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Title: Sidonia The Sorceress V2

Author: William Mienhold

Release Date: October, 2004 [EBook #6701]
[Yes, we are more than one year ahead of schedule]
[This file was first posted on January 17, 2003]

Edition: 10

Language: English

Character set encoding: ISO-8859-1

***** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SIDONIA THE SORCERESS V2 *****

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SIDONIA THE SORCERESS

THE SUPPOSED DESTROYER OF THE WHOLE REIGNING DUCAL HOUSE OF
POMERANIA.

TRANSLATED BY LADY WILDE

MARY SCHWEIDLER

THE AMBER WITCH BY WILLIAM MEINHOLD DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

IN TWO VOLUMES VOL. II.

1894

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CHAPTER IV.

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If Sidonia could not be the pastor's wife, she was determined at least to be sub-prioress, and commenced her preparations for this object by knitting a little pair of red hose for her cat. Then she sent for Dorothea Stettin, saying that she was weak and ill, and no one took pity on her.

When the good Dorothea came as she was asked, there lay my serpent on the bed in her nun's robes, groaning and moaning as if her last hour had come; and scarcely had the sub-prioress taken a seat near her, when my cat crept forth from under the bed, in his little red hose, mewing and rubbing himself up against the robe of the sub-prioress, as if praying her to remove this unwonted constraint from him, of the little red hose.

After Dorothea had inquired about her sickness, she looked at the cat, and asked wonderingly, what was the meaning of such a strange dress?

Illa--"Ah, dear friend, it was dreadful to my feelings to see the

little animal going about naked, therefore I knit little hose for him, as you see; indeed, I am often tempted to wonder how the Lord God could permit the poor animals to appear naked before us."

Hæ. (extending her arms for joy, so that she almost tumbled back off the stool).--"Oh, God be praised and thanked, at last I have found one chaste soul in this wicked world! (sobs, throws up her eyes, falls upon Sidonia's neck, kisses her, and weeps over her:) ah yes, one chaste soul at last, like herself!"

Illa.--"True, Dorothea, there is no virtue so rare in this evil world as chastity. Ah, why has the Lord God placed such things before our eyes? I never can comprehend it, and never will. What a sight for a chaste virgin these naked animals! What did the dear sister think on the matter?"

Hæ.--"Ah, she knew not what to think, had asked the priest about it."

Illa.--"And what did he say?"

Hæ.--"He laughed at her."

Illa.--"Just like him, the lewd, hypocritical pharisee."

Hæ.--"Eh? she was too hard on the good priest. He was a pure and upright servant of God."

Illa.--"Ay, as Judas was. Had not sister Dorothea heard----"

Hæ.--"No; for God's sake, what? The dear sister frightened her already."

Illa.--"First, you confess that the priest laughed when you talked about chastity?"

Hæ.--"Yes, true, ah, indeed true."

Illa.--"Then you remember that he preached a sermon lately upon adul--upon adul-- No, she never could utter the word--the horrible word. Upon the seventh commandment, to the great scandal of the entire convent?"

Hæ.--"Ah yes, ah yes, she was there, and had to stop one ear with her finger, the other with her kerchief, not to hear all the strange and dreadful things he was saying."

Illa.--"And yet this was the man that ran in and out of the cloister daily at his pleasure, sent for or not--a young unmarried man--though the convent rules especially declared an _old_ man. Ah, if _she_ were sub-prioress, this scandal should never be permitted."

Hæ.--"What could be done? it was a blessed thing to live in peace. Besides, the priest was such a pious man."

Illa.--"Pious? Heaven defend us from such piety! Why, had she not heard?--the whole convent talked about it."

Hæ.--"No, no; for God's sake, what had happened? tell her--she had been making sausages all the morning, and had heard nothing."

Illa.--"Then know, ah God, how it pained her to talk of it--she had heard a great noise in the kitchen in the morning, as if all the pots and pans were tumbled about, and when she ran in to see--there was the priest--oh, her chaste eyes never had seen such a sight--the _pious_ priest making love to her old maid, Wolde."

Hæ.--"Impossible, impossible!--to her old maid, Wolde?"

Illa.--"Yea, and he was praying her for kisses, and praising her fat hand, and extolling her white hair. But as to what more she had seen----"

Hæ.--"For God's sake, sister, what more?"

Illa (sighing, and covering her face with both hands).--"No, no, that she could never bring her chaste lips to utter. Oh, that such wickedness should be in the world (weeping bitterly). But she would never enter the chapel again, and that priest there; nor receive the rites from him. But this was not all; the dear sister must hear how he revenged himself upon her, because she interrupted his toying with the old hag. It was truth, all truth! She (Sidonia) grew so ill with fright and horror that she was unable to disrobe, and threw herself on the bed just as she was, but growing weaker and weaker hour by hour, sent for the priest at last, to pray with her, and afterwards to offer up general supplication for her restoration, in the chapel with all the sisterhood; but only think, the shameless hypocrite refused to pray with her, because he spied an end of her black robe out of the bed, declaring she was not ill at all, that she was a base liar, all because she had lain down in her convent dress, and finally went his way cursing and swearing, without even saying one prayer, or uttering one word of comfort, as was his duty. And now, alas! she must die without priest or sacrament! To what a Sodom and Gomorrah she had come! But if an old hag like her maid was not safe--from the shameless parson, how could she or any of them be safe? What was to be done? unless the dear sister, as sub-prioress, took the matter in her own hands, and brought him to task about it?"

At this proposal the other trembled like an aspen leaf, and seemed more dead than alive. She wept, wrung her hands--for God's sake

what could she do? how could she talk on such a matter? Let the abbess see to it, if she chose.

Illa--"Stuff, the old pussy--the less said of _her_ the better. Why, she was worse than the old maid, Wolde, herself."

Hæ--"The abbess? why, the whole convent, and the whole world too, talked of her piety and virtue."

Illa--"Very virtuous, truly, to have the priest locked up with her; and when some of the sisters wished to remain, suspecting that all was not right, the priest pushed them out at the door with his own hands, and bolted it after them, as many could testify to her had been done this very day. Oh, what a Sodom and Gomorrah she had been betrayed into! (weeping, sobbing, and falling upon Dorothea's neck.) I pray you, sister, for the sake of our heavenly bridegroom, bring this evil to an end, otherwise fire and brimstone will assuredly and justly be rained down upon our poor cloister."

Still the other maintained, "That the dear sister must err as regarded the abbess. It might be her chaste zeal that blinded her. True enough, probably, what she said of the priest; but the worthy abbess--no, never could she believe that."

Illa--"Let her have proof then. It was not her custom to weaken innocence; call her maid, Wolde."

Then as Wolde entered, Sidonia made a sign, and bid her tell the sub-prioress all that the shameless priest had done.

Ancilla--"He had asked her for little kisses, praised her hands and hair, and her beautiful limp, and had sat up close to her on the bench, then run after her into the kitchen, gave her money (shows the money), asked again for kisses, then----"

Sidonia screams--

"Hold your tongue; no more, no more; enough, enough!"

At this story, Dorothea Stettin nearly went into convulsions--she wrung her hands, crying--

"How is it possible? O heaven, how is it possible?"

Illa--"There is something more quite possible also; the hag shall tell you what she saw at the room door of the abbess."

Ancilla--"When the scandalous priest left her, he went straight to the abbess, and there was taken with cramps, as she heard, upon which all the convent ran thither, and she with the rest. And he was lying stretched out on a bench, like one dead, no doubt from shame; but the shame soon went off, and then he got up,

and bade them all leave the room. However, good Anna Apenborg did not choose to go, for she suspected evil. Whereupon he seized her by the hand, and put her out along with the others. She saw all this herself, for she was standing in the passage, waiting to speak to sister Anna. When, behold, she was pushed out, to her great surprise, in this way by the priest, and they heard the door bolted inside immediately after."

At this Dorothea Stettin fell upon Sidonia's bed, weeping, sobbing, and ready to die with grief; but Sidonia bade her not take on so; for perhaps, after all, the old hag had not told the truth, at least concerning the dear, worthy abbess; but two witnesses would be sufficient testimony. Whereupon she bid Wolde watch for Anna Apenborg from the window, and beckon to her to come in if she saw her going by.

And scarcely had Wolde stepped to the window, when she laughed and said--

"Truly, there stands Anna chatting with Agnes Kleist's maid at the well. Shall I run and call her?"

"Yes," said Sidonia.

In a little while Wolde returned with sister Anna. The girl looked wildly round at first, stared at the broom-sticks which lay crosswise under the table, and then asked, with a trembling voice, what the good sister wanted with her, while she took a seat on a trunk near the bed.

"My old maid," said Sidonia, "tells me that the reverend chaplain took you by the hand, and put you out of the abbess's room, after which he bolted the door. Is this true or not? Speak the whole truth."

So Anna related the whole story as Wolde had done; but, while talking, the curious damsel lifted up a corner of the quilt to peep under the bed, upon which my cat in his little red hose crept forth again, mewing and rubbing himself against Anna, at which she gave a shriek of horror and sprang out of the room, down the steps and into the courtyard, without ever once venturing to look behind her. And many think that this cat was Sidonia's evil spirit Chim. But Anna Apenborg saw afterwards a pair of terrible fiery eyes glaring at her from Sidonia's window; so others said, that must have been Chim. But we shall hear more of this same cat presently.

Summa--Sidonia knew well enough what made the girl scream, but she turned to Dorothea, and said--

"Ah, see how this wickedness has shocked the poor young nun! Therefore, dear sister, you must, as sub-prioress, make an end of the scandal, and prohibit this false priest from visiting the convent; for, indeed, they who permitted him such freedom amongst

the nuns were more to blame for his sins than he himself."

Poor Dorothea groaned forth in answer--

"Alas, alas! why did I ever accept the sub-prioret? For the couple of sacks of flour and the bit of corn which she got more than the others, it was not worth while to be plagued to death. It was all true about the priest. He must be dismissed. But then she loved peace. How could she right such matters? Oh, that some one would relieve her of this sub-prioret!"

Illa.--"That can be easily done if you will. Suppose you ask Anna Apenborg to take it?"

Hæ.--"No, no; Anna had not sense enough for that; but if the dear sister herself would take it, how happy she would feel."

Illa.--"She was too sick, probably going to die; who could tell?"

Hæ.--"No, no; she would pray for her. The dear sister could not be spared yet. Let her say yes (falling on her neck and weeping), only let her say yes."

Illa.--"Well, out of love to her she would say yes; and if the Lord raised her up from this sick bed, order and decorum should reign again in the convent."

Hæ (again embracing her with gratitude).--"No doubt they would. She knew well that no such pure-minded nun was in the convent as her dear sister Sidonia."

Illa.--"But, good Dorothea, in order to get rid of the priest as soon as possible, we had better send the porter immediately to summon the abbess and the entire sisterhood here, for you to tender your resignation in their presence."

Hæ.--"But sister Sidonia must promise not to complain of the priest or the abbess to the Prince."

Illa.--"No, no; I can settle the matter quietly, without laying a complaint before the Prince."

Hæ.--"All right, then. Everything, if possible, in peace."

Hereupon Sidonia despatched the porter to the abbess with a request that she and the whole convent would assemble in half-an-hour at the refectory, as she had somewhat to communicate. Meanwhile she instructed Dorothea in what she was to say, so as not to disgrace the poor abbess before the whole convent.

At the end of the half-hour, the abbess and the entire sisterhood appeared, but all with anger and mistrust depicted on their

countenances. Sidonia then spake--

"Since ye and your priest refused to pray for me, I have prayed for myself, and the Lord hath heard me in my weakness, and made me strong enough to listen to the request of this good sister, Dorothea, and promise to fulfil it. Speak, sister Dorothea, what was your prayer?"

So Dorothea advanced, weeping and wringing her hands--

"Ah, God! she could no longer be sub-prioress. She loved peace too much. But there were bad doings in the convent--she would say no more--only they must end. Therefore she had earnestly prayed her dear sister Sidonia to relieve her from the duties of office, and become sub-prioress in her stead."

Here she loosed the veil, which differed from the others, by having a key embroidered in gold thereon--the abbess had two keys on her veil--and bound it on Sidonia, who had by this time risen from bed, taking Sidonia's veil for herself. Then leading the fatal sorceress forward, she said--

"Good mother and dear sisters--behold your sub-prioress!"

Thereupon the abbess and the whole convent remained quite mute, so great was their horror.

Then Sidonia asked--

"Have they aught to say against it? If so, let them speak."

But they all remained silent and trembling, till at last the abbess murmured--

"Is this done with your free-will, Dorothea?"

"Ah, yes, yes, truly," she answered. "I told you before with what earnest prayers I besought the dear sister to release me. God be thanked she has consented at last. Who can keep order and decorum so well throughout the convent?"

Then the abbess spoke again--

"Sister Sidonia, I have no opposition to make, as you know full well. So, if the Prince, and the sheriff, our worthy superintendent, consent, you shall be sub-prioress. Yet first you must render an account of your strange doings this past night, for things were seen and heard in your chamber which could not have been accomplished without the help of the great enemy himself."

Hereat Sidonia laughed as if she would die. She would tell them the whole trick. They all knew what a trouble to the convent was this Anna Apenborg from her curiosity--not once or twice, but ten

times a day, running in and out with her chat and gossip. She had tried all means to prevent her, but in vain. Even in the middle of her prayers, she said Anna would come in to tell her what one sister was cooking, and another getting, or some follies even quite unfit for chaste ears. And that last night being very sick, she sent for the priest, upon which she heard Anna calling out from the window to the porter, "Will he come? will he come?" _Item_, she had then crept down to listen at the door. So after the priest went, notwithstanding all her weakness, she (Sidonia) determined to give her a good fright, and thus prevent her from spying and listening any more. Then she called Wolde, and bid her dance, while she muttered some words out of the cookery-book. But here Anna called out, "It is not true; there were _three_ danced. Where is the carl with the deep bass voice? Who could this be at that midnight hour, but the devil bodily himself?"

At this, Sidonia laughed louder than before. It was her cat--her own cat, who was springing about the room, because for divers reasons she had put little red hose on him. On this she stoops under the bed, seizes my cat by the leg, who howls (that was the deep bass voice), and flings him into the middle of the room, where all the nuns, when they beheld his strange jumps and springs in the little hose, burst out into loud laughter, in which the abbess herself could not refrain from joining. So as there was no evidence against Sidonia, and Anna Apenborg was truly held of all as a most troublesome chatterbox and spy, the inquiry ended. And with somewhat more friendliness, putting the best face on a bad matter, they accepted Sidonia for their sub-prioress.

CHAPTER V.

How Sidonia wounds Ambrosia von Guntersberg with an axe, because she purposed to marry--And prays the convent porter, Matthias Winterfeld, to death--For these, and other causes, the reverend chaplain refuses to shrive the sorceress, and denounces her publicly from the altar.

Sidonia's first act, as may easily be imagined, was to dismiss the priest; and for this purpose she wrote him a letter, saying that he must never more presume to set foot within the cloister, for if old ice-grey mothers were not safe from him, how could she and the other maidens hope to escape? If he disobeyed her orders, she would summon him before the princely consistorium, where strange things might be told of him.

So the reverend David consented right willingly, and never saw the nuns except on Sundays in the chapel, but Sidonia herself never appeared in the nuns' choir. She gave Dorothea many excellent and

convincing reasons for her absence. (But in my opinion, it was caused by hate and abhorrence of the sacrament and the holy Word of God; for such are a torment and a torture to the children of the devil, even as the works of the devil are an abomination to the children of God.)

When, however, the report came, that the reverend David was indeed betrothed to Barbara Bamberg, Sidonia presented herself once in the choir, kneeled down, and was heard to murmur, "Wed if thou wilt, that I cannot hinder; but a child thou shalt never hold at the font!" And truly was the evil curse fulfilled.

Meanwhile the fear and the dread of her increased daily in the convent, for besides old Wolde, two other horrible hags were observed frequently going in and out of her apartments--true children of Satan, as one might see by their red, glowing eyes. With these she practised many horrible sorceries, sometimes quarrelled with them, however, and beat them out with the broom-stick; but they always came back again, and were as well received as ever.

Then she had strifes and disputes with every one who approached her, and was notorious through all the courts of justice for her wrangling and fighting, in particular with her brother's son, Otto of Stramehl, for she sued him for an *_alimentum_* pension, and also demanded that the rents of her two farm-houses in Zachow should be paid her, according to the sum to which they must have accumulated during the last fifty years. But he answered, she should have no money; why did she not live at her farm-houses? He knew nothing of the rents, the whole matter was past and forgotten, and she had no claim now on him, and so every month she wrangled in the courts about this business. *_Item_*, she fought with Preslar of Buslar, because, being a feudal vassal of the Borks', she required him to kiss her hand, which he refused; then her dog having strayed into his house, she accused him of having stolen it. *_Item_*, she fought with the maid who acted as cook in the convent kitchen, and said she never got a morsel fit to eat. And the said maid (I forget her name now) having salted the fish too much one day, she ran after her with a broom-stick--once, indeed, beat her so severely, that she was lame her life long after.

But worse than the fish-salting was the white kerchief which the maid wore. For people, she said, might take her at a distance to be one of the honourable convent ladies, therefore she must wear a coloured one. This the maid would not do, so she was soon brought to an untimely end also, along with all others who displeased her.

These things, and many more, came out upon her trial, but for divers reasons I must pass them over. All her notes, messages, and letters, she entrusted to the porter, Matthias Winterfeld, who was often sent, may be five times a week, by her to Stargard. But he dared not remonstrate, or she would have struck him with the

broom-stick.

However, all this is nothing in comparison with the way she treated the unfortunate nuns. The younger and prettier they were, so much the more she boxed, beat, and martyred them, even striking them with the broom-stick. And if they ever smiled or seemed happy talking to one another, she abused and reviled them, calling them idle wantons, who thought of nothing but matrimony. None were permitted outside the convent gates, not even to visit their parents: they should not be flying back with their crumbs of gossip about brides and weddings, forsooth, and such-like improper thoughts. Neither should they go to the annual fair. She would go herself and buy everything for them she thought needful, only let them give her the gold.

And out of deadly fear the poor maidens bore this tyranny long while silently; even the abbess feared to complain, so that Sidonia soon usurped the entire government of the convent.

But the powder-mill broke out at last into vivid flames, as I shall narrate here. It was on this wise:--Amongst the novices was one beautiful young maiden, Ambrosia von Guntersberg by name. She was fifth daughter of old Ambrosius of Falkenwald, a little town near Jacobshagen. One day a young nobleman called Ewald von Mellenthin beheld her in her cloister habit. Think you he forgot her? No, he can never forget the maiden! One, two weeks pass over, but she has sunk deeper and deeper into his heart; at last he rose up and went to Falkenwald to her father, Ambrosius, asking her hand in honourable marriage.

Now, the old man was well pleased, for he was poor, and had five daughters; so he bid the young noble write a letter to his daughter Ambrosia, which he would inclose in one from himself to her. But no answer arrived from the maiden (we may guess why, for Sidonia opened and read all the letters that came to the convent, before they were handed to their owners. Those that displeased her she burned; no doubt, therefore, the love-letter was the first in the flames). But the young noble grew impatient for an answer, and resolved to ride to Marienfliess. So he ties his good horse to a cross in the churchyard, walks straight up to the convent, and rings the bell. Immediately the old porter, Matthias, opened to him, with his hands covered with blood (for he was killing a fat ox for the nuns, close by); whereupon the noble lord prayed to speak a few words to the young novice Ambrosia von Guntersberg, at the grating; and in a little time the beautiful maiden appeared, tripping along the convent court (but Sidonia is before her). Ambrosia advanced modestly to the grating, and asked the handsome knight, "What was his pleasure?" who answered, "Since I beheld you in Guntersberg, dearest lady, my heart has been wholly yours; and when I saw how diligently and cheerfully you ruled your father's house during his sickness, I resolved to take you for my wife, if such were possible; for I need a good and prudent spouse at my castle of Lienke, and methinks no better or more beautiful could

be found than yourself. Therefore I obtained your father's permission to open the matter to you in writing, and he inclosed my letter in one of his own; but you have neither answered one nor the other. Whereupon, in my impatience, I saddled my good horse, and rode over here to have an answer at once from your own beautiful lips."

When Sidonia heard this, she grew black in the face with rage--"What! in her presence, before her very face, to dare to hold such language to a young maiden--a mere child--who knew nothing at all of what marriage meant. He must pack off this instant, or the devil himself should turn him out of the cloister."

Meanwhile the young maiden took heart (for the handsome knight pleased her), and said, "Gracious Lady Prioress (Sidonia made them all call her Gracious Lady, as if she were a born princess), I am no more a child, as you say, and I know very well what marriage means."

This boldness made the other so wroth that she screamed--"Wait! I will teach you what marriage is;" and she sprang on her to box her. But Ambrosia rushed through the side-door out into the court, Sidonia following; however, not being able to reach her, she seized up the axe with which the porter had been killing the ox, and flung it after her, wounding the poor maiden so in the foot that the red blood poured down over her white stockings, while the young lover, who could not break the grating, screamed and stamped for rage and despair. By the good mercy of God the wound was only slight, still the fair novice fell to the ground; but seeing Sidonia rushing at her again with the large butcher's knife which the porter had been using, she sprang up and ran to the grating, crying out to the noble, "Save me! save me!"

And at her screams all the nuns threw up their windows, right and left, over the courtyard; but finding the young knight could not help her, she ran to the old porter, still screaming, "Save me! save me! she is going to murder me!"

Now the fellow was glad enough to be revenged on Sidonia, for she had sent him running to Stargard for her late the night before, and the moment the ox was to be quartered, he was to be off there again at her command; so he rushed at the vile witch, and seizing her up like a bundle of old rags, pitched her against the wall with all his force, adding a right hearty curse; and there she lay quaking like an old cat, while the handsome young noble laughed loud from the grating.

But she was up again soon, shook her dry, withered fist at the porter, and cried, "Ha! thou insolent churl, I will pray thee to death for this!"

Whereupon she went off to her room, and locked herself up there,

while the fair Ambrosia ran to the grating, and stretching out her little hands through the bars, exclaimed, "I am yours, dear knight; oh, take me away from this horrible hell!"

This rejoiced my young noble heartily, and he kissed the little hands and lamented over her foot--"And was it much hurt? She must lift it up, and show him if the wound was deep."

So she raised up the dainty foot a little bit, and then saw that her whole shoe was full of blood; but the old porter, who came by just then, comforted the handsome youth, and told him he would stop the blood directly, for the wound was but a trifle. Whereupon he laid a couple of straws over it, murmured some words, and behold, in a moment, the blood is staunched! Then the fair novice thanked him courteously, and prayed him to unlock the wicket, for she would go and stay a couple of hours with the miller's wife, while this young noble, to whom she had plighted love and troth, returned to her father's for a carriage to bring her home. After what had passed now, never more would she enter the cloister.

But what happened? Scarcely had the good old porter unfastened the grating, and the young knight taken the fair girl in his arms, kissing her and pressing her to his heart (well Sidonia did not see him), when Matthias screamed out, "My God, what ails me?" and fell flat on the ground. At this the young knight left his bride, and flew to raise him up. "What could ail him?" But the poor old man can hardly speak, his eyes are turned in his head, and he gasped, "It was as if a man were sitting inside his breast, and crushing him to death. Oh, he could not breathe--his ribs were breaking!"

The alarmed young noble then helped the poor creature to reach his room, which lay close by the wicket; and having laid him on the bed in care of his wife, and recommended him to the mercy of God, he returned to his own fair bride, to carry her off from this murder-hole, and place her in safety with the miller's wife. I may as well mention here that he and the beautiful Ambrosia were wedded in due time, and lived long in peace and happiness, blessed with many lovely children; for all the evil which Sidonia tried to bring upon them, as we shall hear, came to nought, through the mercy of the great God.

But to return to the porter--on the third day he died; and during that time, day and night, Sidonia prayed, and was never seen but once. This was at the dividing of the salmon, when she threw up her window, and shaking her withered clenched hand at them, and her long white locks, threatened the nuns on their peril to touch the tail-piece--the tail-piece was hers.

A general horror pervaded the convent now, in truth, when the death of the porter was known. Anna Apenborg shut herself up, trembling, in her cell, and even good Dorothea began somewhat to doubt the virtues of the vile sorceress; for the corpse had a

strange and unnatural appearance, so that it was horrible to look upon, by which signs it was easy to perceive that he had been prayed to death, as the fearful night-hag had threatened.

I must notify these symptoms, for the corpses of many of Sidonia's victims presented the same appearances; as the corpse of the reverend David--_item_, Joachim Wedeln of Cremzow--_item/_ , Doctor Schwalenberg of Stargard, and Duke Philip II., and lastly, the abbess, Magdalena von Petersdorf. Whether her brother's son, Otto of Stramehl, whom she was suspected also of having prayed to death, presented the like, I cannot say with certainty. At this same time also his princely Grace Duke Bogislaff XIII. expired, many say bewitched to death; but of this I have no proof, as the body had quite a natural aspect after death. Still he had just arranged to journey to Marienfließ himself, and turn out Sidonia, in consequence of the accusations of Sheriff Sparling and the convent chaplain, so that his sudden death looks suspicious; however, as the _medicus_, Dr. Nicolaus Schulz, pronounced, "Quod ex ramis venarum hepatis et lienis exporrectis, iste adustus sanguis eo prosiliisset" (for he died by throwing up a black matter like his brothers); and further, as the manikin on the three-legged hare did not appear this time at the castle, I shall not lay the murder on Sidonia, to increase her terrible burden at the last day, though I have my own thoughts upon the matter.

Summa.--My gracious Prince died _suddenly_. Alas, woe! exactly like all his brothers; he was just sixty-one years old, seven months, and fifteen days, and a more God-fearing prince never sat on a throne. But my grief over the fate of this great Pomeranian house has carried me away from the corpse of the old porter. The appearances were these:--

1. The face brown, green, and yellow, particularly about the _musculi frontales et temporales._
2. The _musculi pectorales_ so swelled, and the _cartilago ensiformis_ so singularly raised, that the chest of the corpse touched the mouth.
3. From the _patella_ of the left leg to the _malleolus externus_ of the foot, all brown, green, and yellow, blended together.

And on examination of the said corpse, Dr. Kukuck of Stargard affirmed and was ready to swear, that no one tittle of the signature of Satan was wanting thereupon.

Summa.--The poor carl was buried with great mourning on the following Friday; and the reverend David preached a sermon thereupon, in which he plainly spoke of his strange and unnatural death, so that every one knew well whom he suspected. My hag heard of this instantly, and therefore determined to attend the

sacrament on the following Sunday; for this end she despatched Wolde to the priest, bidding her tell him she had a great desire to attend the holy rite, and would go to confession that day after noon. At this horrid blasphemy a cold shudder fell upon the priest (and I trust every Christian man will feel the like as he reads this), for he now saw through her motive clearly, how she wanted to blind the eyes of the people as to the death of the porter, by this mockery of the holiest rites of religion. Besides, amongst the horrible abominations practised by witches, it is well known that having received the sacred bread, they privately take the same again from their mouth and feed their familiar therewith. And one day when the convent was quite still, Anna Apenborg, having crept down to peep through the key-hole of the refectory door, saw enough to confirm this general belief.

No wonder then if the good priest stood long silent from horror; then he spake--"Tell the prioress it is well;" but when Wolde was gone, he threw himself upon his knees in his closet before God, and wrestled long in prayer, with tears and wringing of hands, that He would open to him what was his path of duty.

About noon he became more composed, through the great mercy of the Lord; and bid his wife, Barbara, come to him, with whom he had lived now a year and a half in perfect joy, though without children. To her he disclosed the proposition of the horrible sorceress, and afterwards spake thus:--

"And because, dear Barbara, after earnest prayer to God, I have come to the resolution neither to shrive nor to give the Lord's body to this daughter accursed of hell, do not be surprised if a like death awaits me as happened to the porter, Matthias. When I die, therefore, dear wife, take thee another spouse and bear children. 'For the woman,' says the Scripture, 'shall be blessed through childbearing, so as she continues in faith, and love, and in holiness with sobriety' (I Tim. ii.). Thus thou wilt soon forget me."

But the poor wife wept, and besought him to turn from his resolve, and not incur the vengeance of Sidonia. So he answered, "Weep not, or our parting will be more bitter; this poor flesh and blood is weak enough, still never will I blaspheme the holy rite of our Church, and 'cast pearls before swine' (Matt. vii.). And wherefore weep? At the last day they would meet again, to smile for ever in an eternity of joy. But could he hope for this if he were an unfaithful steward of the mysteries of God? No; but it was written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? God be thanked who giveth us the victory through Christ our Lord' (I Cor. xv.). In God therefore he trusted, and in His strength would go now to the confessional."

She must let him go; the sexton would soon ring the bell, and he wished to pray some time alone in the church. Her tears had again

disturbed his spirit, and made him weak. But he would use the holy keys of his office, which his Saviour had entrusted to him, to His glory alone, even if this accursed sorceress were to bring him to the grave for it. If the Lord will, He could protect him, but he would still do his duty. Will she not let him go now, that he may pray?

And when she unwound her arms, he took her again in his, kissed her, sobbed, and wept; then tearing himself away, went out into the church by the garden entrance.

Then the poor wife flung herself on a seat, weeping and praying, but in a little while in came Dorothea Stettin, saying, "That she was going to confession, and had no small silver for the offertory. Could she give her change of a dollar?"

Then she asked about the other's grief; and having heard the cause, promised to go to the priest herself, and beseech him not to break the staff "Woe" over Sidonia. She went therefore instantly to the church, and found him on his knees praying behind the altar. Whereupon she entreated him, after her fashion, not to break the blessed peace--peace above all things.

Meanwhile the sexton rung the bell, and Sidonia entered, sweeping the nave of the church to the altar, followed by seven or eight nuns. But when she beheld Dorothea come out at one side, and the priest at the other, and that not another soul had been in the church, she laughed aloud mockingly, and clapped her hands--"Ha! the pious priest, would he tell them now what he and Dorothea were doing behind the altar? The sisters were all witnesses how this shameless parson conducted himself." Though she spoke this quite loud for every one to hear, yet not one of the nuns made answer, but stood trembling like doves who see the falcon ready to pounce upon them. Yea, even as Dorothea came down the altar steps to take her place in the choir, my hag laughed loud again like Satan, and cried, "Ah! the chaste virgin! who meetest the priest behind the altar! Thou shameless wanton, the prioress shall teach thee fitter behaviour soon!"

Poor Dorothea turned quite pale with fright, and began--"Ah! dear sister, only listen!"

But the dragon snapped at her, with--"Dear sister, forsooth! What!--was she to bear this insolence? Let her know that the gracious Lady Prioress was not to be talked to as 'dear sister'!"

Here the organ struck up the confession hymn; and the whole congregation being assembled in the church, Sidonia and the seven nuns ascended the steps of the altar, bowed to the priest, and then took their seats, whereupon the organ ceased playing.

After a brief silence, the poor minister sighed heavily, and then spake--"Sidonia, after all that has been stated concerning you,

particularly with regard to the death of the convent porter within these last few days, I cannot, as a faithful servant of God, give you either absolution or the holy rite of the Lord's Supper, until you clear yourself from such imputations before a princely consistorium."

At this my hag laughed loud from the altar, crying, "Eh?--that was a strange story. What had she done to the convent porter?"

Ille.--"Prayed him to death, as every one believed, and his appearance proved."

Hæ (still laughing).--"He must have lost his senses. Let him go home and bind asses' milk upon his temples; he would soon be better."

Ille.--"She should remember where and what she spoke. Had she not herself said, she would pray the porter to death?"

Hæ (laughing yet louder).--"Oh! in truth, his little bit of mother-wit was quite gone. When and where had it been ever heard that one person could pray another to death? Then they might pray them to life again. Shall she try it with the porter?"

Ille.--"Why then had she threatened it?"

Hæ (still laughing).--"Ah! poor man! she saw now he was quite foolish. Why had she threatened? Why, in anger, of course, because the vile churl had flung her against the wall. Had he never heard the poor people say to each other, 'May the devil take you;' but if one happened to die soon after, did people really think the devil had taken him? Why, he was as superstitious as an old spinning-wife."

Ille.--"She had heard his resolve. This was no place to argue with her; therefore she might go her ways, for he would verily not give her absolution."

So Sidonia rose up raging from the confessional, clenched her hand, and screamed out in the still church, so that all the people shuddered with horror--"Ye are all my witnesses that this worthless priest has denied me absolution, because, forsooth, he says I killed the convent porter. Ha! ha! ha! Where is it said in your Scriptures that one man can pray another to death? But the licentiousness of the vile priest has turned his brain, and he wallows in all most senseless superstitions. Did he not run after my old hag of a servant, as I myself saw; and this was not enough, but he must take Dorothea Stettin (the hypocritical wanton) behind the altar alone; and because I and these seven maidens discovered his iniquity, he refuses me the rites, and must have me before a princely consistorium to revenge himself. But wait, priest, I will drag the sheep's clothing from thee. Wait, thou shalt yet repent this bitterly!"

After the horrible sorceress had so blasphemed, she departed as quickly as possible from the church, muttering to herself. The congregation remained silent from fear and terror; and the poor priest, who seemed more dead than alive, prayed the sexton to fetch him a cup of water, which he drank; and then being in some degree recovered, he stepped forth, and addressed the congregation thus:--

"Dear brethren and friends, after what ye have just heard, ye will not wonder if I am unable to receive confessions this day, or to administer the holy communion. Ye all know Dorothea Stettin, neither is my character unknown to you; therefore remember the words of St. Peter, 'The devil goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.' But we will resist him, steadfast in the faith. Meet me, then, tomorrow here at the altar, and ye shall hear my justification. After which, I will shrive those who desire to be partakers of the holy sacrament."

And on the following morning, the holy minister of God preached from Matthew v. 11--"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil falsely against you, for My sake; be glad and comforted, for ye shall be well recompensed in heaven." And in this powerful sermon he drew a picture of Sidonia from her youth up; so that many trembled for him when they remembered her power, though they glorified God for the mighty zeal and courage that burned in his words. But when Sidonia heard of this sermon, she became almost frantic from rage.

CHAPTER VI.

Dorothea Stettin falls sick, and how the doctor manages to bleed her--Item, how Sidonia chases the princely commissioners into the oak-forest.

Such a public humiliation the good virgin Dorothea Stettin found it impossible to bear. She fell sick, and repented with bitter tears of the trust and confidence she had reposed in Sidonia; finally, the abbess sent off a message to Stargard for the _medicus_, Dr. Schwalenberg.

This doctor was an excellent little man, rather past middle age though still unmarried, upright and honest, but rough as bean-straw. When he stood by Dorothea's bed and had heard all particulars of her illness, he bid her put out her hand, that he might feel her pulse. "No, no;" she answered, "that could she never do; never in her life had a male creature felt her pulse." At this my doctor laughed right merrily, and all the nuns who stood round, and Sidonia's old maid, Wolde, laughed likewise; but

at last he persuaded Dorothea to stretch out her hand.

"I must bleed her," said the doctor. "This is febris putrida; therefore was her thirst so great: she must strip her arm till he bleed her." But no one can persuade her to this--strip her arm! no, never could she do it; she would die first: if the doctor could do nothing else, he may go his ways.

Now the doctor grew angry. Such a cursed fool of a woman he had never come across in his life; if she did not strip her arm instantly, he would do it by force. But Dorothea is inflexible; say what he would, she would strip her arm for no man!

Even the abbess and the sisterhood tried to persuade her.

"Would she not do it for her health's sake; or, at least, for the sake of peace?"

They were all here standing round her, but all in vain. At last the doctor, half-laughing, half-cursing, said--

"He would bleed her in the foot. Would that do?"

"Yes, she would consent to that; but the doctor must leave the room while she was getting ready."

So my doctor went out, but on entering again found her sitting on the bed, dressed in her full convent robes, her head upon Anna Apenborg's shoulder, and her foot upon a stool. As the foot, however, was covered with a stocking, the doctor began to scold.

"What was the stocking for? Let him take off the stocking. Was she making a fool of him? He advised her not to try it."

"No," Dorothea answered, "never would she strip her foot for him. Die she would if die she must, but that she could never do! If he could not bleed her through the stocking, he may go his ways."

Summa--As neither prayers nor threatening were of any avail, the doctor, in truth, had to bleed her through the stocking; and scarcely had he finished, when Sidonia sent, saying.

"That she, too, was ill, and wished to be bled."

And there lay my hag alone, in bed, as the doctor entered. She was right friendly.

"And was it indeed true, that absurd fool Dorothea did not choose to be bled? Now he saw himself what a set of simpletons she had to deal with in the convent. No wonder that they all blackened her and belied her. She was sick from very disgust at such malice and absurdity. Ah, she regretted now not having married when she had the opportunity; it would have been better, and she had many

offers. But she always feared she was too poor. However, her fortune was now excellent, for her sister had died without children, and left her everything--a very large inheritance, as she heard. But the dear doctor must taste her beer; she had tapped some of the best, and there was a fresh can of it on the table."

But my doctor was too cunning not to see what she was driving at; besides, he had heard of her beer-brewing, so he answered--

"He never drank beer; but what ailed her?"

"Ah, she didn't know herself, but she had a trembling in all her limbs. Would he not take a glass of mead, or even water? Her old servant should bring it to him."

"No. Let her just put out her hand for him to feel her pulse."

Instantly she stretched forth, not her hand alone, but her whole naked, dry, and yellow arm from the bed. Whereupon the doctor spoke--

"Eh? What should I bleed you for? The pulse is all right. In fact, old people never should be bled without serious cause; for at seventy or so, mind ye, every drop is worth a groschen."

"What!" exclaimed Sidonia, starting up; "what the devil, do ye think I am seventy? Why, I am hardly fifty yet."

"Seventy or fifty," answered the doctor, "it is all much the same with you women-folk."

"To the devil with you, rude churl!" screamed Sidonia. "If you will not bleed me, I'll find another who will. Seventy indeed! So rude a knave is not in the land!"

But my doctor goes away laughing; and as the ducal commissioners had arrived to try Sidonia's case, with the convent chaplain, he went down to meet them at Sheriff Sparling's, and these were the commissioners:--

1. Christian Ludeck, state prosecutor; a brother of the priest's.
2. Johann Wedel of Cremzow.
3. Eggert Sparling, sheriff of Marienfliess.
4. Jobst Bork, governor of Saatzig.

This Jobst was son to that upright Marcus whose wife, Clara von Dewitz, Sidonia had so miserably destroyed. For his good father's sake, long since dead, their Graces of Stettin had continued him in the government of Saatzig, for he walked in his father's steps, only he was slow of speech; but he had a lovely daughter, yet more

praiseworthy than her grandmother, Clara of blessed memory, of whom we shall hear more anon.

Summa--The doctor found all the commissioners assembled in the sheriff's parlour. _Item_, Anna Apenborg and the abbess as witnesses, who deposed to all the circumstances which I have heretofore related; also, the abbess set forth the prayer of the sick Dorothea Stettin, that she might be restored to the sub-priolet out of which the false Sidonia had wickedly talked her, and now for thanks gave her insolent contempt and mocking sneers.

Anna Apenborg further deposed, that, looking through the key-hole of the refectory door one day, she spied the wicked witch boring a hole in the wall; in this she placed a tun-dish, and immediately after, a rich stream of cow's milk flowed down into a basin which Sidonia held beneath, and that same day the best cow in the convent stopped giving milk, and had never given one drop since. And because the dairymaid, Trina Pantels, said openly this was witchcraft, and accused Sidonia and the old hag Wolde of being evil witches--for she was not a girl to hold her tongue, not she--her knee swelled up to the size of a man's head, and day and night she screamed for agony, until another old witch that visited Sidonia, Lena of Uchtenhagen, for six pounds of wool, gave her a plaster of honey and meal to put on the knee, and what should be drawn out of the swelling, but quantities of pins and needles; and how could this have been, but by Sidonia's witchcraft? [Footnote: However improbable such accusations may seem, numbers of the like, some even still more extraordinary, may be found in the witch trials of that age, by any one who takes the trouble of referring to them.]

Many witnesses could prove this fact; for Tewes Barth, Dinnies Koch, and old Fritz were by, when the plaster was taken off.

Then Sheriff Sparling deposed, that having smothered his bees lately, he sent a pot of pure honey to each of the nuns, as was his custom; but Sidonia scolded, and said her pot was not large enough, and abused him in a cruel manner about his stinginess in not sending her more. So, some days after, as he was riding quietly home to his house, across the convent court, suddenly the whole ground before him became covered with the shadows of bee-hives, and little shadows like bees went in and out, and wheeled about just as real bees do. Whereupon, he looked in every direction for the hives, for no shadows can be without a body, but not a hive nor a bee was in the whole place round; but he heard a peal of mocking laughter, and, on looking up, there was the wicked witch looking out at him from a window, and she called out--

"Ho! sir sheriff, when you smother bees again, send me more honey. A couple of pounds of the best--good weight!"

And this he did to have peace for the future.

Now the commissioners noted all this down diligently; but the state prosecutor shook his head, and asked the abbess--

"Wherefore she had not long ago brought this vile witch before the princely court?"

To which she answered, sighing--

"What would that help? She had already tasted the vengeance of the wicked sorceress, and feared to taste it again. Well, night and day had she cried to God to free the convent from this she-devil, and often resolved to unfold the whole Satan's work to his Highness, though her own life would be perilled surely by so doing. But she was ready, as a faithful mother of the convent, to lay it down for her children, if, indeed, that could save them. But how would her death help these poor young virgins? For assuredly the moment Sidonia had brought her to a cruel end, she would make herself abbess by force, and this was such a dread to the sorrowing virgins, that they themselves entreated her to keep silence and be patient, waiting for the mercy of God to help them. For truly the power of this accursed sorceress was as great as her wickedness."

Here answered Dr Schwalenberg--

"This power can soon be broken; he knew many receipts out of Albertus Magnus, Raimundus Lallus, Theophrastus, Paracelsus, &c., against sorcery and evil witches."

This was a glad hearing to the state prosecutor, and he answered with a joyful mien and voice--

"Marry, doctor, if you know how to get hold of this evil hag, do it at once; we shall then bind her arms, so that she can make no signs to hurt us, and clap a pitch-plaster on her mouth, to stop the said mouth from calling the devil to her help; after which, I can easily bring her with me to Stettin, and answer for all proceedings to his Grace. Probably she is a-bed still; go back, and pretend that, upon reflection, you think it will be better to bleed her. Then, when you have hold of her arm, call in the fellows, whom the sheriff will, I am sure, allow to accompany you."

"Yes, yes," cried the sheriff, "take twenty of my men with you, my good doctor, if you will."

"Well, then," resumed the state prosecutor, "let them rush in, bind the dragon, clap the pitch-plaster on her mouth, and she is ours in spite of all the devils."

"Right, all right," cried the doctor; "never fear but I'll pay her for her matrimonial designs upon me."

And he began to prepare the plaster with some pitch he got from a cobbler, when suddenly the state prosecutor screamed out--

"Merciful God! see there! Look at the shadow of a toad creeping over my paper, whereon I move my hand!"

He springs up--wipes, wipes, wipes, but in vain; the unclean shadow is there still, and crawls over the paper, though never a toad is to be seen.

What a commotion of horror this Satan's work caused amongst the bystanders, can be easily imagined. All stood up and looked at the toad-shadow, when the abbess screamed out, "Merciful God! look there! look there! The whole floor is covered with toad-shadows!" Hereupon all the women-folk ran screaming from the room, but screamed yet louder when they reached the door, and met there Sidonia and her cat face to face. Round they all wheeled again, rushed to the back-door, out into the yard, over the pond, and into the oak-wood, without daring once to look behind them. But the men remained, for the doctor said bravely, "Wait now, good friends, patience, she can do us no harm;" and he murmured some words.

But just as they all made the sign of the cross, and silently put up a prayer to God, and gathered up their legs on the benches, so that the unclean shadows might not crawl upon their boots, the horrible hag appeared at the window, and her cat in his little red hose clambered up on the sill, mewing and crying (and I think myself that this cat was her spirit Chim, whom she had sent first to the sheriff's house to hear what was going on; for how could she have known it?).

Summa--She laid one hand upon the window, the better to look in, and clenching the other, shook it at them, crying out, "Wait, ye accursed peasant boors, I, too, will judge ye for your sins!" But seeing her cousin, Jobst Bork, present, she screamed yet louder--"Eh! thou thick ploughman, hath the devil brought thee here too? Art thou not ashamed to accuse thy own kinswoman? Wait, I will give thee something to make thee remember our relationship!"

And as she began to murmur some words, and spat out before them all, the state prosecutor jumped up and rushed out after the women, and Sheriff Sparling rushed out after him, and they never stopped or stayed till both reached the oak-wood.

But Jobst said calmly, "Cousin, be reasonable; it is my duty!" My doctor, however, wanted to pay her off for the marriage business, so he seized a whip with which Sheriff Sparling had been thrashing a boor, and hurrying out, cried, "I will make her reasonable! Thou old hag of hell! here is the fit marriage for thee!" and so whack, whack upon her thin, withered shoulders.

Truly the witch cried out now in earnest, but began to spit at the same time, so that the doctor had given but four strokes when the whip fell from his hand, and he tottered hither and thither, crying, "O Lord! O Lord!" At this the sorceress laughed scornfully, and mocking his movements, cried out likewise, "O Lord! O Lord!" and when the poor doctor fell down flat upon the earth like the old porter and others, she began to dance, chanting her infernal psalm:--

"Also kleien und also kratzen,
Meine Hunde und meine Katzen"

And the cat in his little red hose danced beside her. After which, she returned laughing to the convent to pray him to death, while the poor fellow lay groaning and gasping upon the pavement. None were there to help him, for the state prosecutor and Wedeln had made off to Stargard as quick as they could go, and Sheriff Sparling was still hiding in the bush. However, Jobst and the old dairy-woman helped him up as best he could, and asked what ailed him? to which he groaned in answer, "There seemed to be some one sitting inside his breast, and breaking the _cartilago ensiformis_ horribly asunder. Ah, God! ah, God! he was weak indeed! his hour was come; let them lay him in a coach, and carry him directly to Stargard."

This was done as soon as the sheriff could be found; but my doctor's screams never ceased for three days, after which he gave up the ghost, and the corpse had the same appearance as that of the convent porter, which I have already noticed. Thus it happened with the wise!

But Johann Wedeln fared little better, as we shall see; for after the doctor's strange death, he said openly everywhere, he would never rest till the accursed witch was burned. Anna Apenborg repeated this in the convent, and to Sidonia's maid, upon which the witch sent for Anna, and asked was the report true? And when the other did not deny it, she exclaimed, "Now for this shall the knave be contracted all his life long, and twist his mouth _thus_." Whereupon she mimicked how his shoulders would be drawn up to his ears, and twisted her mouth in horrible contortions, so that it was a shame and sin to look at her. And truly this misfortune fell upon him from that hour. And afterwards when he heard of her wickedness, from Anna Apenborg and others, and brought her to an account for her sorcery in Stettin, she made him bite the dust and lie in his coffin ere long, out of malice and terrible revenge, as we shall hear further on.

How the assembled Pomeranian princes hold a council over Sidonia [Footnote: Note of Bogislaß XIV.--I was not present at this council, for I was holding my espousals at the time. (The Duke married the Princess Elizabeth von Schleswig Holstein in 1615, but left no heirs.)] _and at length cite her to appear at the ducal court._

When the state prosecutor, Christian Ludeck, reached Stettin with his appalling news, the Duke was seriously troubled in mind as to how he could best save the holy sisterhood, and indeed the whole land, from the terrible Satanic power and murderous malice of this cruel sorceress. So he summoned all the princes of his family to a convocation on a certain day, at Old Stettin; but when they arrived, his Grace was absent, for he had gone to Coblenz on some business, and here was the matter.

His steward, Jeremias Schroter, was an unworthy agent, as his Grace heard; and when the time came for the poor people to get their oats or corn, he sent round and made them all give their receipts first, saying "They should have their corn after;" but when they went to bring it home, he beat them, and asked what they meant--he had their receipts: they were cheats, and should get no more corn from him.

Now, a poor parson's widow came up all the way to Stettin, to complain of the steward to his Highness, who was shocked at such knavery, and determined to go down himself to Coblenz and make inquiries; for the steward swore that the people were liars, and had defamed him.

The Duke therefore bid the chancellor, Martin Chemnitz, entertain his princely brothers until his return, which would not be before evening, and to show them his painting and sculpture galleries, and whatever else in the castle might please them. And now to show the good heart of his Grace, I must mention that, seeing the poor widow was tired with her six miles' walk, he bid her get up beside the coachman on the box of his carriage, and he would drive her himself to her own place.

Meanwhile the young princes arrived, and the court marshal, the chancellor, the aforesaid state prosecutor, and other high officials, received them on behalf of his Highness. Doctor Cramer, _vice-superintendens_, my esteemed father-in-law, was also present--_item_, Doctor Constantius Oesler.

They were first led into the picture-gallery by the chancellor (although Duke George cared little about such matters), where there was a costly collection of paintings by Perugino, Raphael, Titian, Bellini, &c.--_item_, statues, vases, coins, and medals, all of which his Grace had brought lately from Italy. Here also there was a large book, covered with crimson velvet, lying open, in which his Grace the Duke had written down many extracts

from the sermons of Doctor Cramer and Mag. Reutzio, with marginal Latin notes of his own; for the Duke had a table in his oratory or closet in St. Mary's Church, that he might write down what pleased him, and a Greek and Latin Bible laid thereon. This book was, therefore, a right pleasing sight to Doctor Cramer, who stood and read his own sermons over again with great relish, while the others examined the paintings.

When they grew weary, the chancellor conducted them to the library, which contained ten thousand books. But Duke Ulrich said, "Marry, dear brothers, what the devil is there to see here? Let us rather go down to the stables, and examine my new Danish horses; then come up to my quarters (for his Grace lived with his brother, Duke Philip), and have a good Pomeranian carouse to pass away the time; for as to these fooleries, which have cost our good brother such a mint of money, I would not give a dollar for them all."

So they ran down the steps leading to the stables; but first he brought them into the hunting-hall, belonging to his quarter, which was decorated, and covered all along the walls with hunting-horns, rifles, cross-bows, and hunting-knives and pouches, with the horns of all sorts of animals killed in the chase. Whereupon Duke George said, "He was content to remain here--the horses he could see on the morrow."

So he sat down by the wine-flask, which lay there already upon the table; and while Duke Ulrich was trying to persuade him to come to the stables, saying he could have the wine-flask after, the door opened, and his Highness Duke Philip unexpectedly entered the apartment.

He embraced all his dear brothers, and then, turning to Duke Francis, the bishop, said, "Tell me, dear Fra (so he always called him, for his Grace spoke Italian and Latin like German), is there any hope of a christening at thy castle? Oh, say yes, and I will give thee a duchy for my godchild."

But Bishop Francis answered mournfully, "No!" Then Duke Philip turned to another--"How say you, brother--mayhap there is hope of an heir to Wolgast?"

"None, alas!" was the answer.

"No, no!" exclaimed the Duke, "and there is no hope for me either--none!" Then he walked up and down the hall in great agitation, at last stopped, and lifting up his hands to heaven, cried, "Merciful God, a child, a child! Is my whole ancient race to perish? Wilt Thou slay us, as Thou didst the first-born of Egypt? Oh! a child, a child!"

Here Doctor Cramerus advanced humbly, and said, "Your Highness should have faith. Remember what St. Paul says (Rom. iv.) concerning the faith of Abraham and Sarah; and Abraham was a

hundred years old, whereas your Highness is scarce forty, therefore why despair of the mercy of God? Besides, many of his brothers were still unwed."

Hereat his Grace stood silent, and looked round at his dear brothers; but Duke George exclaimed, "You need not look at me, dear brother, for I mean never to marry" (which, indeed, was the truth, for he died some short time after at Buckow, whether through Sidonia's witchcraft I know not, at the age of thirty-five years, and unmarried. One thing, however, is certain, that his death was as strange as the others; for in seven days he was well, sick, dead, buried). [Footnote: There was formerly a Cistercian monastery at Buckow, in the chapel of which still hangs a picture of this Prince. Like most of his race, the face is in the highest degree unmeaning; indeed, nothing more can be said of him than that he was born and died.]

Summa--His Highness first excused himself to his illustrious brothers for his absence, and related the cause, how his knave of a steward had been oppressing the poor, whereupon he determined to go himself and avenge their injuries; for a prince should be the father of his people, and it was a blessed work, the Scripture said, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction (James i. 27). So he hid himself in a little closet, where he could hear everything in the widow's house, and then bid her send for the steward; and when he came, the widow asked for her corn, as usual, but he said, "She must give him the receipt first, and then she might have it;" upon which she gave him the receipt, and he went away. Then the Duke bid the widow send a peasant and his cart for the corn; however, the old answer came back--"She was a cheat--what did she mean? He had her receipt in his hand."

Upon this the Duke drove himself to the knave, and made him, in his presence, pay down all the arrears of corn to the widow; then he beat him black and blue, for a little parting remembrance, and dismissed him ignominiously from his service. After this he had thoughts of driving round to visit Prechln of Buslar, for the rumour was afloat that Sidonia had bewitched his little son Bartel, scarcely yet a year old, and made him grow a beard on his chin like an old carl's, that reached down to his little stomach. But as his dear brothers were waiting for him, his Grace had given up this journey, particularly as he wished to hear their opinions without delay as to what could be done to free the land from this evil sorceress Sidonia. Hereupon he bade Christian Ludeck, the state prosecutor, to read the proceedings at Marienfliess from his notes.

As he proceeded to read the Acta, the listeners crossed and blessed themselves; at last Duke Francis, the bishop, spake--"Did I not say well, when years ago, in Oderkrug, I prayed our father of blessed memory to burn this vile limb of Satan for a terrible example? But my good brother Philip sided against me with my

father, and he was deemed the wiser. Who is the wiser now, I wonder--eh?"

Then Duke Philip asked Dr. Cramer, "What he thought of the matter as *theologus*?" who answered, "Your Grace must spare me; I will accuse no one, not even Sidonia, for though such things appear verily to be done by the help of the devil, yet had they no proof, seeing that no *medicus* had hitherto dissected any one of the *cadavera* which it was avowed Sidonia had bewitched to death."

Hereupon Dr. Constantius spake that he had already, by legal permission, dissected the body of his colleague, Dr. Schwalenberg, and delivered over the *visum repertum* to his Grace's chancellor. Then he described the appearances, which were truly singular, particularly that of the *cartilago ensiformis*. *Item*, concerning the *valvulae tricuspidales*, through which the blood falls into the heart. They were so powerfully contracted that the blood was forced to take another course, for which reason, probably, the corpse seemed so dreadfully discoloured. *Item*, the *vena pulmonalis* had burst, from which cause the doctor had spit blood to the last. And lastly, the *glandulae sublinguales* were so swollen that the tongue could not remain in the mouth. Such a death was not natural; that he averred. But whether Sidonia's sorcery had caused it, or it were sent as a peculiar punishment by God, that he would not say; he agreed with the excellent Dr. Cramer, and thought it better to accuse no one.

"Now by the cross!" cried Duke Francis, "what else is it but devil's work? But the lords were very lukewarm, and resolved not to peril themselves; *that* he saw. However, if his brother, Duke Philip, permitted the whole princely race to be thus bewitched to death, he would have to answer for it at the day of judgment. He prayed him, therefore, for the love of God, to send for the hag instantly, and drag her to the scaffold."

Hereat Duke Philip sank his head upon his arm, and was silent a long space. But the state prosecutor gave answer--"Marry! will your Episcopal Highness then take the trouble to tell us, who is to seize the hag? I will do it not, and who else will? for, methinks, whoever touches her must needs be sore tired of life."

"If no one else will," returned the bishop, "my Camyn executioner, Master Radeck, will surely do it, for he never feared a witch; besides, he knows all their *arcana*."

Meanwhile, as Duke Philip still sat in deep thought, and played with a quill, the door opened, and a lacquey entered with a message from the noble Prechln of Buslar, requesting an *audiencia* of his Grace. He had an infant in his arms which a wicked witch had prayed to death, and the child had a beard on it like an old man, so that all in the castle were terrified at the

sight.

His Grace Duke Philip instantly started up. "Merciful God! is it true?" waved his hand to the lacquey, who withdrew, and then walked up and down, exclaiming still, "Merciful God! what can be done?"

"Torture! burn! kill!" cried Duke Francis, the bishop "and to-morrow, if it be possible. I shall send this night for my executioner! trust to him. He will soon screw the soul out of the vile hag; take my word for it."

"Ay! torture! burn! kill!" cried also the state prosecutor, "and the sooner the better, gracious master. For God's sake, no mercy more!"

Here the door opened, and Prechln of Buslar entered, pale as the infant corpse that lay upon his arms. This corpse was dressed in white with black ribbons, and a wreath of rosemary encircled the little head; but, what was strange and horrible, a long black beard depended from the infant's chin, which the wind, as the door opened, blew backward and forward in the sorrowing father's face. After him came his wife, wringing her hands wildly from grief, and an old serving-maid.

Truly the whole convocation shuddered at the sight, but Bishop Francis was the first to speak--

"And this is no devil's work?" he exclaimed. "Now, by my faith, ye and your wise doctors are fools if ye deny this evidence. Come nearer, poor fellow; set the corpse of your child down, and tell us how it came to pass. We had heard of your strange affliction, and just spoke thereon as you entered. Ha! the sorceress cannot escape us now, methinks."

Now, when the mourning father began to tell the story, his wife set up such a weeping and lamentation, and the old nurse followed her example after such a lugubrious fashion, that their lordships could not hear a word. Whereupon his Grace Duke Philip was obliged earnestly to request that the women should keep silence whilst Prechln of Buslar spoke.

I have already mentioned what grudge Sidonia had against him, because he refused to acknowledge himself her feudal vassal by kissing her hand; also, how she accused him afterward of stealing her dog. This the poor knight related now at length, and with many tears, and continued--

"During the strife between them, she one day spat upon both his little sons, and the eldest, Dinnies, a fine fellow of seven years old, who was playing with a slipper at the time under the table, died first. But the accursed witch had stepped over to the cradle where his little Bartholomew lay sleeping, while this old nurse,

Barbara Kadows, rocked him, and murmuring some words, spat upon him, and then went away, cursing, from the house. So the spell was put upon both children that same day, and Dinnies took sick directly, and in three days was a corpse; but on his little Memi first grew this great black beard which their lordships all saw, and then he likewise died, after crying three days and three nights in horrible torture." The old nurse confirmed all this, and said--

"That when the horrible hag knelt down by the cradle to blow upon the child, she turned up her eyes, so that nothing but the whites could be seen. Ah! what a wicked old hag that could not spare a child like that, and could put such an old man's beard on its little face."

Then Duke Philip asked the knight if he had accused Sidonia of the witchcraft, and what had she answered?

"Ah yes, he had done so, but by letter, for he feared to go to Marienfliess, lest it might happen to him as to others who met her face to face, and his messenger brought back a letter in answer, by which their lordships could see how her arrogance equalled her wickedness," and he drew forth her letter from his bosom, and handed the same to his Highness. Now Bishop Francis would have prevented his brother touching the letter, but Duke Philip had a brave heart, and taking it boldly, read aloud as follows:--

"SIDONIA, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, PRIORRESS OF THE NOBLE CONVENT OF MARIENPLIESS, LADY AND HEIRESS OP THE LANDS AND CASTLE OF STRAMEHL, LABES, REGENWALD, WANGERIN, AND OTHERS--GREETING."

"GOOD FRIEND AND VASSAL,"

"Touching your foul accusation respecting your two brats, and my bewitching them to death, I shall only say you must be mad. I have long thought that pride would turn your brain: now I see it has been done. If Bartel has got a beard, send for soap and shave him. As to yourself, I counsel you to come to Marienfliess to old Kathe, she knows how to turn the brain right again with a wooden bowl. Pour hot water therein, three times boiled, set the bowl on your head, and over the bowl an inverted pot; then, as the water is drawn up into the empty pot, so will the madness be drawn up out of your brain into the wooden bowl, and all will be right again. It is a good receipt; I counsel you to try it. She only desires you to kiss her hand in return. Such is the advice of your feudal lady and seigneuress,

"SIDONIA BORK."

His Highness had hardly finished reading the letter, when Bishop Francis cried out--

"What the devil, brother, hast thou made the murderous dragon a

prioress?"

But his Highness knew nothing of it, and wondered much likewise. Whereupon the state prosecutor told them how it came about, and that poor Dorothea Stettin had been talked out of her situation by the dragon, as was all here to be seen set down in full in the indictment; but, as the case was not now under discussion, he would pass it over, although great quarrels and scandal prevailed in the convent in consequence, and poor Dorothea lay sick, earnestly desiring to be restored to her prioret.

Bishop Francis now grew yet more angry--

"Give the witch a prioret in hell," he cried. "What would his dear brother do, now that the proofs were in his hands?"

To which Duke Philip answered mildly--

"Dear Fra, think on my symbol, C. & R." (that is, _Christo et Reipublicae_, for Christ and the State). "Let us not be over-hasty. Suppose that Dr. Constantinus should first dissect this poor infant, and see what really caused its death."

Thereat the doctor plunged his hand in his pocket, to draw forth his case of instruments, but the mother screamed out, and ran to tear the child from him--"No, no; they should never cut up her little Memi!" _Item_, the maid screamed out, "No, no; she would lose her life first!" _Item_, the father stood still and trembled, but said never a word.

What was to be done now? His Grace repented of his hastiness, and at last said--

"Well, then, friends, let the doctor examine the infant externally, look into its mouth, &c."

And when the parents consented to this, his Grace prayed them gently to withdraw with him into another apartment while the examination was made, as such a sight might give them pain. To this also they consented, and his Grace led the way to another hall (giving a sign privately to the doctor to do his business properly), where a splendid collation was served. After which, just to detain them longer, his Grace brought them to visit the picture-gallery.

Summa--When they returned, the dissection had been accomplished, at which sight the parents and the maid screamed; but his Grace confuted them, saying--

"That the ends of justice required it. He would now take the case into his own hands, and they might return quietly to their own castle and bury their infant, who would sleep as well dissected as entire."

Having at last calmed them somewhat, they kissed his hand and took their leave.

Meanwhile the two young Dukes, Ulrich and George, finding the time hang heavy, had slipped away from the council-board, and gone down to the ducal stables.

When his Highness noticed their absence, he sent a page bidding them return and give their opinion in council as to what should be done next. But they sent back an answer--"Let the lords do what they pleased; as for them they were off to the chase, seeing it was pleasanter to hunt a hare than a witch."

Now Bishop Francis stormed in earnest.

"Marry, some folk would not believe in witchcraft, till they stood with their heels turned toward heaven; and here these idle younkners must needs ride off to the chase when the life and death of our race hangs in the balance. I say again, brother, torture, burn, kill, and as soon as may be."

But Duke Philip still answered mildly--

"Dear Fra, the *_medicus_* hath just pronounced that the corpse of the poor child presents no unnatural appearances; and as to the beard, this may just as well be a *_miraculum Dei_* as a *_miraculum damonis_*, therefore I esteem it better to cite Sidonia to our court, and admonish her strenuously to all good."

This course had little favour from Bishop Francis; but when the state prosecutor agreed with his Highness, and Dr. Cramerus praised so Christian and merciful a resolve, he was at last content, particularly as some one said (I forget who, but I rather think it was the chancellor, Martinus Chemnitz), that Mag. Joel of Grypswald gave it as his opinion that it would be a matter of trouble and danger to seize the witch, seeing that her familiar, the spirit Chim, was a mighty and strong spirit, and capable of taking great revenge on any who laid hand upon her; but that he, Mag. Joel, would do for him easily if he came in his way.

This intelligence gave the bishop great comfort, and he instantly despatched a letter to Mag. Joel, bidding him come forthwith to Stettin, whilst the chancellor prepared a *_Citationem realem sive personalem_* for Sidonia, which contained the following:--

"WE, PHILIP, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, &c.,

"Command thee, Sidonia von Bork, conventual and not prioress of the noble convent of Marienfliess, to appear before us, at our court of Stettin, on the 15th day of July, at three of the clock, to answer for the evil deeds whereof thou art accused, under punishment of banishment, forfeiture, and great danger to thy body

and life. Against such, therefore, take thou heed.

"Signatum, Old Stettin, 10th July 1616.

"PHILIPPUS, _manu sua_."

CHAPTER VIII.

Of Sidonia's defence--Item, how she has a quarrel with Joachim Wedel, and bewitches him to death.

At three of the clock on the appointed day, the grand Rittersaal (knights' hall) of the stately castle of Old Stettin was crowded with ministers, councillors, and officials, who had met there by command of their illustrious mightinesses, Duke Philip, Prince and Lord of Stettin, and Francis, Bishop of Camyn. Amongst the nobles assembled were Albert, Count of Eberstein, Lord of Neugarten and Massow; Eustache Flemming, hereditary Grand Marshal; Christoph von Mildenitz, privy councillor and dean of the honourable chapter of Camyn; Caspar von Stogentin, captain at Friedrichswald; Christoph von Plate, master of the ceremonies; Martin Chemnitz, Chancellor of Pomerania; Dr. Cramer, my worthy lord father-in-law, _vice-superintendens_; Dr. Constantius Oesler, _medicus_; Christian Ludeck, attorney-general; Mag. Joel of Grypswald, and many others. These all stood in two long rows, waiting for their princely Graces. For it was rumoured that Sidonia had already arrived with the fish-sellers from Grabow, which, indeed, was the case; and she had, moreover, packed seven hogsheads of her best beer on the waggon along with her, purposing to sell it to profit in the town; but the devil truly got his profit out of the said beer, for by it not only our good town of Stettin, but likewise the whole land, was nearly brought to ruin and utter destruction, as we shall hear further on.

Summa--When all the afore-named were ranged in rank and order, the great doors of the hall were flung wide open, and Duke Philip entered first. Every one knows that he was small, delicate, almost thin in person, pale of face, with a moustache on his upper lip, and his hair combed _à la Nazarena_. [Footnote: Divided in the centre, and falling down straight at each side, as in the pictures of our Saviour.] He wore a yellow doublet with silver-coloured satin sleeves, scarlet hose trimmed with gold lace, white silk stockings, and white boots, with gold spurs; round his neck was a Spanish ruff of white point lace, and by his side a jewel-hilted sword; his breast and girdle were also profusely decorated with diamonds. So his Highness advanced up the hall, wearing his grey beaver hat, from which drooped a stately plume of black herons' feathers, fastened with an aigrette of diamonds. This he did not remove, as was customary, until all

present had made their obeisance and deferentially kissed his hand. Duke Francis followed in his episcopal robes, with a mitre upon his head, and a bishop's crook of ivory in his hand. The other young dukes, Ulrich, George, and Bogislaus, remained cautiously away. [Footnote: Note of Bogislaff XIV.--Yes; but not out of fear. I was celebrating my espousals, as I have said.]

And the blood-standard waved from the towers, and the princely soldatesca, with all the officers, lined the castle court, so that nothing was left undone that could impress this terrible sorceress with due fear and respect for their illustrious Graces.

And when the order was given for Sidonia to be admitted, the two Princes leaned proudly on a table at the upper end of the hall, while the assembled nobles formed two long lines at each side. Three rolls of the drum announced the approach of the prisoner. But when she entered, accompanied by the lord provost, in her nun's robes and white veil, on which the key of her office was embroidered in gold, a visible shudder passed over her frame; collecting herself, however, quickly, she advanced to kiss their Graces' hands, but Bishop Francis, after he had drawn his _symbolum_ with chalk before him on the table, namely, H, H, H, that is, "Help, helper, help," cried out, "Back, Satan! stir not from thy place; and know that if thou shouldst attempt any of thy diabolical sorceries upon my dear lord and brother here (as for me, this honourable, consecrated, and priestly robe saves me from thy power) thou shalt be torn limb from limb, and thy members flung to feed the dogs, while thou art yet living to behold it, accursed, thrice-accursed witch!"

And his Grace, in his great rage against her, struck the table with his ivory crook, so that he broke a bottle filled with red ink which stood thereon, and the said ink (alas! what an evil omen) poured down upon Duke Philip's white silk stockings, and stained them red like blood.

Meanwhile Sidonia exclaimed, "What! is there no leech here to feel the pulse of his Serene Highness? Surely the dog-days, that we are in the middle of, have turned his brain completely. Any little bit of mother-wit he might have had is clean gone. What! she had scarcely entered--knew not yet of what she was accused, and she was 'Satan!' 'a thrice-accursed witch!' who was to be cut up into little bits to feed dogs! Had any man ever heard the like? Would the nobles of Pomerania, whom she saw around her, suffer one of their own rank--a lady of castles and lands--to be thus handled? She called upon them all as witnesses, and after the _audienza_ a notary should be summoned to note all down, for she would assuredly appeal to the states of the kingdom, and bring her cause before the Emperor."

Hereupon Duke Philip interposed--"Lady, our dear brother is of a hasty temperament; yet you can scarce wonder at his speech, or take it ill, when you consider the terrible evils which you have

brought upon our ancient and illustrious race. However, as an upright and good prince must judge the cause of his subjects before his own, I shall first inquire what caused the sudden illness of the sheriff, Eggert Sparling, and of the abbess, Magdalena, that time they brought my father's letter to you?--that letter which you said was a forgery, and flung into the fire."

Illa.--"What caused it? How could she remember? It was a long time ago; but so far as she recollected, they came in when she was brewing beer or cooking sausages, and she opened the window to admit fresh air; before this window they both sat and talked, to be out of the smell of the cooking; could they not have got rheumatism by such means? Let his Grace ask the doctors did it require witchcraft to give a man the rheumatism, who sat in a draught of air?"

The Duke.--"But both were cured again as quickly as they had taken it."

Illa>/i>.--"Ah, yes! She would have done her best to cure even her greatest enemy, for the holy Saviour had said, 'Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute you.' To such commands of her Lord she had ever been a faithful servant, and therefore searched out of her cookery-book for a _sympatheticum_, but for thanks, lo, now what she gets! Such was the way of this wicked world. Perhaps my gracious lord would like to know of the _sympatheticum_; she would say it for him, if he wished."

"Keep it to yourself, woman," roared Duke Francis, "and tell us why you burned my father's letter?"

Illa.--"Because, in truth, she deemed it a forgery. How could she believe a knave who had already deceived his own gracious Prince? For did not this base sheriff appropriate to his own use eleven mares, one hundred sheep, sixteen head of cattle, and forty-two boars, all the property of his Highness, to the great detriment of the princely revenue. _Item_, at the last cattle sale he had put three hundred florins into his own bag, and many more evil deceits had this wicked cheat practised."

"Keep to the question," cried Duke Philip, "and answer only what you are asked. What was that matter concerning the priest which caused you to complain of him to our princely consistorium?"

Illa.--"Ay! and no notice taken, though it was a scandal that cried to Heaven, how this licentious young carl was admitted into the convent as chaplain, when the regulations especially declared that an honourable _old_ man should hold the office. She prayed, therefore, that another priest might be appointed."

Hereat my worthy father-in-law, Dr. Cramer, said, "Good lady, be not so hasty; from all we have heard, this priest is a right

worthy and discreet young man."

Illa.--"Right worthy and discreet, truly! as her old maid could testify; or the abbess, with whom he locked himself up; or Dorothea Stettin, with whom he was discovered behind the holy altar. Fie! The scandal that such a fellow should be convent chaplain! and that a Christian government should suffer it!" (spitting three times on the ground.)

The Duke.--"The inquiry concerning him was pending. For what cause had she forced herself into the sub-prioret?"

Illa.--"She! Forced herself! Forced herself into the sub-prioret! What devil had invented this story? Why, the abbess and the whole convent were witness that she was forced into it; for as Dorothea Stettin was ashamed after that business behind the altar when she was discovered with the priest--besides, was a weak, silly thing at all times--she had consented to relieve her from the sub-prioret at her (Dorothea's) earnest supplication and prayer."

The Duke.--"Wherefore had she treated the novices with such cruelty, and run at them with axes and knives, to do them grievous bodily harm?"

Illa.--"They were a set of young wantons, always gossiping about marriage and loons, therefore she had held a strict hand over them, which she would not deny; particularly as if any of the nuns fell into sin, the law decreed that she was to be beheaded. Was she therefore wrong or right? Truly the abbess said nothing, for she was as bad as any of them, and had locked herself up with the priest."

The Duke.--"What caused the sudden death of the convent porter?"

Illa.--"What! was this, too, laid on her as a crime? Why, at last, if any one died in Wolgast, or another in Marienfließ during her absence, she would have to answer for it."

The Duke.--"But Dr. Schwalenberg had died in the self-same way, and as suddenly--tumbling down dead upon the pavement."

Illa.--"The knave was so drunk when he ran after her with a horsewhip to beat her, that he tumbled down on the stones; and mayhap the shock killed him, as it did that other knave who flung her against the wall; or that he got a fit; for such would have been a just judgment of God on him, as it is written (Malachi iii. 5), 'I will be a swift witness for the widow and the orphan.' Ah! truly she was a poor orphan, and the just God had been her swift witness; for which, all praise and glory be to His name for ever" (weeping).

Here Christoph Mildenitz, canon of Camyn, exclaimed, "Marry, thou wicked viper, I have seen the corpse of this same Schwalenberg myself, and every one, even the physicians, said that he had died no natural death."

Illa--"Must the fat canon put in his word now? Ha! this was her thanks for the gloves she had knit him, and which he wore at this present moment, for she knew them, even at that distance, by the black seams round the thumbs. But so it was ever: she had no greater enemies than those whom she had done kindness to."

The Duke--"Prechln von Buslar also accused her of having brought his two sons to death, and making a long man's beard grow upon the little Bartel."

Illa (laughing).--"Ah! it is easy to see by your Grace that we are in the dog-days. Your Highness must pardon my mirth; but who could help it? Merciful God! are Thy wonders, sent to fright the world and turn men from sin, to be called devil's sorceries! To what a pass is the world come! Has your Highness forgotten all history? Know you not that God gives many signs to His people, and speaks in wonders? Yet, when did men, till now, say that these signs were of the devil alone, and persecute and destroy helpless women by reason of them? Speak, gracious Duke--speak, ye noble lords--have ye not tortured, and burned, and put to death weak and innocent women without number for these things, and must ye needs now seek my life? And when was it ever known, till now, that nobles sat in judgment upon one of their own rank--a lady of as high blood and proud descent as any of ye here--for old wives' tales like these, and children's fooleries? Speak! Whoso saith I lie, let him step forward and convict me." [Footnote: It was a fact that the persecution of witches had risen at this period almost to a mania.]

There was a dead silence in the hall when she had ended, and even Duke Philip looked down ashamed, for he could not but acknowledge that she spoke the truth, however unwillingly he believed aught the vile sorceress uttered.

At last Bishop Francis spake--"Why then didst thou blow upon the children of Prechln of Buslar, if it were not to bewitch them to death?"

Whereupon the witch answered scornfully--"If that could kill, then were we all dead long since, for the wind blows on us every minute, and we blow upon our hot broth to cool it, yet who dies thereof? How could a bishop be so sunk in superstition? As to Prechln of Buslar, no wonder if God had smitten him for his pride and arrogance, as it is said (Luke i. 51), 'He scatters such as are proud of heart,' for, though her feudal vassal, he had refused to do her homage; therefore here was no witch-work, but only God's work, testifying against sinful haughtiness and pride.

"Moreover, it was false that she had blown upon the children; the silly fool Prechln had imagined it all--nothing was too absurd for stupidity like his to believe; and what then? Can't people die but by witchcraft? Did St. Peter bewitch that covetous knave Ananias (Acts v.) when he fell down dead at his feet for having lied to the Holy Ghost? Let the honourable convocation answer her truly."

_Summa.--The end of all was (as we may imagine) that the cunning Satan was allowed to depart in peace, only receiving a wholesome admonition from his Highness Duke Philip, and another from my worthy father-in-law, Dr. Cramer.

But what happened as she returned to her lodgment in the Rügenberg Street? Behold Joachim Wedel of Cremzow, whom she had made contracted, sat at his window to enjoy the air, but the evil hag no sooner looked up and saw him than she began to mock him, twisting her mouth awry, even as he twisted his mouth. When he observed her, his face grew red with anger, and he cried out of the window, "Ha, thou accursed witch, I am not so help--help--help--helpless as thou thinkest; so do not twi--twi--twi--twist thy mouth at me that way."

To which Sidonia only answered with the one word "Wait!" and passed on, but returned soon again with a notary and two witnesses (one was the landlord of the inn where she had left her beer), stepped up to the chamber where Joachim sat, and bid them take down that he had called her an accursed witch while she was quietly going along the street to her lodgment.

Poor Wedel vainly tried to speak in his defence; the hag maintained her assertion, and prayed that the just God who brought all liars to destruction would avenge her cause, if it were His gracious will, for the Scripture said (Psalm v. 7), "I will destroy them that speak leasing." Therefore she left him and all her other enemies in the hand of God. He would take vengeance!

And oh, horror! scarcely had she returned to her lodgment when the poor man began to scream, "There is some one sitting within my breast, and lifting up the breast-bone!" Thus he screamed and screamed three days and three nights long; no physician, not even Dr. Constantinus, could help him, and finally, when he died, his body presented the same appearances precisely as those of Dr. Schwalenberg and the convent porter, as the doctors who dissected him affirmed upon oath. He was a clever man, learned and well read, and left Annales behind him, a work which this cruel witch caused to remain unfinished.

