsome features had grown almost coarse. Leuthold, with his attenuated frame, his thin and sharpened face, was now more beautiful to look upon than Herman. The two men were types of the sensual and the spiritual; one sinking the noblest form to its own meanness, the other exalting the least beautiful exterior to the nobility of the essence within.

As they reached the door, Leuthold drew back. "Wilt thou not first tell thy wife I am here? She may be startled—pained, at this sudden meeting with her dead father's friend."

Herr Waldhof laughed aloud. "Oh, thou needst not fear; Hilda is not very much given to sentiment. She grieves little over the old times now, I suspect. Come along."

In the old hall—it was the same in which we first beheld the two friends—sat a matron in the midst of a troop of noisy children and serving−maids. She was rosy and contented−looking: not a wrinkle marked the comely brow; and the brown eyes seemed ever smiling. The round cheek and portly figure had long lost all the proportions of girlhood; and something unmistakeable about the matron's air and tone, told of a greater change than these—a change in mind and soul. As Leuthold kissed the hand of Madame Waldhof, he no longer thought of the Hilda of his boyhood.

She let fall a few tears as she spoke of her father, and then the wife of Herman recovered her usual calm demeanour. She called her children, who, after much resistance, came to kiss Leuthold's hand one by one. One,—a sweet, modest−eyed, little maiden, whom her mother called Hilda,—came and stood by Leuthold's knee. It seemed as if the spirit of the first Hilda were revived in her; as the old man met her open gaze, and laid his hand on her soft braided hair, the child wondered that he repeated her name so often in such a low, dreamy tone, and that as he kissed her, a tear, not her own, was left upon her cheek. It had fallen to the memory of what was now nothingness—the Hilda who once had been.

"You will annoy Leuthold with all these young folk," said Herman to his wife. "Mothers are so vain of their children! Come, old friend, and I will show you all the changes I have made in the house."

"You have let this hall remain, I see," said Leuthold, in a low tone, as they went out. "Do you remember that night, Herman?"

"The night I dreamed such a wild dream? It was some of thy strange fancies which got into my brain, Leuthold; but I have forgotten all such things now. Let us go and see the horses. I hunt almost as much as ever, though I am not so young as I was the day I quarrelled with Von P—. Ha! ha! Dost rememher it, Leuthold? To think how foolish I made myself for the sake of that old dame yonder! Yet Hilda has been a good wife to me; and we live very comfortably."

"I am glad," Leuthold answered, absently; and Herman continued—

"Those old times were pleasant, after all, and we often laugh over them. I sometimes thought, after you went so suddenly, that you really fancied Hilda. But if you did, I suppose you have long got over it—these love notions are foolish things. We are all wiser, and we need not quarrel about her now—Ha! ha!"

And Waldhof's laugh made needless the answer which, for his life, Leuthold could not have uttered. All that day he followed his friend mechanically, sat at the board, listened to the husband and wife as they discussed the daily household events, and chronicled the words and deeds of their children. Once only the conversation turned on things in which Leuthold could take an interest. He asked after the treasures of the professor's library.

"Oh, they have passed into different hands," said Madame Waldhof. "I was told that no one cares for manuscripts now, since printing has become known."

"For my part I care little for books or manuscripts either. One lives very comfortably without being learned. I have not caught Madame Waldhof reading this long time; and I think of her just as highly. I imagine she, too, is

quite as contented with me as if I were the cleverest man living."

Hilda looked up in her husband's face with a beaming smile, and laid her hand in his. That look brought back her girlish days—it showed that one feeling remained the same—woman's love!

At last, when Herr Waldhof had fallen asleep, and his wife sat spinning beside him in perfect silence, lest his slumbers should be broken, Leuthold crept away to his own chamber. There, in the stillness of meditation, his whole life rose up before him with its array of shadows. They glided past him, fast changing like forms in a dream. He alone remained the same. To the time of gray hairs Leuthold had carried the one true feeling of life—love. It was a reality; all the rest were but fleeting shadows. He rejoiced that it had been so; that his love had been made immortal in memory; that, embalmed by suffering, the one ideal had remained secure through the changes of life. In this love he rested; still worshipping, not the real Hilda, the wife of Herman, but the Hilda of his dreams—the pure image of womanhood. He loved—not her, but love itself.

Again in his solitude his guardian angel stood beside Leuthold. It showed him the difference between the life of the body and the life of the soul; it painted the man−animal at his feasts, at his pleasures, wasting his existence in petty joys; how, when the mask of youth falls off, he sinks down, down, by lower degrees, until, in the aged driveller, no sign remains of the casket that contained a divine soul.

"Wouldst thou have exchanged thy life, with all its loneliness—all its cares—for such an one as this?" murmured the inner voice. "Hast thou not been rich?—in the wealth of thy soul. Hast thou not been happy?—in scattering blessings on others, far and wide. Hast thou not been loved? for all holy spirits look down with immortal tenderness on the man who walks the earth in purity, in meekness, and in charity. Thou hast done thy work, O faithful one! Lay thy burden down, and enter into thy rest."

And on Leuthold's ear fell another low tone—solemn and sweet—which he knew well.

"Come," it breathed, "son of my love, I wait for thee! Come home! The shadows are passing away: the immortal day is dawning. Thou hast lived, thou hast suffered, thou hast conquered. Now rejoice!"

As the old man listened, a heavenly smile brightened his face, for he knew that the time of his departure was at hand. He looked out into the night, and the angels of the stars breathed their influence down upon him. Every ray, as it fell, brought with it a divine message, penetrating to his inmost soul. Joyfully, rapturously that weary soul answered the summons, and spread its wings to the land of immortality.