And further, it was a strange thing (whether of witchcraft or of God, I cannot say) that except my gracious Duke Philip, almost every one present at this remarkable colloquium died within the year; for example, Count Albert, Eustache Flemming, Caspar von Stogentin, Christoph von Mildnitz--all lay in their graves before the year was out. [Footnote: Some place the death of Joachim Wedel

so early as 1606. The whole matter is taken, almost word for word, from the criminal records in the Berlin Library; and, according to Dähnert, the first question on the book concerned the death of this man. His, *Annales* include the years from 1501 to 1606; they contain the whole history of that period, but the work has never been printed. Dähnert, however, vol. ii. Pomeranian Library, gives some extracts therefrom; also, in Franz Kock's "Recollections of Dr. John Bugenhagen," Stettin, 1817, we find this chronicle quoted.]

CHAPTER IX.

How a strange woman (who must assuredly have been Sidonia) incites the lieges of his Grace to great uproar and tumult in Stettin, by reason of the new tax upon beer.

My gracious Prince will perhaps say, "But, Theodore, how comes it that this hag, who in her youth could not be brought to learn the catechism, quoted Scripture in her old days like a priest?"

I answer--Serene Prince and Lord, that seems in my opinion because the evil witch found that Scripture, when not taught of God, can be made to serve the devil's purposes. For this reason she studied therein; not to make honey, but to extract poison, as your Grace may have perceived in her strifes with individuals, and even with the constituted authorities. Further, methinks, she must also have studied in history books, for how else could she have discoursed upon political matters so as to raise the whole population of Stettin into open revolt, as we shall soon see. However, I leave these questions undecided, and shall only state facts, leaving the rest for your Highness's judgment.

The day following that on which Sidonia had been tried before the noble convocation (and she must have still been in the town, I think, for it was late in the previous evening when she bewitched Joachim Wedel), the priest of St. Nicholas read out after the sermon, before the whole congregation, the ducal order declaring that, from that date forward, the quart of beer, hitherto sold for a Stralsund shilling, should not be sold under sixteen Pomeranian pence. This caused great murmurs and discontent among the people; and when they came out of church they rushed to the inn, where Sidonia had been staying, to discuss the matter freely, and screamed and roared, and gesticulated amongst themselves, saying, "The council had no right to raise the price of beer; they were a set of rogues that ought to be hung," &c., and they struck fiercely on the table, so that the glasses rang. Just then an old hag came to the door, but not in a cloister habit. She had a black plaster upon her nose, and complained how she had hurt herself by falling on the sharp stones, which had put her nose out of joint.

"People talked of this new decree--was it true that the poor folk were to pay sixteen Pomeranian pence for a quart of beer?--O God! what the cruelty and avarice of princes could do. But she scarcely believed the report, for she brewed beer herself better than any brewer in the land, and yet could sell the quart for eightpence, and have profit besides. Oh, that princes and ministers could rob the poor man so! ay, they would take the very shirt off his back to glut their own greed and covetousness. And what did they give their hard-earned gold for? To build fine houses for the Prince, forsooth, and fill them with fine pictures from Italy, and statues, as if he were a brat of a school-girl, and must have his dolls to play with."

"What sort is your beer, old dame?" asked a fellow. "Marry, it must be strange trash, I warrant."

Illa--"No, no; if they would not believe her word, let them taste the beer. She wanted nothing further but to prove how the wicked government oppressed the poor folk; for she was a God-fearing woman, and her heart was filled with grief to see how the princes lately, in this poor Pomerania, squeezed the very life-blood out of the people," &c. Then she lifted up a barrel of beer upon the table (I have already said that Sidonia had brought some with her to sell), and invited the discontented people to taste it, which they were nothing loth to do, and soon broached the said barrel. Then, having tasted, they extolled her beer to the skies--"No better had ever been brewed." Now other troops of the discontented came pouring in from Lastadie, Wiek, &c., cursing, and swearing, and shouting--"The beer must not be raised; they would force the government to take off the tax. Would not their comrades join?"

This was fine fun to the old hag, and she produced another barrel of beer, which the mob emptied speedily, and then began talking, shouting, screaming, roaring like flocks of wild geese; and when the old hag saw that they had got enough under their caps to make them quite desperate, she began--

"Was not her beer as good as any beer in the duchy?"

"Ay, ay--better!" shouted the mob, "Where dost thou live, mother?"

To this she gave no answer, but continued: "Yet this beer cost but eightpence a quart, by which they could see how the wicked and cruel government oppressed them. Oh, it was a sin that cried to Heaven, to see how princes and nobles scourged and skinned the poor folk. They swilled wine of the best, and plenty, in their own gorgeous castles, but grudged poor bitter poverty its can of beer! Shame on such a government!"

"True, true!" shouted the mob; "she is right: we are scourged and skinned by these worthless nobles. Come, brothers, let us off to

the council-hall, and if they will not take off the tax, we'll murder every soul of them."

Illa--"And be asses for their pains. Was that all they could do--_pray_ the mighty council, forsooth, to lower the tax? Oh, brave fellows! What! had they not the power in their own hands, if they would only be united? Had they never heard how the people of Anklam had, in former times, killed their rulers and governors, and then did justice to themselves? What right had prince, minister, or council to skin a people? They had all stout arms and brave hearts here, as she saw; _could they not right themselves? _--must they needs crouch for their own to prince or minister? Did she lie, or did she speak the truth?"

Here the mob cheered and shouted, "True! true!" and they struck the table till the glasses broke, roaring, "She is right, brothers. Are we not strong? Can we not right ourselves? Why should we go begging to a council? May the devil take all the covetous, rich knaves, who drink the people's blood!"

Illa--"But may be they wanted a prince--eh? The prince was the shepherd, the council only the dog who bit the sheep as his master commanded. Eh, children? is not a prince a fine thing, to squeeze the sweat and life-blood out of ye, and turn it into gold for himself? For what are his riches but your sweat and blood, if ye reflect on it; and is it a sin to take your own? Methinks if all princes were killed or banished, and their goods divided amongst the people, ye would all have enough. Have ye not heard of that brotherhood who set all princes and governments at defiance for two hundred years, and lived like brothers amongst themselves, dividing all goods alike, so that they were called Like-dealers; and no beggar was found amongst them, for they had all things in common. [Footnote: These Like-dealers were the communists of the Middle Ages, and were for a number of years the plague of the northern seas; until at the beginning of the fifteenth century they were subdued, and many of them captured by the Dutch, who nailed them up in barrels, leaving an aperture for the head, at top, and then decapitated them. The best account of them is found in "Raumer's Historical Note-book," vol. ii. p. 19. And if any one wishes to see the result of communist teaching, they have only to study here the horrible excesses to which it leads.

The communism of the apostolic age might have been suited to a period in which it would be difficult to say whether faith or love predominated most; but even then it by no means prevented the existence of extreme poverty, for we read frequently in the Acts and Epistles of the _collections_ made for the Christian churches. But in our faithless, loveless, selfish, sin-drowned century, such an attempt at community of goods would not only annihilate all morality completely, but absolutely degrade us back from civilisation and modern Catholicism into the rudest and most meagre barbarism. The apostles of such doctrines now must speak, though perhaps unconsciously, from the sole inspiration of Satan,

like Sidonia. The progress of humanity is not to be furthered by such means. Let our merchants no longer degrade human beings into machines for their factories, nor our princes degrade them into automaton puppets for their armies, but of men make _living men_. And the strong energy, the stern will, the vital spiritual power that will thus be awakened, will and must produce the regeneration of humanity.] Wherefore can ye not be Like-dealers also? Are there not rich enough for ye to kill? And if ye are united, who can withstand you? Look at the dog and the cattle--how the poor stupid beasts let themselves be driven, and bit, and beaten, just because they are used to it; but, lo! if the cattle should all turn their horns against the dog and the shepherd, what becomes of my fine pair? So is it with the Prince and his council. Oh, if ye were only united! Fling off the parsons too, for they are prime movers of all your misery. Do they not teach you, and teach you from your youth up, that ye must have princes and priests? Eh, brothers, where is that written in the Scriptures?

"Doth not St. Peter say (1st Epistle, chap, ii.), 'Ye are a royal priesthood'? What then! if ye are kings, princes, and priests yourselves, must ye needs pay for other kings, princes, and priests? Can ye not govern yourselves? can ye not pray for yourselves? In my opinion, yes! Doth not the same St. Peter likewise call ye 'a chosen people,' 'a people of inheritance;' but, I pray you, where is your inheritance?--poor beggars as ye are--to whom neither priest nor prince will give one can of beer. Ha! go, I tell you--take back your kingship, your priesthood, your inheritance. Become Like-dealers, brothers, even as the early Christians, who had all things in common, before the greed of priest or prince had robbed them of all. Like-dealers! Like-dealers! run, run--kill, slay, strike all dead, and never rest until ye drown the last priest in the blood of the last prince!"

As the hag thus spoke, through the horrible inspiration of Satan, the passions of the mob rose to frenzy, and they rushed out and joined the bands in the streets, and the crowds that poured from every door; and as they repeated her words from one to the other the frenzy spread (for they were like oil to fire). But the hag with the black plaster on her nose, when she saw herself left alone in the chamber, looked out after them, and laughed, and danced, and clapped her hands.

Now the Prince and court had withdrawn to Colbatz for safety, and a council was summoned in all haste and anxiety. The water-gate was barred likewise, to prevent a junction with the people of Lastadie and Wiek, but the townspeople, who had gathered in immense crowds, broke it in, and joining with the others, proceeded to storm the council-hall, where the honourable council were then sitting. They shouted, roared, menaced, and seizing the clerk, Claude Lorenz, in the chamber, murdered him before the very eyes of the burgomasters, and flung the body out of the window;

then rushing down the steps again, proceeded along the corn-market, and by the high street into the horse-market, where they sacked three breweries from the roof to the cellar; and dragging out the barrels, staved in the bottom, and drank out of their hats and caps, shouting, roaring, singing, and dancing, while they swilled the good beer; so that the sight was a scandal to God and man.

And the uproar waxed stronger and stronger throughout that whole night. Not a word of remonstrance or expostulation will the people listen to; they threaten to hang up the messengers of the honourable council, and show no respect even to a mandate from his Highness, under his own seal and hand, which a horseman brings them. They laugh, mock, fling it into the gutter, sack more breweries, and by ten of the clock, just as the citizens are going to church, they number ten bands strong.

So my worthy father-in-law, Dr. Cramer, with the dean and archdeacon of St Mary's, stood upon the steps at the church-door as the bells rung, and the mob rushed by to sack more breweries. And he spoke friendly to the rioters--"They should stop and hear what the Word of God said about the uproar at Ephesus (Acts xix.)."

And some would, and some would not. What did they want with parsons? Strike all the parsons dead. They could play the priest for themselves, and forgive their own sins. Yet many went in, for it was the custom to attend the weekly preaching, and my worthy father-in-law, turning round, addressed them from the nave of the church--me-thinks they needed it!

One very beautiful comparison that he employed made a great impression, and brought many to reason. For he spoke of the bees, how, when they wander too far from the hive, they can be brought back by soft, sweet melody, and so might this wild and wandering human swarm be brought back to the true hive by the soft and thrilling melody of God's holy Word. Then for conclusion he read the princely mandate from the altar; but at this the uproar recommenced, and they ran shouting and screaming out of the church, and to their wild work again, staving in the barrels and drinking the beer; and they insulted a magistrate that spoke mildly to them, and said if they would be quiet, he would try and have the tax removed. So they raged like the bands of Korah and Abiram; wanted to kill every one, all the rich, and divide their goods; for their riches were their blood and sweat. They would drag the four guilds to the council-hall, and the chief burgomasters, and hang them all up, and afterwards the honourable council, and all the priests, &c. So passed the first and second day.

On the third morning by six of the clock, his Highness Duke Philip, with all his suite, drove in six coaches from Colbatz up to the Oderstrasse, galloping into the middle of the crowd of

noisy, drunken rioters, who thronged the grass-market as thick as bees in a swarm.

He wished to pass on quickly to the castle, but could not, so he had to see and hear for himself how the insurrection raged, and the mob surrounded the coach of his Highness with loud cries, in which nothing could be heard distinctly, but on one side "Kill him!" and on the other, "Let him go!" This made Bishop Francis wild with anger, and he wanted to jump out of the coach and beat back the people, but Duke Philip gently restrained him. "See you not," he said, "the people are sick? Hot words will increase their sickness." Then he motioned to Mag. Reutzio, the court chaplain, who sat in the coach, to admonish the crowd.

But the moment the reverend M. Reutzio put his head out of the window to address them, the people shouted, "Down with the parson! what is he babbling for. Dr. Cramer told us all that yesterday. We want no parsons; kill them! kill them! Down with priests! down with princes!" And they sprang upon the horses to cut the traces, but the coachman and outriders slashed away right and left with their horsewhips, so that the mob recoiled; and then with loud shouts of "Make way! make way!" the coachman lashed his horses forward into a gallop.

But behold, as they crossed the Shoe-strasse, a coarse, thick-set woman knelt by the kennel with her daughter, a half-grown girl, and they were drinking beer from a barrel like calves. This same woman was knocked down by the foremost horse, so that she fell into the gutter. Hereat she roared and cursed his princely Grace, and flung the beer-can at him, but it fell upon the horse, who grew wild, and dashed off in a mad gallop across the Shoe-strasse into the Pelzerstrasse, and up to the castle without pausing, where a large crowd had already collected.

If the sovereign people had been wild before, they were ten times more wild now, and ran to try and get into the castle after his Highness; but the Duke ordered the gates to be closed. He, finding that the courts and corridors were already filled with the members of the venerable council, and three hundred of the militia, bade the men stand to their arms, load the heavy artillery, and erect the blood-standard on the tower, while he and the princes, with the honourable members, considered what could best be done in this grave and dangerous crisis. Whereupon he bade the council attend him in the state banqueting-hall.

Now the honourable council declared they were ready to part life and limb for their liege lord and the illustrious house of Pomerania, according to the terms of their oath; but the burghers would not. For when Duke Philip asked, would not the burghers go forth, and help to disperse this armed and unruly mob, the militia made sundry objections, and set forth numerous difficulties. Whereupon Bishop Francis started up, and exclaimed, "Brother, I pray thee, do not stoop to conciliate the people! If ye know not

how to die, I can go forth and die for all--since it has come to this." And he rose to depart.

But his Highness seized him by the hand, and entreated patience yet for one hour more. Then he turned to the militia, and again admonished them of their duty, and bid them remember the oath; but they answered sharply, "Why the devil should we go forth and shoot our brothers, neighbours, and friends? They are more to us than all." _Item_, they recapitulated their objections and difficulties.

Hereupon his Highness exclaimed, "Alas! how comes it that my good people of Stettin are so unruly? If the Stralsunders indeed had risen, I would say nothing, but my dear Stettiners, who have ever been so true and loyal, holding to their province through all adversities, and now--ah! that I should live to see this day!"

Then Bishop Francis spake--"Truly, our good Stettiners are to be known no longer. Were it possible to bewitch a whole people, I would say this witch-devil of Marienfliess had done it. For in all Pomeranian land was it ever heard that the people refused obedience to their Prince as the burgher militia here have dared to refuse this day?"

Just then the evil tidings arrived that the mob were sacking the house of one of the chiefs of the council, whereupon his Highness Duke Philip called out again, "Will ye stand by me or not? Here is no time for hesitation, but action. Will ye follow me? Speak, lieges!"

Hereat a couple of hundred voices responded "Yes, yes;" but the "yes" fell as dull and cold upon the ear as the clang of a leaden bell.

However, Bishop Francis instantly exclaimed, "Good! Go then, all of ye, to the armoury, and arm yourselves with speed. Meanwhile I shall see to the loading of the cannon in the castle court. Then whosoever among you is for God and the Prince, follow me to victory or death."

But Duke Philip interposed. "Not so, dear brother; not so, my good lieges; let us try first what reconciliation will do, for they are my erring children."

And though Duke Francis was sore displeased and impatient, yet my gracious Prince despatched his chief equerry, Andreas Ehlers, as herald to the people, dressed in complete armour, and with a drawn sword in his hand, accompanied by three trumpeters, to read a new princely proclamation to the people.

So the herald rode first to the grass-market, and when the trumpet sounded, the people stood still and listened, whereupon he read the following proclamation, in a loud voice:--

"The Serene and Illustrious Prince and Lord, Lord Philip, Duke of Stettin, Pomerania, Cassuben, and Wenden, Prince of Rugen, Count of Gutzkow, and Lord of the lands of Lauenburg and Butow, our gracious Prince, Seigneur, and Lord, hereby commandeth all present, from Lastadie, Wiek, Dragern, and other places assembled, to lay down their arms, and retire each man to his own home in peace and quietness, without offering further molestation to his loyal lieges, burghers, and citizens, on pain of severe punishment in person and life, and deprivation of all wonted privileges. Further, if they have aught of complaint against the honourable council or burgesses, let them bring the same before his Highness himself. Meanwhile the quart of beer, until further orders, shall be reduced to its original price, as agreed on yesterday in council, and be sold henceforth for one Stralsund shilling.

"Signatum, Old Stettin, the 18th July, 1616.

"PHILIPPUS, _manu sua_."

When the herald had finished reading, and shown the princely signature and seal to the ringleaders, a great murmur arose among the crowd, of which, however, the herald took no heed, but rode on to the horse-market, where he likewise read the proclamation, and so on through the principal thorough-fares. Then he returned to the grass-market, but lo! not a soul was to be seen; the crowds had all dispersed, and quietness reigned everywhere. Whereupon the herald rode joyfully to the horse-market, to see if the like had happened there, and truly peace had returned here too. And all along the principal streets where the proclamation had been read, the people were thoroughly subdued by this princely clemency and authority.

So when the herald returned to the castle, and related the success of his mission, the tears filled the eyes of his Grace Duke Philip, and taking his lord brother by the hand, he exclaimed, "See, dear Francis, how true are the words of Cicero, '_Nihil tam popolare quam bonitas_'." [Footnote: (Nothing so popular as kindness.)] Then they both went forth and walked arm in arm throughout the town, and wherever his Grace saw any group still gathered round the beercans, he told them to be content, for the beer should be sold to them at the Stralsund shilling. And thus the riot was quelled, and the town returned to its accustomed quietness and order.

Now truly the same Cicero says, "_In imperita muititudine est varietas et inconstantia et crebra tanquam tempestatum, sic sententiarum commutatio_" [Footnote: (The senseless multitude are changeful and inconstant as the weather, and their opinions suffer as many mutations.)]

CHAPTER X.

Of the fearful events that take place at Marienfliess--Item, bow Dorothea Stettin becomes possessed by the devil.

Meanwhile Satan hath not been less busy at Marienfliess in Sidonia's absence, than at Old Stettin in her presence. But he cunningly changed his mode of action, not to be recognised, and truly Dorothea Stettin was the first he practised on. For having recovered from her sickness, she one day presented herself at church in the nun's choir as usual; but while joining in the closing hymn, she suddenly changed colour, began to sob and tremble in every limb, then continued the chant in a strange, uncertain voice, sometimes treble, sometimes bass, like that of a lad whose beard is just beginning to grow. At this the abbess and the sisterhood listened and stared in wonder, then asked if the dear sister had fallen ill again?

"No," she answered gruffly, "she only wanted to be married. She was tired of playing the virgin. Did the abbess know, perchance, of any one who would suit her as bridegroom? For she must and would be married!"

Think now of the horror of the nuns. Still they thanked God that such a scandalum had happened during the singing, and not at the blessed sermon. Then they seized her by the arms, and drew her away to her cell. But woe, alas! scarcely had she reached it, when she threw herself upon her bed in strong convulsions. Her eyes turned so that only the whites were to be seen, and her face grew so drawn and strange that it was a grief to look upon it, and still she kept on screaming in the deep, gruff man's voice--"For a bridegroom! a bridegroom!" she that was so modest, and had such a delicate, gentle voice. Whereupon all the sisters rushed in to hear her the moment the sermon was over; item, the priest in his surplice.

But the unfortunate maiden no sooner beheld him, than she cried out in the deep bass voice--"David, I must marry; wilt thou be my bridegroom?" And when he answered, "Alas, poor girl! when was such speech ever heard from you before? Satan himself must have possessed you!" she cried out again, "Hold your chatter--will you, or will you not?"

"How can I take you?" replied the priest; "you know well that I have a wife already." Whereupon the gruff bass voice answered, with mocking laughter, "Ha! ha! ha! what matter for that? Take more wives!"

Here some of the young novices laughed, but others who had never wept bis dato, now broke out in violent weeping, and the abbess exclaimed, "Oh, merciful God! who hath ever heard the like

from this our chaste sister, whom we have known from her youth up?
Oh! deliver her from this wicked devil who reigns in her soul and
members!"

But at the mention of the holy name, the evil one raged more
furiously than ever within her. He tore her, so that she foamed at
the mouth, and--ah! woe is me that I must speak it--uttered coarse
and shameful words, such as the most shameless groom or jack-boy
would scarce pronounce.

These sent all the novices flying and screaming away; but the
abbess remained, with some of the nuns, also the priest, who
prepared now to exorcise the devil with the most powerful
conjurations. Yet ere he began, a strange thing happened; for the
possessed maiden became suddenly quite still, all her members
relaxed, and her eyes closed heavily as if in sleep. But it was
not so, for she then began, in her own soft, natural voice, to
chant a hymn in Dutch, although they all knew she never had
learned one word of that language. The words were these:--

"Oh, chaste Jesu! all whose being
Was so lovely to our seeing,
Thoughts and speech, and soul and senses,
Filled with noblest evidences.

Oh! the God that dwelt in Thee,
In His sinless purity!
Oh, Christ Immanuel,
Save me from the sinner's hell!

Make my soul, with power divine,
Chaste and holy, ev'n as Thine!"

Then she added in her own tongue--"Ah! ye must pray much before
this devil is cast out of me. But still pray, pray diligently, and
it will be done.

"Guard, Lord Christ, our deepest slumber,
Evil thoughts may come in dreams;
And the senses list the murmur,
Though the frail form sleeping seems.

Oh! if Thy hand do not keep us,
Even in sleep, from passion's flame,
Though our eyes close on temptation,
We may fall to sin and shame!
Amen."

"Yes, yes, oh, pray for me; be not weary, her judgment is
pronounced."

"What mean you?" spake the abbess, "whose judgment hath been
pronounced?"

Illa--"Know you not, then? Sidonia's."

Hæ--"How could she have bewitched you? She is far from here."

Illa--"Spirits know no distance."

Hæ--"How then hath she done this?"

Illa--"Her spirit Chim summoned another spirit last evening, who entered into me as I gasped for air, after that strife between you and your maid, for I was shocked to hear this faithful creature called a thief."

Hæ--"And is she not a thief?"

Illa--"In no wise. She is as innocent as a new-born child."

Hæ--"But there was no one else in the chamber when I laid down my purse, and when she went away it was gone."

Illa--"Ah! your dog Watcher was there, and the purse was made of calf's skin, greased with your hands, for you had been rolling butter; so the dog swallowed it, having got no dinner. Kill the dog, therefore, and you will find your purse."

Hæ--"For the love of Heaven! how know you aught of my rolling butter?"

Illa--"A beautiful form like an angel sits at my head, and whispers all to me."

Hæ--"That must be the devil, who has gone out of thee, for fear of the priest."

Illa--"Oh, no! He sits under my liver. See!--there is the angel again! Ha! how terribly his eyes are flashing!"

Hæ--"Canst thou see, then? Thine eyes are close shut" (opening Dorothea's eyes by force, but the pupil is not to be seen, only the white).

Illa--"I see, but not through the eyes--through the stomach."

Hæ--"What? Thou canst see through the stomach?"

Illa--"Ay, truly! I can see everything: there is Anna Apenborg peeping under the bed; now she lets the quilt drop in fright. Is it not so?"

The abbess clasps her hands together, looks at the priest in astonishment, and cries, "For the love of God, tell me what does all this betoken?"

To which the priest answers, "My reason is overwhelmed here, and I might almost believe what the ancients pretended, and Cornelius Agrippa also maintained, that two daemones or spirits attend each man from infancy to the grave; and that each spirit strives to blend himself with the mortal, and make the human being like unto himself, whether it be for good or evil. [Footnote: Cornelius Agrippa, of the noble race of Nettersheim, natural philosopher, jurist, physician, soldier, necromancer, and professor of the black art--in fine, learned in all natural and supernatural wisdom, closed his restless life at Grenoble, 1535. His principal work, from which the above is quoted (cap. xx.), is entitled De Occulta Philosophia. That Socrates had an attendant spirit or demon from his youth up, whose suggestions he followed as an oracle, is known to us from the Theages of Plato. But of the nature of this genius, spirit, or voice, we have no certain indications from the ancients, though the subject has been much investigated in numerous writings, beginning with the monographs of Apulejus and Plutarch. The first (Apulejus), De Deo Socratis, makes the strange assertion, that it was a common thing with the Pythagoreans to have such a spirit; so much so, that if any among them declared he had not one, it was deemed strange and singular.]

"However, I esteem this apparition to be truly Satan, who has changed himself into an angel of light to deceive more easily, as is his wont; therefore, as this our poor sister hath also a prophesying spirit, like that maiden mentioned, Acts xvi. 16, let us do even as St. Paul, and conjure it to leave her. But first, it would be advisable to see if she hath spoken truth respecting the dog."

So my dog was killed, and there in truth was the purse of gold found in his stomach, to the wonderment of all, and the great joy of the poor damsel who had been accused of stealing it. Immediately after, the poor possessed one turned herself on the couch, sighed, opened her eyes, and asked, "Where am I?" for she knew nothing at all of what she had uttered during her sleep, and only complained of a weakness through her entire frame. [Footnote: That poor Dorothea was in the somnambulistic state (according to our phraseology) is evident. A similar instance in which the demoniac passed over into the magnetic state is given by Kerner, "History of Possession," p. 73. I must just remark here, that Kieser ("System of Tellurism") is probably in error when he asserts, from the attitudes discovered amongst some of the Egyptian hieroglyphics, that the ancients were acquainted with the mode of producing the magnetic state by manipulation or passes, for Jamblicbus enumerates all the modes known to the ancients of producing the divining crisis, in his book De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum, in the chapter, Insuperatas vacat ab actione

propria_, page 58, and never mentions manipulation amongst them, of which mode, indeed, Mesmer seems to have been the original discoverer. The ancients, too, were aware (as we are) that the magnetic and divining state can be produced only in young and somewhat simple (_simpliciores_) persons. Porphyry confirms this in his remarkable letter to the Egyptian priest of Anubis (to which I earnestly direct the physiologists), in which he asks, "Wherefore it happens that only simple (_aplontxronz kai nxonz_) and young persons were fitted for divination?" Yet there were many even then, as we learn from Jamblich and the later Psellus, who maintained the modern rationalistic view, that all these phenomena were produced only by a certain condition of our own spiritual and bodily nature; although all somnambulists affirm the contrary, and declare they are the result of external _spiritual_ influences working upon them.] After this, the evil spirit left her in peace for two days, and every one hoped that he had gone out of her; but on the third day he began to rage within the unfortunate maiden worse than ever, so that they had to send quickly for the priest to exorcise him. But behold, as he entered in his surplice, and uttered the salutation, "The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon this maid," the evil spirit with the man's coarse voice cried out of poor Dorothea's mouth--

"Come here, parson, I'll soon settle for you."

Then it cursed, swore, and blasphemed God, and raged within the poor maiden, so that the foam gathered on her pale lips. But the reverend David is not to be frightened from his duty by the foul fiend. He kneeled down first, with all present, and prayed earnestly to God; then endeavoured to make the possessed maiden repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed after him; but the devil would not let her. He raged, roared, laughed scornfully, and abused the priest with such unseemly words that it was a grief and horror to hear them.

"Wait, parson," it screamed, "in three days thou shalt be as I am. (Namely, a spirit; though no one knew then what the devil meant.) I will make thee pay for this, because thou tormentest me."

But neither menaces nor blasphemies could deter the good priest. He lifted his eyes to heaven, and prayed that beautiful prayer from the Pomeranian liturgy, page 244, which he had by heart:--

"O Lord Jesu Christ, Thou Son of the living God, at whose name every knee must bend, in heaven, upon the earth, and under the earth; God and man; our Saviour, our brother, our Redeemer; who hast conquered sin, and death, and hell, trod on the devil's head and destroyed his works--Thou hast promised, Thou holy Saviour, 'that whatever we ask the Father in Thy name, Thou wilt grant unto us.' Therefore, by that holy promise, we pray Thee, Lord Christ, to look with pity upon this our sister, who hath been baptized in Thy holy name, redeemed by Thy precious blood, washed from all sin, anointed by Thy Holy Spirit, and made one with Thee, a member

of the living temple of Thy body. Relieve her from the tyranny and power of the devil; graciously cast out this unclean spirit, that so Thy holy name may be praised and glorified, for ever and ever. Amen."

Then he laid his hand upon the sick maiden's head, while the hellish fiend raged and roared more furiously than ever, so that all present were seized with trembling, and exclaimed--

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, I bid, desire, and command thee, thou unclean spirit, to come forth, and give place to the Holy Spirit of God! Amen."

Whereupon the convulsions ceased in the sick maiden's limbs, and she sank down gently on her bed, as a sail falls when the cords are loosed and the wind ceases; and thus she lay for a long time quite still.

After which, she said in her own natural voice--

"Now I see him no more!"

"Who is it that you see no more?" asked the abbess.

Illa--"The evil spirit, my angel says. He has gone forth from me. Woe, woe, alas!"

Hæ--"Why dost thou cry, alas, when he has in truth gone out from thee?"

Illa--"My angel says, he will first strangle the priest who has cast him forth, then will he return, as it is written in the Scripture (Matt. xi. 24), 'After three days I will return to my house from which I had gone forth.' Ah, look! the good priest is growing pale. But let him be comforted, for he shall have his reward in heaven, as the Lord saith (Matt, v.)."

Hæ--"But why does the great God permit such power to the devil, if what thou sayest be true?"

Illa is silent.

Hæ--"Thou art silent; what says thy angel?"

Illa--"He is silent also--now he speaks again."

Hæ--"What says he then?"

Illa--"The wisdom of God is silent."

The abbess repeats the words, while the priest falls back against the wall, as white as chalk, and exclaims--

"Your angel is right. I feel as if a mouse were running up and down through my body. Alas! now the bones of my chest are breaking. Farewell, dear sisters; in heaven we shall meet again. Farewell; pray for me. I go to lay my head upon my death-pillow."

And he was scarcely gone out at the door when a great cry and weeping arose amongst the sisters present, and the abbess asked, weeping likewise--

"Is this, too, Sidonia's work?"

Illa--"Whose else? She hath never forgiven him because he rejected her love, and hath only delayed his death to a fitting opportunity."

Hæ--"Merciful God! and will this murderous nun be brought to judgment?"

Illa--"Yes, when her hour comes, she will be burned and beheaded--not many years after this."

Hæ--"And what will become of you? Will you die, if Satan often takes up his dwelling-place in your heart?"

Illa--"If you do not prevent him, I shall die; if he leave me, I shall grow well."

Hæ--"What can we, miserable mortals, do to prevent him?"

Illa--"Jobst Bork of Saatzig has three rings, which the spirits made, and gave to his grandmother in Pansin. Item, he has also a beautiful daughter called Diliiana, and as no second on earth bears her name, [Footnote: In fact, I have nowhere else met with the name "Diliiana," whereas that of "Sidonia" is by no means uncommon. Virgil calls Dido "Sidonia" (~n. i, v. 446), with somewhat of poetic license, for she was not born in Sidon but in Tyre. About the time of the Reformation this name became very common in the regal houses. For example, King George of Bohemia, Duke Henry of Saxony, Duke Franz of Westphalia, and others, had daughters called "Sidonia." For this reason, therefore, the proud knight of Stramehl probably gave the same name to his daughter. In the Middle Ages I find only one Sidonia or Sittavia, the spouse of Count Manfred of Xingelheim, who built the town of Zittau, and died in the year 1021.] so is there no other who equals her in goodness, piety, humility, chastity, and courage. If this Diliiana lays one of the rings on my stomach, in the name of God, the devil can no more enter in me, and I shall be healed. But what do I see?--there she comes herself."

Hæ--"Who comes?"

Illa--"Diliiana. She has run away from her father, and will

offer herself as servant to Sidonia, because old Wolde is sick."

Hæ--"She must be foolish then, if this be true."

Illa--"Ay, she is foolish, but it is from pure love, which indeed is a godlike folly; for Sidonia hath bewitched her poor father, and he grows worse and worse, and her prayers to the sorceress are of no avail to help him, so she hath privately left her father's castle, to offer herself as servant to Sidonia; for no wench, far or near, will be found who will take old Wolde's place, and she hopes, in return for this, that the sorceress will give her something from her herbal to cure her old father. Ha! what do I see? How her beautiful hair streams behind her upon the wind! How she runs like a deer over the heather, and looks back often, for her heart is trembling lest her father might send after her. Now she enters the wood; see, she kneels down, and prays for her father and for herself, that God will keep her steps. Let us pray also, dear sisters, for her, for the poor priest, and for the unfortunate maiden."

Whereupon they all fell upon their knees, and the possessed virgin offered up so beautiful a prayer that none had ever heard the like before, and every face was bedewed with tears. After which she awoke, and, as the first time, remembered nothing whatever of what had passed, or of what she had uttered.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the arrival of Diliana and the death of the convent priest--Item, how the unfortunate corpse is torn by a wolf.

Scarcely had the abbess returned to her apartment when Diliana sprang in, with flowing hair, and her beautiful, blooming face looking like a rose sprinkled with morning dew. So the worthy matron screamed first with wonder that all should be true, then taking the lovely young maiden in her arms, pressed her to her heart, and asked--

"Wherefore comest thou here, my beloved Diliana?"

Illa--"I have run away from my father, good mother, and will serve my cousin Sidonia Bork as her waiting-maid, hoping that in return she will give him something out of her herbal to heal his poor frame, which is distracted day and night with pain, even as she healed you and Sheriff Sparling; and she will do this, I am sure, because I hear that her maid, Anne Wolde, is sick, and no one in all the country round will take service with her, they say."

Hæ.--"Poor child, thou knowest not what thou dost. She will slay thee, or ill-treat thee in her wickedness, or may be bring some worse evil than either on thee."

Illa.--"And I will do as the Lord commanded--if she strike me on one cheek, I will turn to her the other also, whereby she will be softened, and consent to help my poor father."

Hæ.--"She will help him in nothing, and then how wilt thou bear the disgrace of servitude?"

Illa.--"Disgrace? If the soul suffer not disgrace, the body, methinks, can suffer it never."

Hæ.--"But how canst thou do the duties of a serving-wench? Thou, brought up the lady of a castle!"

Illa.--"I have learned everything privately from Lisette; trust me, I can feed the pigs and sheep, milk the cow, and wash the dishes, &c."

Hæ.--"But what put it into thy head, child, to serve her as a maid?"

Illa.--"When I last entreated my cousin Sidonia to help my poor father, she said, 'Get me a good maid who will do my business well, and then I shall see what can be done to help him. Now, as no one will take service with her, what else can I do, but play the trencher-woman myself, and thus save my poor father's life?'"

Hæ.--"Thou hast saved it once before, as I have heard."

Illa is silent.

Hæ.--"How was it? Tell me, that I may see if they told me the story truly."

Illa.--"Ah, good mother, speak no more of it. It was as you have heard, no doubt."

Hæ.--"People say that a horse threw your father, dragged him along, and attempted to kick him, upon which, while all the men-folk stood and gaped, you flew like the wind, seized the bridle of the animal, and held him fast till your father was up again."

Illa.--"Well, mother, there was nothing very wonderful in that."

Hæ.--"Also, they tell that one day at the hunt you came upon a part of the wood where two robbers were beating a noble almost to death, after having plundered him. You sprang forward, menaced them, and finally made them take to their heels, after

which you helped the poor wounded man upon your own palfrey, like a good Samaritan indeed, and without thought of the danger or fatigue, walked beside him, leading the horse by the bridle until clear out of the wood, and thus----"

Illa.--"Ah, good mother, do not make me more red than I am; for know, the poor wounded noble thought so much of what I had done, that he must needs ask me for his bride, though truly I would have done the like for a beggar."

Hæ.--"Then it was George Putkammer, and thou wilt not have him?"

Illa.--"I may say with Sara (Tobias iii.), 'Thou knowest, Lord, that I have desired no man, and have kept my soul pure from all evil lusts;' but indeed to save my father's life is more to me than a bridegroom. A bridegroom may be offered many times in life to a young thing like me, but a father comes never again."

Hæ.--"God grant that thou mayest save him, but never tell thy cousin Sidonia of George Putkammer's love, else, methinks, it will be all over with thee."

Illa.--"But if she ask me, I cannot lie unto her----"

Just then the cry was heard, "The priest is dying;" whereupon the abbess, Diliانا, indeed the whole convent, rushed out to visit him at the glebe-house. The priest, however, was dead when they arrived, and his corpse had the same signature of Satan as the others who died before him, save only that his right hand was uplifted, and had stiffened into the same position in which he held it when he exorcised the evil spirit out of Dorothea.

So they all stood around pale and trembling, while they listened to his poor widow telling how his breast-bone rose up higher and higher, until at length he died in horrible agony.

But behold, the door flies open, and Sidonia, who had just returned from her long journey, enters, with her long black habit trailing after her through the chamber. Whereupon they all become dumb with horror and disgust, and stand there like so many marble or enchanted figures.

"Ah, what is this I hear," exclaimed the accursed sorceress, "just on my return home? Is the worthy and upright man really dead? Woe! alas, that I could have saved him from this! How did it happen? Thank God that I was not here at the time, or the wicked world, which lays all manner of crimes upon me falsely, might have accused me of this likewise. Yes, I thank God a thousand times that I was absent! Speak, poor Barbara! how did it happen that your dear spouse fell so suddenly ill?"

But the poor wife only trembled, and sank powerless against the

bed where the corpse of her husband lay stretched; for when Sidonia advanced close to it, the red blood oozed from the mouth of the dead man, as if to accuse his murderess before God and man.

And no one could speak a word, not even a sob was heard in answer to her questions; whereupon the sorceress spake again--

"Alas, what is all this which has happened in my absence! Good Dorothea, they tell me, is possessed by a devil; but, at least, people can see now that I am as innocent as a new-born infant; though, assuredly, some terrible sinner must be lurking amongst us, though we know it not, or all this judgment would not come upon the convent. I would not willingly condemn any Christian soul; but, if I err not, the old dairy-woman is the person!"

This she said from revenge, because the woman had refused to give her seven cheeses for a florin, when she was on her way to Stettin. Of the misfortunes which grew out of these same cheeses for the poor dairy-woman, we shall hear more in due time.

At this horrible hypocrisy and falsehood the abbess could no longer hold her peace, and cried, "In my opinion, sister, you err much; the old dairy-mother is a pious and honest woman, as all the convent can testify, and attended diligently on our dead pastor here to be catechised."

Illa--"Who then, else? It was incomprehensible. A thousand times thank God that she had been away during it all. Now they must hold their tongues, they who had blackened her to the Prince; but his Grace had done her justice, and dismissed her honourably from the trial at Stettin."

Hæ--"I have a different version of the story; for his Highness has commanded you to resign the sub-prioress to Dorothea Stettin forthwith--_item_, you are to be kept close within the convent walls, for which purpose I shall order the great padlock to be placed again upon the gates. Thus his Grace commands; and as we have a chapter assembled here already, I may announce the resolve with all due form."

Illa--"What! you tell me this, in the presence of the priest's wife and your serving-wenches? Do they belong to the chapter of noble virgins? I shall forward a _protocollum_ to his Highness, setting forth all that has happened in my absence, and get all the sisterhood to sign it, that the Duke may know what kind of folk the abbess summons to her chapter; but as touching the sub-prioress, it is well known to you all how it was forced upon me by Dorothea, as I fully explained to the princes in council. However, speak, sisters; if ye indeed wish this light, silly creature, this devil-possessed Dorothea Stettin, for your sub-prioress again, take her, and welcome--I will not prevent you. She can teach you all the shameful words which, as I hear, flow so liberally from her lips--eh, sisters, will ye have the wanton or

not?"

And when the nuns all cried "No, no!" the accursed witch went on--

"Well, then, I bid ye all to assemble instantly in my apartment, to testify the same to his Highness; also to bear witness of the evil deeds done in my absence, for that the poor priest has died no natural death, is evident; therefore his Grace, I trust, will probe the business to the uttermost, and find out who is the evil Satan amongst us--ay, and tear off the deceitful mask, that my good name thereby may be justified before the Prince and the whole world."

Diliana now stepped forward from amidst a crowd of serving-women among whom she had concealed herself, and bowed low in salutation to Sidonia; but the witch laughed scornfully, and cried, "What! has your worthy father sent you to me?"

Illa.--"Ah, no; she came out of her own free will, to serve her good cousin Sidonia, for she heard that no maid could be found to hire with her, therefore she would play the serving-wench herself, and ask no other wages but a cure from her receipt-book for her dear father, who was daily growing worse and worse."

Hæ.--"She required much from her maid; and on her way home she had bought six little pigs--_item_, she had a cow, cocks and hens, geese, and seven sheep. All these the maid must feed and look after, besides doing all the indoor work."

Illa.--"She could do all that easily, for old Lisa had instructed her in everything."

Hæ.--"But how was it that she was not ashamed to play the serving-wench--she, a castle and land dowered maiden, with that illustrious name she bore?"

Illa.--"There was but one thing of which men need be ashamed, and that was sin; but this was not sin."

Hæ.--"She was very sharp with her answers. Why did she not talk to her father, who had made her brother's son, Otto of Stramehl, give up to him her two farm-houses in Zachow, with all the rents appertaining; but Otto had been justly punished by the good God, for she had just got tidings of his death."

Illa.--"But my father will restore you all, good cousin, as he wrote to you himself."

Hæ.--"Ay, the old houses, may be, he'll give back, but will he restore the rents that have been gathering for fifty years? No, no, he refuses the money, even as my nephew Otto refused it (but God has struck him dead for it, as I said before). [Footnote: He died suddenly just at this time; and Sidonia

confessed, at the eleventh torture question, that she had caused his death, (Dähnert, p. 430.)] Oh, truly these proud knights of my own kin and name stood bravely for me against the world! ay, I owe them many thanks for turning me out, a poor young maiden, unfriended and alone, till I became a world's wonder, and the scorn of every base and lying tongue; but persecution was ever the lot of the children of God."

Illa.--"Her poor father had not the gold; for five rix-dollars a year would amount in fifty years to five hundred rix-dollars, and such a sum her father could not command."

Hæ.--"Yet he had enough to spend on horses, falcons, hunting, and the like; only for her he had naught."

Illa (kissing her hand).--"Ah, good cousin, leave him in peace, and help him if you can; I will serve thee as well as I am able--my life long, if you ask it of me."

Hæ.--"Away! thou silly, childish thing; how should the meek Sidonia ever bear to be served by a noble lady as thou art? If the world had not blackened me before, it might begin now in earnest, and justly."

Illa.--"Ah, good, kind cousin, will you then heal my father for nothing?"

Hæ.--"Well, I shall see about it, if, perchance, it be God's will."

Illa (kissing her hand again).--"Dear cousin, how good you are! Now see, all of ye, what a kind cousin I have in Sidonia, who has promised to cure my loved father" (dancing for joy like a child).

Hæ.--"Come, then, all present, to my apartment; thou, Diliana, mayest draw up the _protocollum_, and better, perhaps, than a bad notary. Come!"

So they all proceeded to the refectory, and the _protocollum_, was drawn up and signed, and Sidonia compelled the new convent porter to carry it off, that very night, to his Highness at Stettin.

Meanwhile the poor widow, along with some other women, including the old dairy-mother, prepared the poor priest's corpse for burial, and they put on him his black Geneva gown--_item_, black plush breeches, which his brother-in-law in Jacobshagen had made him a present of. I note the plush breeches especially, for what reason my readers will soon see; and because the parsonage swarmed with rats, they had the corpse carried before nightfall into the church, and set down close beside the altar; and by command of the sheriff the windows were thrown open to admit fresh

air, on account of the dead body lying there.

An hour after the poor widow went into the church, to see if the blood yet flowed from the mouth of her dear murdered husband. But what sees she?--the corpse is lying on its face in the coffin in place of on its back. She calls the dairy-mother in, trembling with horror, and they turn him between them. Then they go forth, but return in a little while again, and see, the corpse is again turned upon its face. And no one is able to comprehend how the corpse can turn of itself, or be turned by any one, for the widow has one key of the church and the abbess has the other; therefore the poor wife, simple as she is, resolves to hide herself in the church for the night, and light the altar candles, that she might see how it happened that the corpse turned in the coffin. And the dairy-mother agreed to watch with her; _item_, Anna Apenborg, who heard the story from them; _item_, Diliana, for as Sidonia had no bed to give her, the young maiden had gone to sleep with Anna, and there the priest's maid told them of the horrible way her poor master's corpse had turned in the coffin. So the weeping widow let them all watch with her gladly, for she feared to be alone, but warned them to speak no word, lest the evil-doer, whoever it might be, should perceive them, and keep away. There was no man within call, either, to help them, for the porter had gone away to Stettin; so they four, after commending themselves to God, went secretly into the church at ten of the clock, laid the corpse right upon its back, and lit candles round it, as the custom is. Item, they lit the candles on the altar, and then hid themselves in the dark confession-box, which lay close by the altar, and from which they could see the coffin perfectly.

After waiting for an hour or more, sighing and weeping, and when the hour-glass which they had brought with them showed it was the twelfth hour--hark! there was a noise in the coffin that made them all start to their feet, and at the same instant the private door of the nuns' choir opened gently, and something came down the steps of the gallery, step by step, on to the coffin, and the blood now froze in their veins, for they perceived that it was a wolf; and he laid his paws upon the corpse, and began to tear it.

At this sight the poor widow screamed aloud, whereupon the wolf sprang back and attempted to make off, but Diliana bounded on its track, crying, "A wolf! a wolf!" and seeing upon the altar an old tin crucifix, which some of the workmen who had been opening the vault had brought up from below, she seized it and pursued the wolf out of the great gate into the churchyard, while the rest followed screaming. And as the wolf ran fast, and made for the graves, as if to hide itself, the daring virgin, not being able to get near enough to strike it, flung the crucifix at the unclean beast, when lo! the wolf suddenly disappeared, and nothing was to be seen but Sidonia in the clear moonlight, standing trembling beside a grave.

"Good cousin!" exclaimed Diliana in horror, "where has the wolf

gone? we were pursuing a wolf." Upon which the horrible and accursed night-raven recovered herself quickly, and pointing with her finger to the crucifix which lay upon the ground, said with a tone of mingled scorn and anger, "There, thou stupid fool! he sank beneath that cross!"

The poor innocent child believed her, and ran forward to pick up the crucifix, looking in every direction around for the wolf; but the others, who were wiser, saw full well that the wolf had been none other than Sidonia herself, for her lips were bloody, and round them, like a beard, were sticking small black threads, which were indeed from the black silk hose of the poor corpse. And when they looked at her horrible mouth they trembled, but were silent from fear; all except the inquisitive Anna Apenborg, who asked, "Dear sister, what makes you here at midnight in the churchyard?"

Here the horrible witch-demon mastered her anger, and answered in a melancholy, plaintive tone, "Ah, good sister Anna! I had a miserable toothache, so that I could not sleep, and I just crept down here into the fresh air, thinking it might do me good. But what are you all doing here by night in the churchyard?"

No one replied; indeed, she seemed not to care for an answer, but put up her kerchief to her horrible and traitorous mouth, and turned away whimpering. The others, however, went back to the church, where the corpse truly lay upon its back as they had left it, but the hose were rent at the knee, and the flesh torn and bloody.

How can I tell now of the poor widow's screams and tears?

Summa--The corpse was buried the next day, and as no man had been a witness of the night-scene, only the weeping women, no one would believe their strange story, neither on the last trial would the judges even credit so wild a tale as that Sidonia could change herself into a wolf, and pronounced as their opinion, that fear must have made the women blind, or distracted their heads, and that no doubt a real wolf had attacked the corpse, which was by no means a strange or unusual occurrence. (But I have my own opinion on the subject, and many who read this will think differently from the judges, I warrant.)

For no more horrible vengeance could have been devised by Beelzebub himself, the chief of the devils, than this of the she-wolf Sidonia Bork (for Bork means wolf in the Gothic tongue), to revenge herself on the priest because he disdained her love. But why and wherefore the unfortunate corpse was found so often turned upon its face, that I cannot explain, and it must ever remain a mystery, I think. However, I shall pass on now to other matters, for truly we have had enough of these disgusting horrors. [Footnote: One of the most inveterately rooted of our superstitions is this belief in the existence of man-wolves. Ovid mentions it in his *_Lycaon_*, and even Herodotus. Many modern

examples are given in Dr. Weggand's natural history, which book I recommend to all lovers of the marvellous, for they will find much in it which far surpasses what we have related above concerning Sidonia. The belief in a vampire, which Lord Byron has clothed with his genius, belongs to the same order of superstitions; and Horst, in his Magic Library, furnishes some very curious remarks concerning it. Even Luther himself believed in the possibility of such existences.]

CHAPTER XII.

How Jobst Bork has himself carried to Marienfliess in his bed, to reclaim his fair young daughter Diliana--Item, how George Putkammer threatens Sidonia with a drawn sword.

Now Jobst Bork of Saatzig had but this one daughter, the fair Diliana, whom he loved ten times more than his life; and no sooner had he heard of her flight than he guessed readily whither, and for what cause, she had flown; for, that day and night her thoughts were bent on how to help him, he knew well; also, the teachings of old Lisa were not unknown to him. So he resolved to go and seek her, and sent for twelve peasants to carry him, as he was, in his bed, to Marienfliess, for his limbs were so contracted from gout that he could neither ride, walk, nor stand.

Accordingly, next morning early, the twelve peasants bearing the couch on which lay the poor knight, entered the great gate of the convent, and they set down the bed, by command of the knight, just beneath Sidonia's window. Whereupon the miserable father stretched forth his right hand, and cried out, as loud as he was able, "Sidonia Bork, I conjure you by the living God, give me my child again!"

Three times he repeated this adjuration. So we may imagine how the whole convent ran together to see who was there. Anna Apenborg and Diliana were, however, not amongst them, for they had been up late watching by the corpse, and were still fast asleep; _item_, Sidonia, I think, was snoring likewise, for she never appeared, until at last she threw up the window, half-dressed, and screamed out, "What wants the cursed knave? Hath the devil possessed you, Jobst, in earnest? Good people, take the fellow to Dorothea's cell--they are fit company for one another!"

But the knight again stretched forth his trembling arm from the bed, and repeated his adjuration solemnly, using the same words.

At this, Sidonia's face glowed with anger; and seizing her broom-stick, she rushed out of the room, down the steps, and into the courtyard, while her long, thin, white hair flew wildly about

her face and shoulders, and her red eyes glared like two red coals in her head. (I have omitted to notice that this horrible Satan's hag had long since got his signature in her red eyes; for, as the slaves of vice are known by their ash-pale colour, and the _black_ circle round their eyes, so the slaves of Satan are known by the _red_ circle.) But when the evil witch reached the spot where the sick knight lay on his bed, and saw the crowd standing round him, she changed her demeanour, and leaning on the broom-stick, exclaimed, "Methinks, Jobst, you are mad; and you and your daughter ought to be put at once into a mad-house; for, judge all of ye who stand here round us, how unjustly I am accused. Yesterday this man's daughter comes to me, and says she will play my serving-wench, if I promise to cure her father; just as if I were the Lord God, and could heal sickness as I willed; but I refused to take her, as was meet, and the whole convent can testify this of me; when, see now, here comes this fool of a father, and, taking the Lord's name in vain, demands his daughter of me, though I never had her, nor detained her; and she can go this moment whither she likes, as ye all know."

Hereupon the abbess herself advanced to the bed, and spake--"In truth, you err, sir knight. Sidonia hath refused to accept your daughter's service! But here comes the fair maiden herself--ask her if it is not so."

And Diliانا, who had thrown on her clothes in haste, and ran with Anna out of her cell, sprang forward, and fell sobbing upon her father's bosom, who sobbed likewise, and cries, in an agitated voice, "God be thanked, I have thee again; now I shall die happy! Ah! silly child, how couldst thou run away from me! Dearest!--my heart's dearest!--my own joy-giving Diliانا! ah, leave me not again before I die--it will not be long, perhaps."

Here the weeping of the peasants interrupted him, for they loved the good knight dearly, and the rude boors sobbed, and blew their noses, in great affliction, like so many children. But the knight was too proud to beg a cure from Sidonia; he would rather die--better death than humiliation. So he spake--"Children, lift me up again, in the name of God, and bear me home; and thou, my Diliانا, walk thou by my side, sweet girl, that my eyes may not lose thee for an instant."

So the peasants lifted up the bed again on their shoulders; but Diliانا exclaimed, "Wait, ah, my heart's dearest father, you do our good cousin Sidonia sore injustice. Only think, she has promised to cure you, without any recompense at all! Is it not true, dear cousin? Set the bed down again, good vassals! Is it not true, dear cousin?"

As she thus spoke, and kissed the claws of the horrible hell-wolf with her beautiful bright lips, such an expression of rage and unutterable hatred passed over Sidonia's face, that all, even the peasants, shuddered with horror, and nearly let the bed fall from

their trembling hands; but the fair young girl was unaware of it, for she was bending down upon the hand of the evil sorceress.

However, my hag soon composed herself; and, no doubt, fearing the vengeance of Duke Francis, or hoping perhaps to cover her evil deeds by this one public act of charity, and so gain a good name before the world, and the fair opinion of their Highnesses, to whom she had written the day previous, she rested her arm once more upon the broom-stick, and turning to the crowd, thus spake--

"Ye shall see now that Sidonia hath a truly Christian heart in her bosom; for, by the help of God, I will try and heap coals of fire upon mine enemy's head. Yes, he is mine enemy. None have persecuted me more than he and his race, though, God be good to me, it is my own race likewise. His false father was the first to malign me, and yet more guilty was his still falser mother; but God punished her hypocrisy with a just judgment, for she died in child-birth of him, so true is it what the Scripture says, 'The Lord abhors both the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.' Ah, she was deceitful beyond all I have met with upon earth--also, this her son, the false Clara's son, hath made my nephew, Otto of Stramehl, in a traitorous and unknighly manner, give him up my two farm-houses at Zachow, and he now refuses to restore me either my farms or the rents thereto belonging."

Here Jobst cried out, "'Tis false, Sidonia! I shall say nothing of thy statements respecting my parents, for all who knew them testify that they were righteous and honourable their life long, therefore let them rest in their graves; but as touching thy farm-houses, thou shalt have them back, as I have already written to thee. The accumulated rents, however, thou canst not have, for it were a strange and unjust thing, truly, to demand fifty years' rent from me, who have only been in possession of the farms for half a year."

"What! thou unjust knave," screamed Sidonia furiously; but then suddenly strangled the wrath in her throat with a convulsion, as if a wolf were gulping a bone, and continued--"It may be a hard struggle to help one of thy name, but I remember the words of my heavenly Bridegroom (oh, that the horrible blasphemy did not choke her), 'I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you;' and so, Jobst Bork, I will do good to thee out of my herbal, if the merciful God will assist my efforts, as I hope."

Then she turned her hypocritical, Satanic eyes up to heaven, sighed, and stepping to the bed, murmured some words; then asked, "How is it with thee now, Jobst? is there ease already?"

"Oh yes, good cousin," he answered, "I am better, much better, thanks, good cousin! Lift me up again, children, and bear me homeward--I thank thee, cousin!" and with these words he was borne out of the convent gates, the fair young Dilia following him

closely; and scarcely had they left the town and reached the moor, when the knight called out from the bed, "Oh, it is true, my own dear daughter--praise be to God, I am indeed better; but I am so weary!"

And he sank back almost immediately into a deep sleep, which continued till they reached the castle of Saatzig, and the bearers laid the bed down again in its old place in the knight's chamber--still he woke not.

Then Diliانا kneeled down beside him, and thanked the Lord with burning tears; sprang up again quickly, and bade them saddle her palfrey, for she must ride away, but would return again before a couple of hours. If her father woke up in the meantime, let them say he must not be uneasy, for that she would return soon and tell him herself whither and on what errand she had been.

Hereupon she went to a large cabinet that stood in her father's chamber, took out a little casket containing three golden rings, mounted her palfrey, and rode back with all speed on the road to Marienfliess. But I must here relate how these magic golden rings came into possession of the family; the tradition runs as follows:--

A long while ago the castle of Pansin, which had originally belonged to the Knights Templars, became a fief of the Bork family, and the Count who was then in possession went to the wars in the Holy Land, leaving his fair young wife alone in her sorrow: and lo! one night, as she was weeping bitterly, a spirit appeared in her chamber, and motioned her to rise from bed and follow him to the castle garden. But she was horror-struck, and crept trembling under the quilt. Next night the ghost again stood by her bed, made the same gestures even menacingly, but she was frightened, and hid her head beneath the clothes.

The third night brought the ghost likewise; but this time the fair lady took courage, rose from bed, and followed him in silence down the steps into the castle garden, on to a small island, where the two streams, the Ihna and the Krampehl, meet. Here there was a large fire, and around it many spirits were seated. Hereupon her ghost spake--

"Fear nothing, but fill thy apron with coals from the fire, and return to the castle; but, I warn thee, do not look back."

The fair chatelaine did as she was desired, filled her apron, and returned to the castle; but all the way, close behind her, there was a terrible uproar, and the rushing and roaring as of many people. However, she never looked back, only on reaching the castle gates she thought she might take one peep round just as she was closing them; but, lo! instantly her apron was rent, and the coals fell hither and thither on the ground, and out of all she could only save three pieces, with which she rushed on to her own

apartment, never again looking behind her, though the uproar continued close to her very heels all the way up to her chamber door; and trembling with dread, and commending herself to all the saints, she at last threw herself on her bed once more in safety. But next morning, on looking for the coals, she found three golden rings in their stead bearing strange inscriptions, which no man hath been able to decipher until this day. As to those she had dropped at the castle gate, they were nowhere to be seen; and on the fourth night the ghost comes again, and scolds her for disobeying his orders, but admonishes her to preserve the three rings safely, for if she lost one, a great misfortune would fall upon the village, and the castle be rent violently--_item_, but two of her race would ever be alive at the same time; if the second were lost, her race would be reduced to direst poverty; and if the third ring were lost, the race would disappear entirely from the earth.

After this, when her knightly spouse returned from Jerusalem, and she told him the wonderful story of the three rings, he had a costly casket made for them, in which they were safely locked, with a rose of Jericho placed above them, which he had himself brought from the Holy Land; and this wonderful treasure has been preserved by the Count's descendants with jealous care, even until this day. I have said that no man could read the inscriptions on the rings: they were all the same--the three as like as the leaves of a trefoil. They were all large enough for the largest man's thumb, and made of the purest crown gold: the shield was of a circular form, bearing in the centre the figure of a Knight Templar in full armour, with spur and shield, keeping watch before the Temple at Jerusalem; but what the characters around the figure signified, I leave unsaid, and many, I am thinking, will leave unsaid likewise. [Footnote: It is a fact, that no one up to the present time has been able to decipher this very remarkable inscription, not even Silvestre de Sacy himself, to whom it was sent some years ago. Dreger's reading, given in Dänert's Pomeranian Library, iv. p. 295, is manifestly wrong--_Ordo Hierosolymitanis_. But two of the rings are forthcoming now; and in fulfilment of the tradition, a tremendous rent really followed the loss of the first in the old castle of Pansin, which may yet be seen in this fine ruin, whose like is not to be found in all Pomerania, nor, indeed, in the north of Germany. The two remaining rings, with the rose of Jericho, are still to be seen in the original casket, which is of curious and costly workmanship, and this casket is again enclosed in another of iron, with strong hoops and clasps. Should any of my readers desire to discover the meaning of the inscription, he will do me the highest favour by communicating the same to me.]

In summa--When Diliانا arrived with these rings, the poor Dorothea lay again in the devil's fetters. She roared, and screamed, and raged horribly, and tore her bed-clothes, and foamed at the mouth, and even abused and reviled the beautiful young virgin, who took, however, no heed thereof, but with permission of

the abbess laid the three rings upon the stomach of the sick nun, who immediately became quite still, and so lay for a little while, after which, with a loud roar, Satan went out of her, while the windows clattered and the glasses rang upon the table. Then she fell into a deep sleep, and on awakening remembered nothing of what had happened, but seeing Diliانا prepared to set out on her homeward ride, asked with wonder, "Who is this strange young maiden, and what does she here?"

After this, as I may as well briefly notice here, Dorothea became quite well, and by the mercy of God remained for ever after untouched by the demon claws of the great enemy of mankind.

Meanwhile the good Diliانا felt it to be her duty to descend to the refectory, and thank the hell-dragon for the refreshing sleep which her father, Jobst, had obtained by her means. But, ah! how does she find my dragon? Her eyes shoot fire and flame, and in an instant she flew at poor Diliانا on the subject of marriage--

"What! she wanted to marry too! She was scarcely out of school, and yet already was thinking about marriage!"

"Good cousin," answered the other, "I have indeed no thoughts of marriage, and no desire for it has ever entered my heart."

"What!" screamed my dragon; "you lie to me, child! The whole convent talks of it; and Anna Apenborg herself told me that you are betrothed to that beardless boy George Putkammer. Fie! a fellow without a beard."

Hereupon she began to spit out. But George Putkammer that instant clattered up the steps; for the news had come to Pansin, of which castle Jobst Bork had made him castellan, seeing that he set much store by the brave young knight, and would willingly have had him for his son-in-law, if his fair little daughter Diliانا had not resisted his entreaties, *_bis dalo_*; the news came, I say, now that Diliانا had run away from her father, and gone to play the serving-wench to Sidonia. So the knight seized his good sword, and went forth, like another Perseus, to save his Andromeda, and deliver her from the dragon, even if his own life were to pay the cost. He knew not that the damning dragon despised the service of the mild, innocent girl, nor that Jobst Bork had gone to offer himself as a sacrifice in her place.

So he clattered up the steps, dashed open the door, and finding Sidonia in the very act of spitting out, he drew his sword, and roared--

"Dare to touch even a finger of that angel beside thee, and thy black toad's blood shall rust upon this sword."

And when Sidonia started back alarmed, he continued--

"O Dilia, much loved and beautiful maiden, what does my queen here? Where have you heard that the angels of God seek help and shelter from the devil, as you have done here? Return with me to Saatzig, and, by my faith, some other means shall make this vile wretch help your poor father."

Sidonia now screamed with rage--

"What wants this silly varlet here, this beardless young profligate? Ha, youngster, thou shalt pay for thy bold, saucy tongue!"

Ille--"Hold thy accursed mouth, or I will give thee such a blow that thou shalt never need it again, but to groan. Listen, cursed beast of hell, and mark my words. Since our gracious Lord of Stettin handles thee so gently, and lets thee heap evil upon evil at thine own vile will, I and another noble have sworn solemnly to rid the land from such a curse. Let it cost our lives or not, we shall avenge our country in thy blood, unless thou cease to work all thy diabolical wickedness. Now, therefore, hear me. Delay one instant to heal the upright Jobst and to remove thy accursed witch-spell from off him, and this sword shall take a bloody revenge; or if but a finger ache of this beautiful maiden here, thy death is certain. Think not to escape. Thou mayst lame me, like Jobst or Wedel, or murder me as others, it will not help thee; for my friend hath sworn, if such happen, that he will ride straight to Marienfließ, and run his sword through thy body without a word. Two horses stand, day and night, ready saddled in my stall, and in a quarter of an hour we are here--he or I, it matters not, whichever is left alive, or both together, and we shall hew thee from head to foot, even as I hew this jar in two that stands upon the table, so that human hand shall never lift it more."

So saying, he struck the jar with his sword, when it flew into a thousand pieces, and the beer dashed over the hag's clothes, so that she raised a cry of terror, for such speech had no man ever yet dared to hold to her.

But the brave Dilia seized hold of the young knight's sword, crying--

"For God's sake, sir knight, what mean you? You do my good cousin sore injustice; I have never seen you thus before. Sidonia hath declined to take me for her maid, and has helped my poor father, of her own free will, for he was here yesterday, and now rests safe in Saatzig in a deep and healthful sleep; for which cause I come hither to thank my good cousin for her kindness. Where is your justice, sir knight--your honour? Bethink you how often you have extolled these noble virtues yourself to me!"

As the knight listened, and heard that her father was already cured, he marvelled greatly; inquired all the particulars, but

shook his head at the end, saying--

"'A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, and figs are not to be gathered from thorns.' That she has helped your father, I take as no sign of her kindness, but of her fear; therefore my resolve stands good. Sidonia, thou accursed hag, touch but one finger of this maiden or her father, and I will hew thee in pieces, even as I cleft this jar. But you, fair lady, permit me to ride home with you to your father's castle, and see how it stands with the brave knight's health, and whether he has in truth been cured."

Meanwhile Sidonia hath spat forth again, and begins running like a wild cat in her rage round the room, so that her kerchief falls off, and her two sharp, dry, ash-coloured shoulder-bones stick up to sight, like pegs for hanging baskets on; and she curses and blasphemes the young knight and his whole race, who, however, cares little for her wrath, but gently taking Diliانا by the hand, said tenderly--

"Come, dear lady, come from this hell-hole, and leave the old dragon to dance and rage at her pleasure, as much as she likes."

The lady, however, withdrew her hand, saying, "Ride back alone to Saatzig, sir knight! It is not seemly for a young maiden to ride through the wood with a young man alone. Besides, I must stay a little, and comfort my poor cousin for all your hard words--see how you have vexed her!"

But Sidonia paused, and laughed loud and long, mocking the young knight's disappointment; so after he had again prayed the maiden in vain to accompany him, he left the refectory in silence, sprang upon his barb, and rode on to the wood, resolving to wait there till Diliانا came up.

And in truth he had to wait long. At last, however, she appeared through the trees, and on seeing him she was angry, and bade him ride his ways. So my knight entreats for the love of God that she will listen to him, for he can no longer live without her. By day and by night her image floats before him, and wherefore should she be so hard and cruel-hearted towards him? Better to have let him die at once under the hands of the murderers in the forest, than to let him die daily and hourly before her eyes, of the bitter love-death. Was he, then, really such an object of abhorrence to her, such a fire in her eyes? Alas! alas! could she but know his torments!"

"Sir knight," she answered, "you are no fire in my eyes, unless it be the cold fire of the moon. Have patience, sir knight; why do you press me for a promise when you have heard my resolve?"

Ille.--"Patience! How could he have patience longer? Ah! her father had long since consented, but she was but as the moon

in the brook to the child who tries to lay hold of it, since she had talked of the moon."

Hæ.--"Sir knight, you compel me to a confidence."

Ille. (riding up close to her palfrey).--"Speak! dearest Diliانا."

Hæ (drawing back).--"Come no nearer. What if any one saw us. Listen! Yesterday six weeks, my grandmother, Clara von Dewitz, who died, as you know, giving birth to my father, appeared to me in a dream. She was wrapped in a bloody shroud, and her eyes were starting forth horribly from her head, when I shuddered with terror, and the poor ghost spoke--'Diliانا, I am Clara von Dewitz, and thou art the one selected to avenge me, provided thou dost keep thy virgin honour pure in thought, word, and deed!' With this she disappeared, and now, sir knight, judge for yourself what is henceforth my duty."

Now the knight tried to laugh her out of her belief in this ghost story, said it was all fancy, the same had often happened to himself; not once, but a hundred times, had he seen a ghost, as he thought, but found out afterwards there was no ghost at all in the business, &c. However, his words and smiles have no effect. She knew what she knew, and whether she was deceived or not about this apparition of her grandmother, time would show, and _bis dalo_, she would remain obedient to her commands, and preserve her virgin honour pure in thought, word, and deed, even if it were to be for her life long, until she saw clearly what purpose God destined her to accomplish.

Now as my poor knight began his solicitations again yet more earnestly, the fair maiden drew herself up gravely, and said, "Adieu! sir knight, ride your own path, I go mine! At present I shall select no spouse; but if I ever give my hand to man, you shall be the selected one, sir knight, and no other. Now return to your own castle. If you wish to see my father, come to-morrow to Saatzig, for I shall ride there alone now. Farewell!"

And off she cantered on her palfrey, hop, hop, hop, as fast as an arrow from a bow, and her red feathers gleamed through the green leaves of the forest trees, so that my knight stood watching, her, filled with as much joy as sorrow, for the maiden now seemed to him so beautiful, and he watched her as long as a glimpse of her feathers could be had through the trees, and then he listened as long as the tramp of her palfrey could be heard (for he told me this himself), then he alighted, and kneeling down, prayed to God the Lord to bless this beautiful darling of his heart, whilst he sobbed like a child, for sorrow and the sweet anguish of love. Then he rose up, and obedient to her commands, took his way back to the stately castle of Pansin.

But next morning early, he was at Saatzig, where the good knight

Jobst receives him joyfully at table, quite restored to health. Nor has aught evil happened to the beautiful Diliانا, as the knight feared from the spitting of Sidonia. However, he heard from the maiden, that after he left the refectory, Sidonia spat a second time, probably to remove the first witch-spell (for no doubt she feared the knight would hold his word, and hew her in pieces if aught evil happened to the fair young maiden). And for the rest, the knight ceased to trouble Diliانا with his solicitations; but he made father and daughter promise to give him instant notice if but a finger ached, and he would instantly find one sure way to bind the wild beast of Marienfliess for ever, namely, with his good sword.

CHAPTER XIII.

How my gracious Lord Bishop Franciscus and the reverend Dr. Joel go to the Jews' school at Old Stettin, in order to steal the Schem Hamphorasch, and how the enterprise finishes with a sound cudgelling.

Meanwhile my gracious Duke Francis was puzzling his brain, day and night, how best to bind this malicious dragon, and hinder her from utterly destroying his whole race. He wanted to effect, by the agency of spirits, what George Putkammer had already effected by his good sword, as we have related before. So his Highness must needs send for Dr. Joel, in all haste, to Old Stettin, to ask him whether it were not possible to break the power of the evil witch by spiritual agency; for as to human, it was out of the question, since no one could be found to lay hands on her. They would as soon touch the bodily Satan himself.

Whereupon my _magister_ answered, that he had already, to serve his Grace, consulted divers spirits as to what could be done in this sore strait, but none would undertake a contest with Sidonia's spirit, which was powerful and strong, and, acting in concert always with the spirit of old Wolde, had the might in himself, as it were, of two demons. For this reason they must try two modes of casting out the evil thing. The first was to exorcise the sun-spirit, according to the form in the _Clavicula Salomonis_, for he was the most powerful of all the astral spirits, and question him as to what should be done. But for this conjuration a pure young virgin was necessary, not merely pure in act, but in thought, in soul. Even her very garments must be woven by a virgin's hands, otherwise the holy angels, who neither marry nor are given in marriage, would not appear. For they obey only the summons of one who is as pure as themselves, in body and in soul. Such a being he had once possessed in his only little daughter, a virgin of eighteen years. All her clothes had been spun and woven by virgin hands, and as she had a brave spirit, she

had often helped him to cite the astral angel _Och_. But the last time she had assisted at the conjuration, the angel himself had strangled her with his own hands, twisting her neck so horribly that her tongue hung out of her mouth. And thus she died before his very face. The cause was, as he, poor father, had heard afterwards, that she had suffered a young student to kiss her, and so the pure virginity of her soul was lost. Now if the gracious Prince knew of any such pure virgin, who besides must be brave and courageous as an amazon, matters would proceed easily, they would make an end of the demon Sidonia without the least difficulty. He had the clothes ready, all spun by virgins; _item_, all the necessary _instruments_.

So my gracious Prince sits and thinks awhile, then shakes his head, and says, laughing, "Methinks such a virgin were rarer than a white raven. It would be easy to find one pure in form, but a virgin pure in soul--and then as brave as Deborah and Judith. Mag. Joel, such a virgin, methinks, is not to be had, and you did evil to put your poor little daughter to such a test. For woman-flesh is a weak flesh since the day of Eve, as we all know. But you talked of a second mode: what is it? Let me hear."

Hereupon the _magister_ sighed for grief, wiped his eyes, and spake--"Ah, yes! you are right, my good lord. Fool that I was, I might have had my little daughter still, for though she only allowed the student to kiss her, yet by that one kiss the pure mirror of her soul was dimmed, and before the angels of God she was henceforth unholy. However, as touching the second method, it is the Schem Hamphorasch, through which all things are possible."

The Duke--"What is the Schem Hamphorasch?"

Ille--"The seventy names of the Most High and ever-blessed God, according to the seventy nations, and the seventy tongues, and the seventy elders of Moses, and the seventy disciples of Christ, and the seventy weeks of Daniel. To him who knows this name, the holy God will appear again as He did aforetime in the days of the patriarchs."

The Duke--"You are raving, good Joel; yet--but how can this be possible?"

Ille--"I am not raving, gracious Prince; for tell me, wherefore is it that the great God does not appear to men now as He did in times long past? I answer, because we no longer know His name. This name, or the Schem Hamphorasch, Adam knew in Paradise, and therefore spake with God, as well as with all animals and plants. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, &c.--all knew this name, and performed their wonders by it alone. But when the beastly and idolatrous Jews gave themselves over to covetousness and all uncleanness, they forgot this holy name; so, as a punishment, they endured a year of slavery for each of the seventy names which they had forgotten; and we find them, therefore, serving seventy years

in Babylonian bonds. After this they never learned it again, and all miracles and wonders ceased from amongst them, until the ever-blessed God sent His Son into the world, to teach them once more the revelation of the Schem Hamphorasch; and to all who believed on Him He freely imparted this name, by which also they worked wonders; and that it might be fixed for ever in their hearts, He taught them the blessed Pater Noster, in which they were bid each day to repeat the words, 'Hallowed be Thy name.' Yea, even in that last glorious high-priestly prayer of His--in face of the bitter anguish and death that was awaiting Him, He says, 'Father, keep them in Thy name;' or, as Luther translates it, 'Keep them above Thy name.' For how easily this name is lost, we learn from David, who says that he spelt it over in the night, so that it might not pass from his mind (Psalm cxix. 55).

Item, after the resurrection, He gave command to go and baptize all nations--not in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as Luther has falsely rendered the passage, but _for_, or _by_, the name--that such might always be kept before their eyes, and never more pass away from the knowledge of mankind. And the holy apostles faithfully kept it, and St. Paul made it known to the heathen, as we learn (Acts ix, 15). And all miracles that they performed were by this name. Now the knowledge remained also with the early Christians, and each person was baptized _by_ this name; and he who knew it by heart could work miracles likewise, as we know by Justin Martyr and others, who have written of the power and miraculous gifts of the early Church. But when the pure doctrine became corrupted, and the Christian Church (like the Jewish of former times) gave itself up to idolatry, masses, image-worship, and the like, the knowledge of the mystic name was withdrawn, and all miracles have ceased in the Church from that up to this day."

While Magister Joel so spake, his Highness Duke Francis fell into a deep fit of musing. At last he exclaimed, "Good Joel, you are a fanatic, an enthusiast--surely we know the name of God; or what hinders us from knowing it?"

Ille--"You err, my gracious Prince, for this name is the holy and mystic _Tetragrammaton_, 'Jehovah,' which is the chief and highest name of God, and which truly is found written in the Scriptures; but of the true pronunciation of the name no man knoweth at this day, for the letters J H V H are wanting in all the old manuscripts." [Footnote: For those who are unacquainted with Hebrew, I shall just observe here, that, in fact, the proper pronunciation of the name "Jehovah" is a vexed question with the learned up to this hour. Ewald, one of the latest authorities, and who has taken much trouble in investigating the subject, says, that there is the highest probability that the word should be pronounced "Jahve," signifying, He who should come (hoxrcho'menos), for which reason the Baptist's disciples asked Christ (Matt. xi. 13), "Art Thou He who should come?"--namely, the Messias, Jahve, or, as we call it, Jehovah. Compare Heb. x. 37; Hagg. ii. 6, 7; Rev. i. 8. I must observe, next, that all the

Theophanisms (God manifestations) recorded in the Old Testament, to which the theosophistic, cabalistic Dr. Joel refers, were considered by the early Christian fathers as manifestations to the senses, not of _God_--whom no man hath seen or can see--but of the asarchos Christ. Even the elder rabbins understand, in these Theophanisms, not _God_, but the Mediator between God and the world--the angel Metatron. For the rest, I need scarcely remark that the exegesis of Dr. Joel is false throughout. The Bible has been so tortured to support each man's individual, strange, crude dogma, that it is no wonder even Protestants are falling back upon _tradition_ as the best and surest interpreter of Scripture, and the clearest light to read it by.]

Magister Joel continues--"But be comforted; there were some faithful souls on the earth, who did not entirely lose the remembrance of the Schem Hamphorasch; and your Highness will wonder to hear, that even in this very town the secret exists, in the possession of an old man, who has it, really and truly, locked up in his trunk, though, I confess, he is as great a rogue himself as ever breathed."

Hereupon his Grace jumped up, and embraced the _magister_. "Let him not spare the gold; only bring him this treasure. How could it be done? How did the man get it? Let him tell the whole story."

Ille.--"It was a long story; but he would just give it in brief:--A Jew out of Anklam, named Benjamin, went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and having suffered great hardships and distress by the way, was taken in and sheltered by a hermit, in the desert, who converted and baptized him. The Jew stayed with the old hermit till he died; and the old man, as a costly legacy, left him the Schem Hamphorasch, written on seventy palm-leaves. But as Benjamin could not read a word of Hebrew, he resolved to return home to Pomerania, where his mother's brother lived--the Rabbi Reuben Ben Joachai, of Stettin. However, when he presented himself, poor and naked as he was, at his uncle's door, the rabbi pushed him away, and shut the door in his face the moment he said he had a favour to ask of him. This treatment so afflicted Benjamin that he took ill on his return to the inn; but having nothing wherewith to pay the host, he sent a message to his uncle, the rabbi, bidding him come to him, as he had a secret to impart.

"When the rabbi arrived, Benjamin asked, 'What he would give for the Schem Hamphorasch, for people told him that it was the greatest of all treasures?--to him, however, it was useless, since he could not read Hebrew.'

"Hereat the rabbi's eyes sparkled; he took the palm-leaves in his hand, and seeing that all was correct, offered a ducat for the whole; this Benjamin refused. Whereupon, after many cunning efforts to possess himself of it, which were all in vain, the rabbi had to depart without the treasure. However, Benjamin,

suspecting that he would come back for it in a little while, cut out two of the leaves from revenge, and when my knave of a rabbi returned, he sold him the incomplete copy for five ducats at last.

"This same Benjamin I (the _magister_) attended afterwards in hospital when he was dying, and as the poor wretch had no money, he gave me himself, upon his death-bed, the two abstracted palm-leaves out of gratitude, being all he had to offer. These two are now in my possession, and if we could only obtain the other portion, your Highness would have the holy and mystic Schem Hamphorasch complete. But how to get it? Gold he had already offered in vain to the Jew, Rabbi Reuben, who even denied having the Schem Hamphorasch at all; but his servant, Meir, for a good bribe, told him in confidence that his master, the rabbi, really and in truth had this treasure, though the knave denied the fact to him. It lay in a drawer in the Jewish school, beside the book of the law or the _Thora_, and my magister thought they might manage to gain admittance some night into the Jews' school by bribing the man Meir well. Then they could easily possess themselves of the Schem Hamphorasch (which indeed was of no use to the old knave of a rabbi), for the drawer could be known at once by the tapestry which hung before it, in imitation of the veil of the Temple. If they once had the treasure, the angel Metatron would appear to them, the mightiest of all angels, and his Highness could not only obtain his protection against the devil's magic of the sorceress of Marienfliess, but also induce him to look graciously upon his Grace's dear spouse, whom this evil dragon had bewitched, as all the world saw plainly, so that she remained childless, as well as all the other dukes and duchesses of dear Pomerania land, who were rendered barren and unfruitful likewise by some demon spell."

Hereupon his Grace cried out with joy, "True, true! I will make him do all that; and when I obtain the Schem Hamphorasch I will learn it myself by heart, and repeat it day and night like King David, so that it never shall go out of my head--_item_, all priests in the land shall learn it by heart; and I will gather them together three times a year at Camyn, and hear them myself, man by man, repeat this said Schem Hamphorasch, so that never more can it pass from the memory of our Church, as it did from that of the filthy Jews, or the impure Christians of the Papacy."

Summa--The rabbi's servant, Meir, is bribed, and he promises to admit them both next night into the Jews' school, for there was to be a meeting there of the elders, and his master, the said Rabbi Reuben Ben Joachai, was to examine a _moranu_ or teacher. They could conceal themselves in the women's gallery, where no one would discover them, and after every one had gone, slip down and take what they pleased out of the drawer, then make off, for he would leave the door open for them--that was all he could do--his master might come, &c.

So all was done as agreed upon; the Prince and Mag. Joel crept up

to the women's gallery, in which were little bull's-eyes, through which they could see clearly all that was going on; and scarcely were the candles lit when my knave of a rabbi enters (he was a long, dry carl, with a white beard, and ragged coat bound round the waist with a girdle); _item_, the candidate, I think he was called David, a little man, with curly red beard, and long red locks falling down at each side upon his breast; _item_, seven elders, and they place themselves in their great hats round a table. Then the Rabbi Reuben demands of the candidate to pay his dues first, for a knave had lately run away without paying them at all; the dues were ten ducats.

When the candidate had reckoned down the gold, Rabbi Reuben commenced to question him in Hebrew; whereupon the other excused himself, said he knew Hebrew, but could not answer in it; prayed, therefore, the master would conduct the examination in German. Hereupon my knave of a rabbi looked grave, seemed to think that would be impossible, consulted with the elders, and finally asked them, if the candidate David paid down each of them two ducats, and ten to himself, would they consent to have the examination conducted in the language of the German sow? Would they consent to this, out of great charity and mercy to the candidate David?

"Yea, yea--even so let it be," screamed the elders; "God is merciful likewise."

So my David again unbuttoned his coat, and reckoned down the fine; whereupon the examination began in German, and I shall here note part of it down, that all men may know what horrible blindness and folly has fallen upon the Jews, by permission of the Lord God, since they imprecated the blood of Christ upon their own heads. Not even amongst the blindest of the heathen have such base, low, grovelling superstitions and dogmas been discovered as these accursed Jews have forged for themselves since the dispersion, and collected in the Talmud. Well may the blessed Luther say, "If a Christian seeks instruction in the Scripture from a Jew, what else is it than seeking sight from the blind, reason from the mad, life from the dead, grace and truth from the devil?"

And this madness and blindness of the accursed race would never have been fully known, only that the examination was held in German (for in general it is conducted in Hebrew, to please the vain Jews), by which means the Prince and Doctor Joel heard every word, and wrote it all down on their return home; and when afterwards his Highness Duke Francis succeeded to the government, he banished this rabbi and the elders, with their whole forge of blasphemy and lies, for ever from his capital.

Here, therefore, are some of the most remarkable questions; but I must premise that K. means my Knave, namely, the rabbi, and C. the _Candidates_. [Footnote: Lest my reader might think that what follows is a malicious invention of my own to bring the Jews into disrepute, I shall add the precise page of the Talmud from which

each question is taken (from Eisenmenger's "Judaism Unveiled," Königsberg, 1711, and other sources). The Jews, I know, endeavour to deny that they hold these doctrines; but it is nevertheless quite true that all their learned men who have been converted to Christianity since the time of the Reformation confessed that these dogmas were intimately woven into their belief, and formed its groundwork.]

K.--"Which is holier, the Talmud or the Scriptures?"

C.--"I think the Talmud."

K.--"Wherefore, wherefore?"

C.--"Because Raf Aschi hath said, he who goes from the HÆlacha (the Talmudical teaching) to the Scripture will have no more luck; [Footnote: Talmud, tract. Chagiga, fol. X. col. I. Raf Aschi, the author the Gemara, a portion of the Talmud.] and good luck we all prize dearly above all things--eh, my master?"

K.--"Right, right. Who is he like who reads only in the Scripture, and not in the Talmud? What say our fathers of blessed memory?"

C.--"They say that he is like one who has no God."
[Footnote: Talmud, tract. Eruvin.]

K.--"Can the holy and ever-blessed One sin? What is the greatest sin He has committed?"

C.--"First; He made the moon smaller than the sun."

K.--"Our rabbis of blessed memory are doubtful upon this point, as Jonathan, the son of Usiel, says, in the Targum of Moses. [Footnote: The ancient Chaldee paraphrase of the Old Testament is called Targum by the Jews. It is split into the Jerusalemite, and the Babylonian Targum.] But which is the greatest sin of all that the holy and ever-blessed One committed?"

C.--"I think it was when He forswore himself. [Footnote: Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.] For He first swore, saith Rabbi Eliaser, that the children of Israel, who were wandering in the desert, should have no part in eternal life; and then His oath lay heavy on Him, so that He got the angel Mi to absolve Him therefrom."

K.--"It was, in truth, a great sin, but a greater, methinks, was, that He created the accursed Nazarene--the Jesu--the idol of the children of Edom. I mean the Christ."

C.--"Rabbi, that is not in the Talmud."

K.--"Fool! it is the same. _I_ have said it, therefore

it is true. Knowest thou not, when a rabbi says, 'This thy right hand is thy left, and this thy left hand is thy right,' thou must believe it, or thou wilt be damned?" [Footnote: Targum upon Deut. xvii. 11.]

Here all the elders cried out--

"Yea, yea; the word of a rabbi is more to be esteemed than the words of the law, and their words are more beautiful than the words of the prophets, for they are words of the living God."

[Footnote: Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.]

K.--"Now answer--what says the Talmud of that Adam Belial, that Jesu, that crucified, of whom the Christians say that he was God?"

C.--"That he was the son of an evil woman, who learned sorcery in Egypt, and he hid the sorcery in his flesh, in a wound which he made therein, and with the magic he deceived the people, and turned them from God. He practised idolatry with a baked stone, and prostrated himself before his own idol; and finally, as a fit punishment, he was first stoned to death, upon the eve of the passover, and then hung up upon a cross made of a cabbage-stalk, after which, Onkelos, the fallen Titus' sister's son, conjured him up out of hell." [Footnote: Although the Jews deny that Christ is named in the Talmud, saying that another Jesus is meant, yet Eisenmenger has fully proved the contrary, on the most convincing grounds.]

K.--"Is it possible to find more detestable Gojim than these impure and dumb children of Talvus--these Christian swine?"

[Footnote: Children of Edom, children of harlots, swine, dogs, abominations, worshippers of the crucified, idolaters, are titles of honour freely given to Christians by the rabbis.--See Eisenmenger.]

C.--"No; that were impossible."

K.--"It permitted us to deceive them and spoil them of their goods."

C.--"Eh? Wherefore are we the selected people, if we could not spoil the children of Edom? They are our slaves, for we have gold and they have none."

K.--"Good, good; but where is it written that we may spoil the swine and take their goods?"

C.--"The Talmud says, it is permitted to deceive a Goi, and take his goods." [Footnote: Tract. Bava Mezia.]

K.--"Forget not the principal passage, Tract. Megilla, fol. 13--'What, is it then permitted to the just to deal deceitfully?"

And he answered, Yea, for it is written, With the pure thou shalt be pure, and with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness.' [Footnote: 2 Sam. xxii. 27; a specimen of how the Talmudists interpret the Bible.] _Item_, it is written expressly in the _Parascha Bereschith_, 'It is permitted to the just to deal deceitfully, even as Jacob dealt;' and if our fathers of blessed memory acted thus, we were fools indeed not to skin the Christian dogs and flog them to the death. (Spitting out.) Curse on the unclean swine!"

C.--"I will be no such fool, rabbi, and if they compel me to take an oath, I will do as Rabbi Akkiva of blessed memory."

K.--"Right, my son; pity thou canst not speak Hebrew; methinks then thou wouldst have been a light in Israel. Speak--how hath the Rabbi Akkiva sworn?"

C.--"The Talmud says, 'Hereupon the Rabbi Akkiva took the oath with his lips, but in his heart he abjured it.'" [Footnote: Talmud, tract. Calla.]

K.--"The Rabbi Akkiva, of blessed memory, was but a sorry liver. Canst thou, too, defend the violation of the marriage vow?"

C.--"With the wives of the unclean Christian dogs, wherefore not? For Moses saith (Lev. xx. 10), 'He who committeth adultery with his _neighbour's_ wife shall be put to death;' so saith the Talmud, the wives of _others_ are excepted; and Rabbi Solomon expressly says on this passage, that under the word 'others' the wives of Gojim, or the Christian dogs, are meant." [Footnote: Eisenmenger quotes a prayer-book of the Jews on this subject, called _The Great Tephilla_.]

K.--"Yea, cursed be they and their whole race. Dost thou curse them daily, as is thy duty?"

C.--"My duty is to curse them once; I curse them thrice." [Footnote: Talmud, tract. Sanhedrin.]

K.--"Then wilt thou be recompensed threefold when Messias comes, and the fine dishes and the fine clothes will grow out of the blessed earth of themselves, that it will be a pleasure to see them. [Footnote: Talmud, tract. Kethuvoth.] Speak--what saith the Talmud? How large will the grapes then be?"

C.--"So large that a man will put a single grape in the corner of his house, and tap it as if it were a beer-barrel. Is not that almost too large, master!"

K.--"Look at my pert wisehead! Knowest thou not, that he who mocks the words of the wise goes straight to hell, as happened to that disciple who laughed at the Rabbi Jochanan when he said that precious stones should be set in the gates of Jerusalem,

three ells long and three ells broad? [Footnote: Talmud, tract Bava Bathra.] _Item_, hast thou not read how Rabbi Jacob Ben Dosethai went one morning from Lud to Ono for three miles in pure honey, or how Rabbi Ben Levi saw grapes in the land of Canaan so large that he mistook them for fatted calves. What, then, will it not be when Messias comes? [Footnote: In tractat Kethuvoth] But who will _not_ partake these blessings?"

C.--"The accursed swine, the Christians." [Footnote: Eisenmenger ii. 777, &c. On this point he brings forward numerous quotations from the later rabbinical writings; for it is certain that on _this_ subject the Talmud judges more mildly.]

K.--"Wherefore not?"

C.--"Because they eat swine's flesh, and believe on the Talvus, who deceived the people through his sorceries."

K.--"All true; but when the Talmud says that the impure Nazarene brought all his sorceries out of Egypt, what say our rabbis of blessed memory against that?"

C.--"That he secretly stole the Schem Hamphorasch out of the Temple, and stitched it into his flesh." [Footnote: An extract from the horrible book of curses against the Saviour, the _Toledot Jeschu_, is given in Eisenmenger; the entire is printed in Dr. Wagenseil's _Tela Ignea Satanæ]

K.--"What is the Schem Hamphorasch?"

C.--"God's wonder, His greatest! the seventy names of the holy and ever-blessed God; and to him who knows them will the angel Metatron appear, as he appeared to our forefathers, and all stones can he turn to diamonds, and all loam to gold."

K.--"Dost thou know, my son, that I myself possess this Schem Hamphorasch?"

C. (clasping his hands).--"Wonder of God! can it be? And have you all these riches?"

K.--"One of the accursed Christian dogs deceived me, and kept back two of the leaves (may God plague him in eternity for it), but still it effects much. I sell the holy Schem in little pieces, as a cure for all diseases; yea, even bits no larger than a grain will bring three ducats; _item_, I sell bits of it to the dying to lay upon their stomachs, that so they may gain eternal blessedness. Wilt thou buy a little grain too--eh? Ask the elders here if ever better physic were found than the least grain of dust from the holy Schem Hamphorasch?"

So the elders swore as my knave bid them, and said that no better physic could be, and told of the various diseases which it had

cured in their own persons; item, that no Jew in the whole town was without a morsel, be it large or small, to lay on his stomach when dying; "but the greater the piece," said the rabbi, "the greater the blessedness."

Now as the red-haired disciple seemed much inclined to purchase a bit, the rabbi went over to the drawer, withdrew the tapestry, and lifting up the golden jad, [Footnote: The jad--a gold or silver hand with which a priest pointed out each line to the reader of the Tora.] pointed smilingly to the palm-leaves therein with it. "This," he said to the disciple, "was the ever-blessed Schem Hamphorasch itself, if he had not already believed his words."

Meanwhile the aforesaid Meir, the rabbi's servant, crept forth from under the women's gallery, and spake--"Now may ye stick two Christian dogs dead, who are hiding here to steal the blessed golden treasure from my master the rabbi: the clock has struck eleven, and the Christian swine are snoring in all quarters of the city. Up to the women's gallery! up to the women's gallery! There they sit! Their six ducats I have safe: kill the dumb uncircumcised dogs! strike them dead! For a ducat I will fling them into the Oder. Come, come! here are knives! here are knives."

When the Duke and Doctor Joel heard all this, and saw all through the little bulls'-eyes, they jumped up and clattered down the stairs, the Duke drawing his dagger, which by good luck he had brought with him. But the Jews are already on them, and the rabbi strikes the Duke on the face with the golden jad, screaming--

"Accursed dog! there is one golden blow for thee, and a second golden blow for thee, and a third golden blow for thee; put them out to interest, and thou wilt have enough to buy the Schem Hamphorasch." And the others fell upon the doctor, beating him till their fists were bloody, and sticking him with their knives. So my magister roared, "Oh, gracious lord! tell your name, I beseech you, or in truth they will murder us--they will beat us to death!"

But the Duke had hit the rabbi such a blow with his dagger across the hand, that the golden jad fell to the ground, and the Duke, leaning his back against a pillar, hewed right and left, and kept them all at bay.

But this did not help, for the traitor knave, Meir, creeping along on his knees, got hold of the Duke's foot, and lifting it up suddenly in the air, made him lose his balance, and my gracious Prince stumbled forward, and the dagger fell far from his hand, upon which he cried out, "Listen, ye cursed Jewish brood! I am your Prince, the Duke of Pomerania! My brother shall make ye pay for this: your flesh shall be torn from the bones, and flung to dogs by to-morrow, if you do not instantly give free passage to me and my attendant." Then taking his signet from his finger, he held it up, and cried, "Look here, ye cursed brood; here are my

arms--the ducal Pomeranian arms--behold! behold!"

At this hearing, the rabbi turned as pale as chalk, and all the others started back from Dr. Joel, trembling with terror, while the Duke continued--"We came not here to steal the Schem Hamphorasch, as your traitor knave has given out, but to hear your accursed Satan's crew with our own ears, which also we have done."

"Oh, your Highness," cried the rabbi, "it was a jest--all a mere innocent jest. The accursed knave is guilty of all. Come, gracious Prince, I will unbar the door; it was a jest--may I perish if it was anything more than a merry jest, all this you have heard."

And scarcely had the door been closed upon the Duke and Dr. Joel, when they heard the Jews inside falling upon the traitorous knave and beating him till he roared for pain, as if in truth they had stuck him on a pike. But they cared little what became of him, and hastened back with all speed to the ducal residence.

CHAPTER XIV.

How the Duke Francis seeks a virgin at Marienfliess to cite the angel Och for him--Of Sidonia's evil plot thereupon, and the terrible uproar caused thereby in the convent.

After his Highness found that to obtain the Schem Hamphorasch was an impossible thing, he resolved to seek throughout all Pomerania for a pure and brave-hearted virgin, by whose aid he could break Sidonia's demon spells, and preserve his whole princely race from fearful and certain destruction. He therefore addressed a circular to all the abbesses, conjecturing that if such a virgin were to be found, it could only be in a cloister; and this was the letter:--

"FRANCISCUS, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, DUKE OF POMERANIA, STETTIN, CASSUBEN, AND WENDEN, BISHOP OF CAMYN, PRINCE OP RUGEN, COUNT OF GUTZKOW, LORD OF THE LANDS OF LAUENBURG AND BUTOW, &C.

"WORTHY ABBESS, TRUSTY AND GOOD FRIEND,--Be it known to you that we have immediate need of the services of a pure virgin--but in all honour--and are diligently seeking for such throughout our ducal and ecclesiastical states; but understand, not alone a virgin in act--for they can be met with in every house--but a virgin in soul, pure in thought and word, for by her agency we mean to build up a holy and virtuous work; as Gregory Nyssensis says (_De Virginitate_, Opp. tom. ii. fol. 593):--'Virginité must be the fundamentum upon which all virtue is built up, then are the works of virtue noble and holy; but virginity, which is only of the form, and exists not in the soul, is nothing but a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, or a pearl which is trodden

under foot of swine.'

"Further, the said virgin must be of a brave, steadfast, and man-like spirit, who fears nothing, and can defy death and the devil, if need be.

"If ye have such a virgin, upon whom, with God's help, I can build up my great virtuous work, send her to our court without delay, and know that we shall watch over such virgin with all princely goodness and clemency; but know also, that if on trial such virgin is not found pure in thought and word, great danger is in store for her, perchance even death.

"Signatum Camyn, 1st September 1617.

"FRANCISCUS, _manu sua_.

"_Postscriptum._--Are the winter gloves ready? Forget not to send them with the beer-waggon; my canons esteem them highly."

When this letter reached the abbess of Marienfließ by the beer-waggon of the honourable chapter of Camyn, she was much troubled as to how she ought to proceed. Truly there were two young novices lately arrived, of about fifteen or sixteen, named Anna Holborne and Catharina Maria von Wedel. These the abbess thought would assuredly suit his Highness--_item_, they were of a wonderful brave spirit, and had gone down at night to the church to chase away the martens, though they bit them cruelly, because they prevented the people sleeping; and, further, never feared any ghost-work or devil's work that might be in the church, but laughed over it. When these same virgins, however, heard what the abbess wanted, they excused themselves, and said they had not courage to peril their lives, though in truth they were pure virgins in thought and word. But they could not hold their tongue quiet, but must needs blab (alas, woe!) to Anna Apenborg, who runs off instantly to the refectory to Sidonia, whom she had appeased by means of some sausages, and tells her the whole story, and of his Grace's wonderful letter.

So my hag laughed--never suspecting that she was the cause of all--and said, "She would soon make out if such a virgin were to be found in the convent; but would Anna promise secrecy?" And when the other asseverated that she would be as silent as a stone in the earth, my hag continued--

"I have got a receipt from that learned man, Albertus Magnus--his book upon women--and we shall try it upon the nuns; but thou must hold thy tongue, Anna."

"Oh, she would sooner have her tongue cut out than blab a word; but what was the receipt?"

Here Sidonia answered, "She would soon see. She would give the

sisterhood a little of her fine beer to drink, with some of it therein; and as she had got fresh sausages, and other good things in plenty by her, she would pray the abbess and the whole convent to dine with her on the following Monday; then the dear sister should see wonders."

And in truth my hag was so shameless, that on Sunday, after church, she prayed all the virgins, saying, "Would the dear sisters eat their mid-day meal with her next day, to show that they forgave her, if she had ever been over-hasty? Ah, God! she loved peace above everything; but they must each bring their own can, for she had not cans enough for all; and her new beer was worth tasting-a better beer had she never brewed."

Summa--All the sisterhood gladly accepted her invitation, thinking from her Christian mildness of speech in the church that she indeed wished to be reconciled to them; _item_, the abbess promised to come, holding that compliance brings grace, but harshness disfavour; but here the reverse was the case.

Early on this same Monday, the waggon returned laden with beer for the honourable chapter, and the abbess despatched an answer by it to his Highness the Bishop, as follows:--

MOST REVEREND BISHOP AND ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE, MY FRIENDLY SERVICES TO YOUR GRACE.

"GRACIOUS LORD,--Concerning the matter of which your Highness writes, I think there is no lack here of such virgins as you describe, but none are of steadfast enough heart to brave the great danger with which your Highness says they are menaced; for we have a nature like all women, and are weak and faint-hearted. But, methinks, there is one brave enough, and in all things pure, who would be of the service your Grace demands--I mean Dilia Bork, daughter of Jobst Bork of Saatzig; I counsel your Grace, therefore, to try her.

"Now, as touching the winter gloves, I shall send some along with this; but Sidonia will knit no gloves, and says, 'The fat canons are like enough to old women already, without putting gloves on them;' by which your Highness may judge of her impure mouth. God better her.

"Your princely Grace's and my reverend Bishop's humble servant and subject,

"MAGDELENA V. PETERSDORFIN.

"Marienfliess, 5th Sept. 1617."

Now when twelve o'clock struck, and mid-day shone on the blessed land, all the nuns proceeded in their long black habits and white veils to Sidonia's apartment, each with her beer-can in her hand

(woe is me! how soon they rushed back again in storm and anger).

Then they sat down to the sausages and other good morsels, while Anna Apenborg was on tiptoe of expectation to see what would happen; and old Wolde was there quite well again (for ill weeds never die--no winter is cold enough for that). And she filled each of their cans with the beer which Sidonia had brewed, after a new formula; but, lo! no sooner had they tasted it than first Dorothea Stettin starts up, and Sidonia asks what ails her.

To which she answers: "She is not superstitious, but there was surely something wrong in the beer. She felt quite strange." And she left the room, then another, and another--in fine, all who had tasted the beer started up in like manner and followed Dorothea. Only the abbess and some others who had not partaken of it remained. Anna Apenborg had disappeared amongst the first, and presently a terrific cry was heard from the courtyard, as if not alone the cloister, but the whole world was in flames. Curses, cries, menaces, threats, screams, all mingled together, and shouts of "Run for a broomstick! the accursed witch! the evil hag! let us punish her for this!"

Whereupon the abbess jumps up, flings open the window, and beholds Dorothea Stettin so changed in mien, voice, gestures--in fine, in her whole being--that she was hardly to be recognised. She looks black and blue in the face, has her fists clenched, stamps with her feet, and screams.

"For God's sake! what ails you, Dorothea?" asked the alarmed abbess. But no answer can she hear; for all the virgins scream, roar, howl, and curse in one grand chorus, as if indeed the last day itself were come. So she runs down the steps as quick as she can, while Sidonia looks out at the window, and laughing, said, "Eh, dear sisters, this is a strange pastime you have got; better come up quickly, or the pudding will be cold."

At this the screeching and howling were redoubled, and Dorothea spat up at the window, and another flung up a broomstick, so that my hag got a bloody nose, and drew in her head screaming now likewise.

Then they all wanted to rush up into the refectory, each armed with a broomstick to punish Sidonia, and they would not heed the abbess, who still vainly asked what had angered them? but the other sisters who were descending met them half way, and prevented their ascent; whereupon the abbess raised her voice and called out loud: "Whoever does not return instantly at my command as abbess, shall be imprisoned forthwith, and condemned to bread and water for a whole day! Item, whoever speaks until I address her, shall be kept half-a-day on bread and water. Now Dorothea, speak--you alone, and let every one of you descend the steps and return here to the courtyard." This menace availed at last, and with many sobs and groans, Dorothea at last told of Sidonia's

horrible plot, as Anna Apenborg had explained to them. How she had invited them on purpose to disgrace them for ever in the eyes of the Prince and of the whole world, and the abbess could now judge herself, if they had not a right to be angry. But she must have her sub-prioress back again, out of which the scandalous witch had tricked her, and the abbess must forthwith despatch a messenger to his Highness, praying him to chase this unclean beast out of the convent, and into the streets again, from which they had taken her; for neither God nor man had peace or rest from her.

Sidonia overhearing this from the window, stretched out her grey head again, wiped away with her hand the blood that was streaming from her nose, and then menacing the abbess with her bloody fist, screamed out, "Write if you dare! write if you dare!" So the curses, howls, yells, screeches, all break loose again; some pitch their shoes up at the windows, others let fly the broomsticks at the old hag, and Dorothea cried out, "Let all pure and honourable virgins follow me!" Yet still a great many of the sisters gathered round the abbess, weeping and wringing their hands, and praying for peace, declaring they would not leave her; but all the younger nuns, particularly they who had drunk of Sidonia's accursed beer, followed the sub-prioress, and as the discontented Roman people withdrew once to the Aventine mount, so the cloister malcontents withdrew to the Muhlenberg, howling and sobbing, and casting themselves on the ground from despair. In vain the abbess ran after them, conjuring them not to expose themselves before God and man: it was all useless, my virgins screamed in chorus--"No, that they would never do, but to the cloister they would not return till the princely answer arrived, expelling the dragon for ever. Let what would become of them, they would not return. The jewel of their honour was dearer to them than life."

Now Sidonia was watching all this from her window, and as she justly feared that now in earnest the wrath and anger of the two Princes would fall on her, she goes straight to the abbess, who sits in her cell weeping and wringing her hands, menaces her again with her bloody fist, and says, "Will you write? will you write? ay, you may, but you will never live to hear the answer!" Upon which, murmuring to herself, she left the chamber. What can the poor abbess do? And the cry now comes to her, that not only the miller and his men, but half the town likewise, are gathered round the virgins. Oh, what a scandal! She wrings her hands in prayer to God, and at last resolves to lay down her poor life, so that she may fulfil her hard duty bravely as beseems her, goes then straight to the Muhlenberg and arranges the evil business thus:--Let the virgins return instantly to the cloister, and she would herself write to the Duke, and despatch the messenger this very night. But she begged for just two hours to herself, that she might make her will, and send for the sheriff's secretary to draw it up properly; also to search for her shroud which lay in her chest. For since her cruel children demanded her life, she would give it to them. The Duke's answer she would never live to hear. So Sidonia had prophesied just now.

Then she descended the hill, chanting that beautiful hymn of Dr. Nicolai's, while the virgins followed, and some lifted up their weeping voices in unison with hers:--

'Awake! the watchers on the tower
Chant aloud the midnight hour;
Awake, thou bride Jerusalem!
Through the city's gloomy porches
See the flashing bridal torches;
Awake, thou bride Jerusalem!
Come forth, come forth, ye virgin choir,
Light your lamps with altar fire!
Hallelujah! in His pride
Comes the Bridegroom to His bride;
Awake, thou fair Jerusalem!

Zion heard the watchers singing,
From her couch in beauty springing,
She wakes, and hastens joyful out.
Lo! He comes in heavenly beauty,
Strong in love, in grace, in duty;
Now her heart is free from doubt.
Light and glory flash before Him,
Heaven's star is shining o'er Him,
On His brow the kingly crown,
For the Bridegroom is THE SON.
Hallelujah! follow all
To the heavenly bridal-hall,
There the Lamb holds festival!

But behold, as they reached the convent gates, chanting their heavenly melody, there stood the demon-witch, dancing and singing her hellish melody--

"Also kleien und also kratzen,
Meine Hunde und meine Katzen."

And old Wolde and the cat, in his little red stockings, danced right and left beside her.

At this horrible sight the poor virgins scampered off hither and thither to their cells, like doves flying to their nests, without uttering a word, only the abbess exclaimed--"But two hours, my children, in the church!" Whereupon she goes, makes her will, and prepares her shroud. _Item_, sends for the dairy-mother, gives her the shroud. _Item_, a sack of moss and hops to make a pillow for her coffin, for such she would like her poor corpse to have. Then sends for the convent carpenter, and makes him take her measure for a coffin; and, lastly, strengthened in God, goes to the church to write her own death-warrant, namely, the letter to his Highness. Yet many of the virgins, for fear of Sidonia, refused to affix their signatures thereto, among whom was Anna

Apenborg, who, as soon as she left the church, ran up to the refectory to chatter over the whole business with Sidonia.

Item, how the new convent-porter was to be sent that same midnight with the letter to his Highness.

So Sidonia began now to scold, because Anna could not hold her tongue, and had betrayed her secret to the sisters. But the other said--

"She thought it was all a pure jest, and had told them for fun, that they might have a good laugh together; for how could she know that they would all grow raging mad like that!"

So my hag forgave her, and bid her sit down and eat some sausage for her supper, in return for the news she had brought her. Meanwhile, she would write a letter to his Highness likewise, and Anna should give it to the convent-porter, to take with him along with that of the abbess. This was the letter:--

"SERENE PRINCE AND GRACIOUS LORD,--

"Now will your Highness perceive, by this writing, how faithful and true a servant I am to your princely house, though the godless world has raised up an evil cry against me in your Highness's ears. Gracious Prince, the reverend Lord Bishop wrote to our worthy abbess of Marienfliess, bidding her seek out for him a virgin, pure in thought, word, and deed, by whose help he might perform some great virtue-work. Now, the abbess confided her perplexities on the matter to me, as sub-prioress; whereupon I said, 'That to serve your Highness, I would show whether such a virgin were in the convent, but she must keep silence;' this she promised. Whereon I brewed a drink, according to Albertus Magnus--it is at the 95th page--and bade them all to dinner, when I secretly put the drink into some of my best beer. Now Albertus states that the drink will have no effect on a pure virgin, only on the reverse. Your Highness, therefore, may judge what sort of sisterhood we have, when, no sooner had they drunk, than almost all rose up raging mad, and rushed out of the convent into the courtyard, where such a _scandalum_ arose--screams, curses, yells, and shrieks, that your Grace may surely judge no honourable virgin was to be found amongst them. In fact, the worthy abbess, a few others, and I myself, were the only persons who remained unaffected by the draught. Therefore, I counsel our gracious Bishop to select one from amongst us, for his great virtue-work. I, indeed, have the strongest heart of all, and the bravest courage.

"But, assuredly, the worst of all these light wantons was Dorothea Stettin, from whom I received the sub-prioress, because, as your Grace heard, she held unchaste discourse during her illness, and, therefore, is as much suited to be sub-prioress as a jewel of gold to a swine's snout. She, therefore, drew off all the other raging wantons to the Muhlenberg, declaring that they would not return

until I, who had done this great service to my Lord Bishop, was turned out into the streets. Then the lewd common folk gathered round the sisters on the hill, who betrayed their own evil case, methinks, by their rage, and mocked and jeered them, till the abbess herself had to go forth and entreat them to return; but they despised her, and the sheriff must needs gallop up with his horsewhip, and whip them before him, but in vain; the evil is too strong in them. They still said, that I, unfortunate maiden, 'must be accused to your Highness of all this scandal,' for the silly abbess had betrayed what I had done; 'and that till I was turned out of the convent, they would not come back.' Now the poor abbess fell sick at such base contempt and insult to her authority, and, feeling her end near, she made her will, and took out the shroud from her trunk, and had the carpenter to measure her for her coffin, and at last consented to write to your Grace, because by no other means would these evil wantons be satisfied, or the great scandal and disgrace to the convent be averted. But, I think, if your Grace would write her a private letter, she would change her opinion (Ah, yes, the hag means her to receive it!) and make a far different resolve when your Grace sees how true and faithful I have acted as,

"Your Highness's most humble maiden,

"SIDONIA BORK,

"Otto Bork's only and unfortunate orphan.

"Marienfliess, 6th Sept. 1617.

"P.S.--If she dies, I pray your Grace to hold me in your remembrance."

CHAPTER XV.

Of the death of the abbess, Magdalena von Petersdorfin--Item, how Duke Francis makes Jobst Bork and his daughter, Dilia, come to Camyn, and what happens there.

Now the messenger had hardly departed, when Sidonia arranged her food for three days, laid two new brooms crosswise under the table; _item_, had her bath carried up by old Wolde from the kitchen to the refectory, and lastly, locked herself up, giving out that she must and will pray to God to pardon her fallen sisters for all their sins, and that up to Friday night no one should disturb her.

Summa.-The unfortunate abbess ascertained, but too well, that same night, what such praying betokened. She screamed out,

like all the others, that it seemed as if a miner was in her breast, and hammered there, striving to raise up the bones; and the good dairy-mother, a pious and tender-hearted creature, not very old either, never left her side during all her martyrdom. For three days and three nights she took no rest, but watched by the sick abbess; lifting her from the bed to the cold floor, and from the cold floor to the bed, and refused a piece of gold the abbess offered for her trouble, begging it might be given to Lisa Behlken, a little gipsy maiden, whose thievish and heathenish parents had left her behind them in the town, but who had been taken in and sheltered by the poor widow, though she had enough to do to get her living alone.

Summa--On the Friday night the worthy abbess expired in horrible tortures; and, in consequence, such a fear and horror fell upon the whole convent, that they trembled and shook like aspen leaves, and bitterly repented now of their folly with loud cries and weeping, in having, with their own hands, helped to cast down their only stay and support.

So, next morning, Sidonia summoned the whole chapter to her apartment, drew herself up like a black adder, as she was, menaced them with her dry fists, and spake--

"See now, ye shameless wantons, what ye have done! Ye have murdered the worthy abbess, though she told you herself, it would be her death if ye came not down from the Muhlenberg; giving up your honour and the honour of our convent, ye vile crew, as a prey to the malicious world. In vain have I cried to God three days and three nights for pardon for your heavy sins, and for support for our dear mother; your sins are an offence to the Lord, and He would not hearken to me. For this morning I hear, to my great terror, that the good abbess, just as I feared, has been done to death by your vile obduracy and disobedience."

As the blasphemous devil thus went on, all were silent round her. Even Dorothea Stettin had not a word--for, though her wrath was great, her fear was yet greater. Only Anna Apenborg, who had her eyes always about, cried out--"See there, dear sisters, there comes the porter back from Old Stettin. Ah, that he should find our good mother in her coffin, as she prophesied!"

So Sidonia despatches a sister for the princely letter, and bids the others remain; and when the letter is brought, Sidonia breaks the seal, runs over the contents to herself, laughs, and then says, at last--

"Listen to the message his Grace sends to our, alas! now dead mother, as a kind and just father!" Reads--

"HONOURABLE MOTHER, WORTHY ABBESS,--

"As our serene and gracious Prince is just setting off to hunt

with the illustrious patricio, Philip Heinhofer of Augsburg, his Grace bids me say that he will visit the convent himself next month on his way to New Stettin, to advise with you, and investigate, in person, this evil business with the sisterhood. As to Sidonia, he reserves a different treatment for her.

"Your good son and friend, "FRANCISCA BLODOW," Ducal Secretary.

"Old Stettin, 8th Sept. 1617."

Hereupon she stuck the letter in her pocket, clapped her hand over it, and continued--

"That is what I call a just, good father; and if I had not interposed with Christian charity, who knows what heaps of vile, shameless wantons might not be cast forth upon the streets. But I remember the words of my heavenly Bridegroom--'Forgive, and it shall be forgiven you!' And now to end, good sisters, since our worthy mother is no more, we must have a ruler over this uproarious convent. Therefore, let us proceed at once to elect her successor from amongst ourselves, that so our gracious Prince may be able to confirm your choice on his arrival next month. Proceed, then, since ye are all assembled here, that the convent may know in whom it may place confidence. Speak, Anna Apenborg, whom dost thou name for an abbess, my much-loved sister?"

With Sidonia's sausage still in her stomach, what else could she do, but bow and say--

"I think no one so worthy as our good sister Sidonia."

Hereat laughed my hag, and went on to ask the other virgins; and all those who had not been affected by the hellish drink cried out "Sidonia!" while those who had been were afraid to dissent, and so cried out too for her. In fine, "Sidonia! Sidonia!" was heard from all lips, and so they took her for their abbess, whom but a few days before they would have flung out into the streets. Even Dorothea Stettin consented, on condition that she received back the sub-prioret. Whereupon Sidonia loosed her veil with the one golden key, and restored it to Dorothea with the Judas kiss; then bid her fetch the veil of the abbess with the two golden keys, for this was an heirloom in the cloister. When it arrived, Sidonia goes to her trunk, and takes out a large regal cape that looked like ermine, but was only white cat's skin. She hung this upon her neck, and exclaimed--

"Hitherto I was lady of castles and lands--now, as abbess, I am of princely rank, for many princesses were abbesses in the time of the Papacy; therefore, it is meet that I array myself as a princess, and I command ye all to treat me as a princess, and honour me as your abbess, and kiss my hand, which is the proper, due, and fitting reverence to be paid to my rank. The late worthy matron, indeed, suffered ye to treat her with little respect, and

your late vile contempt of her on the Muhlenberg shows (God be good to us!) but too well what fruit her neglect of these things brought forth."

Truly the pride of this hag was equal to her wickedness; for mark, already for a year and a day before this, she had made the convent-porter and others bring her white cats and black cats; these she killed and skinned, and sewed the black cats' tails on the white skins, to make a show withal, for ermine skin was above her price, I am thinking. Yet no one knew wherefore she killed the cats, and for what cause. Now it all came to light.

No doubt these circumstances gave rise to that error which runs through the Pomeranian cotemporary authors, who assert all of them, that Sidonia was abbess of Marienfliess--though, in truth, she never was duly elected. [Footnote: Cramer and Mikrus make the same mistake.]

But let us return now to his Highness, Bishop Francis. He sent to Jobst Bork, bidding him come instantly to Camyn with his little daughter, Diliانا. They knew nothing of his Grace's purpose, but were soon informed on entering the episcopal palace. For, after his Highness, with whom was Doctor Joel, desired them to be seated, the Doctor placed Diliانا upon a stool, close to the window, beside which my magister had hung up a magic screen on purpose; and, as the blessed sun poured in through the window, Diliانا's beautiful, delicate form was shadowed forth upon the pure white linen with which it was covered. Whereupon the magister bent down, stuck his hands on his fat sides, knit his brows, and contemplated the image steadily for some time; then, starting up, gave a loud huzzah, and cried out--

"Gracious Prince, we have found it, we have found it! Here is a pure virgin. I know by the formation of the shadows along the virgin-linen that she is pure as the sun-angel--as the ascending morning dew."

Here Jobst Bork shook his head, and the maiden blushed to her finger-ends, and looked down ashamed in her lap. Then his Grace said, laughing--

"Do not wonder at our joy, for the destiny of our whole race, good Jobst, lies now in you and your daughter's hands. Through the witchcraft of Sidonia Bork, as ye know, and all the world testifies, our ancient race has been melted away till but a few dry twigs remain, and no young eyes look up to us when our old eyes are failing. But what Sidonia Bork has destroyed, Diliانا Bork, by God's help, can restore. For, mark! after all human help had been found of no avail, this man whom ye see here, a _magister artium_ of Grypswald, Joel by name, inquired of the spirits how the great evil could be turned away from our race; but they declared that none knew except the sun-angel, because he saw all that passed upon the earth. This angel, however, being the

greatest of all spirits, will not appear unless a brave and pure virgin--pure in thought, word, and work--stand within the magic circle; therefore, we have sent for your daughter, hearing that she was such an one, and the magister hath proved the truth of the report even now. It rests with you, therefore, much-prized Diliانا, sister to the angels in purity, and last and only hope of my perishing race, to save them at my earnest petition."

When he ended, Diliانا remained quite silent, but Jobst wriggled on his chair, and at last spake--

"Serene Prince, you know me for the most obedient of your subjects, but with the devil's work I will have nothing to do; besides, I see not why you must trouble spirits about my evil cousin, the sorceress of Marienfliess. Send to my castellan of Pansin, George Putkammer, he will thrust her in a sack to-night, and carry her to-morrow to Camyn--_that_ you may believe, my Lord Duke!"

Then he related what the brave knight had done, and how Sidonia had in truth left him in peace ever since, all through fear of the young knight's good sword. His Grace wondered much at this. "Never could I have believed that so stouthearted a man was to be found in all Pomerania--one that would dare to touch this notorious witch."

And he fell into deep musing, keeping his eyes upon Jobst's jack-boots, in which he had stuck a great hunting-knife. At last he spake--"But if I seize her and burn her, will it be better with our race? I trow not; for she can leave the evil spell on us, perhaps, even if she were a hundred times burned. Her magic hath great power. Will burning her break the spell? No; we must act more cunningly with the dragon. Earth cannot help us in this. And here you see, Jobst, why I demand your daughter's help to conjure the angels of God."

"Then seek another virgin, my Prince," answered Jobst, "mine you shall never have. I have been once in the devil's claws, and I won't thrust myself into them again--much less my only darling child, whom I love a thousand times better than my life. No, no, her body and soul shall never be endangered by my consent."

"But where is the danger?" said the Duke. "It is with an angel, not a devil, your daughter is to speak; and surely no evil, then, could happen to our dear and chaste little sister?"

At last Diliانا exclaimed eagerly, "Ah; can it be possible to speak with the blessed angels, as the evil women speak with the devil? In truth, I would like to see an angel."

At this the Duke looked significantly at the magister, who immediately advanced, and began to explain the _opus magicum et theurgicum_ to the maiden, as follows:--

"You know, fair young virgin, that our Saviour saith of the innocent children, 'Their angels always see the face of My Father which is in heaven' (Matt xviii.). Item, St. Paul (Heb. i.): 'Are not the angels ministering spirits, sent forth for the service of those who are heirs of salvation?' This is no new doctrine, but one as old as the world. For you know, further, that Adam, Noah, the holy patriarchs, the prophets, &c., talked with angels, because their faith was great. Item, you know that, even in the New Testament, angels were stated to have appeared and talked with men; but later still, during the papal times even, the angels of God appeared to divers persons, as was well known, and of their own free will. For they did not always appear of free will; and therefore, from the beginning, conjurations were employed to compel them, and fragments of these have come down to us ex traditione, as we magistri say, from the time of Shem, the son of Noah, who revealed them to his son Misraim; and so, from son to son, they have reached to our day, and are still powerful."

"But," spake Diliiana, "is it then possible for man to compel angels?"

Ille-"Yes, by three different modes; first, through the word, or the intellectual vinculum; secondly, through the heavenly bodies, or the astral vinculum; lastly, through the earthly creatures, or the elementary vinculum.

"Respecting first the word, you know that all things were made by it, and without it was nothing made that is made. With God the Lord, therefore, word and thing are one and the same; for when He speaks it is done; He commands, and it stands there. Also, with our father, Adam, was the word all-powerful; for he ruled over all beasts of the field, and birds, and creeping things by the name which he gave unto them, that is, by the word (Gen. ii.). This power, too, the word of Noah possessed, and by it he drew the beasts into the ark (Gen. vii.); for we do not read that he drave them, which would be necessary now, but they went into the ark after him, two and two, i.e., compelled by the power of his word.

" Next follows the astral vinculum, i.e., the sympathy between us and those heavenly bodies or stars wherein the angels dwell or rule. We must know their divers aspects, configurations, risings, settings, and the like, also the precise time, hour, and minute in which they exercise an influence over angel, man, and lower creatures, according as the ancients, and particularly the Chaldeans have taught us; for spirit cannot influence spirit at every moment, but only at particular times and under particular circumstances.

"Lastly comes the elementary vinculum, or the sympathy which binds all earthly creatures together--men, animals, plants, stones, vapours and exhalations, &c., but above all, this

cementing sympathy is strongest in pure virgins, as you,
much-praised Diliana----"

Hereupon she spake surprised: "How can all this be? Is it not
folly to suppose that the blessed angels could be compelled by
influences from plants and stones?"

"It is no folly, dear maiden, but a great and profound truth,
which I will demonstrate to you briefly. Everything throughout the
universe is effected by two opposing forces, attraction or
sympathy, repulsion or antipathy. All things in heaven as
well as upon earth act on each other by means of these two
forces."

"And as all within, above, beneath, in the heaven and on the
earth, are types insensibly repeated of one grand archetype, so we
find that the sun himself is a magnet, and by his different poles
repels or attracts the planets, and amongst them our earth; in
winter he repels her, and she moves darkly and mournfully along;
in spring he begins to draw her towards him, and she comes
joyfully, amidst songs of the holy angels, out of night and
darkness, like a bride into the arms of her beloved. And though no
ear upon earth can mark this song, yet the sympathies of each
creature are attracted and excited thereby, and man, beast, bird,
fish, tree, flower, grass, stones, all exhale forth their
subtlest, most spiritual, sweetest life to blend with the holy
singers.

"O maiden, maiden, this is no folly! Truly might we say that each
thing feels, for each thing loves and hates--the animate as the
inanimate, the earthly as the heavenly, the visible as the
invisible. For what is love but attraction or sympathy towards
some object, whereby we desire to blend with it? And what is hate
but repulsion or antipathy, whereby we are forced to fly or recoil
from it?

"We, silly men, tear and tatter to pieces the rude coarse
materia of things, and think we know the nature of an
object, because, like a child with a mirror, we break it to find
the image. But the life of the thing--the inner, hidden mystic
life of sympathies--of this we know nothing, and yet we
call ourselves wise!

"But what is the signification of this widespread law of love and
hate which rules the universe as far as we know? Nothing else than
the dark signature of faith impressed upon every creature.
For what the thing loves, that is its God; and what the thing
hates, that is its devil. So when the upright and perfect soul
ascends to God, the source of all attraction, God descends to it
in sympathy, and blends with it, as Christ says, 'Whoso loves Me,
and keeps My word, My Father will love him, and we will come and
take up our abode with him.' But if the perverted soul descends to
the source of all repulsion, which is the devil, God will turn

away from him, and he will hate God and love the devil, as our blessed Saviour says (Matt. vi.), 'No man can serve two masters, he will _hate_ one and _love_ the other; ye cannot serve God and the devil.' Such will be the law of the universe until the desire of all creatures is fulfilled, until the living Word again descends from heaven, and says, 'Let there be light!' and the new light will fall upon the soul. Then will the old serpent be cast out of the new heaven and the new earth. Hate and repulsion will exist no longer, but as Esaias saith, 'The wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, will lie down together, and the child may play fearlessly upon the den of the adder.' Hallelujah! Then will creation be free! then will it pass from the bondage of corruption into the lordly freedom of the children of God (Rom. viii.), and

Sun,
Moon, stars,
Earth, angels, men,
Beasts, plants, stones,
The living as the dead,
The great as the small,
The visible as the invisible,
Will find at last
The source of all attraction
Which they have ever ardently desired--
Round which they will ever circle
Day on day, night on night,
Century on century, millennium on millennium,
Lost in the infinite and eternal abyss
Of all love--
GOD!"

[Footnote: Almost with the last words of this sketch, the second part of *_Kosmos_*, by Alexander von Humboldt, came to my hand. Evidently the great author (who so well deserves immortality for his contributions to science) views the world also as a whole; and wherever in ancient or modern times, even a glimpse of this doctrine can be found, he quotes it and brings it to light. But yet, in a most incomprehensible manner, he has passed over those very systems in which, above all others, this idea finds ample room; namely, the new platonism of the ancients (the Theurgic Philosophy), and the later Cabalistic, Alchymical, Mystic Philosophy (White Magic), from which system the deductions of Magister Joel are borrowed; but above all, we must name *_Plotinus_*, as the father of the new Platonists, to whom nature is throughout but one vast unity, one divine totality, one power united with one life. In later times, we find that Albertus Magnus, Cornelius Agrippa, and Theophrastus Paracelsus held the same view. The latter uses the above word "attraction" in the sense of sympathy. And the systems of these philosophers, which are in many places full of profound truths, are based upon this idea.]

CHAPTER XVI.

Jobst Bork takes away his daughter by force from the Duke and Dr. Joel; also is strengthened in his unbelief by Dr. Cramer--Item, how my gracious Prince arrives at Marienfliess, and there vehemently menaces Sidonia.

When Dr. Joel had ended his discourse, the fair young virgin's eyes overflowed with tears; and clasping her hands, she sprang up, and seizing my magister by the hand, exclaimed, "O sir, let us see the blessed angels! Let me talk with them."

But her father, who was dry and brief in speech, tore her away, saying sourly, "Have done, child; you must not dare to do it!" Then they all prayed him to consent--the Duke, and the magister, and Dilia herself; and the magister said, that in a few days the sun would be in Libra, which would be the fitting and best time; if they delayed, then a whole year must pass over without obtaining any help, for he had already demonstrated that each spirit had its particular time of influence. And so my magister went on. But all was in vain. So Dilia stroked her father's beard with her little hands and said, "Think, dear papa, on grandmamma--her poor ghost; and that I can avenge her if I keep my virgin honour pure in thought, word, and deed! Is it not strange that my gracious Prince should just now come and demand the proof of my purity? Let me pass the trial, and then I can avenge the poor ghost, and calm the fears of his Highness all at once; for assuredly he has cause to fear Sidonia." So the Duke and Magister Joel inquired eagerly what she meant by the ghost; and when they heard, they rejoiced, and said the finger of God was in it. "Would the knight still strive against God?"

"No," he answered, "but against the devil; for Luther says, 'Such ghost-work must be of the devil, since the departed soul must either be in heaven or in hell; if in heaven, it would have rest,' therefore he feared the ghost of his poor mother had nothing good about it, and he would take care and keep his child from the claws of the devil."

Thus the argument and strife went on, till Jobst at last cried out sharply, "Dilia, dost thou esteem the fifth commandment? If so, come with me." Whereupon the pious virgin threw herself upon his neck, exclaiming, "Father, I come!"

But my magister took her by the hand, to draw her from her father, whereat Jobst seized the hunting-knife that he had stuck in his jack-boots, and brandishing it, cried out, "Hands off, fellow, or I'll paint a red sign upon thee! My Lord Duke, in the name of the three devils, seek out another virgin; but my virgin, your Highness shall never have." Then seizing his little daughter by

the waist, he rushed out of the room with her, growling like a bear with his cub, and down the stairs, and through the streets, never stopping or staying till he reached the inn, nor even once looking behind him or heeding his Grace, who screamed out after him, "Good Jobst, only one word; only one word, dear Jobst!"

And when my Jobst reached the inn, he roared for the coachman, bid him follow him with all speed to the road, paid down his reckoning to mine host, and was off, and already out of the town, just as the Duke and Dr. Joel reached the inn, to try and get him back again. So they return raging and swearing, while Jobst crouches down behind a thorn-bush with his little daughter, till the coach comes up. And they have scarcely mounted it, when Dr. Cramer, of Old Stettin, drives up; for he was on his way to induct a rector (I know not whom) into his parish, as the ecclesiastical superintendent lay sick in his bed. This meeting rejoiced the knight's heart mightily; and after he had peered out of the coach windows, to see if the Duke or the doctor were on his track, and making sure that he was not pursued, he prayed Dr. Cramer to bide a while, and discourse him on a matter that lay heavy on his conscience. The doctor having consented, they all alighted, and seated themselves in a hollow, where the coachman could not overhear their discourse. Then Jobst related all that had happened, and asked had he acted rightly?

"In all things you have done well, brave knight," answered my excellent godfather, "for though, doubtless, spirits can and do appear, yet is there always great danger to body and soul in practising these conjurations; and no one can say with security whether such apparition be angel or devil; because St. Paul says (2 Cor. xi. 14), that 'Satan often changes himself into an angel of light;' and respecting the ghost of your mother, in my opinion, it was a devil sent to tempt your dear little daughter; for it is written (Wisdom xxxi.), 'The just are in the hand of God, and no evil troubles them.'"

He is going on with his quotations, when Dilliana calls out, "Godfather, here is a coach coming as fast as it can drive; and surely two men are therein!"

"Adieu! adieu!" cried the knight, springing up, and dragging his daughter into the coach as quick as he could. Then he bid the coachman drive for life and death; and when they reached the wood, to take the first shortest cut to the left.

Meanwhile, the Duke and Dr. Joel come up with my worthy godfather, stop him, and ask what the knight, Jobst Bork, was saying to him? for they had seen them both together, sitting in the hollow, along with Dilliana.

On this, the dry sheep's cough got into my worthy godfather's throat from pure fright, for a lie had never passed his lips in all his life; therefore he told the whole story truly and

honestly.

Meanwhile, the other coach drove on rapidly through the wood; and the coachman did as he was desired, and took the first path to the left, where they soon came on a fine thick hazel grove. Here Jobst stopped to listen, and truly they could hear the other coach distinctly crushing the fallen leaves, and the voice of the Duke screaming, "Jobst, dost thou hear?--Jobst, may the devil take thee, wilt thou stop?"

"Ay, my Lord Duke," thought Jobst to himself, "I will stop as you wish, but I trust the devil will neither take me nor my daughter." Then he lifted the fair Dilliana himself out of the coach, and laid her on the green grass, under the thick nut trees, saying, "Where shall we fly to, my daughter? What thinkest thou?"

Illa--"Why, to thy good castle of Saatzig, my father."

Ille--"Marry, I'll take good care I won't--to fly from one danger to another; for will he not hunt us there--ay, till his spurs are red, and shouting all the way after me till his lungs burst like an old wind-bag."

Illa--"Whither, then, my father?"

Ille--"To Stramehl, methinks, to my cousin Bastien, where we shall remain until the time is passed in which he can question the spirits; for, if I remember rightly, the sun will enter Libra in a few days."

Illa--"But, dear father, is it not cruel thus to torment the good Prince? Oh! it must be so beautiful to talk to an angel!"

Ille--"Do not anger me, my heart's daughter, do not anger me. Better be George Putkammer's good loving wife; turn thy thoughts that way, my daughter, and in a year there will be something better worth looking at in the cradle than a spirit."

Illa blushes and plucks the nuts over her head.

Ille--"What sayest thou? Art thou for ever to put off these marriage thoughts?"

Illa--"Ah! my heart's dear father, what would my poor grandmother say in eternity? It is impossible that, without God's will, the Duke and the poor ghost should have come upon the same thoughts about me."

Ille--"Anger me not, child; thou art a silly, superstitious thing; without God's will, it may well be, but not without the devil's will. Thou hast heard what Luther says of ghosts, and we must believe him. Eh?"

Illa--"But my Lord Duke and Dr. Joel say quite differently. Ah, father, let me see the blessed angels! Dr. Joel surely has seen them often, and yet no danger befell him."

Ille--"Anger me not, daughter, I say, for the third time. It is written, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;' and is not this tempting Him--setting heaven and hell in an uproar all about a wicked old hag of a witch? Wherefore is the Duke such a goose? But I will give him no child of mine to run a race with to hell. Now rise, child, and follow me to the coach!"

Illa--"But you must make me one promise" (weeping).

Ille--"What then?"

Illa--"Speak no more of marriage to me till I say, 'Father, now let the marriage be.'"

Ille--"With the young knight, George?"

Illa--"I have no objection to offer to him; but the young man is not to come before my eyes until then."

Ille--"Ah, thou art as obstinate as the Rügen geese! Well, have it thy own way, child. And now to Strameh!!"

Still the Duke was hunting after them, through thick and thin, and roaring for the knight at the top of his voice, till the wood re-echoed; and though some squires, who came up through the forest, declared that no carriage had passed their way, yet he continued his chase, feeling certain that no matter what bypath the knave had taken, yet he would assuredly come up with him at Saatzig.

So the next day he reached the castle, for it lay but ten miles from Camyn, but no knight was there. The Duke waited for two days, still no sign of him. So he amused the time by fishing, and making inquiries amongst all the neighbouring people about Sidonia, and so strange were the tales repeated by the simple, superstitious folk, that his Highness resolved to make a detour home by Marienfliess, just to get a passing glimpse of this devil's residence. Here he met a shepherd, who told many strange things, and swore that he had seen her many times flying out of the chimney on her broomstick; and, as the convent lay right before them, his Grace asked which was Sidonia's chimney, and the carl pointed out the chimney with his hand--it was the fourth from the church there, where the smoke was rising. Whereupon my Lord Duke shuddered, and went his way as quick as he could up the Vossberg. He knew not that upon that very day his brother, Duke Philip, had arrived at Marienfliess from Old Stettin, on his way to the diet at New Stettin. The herald had been despatched by his Highness, some days before, to inform Sheriff Eggert Sparling of his approach, and that his Highness and suite would arrive about noon.

He was also to say the same to the nuns, particularly to Sidonia Bork.

So at mid-day my sheriff set off to the cloister, with the steward and the secretaries, and waited there in the nuns' courtyard for the arrival of the Duke, and a boy was placed in the mill to wave his cap the moment his Highness came in sight. Yet my Eggert was suffering terrible anguish all the time in his mind, for he thought that the Duke might bid him seize the devil's witch.

Soon the cry rose that the Duke was coming--his six coaches had just come in sight. Then the convent gate opened, and my hag appeared at the head of the entire sisterhood, all in their black robes and white veils; she the same, except that she wore the abbess veil whereon two golden keys were embroidered. Item, the white cats'-skin cape, which I have noticed before, was displayed upon her shoulders. Thus she came forth from the convent gate with all the sisters, two and two, and she threw up her eyes, and raised the hymn of St. Ambrose, just as the Duke and his six coaches drove into the courtyard, and the whole convent joining, they advanced thus singing to meet his Highness.

Now, his Highness was a meek man and seldom angry, but his brow grew black with wrath, when Sidonia, stepping up to the coach, bowed low, and in her cats' tippet--herself a cat in cunning and deceit--threw up her eyes hypocritically to heaven.

"How now," cried his Grace; "who the devil hath suffered you, Sidonia, to play the abbess over these virgins?"

To which my hag replied--

"Gracious Prince, ask these virgins here if they have not selected me as their abbess of their own free will, and they are now come to entreat your Highness to confirm the choice of their hearts."

"Marry," quoth the Duke, "I have heard enough of your doings from the neighbouring nobles and others. I know well how you made the poor abbess Magdalena bite the dust; item, how you forced these poor virgins to elect you abbess through mortal and deadly fear. Speak, dear sisters, fear nothing--I, your Prince, command you: have ye not elected this piece of sin and vanity to be your abbess simply through fear of your lives?"

But the virgins looked down upon the ground, were silent and trembled, while my sheriff plunged his hand into his wide boots for the kerchief to wipe his face, for he saw well how it would end, and the sweat of anguish was dripping from his brow. A second time his Grace asked--"Was it from fear?" When at last one answered, named Agnes Kleist, not the stout Dinnies' sister, but another--

"In truth, gracious Prince, it was from pure bodily fear alone

that we elected Sidonia as our abbess."

Her courage pleased the Duke so much that he inquired her name, and hearing it, said--

"Ay, I thought you must be a Kleist; and now, for your truth and courage, I make you abbess of Marienfließ; Item, Dorothea Stettin sub-prioress. And mark me, Sidonia Bork--it is for the last time--if you attempt to dispute my will, or make the least disturbance in the convent in consequence of my decision, you shall be sent over the frontier. I have tried kindness long enough by you--now for justice!"

"Sparling, I command you by your duty to me as your Prince, if this evil and notorious hag should make the least disturbance or strife in the convent, seize her that instant, either yourself or by means of your bailiffs, and chase her over the frontiers. Item, you are not to permit her to leave the convent, to alarm or intimidate the neighbouring nobles, as she hath hitherto done. Therefore I command the new abbess to replace the heavy padlock on the gate from this day forth. Do you hear this, Sidonia? These poor maidens shall have peace at last. Too long they have been your sport and mockery, but it shall end."

So the new abbess answered--"Your Highness shall be obeyed!"

But my sheriff could not utter a word from horror, and seemed stifling with a thick, husky cough in his throat. But when Sidonia crept up close to him, and menaced him privately with her dry, clenched hand, he forgot himself entirely, and made a spring that brought him clean over the churchyard wall, while his sword clattered after him, and his plumed beaver dropt from his head to the ground. All the lacqueys laughed loud at the sight, even his Grace laughed. But my sheriff makes the best of it, and calls out--

"Ah, see, my Lord Duke, how the little boys have stolen the flowers that I myself planted on the grave of the blessed abbess. I'll make them pay for it, the thieving brats!"

Hereat his Grace asked why the abbess was not buried within the church, but in the graveyard. And they answered, she had so commanded. Whereupon he said mildly--

"The good mother is worthy of a prayer; I shall go and say a paternoster upon her grave, and see if the youngsters have left me a flower to carry away for memory."

So he alighted, made Eggert show him the grave, removed his hat, and prayed, while all his suite in the six coaches uncovered their heads likewise. Lastly, he made the sign of the cross, and bent over the grave to pluck a flower. But just then a warm heavy wind blew across the graves, and all the flowers drooped, faded, and

turned yellow as it passed. Yea, even a yellow stripe seemed to mark its passage straight across all the graves over the court, up to the spot where the thrice-accursed witch stood upon the convent wall, and people afterwards remarked that all plants, grass, flowers, and shrubs within that same stripe turned pale and faded, only some poison plants, as hemlock, nightshade, and the like, stood up green and stiff along that livid line. When the Duke observed this, he shook his head, but made no remark, stepped hastily, however, into his carriage, after again earnestly admonishing Sidonia; item, the sheriff to remember his commands. He ordered the procession to start, and proceeded on his way to the Diet.

It may be easily believed that no one ventured to put the commands of his Grace into execution; therefore, Sidonia remained abbess as heretofore. Agnes Kleist, indeed, that same day, had the great padlock put upon the gate; but my hag no sooner sees it than she calls for the convent servant, saying she must go forth to drive, then takes her hatchet, and with it hews away at the padlock, until it falls to the ground. Whereupon, laughing scornfully, she went her way out into the road; and the new abbess could not remonstrate, for on Sidonia's return home (I forgot to say that, latterly, she had gone much about amongst the neighbouring nobles, even as his Highness observed, frightening them to death with her visits) she shut herself up again; and Anna Apenborg soon brings the news from Wolde, "The lady is praying;" and Anna, having privately slid under the window, found that it was even so.

So the whole convent shuddered; but no one dared to say a word, though each sister judged for herself what the praying betokened, without venturing to speak her surmise. But this time she did not pray for three days and three nights, only once in the week, when her bath-day came; by which, people suspected that his Highness was destined to a slower death than the other victims of her demoniac malice.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the fearful death of his Highness, Duke Philip II. of Pomerania, and of his melancholy but sumptuous burial.

After the before-mentioned festival of the jubilee, it happened that one day Anna Apenborg went to the brew-house, which lay inside the convent walls (it was one of Sidonia's praying days), and there she saw a strange apparition of a three-legged hare. She runs and calls the other sisters; whereupon they all scamper out of their cells, and down the steps, to see the miracle, and behold, there sits the three-legged hare; but when Agnes Kleist took off her slipper, and threw it at the devil's sprite, my hare

is off, and never a trace of him could be found again in the whole brew-house or in the whole convent court. Hereat the nuns shuddered, and each virgin has her opinion on the matter, but speaks it not; for just then, too, comes Sidonia forth, with old Wolde and the cat, and the three begin their devil's dance, while the cat squalls and wails, and the old witch-hag screams her usual hell psalm:--

"Also kleien und also kratzen,
Meine Hunde und meine Katzen."

Next day, however, the poor virgins heard, to their deep sorrow, what the three-legged hare betokened even as they had suspected; for the cry came to the convent that his Grace, good Duke Philip, was dead, and the tidings ran like a signal-fire through the people, that this kind, wise, just Prince had been bewitched to death. (Ah! where in Pomerania land--yea, in all German fatherland--was such a wise, pious, and learned Prince to be found? No other fault had he but one, and that was not having, long before, burned this devil's witch, this accursed sorceress, with fire and faggot.)

And now I must tell how his Grace had scarcely left Marienfliess and reached Saatzig (they were but a mile from each other) when he felt suddenly weak. He wondered much to find that his dear lord brother, Duke Francis, had only left the castle two hours before. Item, that Jobst Bork had not arrived there, and no man knew whither the knight had flown. Here the Duke grew so much worse, that his ministers earnestly entreated him to postpone the diet at New Stettin, and return home; for how could it please the knights and burgesses to see their beloved Prince in this sad extremity of suffering?

Hereupon his Highness replied with the beautiful Latin words, "Officio mihi officio." (And after his death, these words were stamped on the burial-medals. Item, a rose, half-eaten by a worm, with the inscription, "Ut rosa roditur omnes;" whereby many think allusion is made to the livid breath that passed over the flowers at Marienfliess, but I leave these things undecided.)

Summa--His Highness proceeded to New Stettin, and decided all the boundary disputes amongst the nobles, &c., returned then to his court at Old Stettin, to hold the evangelical jubilee; but, by that time, all the doctors from far and near could do naught to help him; and though he lingered some months, yet, from the first, he knew that death was on him; for nothing could appease the tortures he suffered in his breast, even as all the others whom Sidonia had murdered, and finally, on the 3rd day of February 1618, at ten of the clock, he expired--his age being forty-four years, six months, and six days. And the corpse presented the same signature of Satan, though his Grace's sickness had differed in some particulars from that of Sidonia's other victims. To this

appearance of the princely corpse I myself can testify, for I beheld it, along with many others, when it lay in state in the great hall.

On the 19th of March following, the princely ceremony of interment took place. Let me see if my tears will permit me to describe it:--

After the deputies from the three honourable estates had assembled--the Stettin, the Wolgastian, and the ecclesiastical--in the castle church, with the Princes of the blood, the nobles, knights, and magnates of the land, three cannons were fired; and at nine of the clock in the evening, the princely corpse was carried first into the count's chamber, then to the knights' chamber, from thence to the grand state-hall, by torchlight, by twenty-four nobles, and from that to the castle square, which was entirely covered with black cloth. Here it was laid down, and sixty students from the university of Grypswald, and forty boys from the town-school, sung the burial psalms from their books; while, at intervals, the priests chanted the appointed portions of the liturgy; after which all the bells of the town began to toll, and the swan song was raised, "Now in joy I pass from earth." Whereupon the nobles lifted up the bier again, and the procession moved forwards. And could my gracious Prince have looked out through the little window above his head, he would have seen not only the blessed cross, but also his dear town, from street to tower, covered with weeping human faces: for the procession passed on through the main street, across the coal market, through castle street, into the crane court--all which streets were lined with the princely soldatesca, who also, each man, carried a torch in his hand, besides the group of regular torch-bearers in the procession--and windows, roofs, towers, presented one living mass of human heads all along the way. And the order was thus:--

1. The song-master, _cum choro-item_, the rector, ~~pa~~adagogis, with his collegis.
2. The honourable ministerium from all the three states.
3. The Duke's trumpeters and drummers, with instruments reversed, and drums covered with crape.
4. The rector magnificus, and the four deacons of the university of Grypswald, among whom came Dr. Joel.
5. The land-marshal, with his black marshal's staff, alone; then the pages, three and three, in mourning cloaks, and faces covered with black taffety up to their noses.
6. The court-marshal, and the marshals of the three states--_item_, the ambassadors, and other high officials of foreign princes, &c.

7. Twelve knights, in full armour, upon twelve horses; each knight bearing his standard, and each horse covered entirely with black cloth, and having the arms of his rider embroidered on the forehead-piece, and on the two sides was led by a noble on foot.

The supreme court-marshal followed these, his drawn sword covered with crape, in his hand, the point to the ground.

Next the chancellor, with the seals covered with crape, and laid upon a black velvet cushion.

The princely corpse, borne by twenty-four nobles, on a bier covered with black velvet, and beneath a bluish-velvet canopy embroidered on all sides with the arms of his Grace's illustrious ancestors, with all their helmets, shields, devices, and quarterings, gorgeously represented in gold and silver.

Item, on each side, twelve nobles, with lighted wax torches, from which streamers of black crape floated, and twelve halberdiers, with halberds reversed.

The last poor faded trefoil of our dear fatherland, namely, the serene and illustrious Princes, Dukes, and Lords--Francis, Ulrich, and Bogislaff, the princely brothers of Pomerania--all in long velvet mantles, and their faces covered with black crape up to the eyes. [Footnote: Note of Duke Bogislaff XIV.-The three accompanied him to the grave; but who will walk mourner beside my bier? Ah! that long ere this I had lain calmly in my coffin, and looked up from the little window to my Lord, and rested in the God of my salvation! Amen.]

His princely Highness, Duke Philip Julius of Wolgast--the last of his name--and, like his cousins, wearing crape over his face to the eyes.

The honourable chapter of Camyn.

The councillors, _medici_, and other officers.

The chamberlain, knights, and pages of the princely widow's household.

The princely widow herself, with all her ladies, in long black silk mantles, their faces covered with black taffety up to the eyes, and accompanied by their Graces the Elector of Brandenburg and the Duke of Mecklenburg.

The princely widow, Hedwig, the bereaved spouse of Ernest Ludovic of blessed memory--who was doomed to follow her whole illustrious race to the grave--conducted by Duke William of Courland, and Henry of Mangerson, ambassador from Brunswick.

The Countess von Eberstein, and Baroness von Putbus, with the ladies in waiting to her princely Highness.

The noble ladies and maids of honour, amongst whom came Diliiana Bork.

Burgomasters, sheriffs, and council of the good town of Old Stettin.

Trumpeters and drummers, as before, and another songmaster _cum choro_, as at the beginning; and so closed the procession.

And how can I ever forget the lamentations that broke forth from all the people, as the princely bier approached--men, women, children, all sobbed and wept, as if indeed their own father lay there, and turned their torches down to view the blessed body better, from the windows and the towers (for mostly all the people carried torches). Then arose such a lamentation and cry as if no comfort more was left for them upon earth, only in heaven must they look for it; and as I stood in the coal-market, leaning my shoulder against a post, and heard this great cry of a whole people, and saw the flashing torches all bent upon this one point in the dark midnight, behold the bright gold crucifix on the coffin glittered as if in the clear light of the sun; and the blaze of the torches was reflected from the black concave of heaven, so that a glory seemed to rest around and above the bier, and all shone and glittered in that radiant circle, so that it was a pleasure and a wonder to gaze upon.

"Thus through sin and sorrow loometh,
Light of light from God that cometh,
Shining o'er life's saddest night.
For His glory ever stayeth,
On the soul that weeps and prayeth;
May the words that Jesu sayeth
Guide us onward towards that light!
Amen!"

The procession now returned again to the castle square, and from thence to the chapel.

Now when the coffin was laid down before the altar, and all the twelve knights with their standard gathered round it, my esteemed godfather, Dr. Cramer, advanced up the nave to the altar, chanting the Kyrie Eleison, and all the twelve knights lowered their standards upon the coffin, and beat their breasts, crying out--"Kyrie Eleison!" which cry was caught up by the whole congregation, and they likewise--nobles, priests, people, prince, peasant, men, women, children--all smote their breasts and cried out, "Kyrie Eleison!" so that my blessed godfather, his voice failed through weeping, and three times in vain he tried to speak.

After the sermon, the coffin was lifted up and lowered into the vault, and the signet-ring of his Highness broken by the land-marshal, and flung upon the coffin. But the twelve standards

were set down by the altar, and the marshal presented his staff to Bishop Francis, now the serene and illustrious reigning Duke of Pomerania; and the supreme court-marshal delivered up the sword, and the chancellor the seals to his Serene Highness, and so this mournful ceremony terminated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How Joist Bork and his little daughter are forced at last into the "Opus Magicum"--Item, how his Highness, Duke Francis, appoints Christian Ludecke, his attorney-general, to be witch-commissioner of Pomerania.

Now my Jobst, guessing well what was in store for him if he remained at the ducal court, ordered his horses to be ready harnessed by four of the clock, on the morning after the funeral, that he might get clear off with his daughter before my lord Duke knew anything of the matter. But his Highness knew better than that, for just as the knight and his daughter were stepping into the coach, four of the Duke's equerries sprang forth and seized the horses' heads, while four pages rushed down the castle steps, and informed the knight that he must accompany them with his daughter back to the castle, and up to the private apartment of his Grace, for that the Duke had a word to say to him before his departure. What could my Jobst do? He must take his Dilia out of the coach again, and follow the pages through the castle up to the Duke's quarters, which were filled with all beautiful things, statues and paintings, &c., from Italy; and his private room was decorated with the finest pieces of sculpture. So here they find his Grace and Dr. Joel seated at a table, with the wine-can before them, for they had sat up all night discoursing.

And when my Jobst enters with his sour face, holding his daughter by the hand, the Duke calls out--

"Marry, brave vassal, why so sour? _I_ might well look sour, since you and your little daughter lately chose to play blind-man's-buff with your lawful Prince, making a mock of him. But I pardon you, and hope you have come to your senses since. Come, sit down; drink my health in the wine cup. I trow this wine will please your palate."

But Jobst excused himself: "He never drank so early." Whereupon the Duke continued--

"Well, as you please; but, good Jobst, you must be harder than a stone, if you refuse now to assist me in binding this accursed witch of Marienfließ, when you see this last evil which she has done, and how all the weeping land mourns for its Prince. Will you

and your little daughter, this virgin, not deliver me and my ancient race from so great and terrible a foe? What say ye, brave Jobst? Come, sit down beside your afflicted Prince, you and your little daughter, and tell me what help and comfort ye mean to bring me in my sore grief and sorrow. Speak, Jobst; ah! say was ever Prince like unto this Prince--and yet childless, childless, as we are all! Have pity on my noble ancient race, or, even as he lamented on his death-bed, 'Pomerania will pass in a little while into stranger hands!'"

Now, my Jobst, who had sat down with his daughter on a couch near the table, got the dry sheep's cough in his throat again, and, in his embarrassment, snuffed out the candle; but, making a great effort, at last said--

"His Grace must be resigned: who could withstand the will of God? Yet he must say, in all honesty, that he had talked to many persons about the matter, and some said it was folly and nonsense, and there could be no reason in it. Others, amongst whom was Dr. Cramer, said, if not folly, yet it was a dangerous business to body and soul, and ought not to be attempted."

But my Jobst grows disturbed, and at last says, "Well, then, I must speak out the truth. My child is not the pure virgin whom ye seek. I mean in her thoughts, for she has already been betrothed to a bridegroom."

At this the Duke clapped his hand to his forehead and sighed-"Then my last hope has perished!" _Item_, the magister was quite thunderstruck. But Dilia, who blushed to her finger-ends while her father spoke, started from the couch, seized the hand of my gracious Lord, and exclaimed--

"Be calm, my Lord Duke, my father hath said this but to free me, as he thinks, from this dungeon business. But even against him I must defend my honour, for in truth my soul has been ever pure from all vain or sinful lusts, even as it is written (Tobias iii.). And though my father has proposed a bridegroom to me, yet up to this day I have constantly rejected him, partly for the sake of my poor grandmother, whose ghost admonished me, and partly that I might serve your gracious Highness as a pure and honourable virgin." This hearing so rejoiced the Duke, that he kissed her hand; but the fair young virgin, when she saw her father rise up and walk hither and thither in great agitation, began to weep, and ran to throw herself on his neck, sobbing forth, "Comfort yourself, dear father, it could not be otherwise, for when you uttered such hard words of your daughter, what could I do but defend my honour, even against my own earthly father? Ah, dear father! it was the cruellest word your little daughter ever heard from you in her life--but one little kiss, and all will be right again!"

The poor knight now fairly sobs like a child, and at last stammers

out, "Well then, you must let me be present; if the devil takes my child, let him take me too along with him. I would rather be with my little daughter in hell, than without her in heaven."

"Good knight," answered Joel, "that may not be; only three can be present, the Duke, your daughter, and myself. I handle the intellectual vinculum or the conjuration. Diliiana takes the elementary vinculum, as dove's blood, the blood of the field-mouse, virgin wax, and the censer, in her pure hands, and the Duke holds the astral vinculum, and questions the spirit."

Still my Jobst answers, "It may not be, unless I am present." And the strife continued in this wise for a good space, until it was at last agreed upon that the knight should keep watch before the door with his drawn sword during the conjuration, and that in autumn, when the sun entered Libra, they would begin the great work.

Jobst now rose to take his leave, but his little daughter, Diliiana, stood awhile silent, then blushed, looked upon the ground, and spoke at last--

"My Lord Duke, will your Grace make my father promise, upon his knightly word, never to bring the young noble, George Putkammer, whom he has destined for my husband, into my presence from this day forth until after I have questioned the spirit. For I have a liking for the young knight, and I am but a poor, weak thing, like our mother Eve and all other women: who knows what thoughts might rise in my heart, if I beheld his face or listened to his entreaties? and then the whole good work would come to nought, or perchance I might repent it my life long. I would therefore now rather go to Stramehl, where I can pray and become strong in spirit, so that perchance I shall find favour in the sight of the angel of God, as Hagar the handmaid of Abraham in the desert."

Then the beautiful child folded her hands, and looked up to heaven with such trust and innocence, that all were moved, and the knight pledged his word to the Duke; after which he pressed his little lamb to his heart, and then both of them left the chamber of his Highness.

Now the Duke at last was joyful, for he had hope in the great work, and fell upon his knees with the magister to pray God for mercy upon himself, his race, and the young virgin. _Item_, promised by his honour to seek out and burn all the witches in the land, that so the kingdom of God might be built up, and the kingdom of the prince of this world sink to ruin and utter destruction. And on the following morning, he sent for Christian Ludecke (brother to the priest who had been bewitched to death), appointed him special witch-commissioner of the kingdom, and bade him search throughout the length and breadth of the land, and wherever he found one of these evil and accursed sorceresses, to burn her for the honour and glory of God. [Footnote: An equally

notorious witch-finder was one Hopkins of England. See Sir Walter Scott's "Letters upon Demonology and Witchcraft."]

"Let him show no mercy towards this hell-brood of Satan, for the devil lately had become so powerful everywhere, but especially in dear Pomerania-land, that, if not prevented, he would soon pervert the whole people, and turn them away from the pure and blessed evangelical doctrine. Still he must have them all tried fairly before the sheriff's court ere he tortured or burned. His brother of blessed memory had too long delayed the burning, therefore he must now be the more diligent; and, by next autumn, he trusted, with the help of God, to be able to burn Sidonia herself."

Hereupon, my Ludecke wondered much that his Grace should be so confident about burning Sidonia, but answered bravely, "All should be done as his Highness wished; for since the cruel death of his poor brother, the priest, his motto was--'Torture! burn! kill!' But would to God that his Highness could bind Sidonia's familiar first, for he was a powerful spirit, every one said; and could not this learned magister exorcise him? The rumour went that he meant so to do." But his Grace rebuked such curiosity, and answered coldly, "He could not tell how the magister meant to proceed; but his (Ludecke's) duty lay clear before him, let him do it."

Hereupon, my Ludecke looked rather confused, and took his leave. And soon after, the witch-burnings began in such fearful rise through the land, that in many parishes six or seven poor women, young or old, innocent or guilty, it was all the same--yea, even children of ten to twelve years were yearly burned to powder; and by the wonderful providence of God, it happened that the burnings began first in Marienfliess, and truly with one of Sidonia's friends, the old pugnosed hag of Uchtenhagen, whom I have mentioned before, and that she visited Sidonia frequently; and this was the way of it:--One day, Sidonia beat this same Pug-nose most unmercifully with the broomstick, and chased her out into the convent square, still striking at her, which sight, however, the nuns little heeded, for this *_spectaculum_* was now so common that they only thanked their stars it was not their turn, and passed on. But Anna Apenborg met her by the well, and as the horrible old Pug-nose was screeching and roaring at the top of her voice, and cursing Sidonia, she asked, "What now?--what ailed her?--what had she and the Lady Sidonia been quarrelling about?" And some others came up, principally the wenches from the kitchen, to hear what all the roaring was for. Whereupon, Pug-nose told her story: "The cursed lady-witch had bid her lately go to the holy sacrament, and when she received the blessed wafer, to take the same out of her mouth privately, and bring it to her at Marienfliess, wherewith to feed her familiar, whom she kept in the form of a toad. At this blasphemy she (Pug-nose) remained silent, for she feared the hag and her anger; but on the Sunday she swallowed the bread, as other Christian people; whereupon Sidonia sends for her, pretending she had spinning to give her, but no sooner had she entered the room, than the terrible she-devil asked

for the wafer; so she confessed she had swallowed it. How could she commit such a horrible sacrilege? At this, the accursed witch ran at her with the broomstick, and beat her all the way down into the court."

This story soon spread over the convent, and the priest's wife told it to the fish-seller, who came up there that day, bidding him run to her brother-in-law, Christian Ludecke, with the news of the last sorcery going on in the convent.

This was a fine hearing to the witch commissioner, who resolved instantly to seize Pug-nose, and begin the burnings in the parish of Marienfliess, to frighten Sidonia, and keep her in check until autumn. So he took the executioner, with all the torture instruments, and a scriba along with him in the carriage, and set off for Uchtenhagen, where the old hag dwelt.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Christian Ludecke begins the witch-burnings in Marienfliess, and lets the poor dairy-mother die horribly on the rack.

Now it happened about this time in Marienfliess that the dairy-mother (I have tried to remember her name, but in vain, she was daughter to Trina Bergen I know, as is noticed _libro secundo_) sold a kid to the bailiff, Brose [Footnote: Ambrosius.] Bucher, grandson of that Zabel Bucher who was going to burn old Wolde years before, which kid soon grew sick and died. _Item_, the bailiff's wife had quarrelled with the dairy-mother (ah, if I could remember her name) about the price; the said wife assured her husband the bailiff that the dairy-mother had bewitched the kid to death out of spite, because she would not give her as much as she asked for it. This he easily credited, and talked of it to the country people, and now the old hag must be an evil witch, her mother indeed he knew had been in bad repute likewise, for how but by witchcraft could the poor little kid have died off all of a sudden. So all the malicious women's tongues were set going with their spinning-wheels, and this poor worthy dairy-mother, whose piety, charity, and kindness I have noticed already, was in a few days the common talk of the parish.

About this time, Beatus Schact, the convent chaplain, was summoned to baptize a shepherd's dying child, and he had just packed up his book, when he observed through the window a waggon, drawn by four horses, coming down the Stargard street, with the sound of singing from the persons within. Foremost on the waggon sit three official-looking personages, in scarlet mantles, and one of them

bears a red banner, with a black cross thereon, in his hand. Behind them are three women bound, and the psalm which they chant is the death-psalm--"Now pray we to the Holy Ghost." As the priest looks upon this strange sight, *_bis dato_*, never seen in Pomerania-land, the waggon halts close by the church wall, and one of the men with the red mantles sounded a trumpet, so that all the people run to see what was going forward, and the priest runs likewise. *_Item_*, all the nuns gather thick at the convent gate, and peep over other's shoulders; for people think it must be pickleherring, or some such strolling mummers, come to exhibit to the folk during the evening.

Meanwhile, a peasant observes that his own sister, Ussel, wife to a peasant at Pegelow, was one of the three poor wretches who sat there with bound hands. Whereupon he springs to the waggon, and asks with wonder, "Ussel, what brings thee here?" But for answer she only pours forth tears and lamentations. However, commissioner Ludecke (for you may well guess it was he with his witch-waggon) would not let them discourse further; but bid the peasant stand back, unless he wished the executioner to seize him and tear his hide for him; then speaks--

"Know, good people, that our serene and gracious Prince and Lord, the illustrious and eminent Duke Francis George of Stettin, Pomerania, having heard that the devil is loose in our dear fatherland, and carries on his demon work, especially amongst the women folk, tempting them into all horrible sorceries, filthiness, and ungodly deeds, has appointed me, Christian Ludecke (brother of your late pastor), to be witch-commissioner for the whole kingdom, that so I may purge the land by fire, bringing these devil's hags to their just punishment, for the great glory of God, and terror of all godless sorceresses, witches, and others in this or any other place. Ye are also to name me the honourable attorney-general, which also I am."

Here the peasant cried out--

"But his sister Ussel, who sat there bound upon the cart, was no witch, and every one knew that. His worship might take pity on her tears and let her free. She had a husband, and four innocent little children likewise; who would take care of them now?"

"No, no," shouted Ludecke; "true sign that she is a witch since she howls! Had she a good conscience wherefore should she do it? He came to know whether there was a witch, perchance, also in *Marienfließ*?"

Here the bailiff's wife nudged her husband in the side with her elbow, and whispers--"The dairy-mother," but the carl would not utter a word. So she screamed out herself--

"Ay, there is the dairy-mother of the parish, a horrible old witch, as all the town knows."

And here I have just bethought me of the name of the dairy-mother. It was Benigna Ficht; she was widow of old Ficht, the peasant.

At this several voices cried out, "No, no;" but she screamed out--

"Yea, yea! it was true; and her mother before her had been an evil witch, and had let witches sit in her cellar, so that she must be a witch herself." [Footnote: This idea runs through all the witch trials. Woe to the woman whose mother had been accused of witchcraft, she seldom got off with her life.]

This pleased the bloodthirsty attorney-general, and he asked if the bailiff were present. And when my Brose stepped forward with a profound bow, Ludecke went on--

"Was this the case about the dairy-mother? Was she, in truth, an evil witch?"

Whereupon his malicious wife nudged him again with her elbows in the side, till he answered--"Ay, the people say so."

Ludecke continued--"Were there more witches in the place beside the dairy-mother?"

The fellow was silent and seemed disturbed, until being menaced by the commissioner with all temporal and eternal punishment if he spoke not the truth, my Brose stepped up upon the wheel, and whispered in his ear, while he cast a frightened glance at the convent gate--

"Ay, there is another, one of the convent sisters called Sidonia Bork, she is the very devil itself."

But Ludecke seemed as though he could not believe him--

"It was impossible; he had always heard that this lady was a model of all goodness, piety, and wisdom, who had healed the sheriff himself of some great sickness;" but he squinted all the time over at the convent gate, where the black robes were crowding, and then whispered the bailiff--"Is Sidonia amongst them, think you?"

My carl squinted likewise at the gate, then whispered back again in his ear--"No, Sidonia is not there, as far as I can see."

Meanwhile the *_pastor loci_*, a simple, timid little man, as I have said, got up all his courage, and feeling it to be his duty to defend his parishioner, the poor dairy-mother, advanced to the waggon, saying--

"Would his worship the lord attorney-general permit him a few words? He was the priest of the parish, had married the widow of his late brother, as no doubt his worship had heard by letters

from his dear spouse. His duty compelled him to take the part of this poor dairy-woman, whose character evil tongues had blackened to his worship, for she was the most pious person in all the parish, and every evening brought her spinning along with other pious women to his house, to hear the blessed Word of God, and be examined in the catechism--any one who knew her pious honest life could not believe this of her."

"So much the more likely she is a witch," cried Ludecke; "they are all hypocrites. Look at that pious and honest trio in the cart, how they cast down their eyes and look so innocent, and yet they were three of the vilest witches; for what made them look down, if it were not their evil conscience?"

Now it happened that just then old Wolde came limping by, with a new broom which she had bought in the town for Sidonia, no doubt to lay under the table, as she was wont; so Brose whispered--

"Yea, yea, there was one hobbling by with the broom, and she was the worst of all, Sidonia's servant, old Wolde." Whereupon the commissioner thought within himself, how could he terrify Sidonia more than by seizing her maid, and sending her to the rack and the stake. So he bid the executioner lay hold on that lame hag with the broom, and fling her into the cart along with the others. This was soon done; for, though old Wolde made some resistance, and screeched and roared, yet she was thrown down upon the ground, bound, and flung into the nest in spite of all.

Anna Apenborg saw all this from the convent gate, and, to make friends with Sidonia, she ran to the refectory with the news of Ludecke's doings. Whereupon Sidonia, who knew the coward knave well, seized her broomstick and ran down the steps, beating the nuns right and left about the ears, who were gathered thick and black around the gate, so that they all flew screaming away, and then presented herself, glowing with fury, and brandishing her broomstick, to the eyes of the terrified Ludecke, whereat all the four hags cried out from the waggon--

"Help us, O Lady Prioress! Help us, O Lady Prioress!"

And Sidonia screamed in answer, "I come, I come!" swung her broomstick and called out--"Wait, thou accursed quill-driver, wait!"

But my Ludecke no sooner saw her rushing at him, with her thin white hair flying about her face, than he jumped from the cart, and took to his heels so fast that nothing could be seen of him through the dust he raised but the bright nails of his shoes, as he scampered away to the furze bushes. Item, followed the scribe, and lastly the executioner, to the great amusement of the common folk, who stood round the waggon, and now laughed and gibed at the authorities. Then the afore-mentioned peasant jumped upon the cart, and cut the cords that bound his sister, Ussel, and the

others. Whereat they likewise took to their heels and went hither and thither, to hide themselves in the wood, while old Wolde returned calmly with Sidonia to the convent, and two of the hags got clear off, and were fed by their kinsfolk, I take it, for months in the pits and hollow trees where they had sheltered themselves, for never a trace could Ludecke get of them more, though he searched day and night in every village, and house, and nook, and corner. But Pug-nose, who was half-blind with fright, in place of running away, ran straight up into the very mouth of the executioner, who was crouching with the clerk his master behind a thorn-bush.

Eh, how she roared when Master Hansen stretched out his arm and caught hold of her by the coat! Then he bound her again, and so she was carried to the sheriff's house, for Ludecke had set up his quarters with Sheriff Sparling, and that same day he resolved to open the criminal commission *_nomine serenissim_a* with Pug-nose.

Summa--The hag confessed upon the rack to Sidonia being a witch, and named several other women besides. So my Ludecke has to write off for another executioner and seven bailiffs, fearing his own would have more work on their hands than they could do. And every day messengers were despatched to Stargard with bundles of indictments and writs. And in the sheriff's court, day after day, there was nothing but trying witches and condemning them, and torturings, and burnings. And though many saved themselves by flight, and others got off with only a sharp reprimand, yet in four weeks no less than four wretched women were burned close by Sidonia's window, so that she might see them smoking to powder.

And Pug-nose was the first whom the bloodthirsty knave ordered to be burned (I say nothing against that, for it is all right and according to law), but the bloodhound went rather beyond the law sometimes, thinking to terrify Sidonia, for it was the custom to build a sort of little chamber at top of the pile within which the wretched victims were bound, so that they could be stifled by the smoke before the flames reached them. But he would allow of no little chamber, and had a stake erected on the summit of the pile, round which an iron chain was fastened, and to the end of this chain the miserable criminal: and truly many hearts were moved with pity when Pug-nose was fastened to the stake, and the pile was lit, seeing how she ran right and left to escape the flames, with the chain clattering after her, in her white death-shift, stitched with black, which Sidonia gave out she made for her out of pure Christian charity--screaming horribly all the while, till finally the fire blazed up over her, and she fell down a blackened heap.

Three weeks after three more women were burned upon three separate piles, on the same day, and at the same hour, straight in view of Sidonia's window; and they likewise each one were bound to the chain, and their screams were heard plainly as far as Stargard.

And for four miles round the smell of roast human flesh was plainly perceptible, which, as every one knows, has quite a different odour from any other burned flesh. Yet the death of the poor dairy-mother was still more horrible if possible, and though it may well make my tears to flow again, yet I will relate it. But tears here, tears there, what will it help?

So to begin:--

My worthy father-in-law, M. Beutzius, formerly court-chaplain, but who had lately been made general-superintendent by Duke Francis, for the reason before mentioned, went about this time to attend the synod, at the little town of Jacobshagen; and on his way home, in the morning about eleven o'clock (for he had slept at Stargard), while passing the court-house at Marienfliess, had his attention attracted by two young peasant girls, who were standing before a window wringing their hands, and screaming as piteously as if the world itself were going to be destroyed.

He stopped his coach instantly, listened, and then distinctly heard groans proceeding from the little room; but the sound was so hollow and unnatural that two pigs that were rooting up the earth near him lifted up their snouts. As soon as they heard it, they started off in fright, then stopped and stood listening and trembling in the distance. So my worthy father-in-law called out, while his hair stood on end with terror, "Children, for the love of God, what is the matter?" But the poor girls, for their sobbing and weeping, could utter nothing but "Our mother! our poor mother!" Upon which he sprang from the coach, advanced closer, and asked, "What is it, poor girls? what has happened?"

"Oh sir!" answered one at last, "our poor innocent mother has been lying two whole hours on the rack within there, and the savage knaves won't leave their breakfast to come and release her!"

So the good man looked shudderingly through the window, and there beheld the unfortunate dairy-mother lying bound half naked upon a plank, so that her white hair swept the ground. And her hands were bound round her neck, and under each arm lay a coal-pan, from which a blue flame ascended as if sulphur were burning therein, so that her arms were burned quite black already.

"My God! where is the executioner?" screamed my father-in-law, and when the girl, sobbing, pointed to the tavern, the old man ran off as quick as he was able the whole way to the place, where the executioner and his fellows sat by the beer-jug, laughing and making merry. And when he arrived, the old man's breath was well-nigh gone, and he could scarcely tell of the horrors he had seen and heard; but when he had ended the executioner answered he could not help it. "His worship the attorney-general was at breakfast likewise at the court-house, and had the keys. When he was done he would send for them." The worthy priest then ran back again all the way from the tavern to the court-house, as quick as

he could, but stopping his ears the while as he came nearer, not to hear the groans of the poor dairy-mother, and the screams of her daughters, who were running hither and thither round the walls, as if indeed the wretched girls had quite lost their senses. And at last he reached the sheriff's quarter, where another kind of roaring saluted his ears--I mean the shouts and laughter of the drunken noisy crew within.

For the ferocious bloodhound, Christian Ludecke, had invited friends over from Old Stettin, and there they all sat, Sheriff Sparling too amongst them, round the table like coupled hounds, for a fine metal wire had been passed through all their ears as they sat drinking, so that none could go away without having his ear torn by the wire. Or if one of the beastly drunken pigs swilled so much, that he fell under the table, and his ear tore in consequence, it was a source of great laughter and merriment to the other pigs.

When the old man beheld this, he thought that between grief, anger, and horror, he would have fallen to the ground. And for a long while he stood gazing at the scene, unable to utter a word, whilst they roared to him to take his place, and shoved the wine-can over: "But he must have his ear pierced first like the others; for the good old laws were in force here, and he must drain the cup at a draught till his breath was gone, and his two cheeks remained full--this was the true Pomeranian draught."

At this beastly proposition, the pious priest crossed himself, and at last got out the words--"Mercy for the criminal! mercy for the poor dairy-mother!"

At this, the attorney-general, Christian Ludecke, clapped his hand upon his forehead, exclaiming, "'Fore God, it is true, I have let that cursed hag lie on the rack these two hours. I forgot all about her. Send to the executioner, and bid him release her. Let her rest for to-day."

"And you could forget a fellow-creature thus!" exclaimed the priest, with indignation. "Oh! you are more savage than a heathen, or the very brute beasts there without, who trembled at the groans of the poor martyr; yea, hell itself could not be more merciless!"

"What, thou cursed parson!" cried the commissioner, starting from his seat in fury. But just then, as he sprang up, the wire tore through his ear, and the red blood flowed down upon his fine white ruff, whereat the others burst out into a yell of laughter, which increased the villain's fury ten times more.

"Now the damned hag should stay on the rack till night. What did people mean coming with begging prayers for the devil's brood? As well pray mercy for the devil himself--the reverend parson was very tender about his friends the witches." At which he laughed so loud that the roof rang, and all the others roared in chorus.

But the priest replied gravely, "I shall repeat every word you have uttered to his Highness the Duke, with a statement of how I found ye all employed, unless this instant you give orders to release the dairy-mother."

"Never! never!" shouted the bloodhound, and struck the table till the glasses rang. "What is it to thee, damned priest? I am witch-commissioner of Pomerania; and his Highness expressly charged me to show no mercy to these cursed devil's hags, therefore, I am ready to answer to God, the Prince, and my conscience, for what I do."

However, my worthy father-in-law had scarcely left the room, sighing deeply at his unsuccessful mission, when the coward despatched his scribe with the keys to release the dairy-mother. But it was too late--the horrible agony had already killed her; and when the hands of the corpse were unbound, both arms fell of themselves to the ground, out of the sockets. [Footnote: Such scenes of satanic cruelty and beastly debauch, mingled together with the proceedings of justice, were very frequent during the witch-trials. How would it rejoice me if, upon contemplating this present age, I could exclaim with my whole heart, "What progression--infinite progression--in manners and humanity!" But, alas! our modern laws, with their womanish feebleness, and sentimental whimperings, sin quite as much against a lofty and noble justice as those of earlier times by their tyrannical and cannibal ferocity. And yet now, as then, conscience is appealed to as the excuse for all. O conscience, conscience! how wilt thou answer for all that is laid upon thee! To-day, for example, it is a triumphal denial of God and thy Saviour Jesus Christ: a crime at which a Ludecke would have shuddered, even as we shudder now at his; and yet no sense of shame or disquietude seems to pass over thee, although by the Word of God thy crime is a thousandfold greater than his. Matt. xii. 31; John viii. 24; Ephes. v. 6.]

CHAPTER XX.

What Sidonia said to these doings--Item, what our Lord God said; and, lastly, of the magical experiment performed upon George Patkammer and Diliana, in Old Stettin.

I think my bloodhound gained his end at last respecting Sidonia; for truly a terrible anguish fell upon her--a foretaste of that hell-anguish she would one day suffer, I take it; yet she only betrayed this terror by the disquietude of her bearing, and the uneasiness which she exhibited day and night; item, through an increase of her horrible hypocrisy, which grew more flagrant

than ever; for now, standing or going, her eyes were turned up to heaven, and three or four times a day she compelled the nuns to attend prayers in the chapel. Yet when the news was brought her, that the coward knave, Christian Ludecke, had extolled her virtues himself to the bailiff, Brose, she concluded that he meant nothing serious with her. However, she continued sending Anna Apenborg diligently to the sheriff's house, to pick up all the gossip she could from the servants and others. And at length Anna brought word that a maid at the court-house said, the scribe said, in confidence, that his Grace of Stettin said, Sidonia should be burned next autumn.

When Sidonia heard this, she turned as pale as a corpse, and her breath seemed stifling, but recovering herself soon, attempted to smile, turned up her eyes to heaven, and, sighing, said, "He that walketh innocently walketh surely" (Prov. x. 9), and then rang for the nuns to go and pray in the chapel. Yet that same day, when she heard of the fearful death of the dairy-mother, she turned her hypocritical mouth to another tune, raged, and stormed, and abused the bloodthirsty savage of a commissioner, who had let the most pious person of the whole parish die so horribly on the rack; then bid the whole chapter assemble in her room, to state the matter to his Highness, for if these evil doings went on, not even the most innocent amongst them was safe from a like bitter death.

Whereupon Anna Apenborg, who had grown the bravest of all, since she found that Sidonia could not do without her, said, "But, gracious Lady Prioress, you yourself accused the dairy-mother of witchcraft when you came back from Stettin, and found the poor priest in his coffin!" which impertinence, however, my hag so resented, that she hit Anna a blow on the mouth, and exclaimed in great wrath, "Take that for thy impudence, thou daring peasant wench!" But, calming herself in a moment, added, "Ah, good Anna, is it not human to err?--have you never been deceived yourself?"

Summa--The nuns must write and sign. Whereupon my Ludecke, out of fear of Sidonia's revenge, withdrew to Saatzig after the death of the dairy-mother, from thence to Dditz, Pyritz, and so on, still faithful to his motto, "Torture! burn! kill!" for he found as many witches as he pleased in every place; so that the executioner, Curt Worger, who, when he first arrived at Marienfliess, wore nothing but a sorry grey mantle, now appeared decked out like a noble, in a bright scarlet cloak; item, a hat with a red feather, a buff jerkin, and jack-boots with gilded spurs; neither would he sit any longer on the cart with the witches, but rode by the side of the commissioner, on a jet black horse, which carried a red flag between its ears; and his drawn sword rested upon his shoulder. Thus they proceeded through the land; and upon entering a town, the executioner always struck up a psalm, in which not only the attorney-general and his secretary frequently joined, but also the wretched witches themselves who sat in the cart.

And though the Duke received complaints daily, not only from the priest Beutzius, and the convent, but from every town where the special commission was held, of the horrible cruelties practised and permitted by his Grace's officials; yet the Duke remained firm in his determination to root out witchcraft, by these or any means; for whatever the ferocious bloodhound, Ludecke, prated to his Highness, the Duke believed, and therefore would say nothing against any of his acts. But our Lord God had a great deal to say against them; for observe all the signs and wonders that appeared about this time through different parts of the land, which brought many a one to serious reflection.

First, some women, who were cooking meal and pease at Pyritz, found the mess changed into blood; baked bread, likewise, the same. And a like miracle happened at Wriezen also, for the deacon, Caspar Rohten, preached a sermon on the occasion, which has since been printed. _Item_, at Stralsund there was a red rain--yea, the whole sea had the appearance as if it were turned into blood; and some think this was a foreshadowing of the great and real blood-rain at Prague, and of all the evils which afterwards fell upon our whole German fatherland. Next the news was brought to court, that, at the same hour, on the same night, strange and supernatural voices were heard at the following places, in Pomerania:--

1. W-edderwill, a house, as every one knows, close to Stramehl, and the birthplace of Sidonia.
2. E-ggesin, a town near Uckermand, at the other end of Pomerania.
3. H-ohenmoeker, near Demmin.
4. P-yritz, the town where the witch-burnings had raged the most cruelly.
5. O-derkrug, close to his Grace in Stettin.
6. M-arienfliess, where Sidonia defied man, and blasphemed God, and organised all the evil that fell upon the land.

Now when the Duke read this account he was filled with horror, that heaven itself should cry, "Woe;" for when he placed the initial letters of each town together, he observed, to his dismay, that they read, "Weh Pom--" [Footnote: Weh is called Woe, and Pomerania, _Pommern_ in the original.] Yet as the last syllable, _mern_, was wanting, the Duke comforted himself, and thought, "Perhaps it is the other Pomerania, where my cousin Philip Julius rules, over which God has cried 'Woe.'" So he wrote letters; but, alas! received for answer, that in the self-same night the strange voices had been heard in the following places:--

E-ixen, a town near Franzburg.

R-appin, in Rügen.

N-etzelkow, on the island of Usedom.

Thus passing directly across the land.

Yet the Duke still had some little comfort remaining, for there was an m wanting--people always wrote Pommern, not Pomern--therefore by this the All-merciful God showed that He meant to preserve one m, that is, a man, of the noble Pomeranian house, whereby to build it up and make it flourishing again. To this faith he clung in his sore grief; and Doctor Joel further comforted him about the angel, saying that he would assuredly tell him what the sign denoted, and this m in particular, which was kept back from the word Pomerania. But the magister knew right well--as many others, though they would not tell the Duke--that the Lord God had spelled the word correctly; for the name in the Wendisch and Polish tongues is Pomorswa, spelt with but one m, and means a land lying by the sea, and therefore many of the old people still wrote Pomern for Pommern. Had the Duke, however, as well as his princely brothers, heard of the awful appearances which accompanied the voices in every place, methinks they would have despaired utterly. For the clouds gathered themselves into forms resembling each of the four princely Dukes in succession, as like as if a painter had drawn them upon the sky; thence they were, each lying on his black bier, from east to west, in the clear moonlight of heaven.

And his Highness, Duke Francis, was the first, lying on his bier, with his hair combed à la Nazarene, as was his custom, and his face turned to the moon, behind which he presently disappeared.

Next came Duke Udalricus, and his face was so distinct that it seemed cut out of paper, lying there in his coffin; and he, too, sank behind the moon, and was seen no more.

Philip Julius of Wolgast was the third, and the blessed moon shone bright upon his black moustache in the coffin; and, lastly--woe, alas! Whereupon night and darkness fell upon the sky. [Footnote: Latin note of Bogislaw XIV.--"Tunc ego ipse, nonne? hoc nobis infelicibus bene taciturnitate nostrum cohibitum est; Elector Brandenburgiane omnia rapiet!" (Then I myself--is it not so? This was kept secret from us unfortunates. The Elector of Brandenburg will rob all.) Then in German he added:--"Yet the Lord is my light, of whom then shall I be afraid? Ah, that my poor soul, in truth, rested calm in heaven! For I am ready to be offered up like St. Paul (meaning through Wallenstein): 'Would that the time of my departure were at hand! '---2 Tim. iv. 6. Yea, come and take my heritage, George of Brandenburg, I am weary of this life."]

But these fearful signs were as carefully concealed from their

Highnesses as if the whole people had conspired to keep the secret; besides, the figures were not observed at every place where the voices sounded. However, Doctor Joel himself came to the conclusion, in his own mind, that, after these open declarations from heaven, it would be quite useless to consult the angel. Nevertheless, to calm the mind of the Duke, he resolved to go through with the conjuration if possible, at least he might bind the hell-dragon of Marienfliess, and save others from her evil spells, if even the Duke and his illustrious race were already doomed.

Now, having cast Sidonia's nativity, he found that the time in which alone her powerful evil spirit or familiar could be bound, coincided exactly with that in which the sun-angel might be made to appear; thus, the helpless hag could be seized at Marienfliess without danger or difficulty, at this precise hour and moment. So he determined to commence his conjuration at once by the magical bloodletting, and for this purpose wrote the following letter to Diliانا, with which his Highness instantly despatched a horseman to Stramehl:--

* * * * *

JESUS!

"NOBLE AND PURE VIRGIN,--Having found, _ex namtate Sidoniæ, that it is possible to bind her evil spirit just at the moment in which we three stand within the circle to question the sun-angel, we must seek out a brave youth in Marienfliess whom you trust, and who by nature is so sympathetic with you, that he will experience the same sensations in his body while there, precisely at the same moment in which they are excited in you at Old Stettin. This can be accomplished only by the magic bleeding, performed upon you both; therefore I pray you, in the name of his Highness, to communicate with such an one, if so be there is a youth in whom you place trust, and by the next new moon come with him to Old Stettin, where I shall perform the magic bleeding on you both, that no time may be lost in commencing this mighty work, which, by God's help, will save the land. God keep you. Pray for me!

"Your servant to command," M. JOEL.

"Old Stettin, 19th June 1618."

This letter grieved the young virgin, for she saw the magister would not cease his importunities. Nevertheless, to show her obedience to his Highness, and by the advice of her cousin Bastien, she consented to undertake the journey. Bastien likewise offered willingly to go through the magic bleeding along with her, but the maiden declined, and wrote privately to George Putkammer at Pansin the following letter:--

"Be it known to you, Sir Knight, that his Highness of Stettin has solicited my aid in a mighty magic-work, and desired me to seek out a youth in whom I trust, that magister Joel of Grypswald may perform a magic bleeding upon us both. So I have selected you, and desire therefore to meet you on St. John the Baptist's day, by ten of the clock in the forenoon, at the castle of Old Stettin. But my father or Saatzig is to know nothing of the matter; and you must promise neither to look upon me, nor sigh, nor press my hand, nor speak of marriage, whether we be alone or not. In this I trust to your knightly honour and noble nature.

"DILIANA BORK.

"Stramehl, 22nd July 1618."

So on the appointed day Diliana arrived at the castle of Stettin, and his Highness was rejoiced to see her, and bade the magister Joel himself to bring all sorts of dainties for her refreshment, in order that the lacqueys might not be coming in and out, spying at what was going on. And immediately after, the court marshal flung open the door a second time, and my young knight appeared--marry, how handsome he looked--dressed just like a bridegroom! He wore a buff doublet, with sleeves of blue satin, bordered with scarlet velvet; scarlet hose broidered in gold--_item_, Spanish boots with gold spurs, and round his throat a ruff of the finest lace--_item_, ruffles of the same. So with his long sword by his side he entered, carrying his plumed beaver in his hand; and truly he blushed up to his very ears when he beheld Diliana seated there in her pomp and beauty, and he stammered and cast down his eyes upon his boots when the Duke addressed him, so that his Highness grew provoked, and exclaimed--

"What the devil, young man! have you an evil conscience? Can you not look any one straight in the face?"

At this the young knight lifted his eyes boldly and fixed them upon his Grace, answering haughtily--"My Lord Duke, I can look the devil himself straight in the face, if need be; but what is this comedy which you are about to play with me and this young maiden?"

This speech offended his Highness. "It was no mumming work they had in hand, but a grave and serious matter, which, as he did not understand, the magister would explain to him."

So my magister began, and demonstrated the whole _opus theurgicum_; but the knight is as unbelieving as Jobst, and says--

"But what need of the angel? Can we not do the business ourselves? My lord Duke, it is now eleven o'clock; give me permission, and by this hour to-morrow morning Sidonia shall be here in a pig-sack.

And long ago I would have done this of myself, or stabbed her with my dagger for her late evil deeds, if your Grace had not forbade me so to do at the burial of our gracious lord, Duke Philip II. The devil himself must laugh at our cowardice, that we cannot seize an old withered hag whom a cowboy of ten years old would knock down with his left hand."

To which his Highness answered, "You are foolhardy, young man, to esteem so lightly the power of her evil spirit; for know that it is a mighty and terrible spirit, who could strangle you as easily as he has murdered others, for all your defiant speeches! Therefore we must conquer him by other means; and for this reason I look with hope to the appearance of the angel, who will teach us, perhaps, how to remove the spell from my illustrious race, which Sidonia's inhuman malice has laid on them, making them to perish childless off the face of the earth. If even you succeeded in seizing her, how would this help? She would revenge herself by standing there deaf and mute as a corpse, and would sooner be burned at the stake than speak one word that would remove this great calamity from our house."

Then the knight said, "He would never consent that Dilia should run the great danger of citing a spirit."

Which, when the maiden heard, she grew as red as the young knight when he first entered, and said with a grave and haughty mien--

"Sir knight, who gave you any right over my words or works? There may be other men in whom I place trust as well as you; and speak but another word of the like nature, and I will prove it to you by my acts."

Marry, that was a slap on the mouth to my young knight, who grew as red as scarlet, and cast down his eyes upon his boots, while M. Joel began to demonstrate the magic blood-letting to them as follows--

"See here, young knight, and you, fair virgin, here are two little boxes of white ivory, of the same size and weight; and see, within each of them is suspended a little magnet, both cut from the one loadstone, and round in a circle are all the letters of the alphabet. Now, let each of you take a little box, carry it delicately, and by its help you can converse with each other though you were a hundred miles apart. This sympathy between you is established by means of the magic blood-letting. I make an incision in each of your arms, placed together in the form of a cross, then touch the knight's wound with the blood of the virgin, and the virgin's with the blood of the knight, so will your blood be mingled; and then, if one of you press the wound on the arm, the other will feel the same pressure sympathetically on the arm at the same instant, though ye be ever so far removed from one another. Now suppose that you, fair maiden, feel a pressure suddenly on the wound in your arm, you place the magnet box

thereon, and the needle will point of itself, by sympathy, to the letters necessary to form a word, which word will be the same as that found by the magnet of the knight, who will likewise have the box on his arm at the same moment; thus ye can read each other's thoughts instantaneously, and this results entirely from the laws of sympathy, as described by the renowned Abbot Johannes Trithemius, and Hercules de Sunde."

To all this my knight made no answer, but seemed much disturbed. However, the magister ordered him to retire into the next chamber and remove his doublet. _Item_, he bade the young maiden likewise to take off her robe, seeing that the sleeves were very tight. It was a blue silk bodice she had on, trimmed round the bosom with golden fringe, and a mantle of yellow silk embroidered in violets and gold. Now the maiden was angry at first with the magister for his request, but laughed afterwards, when she thought of Dorothea Stettin, and her absurdities with the doctor.

So she said, "Here, cut open my sleeve, it matters not. I have more dresses with me at my lodging." This my magister does immediately, and draws forth the beautiful arm white as a snow-flake, throws the sleeve back upon the shoulder, and places Diliaana with her face turned towards the window, on a seat which his Highness, the Duke, laid for her himself, while he exclaimed earnestly, "Now, Diliaana, guard thy soul well from any evil thought!"

Hereupon the poor young virgin began to weep, and said, "Ah! my Lord Duke, I have indeed need to pray for support, but I will look up to the Lord my Saviour, whose strength is made perfect in my weakness. Now the young knight may come, but let me not see him."

On this, the magister called in the young man, and sat him on the same seat with Diliaana, but back to back. Then he stepped to one side, and looking at them, said, "Eh, my Lord Duke, see the beautiful James's head. That betokens good luck. Pity that the young man has no beard! Young man, you have more hair on your teeth than on your chin, I take it. [FOOTNOTE: Having hair on the teeth, means being a brave, fearless person, one who will stand up boldly for his own.] Why do you not scrape diligently; shall I give you a receipt?"

But the knight made no answer, only grew red for shame. Whereupon my magister left off jesting; and taking the young man's arm, laid it upon the maiden's, in the form of a cross, then opened a vein in each, murmuring some words, while the blood-stream poured down into two silver cups which were held by his Highness, the Duke.

But, woe! my knight sinks down in a dead faint off his side of the couch to the ground. Which, when Diliaana heard, she springs up with her arm still bleeding, and exclaims, "The knight is dead! Oh, save the knight!" Then the poor child wept. "Ah, what will become of me? What is this you mean to do with us?"

So the magister gave over the young knight to the care of his Highness, who held a smelling-flask to his nose, while Dr. Joel took some of his blood and poured it into Dilliana's arm, after which he bound it up. And then, when the young knight began to recover, she hastened, weeping, out of the apartment, saying, "Tell the knight not to touch his arm. When there is necessity I shall press mine. Farewell, gracious Lord Duke, and help me day and night with the sixth petition in the Lord's Prayer!" And she would not return, though the Duke called out after her, "A word, one word!" _Item_, M. Joel, "Bring a shift with you that belonged to your grandmother! Nothing can be done unless you bring this with you!" She hastens on to the inn, and when the knight recovered sufficiently to follow after her, behold, there was her carriage already crossing the Oder bridge, which so afflicted him, that the tears poured from his eyes, and he cursed the whole world in his great love-agony, particularly his Grace, the magister, and the ghost of Clara. For to these three he imputed all the grievous vexations and misfortunes he endured with regard to the fair maiden.

Yet he lived in hope that she would soon press her wounded arm, and thus establish a sympathy of thought between them. So he set spurs to his horse and rode back again to his good castle of Pansin.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the awful and majestic appearance of the sun-angel, Och.

At last the blessed autumn arrived, and found my Ludecke still torturing and burning, and Sidonia still practising her evil sorceries upon man and beast, of which, however, it would be tiresome here to notice all the particulars. And on the 11th day of September, Jobst and his fair daughter arrived at Old Stettin, where the knight again tried to remonstrate with his Highness about the conjuration, but without any success, as we may easily suppose. Thereupon the Duke and the magister commenced a discipline of fastings. _Item_, every day they had magic baths, and this continued up to the midnight of the 22nd day, when they at last resolved to begin the great work, for the sun entered Libra that year on the 23rd day of September, at twenty minutes after two o'clock A.M.

So they all three put on garments of virgin-white linen, and Dilliana drew over hers a shift which had belonged to her grandmother of blessed memory, Clara von Dewitz, for she had not omitted to bring one with her, having searched for it with great diligence. Then she said to the magister, "Much do I wish to ask

the angel, wherefore it is that God gives such power to Satan upon the earth? No man hath yet answered me on this point. May I dare to ask the angel?"

Hereupon he answered, "She might fearlessly do it, he was himself curious." So they conversed, and meantime placed caps on their heads, made likewise of virgin linen, with the Holy Tetragrammaton [Footnote: I have observed before, this was the name, Jehovah, in the Hebrew.] bound thereon. Then the magister, taking a hazel-wand in his right hand, placed the magic circle upon his breast with the left, which circle was made of parchment, and carved all over with magic characters, and taking up his book, bade the Duke bear the vinculum of the heavenly bodies, that is, the signet of the spirit; item, Dilia, the vinculum of the earthly creature, as her own pure body, the blood of the white dove, of the field-mouse, incense, and swallow's feathers. Whereupon, he lastly made the sign of the cross, and led the way to the great knights' hall, which was already illuminated with magic lights of virgin wax, according to his directions.

Now as they all stepped out of the door in their white robes and high caps, shaped like the mitre of a bishop, there stood my Jobst in the corridor, purple with anguish and bathed in sweat--"He would go with them;" and when the magister put him back, saying, "Impossible," the poor knight began to sob, embraced his little daughter, "for who could tell whether he would ever see his only joy upon earth alive again? Ah, into what straits had the Duke brought him and his dear little daughter!"

However, the magister bade him be of good heart, for that no evil could happen to his fair daughter, seeing that she had again and again assured him of her pure virgin soul; but they must lose no time now, if the knight chose to stand outside he might do so. To this Jobst consented, but when the three others had entered the knights' hall, my magister turned round to bolt the door, on which the alarmed father shook the door violently--

"He would never consent to have it bolted; if it were, he would burst it in with a noise that would waken the whole castle. He was a father, and if any danger were in there, he could spring in and save his poor little worm, or die with her if need be."

So the magister consented at last not to bolt the door, but clapped it to, so that the knight could not peep through. He is not to be outwitted, however; drew off his buff doublet, took out a gimlet from his pocket, and bored a hole in the door, laid his hat upon the doublet, took his naked sword between his legs, and, resting both hands firmly on the hilt, bent down and placed his eye at the gimlet-hole, through which he could distinctly see all that passed in the room. And the three walked up to the centre of the hall, where the magic lights were burning, and the magister unloosed the circle from his breast and spread it out upon the

ground, as far as it would reach, then he drew a figure with white chalk at each of the four corners, like interlaced triangles, and taking the vinculum of the heavenly creature, or the signet of the sun-angel, which was written with the blood of a coal-black raven upon virgin parchment, out of the hand of the Duke, hung it upon a new dagger, which no man had ever used, and fixed the same in the circle towards the north--

"For," said he, "the spirit will come from the north: only watch well for the little white cloud that always precedes him, and be not alarmed at anything, for I have too often practised this conjuration to anticipate danger now."

After all this was done, and the pan of perfume, with the vinculum of the earthly creature, had been placed in the centre, the magister spake--"In the name of God the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen!" And stepped from the north side the first into the circle, within which he kneeled down and repeated a beautiful prayer.

And the two others responded "Amen." Whereupon the wise Theurgist, the brave priest of the grand primitive old faith, rose up, made the sign of the cross at the north, and began the conjuration of the angel with a loud voice.

They were harsh and barbarous words that he uttered, which no one understood, and they lasted a good paternoster long; after which, the priest stopped and said--

"Gracious Prince, lay thy left hand upon the vinculum of the heavenly creature;--virgin, step with thy left foot upon the signet of the spirit, in the north of the circle. After the third _pause_ he must appear."

With these words he began the conjuration again; but, behold, as it was ended, a form appeared, not at the north but at the south, and glided on in a white bloody shroud, until it reached the centre of the circle. At this sight the magister was transfixed with horror, and made the sign of the cross, then said in an agitated voice--

"All good spirits praise God the Lord!"

Upon which the spirit answered--

"In eternity. Amen!"

Whilst Diliaan exclaimed--

"Grandmother! grandmother! art thou indeed her spirit?"

So the spirit glided three times round the circle, with a plaintive wailing sound, then stopped before Diliaan, and making

the sign of the cross, said--

"Daughter, take that shift of mine from off thee, it betokens misfortune. It is No. 7, and see, I have No. 6 for my bloody shroud."

Whereupon it pointed to the throat, where indeed the red number 6 was plainly discernible.

Diliana spake--

"Grandmother, how did these things come to pass?"

But the spirit laid the forefinger on its mouth in silence. Whereupon she asked again--

"Grandmother, art thou happy?" The spirit answered--

"I hope to become so, but take off that shift, the angel must soon appear; it will be Sidonia's death shroud."

As the spirit said these words it disappeared again towards the south, whereupon the knight at the gimlet-hole cried out--

"There was some one here, was it the angel?"

"No, no," screamed Diliana, while she quickly stepped out of the circle, and drew off the shift. "No, it was my poor grandmother!"

"Silence," cried the magister; "for God's sake, no talking more, we have already lost ten seconds by that ghost. Now quick with the vinculum of the earthly creature! My Prince, strew the incense upon the burner; virgin, dip the swallow's feathers in the blood of the white dove, and streak my two lips with them. Now all be still if you value your life. Eternity is listening to us, and the whole apartment is full of invisible spirits."

Then he repeated the conjuration for the third time, and, behold, at the last word, a white cloud appeared at the north, that at every moment became brighter and brighter, until a red pillar of light, about an arm's thickness, shot forth from the centre of it, and the most exquisite fragrance with soft tones of music were diffused over the whole north end of the hall; then the cloud seemed to rain down radiant flowers of hues and beauty, such as earth had never seen, after which a tremendous sound, as if a clap of thunder shook not only the castle to its foundation, but seemed to shake heaven and earth itself, and the cloud, parting in twain, disclosed the sun-angel in the centre. Yet the knight outside never heard this sound, nor did old Kruger, the Duke's boot-cleaner, who sat in the very next room reading the Bible; he merely thought that the clock had run down in the corridor, and sent his wife out to see, and this seems to me a very strange thing, but the knight, through his gimlet-hole, saw plainly that a

chair, which they had forgotten to take out the way of the angel at the north side, was utterly consumed by his presence, and when he had passed, lay there a heap of ashes.

And the angel in truth appeared in the form of a beautiful boy of twelve years old, and from head to foot shone with a dazzling light. A blue mantle, sown with silver stars, was flung around him, but so glittering to the eye that it seemed a portion of the milky way he had torn from heaven, as he passed along, and wrapped round his angelic form. On his feet, rosy as the first clouds of morning, were bound golden sandals, and on his yellow hair a crown; and thus surrounded by radiant flowers, odours, and the soft tones of heavenly music, he swept down in grace and glorious beauty to earth. When the Theurgist beheld this, he fell on his knees along with the others, and prayed--

"We praise thee, we bless thee, we adore thee, O lofty spirit of God!--thou throne-angel of the Almighty!--that thou hast deigned by the word of our father Aadae, by the word of our father Henoch, and by the word of our father Noah, to enter the darkness of this our second world, and appear before our eyes. Help us, blessed angel!--help us!"

And the angel said, "What will ye?"

Here the Duke took heart, and gave for answer, "Lord, an evil witch, a devil's sorceress, wickeder than anything yet known upon earth, Sidonia Bork by name----"

But the angel let him continue no further, and with a glance of terrible anger exclaimed, "Silence, thou drunken man of blood!"

Then, looking upon Diliانا, murmured softly, "Speak, thou pure and blessed maiden!"

At this the virgin took courage, and answered, "Our gracious Prince would know how the evil spirit of my cousin Sidonia can be overcome?"

"Seize Wolde first," replied the angel, "then the evil spirit of Sidonia will become powerless. What wouldst thou know further?"

Hereupon the modest virgin blushed, stammered, and looked down; then from awe and terror, scarcely knowing what she said, made answer--

"Behold, thy servant would know wherefore the All-mighty and All-merciful God hath, since the beginning of time, allowed so much power to Satan over His creatures, the works of His own hands?"

Then the angel spake--"That is a grave and serious question, maiden, and the answer would be above thy comprehension; yet this

much I will explain to thee--if there were no devil and no evil, many attributes of the Almighty God our Lord would have remained for ever hid from you, children of humanity, as well as from us, spirits of heaven. Therefore, from the beginning, hath God permitted such power to the devil as might show forth these His attributes to the wondering universe. First, after the fall, His justice was revealed, as you have seen displayed in the old covenant, and this attribute could never have been manifested unless evil and the devil had entered into the world. Now, thought the devil when he beheld the manifestation of this terrible attribute, the whole human race must fall for ever to perdition, and the Lord God must be the first to murder the work of His own hands. But, lo! before heaven and earth, the great God manifested two new attributes; namely, mercy and love, for He fulfilled His word given to Satan in Paradise. The serpent-treacher entered into the world, and oh! infinite wonder! heaven and earth, which till then had seen God but in His goodness, now beheld His love bleed from the wounds of His Son on Golgotha, and the world reconciled to Him for ever, through Christ.

"Yet Satan still thinks to regain his lost dominion over the world; therefore it shall come to pass that the Lord will suffer him to become a mock and derision to all mankind, and for the first time since the world was made men will doubt his existence and disbelieve his power, and his name will be a scorn and idle word to the very children, and the old wives by their spinning-wheels. Then will be manifested some new attribute of divinity, of which as yet thou, nor I, nor any creature, may have an opportunity to contemplate. All this has lain in the purpose of God, in order to increase the happiness of His creatures; for all the other attributes of the Almighty, such as Infinity, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, awaken only awe in the mind of the finite; but those attributes which He manifests in His triumph over sin and Satan, are what truly awaken love, and through love, above all, is the happiness of the creature advanced. When God has thus manifested all His attributes by means of sin and Satan, to the joy of His faithful servants, men and angels, for all eternity, who without sin and Satan would never have known them, then the great day of the Lord will come, when the wine of His love-spirit will inspire every creature that believes on Him in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth! Further----"

But behold, at this word of the angel, a blue ray, about the thickness of an arm, came up from the south into the middle of the circle, and blended itself, trembling and glittering, with the radiant cloud and flowers. When the angel beheld this, he said--

"Lo! I am summoned to the ruins of Nineveh. Let me depart!"

At this the Duke took heart again to speak, and began, "Lord, how is my ancient race----"

But the angel again interrupted him with, "Silence, thou drunken

man of blood!"

And when the magister repeated the form which broke the conjuration, the angel disappeared as he had come, with a terrible clap of thunder; and clouds, light, flowers, odours, and music, all passed away with him, and the hall became dark and silent as the grave.

But in a couple of seconds, just as the magister had stepped out of the circle with the virgin, who trembled in every limb, even as he did himself, my Jobst comes rushing in at the door with joyful mien, thanks God, sobs, embraces his little daughter twice, thrice--embraces her again, and at last asks, "What said the angel?"

And they told him all--_item_, about the ghost of his poor mother, and what it desired. Then, for the first time, they observed that the Duke stood still within the circle with folded arms, and eyes bent upon the ground.

"My Lord Duke, will you not step out of the circle?" exclaimed the magister.

Whereupon the Duke started, sprang from the circle to the spot where they stood, and, seizing the magister by the throat, roared, "Dog of a sorcerer! this is some of thy black-art. Jobst here was right; thou hast raised no angel, but a devil!"

At this the terrified magister first tried to release himself from his Grace's hold, then began to explain, but the Duke would listen to nothing.

"It was clear as the sun this was no angel, but a devil, who, as St. Paul says, had transformed himself into an angel of light; for, first, the hellish emissary had called him a bloodhound. Now, what blood had he ever shed, except the blood of accursed witches? and this, as a just ruler, he had done upon the express command of God Himself (Ex. xxii. 18), where it is written:--'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' No one, therefore, from heaven or upon earth, could blame him for fulfilling the commands of God, yet the spirit had blamed him. _Ergo_, he was not an angel, but a devil. Next, the knave twice called me a drunkard. Here clearly he showed himself no angel, but, as the Lord Jesus named him, the 'father of lies;' for tell me, friends, was I drunk to-day? If I do take a sleeping draught after the fatigues of the day--tell me, what does that matter to this impudent devil? So I say with that Mecklenburgh nobleman in Dobberan:--

'Away, away, thou devil, from me,
I care not a single hair for thee;
In spite of the devil, a noble man
Should drain to the last his drinking-can.
I'll sup with the Lord and the saints the first,

While thou, poor devil, must ever thirst.
I'll drain the mead from the flowing bowl,
While the devil is sitting in hellish dole;
Therefore, away, thou devil, from me,
I care not a single hair for thee.

[Footnote: This inscription is still to be seen upon a tombstone
in Dobberan.]

And doth not Martinus Lutherus say--

'Who loves not wine, women, and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long'?

Marry, the grievous devil may wait long enough before he makes me
a fool. I am too sharp for the stuff with which he humbugs you, my
wise chattering magister!"

But the magister began to demonstrate how unlikely it was that
Satan would give advice how to subdue himself; "For how then could
his kingdom stand?" as the Lord said (Luke xi.). So the Duke
listened, and grew thoughtful--at last exclaimed, "Well, come,
we'll settle that over the wine-cup; and to spite the knave, we'll
keep up the carouse till morning; the night is already half spent,
and I have some glorious Muscadel in the cellar."

My Jobst, however, will not remain; and Diliانا asks, "What his
Grace will do about Wolde?"

This set his Grace again upon abusing the spirit--"Ay, truly, he
must have been a devil--Master Beelzebub himself, and no good
angel--for had he not bid him twice to hold his tongue when he
began to ask about his old illustrious race, and what should be
done to preserve it from utter destruction? The magister might go
to the devil himself now, with all his magic; he saw clearly
through the whole business."

So a great strife arose between them, which ended in the Duke
permitting the blessed maiden to press the wound in her arm, in
order to communicate, by means of the magnetic alphabet, with the
knight, who at that moment was keeping watch with his good sword
in the chapel of Marienfliess. Everything, however, must be
performed before the eyes of the Duke, else he would not believe
it; so the young maiden, blushing for shame, pressed the wound on
her arm; and after a brief space, cried out with wonder--"In truth
I feel the pressure now of itself." Whereupon, at the command of
the magister, she threw up her wide sleeve (for she still wore the
magic robe), and placed the little box with the magnet on her arm,
directing the magnetic needle, with a fine stick, to the letters,
thus:--

S--E--I--Z--E---W--O--L--D--E.

She then retired to a chamber, to put on her own dress, and had scarcely finished when she feels the pressure on her arm again. Whereupon she calls to his Grace and the magister, who set the magnet immediately on her arm, when, to the great surprise of his Grace, the needle turns of itself to the letters--

S--H--E----I--S----S--E--I--Z--E--D.

This sight gave my gracious Lord fresh courage: "And after all, perhaps that was an angel; for surely Sidonia would have protected her maid, if her evil spirit had not become powerless, as the spirit had foretold. And now they would soon have the arch-sorceress herself. He would send a horseman instantly to Christian Ludecke, who was burning witches at Colbatz, to hasten, without delay, to Marienfliess."

At last he permits Jobst, since he will not drink, to take his leave; "yet he and his fair daughter must first promise, by their honour, not to breathe a word of the magic conjuration, since the ignorant and stupid people would only make a mock of such matters; and why cast pearls before swine, or holy mysteries to dogs?" And truly they kept the secret of his Grace, so that not a word was known thereof until Duke Bogislaff the Fourteenth communicated the same to me, precisely as he had the facts from his brother, and gave me permission to publish them in my "History of Sidonia."

CHAPTER XXII.

How old Wolde is seized, confronted with Sidonia, and finally burned before her window.

Meanwhile the young knight, George Putkammer, had ridden over to Marienfliess on the appointed day, to Sheriff Eggert Sparling's. He mentioned nothing of the great magic work, as the Duke had forbidden him to do so, but merely said that he had orders from the Prince to seize Sidonia that night.

At this, my sheriff shuddered: "The young knight should reflect on what he was about; young people were often foolhardy and confident, to their utter ruin. What did he want from him? If he got half the world for it, he would not touch even the clothes of the devil's hag. He had tried it once, and that would do him for his life."

But the knight answered, "He had pledged his word to the Duke, and must hold by it. His worship must just give him a couple of stout fellows to help him."

Ille--"Did he really think that in the whole bailiwick a

fellow could be got to go with him, when it was known he was going to seize the sorceress--the devil's night-bird? Ha! ha! ha!"

Hic--"Then he would do it alone. His worship must just give him some cords, and show him a prison where he could put the vile witch."

Ille--"Cords he should have, as many as he wished, but on no account must the hag be brought to the court-house. He knew her well, and would take care to have nothing to do with her."

Hic--"At least, then, his worship must lend him a horse, and he would bind the dragon thereon with stout cords, and carry her away to his good castle of Pansin, where there was a deep dungeon, in which he could lay her, until he knew the Duke's pleasure."

Ille--"The horse he might have, and choose one himself from the stall, and if it pleased him, bind the witch on its back there in the churchyard, under the linden-trees; but to the court-house the witch must not come--certainly not--or she would suspect him of having a hand in her capture. Yet let the knight think again, and give up this dangerous business, or surely they had beheld each other for the last time."

But the knight only waited until the clock pointed to ten; then taking a lantern, he goes and chooses out a stout white mare (for such, they say, are antipathetical to witches), ties her to a linden in the churchyard, enters the church, lights the altar candles, and sits there, reading in the large Bible; until about the hour that the conjuration was taking place at Old Stettin, when a strange feeling of uneasiness came over him, and he rose up and walked to and fro in the church in great agitation. Suddenly he felt a pressure on his wounded arm, and turning up the sleeve of his doublet, pressed in return, after which, he laid the magnet upon it, and, to his surprise, read that he was to seize Wolde, not Sidonia. Instantly he took up the lantern and the cords, put his good sword under his arm, and ascended the steps up to the nuns' gallery, and from that, entered the convent corridor, as the door between always lay open; but stumbling, by chance, into Anna Apenborg's cell, she led him down a flight of stairs to the ground floor, and close to the refectory, where she pointed to a little chamber adjoining, whispering, "There is where the old cat snores;" then creeps behind a barrel, to watch, while the knight, holding the light before him, stepped at once into the cell, crying, "Stand up, old night-bird, and get on thy rags, thine hour hath come."

A scream of horror was the answer from the hag, and she clapped violently at the refectory wall, calling out, "Help me! help! help! a fellow has seized me, Lady Prioress!" But the knight was resolved to make quick work of it; and hearing a stir already in Sidonia's apartment, threw himself upon the hag, and bound her

hands tight with the cords, while she screamed, and struggled, and yelled piteously for the Lady Prioress; then dragging her up, he exclaimed, "Since thou didst not heed me, now thou shalt come off naked as thou art; better the devil should not have a rag to catch hold of. Come!"

But a fearful-looking form just then rushed into the room--it was Sidonia, just as she had risen from bed, bearing a lamp in her hand, with her white hair flowing wildly about her face and shoulders, and her red glowing eyes fixed menacingly upon the knight. She had just begun a terrific curse, when the young man, seeing the cat in his red hose following, lifted his sword and with one blow cut him clean in two, but started back, for the first time, in terror, when he beheld one half, on its two legs, run quickly under Wolde's bed, and the other half, on the two other legs, make off for the refectory, through the door which had been left open. Even Sidonia recoiled at the sight; but soon, with increased ferocity, sprang at the knight, screaming and clenching her hands. But he cried out, "Hold! or I will cleave thee in twain, even as thy cat." And in truth she stopped stone-still, but soon began to spit and murmur. Whereupon he cried out again, "Ay, spit and mumble; but know that my good friend, of whom I told thee, stands without, and if but a finger of mine aches, now or in future, he hath sworn thy death."

Then swinging Wolde's clothes, which lay on the bed, over her shoulder with the point of his sword, he exclaimed to Sidonia--"Away, away, or the like will be done to thee!"

Whereupon, amidst the howling of the hag, and the horrible curses and maledictions of Sidonia, he re-crossed the gallery and the church, the lame she-devil still howling before him, till they entered the churchyard; after which my brave knight bound her feet upon the white mare, and rode away with her to his good castle of Pansin.

I had forgotten to notice before, that the pastor was not buried within the church, as his widow first intended, but was laid outside in the blessed earth, because she feared that the man-wolf might get at him again within the church-vault and tear him.

Summa--That same evening the witch-commissioner, Christian Ludecke, arrived with his secretary at Marienfliess, according to the mandate of the Prince; and behind them come two waggons, on one of which sits the executioner with his assistants, the red flag floating above him, and the second is laden with the instruments of torture and the rack; for those belonging to the court-house of Marienfliess were not considered powerful enough. And, as usual, they enter the town chanting a sacred hymn, at which sound every one shudders, but my sheriff is particularly horror-struck; and, rushing out to meet them at the court-house, cried out--

"What the devil! is the bloodhound back again? Did he think that witches grew up in the town like cabbages?" but held his peace instantly, when he heard that all was done by command of the Prince.

So the lame hag was brought back again from Pansin that night, and the *_articuli indictionales_* were drawn up against her, in which it was not forgotten that years before she had sat in the cellar of the poor dairy-woman's mother, and there bewitched the cocks and hens, as many old people still living could testify; and the bailiff's wife is by no means slack either in helping her to the same death as the poor dairy-mother. While the whole town and adjacent country rang with these proceedings, Sidonia's disquietude became evident. Every day she sent Anna Apenborg up to the court-house, and there the said Anna and the serving-maid of the scribe were seen with their heads together in every corner conversing, and each day brought less comfort to the terrible witch of Marienfliess. Therefore, about this time, she changed her demeanour to the nuns, and in place of her usual fierce and cruel bearing, she now became quite mild, threw up her eyes, went regularly to church every Sunday, and sighed deeply during the sermon. Day and night she was singing spiritual songs, and sent to Stargard to purchase prayer-books, all to make the world think that she had grown truly religious. *_Item_*, she sent her new maid, Anna Dorings by name, to Stargard, to purchase mercury for her from the apothecary; and when the maid handed the same to her, she heard her murmur as if to herself, while she locked up the poison in her press--

"So now, at least, they can do nothing worse with me than behead me!"

Then she went herself one day to Stargard, and visited a celebrated advocate, called Elias Pauli. "The world was now so hard-hearted, and the devil so active, that she feared her turn might come next to be tried for a witch, just for the sympathy she showed for the poor creatures. Alas! how Satan blinded the reason of men; for when were such cruelties ever heard of as were practised now on poor helpless women? (Weeping.) And would not my Elias defend her from this ferocious bloodhound, Christian Ludecke, who had come again to Marienfliess, and boasted loudly that, when he had made an end of her old maid, Wolde, he would seize her next; and even sworn that, to make a terrible example of her, her nose and ears should be torn off with red-hot pincers ere she was tied to the stake. And what would my Elias do for her? She had a few dozen gold crowns which her sister Dorothea had left her by will, and willingly she would give them, if he turned the base malice of her enemies to shame. Ah, he might take pity on her; for she was a good and holy virgin, and as innocent of all they charged her with as the child in the cradle!" (Weeps and sobs again.)

So the cunning witch had struck the right nail on the head, for my

Elias was a great lover of coins; and though he had a few silver and many copper, yet not a single gold one did he possess. Therefore he became thoughtful after her speech, and walked up and down the room for a quarter of an hour, after which he stood still, and answered--

"Lady, you know as well as I do that your name is notorious throughout the whole land, and little hope can I give you if you are brought to trial. However, I will do what I can to delay the time as much as possible; perchance from your great age, and the bitter heart-remorse you must, no doubt, suffer, you may end your miserable life before they can lay violent hands on you. Pray to the Lord God, therefore, day by day, for your speedy death! I will, likewise, pray for you. Meanwhile, if any evil befall you, I will write petitions in your favour to all the neighbouring princes, to the resident nobles, and to the Duke himself in Stettin, for your race is one of the most illustrious in all Pomerania. And respecting the gold crowns which you promise, send them speedily; for remember from the moment they arrest you, your _inventorium_ is sealed."

This my hag promised, and took her leave; but, woe! the first news she heard upon her return home was, that her maid, by a decree of the council at Stettin, had that day been put to the torture; and having on the rack confessed that she (Sidonia) was the true arch-sorceress, they were to be confronted with each other on the morrow. This news Anna Apenborg told her before she had well descended from the coach--_item_, many of the other nuns confirmed the rumour; so that the unfortunate wretch at last resolved, in despair, to put an end to herself. However, she had little inclination to taste the mercury, I think.

So in the twilight she creeps out behind the brew-house, which stood three or four feet from the convent wall, so that no one in the convent could see what she was about, draws a ladder after her, sets it against the wall, and mounts, intending to spring down into the river below and drown herself.

Now it happened that in the oak-wood, at the opposite side of the stream, my Ludecke and the sheriff were walking up and down, and the sheriff's teeth were chattering in his head from pure fright; for a courier from Stettin had arrived that very evening with an order from his Grace, commanding him, under pain of severe punishment and princely disfavour, to be present, along with Jobst Bork, on the following morning, when Sidonia and Wolde were confronted. Their eyes were suddenly attracted to a head rising above the opposite wall, then long white hair fluttered wildly in the evening breeze, and afterwards a thin black form appeared, until the entire figure stood upon the top of the wall, and extended its arms as a young stork its wings, when it essays to leave the nest, while the eyes were fixed on the water below. Instantly they both recognised Sidonia, and saw what her purpose was.

"Let her, let her," whispered the sheriff to the other; "if she is dead, if she is dead, we shall all rest in peace!"

But the other seized a stone, and flung it with all his might at the wall, crying out, "Wait, thou shameless witch; doth thy conscience move thee so?"

Whereupon the black figure dropped down again behind the wall as quickly as possible. And my Ludecke, being loath to lose the fat morsel he had ready for the flames, resolved to place four guards over her in the refectory; but though the whole town was searched--_item_, menaced that the executioner should scourge them man by man, yet no one will undertake the dangerous office. At last four fellows are found, who promise, for a tun of beer at the very least, to hold watch in the convent square, so that the witch cannot get away out of the building, with which my bloodhound is obliged to be content.

Next morning, at nine of the clock, Sidonia was cited to appear in court, but as she did not come, and mocked the messenger who was sent for her, Ludecke commanded the executioner to go himself, and if she would not come by fair means, to drag her by force. The fellow hesitated, however--

"It was a dangerous business; but if his worship was very anxious, why, for a good horse from the ducal stables, he might dare it, since his own nag had fallen lame."

So this being promised, he departed, and, in a short time, they beheld the carl in his red mantle dragging Sidonia up to the court-house; and, methinks, many within shuddered at the sight; for there were present sitting round the green table--Christian Ludecke, Eggert Sparling, Jobst Bork, and the scriba, Christopher Kahn.

But when the executioner threw open the door, and bade the witch take off her shoes and enter backwards, she refused and scolded--

"What? her bitterest enemies were to be her judges. The thick ploughman from Saatzig, who had stolen her rents from the farm-houses at Zachow; _item_, the arch-cheat Sparling, who robbed his Prince every day--such rabble--burgher carls--secretary fellows, and the like--no; she would never enter. She was the lady of castles and lands; besides, her advocate was not here, and she had engaged one at Stargard;" finally she pushed the door to with her foot.

"Master," cried the bloodhound within, "seize the witch in the name of the Prince!"

Whereupon the door was again thrown open, and my hag, sobbing loudly, was forced into the court in her socks, and backwards.

[Footnote: Because the judges on witch-trials feared the evil influence of the glances of the accused.]

"And what did they want with her?" she asked, still sobbing.

Whereupon the commissioner made a sign to the executioner, who instantly admitted old Wolde Albrecht by the same door. She entered barefoot, and in the black shift worn upon the rack, upon which the red blood lay in deep fresh stains. When Sidonia beheld this she shuddered. But Ludecke rose up and admonished Wolde to speak the truth without fear, and to remember that, on the morrow morning, at that very hour, she would stand before the throne of God--there was yet time to save her poor soul.

So the old lame hag began to sob likewise, and lament, and says at last--

"O Lady Prioress, I must save my poor soul! I would not betray you else."

Then she spoke out, and told bravely all she knew about Sidonia, and her evil spirit Chim; and how Chim used to help her own familiar, whose name was Jurgen, to get rid of Sidonia's enemies; _item_, that the devil Chim sometimes took the form of a man, for she had seen him frequently in Sidonia's chamber.

At this Sidonia raged and scolded, and flew at Wolde to seize her by the hair, but Ludecke interposed, and threatened, if she were not quiet, to give her up to Master Hansen for a few turns or so for trial; upon which she remained silent from terror apace, but soon began again to sob, and exclaimed--

"Yes, yes; she must think of her blessed Saviour, who likewise was betrayed and trodden under foot by one who had broken bread with Him! She had not only given bread to this wretch, but twice had given her life. Oh, woe, woe to the shameless creature, who could step before the throne of God with such a lie in her mouth!"

At which the other wept, and answered with loud sobs--

"Ah, gracious Lady Prioress, if I had not my poor soul to save, I would betray you never!"

Then by desire of the court, she confirmed by oath her previous statements. Whereupon Sidonia was led back to her cell in the convent by the executioner, and forbidden, upon pain of death, to leave it without permission. Whereupon her rage knew no bounds; she scolded, stamped, menaced, and finally cursed her cousin Jobst, as well as the commissioner, jailers, and hangmen, as they were.

The third day the pile is erected again by the executioner, there where the others stood, that is, not far from the window of

Sidonia, and as it was necessary for one of the criminal judges to be present at the burning of a witch, Jobst Bork proceeded thither with a great concourse of people, for my Eggert had excused himself, saying he was sick, though, methinks, I know what sickness he had--namely, the hare's sickness; and Jobst admonished the witch, who hobbled along in her white shift and black cap, leaning on a crutch, not to accuse his poor cousin falsely, for let her think where she would stand in a few moments. There was the pile before her eyes, an image of the eternal hell-fire. But she held by her first confession, and even after the executioner made her ascend the ladder, she turned round at the third step, and cried--

"Give her shoulder as good a wrench as ye gave mine, and she will soon confess, I warrant."

But behold, when the executioner, by desire of the upright Jobst, had bound her fast with wet cords, in order soon to make an end of her, and lit the pile up round about, the flames were still blown away from the stake by the wind, and would not touch the hag, so that many saw in it a miracle of Satan, and wondered, till an old peasant stepped forth from the crowd, and cried, "Ha, ha, I will soon settle her." Then seizing her crutch, which she had dropped at the foot of the pile, he stepped up the ladder, and pitched off her black cap with his stick, whereupon a black raven flew out, with loud croakings, and disappeared towards the north, and instantly after the flames blazed up around her, covering her all over like a yellow mantle, with such rapidity that the people only heard her shriek once.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How Diliiana Bork and George Putkammer are at length betrothed--Item, how Sidonia is degraded from her conventual dignities and carried to the witches' tower of Saatzig in chains.

When Jobst returned home to Saatzig from the execution, he seemed much disturbed in his mind, which was unusual to him, and sat by the stove plunged in deep thought. At length he calls his little daughter Diliiana from the spinning wheel where she sat.

"Ah, the Prince had set his life in great peril, but more than the Prince himself did she, his little daughter, plague him by showing herself so cold to the brave young knight. She ought to leave off this prudery, else he feared by the next time the sun was in the propitious position, that his Highness would send for her again to question the devil--there was nothing such a fanatic would not do; but if she would only press her arm now, and bid the young knight

come. Where could she meet with a braver husband?"

At this the young maiden blushed up to her very eyes, and asked earnestly--

"Father, think you the good knight stays away because I have not summoned him?"

Ille--"Of course, my child. Thou forbidst him to approach thee until summoned; and now where could be a greater proof of his love than in having obeyed thee?"

Hæ--"Ah me, I have wondered so, father, why he never sought me. I never meant that; you surely misunderstood me. But, father, if you wish--shall I summon him by the magnetic sign?"

Ille nods his head, laughing.

Whereupon Diliانا, blushing yet more, pressed her arm, and feeling a pressure in return almost immediately, pushed up her sleeve, set the magic box thereon, and with her golden breastpin directed the magnetic needle to the letters--

C--O--M--E---D--E--A--R--E--S--T.

Whilst my Jobst looked over her shoulder, so that his long grey beard fell upon her neck, and when he read the letters he embraced and kissed her, telling her that a better kisser would soon come and save him the trouble--meaning the knight; and truly scarce half-an-hour had passed, when the cloud of dust could be seen through the trees, which was raised as he rode along, and, panting and agitated, he sprang into the room, exclaiming to my Jobst--"Where is Diliانا?" But she sits mute in the corner, red as a rose, and looks down upon the ground.

So my Jobst laughed, and pointed to the blushing rose in the corner, whereupon the young knight, George, in a moment is by her side, and had her hand in his, and asks--

"If his loved Rachel will not end his weary years of serving now, and be his for evermore?"

"Yes," she murmured through her soft tears. "I will be yours now for evermore;" and she extended her two arms towards him.

Marry, how soon my young knight took the trouble off the old father; so that Jobst danced for joy at the sight, and clapped his hands, and swore that such a wedding should be held at Saatzig, that people would talk about it for fifty years.

But, alas! the wedding must wait for a year and a day! for, in two days the young knight is laid upon a sick bed, and brought so low that at one time his life was despaired of. However, he comforted

himself by pressing his wounded arm three times a day, and thus corresponding with his betrothed by means of the magnet. So they told their grief and their love to each other daily in these few words. And many think that his sickness was a devil's work of Sidonia, or of old Wolde's planning; but he himself rather judged it arose from the wild ride to his young bride on the morning she bade him come. This matter, therefore, I leave undecided.

Yet no one can surely fathom all the cunning wiles of Satan; for though many said Sidonia's power is now broken by Wolde's death, and indeed the poor sheriff was the only one who still played the hare, and kept the roaring ox safe up in the stall--still, so strange a thing happened at this time to the knight, Ewald von Mellenthin, that the criminal court thought proper to take cognisance of the matter, and so we find it noted down in the records of the trial. For, mark! This same knight, being summoned to give evidence, deposed to Sidonia having in his presence flung a hatchet at his dear bride, Ambrosia von Guntersberg, who had been now a long while his well-beloved spouse, which hatchet had wounded her in the foot. Then turning to the hag, he exclaimed wrathfully--

"Ha! thou devil's witch, hast thou found thy recompense at last?"

Whereupon Sidonia made a face at him after her fashion, and menaced him with the vengeance of her friends.

But what friend had she but Satan, who avenged her on this wise. For, as some days after, the knight Ewald was driving with his cousin Detloff, between Schlotenitz and Schellin, such an awful roaring, and raging, and storming was heard in the air over their heads, that the two foremost horses took fright, broke their traces, threw the coachman, who was nearly killed, and dashed off across the field through thick and thin, and never stopped till they reached Stargard, trembling, panting, and exhausted, about evening time.

The knight laid all this evidence before the criminal commission, and my hare grew so frightened thereupon, that next day, while listening to the depositions of more witnesses, seeing a shadow hop along his paper, he started up in horror, screaming, "There are the toad-shadows again! O God, keep me! There are the toad-shadows again!" But the special commissioner, who had also observed the shadow, and got up to look out at the window, now called out, laughing heartily, "Marry, good Sparling, the shadow belongs to one of your worship's brothers--a poor little sparrow, who is hopping there on the house-top. Go out and see, if you don't believe me." Whereupon the whole court burst out into a loud fit of laughter, to the great annoyance of my hare.

Whilst Ludecke is drawing up his *_articulus inquisitionalis_*, Sidonia's advocate, Dr. Elias Pauli, was not idle. And first he stirred up the whole race of the Borks in her favour, letting it

come to the Duke's ears through his grand chamberlain, Matzke Bork, that if Sidonia were treated with gentleness, and thereby brought to make confession, assuredly there was great hope that for this grace and indulgence she would untie the magic knots of the girdle wherewith she had bewitched the whole princely race, and laid the spell of barrenness upon them. But if extreme measures were resorted to, never would she do this for his Highness.

So the Duke was half moved to consent, and bade his superintendent, Mag. Reutzius, come to him, and he should instantly repair to Marienfliess, visit the sorceress in her apartment, where she was _bis dato_, guarded a close prisoner. Let him read out the seventy-four articles of the indictment to her himself, admonish her to confess, and in his (the Duke's) name, offer her pardon if she would untie the knots of the girdle. Did she refuse, however, let her be brought the following Sunday to the convent-chapel, there, in the presence of the whole congregation, before the altar he was again to admonish her. If she still persisted in her lies and wickedness, then let him summon the executioner to strip her of her cloister habit before the eyes of all the people. When he had further pronounced her degradation from all her conventual dignities, she was to be put in fetters and carried to the witches' tower at Saatzig.

My worthy father-in-law offered many objections against this public degradation, but his Highness was resolved, and would listen to no reasons, his wrath was so great against the hag.

Now it may be easily conjectured what crowds of people gathered in the chapel when the blessed Sabbath bell rang, and the news ran from mouth to mouth, that the witch was to be denounced and degraded that day before the altar. Never had so many folk been seen within the walls. And when the church was so full that not a soul more could squeeze in at the doors, the people broke in the windows, and setting ladders against them, clambered through, and swung themselves right and left on the balustrades, and above and below, and on all sides, there was not a spot without a human face. Yea, four youngers crowded under the baldaquin of the pulpit, and another carl got on the altar behind the crucifix, and would have knocked it down, but my worthy father-in-law, seeing it shake, caught hold of the carl by the tail of his coat, and dragged him forth. _Item_, the whole criminal commission is present; _item_, all the nuns in their gallery, with the exception of the sub-prioress, Dorothea Stettin, who, along with two other women, had devoted themselves to a fearful act of vengeance (which I would hardly have believed of them), but it will be related presently.

As to Sidonia, she had been brought in already, and placed on the penitential stool before the altar, after which the organ struck up that terrible hymn,

"Eternity, thou thunder word!"

Yet, as it happened that the congregation had not got this hymn in their Psalm-books, seeing that it was quite a new one (which circumstance had been overlooked in the general agitation), they were obliged to sing that other, beginning,

"Now the awful hour has come."

Then the reverend priest, M. Reutzius, advanced to the altar, having first chanted the litany, and there, to obey the Duke's behests as nearly as possible, opened his sermon with some verses from the afore-mentioned hymn, which I shall set down here for the sake of the curious reader:--

"Eternity, thou thunder word!
Piercing the soul like sharpest sword,
Beginning without ending!
Eternity! Time without Time,
I know not in my grief and crime
Where to my soul is tending.
The fainting heart recoils in fear
To see thy shadow drawing near.

In all the world there is no grief
To which Time brings not some relief,
Though sorrow wildest rages;
But thou, Eternity, can bring
No balm to lessen hell's fierce sting,
Through never-ending ages.
For even Christ Himself hath said,
'There's no repentance for the dead.'

So long as God in Heaven reigns,
So long shall last the sinner's pains,
In hell's fierce tortures lying.
Eternal fires will plague the soul,
Thirst, hunger, horror, fear, and dole,
The soul itself undying.
For hell's dark shades will never flee,
Till God Himself hath ceased to be!"

After which he read out the words of his text to the criminal, telling her how his Serene Highness had selected the same himself out of paternal clemency and in all uprightness. Then he explained it, admonishing her yet once more to save her poor soul and not plunge it into eternal perdition. After this, he kneeled down along with the whole congregation, and prayed to the Holy Spirit for her conversion, so that every one in the church wept and trembled and sobbed. Then he rose up again and spake: "I ask you, for the last time, Sidonia von Bork, do you confess yourself guilty or not?"

And while every one held their breath suspended, the terrible sorceress rose up and spake out with bold defiance--

"I am innocent. Curse upon the bloodthirsty Prince, who has brought me to this shame; my blood be upon him and upon his race!"

"No!" cried the priest from the altar; "he hath saved his soul; thy blood be upon thyself, and thy perdition upon thine own head!"

Then he lifted his right hand as a signal to the executioner, whereupon Master Worger stepped forward in his red mantle with six assistants. And first he draws forth a pair of scissors from beneath his cloak, and cuts off her nun's veil (for by command of the criminal judge, she had only a simple veil on to-day), and he and his assistants trampled it beneath their feet. Then he cuts a slit in her black robe, just beneath the chin, and tore it down from head to foot, as a draper tears linen, and at this sight, and the harsh sound in the silence of the church, many amongst the nuns fainted. When all this had been done, and Sidonia now stood there in her white under-garment, Master Worger, by command of the court, put fetters on her, and riveted them tightly. So that at the terrible sound of the hammering and clanking, and the thundering reverberation through the vaulted church, so great a horror and fear fell upon every one present, that all the nuns who had not fainted rushed out of the gallery; a crowd of people from the nave, and even the priest holding his hands before his eyes, hastened after them.

She was soon lifted up by the executioner and his assistants, and thrown into the cart over which the red flag waved; then driven off without delay to Saatzig, a great crowd of people trotting along with her. And even in Saatzig the whole town ran together when the cart with the criminal was seen emerging from the wood, and the executioner blew his trumpet to give notice to the warder on the tower of their approach, as had been agreed upon.

Amongst the crowd, however, my Jobst is not to be seen; yet when the cart stops, the beautiful form of Dilia is seen pressing forward. She is dressed in a deep mourning mantle, and bears a golden beaker of wine in her hand--weeps, and says mildly--

"Here, dear cousin, drink! You shall have everything as good as I can make it for you, and eat what I and my father eat. Ah! cousin, cousin, wherefore did you not make full confession?"

Herewith she reached out the beaker to the cart, but the evil witch screamed out--

"Confess! What should I confess, you fool? Away with your stuff; I will not be fed by your charity!"

Whereupon she dashed aside the beaker so fiercely that it fell to the ground, and the wine splashed all over the young maiden's

robe. Then, clenching her withered hand, she shook it at the window--

"Ha! the thick ploughman. Where hath the devil hid him? the thief that stole my rents from Zachow! This is my reward for having cured him! But wait, I will make him repent it yet," &c.

And she would have gone on much longer with her curses, but the executioner gave her another blow with his fist, which made her hold her tongue. Then he and his fellows lifted her from the cart, and as she was unable to walk from shame, and despair, and wrath, they carried her up the winding stairs to the witches' tower; and she glowered into the little chamber which she had occupied fifty years before, at the time she murdered poor Clara von Dewitz, for they had to pass by it to reach the witches' tower, which lay two flights of stairs higher up.

And when Master Worger laid her down in the damp dark hole, and shook out some straw for her to lie on, the knave grinned and said--"What would she do now for company? The devil would scarcely come; still a companion would be pleasant."

The witch, however, made no answer, only looked down upon the ground, muttering to herself. Whereupon the knave laughed again and cried, "Eh, wait, I have got a companion for you!"

And opening a sack he had brought with him, took out a blackened human head, and then two long, black, half-burned bones; placed the bones crosswise on the ground, and set the head atop of them, then said, "So, now you have right merry company. That is Wolde's head, as you may perceive; and now ye may conjure the devil together as ye were wont." Then, grinning maliciously, he went out, locking the prison door upon the unfortunate wretch and the death's-head.

Meanwhile, my Jobst and his fair daughter are plunged in great perplexity and despair at the Duke's cruel order to have Sidonia sent to their castle of Saatzig. Therefore, the indignant knight sat down and wrote an earnest remonstrance to his Highness the Duke, and prayed his Grace, therefore, to remove this millstone from his neck, or he would resign the post of Governor of Saatzig, and withdraw to his own good castle of Pansin. This letter he despatched by a running courier to Old Stettin, and it produced a good effect upon the Duke; for, in three days, an order arrived for Sidonia's removal to Oderburg; and the crowds gathered round the cart, from all parts, to see her as she passed along--as thick as if it had been the time of the annual fair.

God be thanked, I have now got her as far as the Odenburg! For as concerning her long imprisonment there, her frequent examinations, and, finally, the question by torture, what need for me to relate them here, seeing that your Highness and your illustrious brothers were present during all behind the green screen? I, too, Doctor

Theodore Plonnie, assisted at the trial as high-sheriff, Anton Petersdorf was _protonotarius_ to the criminal court, and Johann Caude, the _notarius_, conducted the _protocollum_. Besides, when I look back and think of her shrieks, and how the dry withered limbs writhed and cracked upon the wheel, till the black blood poured forth from her nails and teeth, my head swims and the sight leaves my eyes--therefore, away with it! This only will I notice, that her advocate, Doctor Elias Pauli, preserved her in truth for a year and a day from the rack and a bitter death, by his keen and cunning devices, thinking that she would make away with herself some way or other, by mercury or else, to escape the stake. But no such thing: she was as afraid of death as a cat of hot broth; so at last he had to suffer justice to take its course. Whereupon this Satan's hag, on the 28th July 1620, at four o'clock in the afternoon, pursuant to a decree of the electoral-court of judges of Magdeburg in Saxony, was brought into the great hall at Oderburg. and there stretched upon the rack, as I have above mentioned, to force her to a confession upon seventeen _articulos inquisitionales_, many of which I have noticed here and there through the preceding chapters.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Of the execution of Sidonia and the wedding of Diliana.

After the torture, the poor malicious old wretch became so weak that she thought herself like to die, and therefore bade my worthy godfather, Doctor Cramer, to be brought to her that she might make full confession at last. And her repentance, in truth, seemed earnest and real now; for after the communion she bade them bring her coffin--then sat up, and looking at it for a long while in silence, at last said--

"I shall soon rest there in peace; meantime, carry it out again till I am dead."

But such a hunger for the blessed sacrament was caused by her death fears, and not by holy repentance; for as she did not die, but rather after some days grew strong again (probably because the Lord God chose to spare her yet longer, for a more fearful and terrible warning to all sinners), she returned, "like a sow, to her wallowing in the mire." And more particularly did she spit forth her poisonous curses upon the whole princely race, when the court-painter, Matthias Eller, arrived at the prison with an order from his Highness, to paint her portrait, now in her hideous old age, behind that which he had seen at Wolgast, representing her in the prime of youthful beauty. Long did she weep and groan when she looked upon the portrait of what she had been sixty years before; then clenched her fists, and cursed to all eternity the princely

race which had first brought her to public dishonour--she so young and innocent--and not content with that, now thirsted to see her noble blood flow from the gallows.

"Ah, that was indeed the portrait of her youth! for her princely bridegroom had got it painted secretly, because of his haughty arrogant mother, by a painter in Wolgast; but she had revenged herself on the proud old woman at last. The golden chain was her own, but the gold hair-band and the sable collar had been a present from her young bridegroom, And now, what was left of all her pomp and magnificence! See what these accursed princes had brought her to with their envy, arrogance, and savage vengeance--she that was the richest lady in the land was now the poorest beggar, and had not wherewithal even to purchase a death-shift."

Meanwhile the report spread throughout all Pomerania land that Sidonia was dead, and had been privately buried. The cause was this,--when the executioner and his fellows carried out her coffin after she had seen it, they told the eager and curious rabble, who gathered round and had been roaring out for her death, that she was dead already and lay within, and so they would lose the fun of seeing her burned; and this they said in jest, to disappoint the filthy and savage mob. So the news spread through the land and reached Saatzig, where it was confirmed by an honourable knight from Old Stettin, who answered them on oath that he had seen her coffin carried out with his own eyes. So my Jobst and his fair daughter are glad, and thank God that one of their noble race had been spared the disgrace of falling by the hands of the hangman; the young Diliانا, in especial, rejoices, and when her lover arrived from Pansin in the afternoon (for he was grown well and strong again), she threw herself on his bosom, rapturously exclaiming--

"Dearest George, our poor cousin is dead; now may the wedding be--now may the banns be published!"

However, the news soon came how the mistake had happened, and that Sidonia was still alive. But as the banns had been already published and the wedding fixed for the 18th of July, Diliانا at length consented to abide by the arrangement, particularly as they heard also that the execution would be delayed for some time, in consequence of the Elector of Saxony having sent in his protest against it to the Ducal Court of Stettin. Indeed, so many powerful princes protested against this public disgrace, by reason of Sidonia's high rank, that many thought she would be allowed to go away perfectly free.

Summa--Already, by the evening of the 17th, the noble guests had gathered at Saatzig, and of the Borks, almost the whole illustrious race is present; among whom were particularly noticeable the Honourable Aulic Councillors, and Councillors of Administration, Just, Andreas, and Henning. _Item_, all the

Putkammers, among whom came the old burgomaster Wolff, with his sons, Benedictus, Asso, Gerson, Matthias, Wolfgang, &c. So that by midnight the castle rang with merriment and revelry; and old Jobst Bork was so beside himself with joy, that he flung the empty flasks, as he drained them, up at the monks' heads which were carved round the capitals of the pillars in the great knights' hall, crying out, "That is for thee, monk!"

But the festive night hath a sad morning, without talking of all the drinkers who snored till mid-day. However, all were ready at last to go to the bridal, only waiting for Matzke Bork, the princely chamberlain, who had promised, if possible, to be present at the marriage, along with his Serene Highness himself, Duke Francis. So they watched from the windows, and they watched from the towers, but never a one of them is to be seen; and the guests impatiently pace up and down the great hall, which is all wreathed and decorated with flowers and banners. But the young bridegroom is the most impatient of all. He paced up and down the hall, arm-in-arm, with his betrothed, when at last a carriage was heard approaching, and every eye was turned to the window, but Matzke Bork sits in it alone. He enters disturbed and mournful, and when the knight of Saatzig asks him where he has left his Highness the Duke, he answers--

"The Duke will drink blood in place of wine to-day! Listen, good cousins, to what the Duke hath resolved concerning our kinswoman Sidonia. Her sentence hath been pronounced, and this very day will be carried into effect: first, her nose and ears are to be torn up with red-hot irons, at three different quarters of the town, by the public hangman, and afterwards she is to be burned alive at a slow fire."

When he ended, all the Borks present screamed with horror, and gathered round him: "And was it not possible yet to change this sentence?"

But Matzke answered, "He had tried all entreaties, but in vain; even three times he had cast himself on his knees before his Highness, yet could obtain no mitigation; for his Grace was incensed against the witch, because of her arrogant defiance, and her stubborn refusal to remove the spell from the princely race, and sent orders to the executioner to build the pile by eight of the clock on the following morning, and burn her alive thereon."

When he ceased speaking, the uproar in the hall rose to the highest. Some of Sidonia's kin, amongst whom was Jobst, swore the devil's hag deserved it all; and how could her death bring dishonour upon them? But some thought evil of the insult offered to their race, and cursed his Highness, and would spring to their saddles and ride to Stettin on the instant.

Matzke, however, lifted his voice, and bade them have reason. "They must endure what could not be altered. Jobst was right: was

the proud oak the worse because a rotten branch was lopped off? Were they to come before his Highness with such mien and gesture, why, he would straight order them all to be clapped into prison, and then, indeed, would disgrace rest on their illustrious name. No, no; for God's sake, let them rest here. His Grace was too full of wrath now to listen even to his preachers, the ministers of God. How, then, would he hear them? Let them rather rest in peace, and forget the fate of their evil cousin in the festivities of the bridal."

"Ay, good cousins and guests," quoth the bridegroom, "let us to the bridal, and the Word of God will calm us, and bring us upon other thoughts. But where is my beloved Diliانا?"

They sought her in the hall--in vain! They ran all through the castle--in vain! Diliانا is away, and no one knows whither she has gone.

But the maiden hath a brave spirit, and hath wrapped a black mantle belonging to her mourning robes over her bridal dress, and drawn the hood over her myrtle wreath; then taking the shift of her grandmother, Clara, in her hand, which she had kept ready by her for such a case, she descended to the stables, where there were only two grooms to be seen, all the others having joined the crowd round the church to catch a sight of the bridal procession, had the best palfrey saddled, took one groom with her, pressed some money into the hand of the other, and bade him not tell, for three hours, that she had gone to Old Stettin. Then rode away, striking, however, into a bypath, to deceive the guests, in case they should attempt to follow her. And her journey ended all safely; for in four hours she was in Old Stettin, without having been pursued. And reaching the ducal residence, she alighted, hastened up the stairs, bowed proudly to the princely official without uttering a word, and proceeded straight to the apartment of the Duke. There threw off her travelling hood and mantle, and knocked bravely at the door.

"Enter!" exclaimed the voice of his Highness. Upon which the beautiful maiden in her bridal robes, and the myrtle wreath on her hair, stepped in. At which sight his Grace, who was reclining on a couch, started up, took her hand smiling, and asked--"For the love of Heaven, what brought her hither upon her festal-day?"

So she began: "This was no festal-day, but a day of shame to her and her whole race, because of the horrible and incredible tidings brought to them by Matzke Bork, respecting their old kinswoman, Sidonia; therefore she had left bridegroom, bridal, and festival, and ridden away alone, to see if she could not turn away such a disgrace from her noble race, and such horrible torture from her poor old kinswoman. Had she not freely perilled her life for his Grace? If they had not succeeded, at least it was no fault of hers. Let him recall the terrible decree, and if her cousin

deserved death, as she doubted not, command her to be beheaded, as had at first been agreed upon. This, at least, was a more honourable and less painful death. His Grace must grant her prayer, for she would not move from the spot until he did so."

But his Grace is inexorable, and recapitulates all the sins of the demon hag; "how she had defied him, and made a mock of the holy sacrament; and wherefore did he bear the sword from God, if it were not as a just Prince, to set her forth a terrible warning and example to all; for witchcraft was increasing day by day in the land, and witches were almost as plenty as flies."

His Grace then paced up and down a long while in silence. At last spake--

"Now, for thy sake, the first decree shall hold good, although never was one so unworthy of my favour as this hag."

Whereat the young virgin was so moved with gratitude, that she fell down on her knees before his Grace, and bedewed his hand with her tears.

Just then some one knocked, and the jailer entered--

"The witch had taken another fit of conversion, and prayed for a priest. _Item_, for a fresh shift, for she had not changed her linen for four weeks, and no one would give her a fresh shift."

When Diliaua heard this she wondered much over the dark providence of God, and said--"Wait, I will give thee a shift for her;" stepped out into the gallery and took Clara's, No. 7, which she had brought with her, out of her travelling mantle, and, in truth, this was the very shift in which the murderess was carried to her death.

Summa--The jailer hath scarcely got the said shift under his arm, when the clatter of footsteps is heard upon the stairs, and then another knock at the Duke's apartment, and this was my knight George Putkamraer, who rushed in, arrayed in his wedding finery, but all covered over with dust, since he had not given himself time to fling a cloak over his dress. He clasped his young bride to his heart, and half scolded her for leaving him privately before the bridal. But when he heard of her noble courage, and what she had accomplished, he was glad again, and kissed the hand of his Grace, and he must now grant them one favour more, and return with them to the wedding. "The distance was only five miles, and he had the finest Malmsey that ever was drunk to present to his Highness."

At this hearing his Grace exclaimed--

"Eh, George, where have you got the Malmsey? Ha! younker, hast

thou a cup of Malmsey? I will go with thee right heartily to Saatzig!"

And his Grace wanted to order carriages instantly to carry them all off, that so they might arrive that same evening at the castle, but Diliaua objected--

"No, she would stand by her word, and never hold bridal in Saatzig until her poor cousin lay at rest in her grave. This night she would remain in the town, and not leave it until she had seen the last of her poor cousin."

A long strife now ensued, but Diliaua remained firm to her resolve. So his Highness said, at last, that he would play the messenger himself, and journey off to the wedding the moment he had given orders to his chancellor respecting the change of Sidonia's sentence. He was better pleased not to be in the place when she was executed. Diliaua could stay the night in the castle with his dear spouse, the Duchess, and the knight might look after a place for himself. He would desire all the wedding-guests to be ready to-morrow at midday for the bridal, and if Diliaua and the knight disliked riding, let them order a carriage from the marshal of his stables, with fresh Frisian horses, and in a couple of hours they would be at Saatzig.

However, Diliaua would not remain the night in the castle, but went to her cousin, the lady of Matzke Bork, because her house stood not far from the place of execution, although the place itself was not visible, and my younker went down sorrowfully to the inn to pass the night there, but betimes in the morning was up and off to his dear little bride. He finds her in the second story, but no longer in her bridal magnificence; a black mourning garment covered her entire person; and when the knight started in dismay at her appearance, she said--

"That no other robes beseemed a Bork when one of their race was going to her death; and she heard that the procession to the scaffold was to come that way from the Otterburg, and would pass in half-an-hour, therefore she was prepared to behold it. It was well that the scaffold itself was hidden from their sight; but would her dear George just go over and bid some one hoist a flag when the head of her cousin fell."

So the knight did her will, but when he returned said--

"Diliaua, if thou givest me so many nuts to crack when we are married, methinks it will be an evil thing."

To which she answered mildly--

"No, dear George, after marriage it is the wife who cracks all the hard nuts, but to-day, dearest, it is thy office. I know not why, but I have a feeling over me to-day as if the soul of my poor

grandmother would be at rest after this execution, and that Sidonia herself will be, in some sense, pardoned through the means of that death-shift, No. 7; yet wherefore I think this I know not."

Just then a dull, hoarse, murmuring sound was heard in the distance, like the heaving of the waves when thunder is in the air, and the Lady Matzke's maid rushed in exclaiming--"She's coming! she's coming!" Then Diliaua trembled and turned pale, but still advanced to the balcony with her cousin and the young knight.

At length the terrible sorceress herself appears in sight, accompanied by the school, chanting the death-psalm. She wore a white robe seamed with black, and Diliaua recognises, with a shudder, that this is indeed Clara's shift, for she had herself thus stitched the seams in order to know it; but besides, the No. 7 was plainly discernible on the neck. She walked barefoot, and round her head was bound a black fillet flowered with gold, from beneath which her long white hair fluttered in the wind.

Diliaua contemplates all this awhile shudderingly, then covers her face with both hands, and sobs and weeps, so that the tears pour down through the delicate little fingers, and my younker hath enough to do to comfort her. But when the procession disappears she dries her eyes, re-enters the chamber, and folding her hands across her bosom, walks up and down, praying earnestly, until the red Danish flag shoots up. Then she sighed deeply, and drying her beautiful eyes again said softly--

"May God have mercy upon her soul, now her tortures are over!"

Scarcely are the words uttered ere a dense cloud of smoke ascends above the fisher's house, rising higher and higher, like a lofty black tower in the air, so that they all conjectured--"Now she is burning on the pile," and shuddered, yet are content withal that at last her fearful life has ended.

Then they all knelt down and repeated the Lord's Prayer; then rising, addressed themselves in earnest for their homeward journey.

And here, with the death of Sidonia, I might justly close my book, merely stating in addition, that her ashes were laid in the burial ground for the poor, and that some time after the gentle Diliaua caused a tombstone to be erected over them, out of Christian charity and forgiveness. But as some say his Highness the Duke got his death at the wedding of Diliaua, I shall briefly narrate the facts here, to please the curious reader.

For the said Duke was so much taken with the Malmsey wine, that he sat up drinking the whole night, and next morning his legs were swelled to that degree that his boots had to be cut oft with

knives. So that when the bridal pair arrived, his Grace had to receive them in slippers, yet rejoiced much at hearing that all was over; and then, scarcely giving Diliانا time to recover herself, despatched the whole company off to the church. Not, however, without giving serious admonitions, both to the priest and the knight, George, not to let the ring drop. For if Dr. Luther, the thoughtless lubberhead, had not let the ring fall at the wedding of his grandfather in Forgau, it would have been better with him and his whole race, as his grandmother of blessed memory had always said, and now indeed he saw she had spoken wisely.

Now my Jobst in the confusion of voices, hearing only the word "monk," thought his Grace was speaking of the monks' heads on the capitals of the pillars in the hall. So seeing two empty flasks, shouted, "Ay, that is for thee, monk!" and pitched them crash! crash! with such force up at the monks, that the pieces flew about the ears of the musicians who were to play before the bridal pair going to church, and a loud peal of laughter rang through the hall--after which they all set off for the wedding at last. And in truth this was a blessed marriage.

But respecting the illustrious and princely race of Pomerania, they perished each and all without leaving behind one single inheritor of their name or possessions. Not, methinks, because of the spell which the demoniac sorceress laid on them, but because He loved this race so well, that He withdrew them from this evil world before the dreadful strifes, wars, and calamities came upon them, which our poor fatherland now endures. For before these storms broke over our heads, He called them one by one from this vale of tears, and truly, the first was his Highness Duke Francis, for in a few months after Sidonia's execution, after a brief illness, on the 27th December 1620, he fell asleep in God, aged 43 years, 8 months, and 3 days, without leaving children. The next was Bishop Udalricus, who likewise became suddenly ill at Pribbernow, near Stepnitz, with swollen body and limbs, and had to lie there until his death, on the 31st October 1622, when, to the great grief and consternation of the whole land, his young life closed at the early age of 34 years, and he too left no children, though he had a young and beautiful spouse. The next who died was Duke Philip Julius of Wolgast, the only son of Ernest Ludovicus and his spouse Hedwig. He was a wise and just ruler, but followed the others soon, on the 16th February 1625, aged only 40 years, 1 month, and 28 days--likewise, as all the rest, left no children.

But our Lord God hath not withdrawn so many and noble princes from the world without sending forth strange and wonderful signs to forewarn the land; for, without speaking of the great thunderclap which was heard all of a sudden in the middle of clear fine weather, the winter after Sidonia's death, and the numberless mock suns that appeared in different places, or of that strange rain, when a sulphureous matter, like starch in appearance, fell from the air (_item_ , a snow-white pike was caught at Colzow in

Wellin, seven quarters long, and half an ell broad, with red round eyes, and red fins), a stranger wonder than all was seen at Wolgast; for suddenly, during a review held there, one of the soldier's muskets went off without a finger being laid on it, and the ball went right through the princely Pomeranian standard with such precision, that the arms seemed to have been cut out all round with a sharp knife. At Stettin also, in the castle-chapel, one of the crowns suspended over the stalls fell down of itself; but still more awful was what happened respecting Bogislaus XIII., last father of all the Pomeranian princes. For all along, by the pillars of the aisle, there are figures in armour representing the deceased dukes. And during the sermon one Sunday, the sword fell clanging to the ground from the hand of the armed figure representing Bogislaus XIII., though no human hand ever touched it. At this sight every one was troubled in spirit, but woe, alas! we now see what all these supernatural signs and wonders denoted! Yet still we have one noble prince remaining with the ancient blood of Pomerania in his veins. May the Lord God spare him long to us, and bless him, like Abraham, with a son in his old age. Such an Isaac would be a blessed sight to me; for when the last branch falls, I know that my poor heart will break also!

DR. THEODORUS PLÖNIES.

CONCLUSION.

Mournful destiny of the last princely Pomeranian remains--My visit to the ducal Pomeranian vault in Wolgast, on the 6th May 1840.

Bogislaw XIV., who as a truth-loving, amicable, and pious glossator, has annotated so many places in our text, found this "last and happy hour," which he had so long desired, on the 10th March 1637. When he had attained the age of fifty-seven years, his death occurred at a period of unexampled misery, the like of which before or since was never seen in our whole German fatherland. Yet the destiny of the Zantaldes which followed the princely Pomeranian house, seemed in no way propitiated even by their death. No; it raged, and rages still, against the last poor remains of their mouldering clay. Bogislaw, during the horrors of the thirty years' war, remained for _seventeen_ years unburied, because none of the princes who fought for the possession of Pomerania' would consent to bear the expense of the burial, and the land was too poor to take the cost upon itself. Yet his corpse suffered no further indignities like those of his princely kinsfolk of Wolgast. For after ninety-four years we find him still lying calmly in his coffin, looking upward to his God through the little window which he so often sighed after. We shall first take a look at him before we descend into the Wolgast vault

to contemplate the disgusting sacrilege which has been perpetrated and permitted there. Every reader of sensibility will feel interested in the following details, which are taken from Oelrich's valuable work, "Memorials of the Pomeranian Dukes," p. 87:--

"On the 19th of April 1731, a royal commission opened the vault in the castle-church of Stettin, wherein many of the noble princes of Pomerania lay buried, and the coffin of Duke Bogislaff was broken open by especial command. The body was found quite perfect. Even the face was tolerably preserved, though the eyes had fallen in; for the skin had dried over the features, and the beard was long and somewhat red; the coffin was lined throughout with violet velvet (some say black), bordered with stones which had the appearance of turquoise. The corpse was dressed in a surplice, similar in form to that worn by priests at the present day, but fringed with silver, and likewise ornamented with turquoise. Upon the left hand there was a diamond ring and another. The diamond was quite pale, and the right hand was lying close to the side, as if going to seize the dagger. Farther, they found a long and massive gold chain suspended round the neck, and upon the breast a silver plate, like the bottom of a silver beaker, upon which the Pomeranian arms were engraved.

"Beneath the coffin of this last Duke of Pomerania lay the ducal flag, but the pole was broken in two, either from design or in consequence of decay; and above the coffin were remains of crape and mouldered fragments of velvet. *_Lave anima pia!_*

"But the princely remains of Wolgast had indeed a mournful destiny. True; they were not left unburied for a number of years, but they were plundered and outraged, in such a disgraceful and revolting manner, by church-robbers, that it is impossible even to read the account of it in the Swedish protocol of 21st June 1688, from which Heller gives extracts in his 'Chronicle of the Town of Wolgast,' p. 346, without as much pain as emotion.

[Footnote: Only one of these robbers was seized--he was whipped and banished; the second hanged himself, and the other escaped. One was a Jew; the other two were the sexton and gravedigger of the church.]

"Yet the Swedish Government seemed content to rest with the simple investigation, and took no trouble about, or showed the least respect for, the ashes of those to whom they were indebted for land and people. For the coffins lay there just as the robbers left them--broken open with axes and hatchets, or wrenched asunder with crowbars, and still lie in this state. However the vault was closed up, and no one was permitted to enter it unless in the presence of one of the reigning family; for this reason very few ever beheld these mournful remains. I myself would probably never have had an opportunity of so doing, only that the Prussian Government resolved on building some additions to the Wolgast church; and, at the same time, desired the foundation to be

evened, for it had sunk in various places, and afterwards to wall up the princely vault for ever. In order to work at the foundation, it was necessary to remove the great stone which covered the entrance to the vault, and many along with myself availed themselves of this last opportunity to visit the interior. Therefore, on the day named above, I descended with deep emotion the steps that led to it. I found the vault was divided into two compartments, having vaulted roofs of about seven or eight feet high. In the first partition no coffin whatever was to be seen, but I could distinguish already the glitter of the tin coffins in the second compartment, which was reached by a further descent of a few steps, and lit up by the torches and lanterns of numerous visitors who had preceded me. The coffins were nine in number, and mostly covered with tin; each lay on a tressel of mason-work, and bore the marks, more or less, of the violence that had been employed to wrench them open.

"The strong Philip I. began the mournful range. A gentleman handed me his skull, in which scarcely a tooth was wanting. Then I searched in the adjoining coffin for that of his spouse Maria, 'my gracious Lady of Wolgast,' of Doctor Theodore's History. I found it, took it in the other hand, and cannot describe the strange feeling which came over me.

"When I had indulged some time in strange and deep emotions, I laid down the honourable relics again in their coffins, and stepped to that of Ernest Ludovic, the unfortunate lover of the still more unfortunate Sidonia. According to the protocol of 1688, which I held in my hand, there was to be seen there a violet velvet mantle, and a cap without anything inside. There they were--nothing more to find--all fallen in dust, the weak head as the weak heart! Close to him lay his unfortunate wife, Sophia Hedwig of Brunswick, both the most beautiful persons of their time.

"But my interest was excited most by the contemplation of Philip Julius, the last Duke of Pommern-Wolgast, who has only received a passing notice in this book, but who was one of the most gifted, and probably the most lamented Prince of his thousand-year-old race. His coffin was of far costlier workmanship than the others, and decorated with a row of gilded angels' heads; near it stood the black wooden tressel, upon which it had originally been placed, and which looked as fresh as if it had been only just placed there, instead of having lain in the vault for two hundred and fifteen years. A strange sensation crept over me! We were both silent, till at last the gentleman began to search with his hand in the grey mouldering dust, and along with some rags of velvet, he brought up a damp, discoloured scrap of paper, which he carelessly tore; but I instantly seized it, and joined the pieces together again, for the signification of such little notes in the coffins of old times was not unknown to me.

"And, in fact, I found what I sought; there was not only marked on

it the date of the Duke's burial, the 6th of May, which had a mystic significance to me, since it was on the very 6th of May that I was now standing to contemplate these mute yet eloquent graves, but also there was noted down the text from which the funeral sermon had been preached (2 Tim. iv. 7), as well as the list of the psalms sung on the occasion, among which the closing psalm--'When sorrow assails thee,' is still to be found in most hymn-books. But my poor old Pomeranian heart could bear no more: I placed the paper again in the coffin; and, while the tears poured from my eyes as I ascended the steps, those beautiful old verses came into my head, and I could not help reciting them aloud:--

'So must human pomp and stat
In the grave lie desolate.
He who wore the kingly crown,
With the base worm lieth down:
Ermined robe, and purple pall,
Leaveth he at death's weird call.

Fleeting, cheating human life,
Souls are perilled in thy strife;
Yet the pomps in which we trust,
All must perish!--dust to dust.
God alone will ever be;
Who serves Him reigns eternally!"

MARY SCHWEIDLER

THE AMBER WITCH

THE MOST INTERESTING TRIAL FOR WITCHCRAFT EVER KNOWN

PRINTED FROM AN IMPERFECT MANUSCRIPT BY HER FATHER ABRAHAM
SCHWEIDLER, THE PASTOR OP COSEROW IN THE ISLAND OF USEDOM

EDITED BY

WILLIAM MEINHOLD DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

LADY DUFF GORDON

PREFACE

In laying before the public this deeply affecting and romantic trial, which I have not without reason called on the title-page the most interesting of all trials for witchcraft ever known, I will first give some account of the history of the manuscript.

At Coserow, in the island of Usedom, my former cure, the same which was held by our worthy author some two hundred years ago, there existed under a seat in the choir of the church a sort of niche, nearly on a level with the floor. I had, indeed, often seen a heap of various writings in this recess; but owing to my short sight, and the darkness of the place, I had taken them for antiquated hymn-books, which were lying about in great numbers. But one day, while I was teaching in the church, I looked for a paper mark in the Catechism of one of the boys, which I could not immediately find; and my old sexton, who was past eighty (and who, although called Appelmann, was thoroughly unlike his namesake in our story, being a very worthy, although a most ignorant man), stooped down to the said niche, and took from it a folio volume which I had never before observed, out of which he, without the slightest hesitation, tore a strip of paper suited to my purpose, and reached it to me. I immediately seized upon the book, and, after a few minutes' perusal, I know not which was greater, my astonishment or my vexation at this costly prize. The manuscript, which was bound in vellum, was not only defective both at the beginning and at the end, but several leaves had even been torn out here and there in the middle. I scolded the old man as I had never done during the whole course of my life; but he excused himself, saying that one of my predecessors had given him the manuscript for waste paper, as it had lain about there ever since the memory of man, and he had often been in want of paper to twist round the altar-candles, &c. The aged and half-blind pastor had mistaken the folio for old parochial accounts which could be of no more use to any one.

[Footnote: The original manuscript does indeed contain several accounts which at first sight may have led to this mistake; besides, the handwriting is extremely difficult to read, and in several places the paper is discoloured and decayed.]

No sooner had I reached home than I fell to work upon my new acquisition, and after reading a bit here and there with considerable trouble, my interest was powerfully excited by the contents.

I soon felt the necessity of making myself better acquainted with the nature and conduct of these witch trials, with the proceedings, nay, even with the history of the whole period in which these events occur. But the more I read of these extraordinary stories, the more was I confounded; and neither the trivial Beeker (*Die bezauberte Welt*, "The Enchanted

World"), nor the more careful Horst (*_Zauberbibliothek_*, "The Library of Magic"), to which, as well as to several other works on the same subject, I had flown for information, could resolve my doubts, but rather served to increase them.

Not alone is the demoniacal character, which pervades nearly all these fearful stories, so deeply marked, as to fill the attentive reader with feelings of alternate horror and dismay, but the eternal and unchangeable laws of human feeling and action are often arrested in a manner so violent and unforeseen, that the understanding is entirely baffled. For instance, one of the original trials which a friend of mine, a lawyer, discovered in our province, contains the account of a mother, who, after she had suffered the torture, and received the holy Sacrament, and was on the point of going to the stake, so utterly lost all maternal feeling, that her conscience obliged her to accuse as a witch her only dearly loved daughter, a girl of fifteen, against whom no one had ever entertained a suspicion, in order, as she said, to save her poor soul. The court, justly amazed at an event which probably has never since been paralleled, caused the state of the mother's mind to be examined both by clergymen and physicians, whose original testimonies are still appended to the records, and are all highly favourable to her soundness of mind. The unfortunate daughter, whose name was Elizabeth Hegel, was actually executed on the strength of her mother's accusation. [Footnote: It is my intention to publish this trial also, as it possesses very great psychological interest.]

The explanation commonly received at the present day, that these phenomena were produced by means of animal magnetism, is utterly insufficient. How, for instance, could this account for the deeply demoniacal nature of old Lizzie Kolken as exhibited in the following pages? It is utterly incomprehensible, and perfectly explains why the old pastor, notwithstanding the horrible deceits practised on him in the person of his daughter, retained as firm a faith in the truth of witchcraft as in that of the Gospel.

During the earlier centuries of the Middle Ages little was known of witchcraft. The crime of magic, when it did occur, was leniently punished. For instance, the council of Ancyra (314) ordained the whole punishment of witches to consist in expulsion from the Christian community. The Visigoths punished them with stripes, and Charlemagne, by advice of his bishops, confined them in prison until such time as they should sincerely repent. [Footnote: Horst, *_Zauberbibliothek_*, vi. p. 231.] It was not until very soon before the Reformation, that Innocent VIII. lamented that the complaints of universal Christendom against the evil practices of these women had become so general and so loud, that the most vigorous measures must be taken against them; and towards the end of the year 1489, he caused the notorious Hammer for Witches (*_Malleus Malleficarum_*) to be published, according to which proceedings were set on foot with the most fanatical zeal, not only in Catholic, but, strange to say, even in

Protestant Christendom, which in other respects abhorred everything belonging to Catholicism. Indeed, the Protestants far outdid the Catholics in cruelty, until, among the latter, the noble-minded Jesuit, J. Spee, and among the former, but not until seventy years later, the excellent Thomasius, by degrees put a stop to these horrors.

After careful examination into the nature and characteristics of witchcraft, I soon perceived that among all these strange and often romantic stories, not one surpassed my "amber witch" in lively interest; and I determined to throw her adventures into the form of a romance. Fortunately, however, I was soon convinced that her story was already in itself the most interesting of all romances; and that I should do far better to leave it in its original antiquated form, omitting whatever would be uninteresting to modern readers, or so universally known as to need no repetition. I have therefore attempted, not indeed to supply what is missing at the beginning and end, but to restore those leaves which have been torn out of the middle, imitating, as accurately as I was able, the language and manner of the old biographer, in order that the difference between the original narrative, and my own interpolations, might not be too evident.

This I have done with much trouble, and after many ineffectual attempts; but I refrain from pointing out the particular passages which I have supplied, so as not to disturb the historical interest of the greater part of my readers. For modern criticism, which has now attained to a degree of acuteness never before equalled, such a confession would be entirely superfluous, as critics will easily distinguish the passages where Pastor Schweidler speaks from those written by Pastor Meinhold.

I am, nevertheless, bound to give the public some account of what I have omitted, namely--

1st. Such long prayers as were not very remarkable for Christian unction.

2d. Well-known stories out of the Thirty Years' War.

3d. Signs and wonders in the heavens, which were seen here and there, and which are recorded by other Pomeranian writers of these fearful times; for instance, by Micra~~us~~us. [Footnote: Vom Alten Pommerlande (Of Old Pomerania), book v.] But when these events formed part of the tale itself, as, for instance, the cross on the Streckelberg, I, of course, allowed them to stand.

4th. The specification of the whole income of the church at Coserow, before and during the terrible times of the Thirty Years' War.

5th. The enumeration of the dwellings left standing, after the devastations made by the enemy in every village throughout the

parish.

6th. The names of the districts to which this or that member of the congregation had emigrated.

7th. A ground plan and description of the old manse.

I have likewise here and there ventured to make a few changes in the language, as my author is not always consistent in the use of his words or in his orthography. The latter I have, however, with very few exceptions, retained.

And thus I lay before the gracious reader a work, glowing with the fire of heaven, as well as with that of hell.

MEINHOLD.

THE AMBER WITCH

INTRODUCTION.

The origin of our biographer cannot be traced with any degree of certainty, owing to the loss of the first part of his manuscript. It is, however, pretty clear that he was not a Pomeranian, as he says he was in Silesia in his youth, and mentions relations scattered far and wide, not only at Hamburg and Cologne, but even at Antwerp; above all, his South-German language betrays a foreign origin, and he makes use of words, which are, I believe, peculiar to Swabia. He must, however, have been living for a long time in Pomerania at the time he wrote, as he even more frequently uses Low-German expressions, such as occur in contemporary native Pomeranian writers.

Since he sprang from an ancient noble family, as he says on several occasions, it is possible that some particulars relating to the Schweidlers might be discovered in the family records of the seventeenth century, which would give a clue to his native country; but I have sought for that name in all the sources of information accessible to me in vain, and am led to suspect that our author, like many of his contemporaries, laid aside his nobility and changed his name when he took holy orders.

I will not, however, venture on any further conjectures; the manuscript, of which six chapters are missing, begins with the words "Imperialists plundered," and evidently the previous pages must have contained an account of the breaking out of the Thirty

Years' War in the island of Usedom. It goes on as follows:--

"Coffers, chests, and closets were all plundered and broken to pieces, and my surplice also was torn, so that I remained in great distress and tribulation. But my poor little daughter they did not find, seeing that I had hidden her in the stable, which was dark, without which I doubt not they would have made my heart heavy indeed. The lewd dogs would even have been rude to my old maid Ilse, a woman hard upon fifty, if an old cornet had not forbidden them. Wherefore I gave thanks to my Maker when the wild guests were gone, that I had first saved my child from their clutches, although not one dust of flour, nor one grain of corn, nor one morsel of meat even of a finger's length was left, and I knew not how I should any longer support my own life, and my poor child's. _Item_, I thanked God that I had likewise secured the _vasa sacra_, which I had forthwith buried in the church in front of the altar, in presence of the two churchwardens, Hienrich Seden and Claus Bulken, of Uekeritze, commending them to the care of God. And now because, as I have already said, I was suffering the pangs of hunger, I wrote to his lordship the Sheriff Wittich v. Appelmann, at Pudgla [Footnote: A castle in Usedom, formerly a celebrated convent.], that for the love of God and His holy Gospel he should send me that which his Highness' Grace Philippus Julius had allowed me as ~~_prastanda_~~ from the convent at Pudgla, to wit, thirty bushels of barley and twenty-five marks of silver, which howbeit his lordship had always withheld from me hitherto (for he was a very hard inhuman man, inasmuch as he despised the holy Gospel and the preaching of the Word, and openly, without shame, reviled the servants of God, saying that they were useless feeders, and that Luther had but half cleansed the pig-stye of the Church--God mend it!). But he answered me nothing, and I should have perished for want if Hinrich Seden had not begged for me in the parish. May God reward the honest fellow for it in eternity! Moreover, he was then growing old, and was sorely plagued by his wicked wife Lizzie Kolken. Methought when I married them that it would not turn out over well, seeing that she was in common report of having long lived in unchastity with Wittich Appelmann, who had ever been an arch-roogue, and especially an arrant whoremaster, and such the Lord never blesses. This same Seden now brought me five loaves, two sausages, and a goose, which old goodwife Paal, at Loddin, had given him; also a flitch of bacon from the farmer Jack Tewert. But he said I must shield him from his wife, who would have had half for herself, and when he denied her she cursed him, and wished him gout in his head, whereupon he straightway felt a pain in his right cheek, and it was quite hard and heavy already. At such shocking news I was affrighted, as became a good pastor, and asked whether peradventure he believed that she stood in evil communication with Satan, and could bewitch folks? But he said nothing, and shrugged his shoulders. So I sent for old Lizzie to come to me, who was a tall, meagre woman of about sixty, with squinting eyes, so that she could not look any one in the face; likewise with quite red hair, and indeed her goodman had the same. But though I diligently admonished her out of God's Word, she made

no answer, until at last I said, 'Wilt thou unbewitch thy goodman (for I saw from the window how that he was raving in the street like a madman), or wilt thou that I should inform the magistrate of thy deeds?' Then, indeed, she gave in, and promised that he should soon be better (and so he was); moreover she begged that I would give her some bread and some bacon, inasmuch as it was three days since she had had a bit of anything to put between her lips, saving always her tongue. So my daughter gave her half a loaf, and a piece of bacon about two hands-breadths large; but she did not think it enough, and muttered between her teeth; whereupon my daughter said, 'If thou art not content, thou old witch, go thy ways and help thy goodman; see how he has laid his head on Zabel's fence, and stamps with his feet for pain.' Whereupon she went away, but still kept muttering between her teeth, 'Yea, forsooth, I will help him and thee too.'"

CHAPTER VII.

How the Imperialists robbed me of all that was left, and likewise broke into the church and stole the Vasa Sacra; also what more befell us.

After a few days, when we had eaten almost all our food, my last cow fell down dead (the wolves had already devoured the others, as mentioned above), not without a strong suspicion that Lizzie had a hand in it, seeing that the poor beast had eaten heartily the day before; but I leave that to a higher judge, seeing that I would not willingly calumniate any one; and it may have been the will of God, whose wrath I have well deserved. _Summa_, I was once more in great need, and my daughter Mary pierced my heart with her sighs, when the cry was raised that another troop of Imperialists was come to Uekeritze, and was marauding there more cruelly than ever, and, moreover, had burnt half the village. Wherefore I no longer thought myself safe in my cottage; and after I had commended everything to the Lord in a fervent prayer, I went up with my daughter and old Ilse into the Streckelberg, [Footnote: A considerable mountain close to the sea near Coserow.] where I already had looked out for ourselves a hole like a cavern, well grown over with brambles, against the time when the troubles should drive us thither. We therefore took with us all we had left to us for the support of our bodies, and fled into the woods, sighing and weeping, whither we soon were followed by the old men, and the women and children; these raised a great cry of hunger when they saw my daughter sitting on a log and eating a bit of bread and meat, and the little things came with their tiny hands stretched out and cried, "Have some too, have some too." Therefore being justly moved by such great distress, I hindered not my daughter from sharing all the bread and meat that remained among the hungry children. But first I made them pray--"The eyes of all

wait upon Thee;" [Footnote: Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.] upon which words I then spake comfortably to the people, telling them that the Lord, who had now fed their little children, would find means to fill their own bellies, and that they must not be weary of trusting in Him.

This comfort did not, however, last long; for after we had rested within and around the cavern for about two hours, the bells in the village began to ring so dolefully, that it went nigh to break all our hearts, the more as loud firing was heard between whiles; _item_, the cries of men and the barking of dogs resounded, so that we could easily guess that the enemy was in the village. I had enough to do to keep the women quiet, that they might not by their senseless lamentations betray our hiding-place to the cruel enemy; and more still when it began to smell smoky, and presently the bright flames gleamed through the trees. I therefore sent old Paasch up to the top of the hill, that he might look around and see how matters stood, but told him to take good care that they did not see him from the village, seeing that the twilight had but just begun.

This he promised, and soon returned with the news that about twenty horsemen had galloped out of the village towards the Damerow, but that half the village was in flames. _Item_, he told us that by a wonderful dispensation of God a great number of birds had appeared in the juniper-bushes and elsewhere, and that if we could catch them they would be excellent food for us. I therefore climbed up the hill myself, and having found everything as he had said, and also perceived that the fire had, by the help of God's mercy, abated in the village; _item_, that my cottage was left standing, far beyond my merits and deserts; I came down again and comforted the people, saying, "The Lord hath given us a sign, and He will feed us, as He fed the people of Israel in the wilderness; for He has sent us a fine flight of fieldfares across the barren sea, so that they whirr out of every bush as ye come near it. Who will now run down into the village, and cut off the mane and tail of my dead cow which lies out behind on the common?" (for there was no horsehair in all the village, seeing that the enemy had long since carried off or stabbed all the horses). But no one would go, for fear was stronger even than hunger, till my old Ilse spoke, and said, "I will go, for I fear nothing, when I walk in the ways of God; only give me a good stick." When old Paasch had lent her his staff, she began to sing, "God the Father be with us," and soon out of sight among the bushes. Meanwhile I exhorted the people to set to work directly, and to cut little wands for syringes, and to gather berries while the moon still shone; there were a great quantity of mountain-ash and elder-bushes all about the mountain. I myself and my daughter Mary stayed to guard the little children, because it was not safe there from wolves. We therefore made a blazing fire, sat ourselves around it, and heard the little folks say the Ten Commandments, when there was a rustling and crackling behind us, and my daughter jumped up and ran into the cavern, crying, "_Proh dolor

hostis!_" [Our author afterwards explains the learned education of the maiden.] But it was only some of the able-bodied men who had stayed behind in the village, and who now came to bring us word how things stood there. I therefore called to her directly, "_Emergas amici_", whereupon she came skipping joyously out, and sat down again by the fire, and forthwith my warden Hinrich Seden related all that had happened, and how his life had only been saved by means of his wife Lizzie Kolken; but that Jurgen Flatow, Chim Burse, Claus Peer, and Chim Seideritz were killed, and the last named of them left lying on the church steps. The wicked incendiaries had burned down twelve sheds, and it was not their fault that the whole village was not destroyed, but only in consequence of the wind not being in the quarter that suited their purpose. Meanwhile they tolled the bells in mockery and scorn, to see whether any one would come and quench the fire; and that when he and the three other young fellows came forward they fired off their muskets at them, but, by God's help, none of them were hit. Hereupon his three comrades jumped over the paling and escaped; but him they caught, and had already taken aim at him with their firelocks, when his wife Lizzie Kolken came out of the church with another troop and beckoned to them to leave him in peace. But they stabbed Lene Hebers as she lay in childbed, speared the child, and flung it over Claus Peer's hedge among the nettles, where it was yet lying when they came away. There was not a living soul left in the village, and still less a morsel of bread, so that unless the Lord took pity on their need they must all die miserably of hunger.

(Now who is to believe that such people can call themselves Christians?)

I next inquired, when he had done speaking (but with many sighs, as any one may guess), after my cottage; but of that they knew naught save that it was still standing. I thanked the Lord therefore with a quiet sigh; and having asked old Seden what his wife had been doing in the church, I thought I should have died for grief when I heard that the villains came out of it with both the chalices and patens in their hands. I therefore spoke very sharply to old Lizzie, who now came slinking through the bushes; but she answered insolently, that the strange soldiers had forced her to open the church, as her goodman had crept behind the hedge, and nobody else was there; that they had gone straight up to the altar, and seeing that one of the stones was not well fitted (which, truly, was an arch lie), had begun to dig with their swords till they found the chalices and patens; or somebody else might have betrayed the spot to them, so I need not always to lay the blame on her, and rate her so hardly.

Meanwhile the old men and the women came with a good store of berries; _item_, my old maid, with the cow's tail and mane, who brought word that the whole house was turned upside down, the windows all broken, and the books and writings trampled in the dirt in the midst of the street, and the doors torn off their

hinges. This, however, was a less sorrow to me than the chalices; and I only bade the people make springes and snares, in order next morning to begin our fowling, with the help of Almighty God. I therefore scraped the rods myself until near midnight; and when we had made ready a good quantity, I told old Seden to repeat the evening blessing, which we all heard on our knees; after which I wound up with a prayer, and then admonished the people to creep in under the bushes to keep them from the cold (seeing that it was now about the end of September, and the wind blew very fresh from the sea), the men apart, and the women also apart by themselves. I myself went up with my daughter and my maid into the cavern, where I had not slept long before I heard old Seden moaning bitterly, because, as he said, he was seized with the colic. I therefore got up and gave him my place, and sat down again by the fire to cut springes, till I fell asleep for half-an-hour; and then morning broke, and by that time he had got better, and I woke the people to morning prayer. This time old Paasch had to say it, but could not get through with it properly, so that I had to help him. Whether he had forgot it, or whether he was frightened, I cannot say. _Summa_--After we had all prayed most devoutly, we presently set to work, wedging the springes into the trees, and hanging berries all around them; while my daughter took care of the children, and looked for blackberries for their breakfast. Now we wedged the snares right across the wood along the road to Uekeritze; and mark what a wondrous act of mercy befell from gracious God! As I stepped into the road with the hatchet in my hand (it was Seden his hatchet, which he had fetched out of the village early in the morning), I caught sight of a loaf as long as my arm which a raven was pecking, and which doubtless one of the Imperial troopers had dropped out of his knapsack the day before, for there were fresh hoof-marks in the sand by it. So I secretly buttoned the breast of my coat over it, so that none should perceive anything, although the aforesaid Paasch was close behind me; _item_, all the rest followed at no great distance. Now, having set the springes so very early, towards noon we found such a great number of birds taken in them, that Katy Berow, who went beside me while I took them out, scarce could hold them all in her apron; and at the other end old Pagels pulled nearly as many out of his doublet and coat-pockets. My daughter then sat down with the rest of the womankind to pluck the birds; and as there was no salt (indeed it was long since most of us had tasted any), she desired two men to go down to the sea, and to fetch a little salt water in an iron pot borrowed from Staffer Zuter; and so they did. In this water we first dipped the birds, and then roasted them at a large fire, while our mouths watered only at the sweet savour of them, seeing it was so long since we had tasted any food.

And now when all was ready, and the people seated on the earth, I said, "Behold how the Lord still feeds His people Israel in the wilderness with fresh quails: if now He did yet more, and sent us a piece of manna bread from heaven, what think ye? Would ye then ever weary of believing in Him, and not rather willingly endure all want, tribulation, hunger and thirst, which He may hereafter

lay upon you according to His gracious will?" Whereupon they all answered and said, "Yea, surely!" _Ego_: "Will you then promise me this in truth?" And they said again, "Yea, that will we!" Then with tears I drew forth the loaf from my breast, held it on high, and cried, "Behold then, thou poor believing little flock, how sweet a manna loaf your faithful Redeemer hath sent ye through me!" Whereupon they all wept, sobbed and groaned; and the little children again came running up and held out their hands, crying, "See, bread, bread!" But as I myself could not pray for heaviness of soul, I bade Paasch his little girl say the _Gratias_ the while my Mary cut up the loaf and gave to each his share. And now we all joyfully began to eat our meat from God in the wilderness.

Meanwhile I had to tell in what manner I had found the blessed manna bread, wherein I neglected not again to exhort them to lay to heart this great sign and wonder, how that God in His mercy had done to them as of old to the prophet Elijah, to whom a raven brought bread in his great need in the wilderness; as likewise this bread had been given to me by means of a raven, which showed it to me, when otherwise I might have passed it by in my heaviness without ever seeing it.

When we were satisfied with food, I said the thanksgiving from Luke xii. 24, where the Lord saith, "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?" But our sins stank before the Lord. For old Lizzie, as I afterwards heard, would not eat her birds because she thought them unsavoury, but threw them among the juniper bushes; whereupon the wrath of the Lord was kindled against us as of old against the people of Israel, and at night we found but seven birds in the snares, and next morning but two. Neither did any raven come again to give us bread. Wherefore I rebuked old Lizzie, and admonished the people to take upon themselves willingly the righteous chastisement of the Most High God, to pray without ceasing, to return to their desolate dwellings, and to see whether the all-merciful God would peradventure give them more on the sea. That I also would call upon Him with prayer night and day, remaining for a time in the cavern with my daughter and the maid to watch the springes, and see whether His wrath might be turned from us. That they should, meanwhile put my manse to rights to the best of their power, seeing that the cold was become very irksome to me. This they promised me, and departed with many sighs. What a little flock! I counted but twenty-five souls where there used to be above eighty; all the rest had been slain by hunger, pestilence, or the sword. [Footnote: This took place in the year 1628, and the horrors of the Thirty Years' War were spread most fearfully over this island; pity that the description of the old vicar, which he doubtless gave in the preceding pages, has been lost.] I then abode awhile alone and sorrowing in the cave, praying to God, and sent my daughter with the maid into the village to see how things stood at the manse; _item_, to gather together the books and papers,

and also to bring me word whether Hinze the carpenter, whom I had straightway sent back to the village, had knocked together some coffins for the poor corpses, so that I might bury them next day. I then went to look at the springes, but found only one single little bird, whereby I saw that the wrath of God had not yet passed away. Howbeit, I found a fine blackberry bush, from which I gathered nearly a pint of berries, and put them, together with the bird, in Staffer Zuter his pot, which the honest fellow had left with us for a while, and set them on the fire for supper against my child and the maid should return. It was not long before they came through the coppice, and told me of the fearful devastation which Satan had made in the village and manse by the permission of all-righteous God. My child had gathered together a few books, which she brought with her, above all, a *_Virgilius_* and a Greek Bible. And after she had told me that the carpenter would not have done till next day, and we had satisfied the cravings of hunger, I made her read to me again, for the greater strengthening of my faith, the *_locus_* about the blessed raven from the Greek of Luke, at the twelfth chapter; also, the beautiful *_locus parallelus_*, Matt. vi. After which the maid said the evening blessing, and we all went into the cave to rest for the night. When I awoke next morning, just as the blessed sun rose out the sea and peeped over the mountain, I heard my poor hungry child, already standing outside the cave, reciting the beautiful verses about the joys of paradise which St. Augustine wrote and I had taught her. [Footnote: This is an error. The following verses are written by the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, Peter Damianus (d. 23d Feb. 1072), after Augustine's prose.] She sobbed for grief as she spoke the words:--

"Uno pane vivunt cives utriusque patriæ
 Avidi et semper pleni, quod habent desiderant
 Non *_sacietas_* fastidit, neque fames cruciat
 Inhiantes semper edunt, et edentes inhiant
 Flos perpetuus rosarum ver agit perpetuum,
 Candent lilia, rubescit crocus, sudat balsamum,
 Virent prata, vernant sata, rivi mellis influunt
 Pigmentorum spirat odor liquor et aromatum,
 Pendent poma floridorum non lapsura nemorum
 Non alternat luna vices, sol vel cursus syderum
 Agnus est fclelicis urbis lumen inocciduum."

[Footnote: The following version is from the pen of a friend.-- *_Trans_*.

"In that far land the citizens all share one equal bread,
 And keep desire and hunger still, although to fulness fed:
 Unwearied by satiety, unracked by hunger's strife,
 The air they breathe is nourishment, and spiritual life!
 Around them, bright with endless Spring, perpetual roses bloom;
 Warm balsams gratefully exude luxurious perfume;
 Red crocuses, and lilies white, shine dazzling in the sun;
 Green meadows yield them harvests green, and streams with honey

run;

Unbroken droop the laden boughs, with heavy fruitage bent,
Of incense and of odours strange the air is redolent;
And neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, dispense their changeful
light,
But the Lamb's eternal glory makes the happy city bright!"

At these words my own heart was melted; and when she ceased from speaking, I asked, "What art thou doing, my child?" Whereupon she answered, "Father, I am eating." Thereat my tears now indeed began to flow, and I praised her for feeding her soul, as she had no meat for her body. I had not, however, spoken long, before she cried to me to come and look at the great wonder that had risen out of the sea, and already appeared over the cave. For behold a cloud, in shape just like a cross, came over us, and let great heavy drops, as big or bigger than large peas, fall on our heads, after which it sank behind the coppice. I presently arose, and ran up the mountain with my daughter to look after it. It floated on towards the Achterwater, [Footnote: A wash formed by the river Peene in the neighbourhood.] where it spread itself out into a long blue streak, whereon the sun shone so brightly that it seemed like a golden bridge, on which, as my child said, the blessed angels danced. I fell on my knees with her, and thanked the Lord that our cross had passed away from us; but, alas! our cross was yet to come, as will be told hereafter.

CHAPTER VIII.

How our need waxed sorer and sorer, and how I sent old Ilse with another letter to Pudgla, and how heavy a misfortune this brought upon me.

Next day, when I had buried the poor corpses amid the lamentations of the whole village (by the same token that they were all buried under where the lime-tree overhangs the wall [Footnote: This exists no longer.]), I heard with many sighs that neither the sea nor the Achterwater would yield anything. It was now ten days since the poor people had caught a single fish. I therefore went out into the field, musing how the wrath of the just God might be turned from us, seeing that the cruel winter was now at hand, and neither corn, apples, fish nor flesh, to be found in the village, nor even throughout all the parish. There was indeed plenty of game in the forests of Coserow and Uekeritze; but the old forest ranger, Zabel Nehring, had died last year of the plague, and there was no new one in his place. Nor was there a musket nor a grain of powder to be found in all the parish; the enemy had robbed and broken everything: we were therefore forced, day after day, to see how the stags and the roes, the hares and the wild boars, &c., ran past us, when we would so gladly have had them in our bellies, but

had no means of getting at them: for they were too cunning to let themselves be caught in pit-falls. Nevertheless, Claus Peer succeeded in trapping a roe, and gave me a piece of it, for which may God reward him. Item, of domestic cattle there was not a head left; neither was there a dog nor a cat, which the people had not either eaten in their extreme hunger, or knocked on the head, or drowned long since. Albeit old farmer Paasch still owned two cows; item, an old man in Uekeritze was said to have one little pig--this was all. Thus, then, nearly all the people lived on blackberries and other wild fruits; the which also soon grew to be scarce, as may easily be guessed. Besides all this, a boy of fourteen was missing (old Labahn his son), and was never more heard of, so that I shrewdly think that the wolves devoured him.

And now let any Christian judge by his own heart in what sorrow and heaviness I took my staff in my hand, seeing that my child fell away like a shadow from pinching hunger; although I myself, being old, did not, by the help of God's mercy, find any great failing in my strength. While I thus went continually weeping before the Lord, on the way to Uekeritze, I fell in with an old beggar with his wallet, sitting on a stone, and eating a piece of God's rare gift, to wit, a bit of bread. Then truly did my poor mouth so fill with water, that I was forced to bow my head and let it run upon the earth before I could ask, "Who art thou? and whence comest thou, seeing that thou hast bread?" Whereupon he answered that he was a poor man of Bannemin, from whom the enemy had taken all; and as he had heard that the Lieper Winkel [Footnote: A remote part of the island of Usedom.] had long been in peace, he had travelled thither to beg. I straightway answered him, "Oh, poor beggar man, spare to me, a sorrowful servant of Christ, who is poorer even than thyself, one little slice of bread for his wretched child; for thou must know that I am the pastor of this village, and that my daughter is dying of hunger. I beseech thee, by the living God, not to let me depart without taking pity on me, as pity also hath been shown to thee!" But the beggar man would give me none, saying that he himself had a wife and four children, who were likewise staggering towards death's door under the bitter pangs of hunger; that the famine was sorer far in Bannemin than here, where we still had berries; whether I had not heard that but a few days ago a woman (he told me her name, but horror made me forget it) had there killed her own child, and devoured it from hunger? [Footnote: Micraslius also mentions this horrible event in his History of Pomerania.] That he could not therefore help me, and I might go to the Lieper Winkel myself.

I was horror-stricken at his tale, as is easy to guess, for we in our own trouble had not yet heard of it, there being little or no traffic between one village and another; and thinking on Jerusalem, [Footnote: Where, according to Josephus, the same thing occurred.] and sheer despairing because the Lord had visited us, as of old that ungodly city, although we had not betrayed or crucified Him, I almost forgot all my necessities, and took my

staff in my hand to depart. But I had not gone more than a few yards when the beggar called me to stop, and when I turned myself round he came towards me with a good hunch of bread which he had taken out of his wallet, and said, "There! but pray for me also, so that I may reach my home; for if on the road they smell that I have bread, my own brother would strike me dead, I believe." This I promised with joy, and instantly turned back to take to my child the gift hidden in my pocket. And behold, when I came to the road which leads to Loddin, I could scarce trust my eyes (before I had overlooked it in my distress) when I saw my glebe, which could produce seven bushels, ploughed, sown, and in stalk; the blessed crop of rye had already shot lustily out of the earth a finger's length in height. I could not choose but think that the evil one had deceived me with a false show, yet, however hard I rubbed my eyes, rye it was, and rye it remained. And seeing that old Paasch his piece of land which joined mine was in like manner sown, and that the blades had shot up to the same height, I soon guessed that the good fellow had done this deed, seeing that all the other land lay waste. Wherefore, I readily forgave him for not knowing the morning prayer; and thanking the Lord for so much love from my flock, and earnestly beseeching Him to grant me strength and faith to bear with them, steadfastly and patiently, all the troubles and adversities which it might please Him henceforward to lay upon us, according to His divine pleasure, I ran rather than walked back into the village to old Paasch his farm, where I found him just about to kill his cow, which he was slaughtering from grim hunger. "God bless thee," said I, "worthy friend, for sowing my field, how shall I reward thee?" But the old man answered, "Let that be, and do you pray for us;" and when I gladly promised this, and asked him how he had kept his corn safe from the savage enemy, he told me that he had hidden it secretly in the caves of the Streckelberg, but that now all his store was used up. Meanwhile he cut a fine large piece of meat from the top of the loin, and said, "There is something for you, and when that is gone you can come again for more." As I was then about to go with many thanks, his little Mary, a child nearly seven years old, the same who had said the _Gratlas_ on the Streckelberg, seized me by the hand, and wanted to go to school to my daughter; for since my _Custos_, as above mentioned, departed this life in the plague, she had to teach the few little ones there were in the village; this, however, had long been abandoned. I could not, therefore, deny her, although I feared that my child would share her bread with her, seeing that she dearly loved the little maid, who was her godchild; and so indeed it happened; for when the child saw me take out the bread, she shrieked for joy, and began to scramble up on the bench. Thus she also got a piece of the slice, our maid got another, and my child put the third piece into her own mouth, as I wished for none, but said that I felt no signs of hunger, and would wait until the meat was boiled, the which I now threw upon the bench. It was a goodly sight to see the joy which my poor child felt, when I then also told her about the rye. She fell upon my neck, wept, sobbed, then took the little one up in her arms, danced about the room with her, and recited, as she was wont, all

manner of Latin *versus*, which she knew by heart. Then she would prepare a right good supper for us, as a little salt was still left in the bottom of a barrel of meat which the Imperialists had broken up. I let her take her own way, and having scraped some soot from the chimney and mixed it with water, I tore a blank leaf out of *Virgillus*, and wrote to the *Pastor Liepensts*, his reverence Abraham Tiburtius, praying that for God His sake he would take our necessities to heart, and would exhort his parishioners to save us from dying of grim hunger, and charitably to spare to us some meat and drink, according as the all-merciful God had still left some to them, seeing that a beggar had told me that they had long been in peace from the terrible enemy. I knew not, however, wherewithal to seal the letter, until I found in the church a little wax still sticking to a wooden altar-candlestick, which the Imperialists had not thought it worth their while to steal, for they had only taken the brass ones. I sent three fellows in a boat with Hinrich Seden, the churchwarden, with this letter to Liepe.

First, however, I asked my old Ilse, who was born in Liepe, whether she would not rather return home, seeing how matters stood, and that I, for the present at least, could not give her a stiver of her wages (mark that she had already saved up a small sum, seeing that she had lived in my service above twenty years, but the soldiers had taken it all). Howbeit, I could nowise persuade her to this, but she wept bitterly, and besought me only to let her stay with the good damsel whom she had rocked in her cradle. She would cheerfully hunger with us if it needs must be, so that she were not turned away. Whereupon, I yielded to her, and the others went alone.

Meanwhile the broth was ready, but scarce had we said the *Gratias*, and were about to begin our meal, when all the children of the village, seven in number, came to the door, and wanted bread, as they had heard we had some from my daughter her little godchild. Her heart again melted, and notwithstanding I besought her to harden herself against them, she comforted me with the message to Liepe, and poured out for each child a portion of broth on a wooden platter (for these also had been despised by the enemy), and put into their little hands a bit of meat, so that all our store was eaten up at once. We were, therefore, left fasting next morning, till towards midday, when the whole village gathered together in a meadow on the banks of the river to see the boat return. But, God be merciful to us, we had cherished vain hopes! six loaves and a sheep, *item*, a quarter of apples, was all they had brought. His reverence Abraham Tiburtius wrote to me that after the cry of their wealth had spread throughout the island, so many beggars had flocked thither that it was impossible to be just to all, seeing that they themselves did not know how it might fare with them in these heavy troublous times. Meanwhile he would see whether he could raise any more. I therefore with many sighs had the small pittance carried to the manse, and though two loaves were, as *Pastor Liepensis* said in his letter, for me alone,

I gave them up to be shared among all alike, whereat all were content save Seden his squint-eyed wife, who would have had somewhat extra on the score of her husband's journey, which, however, as may be easily guessed, she did not get; wherefore she again muttered certain words between her teeth as she went away, which, however, no one understood. Truly she was an ill woman, and not to be moved by the Word of God.

Any one may judge for himself that such a store could not last long; and as all my parishioners felt an ardent longing after spiritual food, and as I and the churchwardens could only get together about sixteen farthings in the whole parish, which was not enough to buy bread and wine, the thought struck me once more to inform my lord the sheriff of our need. With how heavy a heart I did this may be easily guessed, but necessity knows no law. I therefore tore the last blank leaf out of *_Virgilius_*, and begged that, for the sake of the Holy Trinity, his lordship would mercifully consider mine own distress and that of the whole parish, and bestow a little money to enable me to administer the Holy Sacrament for the comfort of afflicted souls; also, if possible, to buy a cup, were it only of tin, since the enemy had plundered us of ours, and I should otherwise be forced to consecrate the sacred elements in an earthen vessel. *_Item_*, I besought him to have pity on our bodily wants, and at last to send me the first-fruits which had stood over for so many years. That I did not want it for myself alone, but would willingly share it with my parishioners, until such time as God in His mercy should give us more.

Here a huge blot fell upon my paper; for the windows being boarded up, the room was dark, and but little light came through two small panes of glass, which I had broken out of the church, and stuck in between the boards: this, perhaps, was the reason why I did not see better. However, as I could not anywhere get another piece of paper, I let it pass, and ordered the maid, whom I sent with the letter to Pudgla, to excuse the same to his lordship the sheriff, the which she promised to do; seeing that I could not add a word more on the paper, as it was written all over. I then sealed it as I had done before.

But the poor creature came back trembling for fear, and bitterly weeping, and said that his lordship had kicked her out of the castle-gate, and had threatened to set her in the stocks if she ever came before him again. "Did the parson think that he was as free with his money as I seemed to be with my ink? I surely had water enough to celebrate the Lord's Supper wherewithal. For if the Son of God had once changed the water into wine, He could surely do the like again. If I had no cup, I might water my flock out of a bucket, as he did himself;" with many more blasphemies, such as he afterwards wrote to me, and by which, as may easily be guessed, I was filled with horror. Touching the first-fruits, as she told me, he said nothing at all. In such great spiritual and bodily need the blessed Sunday came round, when nearly all the

congregation would have come to the Lord's table, but could not. I therefore spoke on the words of St. Augustine, *crede et manducasti*, and represented that the blame was not mine, and truly told what had happened to my poor maid at Pudgla, passing over much in silence, and only praying God to awaken the hearts of magistrates for our good. Peradventure I may have spoken more harshly than I meant. I know not; only that I spoke that which was in my heart. At the end I made all the congregation stay on their knees for nearly an hour, and call upon the Lord for His holy Sacrament; *Item*, for the relief of their bodily wants, as had been done every Sunday, and at all the daily prayers I had been used to read ever since the heavy time of the plague. Last of all, I led the glorious hymn, "When in greatest need we be," which was no sooner finished than my new churchwarden, Claus Bulk of Uekeritze, who had formerly been a groom with his lordship, and whom he had now put into a farm, ran off to Pudgla, and told him all that had taken place in the church. Whereat his lordship was greatly angered, insomuch that he summoned the whole parish, which still numbered about 150 souls, without counting the children, and dictated *ad protocollum* whatsoever they could remember of the sermon, seeing that he meant to inform his princely Grace the Duke of Pomerania of the blasphemous lies which I had vomited against him, and which must sorely offend every Christian heart. *Item*, what an avaricious wretch I must be to be always wanting something of him, and to be daily, so to say, pestering him in these hard times with my filthy letters, when he had not enough to eat himself. This, he said, should break the parson his neck, since his princely Grace did all that he asked of him; and that no one in the parish need give me anything more, but only let me go my ways. He would soon take care that they should have quite a different sort of parson from what I was.

(Now I would like to see the man who could make up his mind to come into the midst of such wretchedness at all.)

This news was brought to me in the self-same night, and gave me a great fright, as I now saw that I should not have a gracious master in his lordship, but should all the time of my miserable life, even if I could anyhow support it, find in him an ungracious lord. But I soon felt some comfort, when Chim Krüger, from Uekeritze, who brought me the news, took a little bit of his sucking-pig out of his pocket and gave it to me. Meanwhile old Paasch came in and said the same, and likewise brought me a piece of his old cow; *Item*, my other warden, Hinrich Seden, with a slice of bread, and a fish which he had taken in his net; all saying they wished for no better priest than me, and that I was only to pray to the merciful Lord to bestow more upon them, whereupon I should want for nothing. Meanwhile I must be quiet, and not betray them. All this I promised; and my daughter Mary took the blessed gifts of God off the table and carried them into the inner chamber. But, alas! next morning, when she would have put the meat into the cauldron, it was all gone. I know not who prepared this new sorrow for me, but much believe it was Hinrich

Seden his wicked wife, seeing he can never hold his tongue, and most likely told her everything. Moreover, Paasch his little daughter saw that she had meat in her pot next day; item, that she had quarrelled with her husband, and had flung the fish-board at him, whereon some fresh fish-scales were sticking: she had, however, presently recollected herself when she saw the child. (Shame on thee, thou old witch, it is true enough, I dare say!) Hereupon naught was left us but to feed our poor souls with the Word of God. But even our souls were so cast down that they could receive naught, any more than our bellies; my poor child, especially, from day to day grew paler, greyer, and yellower, and always threw up all her food, seeing she ate it without salt or bread. I had long wondered that the bread from Liebe was not yet done, but that every day at dinner I still had a morsel. I had often asked, "Whence comes all this blessed bread? I believe, after all, you save the whole for me, and take none for yourself or the maid." But they both then lifted to their mouths a piece of fir-tree bark, which they had cut to look like bread, and laid by their plates; and as the room was dark, I did not find out their deceit, but thought that they too were eating bread. But at last the maid told me of it, so that I should allow it no longer, as my daughter would not listen to her. It is not hard to guess how my heart was wrung when I saw my poor child lying on her bed of moss struggling with grim hunger. But things were to go yet harder with me, for the Lord in His anger would break me in pieces like a potter's vessel. For behold, on the evening of the same day, old Paasch came running to me, complaining that all his and my corn in the field had been pulled up and miserably destroyed, and that it must have been done by Satan himself, as there was not a trace either of oxen or horses. At these words my poor child screamed aloud and fainted. I would have run to help her, but could not reach her bed, and fell on the ground myself for bitter grief. The loud cries of the maid and old Paasch soon brought us both to our senses. But I could not rise from the ground alone, for the Lord had bruised all my bones. I besought them, therefore, when they would have helped me, to leave me where I was; and when they would not, I cried out that I must again fall on the ground to pray, and begged them all save my daughter to depart out of the room. This they did, but the prayer would not come. I fell into heavy doubting and despair, and murmured against the Lord that He plagued me more sorely than Lazarus or Job. Wretch that I was, I cried, "Thou didst leave to Lazarus at least the crumbs and the pitiful dogs, but to me Thou hast left nothing, and I myself am less in Thy sight even than a dog; and Job Thou didst not afflict until Thou hadst mercifully taken away his children, but to me Thou hast left my poor little daughter, that her torments may increase mine own a thousandfold. Behold, then, I can only pray that Thou wilt take her from the earth, so that my grey head may gladly follow her to the grave! Woe is me, ruthless father, what have I done? I have eaten bread, and suffered my child to hunger! O Lord Jesu, who hast said, 'What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread will he give him a stone?' Behold, I am that man!--behold, I am that ruthless father! I have eaten bread, and

have given wood to my child! Punish me; I will bear it and lie still. O righteous Jesu, I have eaten bread, and have given wood to my child!" As I did not speak, but rather shrieked these words, wringing my hands the while, my child fell upon my neck, sobbing, and chide me for murmuring against the Lord, seeing that even she, a weak and frail woman, had never doubted His mercy; so that with shame and repentance I presently came to myself, and humbled myself before the Lord for such heavy sin.

Meanwhile the maid had run into the village with loud cries to see if she could get anything for her poor young mistress, but the people had already eaten their noontide meal, and most of them were gone to sea to seek their blessed supper; thus she could find nothing, seeing that old wife Seden, who alone had any victuals, would give her none, although she prayed her by Jesu's wounds.

She was telling us this when we heard a noise in the chamber, and presently Lizzie her worthy old husband, who had got in at the window by stealth, brought us a pot of good broth, which he had taken off the fire whilst his wife was gone for a moment into the garden. He well knew that his wife would make him pay for it, but that he did not mind, so the young mistress would but drink it, and she would find it salted and all. He would make haste out of the window again, and see that he got home before his wife, that she might not find out where he had been. But my daughter would not touch the broth, which sorely vexed him, so that he set it down on the ground cursing, and ran out of the room. It was not long before his squint-eyed wife came in at the front door, and when she saw the pot still steaming on the ground, she cried out, "Thou thief, thou cursed thieving carcass!" and would have flown at the face of my maid. But I threatened her, and told her all that had happened, and that if she would not believe me, she might go into the chamber and look out of the window, whence she might still, belike, see her goodman running home. This she did, and presently we heard her calling after him, "Wait, and the devil shall tear off thine arms, only wait till thou art home again!" After this she came back, and, muttering something, took the pot off the ground. I begged her, for the love of God, to spare a little to my child; but she mocked at me and said, "You can preach to her, as you did to me," and walked towards the door with the pot. My child indeed besought me to let her go, but I could not help calling after her, "For the love of God, one good sup, or my poor child must give up the ghost: wilt thou that at the day of judgment God should have mercy on thee, so show mercy this day to me and mine!" But she scoffed at us again, and cried out, "Let her cook herself some bacon," and went out at the door. I then sent the maid after her with the hour-glass which stood before me on the table, to offer it to her for a good sup out of the pot; but the maid brought it back, saying that she would not have it. Alas, how I wept and sobbed, as my poor dying child with a loud sigh buried her head again in the moss! Yet the merciful God was more gracious to me than my unbelief had deserved; for when the hard-hearted woman bestowed a little broth on her neighbour, old

Paasch, he presently brought it to my child, having heard from the maid how it stood with her; and I believe that this broth, under God, alone saved her life, for she raised her head as soon as she had supped it, and was able to go about the house again in an hour. May God reward the good fellow for it! Thus I had some joy in the midst of my trouble. But while I sat by the fireside in the evening musing on my fate, my grief again broke forth, and I made up my mind to leave my house, and even my cure, and to wander through the wide world with my daughter as a beggar. God knows I had cause enough for it; for now that all my hopes were dashed, seeing that my field was quite ruined, and that the sheriff had become my bitter enemy, moreover that it was five years since I had had a wedding, _item_, but two christenings during the past year, I saw my own and my daughter's death staring me in the face, and no prospect of better times at hand. Our want was increased by the great fears of the congregation; for although by God's wondrous mercy they had already begun to take good draughts of fish both in the sea and the Achterwater, and many of the people in the other villages had already gotten bread, salt, oatmeal, &c., from the Pokers and Quatzners of Anklam and Lissan [Footnote: These people still go about the Achterwater every day in small boats called Polten and Quatzen, and buy from the boors any fish they may have caught.] in exchange for their fish; nevertheless, they brought me nothing, fearing lest it might be told at Pudgla, and make his lordship ungracious to them. I therefore beckoned my daughter to me, and told her what was in my thoughts, saying that God, in His mercy, could any day bestow on me another cure if I was found worthy in His sight of such a favour, seeing that these terrible days of pestilence and war had called away many of the servants of His Word, and that I had not fled like a hireling from His flock, but, on the contrary, till _datum_ shared sorrow and death with it. Whether she were able to walk five or ten miles a day; for that then we would beg our way to Hamburg, to my departed wife her stepbrother, Martin Behring, who is a great merchant in that city.

This at first sounded strange to her, seeing that she had very seldom been out of our parish, and that her departed mother and her little brother lay in our churchyard. She asked, "Who was to make up their graves and plant flowers on them? _Item_, as the Lord had given her a smooth face, what I should do if in these wild and cruel times she were attacked on the highways by marauding soldiers or other villains, seeing that I was a weak old man and unable to defend her; _item_, wherewithal should we shield ourselves from the frost, as the winter was setting in, and the enemy had robbed us of our clothes, so that we had scarce enough left to cover our nakedness?" All this I had not considered, and was forced to own that she was right; so after much discussion we determined to leave it this night to the Lord, and to do whatever He should put into our hearts next morning. At any rate, we saw that we could in nowise keep the old maid any longer; I therefore called her out of the kitchen, and told her she had better go early next morning to Liepe, as there still was

food there, whereas here she must starve, seeing that perhaps we ourselves might leave the parish and the country to-morrow. I thanked her for the love and faith she had shown us, and begged her at last, amid the loud sobs of my poor daughter, to depart forthwith privately, and not to make our hearts still heavier by leave-taking; that old Paasch was going a-fishing to-night on the Achterwater, as he had told me, and no doubt would readily set her on shore at Grussow, where she had friends, and could eat her fill even to-day. She could not say a word for weeping, but when she saw that I was really in earnest she went out of the room. Not long after we heard the house-door shut to, whereupon my daughter moaned, "She is gone already," and ran straight to the window to look after her. "Yes," cried, she, as she saw her through the little panes, "she is really gone;" and she wrung her hands and would not be comforted. At last, however, she was quieted when I spoke of the maid Hagar, whom Abraham had likewise cast off, but on whom the Lord had nevertheless shown mercy in the wilderness; and hereupon we commended ourselves to the Lord, and stretched ourselves on our couches of moss.

CHAPTER IX.

How the old maid-servant humbled me by her faith, and the Lord yet blessed me His unworthy servant.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies" (Ps. ciii.).

Alas! wretched man that I am, how shall I understand all the benefits and mercies which the Lord bestowed upon me the very next day? I now wept for joy as of late I had done for sorrow; and my child danced about the room like a young roe, and would not go to bed, but only cry and dance, and between whiles repeat the 103rd Psalm, then dance and cry again until morning broke. But as she was still very weak, I rebuked her presumption, seeing that this was tempting the Lord; and now mark what had happened.

After we had both woke in the morning with deep sighs, and called upon the Lord to manifest to us, in our hearts, what we should do, we still could not make up our minds. I therefore called to my child, if she felt strong enough, to leave her bed and light a fire in the stove herself, as our maid was gone; that we would then consider the matter further. She accordingly got up, but came back in an instant with cries of joy, because the maid had privately stolen back into the house, and had already made a fire. Hereupon I sent for her to my bedside, and wondered at her

disobedience, and asked what she now wanted here, but to torment me and my daughter still more, and why she did not go yesterday with old Paasch? But she lamented and wept so sore that she scarce could speak, and I understood only thus much: that she had eaten with us, and would likewise starve with us, for that she could never part from her young mistress, whom she had known from her cradle. Such faithful love moved me so, that I said almost with tears, "But hast thou not heard that my daughter and I have determined to wander as beggars about the country; where, then, wilt thou remain?" To this she answered that neither would she stay behind, seeing it was more fitting for her to beg than for us; but that she could not yet see why I wished to go out into the wide world; whether I had already forgotten that I had said, in my induction sermon, that I would abide with my flock in affliction and in death? That I should stay yet a little longer where I was, and send her to Liebe, as she hoped to get something worth having for us there, from her friends and others. These words, especially those about my induction sermon, fell heavy on my conscience, and I was ashamed of my want of faith, since, not my daughter only, but yet more, even my maid, had stronger faith than I, who, nevertheless, professed to be a servant of God's Word. I believed that the Lord, to keep me, poor fearful hireling, and at the same time to humble me, had awakened the spirit of this poor maid-servant to prove me, as the maid in the palace of the high-priest had also proved the fearful St. Peter. Wherefore I turned my face towards the wall, like Hezekiah, and humbled myself before the Lord; which scarce had I done before my child ran into the room again with a cry of joy. For behold some Christian heart had stolen quietly into the house in the night, and had laid in the chamber two loaves, a good piece of meat, a bag of oatmeal, item, a bag of salt, holding near a pint. Any one may guess what shouts of joy we all raised. Neither was I ashamed to confess my sins before my maid; and in our common morning prayer, which we said on our knees, I made fresh vows to the Lord of obedience and faith. Thus we had that morning a grand breakfast, and sent something to old Paasch besides; item, my daughter again sent for all the little children to come, and kindly fed them with our store, before they said their tasks; and when in my heart of little faith I sighed thereat, although I said naught, she smiled, and said, "Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." [Footnote: Matt. vi. 34.]

The Holy Ghost spoke by her, as I cannot but believe, nor thou either, beloved reader: for, mark what happened. In the afternoon, she (I mean my child) went up the Streckelberg to seek for blackberries, as old Paasch had told her through the maid that a few bushes were still left. The maid was chopping wood in the yard, to which end she had borrowed old Paasch his axe, for the Imperialist thieves had thrown away mine, so that it could nowhere be found; and I myself was pacing up and down in the room, meditating my sermon; when my child, with her apron full, came quickly in at the door, quite red and with beaming eyes, and

scarce able for joy to say more than "Father, father, what have I got?" "Well," quoth I, "what hast thou got, my child?" Whereupon she opened her apron, and I scarce trusted my eyes when I saw, instead of the blackberries which she had gone to seek, two shining pieces of amber, each nearly as big as a man's head, not to mention the small pieces, some of which were as large as my hand, and that, God knows, is no small one. "Child of my heart," cried I, "how cam'st thou by this blessing from God?" As soon as she could fetch her breath, she told me as follows:

That while she was seeking for blackberries in a dell near the shore, she saw somewhat glistening in the sun, and on coming near, she found this wondrous godsend, seeing that the wind had blown the sand away from off a black vein of amber. [Footnote: This happens frequently even now, and has occurred to the editor himself. The small dark vein held indeed a few pieces of amber, mixed with charcoal, a sure proof of its vegetable origin, of which we may observe in passing there is now scarce any doubt, since whole trees of amber have been found in Prussia, and are preserved in the museum at Konigsberg.] That she straightway had broken off these pieces with a stick, and that there was plenty more to be got, seeing that it rattled about under the stick when she thrust it into the sand, neither could she force it farther than, at most, a foot deep into the ground; , she told me that she had covered the place all over again with sand, and swept it smooth with her apron so as to leave no traces.

Moreover, that no stranger was at all likely to go thither, seeing that no blackberries grew very near, and she had gone to the spot, moved by curiosity and a wish to look upon the sea, rather than from any need; but that she could easily find the place again herself, inasmuch as she had marked it with three little stones. What was our first act after the all-merciful God had rescued us out of such misery, nay, even as it seemed, endowed us with great riches, any one may guess. When we at length got up off our knees my child would straightway have run to tell the maid our joyful news. But I forbade her, seeing that we could not be sure that the maid might not tell it again to her friends, albeit in all other things she was a faithful woman, and feared God; but that if she did that, the sheriff would be sure to hear of it, and to seize upon our treasure for his princely Highness the Duke, that is to say, for himself; and that naught would be left to us but the sight thereof, and our want would begin all over again; that we therefore would say, when folks asked about the luck that had befallen us, that my deceased brother, who was a councillor at Rotterdam, had left us a good lump of money; and indeed it was true that I had inherited near 200 florins from him a year ago, which, however, the soldiery (as mentioned above) cruelly robbed me of; , that I would go to Wolgast myself next day, and sell the little bits as best I might, saying that thou hadst picked them up by the seaside; thou mayst tell the maid the same if thou wilt, but show the larger pieces to no one, and I will send them to thy uncle at Hamburg, to be turned into money for us;

perchance I may be able to sell one of them at Wolgast, if I find occasion, so as to buy clothes enough for the winter, for thee and for me, wherefore thou too mayst go with me. We will take the few farthings which the congregation have brought together to pay the ferry, and thou canst order the maid to wait for us till eventide at the water-side to carry home the victuals. She agreed to all this, but said we had better first break off some more amber, so that we might get a good round sum for it at Hamburg; and I thought so too, wherefore we stopped at home next day, seeing that we did not want for food, and that my child, as well as myself, both wished to refresh ourselves a little before we set out on our journey; item, we likewise bethought us that old Master Rothoog, of Loddin, who is a cabinet-maker, might knock together a little box for us, to put the amber in, wherefore I sent the maid to him in the afternoon. Meanwhile we ourselves went up the Streckelberg, where I cut a young fir-tree with my pocket knife, which I had saved from the enemy, and shaped it like a spade, so that I might be better able to dig deep therewith. First, however, we looked about us well on the mountain, and seeing nobody, my daughter walked on to the place, which she straightway found again. Great God! what a mass of amber, was there! The vein was hard upon twenty feet long, as near as I could feel, and the depth of it I could not sound. Nevertheless, save four good-sized pieces, none, however, so big as those of yesterday, we this day only broke out little splinters, such as the apothecaries bruise for incense. After we had most carefully covered and smoothed over the place, a great mishap was very near befalling us; for we met Witthan her little girl, who was seeking blackberries, and she asked what my daughter carried in her apron, who straightway grew red, and stammered so that our secret would have been betrayed if I had not presently said, "What is that to thee? she has got fir-apples, for firing," which the child believed. Wherefore we resolved in future only to go up the mountain at night by moonlight, and we went home and got there before the maid, and hid our treasure in the bedstead, so that she should not see it.

CHAPTER X.

How we journeyed to Wolgast, and made good barter there.

Two days after, so says my daughter, but old Ilse thinks it was three (and I myself know not which is true), we at last went to the town, seeing that Master Rothoog had not got the box ready before. My daughter covered it over with a piece of my departed wife her wedding gown, which the Imperialists had indeed torn to pieces, but as they had left it lying outside, the wind had blown it into the orchard, where we found it. It was very shabby before, otherwise I doubt not they would have carried it off with them. On account of the box we took old Ilse with us, who had to carry it,

and as amber is very light ware, she readily believed that the box held nothing but eatables. At daybreak, then, we took our staves in our hands, and set out with God. Near Zitze, [Footnote: A village half way between Coserow and Wolgast, now called Zinnowitz.] a hare ran across the road before us, which they say bodes no good. Well-a-day!--When we came near Bannemin I asked a fellow if it was true that here a mother had slaughtered her own child, from hunger, as I had heard. He said it was, and that the old woman's name was Zisse; but that God had been wroth at such a horrid deed, and she had got no good by it, seeing that she vomited so much upon eating it that she forthwith gave up the ghost. On the whole, he thought things were already going rather better with the parish, as Almighty God had richly blessed them with fish, both out of the sea and the Achterwater. Nevertheless a great number of people had died of hunger here also. He told us that their vicar, his reverence Johannes Lampius, [Footnote: The present parish archives contain several short and incomplete notices of his sufferings during these dreadful wars.] had had his house burnt down by the Imperialists, and was lying in a hovel near the church. I sent him my greeting, desiring that he would soon come to visit me (which the fellow promised he would take care to deliver to him), for the reverend Johannes is a pious and learned man, and has also composed sundry Latin *_Chronosticha_* on these wretched times, in *_metrum heroicum_*, which, I must say, pleased me greatly. [Footnote: The old vicar has introduced them among the still existing parochial accounts, and we will here give a specimen of them:--

For 1620.

VsqVe qVo Do MIne IrasCerls, sls nobls pater!

For 1628.

InqVe tVa DeXtra fer operaM tV ChrIste benIgne!]

When we had crossed the ferry we went in at Sehms his house, on the castle green, who keeps an ale-house; he told us that the pestilence had not yet altogether ceased in the town; whereat I was much afraid, more especially as he described to us so many other horrors and miseries of these fearful times, both here and in other places, *_e.g._*, of the great famine in the island of Rügen, where a number of people had grown as black as Moors from hunger; a wondrous thing if it be true, and one might almost gather therefrom how the first blackamoors came about. [Footnote: *Micraeus* also, in his "Ancient Pomerania" (vol. lxxi. 2), mentions this circumstance, but only says:--"Those who came over to Stralsund were quite black from the hunger they had suffered." This accounts for the strange exaggeration of mine host, and the still stranger conclusion of our author.] But be that as it may. *_Summa_*. When Master Sehms had told us all the news he had heard, and we had thus learnt to our great comfort that the Lord had not visited us only in these times of heavy need, I called him aside into a chamber and asked him whether I could not here find means to get money for a piece of amber, which my daughter had

found by the sea. At first he said "No;" but then recollecting, he began, "Stay, let me see, at Nicolas Graeke's, the inn at the castle, there are two great Dutch merchants, Dieterich von Pehnen and Jacob Kiekebusch, who are come to buy pitch and boards, _item_, timber for ships and beams; perchance they may like to cheapen your amber too; but you had better go up to the castle yourself, for I do not know for certain whether they still are there." This I did, although I had not yet eaten anything in the man's house, seeing that I wanted to know first what sort of bargain I might make, and to save the farthings belonging to the church until then. So I went into the castle yard. Gracious God! what a desert had even his princely Highness' house become within a short time! The Danes had ruined the stables and hunting-lodge, anno 1628; _item_, destroyed several rooms in the castle; and in the _locamentum_ of his princely Highness Duke Philippus, where, anno 22, he so graciously entertained me and my child, as will be told further on, now dwelt the innkeeper Nicolas Graeke; and all the fair tapestries, whereon was represented the pilgrimage to Jerusalem of his princely Highness Bogislaus X., were torn down, and the walls left grey and bare. [Footnote: Compare Heller's "Chronicle of the Town of Wolgast," p. 42, &c. The riots were caused by the successor of Philippus Julius (d. 6th Feb. 1625), who was also the last Duke of Pomerania, Bogislaus XIV., choosing to reside in Stettin. At the present time the castle is a mere ruin, and only several large vaulted cellars remain, wherein some of the tradesmen of the present day keep their shops.] At this sight my heart was sorely grieved; but I presently inquired for the merchants, who sat at the table drinking their parting cup, with their travelling equipments already lying by them, seeing that they were just going to set out on their way to Stettin; straightway one of them jumped up from his liquor, a little fellow with a right noble paunch, and a black plaster on his nose, and asked me what I would of them? I took him aside into a window, and told him I had some fine amber, if he had a mind to buy it of me, which he straightway agreed to do. And when he had whispered somewhat into the ear of his fellow, he began to look very pleasant, and reached me the pitcher before we went to my inn. I drank to him right heartily, seeing that, as I have already said, I was still fasting, so that I felt my very heart warmed by it in an instant. (Gracious God! what can go beyond a good draught of wine taken within measure!) After this we went to my inn, and told the maid to carry the box on one side into a small chamber. I had scarce opened it and taken away the gown, when the man (whose name was Dieterich von Pehnen, as he had told me by the way), held up both hands for joy, and said he had never seen such wealth of amber, and how had I come by it? I answered that my child had found it on the sea-shore; whereat he wondered greatly that we had so much amber here, and offered me 300 florins for the whole box. I was quite beside myself for joy at such an offer, but took care not to let him see it, and bargained with him till I got 500 florins, and I was to go with him to the castle, and take the money forthwith. Hereupon I ordered mine host to make ready at once a mug of beer, and a good

dinner for my child, and went back to the castle with the man, and the maid who carried the box, begging him, in order to avoid common talk, to say nothing of my good fortune to mine host, nor indeed to any one else in the town, and to count out the money to me privately, seeing that I could not be sure that the thieves might not lay in wait for me on the road home if they heard of it. And this the man did; for he whispered something into the ear of his fellow, who straightway opened his leathern surcoat, _item_, his doublet and hose, and unbuckled from his paunch a well-filled purse which he gave to him. _Summa_--Before long I had my riches in my pocket, and, moreover, the man begged me to write to him at Amsterdam whenever I found any more amber, the which I promised to do. But the worthy fellow, as I have since heard, died of the plague at Stettin, together with his companion--truly I wish it had happened otherwise. [Footnote: Micraeus mentions these Dutch merchants, p. 171, but asserts that the cause of their death was doubtful, and that the town physician, Dr. Laurentius Eichstadius, in Stettin, had written a special medical paper on the subject. However, he calls one of them Kiekepost, instead of Kiekebusch.] Shortly after, I was very near getting into great trouble; for, as I had an extreme longing to fall on my knees, so that I could not wait until such time as I should have got back to my inn, I went up three or four steps of the castle stairs, and entered into a small chamber, where I humbled myself before the Lord. But the host, Nicolas Graeke, followed me, thinking I was a thief, and would have stopped me, so that I knew not how to excuse myself but by saying that I had been made drunken by the wine which the strange merchants had given to me (for he had seen what a good pull I had made at it), seeing I had not broken my fast that morning, and that I was looking for a chamber wherein I might sleep a while, which lie he believed (if in truth it were a lie, for I was really drunken, though not with wine, but with love and gratitude to my Maker), and accordingly he let me go.

But I must now tell my story of his princely Highness, as I promised above. Anno 22, as I chanced to walk with my daughter, who was then a child of about twelve years old, in the castle garden at Wolgast, and was showing her the beautiful flowers that grew there, it chanced that as we came round from behind some bushes we espied my gracious lord the Duke Philippus Julius, with his princely Highness the Duke Bogislaff, who lay here on a visit, standing on a mount and conversing, wherefore we were about to return. But as my gracious lords presently walked on towards the drawbridge, we went to look at the mount where they had stood; of a sudden my little girl shouted loudly for joy, seeing that she found on the earth a costly signet-ring, which one of their princely Highnesses doubtless had dropped. I therefore said, "Come, and we will follow our gracious lords with all speed, and thou shalt say to them in Latin: _Serenissimi principes, quis vestrum hunc anulum deperdidit_? (for, as I have mentioned above, I had instructed her in the Latin tongue ever since her seventh year), and if one of them says _Ego_, give to him the

ring. *_Item_*, should he ask thee in Latin to whom thou
belongest, be not abashed, and say: *_Ego sum filia pastoris
Coserowiensis_*; for thou wilt thus find favour in the eyes of
their princely Highnesses, for they are both gracious gentlemen,
more especially the taller one, who is our gracious ruler
Philippus Julius himself." This she promised to do; but as she
trembled sorely as she went, I encouraged her yet more and
promised her a new gown if she did it, seeing that even as a
little child she would have given a great deal for fine clothes.
As soon, then, as we were come into the courtyard, I stood by the
statue of his princely Highness Ernest Ludewig, [Footnote: The
father of Philippus Julius, died at Wolgast 17th June 1592.] and
whispered her to run boldly after them, as their princely
Highnesses were only a few steps before us, and had already turned
toward the great entrance. This she did, but of a sudden she stood
still, and would have turned back, because she was frightened by
the spurs of their princely Highnesses, as she afterwards told me,
seeing that they rattled and jingled very loudly.

But my gracious lady the Duchess Agnes saw her from the open
window wherein she lay, and called to his princely Highness, "My
lord, there is a little maiden behind you, who, it seems, would
speak with you," whereupon his princely Highness straightway
turned him round, smiling pleasantly, so that my little maid
presently took courage, and, holding up the ring, spoke in Latin
as I had told her. Hereat both the princes wondered beyond
measure, and after my gracious Duke Philippus had felt his finger,
he answered, "*_Dulcissima puella, ego perdidit_*;" whereupon
she gave it to him. Then he patted her cheek, and again asked,
"*_Sed quoenam es, et unde venis_*?" whereupon she boldly gave
her answer, and at the same time pointed with her finger to where
I stood by the statue; whereupon his princely Highness motioned me
to draw near. My gracious lady saw all that passed from the
window, but all at once she left it. She, however, came back to it
again before I had time even humbly to draw near to my gracious
lord, and beckoned to my child, and held a cake out of the window
for her. On my telling her she ran up to the window, but her
princely Highness could not reach so low nor she so high above her
as to take it, wherefore my gracious lady commanded her to come up
into the castle, and as she looked anxiously round after me,
motioned me also, as did my gracious lord himself, who presently
took the timid little maid by the hand and went up with his
princely Highness the Duke Bogislaff. My gracious lady came to
meet us at the door, and caressed and embraced my little daughter,
so that she soon grew quite bold and ate the cake. When my
gracious lord had asked me my name, *_item_*, why I had in so
singular a manner taught my daughter the Latin tongue, I answered
that I had heard much from a cousin at Cologne of Maria Schurman,
[Footnote: Anna Maria Schurman, born at Cologne on the 5th Nov.
1607, died at Wiewardin the 5th May 1678, was, according to the
unanimous testimony of her contemporaries, a prodigy of learning,
and perhaps the most learned woman that ever lived. The Frenchman
Naudø says of her, "You find in her alone all that the hand can

fashion or the mind conceive. No one paints better, no one works better in brass, wax, and wood. In needlework she excels all women past or present. It is impossible to say in what branch of knowledge she is most distinguished. Not content with the European languages, she understands Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and writes Latin so well that no one who has devoted his whole life to it can do it better." The celebrated Netherlander Spanheim calls her a teacher of the Graces and the Muses; the still more celebrated Salmasius confesses that he knows not in which branch of learning to say she excels: and the Pole Rotyer calls her "The sole example of all wondrous works in one single learned person, and a perfect *_monstrum_* of her sex, yet without fault or blame." For, in truth, with all her extraordinary knowledge she was marvellously humble, although she herself confesses that the immoderate praises of the learned even yet at times blinded her to her own defects. In her later years she went over to the sect of the Labadists, which appears to have some points in common with that of the Muckers. She died unmarried, as an early love affair in her fifteenth year with the Dutchman Caets had been broken off. It is related of her, as a strange fancy, that she liked to eat spiders. The celebrated Spanheim was the first to publish an edition of her works under the title of *_Anna Mariae Schurman Opuscula_*. Leyden, 1648.] and as I had observed a very excellent *_ingenium_* in my child, and also had time enough in my lonely cure, I did not hesitate to take her in hand, and teach her from her youth up, seeing I had no boy alive. Hereat their princely Highnesses marvelled greatly, and put some more questions to her in Latin, which she answered without any prompting from me. Whereupon my gracious lord Duke Philippus said in the vulgar tongue, "When thou art grown up and art one day to be married, tell it to me, and thou shalt then have another ring from me, and whatsoever else pertains to a bride, for thou hast this day done me good service, seeing that this ring is a precious jewel to me, as I had it from my wife." Hereupon I whispered her to kiss his princely Highness' hand for such a promise, and so she did.

(But alas, most gracious God, it is one thing to promise and quite another to hold! Where is his princely Highness at this time? Wherefore let me ever keep in mind that "Thou only art faithful, and that which Thou hast promised Thou wilt surely hold." Ps. xxxiii. 4. Amen. [Footnote: Luther's version.]) *_Item_*--When his princely Highness had also inquired concerning myself and my cure, and heard that I was of ancient and noble family, and my *_salarium_* very small, he called from the window to his chancellor, D. Rungius, who stood without, looking at the sun-dial, and told him that I was to have an addition from the convent at Pudgla, *_item_*, from the crownlands at Ernsthoff, as I mentioned above; but, more's the pity, I never have received the same, although the *_instrumentum donationis_* was sent me soon after by his princely Highness' chancellor.

Then cakes were brought for me also, *_item_*, a glass of foreign wine in a glass painted with armorial bearings, whereupon

I humbly took my leave, together with my daughter.

However, to come back to my bargain, anybody may guess what joy my child felt when I showed her the fair ducats and florins I had gotten for the amber. To the maid, however, we said that we had inherited such riches from my brother in Holland, and after we had again given thanks to the Lord on our knees, and eaten our dinner, we bought in a great store of bread, salt, meat, and stock-fish: item, of clothes, seeing that I provided what was needful for us three throughout the winter from the cloth-merchant. Moreover, for my daughter I bought a hair-net and a scarlet silk bodice, with a black apron and white petticoat, item, a fine pair of earrings, as she begged hard for them; and as soon as I had ordered the needful from the cordwainer we set out on our way homewards, as it began to grow very dark; but we could not carry nearly all we had bought. Wherefore we were forced to get a peasant from Bannemin to help us, who likewise was come into the town, and as I found out from him that the fellow who gave me the piece of bread was a poor cotter called Pantermehl, who dwelt in the village by the roadside, I shoved a couple of loaves in at his house-door without his knowing it, and we went on our way by the bright moonlight, so that by the help of God we got home about ten o'clock at night. I likewise gave a loaf to the other fellow, though truly he deserved it not, seeing that he would go with us no further than to Zitze. But I let him go, for I, too, had not deserved that the Lord should so greatly bless me.

CHAPTER XI.

How I fed all the congregation--Item, how I journeyed to the horse-fair at Gützkow, and what befell me there.

Next morning my daughter cut up the blessed bread, and sent to every one in the village a good large piece. But as we saw that our store would soon run low, we sent the maid with a truck, which we bought of Adam Lempken, to Wolgast, to buy more bread, which she did. Item, I gave notice throughout the parish that on Sunday next I should administer the Blessed Sacrament, and in the meantime I bought up all the large fish that the people of the village had caught. And when the blessed Sunday was come I first heard the confessions of the whole parish, and after that I preached a sermon on Matt. xv. 32, "I have compassion on the multitude ... for they have nothing to eat." I first applied the same to spiritual food only, and there arose a great sighing from both the men and the women, when, at the end, I pointed to the altar whereon stood the blessed food for the soul, and repeated the words, "I have compassion on the multitude ... for they have nothing to eat." (N.B. The pewter cup I had borrowed at Wolgast, and bought there a little earthenware plate for a paten

till such time as Master Bloom should have made ready the silver cup and paten I had bespoke.) Thereupon as soon as I had consecrated and administered the Blessed Sacrament, item, led the closing hymn, and every one had silently prayed his "Our Father" before going out of church, I came out of the confessional again, and motioned the people to stay yet awhile, as the blessed Saviour would feed not only their souls, but their bodies also, seeing that He still had the same compassion on His people as of old on the people at the Sea of Galilee, as they should presently see. Then I went into the tower and fetched out two baskets which the maid had bought at Wolgast, and which I had hidden there in good time; set them down in front of the altar, and took off the napkins with which they were covered, whereupon a very loud shout arose, inasmuch as they saw one filled with broiled fish and the other with bread, which we had put into them privately. Hereupon, like our Saviour, I gave thanks and brake it, and gave it to the churchwarden, Hinrich Seden, that he might distribute it among the men, and to my daughter for the women. Whereupon I made application of the text, "I have compassion on the multitude, for they have nothing to eat," to the food of the body also; and walking up and down in the church amid great outcries from all, I exhorted them always to trust in God's mercy, to pray without ceasing, to work diligently, and to consent to no sin. What was left I made them gather up for their children and the old people who were left at home.

After church, when I had scarce put off my surplice, Hinrich Seden his squint-eyed wife came and impudently asked for more for her husband's journey to Liebe; neither had she had anything for herself, seeing she had not come to church. This angered me sore, and I said to her, "Why wast thou not at church? Nevertheless, if thou hadst come humbly to me thou shouldst have gotten somewhat even now, but as thou comest impudently, I will give thee naught: think on what thou didst to me and to my child." But she stood at the door and glowered impudently about the room till my daughter took her by the arm and led her out, saying, "Hear'st thou, thou shall come back humbly before thou gett'st anything, but when thou comest thus, thou also shall have thy share, for we will no longer reckon with thee an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; let the Lord do that if such be His will, but we will gladly forgive thee!" Hereupon she at last went out at the door, muttering to herself as she was wont; but she spat several times in the street, as we saw from the window.

Soon after I made up my mind to take into my service a lad, near upon twenty years of age, called Claus Neels, seeing that his father, old Neels of Loddin, begged hard that I would do so, besides which the lad pleased me well in manners and otherwise. Then, as we had a good harvest this year, I resolved to buy me a couple of horses forthwith, and to sow my field again; for although it was now late in the year, I thought that the most merciful God might bless the crop with increase if it seemed good to Him.

Neither did I feel much care with respect to food for them, inasmuch as there was a great plenty of hay in the neighbourhood, seeing that all the cattle had been killed or driven away (as related above). I therefore made up my mind to go in God's name with my new ploughman to Gützkow, whither a great many Mecklenburg horses were brought to the fair, seeing that times were not yet so bad there as with us. [Footnote: The fief of Mecklenburg was given by the Emperor to Wallenstein, who spared the country as much as he could.] Meanwhile I went a few more times up the Streckelberg with my daughter at night, and by moonlight, but found very little; so that we began to think our luck had come to an end, when, on the third night, we broke off some pieces of amber bigger even than those the two Dutchmen had bought. These I resolved to send to my wife's brother, Martin Behring, at Hamburg, seeing that the schipper Wulff of Wolgast intends, as I am told, to sail thither this very autumn, with pitch and wood for shipbuilding. I accordingly packed it all up in a strong chest, which I carried with me to Wolgast when I started with my man on my journey to Gützkow. Of this journey I will only relate thus much, that there were plenty of horses, and very few buyers in the market. Wherefore I bought a pair of fine black horses for twenty florins apiece; item, a cart for five florins; item, twenty-five bushels of rye, which also came from Mecklenburg, at one florin the bushel, whereas it is hardly to be had now at Wolgast for love or money, and cost three florins or more the bushel. I might therefore have made a good bargain in rye at Gützkow if it had become my office, and had I not, moreover, been afraid lest the robbers, who swarm in these evil times, should take away my corn, and ill-use, and perchance murder me into the bargain, as has happened to sundry people already. For, at this time especially, such robberies were carried on after a strange and frightful fashion on Strellin heath at Gützkow; but by God's help it all came to light just as I journeyed thither with my man-servant to the fair, and I will here tell how it happened. Some months before a man had been broken on the wheel at Gützkow, because, being tempted of Satan, he murdered a travelling workman. The man, however, straightway began to walk after so fearful a fashion, that in the evening and night-season he sprang down from the wheel in his gallows dress whenever a cart passed by the gallows, which stands hard by the road to Wolgast, and jumped up behind the people, who in horror and dismay flogged on their horses, and thereby made a great rattling on the log embankment which leads beside the gallows into a little wood called the Kraulin. And it was a strange thing that on the same night the travellers were almost always robbed or murdered on Strellin heath. Hereupon the magistrates had the man taken down from the wheel, and buried under the gallows, in hopes of laying his ghost. But it went on just as before, sitting at night snow-white on the wheel, so that none durst any longer travel the road to Wolgast. Until at last it happened that, at the time of the above-named fair, young Rudiger von Nienkerken of Mellenthin, in Usedom, who had been studying at Wittenberg and elsewhere, and was now on his

way home, came this road by night with his carriage. Just before, at the inn, I myself had tried to persuade him to stop the night at Gutzkow on account of the ghost, and to go on his journey with me next morning, but he would not. Now as soon as this young lord drove along the road, he also espied the apparition sitting on the wheel, and scarcely had he passed the gallows when the ghost jumped down and ran after him. The driver was horribly afraid, and lashed on the horses as everybody else had done before, and they, taking fright, galloped away over the log-road with a marvellous clatter. Meanwhile, however, the young nobleman saw by the light of the moon how that the apparition flattened a ball of horse-dung whereon it trod, and straightway felt sure within himself that it was no ghost. Whereupon he called to the driver to stop; and as the man would not hearken to him, he sprung out of the carriage, drew his rapier, and hastened to attack the ghost. When the ghost saw this he would have turned and fled; but the young nobleman gave him such a blow on the head with his fist that he fell upon the ground with a loud wailing. _Summa:_ the young lord, having called back his driver, dragged the ghost into the town again, where he turned out to be a shoe-maker called Schwelm.

I also, on seeing such a great crowd, ran thither with many others, to look at the fellow. He trembled like an aspen leaf; and when he was roughly told to make a clean breast, whereby he might peradventure save his own life, if it appeared that he had murdered no one, he confessed that he had got his wife to make him a gallows dress, which he had put on, and had sat on the wheel before the dead man, when, from the darkness and the distance, no one could see that the two were sitting there together; and this he did more especially when he knew that a cart was going from the town to Wolgast. When the cart came by, and he jumped down and ran after it, all the people were so affrighted that they no longer kept their eyes upon the gallows, but only on him, flogged the horses, and galloped with much noise and clatter over the log embankment. This was heard by his fellows in Strellin and Dammbecke (two villages which are about three-fourths on the way), who held themselves ready to unyoke the horses and to plunder the travellers when they came up with them. That after the dead man was buried he could play the ghost more easily still, &c. That this was the whole truth, and that he himself had never in his life robbed, still less murdered, any one; wherefore he begged to be forgiven: that all the robberies and murders which had happened had been done by his fellows alone. Ah, thou cunning knave! But I heard afterwards that he and his fellows were broken on the wheel together, as was but fair. And now to come back to my journey. The young nobleman abode that night with me at the inn, and early next morning we both set forth; and as we had grown into good fellowship together, I got into his coach with him as he offered me, so as to talk by the way, and my Claus drove behind us. I soon found that he was a well-bred, honest, and learned gentleman, seeing that he despised the wild student life, and was glad that he had now done with their scandalous drinking-bouts: moreover, he talked his Latin readily. I had therefore much pleasure with him

in the coach. However, at Wolgast the rope of the ferry-boat broke, so that we were carried down the stream to Zeuzin, [Footnote: Now Sauzin.] and at length we only got ashore with great trouble. Meanwhile it grew late, and we did not get into Coserow till nine, when I asked the young lord to abide the night with me, which he agreed to do. We found my child sitting in the chimney corner, making a petticoat for her little god-daughter out of her own old clothes. She was greatly frightened, and changed colour when she saw the young lord come in with me, and heard that he was to lie there that night, seeing that as yet we had no more beds than we had bought for our own need from old Zabel Nering the forest-ranger his widow, at Uekeritze. Wherefore she took me aside: What was to be done? My bed was in an ill plight, her little godchild having lain on it that morning; and she could no wise put the young nobleman into hers, although she would willingly creep in by the maid herself. And when I asked her why not? she blushed scarlet, and began to cry, and would not show herself again the whole evening, so that the maid had to see to everything, even to the putting white sheets on my child's bed for the young lord, as she would not do it herself. I only tell this to show how maidens are. For next morning she came into the room with her red silk bodice, and the net on her hair, and the apron; _summa,_ dressed in all the things I had bought her at Wolgast, so that the young lord was amazed, and talked much with her over the morning meal. Whereupon he took his leave, and desired me to visit him at his castle.

CHAPTER XII.

What further joy and sorrow befell us; item, how Wittich Appelmann rode to Damerow to the wolf-hunt, and what he proposed to my daughter.

The Lord blessed my parish wonderfully this winter, inasmuch as not only a great quantity of fish were caught and sold in all the villages, but in Coserow they even killed four seals; _item,_ the great storm of the 12th of December threw a goodly quantity of amber on the shore, so that many found amber, although no very large pieces, and they began to buy cows and sheep from Liepe and other places, as I myself also bought two cows; _item,_ my grain which I had sown, half on my own field and half on old Paasch's, sprung up bravely and gladly, as the Lord had till _datum_ bestowed on us an open winter; but so soon as it had shot up a finger's length, we found it one morning again torn up and ruined, and this time also by the devil's doings, since now, as before, not the smallest trace of oxen or of horses was to be seen in the field. May the righteous God, however, reward it, as indeed He already has done. Amen.

Meanwhile, however, something uncommon happened. For one morning, as I have heard, when Lord Wittich saw out of the window that the daughter of his fisherman, a child of sixteen, whom he had diligently pursued, went into the coppice to gather dry sticks, he went thither too; wherefore, I will not say, but every one may guess for himself. When he had gone some way along the convent mound, and was come to the first bridge, where the mountain-ash stands, he saw two wolves coming towards him; and as he had no weapon with him, save a staff, he climbed up into a tree; whereupon the wolves trotted round it, blinked at him with their eyes, licked their lips, and at last jumped with their fore-paws up against the tree, snapping at him; he then saw that one was a he-wolf, a great fat brute with only one eye. Hereupon in his fright he began to scream, and the long-suffering of God was again shown to him, without, however, making him wiser; for the maiden, who had crept behind a juniper-bush in the field, when she saw the sheriff coming, ran back again to the castle and called together a number of people, who came and drove away the wolves, and rescued his lordship. He then ordered a great wolf-hunt to be held next day in the convent wood, and he who brought the one-eyed monster, dead or alive, was to have a barrel of beer for his pains. Still they could not catch him, albeit they that day took four wolves in their nets, and killed them. He therefore straightway ordered a wolf-hunt to be held in my parish. But when the fellow came to toll the bell for a wolf-hunt, he did not stop awhile, as is the wont for wolf-hunts, but loudly rang the bell on, *„sine mord,“* so that all the folk thought a fire had broken out, and ran screaming out of their houses. My child also came running out (I myself had driven to visit a sick person at Zempin, seeing that walking began to be wearisome to me, and that I could now afford to be more at mine ease); but she had not stood long, and was asking the reason of the ringing, when the sheriff himself, on his grey charger, with three cart-loads of toils and nets following him, galloped up and ordered the people straightway to go into the forest and to drive the wolves with rattles. Hereupon he, with his hunters and a few men whom he had picked out of the crowd, were to ride on and spread the nets behind Damerow, seeing that the island is wondrous narrow there, [Footnote: The space, which is constantly diminishing, now scarcely measures a bow-shot across.] and the wolf dreads the water. When he saw my daughter he turned his horse round, chucked her under the chin, and graciously asked her who she was, and whence she came? When he had heard it, he said she was as fair as an angel, and that he had not known till now that the parson here had so beauteous a girl. He then rode off, looking round at her two or three times. At the first beating they found the one-eyed wolf, who lay in the rushes near the water. Hereat his lordship rejoiced greatly, and made the grooms drag him out of the net with long iron hooks, and hold him there for near an hour, while my lord slowly and cruelly tortured him to death, laughing heartily the while, which is a *„prognosticon“* of what he afterwards did with my poor child, for wolf or lamb is all one to this villain. Just God! But I will not be beforehand with my tale.

Next day came old Seden his squint-eyed wife, limping like a lame dog, and put it to my daughter whether she would not go into the service of the sheriff; praised him as a good and pious man; and vowed that all the world said of him were foul lies, as she herself could bear witness, seeing that she had lived in his service for above ten years. _Item,_ she praised the good cheer they had there, and the handsome beer-money that the great lords who often lay there gave the servants which waited upon them; that she herself had more than once received a rose-noble from his princely Highness Duke Ernest Ludewig; moreover, many pretty fellows came there, which might make her fortune, inasmuch as she was a fair woman, and might take her choice of a husband; whereas here in Coserow, where nobody ever came, she might wait till she was old and ugly before she got a curch on her head, &c. Hereat my daughter was beyond measure angered, and answered, "Ah! thou old witch, and who has told thee that I wish to go into service, to get a curch on my head? Go thy ways, and never enter the house again, for I have naught to do with thee." Whereupon she walked away again, muttering between her teeth.

Scarce had a few days passed, and I was standing in the chamber with the glazier, who was putting in new windows, when I heard my daughter scream in the kitchen. Whereupon I straightway ran in thither, and was shocked and affrighted when I saw the sheriff himself standing in the corner with his arm round my child her neck; he, however, presently let her go, and said, "Aha, reverend Abraham, what a coy little fool you have for a daughter! I wanted to greet her with a kiss, as I always used to do, and she struggled and cried out as if I had been some young fellow who had stolen in upon her, whereas I might be her father twice over." As I answered naught, he went on to say that he had done it to encourage her, seeing that he desired to take her into his service, as indeed I knew, with more excuses of the same kind which I have forgot. Hereupon I pressed him to come into the room, seeing that after all he was the ruler set over me by God, and humbly asked what his lordship desired of me. Whereupon he answered me graciously, that it was true he had just cause for anger against me, seeing that I had preached at him before the whole congregation, but that he was ready to forgive me and to have the complaint he had sent in _contra_ me to his princely Highness at Stettin, and which might easily cost me my place, returned to him if I would but do his will. And when I asked what his lordship's will might be, and excused myself as best I might with regard to the sermon, he answered that he stood in great need of a faithful housekeeper whom he could set over the other women folk; and as he had learnt that my daughter was a faithful and trustworthy person, he would that I should send her into his service. "See there," said he to her, and pinched her cheek the while. "I want to lead you to honour, though you are such a young creature, and yet you cry out as if I were going to bring you to dishonour. Fie upon you!" (My child still remembers all this--_verbolenus_; I myself should have forgot it a hundred

times over in all the wretchedness I since underwent.) But she was offended at his words, and, jumping up from her seat, she answered shortly, "I thank your lordship for the honour, but will only keep house for my papa, which is a better honour for me;" whereupon he turned to me and asked what I said to that. I must own that I was not a little affrighted, inasmuch as I thought of the future and of the credit in which the sheriff stood with his princely Highness. I therefore answered with all humility, that I could not force my child, and that I loved to have her about me, seeing that my dear huswife had departed this life during the heavy pestilence, and I had no child but only her. That I hoped therefore his lordship would not be displeased with me that I could not send her into his lordship's service. This angered him sore, and after disputing some time longer in vain he took leave, not without threats that he would make me pay for it. Item, my man, who was standing in the stable, heard him say as he went round the corner, "I will have her yet, in spite of him!"

I was already quite disheartened by all this, when, on the Sunday following, there came his huntsman Johannes Kurt, a tall, handsome fellow, and smartly dressed. He brought a roebuck tied before him on his horse, and said that his lordship had sent it to me for a present, in hopes that I would think better of his offer, seeing that he had been ever since seeking on all sides for a housekeeper in vain. Moreover, that if I changed my mind about it his lordship would speak for me to his princely Highness, so that the dotation of Duke Philippus Julius should be paid to me out of the princely æarium &c. But the young fellow got the same answer as his master had done, and I desired him to take the roebuck away with him again. But this he refused to do; and as I had by chance told him at first that game was my favourite meat, he promised to supply me with it abundantly, seeing that there was plenty of game in the forest, and that he often went a-hunting on the Streckelberg; moreover, that I (he meant my daughter) pleased him uncommonly, the more because I would not do his master's will, who, as he told me in confidence, would never leave any girl in peace, and certainly would not let my damsel alone. Although I had rejected his game, he brought it notwithstanding, and in the course of three weeks he was sure to come four or five times, and grew more and more sweet upon my daughter. He talked a vast deal about his good place, and how he was in search of a good huswife, whence we soon guessed what quarter the wind blew from. Ergo, my daughter told him that if he was seeking for a huswife she wondered that he lost his time in riding to Coserow to no purpose, for that she knew of no huswife for him there, which vexed him so sore that he never came again.

And now any one would think that the grapes were sour even for the sheriff; nevertheless he came riding to us soon after, and without more ado asked my daughter in marriage for his huntsman. Moreover, he promised to build him a house of his own in the forest; item, to give him pots and kettles, crockery, bedding, &c., seeing that he had stood godfather to the young fellow, who,

moreover, had ever borne himself well during seven years he had been in his service. Hereupon my daughter answered that his lordship had already heard that she would keep house for nobody but her papa, and that she was still much too young to become a huswife.

This, however, did not seem to anger him, but, after he had talked a long time to no purpose, he took leave quite kindly, like a cat which pretends to let a mouse go, and creeps behind the corners, but she is not in earnest, and presently springs out upon it again. For doubtless he saw that he had set to work stupidly; wherefore he went away in order to begin his attack again after a better fashion, and Satan went with him, as whilom with Judas Iscariot,

CHAPTER XIII.

What more happened during the winter--Item, how in the spring witchcraft began in the village.

Nothing else of note happened during the winter, save that the merciful God bestowed a great plenty of fish both from the Achterwater and the sea, and the parish again had good food; so that it might be said of us, as it is written, "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." [Footnote: Isa. liv. 7.] Wherefore we were not weary of praising the Lord; and the whole congregation did much for the church, buying new pulpit and altar cloths, seeing that the enemy had stolen the old ones. _Item_, they desired to make good to me the money I had paid for the new cups, which, however, I would not take.

There were still, however, about ten peasants in the parish who had not been able to buy their seed-corn for the spring, inasmuch as they had spent all their earnings on cattle and corn for bread. I therefore made an agreement with them that I would lend them the money for it, and that if they could not repay me this year, they might the next, which offer they thankfully took; and we sent seven waggons to Friedland, in Mecklenburg, to fetch seed-corn for us all. For my beloved brother-in-law, Martin Behring, in Hamburg, had already sent me by the schipper Wulf, who had sailed home by Christmas, 700 florins for the amber: may the Lord prosper it with him!

Old Thiemcke died this winter in Loddin, who used to be the midwife in the parish, and had also brought my child into the world. Of late, however, she had had but little to do, seeing that in this year I only baptized two children, namely, Jung his son in Uekeritze, and Lene Hebers her little daughter, the same whom the

Imperialists afterwards speared. _Item_, it was now full five years since I had married the last couple. Hence any one may guess that I might have starved to death, had not the righteous God so mercifully considered and blessed me in other ways. Wherefore to Him alone be all honour and glory. Amen.

Meanwhile, however, it so happened that, not long after the sheriff had last been here, witchcraft began in the village. I sat reading with my child the second book of _Virgilus_, of the fearful destruction of the city of Troy, which was more terrible even than that of our own village, when a cry arose that our old neighbour Zabel his red cow, which he had bought only a few days before, had stretched out all fours, and seemed about to die; and this was the more strange as she had fed heartily but half-an-hour before. My child was therefore begged to go and pluck three hairs from its tail and bury them under the threshold of the stall; for it was well known that if this was done by a pure maid the cow would get better. My child then did as they would have her, seeing that she is the only maid in the whole village (for the others are still children); and the cow got better from that very hour, whereat all the folks were amazed. But it was not long before the same thing befell Witthahn her pig, whilst it was feeding heartily. She too came running to beg my child for God's sake to take compassion on her, and to do something for her pig, as ill men had bewitched it. Hereupon she had pity on her also; and it did as much good as it had done before. But the woman, who was _gravida_, was straightway taken in labour from the fright; and my child was scarce out of the pig-stye when the woman went into her cottage, wailing and holding by the wall, and called together all the women of the neighbourhood, seeing that the proper midwife was dead, as mentioned above; and before long something shot to the ground from under her; and when the women stooped down to pick it up, the devil's imp, which had wings like a bat, flew up off the ground, whizzed and buzzed about the room, and then shot out of the window with a great noise, so that the glass clattered down into the street. When they looked after it, nothing was to be found. Any one may judge for himself what a great noise this made in all the neighbourhood. And the whole village believed that it was no one but old Seden his squint-eyed wife that had brought forth such a devil's brat.

But the people soon knew not what to believe. For that woman her cow got the same thing as all the other cows; wherefore she too came lamenting, and begged my daughter to take pity on her as on the rest, and to cure her poor cow for the love of God. That if she had taken it ill of her that she had said anything about going into service with the sheriff, she could only say she had done it for the best, &c. _Summa_, she talked over my unhappy child to go and cure her cow.

Meanwhile I was on my knees every Sunday before the Lord with the whole congregation, praying that He would not allow the evil one to take from us that which His mercy had once more bestowed upon

us after such extreme want; _item_, that he would bring to light the _auctor_ of such devilish works, so that he might receive the punishment he deserved.

But all was of no avail. For a very few days had passed when the mischief befell Stoffer Zuter his spotted cow, and he, too, like all the rest, came running to fetch my daughter; she accordingly went with him, but could do no good, and the beast died under her hands.

Item, Katy Berow had bought a little pig with the money my daughter had paid her in the winter for spinning, and the poor woman kept it like a child, and let it run about her room. This little pig got the mischief, like all the rest, in the twinkling of an eye; and when my daughter was called it grew no better, but also died under her hands; whereupon the poor woman made a great outcry and tore her hair for grief, so that my child was moved to pity her, and promised her another pig next time my sow should litter. Meantime another week passed over, during which I went on, together with the whole congregation, to call upon the Lord for His merciful help, but all in vain, when the same thing happened to old wife Seden her little pig. Whereupon she again came running for my daughter with loud outcries, and although my child told her that she must have seen herself that nothing she could do for the cattle cured them any longer, she ceased not to beg and pray her, and to lament, till she went forth to do what she could for her with the help of God. But it was all to no purpose, inasmuch as the little pig died before she left the sty.

What think you this devil's whore then did? After she had run screaming through the village she said that any one might see that my daughter was no longer a maid, else why could she now do no good to the cattle, whereas she had formerly cured them? She supposed my child had lost her maiden honour on the Streckelberg, whither she went so often this spring, and that God only knew who had taken it! But she said no more then, and we did not hear the whole until afterwards. And it is indeed true that my child had often walked on the Streckelberg this spring both with me and also alone, in order to seek for flowers and to look upon the blessed sea, while she recited aloud, as she was wont, such verses out of _Virgilius_ as pleased her best (for whatever she read a few times that she remembered).

Neither did I forbid her to take these walks, for there were no wolves now left on the Streckelberg, and even if there had been they always fly before a human creature in the summer season. Howbeit, I forbade her to dig for amber. For as it now lay deep, and we knew not what to do with the earth we threw up, I resolved to tempt the Lord no further, but to wait till my store of money grew very scant before we would dig any more.

But my child did not do as I had bidden her, although she had promised she would, and of this her disobedience came all our

misery. (O blessed Lord, how grave a matter is Thy holy fourth commandment! [Footnote: In Luther's version.]) For as his reverence Johannes Lampius, of Crummin, who visited me this spring, had told me that the Cantor of Wolgast wanted to sell the _Opp. St. Augustini_, and I had said before her that I desired above all things to buy that book, but had not money enough left; she got up in the night without my knowledge to dig for amber, meaning to sell it as best she might at Wolgast, in order secretly to present me with the _Opp. St. Augustini_ on my birthday, which falls on the 28th _mensis Augusti_. She had always covered over the earth she cast up with twigs of fir, whereof there were plenty in the forest, so that no one should perceive anything of it.

Meanwhile, however, it befell that the young _nobilis_ Rüdiger of Nienkerken came riding one day to gather news of the terrible witchcraft that went on in the village. When I told him all about it he shook his head doubtingly, and said he believed that all witchcraft was nothing but lies and deceit; whereat I was struck with great horror, inasmuch as I had hitherto held the young lord to be a wiser man, and now could not but see that he was an atheist. He guessed what my thoughts were, and with a smile he answered me by asking whether I had ever read Johannes Wierus, [Footnote: A Netherland physician, who, long before Spee or Thomasius, attacked the wicked follies of the belief in witchcraft prevalent in his time in the paper entitled _Confulatio opinionum de magorum ~~Dæ~~monomia_, Frankfort, 1590, and was therefore denounced by Bodinus and others as one of the worst magicians. It is curious that this liberal man had in another book, _De præstigiis ~~Dæ~~monum_, taught the method of raising devils, and described the whole of hell, with the names and surnames of its 572 princes.] who would hear nothing of witchcraft, and who argued that all witches were melancholy persons who only imagined to themselves that they had a _pactum_ with the devil; and that to him they seemed more worthy of pity than of punishment? Hereupon I answered that I had not indeed read any such book (for say, who can read all that fools write?), but that the appearances here and in all other places proved that it was a monstrous error to deny the reality of witchcraft, inasmuch as people might then likewise deny that there were such things as murder, adultery, and theft.

But he called my _argumentum_ a _dilemma_, and after he had discoursed a great deal of the devil, all of which I have forgotten, seeing it savoured strangely of heresy, he said he would relate to me a piece of witchcraft which he himself had seen at Wittenberg.

It seems that one morning, as an Imperial captain mounted his good charger at the Elstergate in order to review his company, the horse presently began to rage furiously, reared, tossed his head, snorted, kicked, and roared not as horses use to neigh, but with a sound as though the voice came from a human throat, so that all

the folks were amazed, and thought the horse bewitched. It presently threw the captain and crushed his head with its hoof, so that he lay writhing on the ground, and straightway set off at full speed. Hereupon a trooper fired his carabine at the bewitched horse, which fell in the midst of the road, and presently died. That he, Riidiger, had then drawn near, together with many others, seeing that the colonel had forthwith given orders to the surgeon of the regiment to cut open the horse and see in what state it was inwardly. However, that everything was quite right, and both the surgeon and army physician testified that the horse was thoroughly sound; whereupon all the people cried out more than ever about witchcraft. Mean-while he himself (I mean the young _nobilis_) saw a thin smoke coming out from the horse's nostrils, and on stooping down to look what it might be, he drew out a match as long as my finger, which still smouldered, and which some wicked fellow had privately thrust into its nose with a pin. Hereupon all thoughts of witchcraft were at an end, and search was made for the culprit, who was presently found to be no other than the captain's own groom. For one day that his master had dusted his jacket for him he swore an oath that he would have his revenge, which indeed the provost-marshal himself had heard as he chanced to be standing in the stable. _Item_, another soldier bore witness that he had seen the fellow cut a piece off the fuse not long before he led out his master's horse. And thus, thought the young lord, would it be with all witchcraft if it were sifted to the bottom; like as I myself had seen at Giitzkow, where the devil's apparition turned out to be a cordwainer, and that one day I should own that it was the same sort of thing here in our village. By reason of this speech I liked not the young nobleman from that hour forward, believing him to be an atheist. Though, indeed, afterwards, I have had cause to see that he was in the right, more's the pity, for had it not been for him what would have become of my daughter?

But I will say nothing beforehand. _Summa_: I walked about the room in great displeasure at his words, while the young lord began to argue with my daughter upon witchcraft, now in Latin, and now in the vulgar tongue, as the words came into his mouth, and wanted to hear her mind about it. But she answered that she was a foolish thing, and could have no opinion on the matter; but that, nevertheless, she believed that what happened in the village could not be by natural means. Hereupon the maid called me out of the room (I forget what she wanted of me); but when I came back again my daughter was as red as scarlet, and the nobleman stood close before her. I therefore asked her, as soon as he had ridden off, whether anything had happened, which she at first denied, but afterwards owned that he had said to her while I was gone, that he knew but one person who could bewitch; and when she asked him who that person was, he caught hold of her hand and said, "It is yourself, sweet maid; for you have thrown a spell upon my heart, as I feel right well!" But that he said nothing further, but only gazed on her face with eager eyes, and this it was that made her so red.

But this is the way with maidens; they ever have their secrets if one's back is turned but for a minute; and the proverb--

"To drive a goose and watch a maid
Needs the devil himself to aid,"

is but too true, as will be shown hereafter, more's the pity!

CHAPTER XIV.

How old Seden disappeared all on a sudden--Item, how the great Gustavus Adolphus came to Pomerania, and took the fort at Peenemünde.

We were now left for some time in peace from witchcraft; unless, indeed, I reckon the caterpillars, which miserably destroyed my orchard, and which truly were a strange thing. For the trees blossomed so fair and sweetly, that one day as we were walking under them, and praising the almighty power of the most merciful God, my child said, "If the Lord goes on to bless us so abundantly, it will be Christmas Eve with us every night of next winter!" But things soon fell out far otherwise. For all in a moment the trees were covered with such swarms of caterpillars (great and small, and of every shape and colour), that one might have measured them by the bushel; and before long my poor trees looked like brooms; and the blessed fruit, which was so well set, all fell off, and was scarce good enough for the pigs. I do not choose to lay this to any one, though I had my own private thoughts upon the matter, and have them yet. However, my barley, whereof I had sown about three bushels out on the common, shot up bravely. On my field I had sown nothing, seeing that I dreaded the malice of Satan. Neither was corn at all plentiful throughout the parish, in part because they had sown no winter crops, and in part because the summer crops did not prosper. However, in all the villages a great supply of fish was caught by the mercy of God, especially herring; but they were very low in price. Moreover, they killed many seals; and at Whitsuntide I myself killed one as I walked by the sea with my daughter. The creature lay on a rock close to the water, snoring like a Christian. Thereupon I pulled off my shoes and drew near him softly, so that he heard me not, and then struck him over his nose with my staff (for a seal cannot bear much on his nose), so that he tumbled over into the water; but he was quite stunned, and I could easily kill him outright. It was a fat beast, though not very large; and we melted forty pots of train-oil out of his fat, which we put by for a winter store.

Meanwhile, however, something seized old Seden all at once, so that he wished to receive the Holy Sacrament. When I went to him,

he could give no reason for it; or perhaps he would give none for fear of his old Lizzie, who was always watching him with her squinting eyes, and would not leave the room. However, Zuter his little girl, a child near twelve years old, said that a few days before, while she was plucking grass for the cattle under the garden hedge by the road, she heard the husband and wife quarrelling violently again, and that the goodman threw in her teeth that he now knew of a certainty that she had a familiar spirit, and that he would straightway go and tell it to the priest. Albeit this is only a child's tale, it may be true for all that, seeing that children and fools, they say, speak the truth.

But be that as it may. _Summa:_ my old warden grew worse and worse; and though I visited him every morning and evening, as I use to do to my sick, in order to pray with him, and often observed that he had somewhat on his mind, nevertheless he could not disburthen himself of it, seeing that old Lizzie never left her post.

This went on for a while, when at last one day about noon, he sent to beg me to scrape a little silver off the new sacramental cup, because he had been told that he should get better if he took it mixed with the dung of fowls. For some time I would not consent, seeing that I straightway suspected that there was some devilish mischief behind it; but he begged and prayed, till I did as he would have me.

And lo and behold, he mended from that very hour, so that when I went to pray with him at evening, I found him already sitting on the bench with a bowl between his knees, out of which he was supping broth. However, he would not pray (which was strange, seeing that he used to pray so gladly, and often could not wait patiently for my coming, insomuch that he sent after me two or three times if I was not at hand, or elsewhere employed), but he told me he had prayed already, and that he would give me the cock, whose dung he had taken, for my trouble, as it was a fine large cock, and he had nothing better to offer for my Sunday's dinner. And as the poultry was by this time gone to roost, he went up to the perch which was behind the stove, and reached down the cock, and put it under the arm of the maid, who was just come to call me away.

Not for all the world, however, would I have eaten the cock, but I turned it out to breed. I went to him once more and asked whether I should give thanks to the Lord next Sunday for his recovery; whereupon he answered that I might do as I pleased in the matter. Hereat I shook my head, and left the house, resolving to send for him as soon as ever I should hear that his old Lizzie was from home (for she often went to fetch flax to spin from the sheriff). But mark what befell within a few days! We heard an outcry that old Seden was missing, and that no one could tell what had become of him. His wife thought he had gone up into the Streckelberg, whereupon the accursed witch ran howling to our house and asked my

daughter whether she had not seen anything of her goodman, seeing that she went up the mountain every day. My daughter said she had not; but, woe is me, she was soon to hear enough of him. For one morning, before sunrise, as she came down into the wood on her way back from her forbidden digging after amber, she heard a woodpecker (which, no doubt, was old Lizzie herself), crying so dolefully, close beside her, that she went in among the bushes to see what was the matter. There was the woodpecker, sitting on the ground before a bunch of hair, which was red, and just like what old Seden's had been, and as soon as it espied her it flew up with its beak full of the hair, and slipped into a hollow tree. While my daughter still stood looking at this devil's work, up came old Paasch, who also had heard the cries of the woodpecker, as he was cutting roofing shingles on the mountain, with his boy, and was likewise struck with horror when he saw the hair on the ground. At first they thought a wolf must have eaten him, and searched all about, but could not find a single bone. On looking up they fancied they saw something red at the very top of the tree, so they made the boy climb up, and he forthwith cried out that here, too, there was a great bunch of red hair, stuck to some leaves as if with pitch, but that it was not pitch, but something speckled red and white, like fish-guts; item, that the leaves all around, even where there was no hair, were stained and spotted, and had a very ill smell. Hereupon the lad, at his master's bidding, threw down the clotted branch, and they two below straightway judged that this was the hair and brains of old Seden, and that the devil had carried him off bodily, because he would not pray nor give thanks to the Lord for his recovery. I myself believed the same, and told it on the Sunday as a warning to the congregation. But further on it will be seen that the Lord had yet greater cause for giving him into the hands of Satan, inasmuch as he had been talked over by his wicked wife to renounce his Maker, in the hopes of getting better. Now, however, this devil's whore did as if her heart was broken, tearing out her red hair by whole handfuls when she heard about the woodpecker from my child and old Paasch, and bewailing that she was now a poor widow, and who was to take care of her for the future, &c.

Meanwhile we celebrated on this barren shore, as best we could and might, together with the whole Protestant Church, the 25th day mensis Junii, whereon, one hundred years ago, the Estates of the Holy Roman Empire laid their confession before the most high and mighty Emperor Carolus V., at Augsburg; and I preached a sermon on Matt. x. 32, of the right confession of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, whereupon the whole congregation came to the Sacrament. Now towards the evening of the self-same day, as I walked with my daughter by the sea-shore, we saw several hundred sail of ships, both great and small, round about Ruden, and plainly heard firing, whereupon we judged forthwith that this must be the most high and mighty king Gustavus Adolphus, who was now coming, as he had promised, to the aid of poor persecuted Christendom. While we were still debating a boat sailed towards us from Oie, [Footnote: Ruden and Oie, two small islands between

Usedom and Rügen.] wherein was Kate Berow her son, who is a farmer there, and was coming to see his old mother. The same told us that it really was the king, who had this morning run before Ruden with his fleet from Rügen; that a few men of Oie were fishing there at the time, and saw how he went ashore with his officers, and straightway bared his head and fell upon his knees. [Footnote: See also the *_Theatrum Europeum_*, p. 226 fl.]

Thus, then, most gracious God, did I Thy unworthy servant enjoy a still greater happiness and delight that blessed evening than I had done on the blessed morn; and any one may think that I delayed not for a moment to fall on my knees with my child, and to follow the example of the king; and God knows I never in my life prayed so fervently as that evening, whereon the Lord showed such a wondrous sign upon us as to cause the deliverer of His poor Christian people to come among them on the very day when they had everywhere called upon Him, on their knees, for His gracious help against the murderous wiles of the Pope and the devil. That night I could not sleep for joy, but went quite early in the morning to Damerow, where something had befallen Vithe his boy. I supposed that he, too, was bewitched; but this time it was not witchcraft, seeing that the boy had eaten something unwholesome in the forest. He could not tell what kind of berries they were, but the *_malum_*, which turned all his skin bright scarlet, soon passed over. As I therefore was returning home shortly after, I met a messenger from Peenemünde, whom his Majesty the high and mighty king Gustavus Adolphus had sent to tell the sheriff that on the 29th of June, at ten o'clock in the morning, he was to send three guides to meet his Majesty at Coserow, and to guide him through the woods to Swine, where the Imperialists were encamped. *_Item_*, he related how his Majesty had taken the fort at Peenemünde yesterday (doubtless the cause of the firing we heard last evening), and that the Imperialists had run away as fast as they could, and played the bush-ranger properly, for after setting their camp on fire they all fled into the woods and coppices, and part escaped to Wolgast and part to Swine.

Straightway I resolved in my joy to invent a *_carmen gratulatorium_* to his Majesty, whom, by the grace of Almighty God, I was to see, the which my little daughter might present to him. I accordingly proposed it to her as soon as I got home, and she straightway fell on my neck for joy, and then began to dance about the room. But when she had considered a little, she thought her clothes were not good enough to wear before his Majesty, and that I should buy her a blue silk gown, with a yellow apron, seeing that these were the Swedish colours, and would please his Majesty right well. For a long time I would not, seeing that I hate this kind of pride; but she teased me with her kisses and coaxing words, till I, like an old fool, said yes, and ordered my ploughman to drive her over to Wolgast to-day to buy the stuff. Wherefore I think that the just God, who hateth the proud and showeth mercy on the humble, did rightly chastise me for such pride. For I myself felt a sinful pleasure when she came back with

two women who were to help her to sew, and laid the stuff before me. Next day she set to work at sunrise to sew, and I composed my *_carmen_* the while. I had not got very far in it when the young Lord Rüdiger of Nienkerken came riding up, in order, as he said, to inquire whether his Majesty were indeed going to march through Coserow. And when I told him all I knew of the matter, *_item_*, informed him of our plan, he praised it exceedingly, and instructed my daughter (who looked more kindly upon him to-day than I altogether liked) how the Swedes use to pronounce the Latin, as *_ratscho_ pro _ratio_, _uet_ pro _ut_, _schis_ pro _scis_ &c.*, so that she might be able to answer his Majesty with all due readiness. He said, moreover, that he had held much converse with Swedes at Wittenberg, as well as at Griepswald, wherefore if she pleased they might act a short *_colloquium_*, wherein he would play the king. Hereupon he sat down on the bench before her, and they both began chattering together, which vexed me sore, especially when I saw that she made but small haste with her needle the while. But say, dear reader, what was I to do?--Wherefore I went my ways, and let them chatter till near noon, when the young lord at last took leave. But he promised to come again on Tuesday when the king was here, and believed that the whole island would flock together at Coserow. As soon as he was gone, seeing that my *_vena poetica_* (as may be easily guessed) was still stopped up, I had the horses put to and drove all over the parish, exhorting the people in every village to be at the Giant's Stone by Coserow at nine o'clock on Tuesday, and that they were all to fall on their knees as soon as they should see the king coming and that I knelt down; *_item_*, to join at once in singing the Ambrosian hymn of praise, which I should lead off as soon as the bells began to ring. This they all promised to do; and after I had again exhorted them to it on Sunday in church, and prayed to the Lord for his Majesty out of the fulness of my heart, we scarce could await the blessed Tuesday for joyful impatience.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the arrival of the high and mighty King Gustavus Adolphus, and what befell thereat.

Meanwhile I finished my *_carmen_* in *_metrum elegiacum_*, which my daughter transcribed (seeing that her handwriting is fairer than mine) and diligently learned, so that she might say it to his Majesty. *_Item_*, her clothes were gotten ready, and became her purely; and on Monday she went up to the Streckelberg, although the heat was such that the crows gasped on the hedges: for she wanted to gather flowers for a garland she designed to wear, and which was also to be blue and yellow. Towards evening she came home with her apron filled with all manner of flowers;

but her hair was quite wet, and hung all matted about her shoulders. (My God, my God, was everything to come together to destroy me, wretched man that I am!) I asked, therefore, where she had been that her hair was so wet and matted; whereupon she answered that she had gathered flowers round the Köpin, [Footnote: a small lake near the sea.] and from thence she had gone down to the sea-shore, where she had bathed in the sea, seeing that it was very hot and no one could see her. Thus, said she, jesting, she should appear before his Majesty to-morrow doubly a clean maid. This displeased me at the time, and I looked grave, although I said naught.

Next morning at six o'clock all the people were already at the Giant's Stone, men, women, and children. *_Summa_*, everybody that was able to walk was there. At eight o'clock my daughter was already dressed in all her bravery, namely, a blue silken gown, with a yellow apron and kerchief, and a yellow hair-net, with a garland of blue and yellow flowers round her head. It was not long before my young lord arrived, finely dressed as became a nobleman. He wanted to inquire, as he said, by which road I should go up to the Stone with my daughter, seeing that his father, Hans von Nienkerken, *_item_*, Wittich Appelman, and the Lepels of Gnitze, were also going, and that there was much people on all the high roads, as though a fair was being held. But I straightway perceived that all he wanted was to see my daughter, inasmuch as he presently occupied himself about her, and began chattering with her in the Latin again. He made her repeat to him the *_carmen_* to his Majesty; whereupon he, in the person of the king, answered her, "*_Dulcissima et venustissima puella, quæ mihi in coloribus c li, ut angelus Domini appares, utinam semper mecum esses, nunquam mihi male caderei_*;" whereupon she grew red, as likewise did I, but from vexation, as may be easily guessed. I therefore begged that his lordship would but go forward toward the Stone, seeing that my daughter had yet to help me on with my surplice; whereupon, however, he answered, that he would wait for us the while in the chamber, and that we might then go together. *_Summa_*: I blessed myself from this young lord; but what could I do? As he would not go, I was forced to wink at it all: and before long we went up to the Stone, where I straightway chose three sturdy fellows from the crowd, and sent them up the steeple that they might begin to ring the bells as soon as they should see me get up upon the Stone and wave my napkin. This they promised to do, and straightway departed; whereupon I sat down on the Stone with my daughter, thinking that the young lord would surely stand apart, as became his dignity; albeit he did not, but sat down with us on the Stone. And we three sat there all alone, and all the folk looked at us, but none drew near to see my child's fine clothes, not even the young lasses, as is their wont to do; but this I did not observe till afterwards, when I heard how matters stood with us even then. Towards nine o'clock, Hans von Nienkerken and Wittich Appelman galloped up, and old Nienkerken called to his son in an angry voice; and seeing that the young lord heard him not, he rode up to the Stone, and cried

out so loud that all the folk might hear, "Can'st thou not hearken, boy, when thy father calls thee?" Whereupon Rüdiger followed him in much displeasure, and we saw from a distance how the old lord seemed to threaten his son, and spat out before him; but knew not what this might signify: we were to learn it soon enough, though, more's the pity! Soon after the two Lepels of Gnitze [Footnote: a peninsula in Usedom] came from the Damerow; and the noblemen saluted one another on the green sward close beside us, but without looking on us. And I heard the Lepels say that naught could yet be seen of his Majesty, but that the coast-guard fleet around Ruden was in motion, and that several hundred ships were sailing this way. As soon as this news was known, all the folk ran to the sea-shore (which is but a step from the Stone); and the noblemen rode thither too, all save Wittich, who had dismounted, and who, when he saw that I sent old Paasch his boy up into a tall oak-tree to look out for the king, straightway busied himself about my daughter again, who now sat all alone upon the Stone: "Why had she not taken his huntsman? and whether she would not change her mind on the matter and have him now, or else come into service with him (the sheriff) himself? for that if she would not, he believed she might be sorry for it one day." Whereupon she answered him (as she told me), that there was but one thing she was sorry for, namely, that his lordship would take so much useless pains upon her; whereupon she rose with all haste and came to where I stood under the tree, looking after the lad who was climbing up it. But our old Ilse said that he swore a great curse when my daughter turned her back upon him, and went straightway into the alder-grove close by the high road, where stood the old witch Lizzie Kolken.

Meanwhile I went with my daughter to the sea-shore and found it quite true that the whole fleet was sailing over from Ruden and Oie towards Wollin, and several ships passed so close before us that we could see the soldiers standing upon them and the flashing of their arms. Item, we heard the horses neigh and the soldiery laugh. On one ship, too, they were drumming, and on another cattle lowed and sheep bleated. Whilst we yet gazed we saw smoke come out from one of the ships, followed by a great noise, and presently we were aware of the ball bounding over the water, which foamed and splashed on either side, and coming straight towards us. Hereupon the crowd ran away on every side with loud cries, and we plainly heard the soldiery in the ships laugh thereat. But the ball flew up and struck into the midst of an oak hard by Paasch his boy, so that nearly two cart-loads of boughs fell to the earth with a great crash, and covered all the road by which his Majesty was to come. Hereupon the boy would stop no longer in the tree, however much I exhorted him thereto, but cried out to us as he came down that a great troop of soldiers was marching out of the forest by Damerow, and that likely enough the king was among them. Hereupon the sheriff ordered the road to be cleared forthwith, and this was some time a-doing, seeing that the thick boughs were stuck fast in the trees all around; the nobles, as soon as all was made ready, would have ridden to meet his

Majesty, but stayed still on the little greensward, because we already heard the noise of horses, carriages, and voices close to us in the forest.

It was not long before the cannons broke through the brushwood with the three guides seated upon them. And seeing that one of them was known to me (it was Stoffer Krauthahn, of Peenemünde), I drew near and begged him that he would tell me when the king should come. But he answered that he was going forward with the cannon to Coserow, and that I was only to watch for a tall dark man, with a hat and feather and a gold chain round his neck, for that that was the king, and that he rode next after the great standard whereon was a yellow lion.

Wherefore I narrowly watched the procession as it wound out of the forest. And next after the artillery came the Finnish and Lapland bowmen, who went clothed all in furs, although it was now the height of summer, whereat I greatly wondered. After these there came much people, but I know not what they were. Presently I espied over the hazel-tree which stood in my way, so that I could not see everything as soon as it came forth out of the coppice, the great flag with the lion on it, and, behind that, the head of a very dark man with a golden chain round his neck, whereupon straightway I judged this must be the king. I therefore waved my napkin toward the steeple, whereupon the bells forthwith rang out, and while the dark man rode nearer to us, I pulled off my skull-cap, fell upon my knees, and led the Ambrosian hymn of praise, and all the people plucked their hats from their heads and knelt down on the ground all around singing after me; men, women, and children, save only the nobles, who stood still on the greensward, and did not take off their hats and behave with attention until they saw that his Majesty drew in his horse. (It was a coal-black charger, and stopped with its two forefeet right upon my field, which I took as a sign of good fortune.) When we had finished, the sheriff quickly got off his horse, and would have approached the king with his three guides who followed after him; *_item_*, I had taken my child by the hand, and would also have drawn near to the king. Howbeit, his Majesty motioned away the sheriff and beckoned us to approach, whereupon I wished his Majesty joy in the Latin tongue, and extolled his magnanimous heart, seeing that he had deigned to visit German ground for the protection and aid of poor persecuted Christendom; and praised it as a sign from God that such had happened on this the highest festival of our poor Church, and I prayed his Majesty graciously to receive what my daughter desired to present to him; whereupon his Majesty looked on her and smiled pleasantly. Such gracious bearing made her bold again, albeit she trembled visibly just before, and she reached him a blue and yellow wreath whereon lay the *_carmen_*, saying, "*_Accipe hanc vilem coronam et hæ_*," whereupon she began to recite the *_carmen_*. Meanwhile his Majesty grew more and more gracious, looking now on her and now on the *_carmen_*, and nodded with especial kindness towards the end, which was as follows:--

"Tempus erit, quo tu reversus ab hostibus ultor
Intrabis patriam libera regna meæ
Tunc meliora student nostræ tibi carmina musæ
Tunc tua, maxime rex, Martia facta canam.
Tu modo versiculis ne spernas vilibus ausum
Auguror et res est ista futura brevi!
Sis felix, fortisque diu, vive optime princeps,
Omnia, et ut possis vincere, dura. Vale!"

[Footnote:

Thou shalt return chastier of the foe,
To the freed kingdoms of my native land!
Then shall our song with loftier cadence flow,
Boasting the deeds of thy heroic hand!
Scorn not, meanwhile, the feeble lines which thus
Thy future glory and success foretell.
Live, prince beloved! be brave, be prosperous;
Conquer, howe'er opposed,--and fare thee well!]

As soon as she held her peace his Majesty said, "_Propius accedas, patria virgo, ut te osculer_;" whereupon she drew near to his horse, blushing deeply. I thought he would only have kissed her forehead, as potentates commonly use to do; but not at all, he kissed her lips with a loud smack, and the long feathers on his hat drooped over her neck, so that I was quite afraid for her again. But he soon raised up his head, and taking off his gold chain, whereon dangled his own effigy, he hung it round my child's neck with these words, "_Hocce tuæ pulchritudini! et si favente Deo redux fuero victor, promissum carmen et præerea duo oscula exspecto_."

Hereupon the sheriff, with his three men, again came forward and bowed down to the ground before his Majesty. But as he knew no Latin, _item_, no Italian nor French, I had to act as interpreter. For his Majesty inquired how far it was to Swine, and whether there was still much foreign soldiery there? And the sheriff thought there were still about 200 Croats in the camp. Whereupon his Majesty spurred on his horse, and, nodding graciously, cried "_Valete_!" And now came the rest of the troops, about 3000 strong, out of the coppice, which likewise had a valiant bearing, and attempted no fooleries, as troops are wont to do, when they passed by us and the women, but marched on in honest quietness, and we followed the train until the forest beyond Coserow, where we commended it to the care of the Almighty, and every one went on his way home.

CHAPTER XVI.

_How little Mary Paasch was sorely plagued of the devil, and the

whole parish fell off from me._

Before I proceed any further, I will first mark that the illustrious king Gustavus Adolphus, as we presently heard, had cut down the 300 Croats at Swine, and was thence gone by sea to Stettin. May God be for ever gracious to him! Amen.

But my sorrows increased from day to day, seeing that the devil now played pranks such as he never had played before. I had begun to think that the ears of God had hearkened to our ardent prayers, but it pleased Him to try us yet more hardly than ever. For, a few days after the arrival of the most illustrious king Gustavus Adolphus, it was bruited about that my child her little god-daughter was possessed of the evil one, and tumbled about most piteously on her bed, insomuch that no one was able to hold her. My child straightway went to see her little god-daughter, but presently came weeping home. Old Paasch would not suffer her even to come near her, but railed at her very angrily, and said that she should never come within his doors again, as his child had got the mischief from the white roll which she had given her that morning. It was true that my child had given her a roll, seeing that the maid had been, the day before, to Wolgast, and had brought back a napkin full of them.

Such news vexed me sore, and after putting on my cassock I went to old Paasch his house, to exorcise the foul fiend, and to remove such disgrace from my child. I found the old man standing on the floor by the cockloft steps, weeping; and after I had spoken "The peace of God," I asked him first of all, whether he really believed that his little Mary had been bewitched by means of the roll which my child had given her? He said "Yes!" And when I answered, That in that case I also must have been bewitched, _item_, Pagel his little girl, seeing that we both had eaten of the rolls, he was silent, and asked me with a sigh, whether I would not go into the room, and see for myself how matters stood. I then entered with "The peace of God," and found six people standing round little Mary her bed; her eyes were shut, and she was as stiff as a board; wherefore Kit Wels (who was a young and sturdy fellow) seized the little child by one leg, and held her out like a hedge-stake, so that I might see how the devil plagued her. I now said a prayer, and Satan, perceiving that a servant of Christ was come, began to tear the child so fearfully that it was pitiful to behold; for she flung about her hands and feet, so that four strong men were scarce able to hold her; _item_, she was afflicted with extraordinary risings and fallings of her belly, as if a living creature were therein, so that at last the old witch Lizzie Kolken sat herself upon her belly, whereupon the child seemed to be somewhat better, and I told her to repeat the Apostles' Creed, so as to see whether it really were the devil who possessed her. [Footnote: It was imagined in those fearful times that when the sick person could repeat the three articles of belief, and especially some passages from the Bible bearing

particular reference to the work of redemption, he was not possessed, since "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (I Cor. xii. 3).] She straightway grew worse than before, and began to gnash her teeth, to roll her eyes, and to strike so hard with her hands and feet that she flung her father, who held one of her legs, right into the middle of the room, and then struck her foot so hard against the bedstead that the blood flowed, and Lizzie Kolken was thrown about on her belly, as though she had been in a swing. And as I ceased not, but exorcised Satan that he should leave her, she began to howl and to bark like a dog, _item_, to laugh, and spoke at last, with a gruff bass voice like an old man's, "I will not depart." But he should soon have been forced to depart out of her, had not both father and mother besought me, by God's holy Sacrament, to leave their poor child in peace, seeing that nothing did her any good, but rather made her worse. I was therefore forced to desist, and only admonished the parents to seek for help like the Canaanitish woman, in true repentance and incessant prayer, and with her to sigh in constant faith, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed of a devil" (Matt. xv.); that the heart of our Lord would then melt, so that He would have mercy on their child, and command Satan to depart from her.

Item, I promised to pray for the little child on the following Sunday with the whole congregation, and told them to bring her, if it were any ways possible, to the church, seeing that the ardent prayer of the whole congregation has power to rise beyond the clouds. This they promised to do, and I then went home sorely troubled, where I soon learned that she was somewhat better; thus it still is sure that Satan hates nothing so much, after the Lord Jesus, as the servants of the Gospel. But wait, and I shall even yet "bruise thy head with my heel" (Gen. iii.); naught shall avail thee.

Howbeit, before the blessed Sunday came I perceived that many of my people went out of my way, both in the village and elsewhere in the parish, where I went to visit sundry sick folks. When I went to Uekeritze to see young Tittelwitz, there even befell me as follows. Claus Pieper the peasant stood in his yard chopping wood, and on seeing me he flung the axe out of his hand so hastily that it stuck in the ground, and he ran towards the pig-stye, making the sign of the cross. I motioned him to stop, and asked why he thus ran from me his confessor? Whether, peradventure, he also believed that my daughter had bewitched her little godchild? _Ille_. Yes, he believed it, because the whole parish did. _Ego_. Why, then, had she been so kind to her formerly, and kept her like a sister, through the worst of the famine? _Ille_. This was not the only mischief she had done. _Ego_. What, then, had she done besides? _Ille_. That was all one to me. _Ego_. He should tell me, or I would complain to the magistrate. _Ille_. That I might do, if I pleased. Whereupon he went his way insolently. Any one may guess that I was not slow to inquire everywhere, what people thought my daughter had done; but no one would tell me anything, and I might

have grieved to death at such evil reports. Moreover, not one child came during this whole week to school to my daughter; and when I sent out the maid to ask the reason, she brought back word that the children were ill, or that the parents wanted them for their work. I thought and thought, but all to no purpose, until the blessed Sunday came round, when I meant to have held a great Sacrament, seeing that many people had made known their intention to come to the Lord's Table. It seemed strange to me that I saw no one standing, as was their wont, about the church door; I thought, however, that they might have gone into the houses. But when I went into the church with my daughter, there were not more than six people assembled, among whom was old Lizzie Kolken; and the accursed witch no sooner saw my daughter follow me, than she made the sign of the cross and ran out of the door under the steeple; whereupon the five others, among them mine own churchwarden Claus Bulken (I had not appointed any one in the room of old Seden), followed her. I was so horror-struck that my blood curdled, and I began to tremble, so that I fell with my shoulder against the confessional. My child, to whom I had as yet told nothing, in order to spare her, then asked me, "Father, what is the matter with all the people? are they, too, bewitched?" Whereupon I came to myself again, and went into the churchyard to look after them. But all were gone save my churchwarden Claus Bulken, who stood under the lime-tree whistling to himself. I stepped up to him, and asked what had come to the people? whereupon he answered, he could not tell; and when I asked him again, why, then, he himself had left the church, he said, What was he to do there alone, seeing that no collection could be made? I then implored him to tell me the truth, and what horrid suspicion had arisen against me in the parish? But he answered, I should very soon find it out for myself; and he jumped over the wall and went into old Lizzie her house, which stands close by the churchyard.

My child had made ready some veal broth for dinner, for which I mostly use to leave everything else; but I could not swallow one spoonful, but sat resting my head on my hand, and doubted whether I should tell her or no. Meanwhile the old maid came in, ready for a journey, and with a bundle in her hand, and begged me with tears to give her leave to go. My poor child turned pale as a corpse, and asked in amaze what had come to her? but she merely answered, "Nothing!" and wiped her eyes with her apron. When I recovered my speech, which had well-nigh left me at seeing that this faithful old creature was also about to forsake me, I began to question her why she wished to go; she who had dwelt with me so long, and who would not forsake us even in the great famine, but had faithfully borne up against it, and indeed had humbled me by her faith, and had exhorted me to stand out gallantly to the last, for which I should be grateful to her as long as I lived. Hereupon she merely wept and sobbed yet more, and at length brought out that she still had an old mother of eighty, living in Liepe, and that she wished to go and nurse her till her end. Hereupon my daughter jumped up, and answered with tears, "Alas, old Ilse, why wilt thou leave us, for thy mother is with thy brother! Do but tell me why thou wilt

forsake me, and what harm have I done thee, that I may make it good to thee again." But she hid her face in her apron, and sobbed, and could not get out a single word; whereupon my child drew away the apron from her face, and would have stroked her cheeks, to make her speak. But when Ilse saw this she struck my poor child's hand, and cried "Ugh!" spat out before her, and straightway went out at the door. Such a thing she had never done even when my child was a little girl, and we were both so shocked that we could neither of us say a word.

Before long my poor child gave a loud cry, and cast herself upon the bench, weeping and wailing, "What has happened, what has happened?" I therefore thought I ought to tell her what I had heard, namely, that she was looked upon as a witch. Whereat she began to smile instead of weeping any more, and ran out of the door to overtake the maid, who had already left the house, as we had seen. She returned after an hour crying out that all the people in the village had run away from her, when she would have asked them whither the maid was gone. _Item_, the little children, for whom she had kept school, had screamed, and had hidden themselves from her: also no one would answer her a single word, but all spat out before her, as the maid had done. On her way home she had seen a boat on the water, and had run as fast as she could to the shore, and called with might and main after old Ilse, who was in the boat. But she had taken no notice of her, not even once to look round after her, but had motioned her to be gone. And now she went on to weep and to sob the whole day and the whole night, so that I was more miserable than even in the time of the great famine. But the worst was yet to come, as will be shown in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

How my poor child was taken up for a witch, and carried to Pudgla.

The next day, Monday, the 12th July, at about eight in the morning, while we sat in our grief, wondering who could have prepared such great sorrow for us, and speedily agreed that it could be none other than the accursed witch Lizzie Kolken, a coach with four horses drove quickly up to the door, wherein sat six fellows, who straightway all jumped out. Two went and stood at the front, two at the back door, and two more, one of whom was the constable Jacob Knake, came into the room, and handed me a warrant from the sheriff for the arrest of my daughter, as in common repute of being a wicked witch, and for her examination before the criminal court. Any one may guess how my heart sunk within me when I read this. I dropped to the earth like a felled tree, and when I came to myself my child had thrown herself upon me with loud

cries, and her hot tears ran down over my face. When she saw that I came to myself, she began to praise God therefore with a loud voice, and essayed to comfort me, saying that she was innocent, and should appear with a clean conscience before her judges.

Item, she repeated to me the beautiful text from Matthew, chap. v.: "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake."

And she begged me to rise and to throw my cassock over my doublet, and go with her, for that without me she would not suffer herself to be carried before the sheriff. Meanwhile, however, all the village--men, women, and children--had thronged together before my door; but they remained quiet, and only peeped in at the windows as though they would have looked right through the house. When we had both made us ready, and the constable, who at first would not take me with them, had thought better of it, by reason of a good fee which my daughter gave him, we walked to the coach; but I was so helpless that I could not get up into it.

Old Paasch, when he saw this, came and helped me up into the coach, saying, "God comfort ye! Alas, that you should ever see your child come to this!" and he kissed my hand to take leave.

A few others came up to the coach, and would have done likewise; but I besought them not to make my heart still heavier, and to take Christian charge of my house and my affairs until I should return. Also to pray diligently for me and my daughter, so that the evil one, who had long gone about our village like a roaring lion, and who now threatened to devour me, might not prevail against us, but might be forced to depart from me and from my child as from our guileless Saviour in the wilderness. But to this none answered a word; and I heard right well, as we drove away, that many spat out after us, and one said (my child thought it was Berow her voice), "We would far sooner lay fire under thy coats than pray for thee." We were still sighing over such words as these, when we came near to the churchyard, and there sat the accursed witch Lizzie Kolken at the door of her house with her hymn-book in her lap, screeching out at the top of her voice, "God the Father, dwell with us," as we drove past her: the which vexed my poor child so sore that she swooned, and fell like one dead upon me. I begged the driver to stop, and called to old Lizzie to bring us a pitcher of water; but she did as though she had not heard me, and went on to sing so that it rang again. Whereupon the constable jumped down, and at my request ran back to my house to fetch a pitcher of water; and he presently came back with it, and the people after him, who began to say aloud that my child's bad conscience had stricken her, and that she had now betrayed herself. Wherefore I thanked God when she came to life again, and we could leave the village. But at Uekeritze it was just the same, for all the people had flocked together, and were standing on the green before Labahn his house when we went by.

Nevertheless, they were quiet enough as we drove past, albeit some few cried, "How can it be, how can it be?" I heard nothing else. But in the forest near the watermill the miller and all his men ran out and shouted, laughing, "Look at the witch, look at the witch!" Whereupon one of the men struck at my poor child with the sack which he held in his hand, so that she turned quite white, and the flour flew all about the coach like a cloud. When I rebuked him, the wicked rogue laughed and said, That if no other smoke than that ever came under her nose, so much the better for her. *_Item_*, it was worse in Pudgla than even at the mill. The people stood so thick on the hill, before the castle, that we could scarce force our way through, and the sheriff caused the death-bell in the castle tower to toll as an *_avisum_*. Whereupon more and more people came running out of the ale-houses and cottages. Some cried out, "Is that the witch?" Others, again, "Look at the parson's witch! the parson's witch!" and much more, which for very shame I may not write. They scraped up the mud out of the gutter which ran from the castle kitchen and threw it upon us; *_item_*, a great stone, the which struck one of the horses so that it shied, and belike would have upset the coach had not a man sprung forward and held it in. All this happened before the castle gates, where the sheriff stood smiling and looking on, with a heron's feather stuck in his grey hat. But so soon as the horse was quiet again he came to the coach and mocked at my child, saying, "See, young maid, thou wouldest not come to me, and here thou art nevertheless!" Whereupon she answered, "Yea, I come; and may you one day come before your Judge as I come before you;" whereunto I said, Amen, and asked him how his lordship could answer before God and man for what he had done to a wretched man like myself and to my child? But he answered, saying, Why had I come with her? And when I told him of the rude people here, *_item_*, of the churlish miller's man, he said that it was not his fault, and threatened the people all around with his fist, for they were making a great noise. Thereupon he commanded my child to get down and to follow him, and went before her into the castle; motioned the constable, who would have gone with them, to stay at the foot of the steps, and began to mount the winding staircase to the upper rooms alone with my child.

But she whispered me privately, "Do not leave me, father;" and I presently followed softly after them. Hearing by their voices in which chamber they were, I laid my ear against the door to listen. And the villain offered to her that if she would love him naught should harm her, saying he had power to save her from the people; but that if she would not, she should go before the court next day, and she might guess herself how it would fare with her, seeing that he had many witnesses to prove that she had played the wanton with Satan, and had suffered him to kiss her. Hereupon she was silent, and only sobbed, which the arch rogue took as a good sign, and went on, "If you have had Satan himself for a sweetheart, you surely may love me." And he went to her and would have taken her in his arms, as I perceived; for she gave a loud scream, and flew to the door; but he held her fast, and begged and

threatened as the devil prompted him. I was about to go in when I heard her strike him in the face, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan," so that he let her go. Whereupon she ran out at the door so suddenly that she threw me on the ground, and fell upon me with a loud cry. Hereat the sheriff, who had followed her, started, but presently cried out, "Wait, thou prying parson, I will teach thee to listen!" and ran out and beckoned to the constable who stood on the steps below. He bade him first shut me up in one dungeon, seeing that I was an eavesdropper, and then return and thrust my child into another. But he thought better of it when he had come half way down the winding-stair, and said he would excuse me this time, and that the constable might let me go, and only lock up my child very fast, and bring the key to him, seeing she was a stubborn person, as he had seen at the very first hearing which he had given her.

Hereupon my poor child was torn from me, and I fell in a swoond upon the steps. I know not how I got down them; but when I came to myself, I was in the constable his room, and his wife was throwing water in my face. There I passed the night sitting in a chair, and sorrowed more than I prayed, seeing that my faith was greatly shaken, and the Lord came not to strengthen it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the first trial, and what came thereof.

Next morning, as I walked up and down in the court, seeing that I had many times asked the constable in vain to lead me to my child (he would not even tell me where she lay), and for very disquietude I had at last begun to wander about there; about six o'clock there came a coach from Uzdom, [Footnote: Or Usedom, a small town which gives its name to the whole island.] wherein sat his worship, Master Samuel Pieper, *_consul dirigens_*, *_item_*, the *_camerarius_* Gebhard Wenzel, and a *_scriba_*, whose name, indeed, I heard, but have forgotten it again; and my daughter forgot it too, albeit in other things she has an excellent memory, and, indeed, told me most of what follows, for my old head well-nigh burst, so that I myself could remember but little. I straightway went up to the coach, and begged that the worshipful court would suffer me to be present at the trial, seeing that my daughter was yet in her nonage, but which the sheriff, who meanwhile had stepped up to the coach from the terrace, whence he had seen all, had denied me. But his worship Master Samuel Pieper, who was a little round man, with a fat paunch, and a beard mingled with grey hanging down to his middle, reached me his hand, and condoled with me like a Christian in my trouble: I might come into court in God's name; and he wished with all his heart that all whereof my daughter was fyled

might prove to be foul lies. Nevertheless I had still to wait full two hours before their worships came down the winding stair again. At last towards nine o'clock I heard the constable moving about the chairs and benches in the judgment chamber; and as I conceived that the time was now come, I went in and sat myself down on a bench. No one, however, was yet there, save the constable and his young daughter, who was wiping the table, and held a rosebud between her lips. I was fain to beg her to give it me, so that I might have it to smell to; and I believe that I should have been carried dead out of the room that day if I had not had it. God is thus able to preserve our lives even by means of a poor flower, if so He wills it!

At length their worships came in and sat round the table, whereupon _Dom. Consul_ motioned the constable to fetch in my child. Meanwhile he asked the sheriff whether he had put _Rea_ in chains, and when he said No, he gave him such a reprimand that it went through my very marrow. But the sheriff excused himself, saying that he had not done so from regard to her quality, but had locked her up in so fast a dungeon, that she could not possibly escape therefrom. Whereupon _Dom. Consul_ answered that much is possible to the devil, and that they would have to answer for it should _Rea_ escape. This angered the sheriff, and he replied that if the devil could convey her through walls seven feet thick, and through three doors, he could very easily break her chains too. Whereupon _Dom. Consul_ said that hereafter he would look at the prison himself; and I think that the sheriff had been so kind only because he yet hoped (as, indeed, will hereafter be shown) to talk over my daughter to let him have his will of her.

And now the door opened, and my poor child came in with the constable, but walking backwards, [Footnote: This ridiculous proceeding always took place at the first examination of a witch, as it was imagined that she would otherwise bewitch the judges with her looks. On this occasion indeed such an event was not unlikely.] and without her shoes, the which she was forced to leave without. The fellow had seized her by her long hair, and thus dragged her up to the table, when first she was to turn round and look upon her judges. He had a vast deal to say in the matter, and was in every way a bold and impudent rogue, as will soon be shown. After _Dom. Consul_ had heaved a deep sigh, and gazed at her from head to foot, he first asked her her name, and how old she was; _item_, if she knew why she was summoned before them? On the last point she answered that the sheriff had already told her father the reason; that she wished not to wrong any one, but thought that the sheriff himself had brought upon her the repute of a witch, in order to gain her to his wicked will. Hereupon she told all his ways with her, from the very first, and how he would by all means have had her for his housekeeper; and that when she would not (although he had many times come himself to her father his house), one day, as he went out of the door, he had muttered in his beard, "I will have her, despite of all!"

which their servant Claus Neels had heard, as he stood in the stable; and he had also sought to gain his ends by means of an ungodly woman, one Lizzie Kolken, who had formerly been in his service; that this woman, belike, had contrived the spells which they laid to her charge: she herself knew nothing of witchcraft; _item_, she related what the sheriff had done to her the evening before, when she had just come, and when he for the first time spoke out plainly, thinking that she was then altogether in his power: nay, more, that he had come to her that very night again, in her dungeon, and had made her the same offers, saying that he would set her free if she would let him have his will of her; and that when she denied him, he had struggled with her, whereupon she had screamed aloud, and had scratched him across the nose, as might yet be seen, whereupon he had left her; wherefore she would not acknowledge the sheriff as her judge, and trusted in God to save her from the hand of her enemies, as of old He had saved the chaste Susannah.

When she now held her peace amid loud sobs, _Dom. Consul_ started up after he had looked, as we all did, at the sheriff's nose, and had in truth espied the scar upon it, and cried out in amaze, "Speak, for God His sake, speak, what is this that I hear of your lordship?" Whereupon the sheriff, without changing colour, answered, that although, indeed, he was not called upon to say anything to their worships, seeing that he was the head of the court, and that _Rea_, as appeared from numberless _indicia_, was a wicked witch, and therefore could not bear witness against him or any one else; he, nevertheless, would speak, so as to give no cause of scandal to the court; that all the charges brought against him by this person were foul lies; it was, indeed, true, that he would have hired her for a housekeeper, whereof he stood greatly in need, seeing that his old Dorothy was already growing infirm; it was also true that he had yesterday questioned her in private, hoping to get her to confess by fair means, whereby her sentence would be softened, inasmuch as he had pity on her great youth; but that he had not said one naughty word to her, nor had he been to her in the night; and that it was his little lap-dog, called Below, which had scratched him, while he played with it that very morning; that his old Dorothy could bear witness to this, and that the cunning witch had only made use of this wile to divide the court against itself, thereby, and with the devil's help, to gain her own advantage, inasmuch as she was a most cunning creature, as the court would soon find out.

Hereupon I plucked up a heart, and declared that all my daughter had said was true, and that the evening before I myself had heard, through the door, how his lordship had made offers to her, and would have done wantonness with her; _item_, that he had already sought to kiss her once at Coserow; _item_, the troubles which his lordship had formerly brought upon me in the matter of the first-fruits.

Howbeit the sheriff presently talked me down, saying, that if I

had slandered him, an innocent man, in church, from the pulpit, as the whole congregation could bear witness, I should doubtless find it easy to do as much here, before the court; not to mention that a father could, in no case, be a witness for his own child.

But _Dom. Consul_ seemed quite confounded, and was silent, and leaned his head on the table, as in deep thought. Meanwhile the impudent constable began to finger his beard from under his arm; and _Dom. Consul_, thinking it was a fly, struck at him with his hand, without even looking up; but when he felt the constable his hand, he jumped up and asked him what he wanted? whereupon the fellow answered, "Oh, only a louse was creeping there, and I would have caught it."

At such impudence his worship was so exceeding wroth that he struck the constable on the mouth, and ordered him, on pain of heavy punishment, to leave the room.

Hereupon he turned to the sheriff, and cried angrily, "Why, in the name of all the ten devils, is it thus your lordship keeps the constable in order? and truly, in this whole matter there is something which passes my understanding." But the sheriff answered, "Not so; should you not understand it all when you think upon the eels?"

Hereat _Dom. Consul_ of a sudden turned ghastly pale, and began to tremble, as it appeared to me, and called the sheriff aside into another chamber. I have never been able to learn what that about the eels could mean.

Meanwhile _Dominus Camerarius_ Gebhard Wenzel sat biting his pen and looking furiously--now at me, and now at my child, but said not a word; neither did he answer _Scriba_, who often whispered somewhat into his ear, save by a growl. At length both their worships came back into the chamber together, and _Dom. Consul_, after he and the sheriff had seated themselves, began to reproach my poor child violently, saying that she had sought to make a disturbance in the worshipful court; that his lordship had shown him the very dog which had scratched his nose, and that, moreover, the fact had been sworn to by the old housekeeper.

(Truly _she_ was not likely to betray him, for the old harlot had lived with him for years, and she had a good big boy by him, as will be seen hereafter.)

Item, he said that so many _indicia_ of her guilt had come to light, that it was impossible to believe anything she might say; she was therefore to give glory to God, and openly to confess everything, so as to soften her punishment; whereby she might perchance, in pity for her youth, escape with life, &c.

Hereupon he put his spectacles on his nose, and began to cross-question her, during near four hours, from a paper which he

held in his hand. These were the main articles, as far as we both can remember:

Q . Whether she could bewitch?--_R_ . No; she knew nothing of witchcraft.

Q . Whether she could charm?--_R_ . Of that she knew as little.

Q . Whether she had ever been on the Blocksberg?--_R_ . That was too far off for her; she knew few hills save the Streckelberg, where she had been very often.

Q . What had she done there?--_R_ . She had looked out over the sea, or gathered flowers; _item_ , at times carried home an apronful of dry brushwood.

Q . Whether she had ever called upon the devil there?--_R_ . That had never come into her mind.

Q . Whether, then, the devil had appeared to her there, uncalled?--R. God defend her from such a thing.

Q . So she could not bewitch?--_R_ . No.

Q . What, then, befell Kit Zuter his spotted cow, that it suddenly died in her presence?--_R_ . She did not know; and that was a strange question.

Q . Then it would be as strange a question, why Katie Berow her little pig had died?--_R_ . Assuredly; she wondered what they would lay to her charge.

Q . Then she had not bewitched them?--_R_ . No; God forbid it.

Q . Why, then, if she were innocent, had she promised old Katie another little pig, when her sow should litter?--_R_ . She did that out of kind-heartedness. (And hereupon she began to weep bitterly, and said she plainly saw that she had to thank old Lizzie Kolken for all this, inasmuch as she had often threatened her when she would not fulfil all her greedy desires, for she wanted everything that came in her way; moreover, that Lizzie had gone all about the village when the cattle were bewitched, persuading the people that if only a pure maid pulled a few hairs out of the beasts' tails they would get better. That she pitied them, and knowing herself to be a maid, went to help them; and indeed, at first it cured them, but latterly not.)

Q . What cattle had she cured?--_R_ . Zabel his red cow; _item_ , Witthan her pig, and old Lizzie's own cow.

Q . Why could she afterwards cure them no more?--_R_ .

She did not know, but thought--albeit she had no wish to fyle any one--that old Lizzie Kolken, who for many a long year had been in common repute as a witch, had done it all, and bewitched the cows in her name and then charmed them back again, as she pleased, only to bring her to misfortune.

Q. Why, then, had old Lizzie bewitched her own cow, _item_, suffered her own pig to die, if it was she that had made all the disturbance in the village, and could really charm?--_R_. She did not know; but belike there was some one (and here she looked at the sheriff) who paid her double for it all.

Q. It was in vain that she sought to shift the guilt from off herself; had she not bewitched old Paasch his crop, nay, even her own father's, and caused it to be trodden down by the devil, _item_, conjured all the caterpillars into her father's orchard?--_R_. The question was almost as monstrous as the deed would have been. There sat her father, and his worship might ask him whether she ever had shown herself an undutiful child to him. (Hereupon I would have risen to speak, but _Dom. Consul_ suffered me not to open my mouth, but went on with his examination; whereupon I remained silent and downcast.)

Q. Whether she did likewise deny that it was through her malice that the woman Witthan had given birth to a devil's imp, which straightway started up and flew out at the window, so that when the midwife sought for it it had disappeared?--_R_. Truly she did; and indeed she had all the days of her life done good to the people instead of harm, for during the terrible famine she had often taken the bread out of her own mouth to share it among the others, especially the little children. To this the whole parish must needs bear witness, if they were asked; whereas witches and warlocks always did evil and no good to men, as our Lord Jesus taught (Matt. xii.), when the Pharisees blasphemed Him, saying that He cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils; hence his worship might see whether she could in truth be a witch.

Q. He would soon teach her to talk of blasphemies; he saw that her tongue was well hung; but she must answer the questions he asked her, and say nothing more. The question was not what good she had done to the poor, but _wherewithal_ she had done it? She must now show how she and her father had of a sudden grown so rich that she could go pranking about in silken raiment, whereas she used to be so very poor?

Hereupon she looked towards me, and said, "Father, shall I tell?" Whereupon I answered, "Yes, my child, now thou must openly tell all, even though we thereby become beggars." She accordingly told how, when our need was sorest, she had found the amber, and how much we had gotten for it from the Dutch merchants.

Q. What were the names of these merchants?--_R_.
Dieterich von Pehnen and Jakob Kiekebusch; but, as we have heard from a schipper, they since died of the plague at Stettin.

Q. Why had we said nothing of such a godsend?--_R_.
Out of fear of our enemy the sheriff, who, as it seemed, had condemned us to die of hunger, inasmuch as he forbade the parishioners, under pain of heavy displeasure, to supply us with anything, saying that he would soon send them a better parson.

Hereupon _Dom. Consul_ again looked the sheriff sharply in the face, who answered that it was true he had said this, seeing that the parson had preached at him in the most scandalous manner from the pulpit; but that he knew very well, at the time, that they were far enough from dying of hunger.

Q. How came so much amber on the Streckelberg? She had best confess at once that the devil had brought it to her.--_R_.
She knew nothing about that. But there was a great vein of amber there, as she could show to them all that very day; and she had broken out the amber, and covered the hole well over with fir-twigs, so that none should find it.

Q. When had she gone up the Streckelberg; by day or by night?--_R_. Hereupon she blushed, and for a moment held her peace; but presently made answer, "Sometimes by day, and sometimes by night."

Q. Why did she hesitate? She had better make a full confession of all, so that her punishment might be less heavy. Had she not there given over old Seden to Satan, who had carried him off through the air, and left only a part of his hair and brains sticking to the top of an oak?--_R_. She did not know whether that was his hair and brains at all, nor how it came there. She went to the tree one morning because she heard a woodpecker cry so dolefully. _Item_, old Paasch, who also had heard the cries, came up with his axe in his hand.

Q. Whether the woodpecker was not the devil himself, who had carried off old Seden?--_R_. She did not know: but he must have been dead some time, seeing that the blood and brains which the lad fetched down out of the tree were quite dried up.

Q. How and when, then, had he come by his death?--_R_.
That Almighty God only knew. But Zuter his little girl had said that one day, while she gathered nettles for the cows under Seden his hedge, she heard the goodman threaten his squint-eyed wife that he would tell the parson that he now knew of a certainty that she had a familiar spirit; whereupon the goodman had presently disappeared. But that this was a child's tale, and she would fyle no one on the strength of it.

Hereupon _Dom. Consul_ again looked the sheriff steadily in

the face, and said, "Old Lizzie Kolken must be brought before us this very day:" whereto the sheriff made no answer; and he went on to ask--

Q. Whether, then, she still maintained that she knew nothing of the devil?--_R_. She maintained it now, and would maintain it until her life's end.

Q. And nevertheless, as had been seen by witnesses, she had been re-baptized by him in the sea in broad daylight.--Here again she blushed, and for a moment was silent.

Q. Why did she blush again? She should for God His sake think on her salvation, and confess the truth.--_R_. She had bathed herself in the sea, seeing that the day was very hot; that was the whole truth.

Q. What chaste maiden would ever bathe in the sea? Thou liest; or wilt thou even yet deny that thou didst bewitch old Paasch his little girl with a white roll?--_R_. Alas! alas! she loved the child as though it were her own little sister; not only had she taught her as well as all the other children without reward, but during the heavy famine she had often taken the bit from her own mouth to put it into the little child's. How then could she have wished to do her such grievous harm?

Q. Wilt thou even yet deny? Reverend Abraham, how stubborn is your child! See here, is this no witches' salve, [Footnote: It was believed that the devil gave the witches a salve, by the use of which they made themselves invisible, changed themselves into animals, flew through the air, &c.] which the constable fetched out of thy coffer last night? Is this no witches' salve, eh?--_R_. It was a salve for the skin, which would make it soft and white, as the apothecary at Wolgast had told her, of whom she bought it.

Q. Hereupon he shook his head, and went on: How! wilt thou then lastly deny that on this last Saturday the 10th July, at twelve o'clock at night, thou didst on the Streckelberg call upon thy paramour the devil in dreadful words, whereupon he appeared to thee in the shape of a great hairy giant, and clipped thee and toyed with thee?

At these words she grew more pale than a corpse, and tottered so that she was forced to hold by a chair; and I, wretched man, who would readily have sworn away my life for her, when I saw and heard this, my senses forsook me, so that I fell down from the bench, and _Dom. Consul_ had to call in the constable to help me up.

When I had come to myself a little, and the impudent varlet saw our common consternation, he cried out, grinning at the court the while, "Is it all out? is it all out? has she confessed?"

Whereupon Dom. Consul again showed him the door with a sharp rebuke, as might have been expected; and it is said that this knave played the pimp for the sheriff, and indeed I think he would not otherwise have been so bold.

Summa: I should well-nigh have perished in my distress, but for the little rose, which by the help of God's mercy kept me up bravely; and now the whole court rose and exhorted my poor fainting child, by the living God, and as she would save her soul, to deny no longer, but in pity to herself and her father to confess the truth.

Hereupon she heaved a deep sigh, and grew as red as she had been pale before, insomuch that even her hand upon the chair was like scarlet, and she did not raise her eyes from the ground.

R. She would now then confess the simple truth, as she saw right well that wicked people had stolen after and watched her at nights. That she had been to seek for amber on the mountain, and that to drive away fear she had, as she was wont to do at her work, recited the Latin carmen which her father had made on the illustrious king Gustavus Adolphus: when young Rüdiger of Nienkerken, who had oftentimes been at her father's house and talked of love to her, came out of the coppice, and when she cried out for fear, spoke to her in Latin, and clasped her in his arms. That he wore a great wolf's-skin coat, so that folks should not know him if they met him, and tell the lord his father that he had been on the mountain by night.

At this her confession I fell into sheer despair, and cried in great wrath, "O thou ungodly and undutiful child, after all, then, thou hast a paramour! Did not I forbid thee to go up the mountain by night? What didst thou want on the mountain by night?" and I began to moan and weep and wring my hands, so that Dom. Consul even had pity on me, and drew near to comfort me. Meanwhile she herself came towards me, and began to defend herself, saying, with many tears, that she had gone up the mountain by night, against my commands, to get so much amber that she might secretly buy for me, against my birthday, the Opera Sancti Augustini, which the Cantor at Wolgast wanted to sell. That it was not her fault that the young lord lay in wait for her one night; and that she would swear to me, by the living God, that naught that was unseemly had happened between them there, and that she was still a maid.

And herewith the first hearing was at end, for after Dom. Consul had whispered somewhat into the ear of the sheriff, he called in the constable again, and bade him keep good watch over Rea; item, not to leave her at large in her dungeon any longer, but to put her in chains. These words pierced my very heart, and I besought his worship to consider my sacred office, and my ancient noble birth, and not to do me such dishonour as to put my daughter in chains. That I would answer for her to the

worshipful court with my own head that she would not escape. Whereupon _Dom. Consul_, after he had gone to look at the dungeon himself, granted me my request, and commanded the constable to leave her as she had been hitherto.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Satan, by the permission of the most righteous God, sought altogether to ruin us, and how we lost all hope.

The same day, at about three in the afternoon, when I was gone to Conrad Seep his ale-house to eat something, seeing that it was now nearly two days since I had tasted aught save my tears, and he had placed before me some bread and sausage, together with a mug of beer, the constable came into the room and greeted me from the sheriff, without, however, so much as touching his cap, asking whether I would not dine with his lordship; that his lordship had not remembered till now that I belike was still fasting, seeing the trial had lasted so long. Hereupon I made answer to the constable that I already had my dinner before me, as he saw himself, and desired that his lordship would hold me excused. Hereat the fellow wondered greatly, and answered, Did I not see that his lordship wished me well, albeit I had preached at him as though he were a Jew? I should think on my daughter, and be somewhat more ready to do his lordship's will, whereby peradventure all would yet end well. For his lordship was not such a rough ass as _Dom. Consul_, and meant well by my child and me, as beseemed a righteous magistrate.

After I had with some trouble rid myself of this impudent fox, I tried to eat a bit, but nothing would go down save the beer. I therefore soon sat and thought again whether I would not lodge with Conrad Seep, so as to be always near my child; _item_, whether I should not hand over my poor misguided flock to M. Vigelius, the pastor of Benz, for such time as the Lord still should prove me. In about an hour I saw through the window how that an empty coach drove to the castle, and the sheriff and _Dom. Consul_ straightway stepped thereinto with my child; _item_, the constable climbed up behind. Hereupon I left everything on the table and ran to the coach, asking humbly whither they were about to take my poor child; and when I heard they were going to the Streckelberg to look after the amber, I begged them to take me also, and to suffer me to sit by my child, for who could tell how much longer I might yet sit by her! This was granted to me, and on the way the sheriff offered me to take up my abode in the castle and to dine at his table as often as I pleased, and that he would, moreover, send my child her meat from his own table. For that he had a Christian heart, and well knew that we were to forgive our enemies. But I refused his kindness

with humble thanks, as my child did also, seeing we were not yet so poor that we could not maintain ourselves. As we passed by the water-mill the ungodly varlet there again thrust his head out of a hole and pulled wry faces at my child; but, dear reader, he got something to remember it by; for the sheriff beckoned to the constable to fetch the fellow out, and after he had reproached him with the tricks he had twice played my child, the constable had to take the coachman his new whip and to give him fifty lashes, which, God knows, were not laid on with a feather. He bellowed like a bull, which, however, no one heard for the noise of the mill-wheels, and when at last he did as though he could not stir, we left him lying on the ground and went on our way.

As we drove through Uekeritze a number of people flocked together, but were quiet enough, save one fellow who, *_salvâveniâ_*, mocked at us with unseemly gestures in the midst of the road when he saw us coming. The constable had to jump down again, but could not catch him, and the others would not give him up, but pretended that they had only looked at our coach and had not marked him. May be this was true! and I am therefore inclined to think that it was Satan himself who did it to mock at us; for mark, for God's sake, what happened to us on the Streckelberg! Alas! through the delusions of the foul fiend, we could not find the spot where we had dug for the amber. For when we came to where we thought it must be, a huge hill of sand had been heaped up as by a whirlwind, and the fir-twigs which my child had covered over it were gone. She was near falling in a swoon when she saw this, and wrung her hands and cried out with her Saviour, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me!"

Howbeit, the constable and the coachman were ordered to dig, but not one bit of amber was to be found, even so big as a grain of corn, whereupon *_Dom. Consul_* shook his head and violently upbraided my child; and when I answered that Satan himself, as it seemed, had filled up the hollow in order to bring us altogether into his power, the constable was ordered to fetch a long stake out of the coppice which we might thrust still deeper into the sand. But no hard *_objectum_* was anywhere to be felt, notwithstanding the sheriff, *_Dom. Consul_*, and myself in my anguish did try everywhere with the stake.

Hereupon my child besought her judges to go with her to Coserow, where she still had much amber in her coffer which she had found here, and that if it were the gift of the devil it would all be changed, since it was well known that all the presents the devil makes to witches straightway turn to mud and ashes.

But, God be merciful to us, God be merciful to us! when we returned to Coserow, amid the wonderment of all the village, and my daughter went to her coffer, the things therein were all tossed about, and the amber gone. Hereupon she shrieked so loud that it would have softened a stone, and cried out, "The wicked constable hath done this! when he fetched the salve out of my coffer, he

stole the amber from me, unhappy maid." But the constable, who stood by, would have torn her hair, and cried out, "Thou witch, thou damned witch, is it not enough that thou hast belied my lord, but thou must now belie me too?" But _Dom. Consul_ forbade him, so that he did not dare lay hands upon her. _Item_, all the money was gone which she had hoarded up from the amber she had privately sold, and which she thought already came to about ten florins.

But the gown which she had worn at the arrival of the most illustrious king Gustavus Adolphus, as well as the golden chain with his effigy which he had given her, I had locked up as though it were a relic in the chest in the vestry, among the altar and pulpit cloths, and there we found them still; and when I excused myself therefor, saying that I had thought to have saved them up for her there against her bridal day, she gazed with fixed and glazed eyes into the box, and cried out, "Yes, against the day when I shall be burnt! O Jesu, Jesu, Jesu!" Hereat _Dom. Consul_ shuddered and said, "See how thou still dost smite thyself with thine own words. For the sake of God and thy salvation, confess, for if thou knowest thyself to be innocent, how, then, canst thou think that thou wilt be burnt?" But she still looked him fixedly in the face, and cried aloud in Latin, "_Innocentia, quid est innocentia! Ubi libido dominatur, innocentia leve praedium est._" [Footnote: These words are from Cicero, if I do not mistake.]

Hereupon _Dom. Consul_ again shuddered, so that his beard wagged, and said, "What, dost thou indeed know Latin? Where didst thou learn the Latin?" And when I answered this question as well as I was able for sobbing, he shook his head, and said, "I never in my life heard of a woman that knew Latin." Upon this he knelt down before her coffer, and turned over everything therein, drew it away from the wall, and when he found nothing he bade us show him her bed, and did the same with that. This, at length, vexed the sheriff, who asked him whither they should not drive back again, seeing that night was coming on? But he answered, "Nay, I must first have the written paction which Satan has given her;" and he went on with his search until it was almost dark. [Footnote: At this time it was believed that as a man bound himself to the devil by writing, so did the devil in like manner to the man.] But they found nothing at all, although _Dom. Consul_, together with the constable, passed over no hole or corner, even in the kitchen and cellar. Hereupon he got up again into the coach, muttering to himself, and bade my daughter sit so that she should not look upon him.

And now we once more had the same _spectaculum_ with the accursed old witch Lizzie Kolken, seeing that she again sat at her door as we drove by, and began to sing at the top of her voice, "We praise thee, O Lord." But she screeched like a stuck pig, so that _Dom. Consul_ was amazed thereat, and when he had heard who she was, he asked the sheriff whether he would not that she

should be seized by the constable and be tied behind the coach, to run after it, as we had no room for her elsewhere; for that he had often been told that all old women who had red squinting eyes and sharp voices were witches, not to mention the suspicious things which _Rea_ had declared against her. But he answered that he could not do this, seeing that old Lizzie was a woman in good repute, and fearing God, as _Dom. Consul_ might learn for himself; but that, nevertheless, he had had her summoned for the morrow, together with the other witnesses.

Yea, in truth, an excellently devout and worthy woman!--for scarcely were we out of the village, when so fearful a storm of thunder, lightning, wind, and hail burst over our heads, that the corn all around us was beaten down as with a flail, and the horses before the coach were quite maddened; however, it did not last long. But my poor child had to bear all the blame again, [Footnote: Such sudden storms were attributed to witches.] inasmuch as _Dom. Consul_ thought that it was not old Lizzie, which, nevertheless, was as clear as the sun at noon-day, but my poor daughter who brewed the storm;--for, beloved reader, what could it have profited her, even if she had known the black art? This, however, did not strike _Dom. Consul_, and Satan, by the permission of the all-righteous God, was presently to use us still worse; for just as we got to the Master's Dam, [Footnote: It is also called to the present day, and is distant a mile from Coserow.] he came flying over us in the shape of a stork, and dropped a frog so exactly over us that it fell into my daughter her lap: she gave a shrill scream, but I whispered her to sit still, and that I would secretly throw the frog away by one leg.

But the constable had seen it, and cried out, "Hey, sirs! hey, look at the cursed witch! what has the devil just thrown into her lap?" Whereupon the sheriff and _Dom. Consul_ looked round and saw the frog, which crawled in her lap, and the constable, after he had blown upon it three times, took it up and showed it to their lordships. Hereat _Dom. Consul_ began to spew, and when he had done, he ordered the coachman to stop, got down from the coach, and said we might drive home, that he felt qualmish, and would go a-foot and see if he got better. But first he privately whispered to the constable, which, howbeit, we heard right well, that when he got home he should lay my poor child in chains, but not so as to hurt her much; to which neither she nor I could answer save by tears and sobs. But the sheriff had heard it too, and when his worship was out of sight he began to stroke my child her cheeks from behind her back, telling her to be easy, as he also had a word to say in the matter, and that the constable should not lay her in chains. But that she must leave off being so hard to him as she had been hitherto, and come and sit on the seat beside him, that he might privately give her some good advice as to what was to be done. To this she answered, with many tears, that she wished to sit only by her father, as she knew not how much longer she might sit by him at all; and she begged for nothing more save that his lordship would leave her in peace. But

this he would not do, but pinched her back and sides with his knees; and as she bore with this, seeing that there was no help for it, he waxed bolder, taking it for a good sign. Meanwhile _Dom. Consul_ called out close behind us (for being frightened he ran just after the coach), "Constable, constable, come here quick; here lies a hedgehog in the midst of the road!" whereupon the constable jumped down from the coach.

This made the sheriff still bolder; and at last my child rose up and said, "Father, let us also go a-foot; I can no longer guard myself from him here behind!" But he pulled her down again by her clothes, and cried out angrily, "Wait, thou wicked witch, I will help thee to go a-foot if thou art so wilful; thou shalt be chained to the block this very night." Whereupon she answered, "Do you do that which you cannot help doing: the righteous God, it is to be hoped, will one day do unto you what He cannot help doing."

Meanwhile we had reached the castle, and scarcely were we got out of the coach, when _Dom. Consul_, who had run till he was all of a sweat, came up, together with the constable, and straightway gave over my child into his charge, so that I had scarce time to bid her farewell. I was left standing on the floor below, wringing my hands in the dark, and hearkened whither they were leading her, inasmuch as I had not the heart to follow; when _Dom. Consul_, who had stepped into a room with the sheriff, looked out at the door again, and called after the constable to bring _Rea_ once more before them. And when he had done so, and I went into the room with them, _Dom. Consul_ held a letter in his hand, and, after spitting thrice, he began thus, "Wilt thou still deny, thou stubborn witch? Hear what the old knight, Hans von Nienkerken, writes to the court!" Whereupon he read out to us, that his son was so disturbed by the tale the accursed witch had told of him, that he had fallen sick from that very hour, and that he, the father, was not much better. That his son, Rüdiger, had indeed at times, when he went that way, been to see Pastor Schweidler, whom he had first known upon a journey; but that he swore that he wished he might turn black if he had ever used any folly or jesting with the cursed devil's whore his daughter; much less ever been with her by night on the Streckelberg, or embraced her there.

At this dreadful news we both (I mean my child and I) fell down in a swoond together, seeing that we had rested our last hopes on the young lord; and I know not what further happened. For when I came to myself, my host, Conrad Seep, was standing over me, holding a funnel between my teeth, through which he ladled some warm beer down my throat, and I never felt more wretched in all my life; insomuch that Master Seep had to undress me like a little child, and to help me into bed.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the malice of the Governor and of old Lizzie--item, of the examination of witnesses.

The next morning my hairs, which till _datum_ had been mingled with grey, were white as snow, albeit the Lord otherwise blessed me wondrously. For near daybreak a nightingale flew into the elder-bush beneath my window, and sang so sweetly that straightway I thought it must be a good angel. For after I had hearkened awhile to it, I was all at once able again to pray, which since last Sunday I could not do; and the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ began to speak within me, "Abba, Father;" [Footnote: Gal. iv. 6.] and straightway I was of good cheer, trusting that God would once more be gracious unto me His wretched child; and when I had given Him thanks for such great mercy, I fell into a refreshing slumber, and slept so long that the blessed sun stood high in the heavens when I awoke.

And seeing that my heart was still of good cheer, I sat up in my bed, and sang with a loud voice, "Be not dismayed, thou little flock:" whereupon Master Seep came into the room, thinking I had called him. But he stood reverently waiting till I had done; and after marvelling at my snow-white hair, he told me it was already seven; _item_, that half my congregation, among others, my ploughman, Claus Neels, were already assembled in his house to bear witness that day. When I heard this, I bade mine host forthwith send Claus to the castle, to ask when the court would open, and he brought word back that no one knew, seeing that _Dom. Consul_ was already gone that morning to Mellenthin to see old Nienkerken, and was not yet come back. This message gave me good courage, and I asked the fellow whether he also had come to bear witness against my poor child? To which he answered, "Nay, I know naught save good of her, and I would give the fellows their due, only----"

These words surprised me, and I vehemently urged him to open his heart to me. But he began to weep, and at last said that he knew nothing. Alas! he knew but too much, and could then have saved my poor child if he had willed. But from fear of the torture he held his peace, as he since owned; and I will here relate what had befallen him that very morning.

He had set out betimes that morning, so as to be alone with his sweetheart, who was to go along with him (she is Steffen of Zempin his daughter, not farmer Steffen, but the lame gouty Steffen), and had got to Pudgla about five, where he found no one in the ale-house save old Lizzie Kolken, who straightway hobbled up to the castle; and when his sweetheart was gone home again, time hung heavy on his hands, and he climbed over the wall into the castle garden, where he threw himself on his face behind a hedge to sleep. But before long the sheriff came with old Lizzie, and after

they had looked all round and seen no one, they went into an
arbour close by him, and conversed as follows:--

Ille.--Now that they were alone together, what did she want
of him?

Illa.--She came to get the money for the witchcraft she had
contrived in the village.

Ille.--Of what use had all this witchcraft been to him? My
child, so far from being frightened, defied him more and more; and
he doubted whether he should ever have his will of her.

Illa.--He should only have patience; when she was laid upon
the rack she would soon learn to be fond.

Ille.--That might be, but till then she (Lizzie) should get
no money.

Illa.--What! Must she then do his cattle a mischief?

Ille.--Yes, if she felt chilly, and wanted a burning faggot
to warm her _podex_, she had better. Moreover, he thought
that she had bewitched him, seeing that his desire for the
parson's daughter was such as he had never felt before.

Illa (laughing).--He had said the same thing some thirty
years ago, when he first came after her.

Ille.--Ugh! thou old baggage, don't remind me of such
things, but see to it that you get three witnesses, as I told you
before, or else methinks they will rack your old joints for you
after all.

Illa.--She had the three witnesses ready, and would leave
the rest to him. But that if she were racked she would reveal all
she knew.

Ille.--She should hold her ugly tongue, and go to the
devil.

Illa.--So she would, but first she must have her money.

Ille.--She should have no money till he had had his will of
my daughter.

Illa.--He might at least pay her for her little pig which
she herself had bewitched to death, in order that she might not
get into evil repute.

Ille.--She might choose one when his pigs were driven by,
and say she had paid for it. Hereupon, said my Claus, the pigs
were driven by, and one ran into the garden, the door being open,

and as the swineherd followed it, they parted; but the witch muttered to herself, "Now help, devil, help, that I may----" but he heard no further.

The cowardly fellow, however, hid all this from me, as I have said above, and only said, with tears, that he knew nothing. I believed him, and sat down at the window to see when _Dom. Consul_ should return; and when I saw him I rose and went to the castle, where the constable, who was already there with my child, met me before the judgment-chamber. Alas! she looked more joyful than I had seen her for a long time, and smiled at me with her sweet little mouth: but when she saw my snow-white hair, she gave a cry, which made _Dom. Consul_ throw open the door of the judgment-chamber, and say, "Ha, ha! thou knowest well what news I have brought thee; come in, thou stubborn devil's brat!" Whereupon we stepped into the chamber to him, and he lift up his voice and spake to me, after he had sat down with the sheriff, who was by.

He said that yester-even, after he had caused me to be carried like one dead to Master Seep his ale-house, and that my stubborn child had been brought to life again, he had once more adjured her, to the utmost of his power, no longer to lie before the face of the living God, but to confess the truth; whereupon she had borne herself very unruly, and had wrung her hands and wept and sobbed, and at last answered that the young _nobilis_ never could have said such things, but that his father must have written them, who hated her, as she had plainly seen when the Swedish king was at Coserow. That he, _Dom. Consul_, had indeed doubted the truth of this at the time, but as a just judge had gone that morning right early with the _scriba_ to Mellenthin, to question the young lord himself.

That I might now see myself what horrible malice was in my daughter. For that the old knight had led him to his son's bedside, who still lay sick from vexation, and that he had confirmed all his father had written, and had cursed the scandalous she-devil (as he called my daughter) for seeking to rob him of his knightly honour. "What sayest thou now?" he continued; "wilt thou still deny thy great wickedness? See here the _protocollum_ which the young lord hath signed _manu propriâ_" But the wretched maid had meanwhile fallen on the ground again, and the constable had no sooner seen this than he ran into the kitchen, and came back with a burning brimstone match, which he was about to hold under her nose.

But I hindered him, and sprinkled her face with water, so that she opened her eyes, and raised herself up by a table. She then stood awhile, without saying a word or regarding my sorrow. At last she smiled sadly, and spake thus: That she clearly saw how true was that spoken by the Holy Ghost, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man;" [Footnote: Jer. xvii. 5.] and that the faithlessness of the young lord had surely broken her poor heart if the all-merciful God had not graciously prevented him, and sent her a dream that

night, which she would tell, not hoping to persuade the judges, but to raise up the white head of her poor father.

"After I had sat and watched all the night," quoth she, "towards morning I heard a nightingale sing in the castle garden so sweetly that my eyes closed, and I slept. Then methought I was a lamb, grazing quietly in my meadow at Coserow. Suddenly the sheriff jumped over the hedge, and turned into a wolf, who seized me in his jaws, and ran with me towards the Streckelberg, where he had his lair. I, poor little lamb, trembled and bleated in vain, and saw death before my eyes, when he laid me down before his lair, where lay the she-wolf and her young. But behold a hand, like the hand of a man, straightway came out of the bushes, and touched the wolves, each one with one finger, and crushed them so that naught was left of them save a grey powder. Hereupon the hand took me up, and carried me back to my meadow."

Only think, beloved reader, how I felt when I heard all this, and about the dear nightingale too, which no one can doubt to have been the servant of God. I clasped my child with many tears, and told her what had happened to me, and we both won such courage and confidence as we had never yet felt, to the wonderment of _Dom. Consul_, as it seemed; but the sheriff turned as pale as a sheet when she stepped towards their worships and said, "And now do with me as you will, the lamb fears not, for she is in the hands of the Good Shepherd!" Meanwhile _Dom. Camerarius_ came in with the _scriba_, but was terrified as he chanced to touch my daughter's apron with the skirts of his coat; and stood and scraped at his coat as a woman scrapes a fish. At last, after he had spat out thrice, he asked the court whether it would not begin to examine witnesses, seeing that all the people had been waiting some time both in the castle and at the ale-house. Hereunto they agreed, and the constable was ordered to guard my child in his room, until it should please the court to summon her. I therefore went with her, but we had to endure much from the impudent rogue, seeing he was not ashamed to lay his arm round my child her shoulders, and to ask for a kiss _in meâ presentiâ_. But, before I could get out a word, she tore herself from him, and said, "Ah, thou wicked knave, must I complain of thee to the court; hast thou forgotten what thou hast already done to me?" To which he answered, laughing, "See, see! how coy;" and still sought to persuade her to be more willing, and not to forget her own interest; for that he meant as well by her as his master; she might believe it or not; with many other scandalous words besides which I have forgot; for I took my child upon my knees and laid my head on her neck, and we sat and wept.

CHAPTER XXI.

De confrontatione testium.

When we were summoned before the court again, the whole court was full of people, and some shuddered when they saw us, but others wept; my child told the same tale as before. But when our old Ilse was called, who sat on a bench behind, so that we had not seen her, the strength wherewith the Lord had gifted her was again at an end, and she repeated the words of our Saviour, "He that eateth bread with Me hath lift up his heel against Me:" and she held fast by my chair. Old Ilse, too, could not walk straight for very grief, nor could she speak for tears, but she twisted and wound herself about before the court, like a woman in travail. But when _Dom. Consul_ threatened that the constable should presently help her to her words, she testified that my child had very often got up in the night, and called aloud upon the foul fiend.

Q. Whether she had ever heard Satan answer her?--_R_. She never had heard him at all.

Q. Whether she had perceived that _Rea_ had a familiar spirit, and in what shape? She should think upon her oath, and speak the truth.--_R_. She had never seen one.

Q. Whether she had ever heard her fly up the chimney?--_R_. Nay, she had always gone softly out at the door.

Q. Whether she never at mornings had missed her broom or pitchfork?--_R_. Once the broom was gone, but she had found it again behind the stove, and may be left it there herself by mistake.

Q. Whether she had never heard _Rea_ cast a spell, or wish harm to this or that person?--_R_. No, never; she had always wished her neighbours nothing but good, and even in the time of bitter famine had taken the bread out of her own mouth to give it to others.

Q.--Whether she did not know the salve which had been found in _Rea_ her coffer?--_R_. Oh, yes! her young mistress had brought it back from Wolgast for her skin, and had once given her some when she had chapped hands, and it had done her a vast deal of good.

Q. Whether she had anything further to say?--_R_. No, nothing but good.

Hereupon my man Claus Neels was called up. He also came forward in tears, but answered every question with a "nay," and at last testified that he had never seen nor heard anything bad of my child, and knew naught of her doings by night, seeing that he slept in the stable with the horses; and that he firmly believed that evil folks--and here he looked at old Lizzie--had brought

this misfortune upon her, and that she was quite innocent.

When it came to the turn of this old limb of Satan, who was to be the chief witness, my child again declared that she would not accept old Lizzie's testimony against her, and called upon the court for justice, for that she had hated her from her youth up, and had been longer by habit and repute a witch than she herself.

But the old hag cried out, "God forgive thee thy sins; the whole village knows that I am a devout woman, and one serving the Lord in all things;" whereupon she called up old Zuter Witthahn and my churchwarden Claus Bulk, who bore witness hereto. But old Paasch stood and shook his head; nevertheless when my child said, "Paasch, wherefore dost thou shake thy head?" he started, and answered, "Oh, nothing!"

Howbeit, _Dom. Consul_ likewise perceived this, and asked him, whether he had any charge to bring against old Lizzie; if so, he should give glory to God, and state the same; _item_, it was competent to every one so to do; indeed, the court required of him to speak out all he knew.

But from fear of the old dragon, all were still as mice, so that you might have heard the flies buzz about the inkstand. I then stood up, wretched as I was, and stretched out my arms over my amazed and faint-hearted people, and spake: "Can ye thus crucify me together with my poor child? have I deserved this at your hands? Speak, then; alas, will none speak?" I heard, indeed, how several wept aloud, but not one spake; and hereupon my poor child was forced to submit.

And the malice of the old hag was such that she not only accused my child of the most horrible witchcraft, but also reckoned to a day when she had given herself up to Satan to rob her of her maiden honour; and she said that Satan had, without doubt, then defiled her, when she could no longer heal the cattle, and when they all died. Hereupon my child said naught, save that she cast down her eyes and blushed deep for shame at such filthiness; and to the other blasphemous slander which the old hag uttered with many tears, namely, that my daughter had given up her (Lizzie's) husband, body and soul, to Satan, she answered as she had done before. But when the old hag came to her re-baptism in the sea, and gave out that while seeking for strawberries in the coppice she had recognised my child's voice, and stolen towards her, and perceived these devil's doings, my child fell in smiling, and answered, "Oh, thou evil woman! how couldst thou hear my voice speaking down by the sea, being thyself in the forest upon the mountain? surely thou liest, seeing that the murmur of the waves would make that impossible." This angered the old dragon, and seeking to get out of the blunder she fell still deeper into it, for she said, "I saw thee move thy lips, and from that I knew that thou didst call upon thy paramour the devil!" for my child straightway replied, "Oh, thou ungodly woman! thou saidst thou

wert in the forest when thou didst hear my voice; how then up in the forest couldst thou see whether I, who was below by the water, moved my lips or not?"

Such contradictions amazed even *_Dom. Consul_*, and he began to threaten the old hag with the rack if she told such lies; whereupon she answered and said, "List, then, whether I lie! When she went naked into the water she had no mark on her body, but when she came out again I saw that she had between her breasts a mark the size of a silver penny, whence I perceived that the devil had given it her, although I had not seen him about her, nor, indeed, had I seen any one, either spirit or child of man, for she seemed to be quite alone."

Hereupon the sheriff jumped up from his seat, and cried, "Search must straightway be made for this mark;" whereupon *_Dom. Consul_* answered, "Yea, but not by us, but by two women of good repute," for he would not hearken to what my child said, that it was a mole, and that she had had it from her youth up. Wherefore the constable his wife was sent for, and *_Dom. Consul_* muttered somewhat into her ear, and as prayers and tears were of no avail, my child was forced to go with her. Howbeit, she obtained this favour, that old Lizzie Kolken was not to follow her, as she would have done, but our old maid Ilse. I, too, went in my sorrow, seeing that I knew not what the women might do to her. She wept bitterly as they undressed her, and held her hands over her eyes for very shame.

Well-a-day, her body was just as white as my departed wife's; although in her childhood, as I remember, she was very yellow, and I saw with amazement the mole between her breasts, whereof I had never heard aught before. But she suddenly screamed violently and started back, seeing that the constable his wife, when nobody watched her, had run a needle into the mole, so deep that the red blood ran down over her breasts. I was sorely angered thereat, but the woman said that she had done it by order of the judge, [Footnote: It was believed that these marks were the infallible sign of a witch when they were insensible, and that they were given by the devil; and every one suspected of witchcraft was invariably searched for them.] which, indeed, was true; for when we came back into court, and the sheriff asked how it was, she testified that there was a mark of the size of a silver penny, of a yellowish colour, but that it had feeling, seeing that *_Rea_* had screamed aloud, when she had, unperceived, driven a needle therein. Meanwhile, however, *_Dom. Camerarius_* suddenly rose, and stepping up to my child, drew her eyelids asunder and cried out, beginning to tremble, "Behold the sign which never fails." [Footnote: See, among other authorities, *Delrio, _Disquisit. magicæ_, lib. v. tit. xiv. No. 28.*] whereupon the whole court started to their feet, and looked at the little spot under her right eyelid, which in truth had been left there by a sty, but this none would believe. *_Dom. Consul_* now said, "See, Satan hath marked thee on body and soul! and thou

dost still continue to lie unto the Holy Ghost; but it shall not avail thee, and thy punishment will only be the heavier. Oh, thou shameless woman! thou hast refused to accept the testimony of old Lizzie; wilt thou also refuse that of these people, who have all heard thee on the mountain call upon the devil thy paramour, and seen him appear in the likeness of a hairy giant, and kiss and caress thee?"

Hereupon old Paasch, goodwife Witthahn, and Zuter, came forward and bare witness, that they had seen this happen about midnight, and that on this declaration they would live and die; that old Lizzie had awakened them one Saturday night about eleven o'clock, had given them a can of beer, and persuaded them to follow the parson's daughter privately, and to see what she did upon the mountain. At first they refused; but in order to get at the truth about the witchcraft in the village, they had at last, after a devout prayer, consented, and had followed her in God's name.

They had soon through the bushes seen the witch in the moonshine; she seemed to dig, and spake in some strange tongue the while, whereupon the grim arch-fiend suddenly appeared, and fell upon her neck. Hereupon they ran away in consternation, but, by the help of the Almighty God, on whom from the very first they had set their faith, they were preserved from the power of the evil one. For, notwithstanding he had turned round on hearing a rustling in the bushes, he had had no power to harm them.

Finally, it was even charged to my child as a crime, that she had fainted on the road from Coserow to Pudgla, and none would believe that this had been caused by vexation at old Lizzie her singing, and not from a bad conscience, as stated by the judge.

When all the witnesses had been examined, _Dom. Consul_ asked her whether she had brewed the storm, what was the meaning of the frog that dropped into her lap, _item_, the hedgehog which lay directly in his path? To all of which she answered, that she had caused the one as little as she knew of the other. Whereupon _Dom. Consul_ shook his head, and asked her, last of all, whether she would have an advocate, or trust entirely in the good judgment of the court. To this she gave answer, that she would by all means have an advocate. Wherefore I sent my ploughman, Claus Neels, the next day to Wolgast to fetch the _Syndicus_ Michelson, who is a worthy man, and in whose house I have been many times when I went to the town, seeing that he courteously invited me.

I must also note here that at this time my old Ilse came back to live with me; for after the witnesses were gone she stayed behind in the chamber, and came boldly up to me, and besought me to suffer her once more to serve her old master and her dear young mistress; for that now she had saved her poor soul, and confessed all she knew. Wherefore she could no longer bear to see her old master in such woeful plight, without so much as a mouthful of

victuals, seeing that she had heard that old wife Seep, who had till _datum_ prepared the food for me and my child, often let the porridge burn; _item_, over-salted the fish and the meat. Moreover that I was so weakened by age and misery, that I needed help and support, which she would faithfully give me, and was ready to sleep in the stable, if needs must be; that she wanted no wages for it, I was only not to turn her away. Such kindness made my daughter to weep, and she said to me, "Behold, father, the good folks come back to us again; think you, then, that the good angels will forsake us for ever? I thank thee, old Ilse; thou shalt indeed prepare my food for me, and always bring it as far as the prison-door, if thou mayest come no further; and mark, then, I pray thee, what the constable does therewith."

This the maid promised to do, and from this time forth took up her abode in the stable. May God repay her at the day of judgment for what she then did for me and for my poor child!

CHAPTER XXII.

How the Syndicus Dom. Michelson arrived, and prepared his defence of my poor child.

The next day, at about three o'clock P.M., _Dom. Syndicus_ came driving up, and got out of his coach at my inn. He had a huge bag full of books with him, but was not so friendly in his manner as was usual with him, but very grave and silent. And after he had saluted me in my own room, and had asked how it was possible for my child to have come to such misfortune, I related to him the whole affair, whereat, however, he only shook his head. On my asking him whether he would not see my child that same day, he answered, "Nay;" he would rather first study the _Acta_. And after he had eaten of some wild duck which my old Ilse had roasted for him, he would tarry no longer, but straightway went up to the castle, whence he did not return till the following afternoon. His manner was not more friendly now than at his first coming, and I followed him with sighs when he asked me to lead him to my daughter. As we went in with the constable, and I, for the first time, saw my child in chains before me--she who in her whole life had never hurt a worm--I again felt as though I should die for very grief. But she smiled and cried out to _Dom. Syndicus_, "Are you indeed the good angel who will cause my chains to fall from my hands, as was done of yore to St. Peter?" [Footnote: The Acts of the Apostles, xii. 7.] To which he replied, with a sigh, "May the Almighty God grant it;" and as, save the chair whereon my child sat against the wall, there was none other in the dungeon (which was a filthy and stinking hole, wherein were more wood-lice than ever I saw in my life), _Dom. Syndicus_ and I sat down on her bed, which had been left for her at my prayer; and he

ordered the constable to go his ways, until he should call him back. Hereupon he asked my child what she had to say in her justification; and she had not gone far in her defence when I perceived, from the shadow at the door, that some one must be standing without. I therefore went quickly to the door, which was half open, and found the impudent constable, who stood there to listen. This so angered Dom. Syndicus that he snatched up his staff in order to hasten his going, but the arch-rogue took to his heels as soon as he saw this. My child took this opportunity to tell her worshipful defensor what she had suffered from the impudence of this fellow, and to beg that some other constable might be set over her, seeing that this one had come to her last night again with evil designs, so that she at last had shrieked aloud and beaten him on the head with her chains; whereupon he had left her. This Dom. Syndicus promised to obtain for her; but with regard to the defensio, wherewith she now went on, he thought it would be better to make no further mention of the impetus which the sheriff had made on her chastity. "For," said he, "as the princely central court at Wolgast has to give sentence upon thee, this statement would do thee far more harm than good, seeing that the praes thereof is a cousin of the sheriff, and oftentimes goes a hunting with him. Besides, thou being charged with a capital crime hast no fides, especially as thou canst bring no witnesses against him. Thou couldst, therefore, gain no belief even if thou didst confirm the charge on the rack, wherefrom, moreover, I am come hither to save thee by my defensio." These reasons seemed sufficient to us both, and we resolved to leave vengeance to Almighty God, who seeth in secret, and to complain of our wrongs to Him, as we might not complain to men. But all my daughter said about old Lizzie-- item, of the good report wherein she herself had, till now, stood with everybody--he said he would write down, and add thereunto as much and as well of his own as he was able, so as, by the help of Almighty God, to save her from the torture. That she was to make herself easy and commend herself to God; within two days he hoped to have his defensio ready and to read it to her. And now, when he called the constable back again, the fellow did not come, but sent his wife to lock the prison, and I took leave of my child with many tears: Dom. Syndicus told the woman the while what her impudent rogue of a husband had done, that she might let him hear more of it. Then he sent the woman away again and came back to my daughter, saying that he had forgotten to ascertain whether she really knew the Latin tongue, and that she was to say her defensio over again in Latin, if she was able. Hereupon she began and went on therewith for a quarter of an hour or more, in such wise that not only Dom. Syndicus but I myself also was amazed, seeing that she did not stop for a single word, save the word "hedgehog," which we both had forgotten at the moment when she asked us what it was. Summa--Dom. Syndicus grew far more gracious when she had finished her oration, and took leave of her, promising that he would set to work forthwith.

After this I did not see him again till the morning of the third day at ten o'clock, seeing that he sat at work in a room at the castle, which the sheriff had given him, and also ate there, as he sent me word by old Ilse when she carried him his breakfast next day.

At the above-named time, he sent the new constable for me, who, meanwhile, had been fetched from Uzdom at his desire. For the sheriff was exceeding wroth when he heard that the impudent fellow had attempted my child in the prison, and cried out in a rage, "S'death and 'ouns, I'll mend thy coaxing!" Whereupon he gave him a sound thrashing with a dog-whip he held in his hand, to make sure that she should be at peace from him.

But, alas! the new constable was even worse than the old, as will be shown hereafter. His name was Master Köppner, and he was a tall fellow with a grim face, and a mouth so wide that at every word he said the spittle ran out at the corners, and stuck in his long beard like soapsuds, so that my child had an especial fear and loathing of him. Moreover, on all occasions he seemed to laugh in mockery and scorn, as he did when he opened the prison-door to us, and saw my poor child sitting in her grief and distress. But he straightway left us without waiting to be told, whereupon _Dom. Syndicus_ drew his defence out of his pocket, and read it to us; we have remembered the main points thereof, and I will recount them here, but most of the _auctores_ we have forgotten.

1. He began by saying that my daughter had ever till now stood in good repute, as not only the whole village, but even my servants, bore witness; _ergo_, she could not be a witch, inasmuch as the Saviour hath said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. vii.).

2. With regard to the witchcraft in the village, that belike was the contrivance of old Lizzie, seeing that she bore a great hatred towards _Rea_, and had long been in evil repute, for that the parishioners dared not to speak out, only from fear of the old witch; wherefore Zuter her little girl must be examined, who had heard old Lizzie her goodman tell her she had a familiar spirit, and that he would tell it to the parson; for that notwithstanding the above-named was but a child, still it was written in Ps. viii., "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength...;" and the Saviour Himself appealed (Matt. xxi.) to the testimony of little children.

3. Furthermore, old Lizzie might have bewitched the crops; item, the fruit-trees, inasmuch as none could believe that _Rea_, who had ever shown herself a dutiful child, would have bewitched her own father's corn, or made caterpillars come on his trees; for no one, according to Scripture, can serve two masters.

4. _Item_, she (old Lizzie) might very well have been the woodpecker that was seen by _Rea_ and old Paasch on the

Streckelberg, and herself have given over her goodman to the evil one for fear of the parson, inasmuch as Spitzel, *De Expugnatione Orci*, asserts; *item*, the *Malleus Malesicarum* [Footnote: The celebrated "Hammer for Witches" of Innocent VIII, which appeared 1489, and gave directions for the whole course of proceeding to be observed at trials for witchcraft.] proves beyond doubt, that the wicked children of Satan oftentimes change themselves into all manner of beasts, as the foul fiend himself likewise seduced our first parents in the shape of a serpent (Gen. iii).

5. That old Lizzie had most likely made the wild weather when *Dom. Consul* was coming home with *Rea* from the Streckelberg, seeing it was impossible that *Rea* could have done it, as she was sitting in the coach, whereas witches when they raise storms always stand in the water and throw it over their heads backwards; *item*, beat the stones soundly with a stick, as Hannold relates. Wherefore she too, may be, knew best about the frog and the hedgehog.

6. That *Rea* was erroneously charged with that as a *crimen* which ought rather to serve as her justification, namely, her sudden riches. For the *Malleus Malesicarum* expressly says that a witch can never grow rich, seeing that Satan, to do dishonour to God, always buys them for a vile price, so that they should not betray themselves by their riches. [Footnote: The original words of the "Hammer for Witches," tom. i. quest. 18, in answer to the questions, *Cur malefic non ditentur?* are, *Ut juxta complacentiam demonis in contumeliam Creatoris, quantum possibile est, pro vilissimo pretio emantur, et secundo, ne in divitas notentur.*] Wherefore that as *Rea* had grown rich, she could not have got her wealth from the foul fiend, but it must be true that she had found amber on the mountain; that the spells of old Lizzie might have been the cause why they could not find the vein of amber again, or that the sea might have washed away the cliff below, as often happens, whereupon the top had slipped down, so that only a *miraculum naturale* had taken place. The proof which he brought forward from Scripture we have quite forgotten, seeing it was but middling.

7. With regard to her re-baptism, the old hag had said herself that she had not seen the devil or any other spirit or man about *Rea*, wherefore she might in truth have been only naturally bathing, in order to greet the King of Sweden next day, seeing that the weather was hot, and that bathing was not of itself sufficient to impair the modesty of a maiden. For that she had as little thought any would see her as Bathsheba the daughter of Eliam, and wife of Uriah the Hittite, who in like manner did bathe herself, as is written (2 Sam. xi. 2), without knowing that David could see her. Neither could her mark be a mark given by Satan, inasmuch as there was feeling therein; *ergo*, it must be a natural mole, and it was a lie that she had it not before bathing.

Moreover, that on this point the old harlot was nowise to be believed, seeing that she had fallen from one contradiction into another about it, as stated in the *_Acta_*.

8. Neither was it just to accuse *_Rea_* of having bewitched Paasch his little daughter; for as old Lizzie was going in and out of the room, nay, even sat herself down on the little girl her belly when the pastor went to see her, it most likely was that wicked woman (who was known to have a great spite against *>i>Rea_*) that contrived the spell through the power of the foul fiend, and by permission of the all-just God; for that Satan was "a liar and the father of it," as our Lord Christ says (John viii.).

9. With regard to the appearance of the foul fiend on the mountain in the shape of a hairy giant, that indeed was the heaviest *_gravamen_*, inasmuch as not only old Lizzie, but likewise three trustworthy witnesses, had seen him. But who could tell whether it was not old Lizzie herself who had contrived this devilish apparition in order to ruin her enemy altogether; for that notwithstanding the apparition was not the young nobleman, as *_Rea_* had declared it to be, it still was very likely that she had not lied, but had mistaken Satan for the young lord, as he appeared in his shape; *_exemplum_*, for this was to be found even in Scripture: for that all *_Theologi_* of the whole Protestant Church were agreed, that the vision which the witch of Endor showed to King Saul was not Samuel himself, but the arch-fiend; nevertheless, Saul had taken it for Samuel. In like manner the old harlot might have conjured up the devil before *_Rea_*, who did not perceive that it was not the young lord, but Satan, who had put on that shape in order to seduce her; for as *_Rea_* was a fair woman, none could wonder that the devil gave himself more trouble for her than for an old withered hag, seeing he has ever sought after fair women to lie with them.

[Footnote: Gen. vi. 2.]

Lastly, he argued that *_Rea_* was in nowise marked as a witch, for that she neither had bleared and squinting eyes nor a hooked nose, whereas old Lizzie had both, which Theophrastus Paracelsus declares to be an unfailing mark of a witch, saying, "Nature marketh none thus unless by abortion, for these are the chiefest signs whereby witches be known whom the spirit *_Asiendens_* hath subdued unto himself."

When *_Dom. Syndicus_* had read his *_defensio_*, my daughter was so rejoiced thereat that she would have kissed his hand, but he snatched it from her and breathed upon it thrice, whereby we could easily see that he himself was nowise in earnest with his *_defensio_*. Soon after he took leave in an ill-humour, after commending her to the care of the Most High, and begged that I would make my farewell as short as might be, seeing that he purposed to return home that very day, the which, alas! I very unwillingly did.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How my poor child was sentenced to be put to the question.

After Acta had been sent to the honourable the central court, about fourteen days passed over before any answer was received. My lord the sheriff was especially gracious towards me the while, and allowed me to see my daughter as often as I would (seeing that the rest of the court were gone home), wherefore I was with her nearly all day. And when the constable grew impatient of keeping watch over me, I gave him a fee to lock me in together with my child. And the all-merciful God was gracious unto us, and caused us often and gladly to pray, for we had a steadfast hope, believing that the cross we had seen in the heavens would now soon pass away from us, and that the ravening wolf would receive his reward when the honourable high court had read through the Acta, and should come to the excellent defensio which Dom. Syndicus had constructed for my child. Wherefore I began to be of good cheer again, especially when I saw my daughter her cheeks growing of a right lovely red. But on Thursday, 25th mensis Augusti, at noon, the worshipful court drove into the castle yard again as I sat in the prison with my child, as I was wont; and old Ilse brought us our food, but could not tell us the news for weeping. But the tall constable peeped in at the door grinning, and cried, "Oh, ho! they are come, they are come; now the tickling will begin:" whereat my poor child shuddered, but less at the news than at sight of the fellow himself. Scarce was he gone than he came back again to take off her chains and to fetch her away. So I followed her into the judgment-chamber, where Dom. Consul read out the sentence of the honourable high court as follows:--That she should once more be questioned in kindness touching the articles contained in the indictment; and if she then continued stubborn she should be subjected to the peine forte et dure, for that the defensio she had set up did not suffice, and that there were indicia legitima, praegnantia et sufficientia ad torturam ipsam; to wit--1. Mala sama.

2. Malesicum, publicè commissum.

3. Apparitio daemionis in monte.

Whereupon the most honourable central court cited about 20 auctores, whereof, howbeit, we remember but little. When Don. Consul had read out this to my child, he once more lift up his voice and admonished her with many words to confess of her own free will, for that the truth must now come to light.

Hereupon she steadfastly replied, that after the _defensio_ of _Dom. Syndicus_ she had indeed hoped for a better sentence; but that, as it was the will of God to try her yet more hardly, she resigned herself altogether into His gracious hands, and could not confess aught save what she had said before, namely, that she was innocent, and that evil men had brought this misery upon her. Hereupon _Dom. Consul_ motioned the constable, who straightway opened the door of the next room, and admitted _Pastor Benzensis_ [Footnote: The minister at Bentz, a village situated at a short distance from Pudgla.] in his surplice, who had been sent for by the court to admonish her still better out of the Word of God. He heaved a deep sigh, and said, "Mary, Mary, is it thus I must meet thee again?" Whereupon she began to weep bitterly, and to protest her innocence afresh. But he heeded not her distress; and as soon as he had heard her pray, "Our Father," "The eyes of all wait upon Thee," and "God the Father dwell with us," he lift up his voice and declared to her the hatred of the living God to all witches and warlocks, seeing that not only is the punishment of fire awarded to them in the Old Testament, but that the Holy Ghost expressly saith in the New Testament (Gal. v.), "That they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God;" but "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death" (Apocal. xxi.). Wherefore she must not be stubborn nor murmur against the court when she was tormented, seeing that it was all done out of Christian love, and to save her poor soul. That, for the sake of God and her salvation, she should no longer delay repentance, and thereby cause her body to be tormented and give over her wretched soul to Satan, who certainly would not fulfil those promises in hell which he had made her here upon earth; seeing that "he was a murderer from the beginning--a liar and the father of it" (John viii.). "Oh!" cried he, "Mary, my child, who so oft hast sat upon my knees, and for whom I now cry every morning and every night unto my God, if thou wilt have no pity upon thee and me, have pity at least upon thy worthy father, whom I cannot look upon without tears, seeing that his hairs have turned snow white within a few days, and save thy soul, my child, and confess! Behold, thy Heavenly Father grieveth over thee no less than thy fleshly father, and the holy angels veil their faces for sorrow that thou, who wert once their darling sister, art now become the sister and bride of the devil. Return, therefore, and repent! This day thy Saviour calleth thee, poor stray lamb, back into His flock, 'And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound... be loosed from this bond?' Such are His merciful words (Luke xiii.); _item_, 'Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful' (Jer. iii.). Return then, thou backsliding soul, unto the Lord thy God! He who heard the prayer of the idolatrous Manasseh when 'he besought the Lord his God and humbled himself (2 Chron. xxxiii.); who, through Paul, accepted the repentance of the sorcerers at Ephesus (Acts xix.), the same merciful God now crieth unto thee as unto the angel of the church of Ephesus, 'Remember, therefore, from whence thou art

fallen and repent' (Apocal. ii.). O Mary, Mary, remember, my child, from whence thou art fallen, and repent!"

Hereupon he held his peace, and it was some time before she could say a word for tears and sobs; but at last she answered, "If lies are no less hateful to God than witchcraft, I may not lie, but must rather declare, to the glory of God, as I have ever declared, that I am innocent."

Hereupon _Dom. Consul_ was exceeding wroth, and frowned, and asked the tall constable if all was ready, _Item_, whether the women were at hand to undress _Rea_; whereupon he answered with a grin, as he was wont, "Ho, ho, I have never been wanting in my duty, nor will I be wanting to-day; I will tickle her in such wise that she shall soon confess."

When he had said this, _Dom. Consul_ turned to my daughter and said, "Thou art a foolish thing, and knowest not the torment which awaits thee, and therefore is it that thou still art stubborn. Now then, follow me to the torture-chamber, where the executioner shall show thee the _instrumenta_, and thou mayest yet think better of it, when thou hast seen what the question is like."

Hereupon he went into another room, and the constable followed him with my child. And when I would have gone after them, _Pastor Benzensis_ held me back, with many tears, and conjured me not to do so, but to tarry where I was. But I hearkened not unto him, and tore myself from him, and swore that so long as a single vein should beat in my wretched body, I would never forsake my child. I therefore went into the next room, and from thence down into a vault, where was the torture-chamber, wherein were no windows, so that those without might not hear the cries of the tormented. Two torches were already burning there when I went in, and although _Dom. Consul_ would at first have sent me away, after a while he had pity upon me, so that he suffered me to stay.

And now that hell-hound the constable stepped forward, and first showed my poor child the ladder, saying with savage glee, "See here! first of all, thou wilt be laid on that, and thy hands and feet will be tied. Next the thumb-screw here will be put upon thee, which straightway will make the blood to spirt out at the tips of thy fingers; thou mayest see that they are still red with the blood of old Gussy Biehlke, who was burnt last year, and who, like thee, would not confess at first. If thou still wilt not confess, I shall next put these Spanish boots on thee, and should they be too large, I shall just drive in a wedge, so that the calf, which is now at the back of thy leg, will be driven to the front, and the blood will shoot out of thy feet, as when thou squeezeest blackberries in a bag.

"Again, if thou wilt not yet confess--holla!" shouted he, and kicked open a door behind him, so that the whole vault shook, and

my poor child fell upon her knees for fright. Before long two women brought in a bubbling cauldron, full of boiling pitch and brimstone. This cauldron the hell-hound ordered them to set down on the ground, and drew forth, from under the red cloak he wore, a goose's wing, wherefrom he plucked five or six quills, which he dipped into the boiling brimstone. After he had held them awhile in the cauldron he threw them upon the earth, where they twisted about and spirted the brimstone on all sides. And then he called to my poor child again, "See! these quills I shall throw upon thy white loins, and the burning brimstone will presently eat into thy flesh down to the very bones, so that thou wilt thereby have a foretaste of the joys which await thee in hell."

When he had spoken thus far, amid sneers and laughter, I was so overcome with rage that I sprang forth out of the corner where I stood leaning my trembling joints against an old barrel, and cried, "Oh, thou hellish dog! sayest thou this of thyself, or have others bidden thee?" Whereupon, however, the fellow gave me such a blow upon the breast that I fell backwards against the wall, and _Dom. Consul_ called out in great wrath, "You old fool, if you needs must stay here, at any rate leave the constable in peace, for if not I will have you thrust out of the chamber forthwith. The constable has said no more than is his duty; and it will thus happen to thy child if she confess not, and if it appear that the foul fiend hath given her some charm against the torture." [Footnote: It was believed that when witches endured torture with unusual patience, or even slept during the operation, which, strange to say, frequently occurred, the devil had gifted them with insensibility to pain by means of an amulet which they concealed in some secret part of their persons.--Zedler's Universal Lexicon, vol. xlv., art, "Torture."] Hereupon this hell-hound went on to speak to my poor child, without heeding me, save that he laughed in my face: "Look here! when thou hast thus been well shorn, ho, ho, ho! I shall pull thee up by means of these two rings in the floor and the roof, stretch thy arms above thy head, and bind them fast to the ceiling; whereupon I shall take these two torches, and hold them under thy shoulders, till thy skin will presently become like the rind of a smoked ham. Then thy hellish paramour will help thee no longer, and thou wilt confess the truth. And now thou hast seen and heard all that I shall do to thee, in the name of God, and by order of the magistrates."

And now _Dom. Consul_ once more came forward and admonished her to confess the truth. But she abode by what she had said from the first; whereupon he delivered her over to the two women who had brought in the cauldron, to strip her naked as she was born, and to clothe her in the black torture-shift; after which they were once more to lead her barefooted up the steps before the worshipful court. But one of these women was the sheriff his housekeeper (the other was the impudent constable his wife), and my daughter said that she would not suffer herself to be touched save by honest women, and assuredly not by the housekeeper, and

begged _Dom. Consul_ to send for her maid, who was sitting in her prison reading the Bible, if he knew of no other decent woman at hand. Hereupon the housekeeper began to pour forth a wondrous deal of railing and ill words, but _Dom. Consul_ rebuked her, and answered my daughter that he would let her have her wish in this matter too, and bade the impudent constable his wife call the maid hither from out of the prison. After he had said this, he took me by the arm, and prayed me so long to go up with him, for that no harm would happen to my daughter as yet, that I did as he would have me.

Before long she herself came up, led between the two women, barefooted, and in the black torture-shift, but so pale that I myself should scarce have known her. The hateful constable, who followed close behind, seized her by the hand, and led her before the worshipful court.

Hereupon the admonitions began all over again, and _Dom. Consul_ bade her look upon the brown spots that were upon the black shift, for that they were the blood of old wife Biehlke, and to consider that within a few minutes it would in like manner be stained with her own blood. Hereupon she answered, "I have considered that right well, but I hope that my faithful Saviour, who hath laid this torment upon me, being innocent, will likewise help me to bear it, as He helped the holy martyrs of old; for if these, through God's help, overcame by faith the torments inflicted on them by blind heathens, I also can overcome the torture inflicted on me by blind heathens, who, indeed, call themselves Christians, but who are more cruel than those of yore; for the old heathens only caused the holy virgins to be torn of savage beasts, but ye which have received the new commandment, 'That ye love one another; as your Saviour hath loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are His disciples' (St. John xiii.); yourselves will act the part of savage beasts, and tear with your own hands the body of an innocent maiden, your sister, who has never done aught to harm you. Do then as ye list, but have a care how ye will answer it to the highest Judge of all. Again, I say, the lamb feareth naught, for it is in the hand of the Good Shepherd." When my matchless child had thus spoken, _Dom. Consul_ rose, pulled off the black skull-cap which he ever wore, because the top of his head was already bald, bowed to the court, and said, "We hereby make known to the worshipful court, that the question ordinary and extraordinary of the stubborn and blaspheming witch, Mary Schweidler, is about to begin, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Hereupon all the court rose save the sheriff, who had got up before, and was walking uneasily up and down in the room. But of all that now follows, and of what I myself did, I remember not one word, but will relate it all as I have received it from my daughter and other _testes_, and they have told me as follows:--

That when _Dom. Consul_ after these words had taken up the hour-glass which stood upon the table, and walked on before, I would go with him, whereupon _Pastor Benzensis_ first prayed me with many words and tears to desist from my purpose, and when that was of no avail my child herself stroked my cheeks, saying, "Father, have you ever read that the Blessed Virgin stood by when her guileless Son was scourged? Depart, therefore, from me. You shall stand by the pile whereon I am burned, that I promise you; for in like manner did the Blessed Virgin stand at the foot of the cross. But now, go; go, I pray you, for you will not be able to bear it, neither shall I!"

And when this also failed, _Dom. Consul_ bade the constable seize me, and by main force lock me into another room; whereupon, however, I tore myself away, and fell at his feet, conjuring him by the wounds of Christ not to tear me from my child; that I would never forget his kindness and mercy, but pray for him day and night; nay, that at the day of judgment I would be his intercessor with God and the holy angels if that he would but let me go with my child; that I would be quite quiet, and not speak one single word, but that I must go with my child, &c.

This so moved the worthy man that he burst into tears, and so trembled with pity for me that the hour-glass fell from his hands and rolled right before the feet of the sheriff, as though God Himself would signify to him that his glass was soon to run out; and, indeed, he understood it right well, for he grew white as any chalk when he picked it up, and gave it back to _Dom. Consul_. The latter at last gave way, saying that this day would make him ten years older; but he bade the impudent constable, who also went with us, lead me away if I made any _rumor_ during the torture. And hereupon the whole court went below, save the sheriff, who said his head ached, and that he believed his old _malum_, the gout, was coming upon him again, wherefore he went into another chamber, _item_, _Pastor Benzensis_ likewise departed.

Down in the vault the constables first brought in tables and chairs, whereon the court sat, and _Dom. Consul_ also pushed a chair toward me, but I sat not thereon, but threw myself upon my knees in a corner. When this was done they began again with their vile admonitions, and as my child, like her guileless Saviour before His unrighteous judges, answered not a word, _Dom. Consul_ rose up and bade the tall constable lay her on the torture-bench.

She shook like an aspen leaf when he bound her hands and feet; and when he was about to bind over her sweet eyes a nasty old filthy clout wherein my maid had seen him carry fish but the day before, and which was still all over shining scales, I perceived it, and pulled off my silken neckerchief, begging him to use that instead, which he did. Hereupon the thumb-screw was put on her, and she was

once more asked whether she would confess freely, but she only shook her poor blinded head, and sighed with her dying Saviour, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," and then in Greek, "Theø mou, theø mou, hiva thi me hegkatølipes." [Footnote: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"-Matt, xxvii. 46.] Whereat _Dom. Consul_ started back, and made the sign of the cross (for inasmuch as he knew no Greek, he believed, as he afterwards said himself, that she was calling upon the devil to help her), and then called to the constable with a loud voice, "Screw!"

But when I heard this I gave such a cry that the whole vault shook; and when my poor child, who was dying of terror and despair, had heard my voice, she first struggled with her bound hands and feet like a lamb that lies dying in the slaughter-house, and then cried out, "Loose me, and I will confess whatsoever you will." Hereat _Dom. Consul_ so greatly rejoiced, that while the constable unbound her, he fell on his knees, and thanked God for having spared him this anguish. But no sooner was my poor desperate child unbound, and had laid aside her crown of thorns (I mean my silken neckerchief), than she jumped off the ladder, and flung herself upon me, who lay for dead in the corner in a deep swoond.

This greatly angered the worshipful court, and when the constable had borne me away, _Rea_ was admonished to make her confession according to promise. But seeing she was too weak to stand upon her feet, _Dom. Consul_ gave her a chair to sit upon, although _Dom. Camerarius_ grumbled thereat, and these were the chief questions which were put to her by order of the most honourable high central court, as _Dom. Consul_ said, and which were registered _ad protocollum._

Q. Whether she could bewitch?--_R._ Yes, she could bewitch.

Q. Who taught her to do so?--_R._ Satan himself.

Q. How many devils had she?--_R._ One devil was enough for her.

Q. What was this devil called?--_Illa_ (considering). His name was _Disidæmonia_. [Footnote: Greek--Superstition. What an extraordinary woman!]

Hereat _Dom. Consul_ shuddered and said that that must be a very terrible devil indeed, for that he had never heard such a name before, and that she must spell it, so that _Scriba_ might make no error; which she did, and he then went on as follows:--

Q. In what shape had he appeared to her?--_R._ In the shape of the sheriff, and sometimes as a goat with terrible horns.

Q. Whether Satan had re-baptized her, and where?--_R_.

In the sea.

Q. What name had he given her?--_R_-----.

[Footnote: It was impossible to decipher this name in the manuscript.]

Q. Whether any of the neighbours had been by when she was re-baptized, and which of them?--_R_. Hereupon my matchless child cast up her eyes towards heaven, as though doubting whether she should fyle old Lizzie or not, but at last she said, No!

Q. She must have had sponsors; who were they? and what gift had they given her as christening money?--_R_. There were none there save spirits; wherefore old Lizzie could see no one when she came and looked on at her re-baptism.

Q. Whether she had ever lived with the devil?--_R_. She never had lived anywhere save in her father's house.

Q. She did not choose to understand. He meant whether she had ever played the wanton with Satan, and known him carnally? Hereupon she blushed, and was so ashamed that she covered her face with her hands, and presently began to weep and to sob: and as, after many questions, she gave no answer, she was again admonished to speak the truth, or that the executioner should lift her up on the ladder again. At last she said "No!" which howbeit the worshipful court would not believe, and bade the executioner seize her again, whereupon she answered "Yes!"

Q. Whether she had found the devil hot or cold?--_R_. She did not remember which.

Q. Whether she had ever conceived by Satan, and given birth to a changeling, and of what shape?--_R_. No, never.

Q. Whether the foul fiend had given her any sign or mark about her body, and in what part thereof?--_R_. That the mark had already been seen by the worshipful court.

She was next charged with all the witchcraft done in the village, and owned to it all, save that she still said that she knew naught of old Seden his death, item, of little Paasch her sickness, nor, lastly, would she confess that she had, by the help of the foul fiend, raked up my crop or conjured the caterpillars into my orchard. And albeit they again threatened her with the question, and even ordered the executioner to lay her on the bench and put on the thumbscrew to frighten her; she remained firm, and said, "Why should you torture me, seeing that I have confessed far heavier crimes than these, which it will not save my life to deny?"

Hereupon the worshipful court at last were satisfied, and suffered

her to be lifted off the torture-bench, especially as she confessed the *artculus principalis*; to wit, that Satan had really appeared to her on the mountain in the shape of a hairy giant. Of the storm and the frog, item, of the hedgehog, nothing was said, inasmuch as the worshipful court had by this time seen the folly of supposing that she could have brewed a storm while she quietly sat in the coach. Lastly, she prayed that it might be granted to her to suffer death clothed in the garments which she had worn when she went to greet the King of Sweden; *item*, that they would suffer her wretched father to be driven with her to the stake, and to stand by while she was burned, seeing that she had promised him this in the presence of the worshipful court.

Hereupon she was once more given into the charge of the tall constable, who was ordered to put her into a stronger and severer prison. But he had not led her out of the chamber before the sheriff his bastard, whom he had had by the housekeeper, came into the vault with a drum, and kept drumming and crying out, "Come to the roast goose! come to the roast goose!" whereat *Dom*. *Consul* was exceeding wroth, and ran after him, but he could not catch him, seeing that the young varlet knew all the ins and outs of the vault. Without doubt it was the Lord who sent me the swound, so that I should be spared this fresh grief; wherefore to Him alone be honour and glory. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How in my presence the devil fetched old Lizzie Kolken.

When I recovered from my above-mentioned swound, I found my host, his wife, and my old maid standing over me, and pouring warm beer down my throat. The faithful old creature shrieked for joy when I opened my eyes again, and then told me that my daughter had not suffered herself to be racked, but had freely confessed her crimes and fyled herself as a witch. This seemed pleasant news to me in my misery, inasmuch as I deemed the death by fire to be a less heavy punishment than the torture. Howbeit when I would have prayed I could not, whereat I again fell into heavy grief and despair, fearing that the Holy Ghost had altogether turned away His face from me, wretched man that I was. And albeit the old maid, when she had seen this, came and stood before my bed and began to pray aloud to me; it was all in vain, and I remained a hardened sinner. But the Lord had pity upon me, although I deserved it not, insomuch that I presently fell into a deep sleep, and did not awake until next morning when the prayer-bell rang; and then I was once more able to pray, whereat I greatly rejoiced, and still thanked God in my heart, when my ploughman Claus Neels came in and told me that he had come yesterday to tell me about my oats, seeing that he had gotten them all in; and that the

constable came with him who had been to fetch old Lizzie Kolken, inasmuch as the honourable high court had ordered her to be brought up for trial. Hereat the whole village rejoiced, but Rea herself laughed, and shouted, and sang, and told him and the constable, by the way (for the constable had let her get up behind for a short time), that this should bring great luck to the sheriff. They need only bring her up before the court, and in good sooth she would not hold her tongue within her teeth, but that all men should marvel at her confession; that such a court as that was a laughing-stock to her, and that she spat, salvâ veniâ, upon the whole brotherhood, &c.

Upon hearing this I once more felt a strong hope, and rose to go to old Lizzie. But I was not quite dressed before she sent the impudent constable to beg that I would go to her with all speed and give her the sacrament, seeing that she had become very weak during the night. I had my own thoughts on the matter, and followed the constable as fast as I could, though not to give her the sacrament, as indeed anybody may suppose. But in my haste I, weak old man that I was, forgot to take my witnesses with me; for all the misery I had hitherto suffered had so clouded my senses that it never once came into my head. None followed me save the impudent constable; and it will soon appear how that this villain had given himself over body and soul to Satan to destroy my child, whereas he might have saved her. For when he had opened the prison (it was the same cell wherein my child had first been shut up), we found old Lizzie lying on the ground on a truss of straw, with a broom for a pillow (as though she were about to fly to hell upon it, as she no longer could fly to Blockula), so that I shuddered when I caught sight of her.

Scarce was I come in when she cried out fearfully, "I'm a witch, I'm a witch! Have pity upon me, and give me the sacrament quick, and I will confess everything to you!" And when I said to her, "Confess then!" she owned that she, with the help of the sheriff, had contrived all the witchcraft in the village, and that my child was as innocent thereof as the blessed sun in heaven. Howbeit that the sheriff had the greatest guilt, inasmuch as he was a warlock and a witch's priest, and had a spirit far stronger than hers, called Dudaim, [Footnote: This remarkable word occurs in the I Mos. xxx. 15 ff. as the name of a plant which produces fruitfulness in women; but the commentators are by no means agreed as to its nature and its properties. The LXX. render it by Mandragoras, which has been understood by the most eminent ancient and modern theologians to mean the mandrake (Alraunwurzel) so famous in the history of witchcraft. In many instances the devils, strangely enough, receive Christian names; thus the familiar spirit of old Lizzie is afterwards called Kit, i.e., Christopher.] which spirit had given her such a blow on the head in the night as she should never recover. This same Dudaim it was that had raked up the crops, heaped sand over the amber, made the storm, and dropped the frog into my daughter her lap; item, carried off her old goodman through the air.

And when I asked her how that could be, seeing that her goodman had been a child of God until very near his end, and much given to prayer; albeit I had indeed marvelled why he had other thoughts in his last illness; she answered, that one day he had seen her spirit, which she kept in a chest, in the shape of a black cat, and whose name was Kit, and had threatened that he would tell me of it; whereupon she, being frightened, had caused her spirit to make him so ill that he despaired of ever getting over it. Thereupon she had comforted him, saying that she would presently heal him if he would deny God, who, as he well saw, could not help him. This he promised to do; and when she had straightway made him quite hearty again, they took the silver which I had scraped off the new sacrament cup, and went by night down to the sea-shore, where he had to throw it into the sea with these words, "When this silver returns again to the chalice, then shall my soul return to God." Whereupon the sheriff, who was by, re-baptized him in the name of Satan, and called him Jack. He had had no sponsors save only herself, old Lizzie. Moreover that on St. John's Eve, when he went with them to Blockula for the first time (the Herrenberg [Footnote: A hill near Coserow. In almost all trials of witches hills of this kind in the neighbourhood of the accused are mentioned, where the devil, on Walpurgis Night and St. John's Eve, feasts, dances, and wantons with them, and where warlock priests administer Satanic sacraments, which are mere mockeries of those of Divine institution.] was their Blockula), they had talked of my daughter, and Satan himself had sworn to the sheriff that he should have her. For that he would show the old one (wherewith the villain meant God) what he could do, and that he would make the carpenter's son sweat for vexation (fie upon thee, thou arch villain, that thou could'st thus speak of my blessed Saviour!). Whereupon her old goodman had grumbled, and as they had never rightly trusted him, the spirit Dudaim one day flew off with him through the air by the sheriff's order, seeing that her own spirit, called Kit, was too weak to carry him. That the same Dudaim had also been the woodpecker who afterwards 'ticed my daughter and old Paasch to the spot with his cries, in order to ruin her. But that the giant who had appeared on the Streckelberg was not a devil, but the young lord of Mellenthin himself, as her spirit, Kit, had told her.

And this she said was nothing but the truth, whereby she would live and die; and she begged me, for the love of God, to take pity upon her, and, after her repentant confession, to speak forgiveness of her sins, and to give her the Lord's Supper; for that her spirit stood there behind the stove, grinning like a rogue, because he saw that it was all up with her now. But I answered, "I would sooner give the sacrament to an old sow than to thee, thou accursed witch, who not only didst give over thine own husband to Satan, but hast likewise tortured me and my poor child almost unto death with pains like those of hell." Before she could make any answer, a loathsome insect, about as long as my finger, and with a yellow tail, crawled in under the door of the prison.

When she espied it, she gave a yell, such as I never before heard, and never wish to hear again. For once, when I was in Silesia, in my youth, I saw one of the enemy's soldiers spear a child before its mother's face, and I thought _that_ a fearful shriek which the mother gave; but her cry was child's play to the cry of old Lizzie. All my hair stood on end, and her own red hair grew so stiff that it was like the twigs of the broom whereon she lay; and then she howled, "That is the spirit Dudaim, whom the accursed sheriff has sent to me--the sacrament, for the love of God, the sacrament!--I will confess a great deal more--I have been a witch these thirty years!--the sacrament, the sacrament!" While she thus bellowed and flung about her arms and legs, the loathsome insect rose into the air, and buzzed and whizzed about her where she lay, insomuch that it was fearful to see and to hear. And this she-devil called by turns on God, on her spirit Kit, and on me, to help her, till the insect all of a sudden darted into her open jaws, whereupon she straightway gave up the ghost, and turned all black and blue like a blackberry.

I heard nothing more save that the window rattled, not very loud, but as though one had thrown a pea against it, whereby I straightway perceived that Satan had just flown through it with her soul. May the all-merciful God keep every mother's child from such an end, for the sake of Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour! Amen.

As soon as I was somewhat recovered, which, however, was not for a long time, inasmuch as my blood had turned to ice, and my feet were as stiff as a stake, I began to call out after the impudent constable, but he was no longer in the prison. Thereat I greatly marvelled, seeing that I had seen him there but just before the vermin crawled in, and straightway I suspected no good, as, indeed, it turned out; for when at last he came upon my calling him, and I told him to let this carrion be carted out which had just died in the name of the devil, he did as though he was amazed; and when I desired him that he would bear witness to the innocence of my daughter, which the old hag had confessed on her deathbed, he pretended to be yet more amazed, and said that he had heard nothing. This went through my heart like a sword, and I leaned against a pillar without, where I stood for a long time: but as soon as I was come to myself I went to _Dom. Consul_, who was about to go to Usedom, and already sat in his coach. At my humble prayer he went back into the judgment-chamber with the _Camerarius_ and the _Scriba_, whereupon I told all that had taken place, and how the wicked constable denied that he had heard the same. But they say that I talked a great deal of nonsense beside; among other things that all the little fishes had swam into the vault to release my daughter. Nevertheless, _Dom. Consul_. who often shook his head, sent for the impudent constable, and asked him for his testimony. But the fellow pretended that as soon as he saw that old Lizzie wished to confess, he had gone away, so as not to get any more hard words, wherefore he had heard nothing. Hereupon I, as _Dom. Consul_

afterwards told the pastor of Benz, clenched my fists and answered, "What, thou arch rogue, didst thou not crawl about the room in the shape of a reptile?" whereupon he would hearken to me no longer, thinking me distraught, nor would he make the constable take an oath, but left me standing in the midst of the room, and got into his coach again.

Neither do I know how I got out of the room; but next morning when the sun rose, and I found myself lying in bed at Master Seep his ale-house, the whole *_casus_* seemed to me like a dream; neither was I able to rise, but lay a-bed all the blessed Saturday and Sunday, talking all manner of *_allogria_*. It was not till towards evening on Sunday, when I began to vomit and threw up green bile (no wonder!), that I got somewhat better. About this time *_Pastor Benzensis_* came to my bedside, and told me how distractedly I had borne myself, but so comforted me from the Word of God, that I was once more able to pray from my heart. May the merciful God reward my dear gossip, therefore, at the day of judgment! For prayer is almost as brave a comforter as the Holy Ghost Himself, from whom it comes; and I shall ever consider that so long as a man can still pray, his misfortunes are not unbearable, even though in all else "his flesh and his heart faileth" (Ps. lxxiii.).

CHAPTER XXV.

How Satan sifted me like wheat, whereas my daughter withstood him right bravely.

On Monday I left my bed betimes, and as I felt in passable good case, I went up to the castle to see whether I might peradventure get to my daughter. But I could not find either constable, albeit I had brought a few groats with me to give them as beer-money; neither would the folks that I met tell me where they were; *_item_*, the impudent constable his wife, who was in the kitchen making brimstone matches. And when I asked her when her husband would come back, she said not before to-morrow morning early; *_item_*, that the other constable would not be here any sooner. Hereupon I begged her to lead me to my daughter herself, at the same time showing her the two groats; but she answered that she had not the keys, and knew not how to get at them: moreover, she said she did not know where my child was now shut up, seeing that I would have spoken to her through the door; *_item_*, the cook, the huntsman, and whomsoever else I met in my sorrow, said they knew not in what hole the witch might lie.

Hereupon I went all round about the castle, and laid my ear against every little window that looked as though it might be her window, and cried, "Mary, my child, where art thou?" *_Item_*,

at every grating I found I kneeled down, bowed my head, and called in like manner into the vault below. But all in vain; I got no answer anywhere. The sheriff at length saw what I was about, and came down out of the castle to me with a very gracious air, and taking me by the hand, he asked me what I sought? But when I answered him that I had not seen my only child since last Thursday, and prayed him to show pity upon me, and let me be led to her, he said that could not be, but that I was to come up into his chamber, and talk further of the matter. By the way he said, "Well, so the old witch told you fine things about me, but you see how Almighty God has sent His righteous judgment upon her. She has long been ripe for the fire; but my great long-suffering, wherein a good magistrate should ever strive to be like unto the Lord, has made me overlook it till *_datum_*, and in return for my goodness she raises this outcry against me." And when I replied, "How does your lordship know that the witch raised such an outcry against you?" he first began to stammer, and then said, "Why, you yourself charged me thereon before the judge. But I bear you no anger therefor, and God knows that I pity you, who are a poor weak old man, and would gladly help you if I were able." Meanwhile he led me up four or five flights of stairs, so that I, old man that I am, could follow him no further, and stood still gasping for breath. But he took me by the hand and said, "Come, I must first show you how matters really stand, or I fear you will not accept my help, but will plunge yourself into destruction." Hereupon we stepped out upon a terrace at the top of the castle, which looked toward the water; and the villain went on to say, "Reverend Abraham, can you see well afar off?" and when I answered that I once could see very well, but that the many tears I had shed had now peradventure dimmed my eyes, he pointed to the Streckelberg, and said, "Do you then see nothing there?" *_Ego_*. "Naught save a black speck, which I cannot make out." *_Ille_*. "Know then that that is the pile whereon your daughter is to burn at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, and which the constables are now raising." When this hell-hound had thus spoken, I gave a loud cry and swooned. O blessed Lord! I know not how I lived through such distress; Thou alone didst strengthen me beyond nature, in order, "after so much weeping and wailing, to heap joys and blessings upon me;" without Thee I never could have lived through such misery: "therefore to Thy name ever be all honour and glory, O Thou God of Israel!" [Footnote: Tobit iii. 22, 23, Luther's Version.]

When I came again to myself I lay on a bed in a fine room, and perceived a taste in my mouth like wine. But as I saw none near me save the sheriff, who held a pitcher in his hand, I shuddered and closed mine eyes, considering what I should say or do. This he presently observed, and said, "Do not shudder thus; I mean well by you, and only wish to put a question to you, which you must answer me on your conscience as a priest. Say, reverend Abraham, which is the greater sin, to commit whoredom, or to take the lives of two persons?" and when I answered him, "To take the lives of two persons," he went on, "Well, then, is not that what your stubborn

child is about to do? Rather than give herself up to me, who have ever desired to save her, and who can even yet save her, albeit her pile is now being raised, she will take away her own life and that of her wretched father, for I scarcely think that you, poor man, will outlive this sorrow. Wherefore do you, for God His sake, persuade her to think better of it while I am yet able to save her. For know that about ten miles from hence I have a small house in the midst of the forest, where no human being ever goes; thither will I send her this very night, and you may dwell there with her all the days of your life, if so it please you. You shall live as well as you can possibly desire, and to-morrow morning I will spread a report betimes that the witch and her father have run away together during the night, and that nobody knows whither they are gone." Thus spake the serpent to me, as whilom to our mother Eve; and, wretched sinner that I am, the tree of death which he showed me seemed to me also to be a tree of life, so pleasant was it to the eye. Nevertheless I answered, "My child will never save her miserable life by doing aught to peril the salvation of her soul." But now too the serpent was more cunning than all the beasts of the field (especially such an old fool as I), and spake thus: "Why, who would have her peril the salvation of her soul? Reverend Abraham, must I teach you Scripture? Did not our Lord Christ pardon Mary Magdalene, who lived in open whoredom? and did He not speak forgiveness to the poor adulteress who had committed a still greater _crimen_? nay more, doth not St. Paul expressly say that the harlot Rahab was saved, Hebrews xi.? _item_, St. James ii. says the same. But where have ye read that any one was saved who had wantonly taken her own life and that of her father? Wherefore, for the love of God, persuade your child not to give herself up, body and soul, to the devil, by her stubbornness, but to suffer herself to be saved while it is yet time. You can abide with her, and pray away all the sins she may commit, and likewise aid me with your prayers, who freely own that I am a miserable sinner, and have done you much evil, though not so much evil by far, reverend Abraham, as David did to Uriah, and he was saved, notwithstanding he put the man to a shameful death, and afterwards lay with his wife. Wherefore I, poor man, likewise hope to be saved, seeing that my desire for your daughter is still greater than that which this David felt for Bathsheba; and I will gladly make it all up to you twofold as soon as we are in my cottage."

When the tempter had thus spoken, methought his words were sweeter than honey, and I answered, "Alas, my lord, I am ashamed to appear before her face with such a proposal." Whereupon he straightway said, "Then do you write it to her; come, here is pen, ink, and paper."

And now, like Eve, I took the fruit and ate, and gave it to my child that she might eat also; that is to say, that I recapitulated on paper all that Satan had prompted, but in the Latin tongue, for I was ashamed to write it in mine own; and lastly, I conjured her not to take away her own life and mine, but

to submit to the wondrous will of God. Neither were mine eyes opened when I had eaten (that is, written), nor did I perceive that the ink was gall instead of honey, and I translated my letter to the sheriff (seeing that he understood no Latin), smiling like a drunken man the while; whereupon he clapped me on the shoulder, and after I had made fast the letter with his signet, he called his huntsman, and gave it to him to carry to my daughter; _item_, he sent her pen, ink, and paper, together with his signet, in order that she might answer it forthwith.

Meanwhile he talked with me right graciously, praising my child and me, and made me drink to him many times from his great pitcher, wherein was most goodly wine; moreover, he went to a cupboard and brought out cakes for me to eat, saying that I should now have such every day. But when the huntsman came back in about half-an-hour, with her answer, and I had read the same, then, first, were mine eyes opened, and I knew good and evil; had I had a fig-leaf, I should have covered them therewith for shame; but as it was, I held my hand over them, and wept so bitterly that the sheriff waxed very wroth, and cursing bade me tell him what she had written. Thereupon I interpreted the letter to him, the which I likewise place here, in order that all may see my folly, and the wisdom of my child. It was as follows:--

IESVS!

Pater infelix!

Ego eras non magis pallebo rogum aspectura, et rogus non magis erubescet, me suspiciens, quam pallui et iterum erubescui, literas tuas legens. Quid? et te, pium patrem, pium servum Domini, ita Satanus sollicitavit, ut communionem facias cum inimicis meis, et non intelligas: in tali vita esse mortem, et in tali morte vitam? Scilicet si clementissimus Deus Marias Magdalens aliisque ignovit, ignovit, quia resipiscerent ob carnis debilitatem, et non iterum peccarent. Et ego peccarem cum quavis detestatione carnis, et non semel, sed iterum atque iterum sine reversione usque ad mortem? Quomodo clementissimus Deus hoc sceleratissima ignoscere posset? infelix pater! recordare quid mihi dixisti de sanctis martyribus et virginibus Domini, quas omnes mallent vitam quam pudicitiam perdere. His et ego sequar, et sponsus meus, Jesus Christus, et mihi miserse, ut spero, coronam aeternam dabit, quamvis eum non minus offendi ob debilitatem carnis ut Maria, et me sontem declaravi, cum insons sum. Fac igitur, ut valeas et ora pro me apud Deum et non apud Satanam, ut et ego mox coram Deo pro te orare possim.

MARIA S., captiva.

[Footnote: It is evidently written by a female hand, and probably the original letter; there are, however, no traces of sealing-wax or wax upon it, whence I infer that it was sent open, which, from its being written in a foreign language, would have been perfectly

safe. I have purposely left the few grammatical errors it contains, as the smallest alteration of this gem would appear to me in the light of a treason against the character of this incomparable woman.

Translation.

JESUS!

Unhappy Father!

I shall not to-morrow grow more pale at sight of the pile, nor will the pile grow more red on receiving me, than I grew pale and then red while reading thy letter. How? and hath Satan so tempted thee, pious father, pious servant of the Lord, that thou hast made common cause with mine enemies, and that thou understandest not that in such life is death, and in such death is life? For if the all-merciful God forgave Mary Magdalene and other sinners, He forgave them because they repented of the weakness of their flesh, and sinned not again. And shall I sin with so great abhorrence of the flesh, and that not once but again and again without return even until death? How could the all-merciful God forgive this to the vilest of women? Unhappy father! remember what thou hast told me of the holy martyrs, and of the virgins of the Lord, who all lost their lives rather than lose their chastity. These will I follow, hoping that my spouse Jesus Christ will also give to wretched me a crown of eternal glory, although, indeed, I have not less offended through the weakness of the flesh than Mary, declaring myself to be guilty, whereas I am innocent. Be strong, therefore, and pray for me unto God, and not unto the devil, so that I may soon pray for thee before the face of God.

MARY S., a Prisoner.]

When the sheriff heard this he flung the pitcher which he held in his hand to the ground, so that it flew in pieces, and cried, "The cursed devil's whore! the constable shall make her squeak for this a good hour longer;" with many more such things beside, which he said in his malice, and which I have now forgotten; but he soon became quite gracious again, and said, "She is foolish; do you go to her and see whether you cannot persuade her to her own good as well as yours; the huntsman shall let you in, and should the fellow listen, give him a good box on the ears in my name; do you hear, reverend Abraham? Go now forthwith and bring me back an answer as quickly as possible!" I therefore followed the huntsman, who led me into a vault where was no light save what fell through a hole no bigger than a crown-piece; and here my daughter sat upon her bed and wept. Any one may guess that I straightway began to weep too, and was no better able to speak than she. We thus lay mute in each other's arms for a long time, until I at last begged her to forgive me for my letter, but of the sheriff his message I said naught, although I had purposed so to do. But before long we

heard the sheriff himself call down into the vault from above,
"What (and here he gave me a heavy curse) are you doing there so long? Come up this moment, reverend Johannes!" Thus I had scarce time to give her one kiss before the huntsman came back with the keys and forced us to part; albeit we had as yet scarcely spoken, save that I had told her in a few words what had happened with old Lizzie. It would be hard to believe into what grievous anger the sheriff fell when I told him that my daughter remained firm and would not hearken unto him; he struck me on the breast, and said, "Go to the devil then, thou infamous parson!" and when I turned myself away and would have gone, he pulled me back, and said, "If thou breathest but one word of all that has passed, I will have thee burnt too, thou grey-headed old father of a witch; so look to it!" Hereupon I plucked up a heart, and answered that that would be the greatest joy to me, especially if I could be burnt to-morrow with my child. Hereunto he made no answer, but clapped to the door behind me. Well, clap the door as thou wilt, I greatly fear that the just God will one day clap the doors of heaven in thy face!

CHAPTER XXVI,

How I received the Holy Sacrament with my daughter and the old maid-servant, and how she was then led for the last time before the court, with the drawn sword and the outcry, to receive sentence.

Now any one would think that during that heavy Tuesday night I should not have been able to close mine eyes; but know, dear reader, that the Lord can do more than we can ask or understand, and that His mercy is new every morning. For toward daybreak I fell asleep as quietly as though I had had no care upon my heart; and when I awoke I was able to pray more heartily than I had done for a long time; so that, in the midst of my tribulation, I wept for joy at such great mercy from the Lord. But I prayed for naught save that He would endow my child with strength and courage to suffer the martyrdom He had laid upon her with Christian patience, and to send His angel to me, woeful man, so to pierce my heart with grief when I should see my child burn, that it might straightway cease to beat, and I might presently follow her. And thus I still prayed when the maid came in all dressed in black, and with the silken raiment of my sweet lamb hanging over her arm; and she told me, with many tears, that the dead-bell had already tolled from the castle tower, for the first time, and that my child had sent for her to dress her, seeing that the court was already come from Usedom, and that in about two hours she was to set out on her last journey. Moreover, she had sent her word that she was to take her some blue and yellow flowers for a garland; wherefore she asked me what flowers she should take; and seeing

that a jar, filled with fine lilies and forget-me-nots, stood in my window, which she had placed there yesterday, I said, "Thou canst gather no better flowers for her than these, wherefore do thou carry them to her, and tell her that I will follow thee in about half-an-hour, in order to receive the sacrament with her." Hereupon the faithful old creature prayed me to suffer her to go to the sacrament with us, the which I promised her. And scarce had I dressed myself and put on my surplice when _Pastor Benzensis_ came in at the door and fell upon my neck, weeping, and as mute as a fish. As soon as he came to his speech again he told me of the great _miraculum_ (_dæmonis_ I mean) which had befallen at the burial of old Lizzie. For that, just as the bearers were about to lower the coffin into the grave, a noise was heard therein as though of a carpenter boring through a deal board; wherefore they thought the old hag must be come to life again, and opened the coffin. But there she lay as before, all black and blue in the face and as cold as ice; but her eyes had started wide open, so that all were horror-stricken, and expected some devilish apparition; and, indeed, a live rat presently jumped out of the coffin and ran into a skull which lay beside the grave. Thereupon they all ran away, seeing that old Lizzie had ever been in evil repute as a witch. Howbeit at last he himself went near the grave again, whereupon the rat disappeared, and all the others took courage and followed him. This the man told me, and any one may guess that this was in fact Satan, who had flown down the hag her throat as an insect, whereas his proper shape was that of a rat: albeit I wonder what he could so long have been about in the carrion; unless indeed it were that the evil spirits are as fond of all that is loathsome as the angels of God are of all that is fair and lovely. Be that as it may. _Summa_: I was not a little shocked at what he told me, and asked him what he now thought of the sheriff? whereupon he shrugged his shoulders, and said, that he had indeed been a wicked fellow as long as he could remember him, and that it was full ten years since he had given him any first-fruits; but that he did not believe that he was a warlock, as old Lizzie had said. For although he had indeed never been to the table of the Lord in his church, he had heard that he often went, at Stettin, with his princely Highness the Duke, and that the pastor at the castle church had shown him the entry in his communion-book. Wherefore he likewise could not believe that he had brought this misery upon my daughter, if she were innocent, as the hag had said; besides, that my daughter had freely confessed herself a witch. Hereupon I answered, that she had done that for fear of the torture; but that she was not afraid of death; whereupon I told him, with many sighs, how the sheriff had yesterday tempted me, miserable and unfaithful servant, to evil, insomuch that I had been willing to sell my only child to him and to Satan, and was not worthy to receive the sacrament to-day. Likewise how much more steadfast a faith my daughter had than I, as he might see from her letter, which I still carried in my pocket; herewith I gave it into his hand, and when he had read it, he sighed as though he had been himself a father, and said, "Were this true, I should sink into the earth for sorrow; but come,

brother, come, that I may prove her faith myself."

Hereupon we went up to the castle, and on our way we found the greensward before the hunting-lodge, *_item_*, the whole space in front of the castle, already crowded with people, who, nevertheless, were quite quiet as we went by: we gave our names again to the huntsman. (I have never been able to remember his name, seeing that he was a Polak; he was not, however, the same fellow who wooed my child, and whom the sheriff had therefore turned off.) The man presently ushered us into a fine large room, whither my child had been led when taken out of her prison. The maid had already dressed her, and she looked lovely as an angel. She wore the chain of gold with the effigy round her neck again, *_item_*, the garland in her hair, and she smiled as we entered, saying, "I am ready!" Whereat the reverend Martinus was sorely angered and shocked, saying, "Ah, thou ungodly woman, let no one tell me further of thine innocence! Thou art about to go to the Holy Sacrament, and from thence to death, and thou flauntest as a child of this world about to go to the dancing-room." Whereupon she answered and said, "Be not wroth with me, dear godfather, because that I would go into the presence of my good King of Heaven in the same garments wherein I appeared some time since before the good King of Sweden. For it strengthens my weak and trembling flesh, seeing I hope that my righteous Saviour will in like manner take me to His heart, and will also hang His effigy upon my neck when I stretch out my hands to Him in all humility, and recite my *_carmen_*, saying, 'O Lamb of God, innocently slain upon the cross, give me Thy peace, O Jesu!'" These words softened my dear gossip, and he spoke, saying, "Ah, child, child, I thought to have reproached thee, but thou hast constrained me to weep with thee: art thou then indeed innocent?" "Verily," said she, "to you, my honoured god-father, I may now own that I am innocent, as truly as I trust that God will aid me in my last hour through Jesus Christ. Amen."

When the maid heard this, she made such outcries that I repented that I had suffered her to be present, and we all had enough to do to comfort her from the Word of God till she became somewhat more tranquil; and when this was done my dear gossip thus spake to my child: "If, indeed, thou dost so steadfastly maintain thine innocence, it is my duty, according to my conscience as a priest, to inform the worshipful court thereof;" and he was about to leave the room. But she withheld him, and fell upon the ground and clasped his knees, saying, "I beseech you, by the wounds of Jesus, to be silent. They would stretch me on the rack again, and uncover my nakedness, and I, wretched weak woman, would in such torture confess all that they would have me, especially if my father again be there, whereby both my soul and my body are tortured at once: wherefore stay, I pray you, stay; is it then a misfortune to die innocent, and is it not better to die innocent than guilty?"

My good gossip at last gave way, and after standing awhile and praying to himself, he wiped away his tears, and then spake the

exhortation to confession, in the words of Isa. xliii. 1, 2: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour."

And when he had ended this comfortable address, and asked her whether she would willingly bear until her last hour that cross which the most merciful God, according to His unsearchable will, had laid upon her, she spake such beautiful words that my gossip afterwards said he should not forget them so long as he should live, seeing that he had never witnessed a bearing at once so full of faith and joy, and withal so deeply sorrowful. She spake after this manner: "Oh, holy cross, which my Jesus hath sanctified by His innocent suffering; oh, dear cross, which is laid upon me by the hand of a merciful Father; oh, blessed cross, whereby I am made like unto my Lord Jesus, and am called unto eternal glory and blessedness: how! shall I not willingly bear thee, thou sweet cross of my bridegroom, of my brother?" The reverend Johannes had scarce given us absolution, and after this, with many tears, the Holy Sacrament, when we heard a loud trampling upon the floor, and presently the impudent constable looked into the room and asked whether we were ready, seeing that the worshipful court was now waiting for us; and when he had been told that we were ready, my child would have first taken leave of me, but I forbade her, saying, "Not so; thou knowest that which thou hast promised me; ... 'and whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge: ...where thou diest will I die ...'; [Footnote: Ruth i. 16,] if that the Lord, as I hope, will hear the ardent sighs of my poor soul." Hereupon she let me go, and embraced only the old maid-servant, thanking her for all the kindness she had shown her from her youth up, and begging her not to go with her to make her death yet more bitter by her cries. The faithful old creature was unable for a long time to say a word for tears. Howbeit at last she begged forgiveness of my child, for that she had unwittingly accused her, and said, that out of her wages she had bought five pounds' weight of flax to hasten her death; that the shepherd of Pudgla had that very morning taken it with him to Coserow, and that she should wind it closely round her body; for that she had seen how old wife Schurne, who was burnt in Liepe, had suffered great torments before she came to her death, by reason of the damp wood.

But ere my child could thank her for this, the dreadful outcry of blood began in the judgment-chamber; for a voice cried as loudly as might be, "Woe upon the accursed witch, Mary Schweidler, because that she hath fallen off from the living God!" Then all the folk without cried, "Woe upon the accursed witch!" When I heard this I fell back against the wall, but my sweet child stroked my cheeks with her darling hands, and said, "Father,

father, do but remember that the people likewise cried out against the innocent Jesus, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him!' Shall not we then drink of the cup which our heavenly Father hath prepared for us?"

Hereupon the door opened, and the constable walked in, amid a great tumult among the people, holding a drawn sword in his hand which he bowed thrice before my child and cried, "Woe upon the accursed witch, Mary Schweidler, because that she hath fallen off from the living God!" and all the folks in the hall and without the castle cried as loud as they could, "Woe upon the accursed witch!"

Hereupon he said, "Mary Schweidler, come before the high and worshipful court, to hear sentence of death passed upon thee!" Whereupon she followed him with us two miserable men (for _Pastor Benzensis_ was no less cast down than myself). As for the old maid-servant, she lay on the ground for dead.

After we had with great pains pushed our way through all the people, the constable stood still before the open judgment-chamber, and once more bowed his sword before my child, and cried for the third time, "Woe upon the accursed witch, Mary Schweidler, because that she hath fallen off from the living God!" And all the people, as well as the cruel judges themselves, cried as loud as they could, "Woe upon the accursed witch!"

When we had entered the room, _Dom. Consul_ first asked my worthy gossip whether the witch had abode by her free avowal in confession; whereupon, after considering a short time, he answered, that he had best ask herself, for there she stood. Accordingly, taking up a paper which lay before him on the table, he spake as follows--"Mary Schweidler, now that thou hast confessed, and received the holy and most honourable sacrament of the Lord's Supper, answer me once again these following questions:--

1. Is it true that thou hast fallen off from the living God and given thyself up to Satan?
2. Is it true that thou hadst a spirit called _Disidonia_, who re-baptized thee and carnally knew thee?
3. Is it true that thou hast done all manner of mischief to the cattle?
4. Is it true that Satan appeared to thee on the Streckelberg in the likeness of a hairy giant?"

When she had with many sighs said "Yes" to all these questions, he rose, took a wand in one hand and a second paper in the other, put his spectacles on his nose, and said, "Now, then, hear thy sentence." (This sentence I since copied: he would not let me see the other _Acta_, but pretended that they were at Wolgast.

The sentence, however, was word for word as follows.)

"We, the sheriff and the justices appointed to serve the high and worshipful criminal court. Inasmuch as Mary Schweidler, the daughter of Abraham Schweidlerus, the pastor of Coserow, hath, after the appointed inquisition, repeatedly made free confession, that she hath a devil named _Disidamonia_, the which did re-baptize her in the sea, and did also know her carnally; _item_, that she by his help did mischief to the cattle; that he also appeared to her on the Streckelberg in the likeness of a hairy giant. We do therefore by these presents make known and direct, that _Rea_ be first duly torn four times on each breast with red-hot iron pincers, and after that be burned to death by fire, as a rightful punishment to herself and a warning to others. Nevertheless, we, in pity for her youth, are pleased of our mercy to spare her the tearing with red-hot pincers, so that she shall only suffer death by the simple punishment of fire. Wherefore she is hereby condemned and judged accordingly on the part of the criminal court.

"_Publicatum_ at the castle of Pudgla, the 30th day _mensis Augusti, anno Salutis_ 1630." [Footnote: Readers who are unacquainted with the atrocious administration of justice in those days, will be surprised at this rapid and arbitrary mode of proceeding. But I have seen authentic witch-trials wherein a mere notary condemned the accused to the torture and to death without the smallest hesitation; and it may be considered as a mark of humanity whenever the acts on which judgment was given were sent to an university, or to some other tribunal. For the sentence of death appears to have been almost invariably passed by the inferior courts, and no appeal seems to have been possible; indeed in these affairs their worships, as in this case, usually made incredible haste, which, it must be admitted, is perhaps the only good quality which the modern courts of justice might borrow from the old ones.]

As he spake the last word he brake his wand in two and threw the pieces before the feet of my innocent lamb, saying to the constable, "Now, do your duty!" But so many folks, both men and women, threw themselves on the ground to seize the pieces of the wand (seeing they are said to be good for the gout in the joints, item, for cattle when troubled with lice), that the constable fell to the earth over a woman who was on her knees before him, and his approaching death was thus foreshadowed to him by the righteous God. Something of the same sort likewise befell the sheriff now for the second time; for when the worshipful court rose, throwing down tables, stools, and benches, a table, under which two boys were fighting for the pieces of the wand, fell right upon his foot, whereupon he flew into a violent rage, and threatened the people with his fist, saying that they should have fifty right good lashes apiece, both men and women, if they were not quiet forthwith, and did not depart peaceably out of the room. This frightened them, and after the people were gone out into the street,

the constable took a rope out of his pocket, wherewith he bound my lamb her hands so tightly behind her back that she cried aloud; but when she saw how this wrung my heart, she straightway constrained herself and said, "O father, remember that it fared no better with the blessed Saviour!" Howbeit, when my dear gossip, who stood behind her, saw that her little hands, and more especially her nails, had turned black and blue, he spoke for her to the worshipful court, whereupon the abominable sheriff only said, "Oh, let her be; let her feel what it is to fall off from the living God." But _Dom. Consul_ was more merciful, inasmuch as, after feeling the cords, he bade the constable bind her hands less cruelly and slacken the rope a little, which accordingly he was forced to do. But my dear gossip was not content herewith, and begged that she might sit in the cart without being bound, so that she should be able to hold her hymn-book, for he had summoned the school to sing a hymn by the way for her comfort, and he was ready to answer for it with his own head that she should not escape out of the cart. Moreover, it is the custom for fellows with pitchforks always to go with the carts wherein condemned criminals, and more especially witches, are carried to execution. But this the cruel sheriff would not suffer, and the rope was left upon her hands, and the impudent constable seized her by the arm and led her from the judgment-chamber. But in the hall we saw a great _scandalum_, which again pierced my very heart. For the housekeeper and the impudent constable his wife were fighting for my child her bed, and her linen, and wearing apparel, which the housekeeper had taken for herself, and which the other woman wanted to have. The latter now called to her husband to help her, whereupon he straightway let go my daughter and struck the housekeeper on her mouth with his fist, so that the blood ran out therefrom, and she shrieked and wailed fearfully to the sheriff, who followed us with the court. He threatened them both in vain, and said that when he came back he would inquire into the matter and give to each her due share. But they would not hearken to this, until my daughter asked _Dom. Consul_ whether every dying person, even a condemned criminal, had power to leave his goods and chattels to whomsoever he would? And when he answered, "Yes, all but the clothes, which belong of right to the executioner," she said, "Well, then, the constable may take my clothes, but none shall have my bed save my faithful old maid-servant Ilse!" Hereupon the housekeeper began to curse and revile my child loudly, who heeded her not, but stepped out at the door toward the cart, where there stood so many people that naught could be seen save head against head. The folks crowded about us so tumultuously that the sheriff, who, meanwhile, had mounted his grey horse, constantly smote them right and left across their eyes with his riding-whip, but they nevertheless would scarce fall back. Howbeit, at length he cleared the way, and when about ten fellows with long pitchforks, who for the most part also had rapiers at their sides, had placed themselves round about our cart, the constable lifted my daughter up into it, and bound her fast to the rail. Old Paasch, who stood by, lifted me up, and my dear gossip was likewise forced to be

lifted in, so weak had he become from all the distress. He motioned his sexton, Master Krekow, to walk before the cart with the school, and bade him from time to time lead a verse of the goodly hymn, "On God alone I rest my fate," which he promised to do. And here I will also note, that I myself sat down upon the straw by my daughter, and that our dear confessor the reverend Martinus sat backwards. The constable was perched up behind with his drawn sword. When all this was done, item, the court mounted up into another carriage, the sheriff gave the order to set out.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Of that which befell us by the way--Item, of the fearful death of the sheriff at the mill.

We met with many wonders by the way, and with great sorrow; for hard by the bridge, over the brook which runs into the Schmolle, [Footnote: A lake near Pudgla.] stood the housekeeper her hateful boy, who beat a drum and cried aloud, "Come to the roast goose! come to the roast goose!" whereupon the crowd set up a loud laugh, and called out after him, "Yes, indeed, to the roast goose! to the roast goose!" Howbeit, when Master Krekow led the second verse the folks became somewhat quieter again, and most of them joined in singing it from their books, which they had brought with them. But when he ceased singing awhile the noise began again as bad as before. Some cried out, "The devil hath given her these clothes, and hath adorned her after that fashion;" and seeing the sheriff had ridden on before, they came close round the cart, and felt her garments, more especially the women and young maidens. Others, again, called loudly, as the young varlet had done, "Come to the roast goose! come to the roast goose!" whereupon one fellow answered, "She will not let herself be roasted yet; mind ye that: she will quench the fire!" This, and much filthiness beside, which I may not for very shame write down, we were forced to hear, and it especially cut me to the heart to hear a fellow swear that he would have some of her ashes, seeing he had not been able to get any of the wand; and that naught was better for the fever and the gout than the ashes of a witch. I motioned the Custos to begin singing again, whereupon the folks were once more quiet for a while--i.e., for so long as the verse lasted; but afterwards they rioted worse than before. But we were now come among the meadows, and when my child saw the beauteous flowers which grew along the sides of the ditches, she fell into deep thought, and began again to recite aloud the sweet song of St. Augustinus as follows:--

"Flos perpetuus rosarum ver agit perpetuum,
Candent lilia, rubescit crocus, sudat balsamum,

Virent prata, vernant sata, rivi mellis influunt,
Pigmentorum spirat odor liquor et aromatum,
Pendent porna noridorum non lapsura nemorum
Non alternat luna vices, sol vel cursus syderum
Agnus est foelicis urbis lumen inocciduum."

[Footnote:

"Around them, bright with endless Spring, perpetual roses bloom,
Warm balsams gratefully exude luxurious perfume;
Red crocuses, and lilies white, shine dazzling in the sun;
Green meadows yield them harvests green, and streams with honey
run;
Unbroken droop the laden boughs, with heavy fruitage bent,
Of incense and of odours strange the air is redolent:
And neither sun, nor moon, nor stars dispense their changeful
light,
But the Lamb's eternal glory makes the happy city bright!"]

By this *_Casus_* we gained that all the folk ran cursing away
from the cart, and followed us at the distance of a good
musket-shot, thinking that my child was calling on Satan to help
her. Only one lad, of about five-and-twenty, whom, however, I did
not know, tarried a few paces behind the cart, until his father
came, and seeing he would not go away willingly, pushed him into
the ditch, so that he sank up to his loins in the water. Thereat
even my poor child smiled, and asked me whether I did not know any
more Latin hymns wherewith to keep the stupid and foul-mouthed
people still further from us. But, dear reader, how could I then
have been able to recite Latin hymns, even had I known any? But my
Confrater, the reverend Martinus, knew such an one; albeit,
it is indeed heretical; nevertheless, seeing that it above measure
pleased my child, and that she made him repeat to her sundry
verses thereof three and four times, until she could say them
after him, I said naught; otherwise I have ever been very severe
against aught that is heretical. Howbeit, I comforted myself
therewith that our Lord God would forgive her in consideration of
her ignorance. And the first line ran as follows:--*_Dies iræ
dies ilia_*. [Footnote: Day of wrath, that dreadful day; one of
the most beautiful of the Catholic hymns.] But these two verses
pleased her more than all the rest, and she recited them many
times with great edification, wherefore I will insert them here:--

"Judex ergo cum sedebit
Quidquid latet apparebit
Nil inultum remanebit:
 Item,
Rex tremendæ majestatis
Qui salvandos salvas gratis
Salva me, fons pietatis!"

[Footnote:

"The judge ascends his awful throne,

He makes each secret sin be known,
And all with shame confess their own.

Thou mighty formidable king!
Thou mercy's unexhausted spring,
Some comfortable pity bring."--_Old Version._]

When the men with the pitchforks, who were round about the cart, heard this, and at the same time saw a heavy storm coming up from the Achterwater, [Footnote: A wash formed by the river Peene.] they straightway thought no other but that my child had made it; and, moreover, the folk behind cried out, "The witch hath done this; the damned witch hath done this!" and all the ten, save one who stayed behind, jumped over the ditch, and ran away. But _Dom. Consul_, who, together with the worshipful court, drove behind us, no sooner saw this than he called to the constable, "What is the meaning of all this?" Whereupon the constable cried aloud to the sheriff, who was a little way on before us, but who straightway turned him about, and when he had heard the cause, called after the fellows that he would hang them all upon the first tree, and feed his falcons with their flesh, if they did not return forthwith. This threat had its effect; and when they came back he gave each of them about half-a-dozen strokes with his riding-whip, whereupon they tarried in their places, but as far off from the cart as they could for the ditch.

Meanwhile, however, the storm came up from the southward, with thunder, lightning, hail, and such a wind, as though the all-righteous God would manifest His wrath against these ruthless murderers; and the tops of the lofty beeches around us were beaten together like besoms, so that our cart was covered with leaves as with hail, and no one could hear his own voice for the noise. This happened just as we were entering the forest from the convent dam, and the sheriff now rode close behind us, beside the coach wherein was _Dom. Consul_. Moreover, just as we were crossing the bridge over the mill-race, we were seized by the blast, which swept up a hollow from the Achterwater with such force that we conceived it must drive our cart down the abyss, which was at least forty feet deep or more; and seeing that, at the same time, the horses did as though they were upon ice, and could not stand, the driver halted to let the storm pass over, the which the sheriff no sooner perceived, than he galloped up and bade him go on forthwith. Whereupon the man flogged on the horses, but they slipped about after so strange a fashion, that our guards with the pitchforks fell back, and my child cried aloud for fear; and when we were come to the place where the great waterwheel turned just below us, the driver fell with his horse, which broke one of its legs. Then the constable jumped down from the cart, but straightway fell too, on the slippery ground; Item, the driver, after getting on his legs again, fell a second time. Hereupon the sheriff with a curse spurred on his grey charger, which likewise began to slip as our horses had also done. Nevertheless, he came sliding towards us, without, however, falling down; and when he

saw that the horse with the broken leg still tried to get up, but always straightway fell again on the slippery ground, he hallooed and beckoned the fellows with pitchforks to come and unharness the mare; _item_, to push the cart over the bridge, lest it should be carried down the precipice. Presently a long flash of lightning shot into the water below us, followed by a clap of thunder so sudden and so awful that the whole bridge shook, and the sheriff his horse (our horses stood quite still) started back a few paces, lost its footing, and, together with its rider, shot headlong down upon the great mill-wheel below, whereupon a fearful cry arose from all those that stood behind us on the bridge. For a while naught could be seen for the white foam, until the sheriff his legs and body were borne up into the air by the wheel, his head being stuck fast between the fellies; and thus, fearful to behold, he went round and round upon the wheel. Naught ailed the grey charger, which swam about in the mill-pond below. When I saw this, I seized the hand of my innocent lamb, and cried, "Behold, Mary, our Lord God yet liveth! 'And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. Then did he beat them small as the dust before the wind; he did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.' [Footnote: Ps. xviii. 10, 42.] Look down, and see what the Almighty God hath done." While she hereupon raised her eyes toward heaven with a sigh, we heard _Dom. Consul_ calling out behind us as loudly as he could: and, seeing that none could understand his words for the fearful storm and the tumult of the waters, he jumped down from the coach, and would have crossed the bridge on foot, but straightway he fell upon his nose, so that it bled, and he crept back again on his hands and feet, and held a long talk with _Dom. Camerarius_, who, howbeit, did not stir out of the coach. Meanwhile, the driver and the constable had unyoked the maimed horse, bound it, and dragged it off the bridge, and now they came back to the cart, and bade us get down therefrom, and cross the bridge on foot, the which we did after that the constable had unbound my child, with many curses and ill words, threatening that, in return for her malice, he would keep her roasting till late in the evening. (I could not blame him much therefore; for truly this was a strange thing!) But, albeit, my child herself got safe across; we two--I mean reverend Martinus and myself--like all the others, fell two or three times to the ground. At length we all, by God His grace, got safe and sound to the miller's house, where the constable delivered my child into the miller his hands, to guard her on forfeit of his life, while he ran down to the mill-pond to save the sheriff his grey charger. The driver was bidden the while to get the cart and the other horses off the bewitched bridge. We had, however, stood but a short time with the miller, under the great oak before his door, when _Dom. Consul_ with the worshipful court, and all the folks, came over the little bridge, which is but a couple of musket shots off from the first one, and he could scarce prevent the crowd from falling upon my child and tearing her in pieces, seeing that they all, as well as _Dom. Consul_ himself, imagined that none other but she had brewed the storm, and bewitched the bridge (especially as she herself had

not fallen thereon), and had likewise caused the sheriff his death; all of which, nevertheless, were foul lies, as ye shall hereafter hear. He, therefore, railed at her for a cursed she-devil, who, even after having confessed and received the holy Sacrament, had not yet renounced Satan; but that naught should save her, and she should, nevertheless, receive her reward. And, seeing that she kept silence, I hereupon answered, "Did he not see that the all-righteous God had so ordered it, that the sheriff, who would have robbed my innocent child of her honour and her life, had here forfeited his own life as a fearful example to others?" But _Dom. Consul_ would not see this, and said that a child might perceive that our Lord God had not made this storm, or did I peradventure believe that our Lord God had likewise bewitched the bridge? I had better cease to justify my wicked child, and rather begin to exhort her to repent, seeing that this was the second time that she had brewed a storm, and that no man with a grain of sense could believe what I said, &c.

Meanwhile the miller had already stopped the mill, _item,_ turned off the water, and some four or five fellows had gone with the constable down to the great water-wheel, to take the sheriff out of the fellies, wherein he had till _datum_ still been carried round and round. This they could not do until they had first sawn out one of the fellies; and when at last they brought him to the bank, his neck was found to be broken, and he was as blue as a corn-flower. Moreover, his throat was frightfully torn, and the blood ran out of his nose and mouth. If the people had not reviled my child before, they reviled her doubly now, and would have thrown dirt and stones at her, had not the worshipful court interfered with might and main, saying that she would presently receive her well-deserved punishment.

Also, my dear gossip, the reverend Martinus, climbed up into the cart again, and admonished the people not to forestall the law; and seeing that the storm had somewhat abated, he could now be heard. And when they had become somewhat more quiet, _Dom. Consul_ left the corpse of the sheriff in charge with the miller, until such time as, by God's help, he should return. _Item,_ he caused the grey charger to be tied up to the oak-tree till the same time, seeing that the miller swore that he had no room in the mill, inasmuch as his stable was filled with straw; but that he would give the grey horse some hay, and keep good watch over him. And now were we wretched creatures forced to get into the cart again, after that the unsearchable will of God had once more dashed all our hopes. The constable gnashed his teeth with rage, while he took the cords out of his pocket to bind my poor child to the rail withal. As I saw right well what he was about to do, I pulled a few groats out of my pocket, and whispered into his ear, "Be merciful, for she cannot possibly run away, and do you hereafter help her to die quickly, and you shall get ten groats more from me!" This worked well, and albeit he pretended before the people to pull the ropes tight, seeing they all cried out with might and main, "Haul hard, haul hard," in truth, he

bound her hands more gently than before, and even without making her fast to the rail; but he sat up behind us again with the naked sword, and after that _Dom. Consul_ had prayed aloud, "God the Father, dwell with us," likewise the _Custos_ had led another hymn (I know not what he sang, neither does my child), we went on our way, according to the unfathomable will of God, after this fashion: the worshipful court went before, whereas all the folks to our great joy fell back, and the fellows with the pitchforks lingered a good way behind us, now that the sheriff was dead.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How my daughter was at length saved by the help of the all-merciful, yea, of the all-merciful God.

Meanwhile, by reason of my unbelief, wherewith Satan again tempted me, I had become so weak that I was forced to lean my back against the constable his knees, and expected not to live even till we should come to the mountain; for the last hope I had cherished was now gone, and I saw that my innocent lamb was in the same plight. Moreover, the reverend Martinus began to upbraid her, saying that he, too, now saw that all her oaths were lies, and that she really could brew storms. Hereupon she answered, with a smile, although, indeed, she was as white as a sheet, "Alas, reverend godfather, do you then really believe that the weather and the storms no longer obey our Lord God? Are storms, then, so rare at this season of the year, that none save the foul fiend can cause them? Nay, I have never broken the baptismal vow you once made in my name, nor will I ever break it, as I hope that God will be merciful to me in my last hour, which is now at hand." But the reverend Martinus shook his head doubtingly, and said, "The evil one must have promised thee much, seeing thou remainest so stubborn even unto thy life's end, and blasphemest the Lord thy God; but wait, and thou wilt soon learn with horror that the devil 'is a liar, and the father of it'" (St. John viii.). Whilst he yet spake this, and more of a like kind, we came to Uekeritze, where all the people, both great and small, rushed out of their doors, also Jacob Schwarten his wife, who, as we afterwards heard, had only been brought to bed the night before, and her goodman came running after her to fetch her back, in vain. She told him he was a fool, and had been one for many a weary day, and that if she had to crawl up the mountain on her bare knees, she would go to see the parson's witch burnt; that she had reckoned upon it for so long, and if he did not let her go, she would give him a thump on the chaps, &c.

Thus did the coarse and foul-mouthed people riot around the cart wherein we sat, and as they knew not what had befallen, they ran so near us that the wheel went over the foot of a boy.

Nevertheless they all crowded up again, more especially the lasses, and felt my daughter her clothes, and would even see her shoes and stockings, and asked her how she felt. *_Item_*, one fellow asked whether she would drink somewhat, with many more fooleries besides, till at last, when several came and asked her for her garland and her golden chain, she turned towards me and smiled, saying, "Father, I must begin to speak some Latin again, otherwise the folks will leave me no peace." But it was not wanted this time; for our guards, with the pitchforks, had now reached the hindmost, and, doubtless, told them what had happened, as we presently heard a great shouting behind us, for the love of God to turn back before the witch did them a mischief; and as Jacob Schwarten his wife heeded it not, but still plagued my child to give her her apron to make a christening coat for her baby, for that it was pity to let it be burnt, her goodman gave her such a thump on her back with a knotted stick which he had pulled out of the hedge, that she fell down with loud shrieks; and when he went to help her up she pulled him down by his hair, and, as reverend Martinus said, now executed what she had threatened; inasmuch as she struck him on the nose with her fist with might and main, until the other people came running up to them, and held her back. Meanwhile, however, the storm had almost passed over, and sank down toward the sea.

And when we had gone through the little wood, we suddenly saw the Streckelberg before us, covered with people, and the pile and stake upon the top, upon the which the tall constable jumped up when he saw us coming, and beckoned with his cap with all his might. Thereat my senses left me, and my sweet lamb was not much better; for she bent to and fro like a reed, and stretching her bound hands toward heaven, she once more cried out--

"Rex tremendae majestatis!

Qui salvandos salvas gratis,

Salva me, fons pietatis!" [Footnote: Vide p. 395.]

And, behold, scarce had she spoken these words, when the sun came out and formed a rainbow right over the mountain most pleasant to behold; and it is clear that this was a sign from the merciful God, such as He often gives us, but which we blind and unbelieving men do not rightly mark. Neither did my child heed it; for albeit she thought upon that first rainbow which shadowed forth our troubles, yet it seemed to her impossible that she could now be saved, wherefore she grew so faint, that she no longer heeded the blessed sign of mercy, and her head fell forwards (for she could no longer lean it upon me, seeing that I lay my length at the bottom of the cart), till her garland almost touched my worthy gossip his knees. Thereupon, he bade the driver stop for a moment and pulled out a small flask filled with wine, which he always carries in his pocket when witches are to be burnt, [Footnote: Which so often happened at that time, that in many parishes of Pomerania six or seven of these unhappy women were brought to the stake every year.] in order to comfort them therewith in their

terror. (Henceforth, I myself will ever do the like, for this fashion of my dear gossip pleases me well.) He first poured some of this wine down my throat, and afterwards down my child's; and we had scarce come to ourselves again, when a fearful noise and tumult arose among the people behind us, and they not only cried out in deadly fear, "The sheriff is come back! the sheriff is come again!" but as they could neither run away forwards nor backwards (being afraid of the ghost behind and of my child before them), they ran on either side, some rushing into the coppice, and others wading into the Achterwater up to their necks. _Item_, as soon as _Dom. Camerarius_ saw the ghost come out of the coppice with a grey hat and a grey feather, such as the sheriff wore, riding on the grey charger, he crept under a bundle of straw in the cart: and _Dom. Consul_ cursed my child again, and bade the coachmen drive on as madly as they could, even should all the horses die of it, when the impudent constable behind us called to him, "It is not the sheriff, but the young lord of Nienkerken, who will surely seek to save the witch: shall I, then, cut her throat with my sword?" At these fearful words my child and I came to ourselves again, and the fellow had already lift up his naked sword to smite her, seeing _Dom. Consul_ had made him a sign with his hand, when my dear gossip, who saw it, pulled my child with all his strength back into his lap. (May God reward him on the day of judgment, for I never can.) The villain would have stabbed her as she lay in his lap; but the young lord was already there, and seeing what he was about to do, thrust the boar-spear, which he held in his hand, in between the constable's shoulders, so that he fell headlong on the earth, and his own sword, by the guidance of the most righteous God, went into his ribs on one side, and out again at the other. He lay there and bellowed, but the young lord heeded him not, but said to my child, "Sweet maid, God be praised that you are safe!" When, however, he saw her bound hands, he gnashed his teeth, and, cursing her judges, he jumped off his horse, and cut the rope with his sword, which he held in his right hand, took her hand in his, and said, "Alas, sweet maid, how have I sorrowed for you! but I could not save you, as I myself also lay in chains, which you may see from my looks."

But my child could answer him never a word, and fell into a swoond again for joy; howbeit, she soon came to herself again, seeing my dear gossip still had a little wine by him. Meanwhile the dear young lord did me some injustice, which, however, I freely forgive him; for he railed at me and called me an old woman, who could do naught save weep and wail. Why had I not journeyed after the Swedish king, or why had I not gone to Mellenthin myself to fetch his testimony, as I knew right well what he thought about witchcraft? (But, blessed God, how could I do otherwise than believe the judge, who had been there? Others besides old women would have done the same; and I never once thought of the Swedish king; and say, dear reader, how could I have journeyed after him, and left my own child? But young folks do not think of these things, seeing they know not what a father feels.)

Meanwhile, however, _Dom. Camerarius_, having heard that it was the young lord, had again crept out from beneath the straw; _Item, Dom. Consul_ had jumped down from the coach and ran towards us, railing at him loudly, and asking him by what power and authority he acted thus, seeing that he himself had heretofore denounced the ungodly witch? But the young lord pointed with his sword to his people, who now came riding out of the coppice, about eighteen strong, armed with sabres, pikes, and muskets, and said, "There is my authority, and I would let you feel it on your back if I did not know that you were but a stupid ass. When did you hear any testimony from me against this virtuous maiden? You lie in your throat if you say you did." And as _Dom. Consul_ stood and straightway forswore himself, the young lord, to the astonishment of all, related as follows:--That as soon as he heard of the misfortune which had befallen me and my child, he ordered his horse to be saddled forthwith, in order to ride to Pudgla to bear witness to our innocence: this, however, his old father would nowise suffer, thinking that his nobility would receive a stain if it came to be known that his son had conversed with a reputed witch by night on the Streckelberg. He had caused him therefore, as prayers and threats were of no avail, to be bound hand and foot, and confined in the donjon-keep, where till _datum_ an old servant had watched him, who refused to let him escape, notwithstanding he offered him any sum of money; whereupon he fell into the greatest anguish and despair at the thought that innocent blood would be shed on his account; but that the all-righteous God had graciously spared him this sorrow; for his father had fallen sick from vexation, and lay a-bed all this time, and it so happened that this very morning about prayer time, the huntsman, in shooting at a wild duck in the moat, had by chance sorely wounded his father's favourite dog, called Packan, which had crept howling to his father's bedside, and had died there; whereupon the old man, who was weak, was so angered that he was presently seized with a fit and gave up the ghost too. Hereupon his people released him, and after he had closed his father's eyes and prayed an "Our Father" over him, he straightway set out with all the people he could find in the castle, in order to save the innocent maiden. For he testified here himself before all, on the word and honour of a knight, nay, more, by his hopes of salvation, that he himself was that devil which had appeared to the maiden on the mountain in the shape of a hairy giant; for having heard by common report that she oftentimes went thither, he greatly desired to know what she did there, and that from fear of his hard father he disguised himself in a wolf's skin, so that none might know him, and he had already spent two nights there, when on the third the maiden came, and he then saw her dig for amber on the mountain, and that she did not call upon Satan, but recited a Latin _carmen_ aloud to herself. This he would have testified at Pudgla, but, from the cause aforesaid, he had not been able: moreover, his father had laid his cousin, Glaus von Nienkerken, who was there on a visit, in his bed and made him bear false witness; for as _Dom. Consul_ had not seen him (I mean the young lord) for many a long year, seeing he had studied in foreign parts, his father

thought that he might easily be deceived, which accordingly happened.

When the worthy young lord had stated this before _Dom. Consul_ and all the people, which flocked together on hearing that the young lord was no ghost, I felt as though a millstone had been taken off my heart; and seeing that the people (who had already pulled the constable from under the cart, and crowded round him, like a swarm of bees) cried to me that he was dying, but desired first to confess somewhat to me, I jumped from the cart as lightly as a young bachelor, and called to _Dom. Consul_ and the young lord to go with me, seeing that I could easily guess what he had on his mind. He sat upon a stone, and the blood gushed from his side like a fountain (now that they had drawn out the sword); he whimpered on seeing me, and said that he had in truth hearkened behind the door to all that old Lizzie had confessed to me, namely, that she herself, together with the sheriff, had worked all the witchcraft on man and beast, to frighten my poor child, and force her to play the wanton. That he had hidden this, seeing that the sheriff had promised him a great reward for so doing; but that he would now confess it freely, since God had brought my child her innocence to light. Wherefore he besought my child and myself to forgive him. And when _Dom. Consul_ shook his head, and asked whether he would live and die on the truth of this confession, he answered, "Yes!" and straightway fell on his side to the earth and gave up the ghost.

Meanwhile time hung heavy with the people on the mountain, who had come from Coserow, from Zitze, from Gnitze, &c., to see my child burnt, and they all came running down the hill in long rows like geese, one after the other, to see what had happened. And among them was my ploughman, Claus Neels. When the worthy fellow saw and heard what had befallen us, he began to weep aloud for joy; and straightway he too told what he had heard the sheriff say to old Lizzie in the garden, and how he had promised her a pig in the room of her own little pig, which she had herself bewitched to death in order to bring my child into evil repute. _Summa_: All that I have noted above, and which till _datum_ he had kept to himself for fear of the question. Hereat all the people marvelled, and greatly bewailed her misfortunes: and many came, among them old Paasch, and would have kissed my daughter her hands and feet, as also mine own, and praised us now as much as they had before reviled us. But thus it ever is with the people. Wherefore my departed father used to say,

"The people's hate is death,
Their love, a passing breath!"

My dear gossip ceased not from fondling my child, holding her in his lap, and weeping over her like a father (for I could not have wept more myself than he wept). Howbeit she herself wept not, but begged the young lord to send one of his horsemen to her faithful old maid-servant at Pudgla, to tell her what had befallen us,

which he straightway did to please her. But the worshipful court (for *_Dom. Camerarius_* and the *_scriba_* had now plucked up a heart, and had come down from the coach) was not yet satisfied, and *_Dom. Consul_* began to tell the young lord about the bewitched bridge, which none other save my daughter could have bewitched. Hereto the young lord gave answer that this was indeed a strange thing, inasmuch as his own horse had also broken a leg thereon, whereupon he had taken the sheriff his horse, which he saw tied up at the mill; but he did not think that this could be laid to the charge of the maiden, but that it came about by natural means, as he had half discovered already, although he had not had time to search the matter thoroughly. Wherefore he besought the worshipful court and all the people, together with my child herself, to return back thither, where, with God's help, he would clear her from this suspicion also, and prove her perfect innocence before them all.

Thereunto the worshipful court agreed; and the young lord, having given the sheriff his grey charger to my ploughman to carry the corpse, which had been laid across the horse's neck, to Coserow, the young lord got into the cart by us, but did not seat himself beside my child, but backward by my dear gossip: moreover, he bade one of his own people drive us instead of the old coachman, and thus we turned back in God His name. *_Custos Benzensis_*, who, with the children, had run in among the vetches by the wayside (my defunct *_Custos_* would not have done so, he had more courage), went on before again with the young folks, and by command of his reverence the pastor led the Ambrosian *_Te Deum_*, which deeply moved us all, more especially my child, insomuch that her book was wetted with her tears, and she at length laid it down and said, at the same time giving her hand to the young lord, "How can I thank God and you for that which you have done for me this day?" Whereupon the young lord answered, saying, "I have greater cause to thank God than yourself, sweet maid, seeing that you have suffered in your dungeon unjustly, but I justly, inasmuch as by my thoughtlessness I brought this misery upon you. Believe me that this morning when, in my donjon keep, I first heard the sound of the dead-bell, I thought to have died; and when it tolled for the third time, I should have gone distraught in my grief, had not the Almighty God at that moment taken the life of my strange father, so that your innocent life should be saved by me. Wherefore I have vowed a new tower, and whatsoever beside may be needful, to the blessed house of God; for naught more bitter could have befallen me on earth than your death, sweet maid, and naught more sweet than your life!"

But at these words my child only wept and sighed; and when he looked on her, she cast down her eyes and trembled, so that I straightway perceived that my sorrows were not yet come to an end, but that another barrel of tears was just tapped for me, and so indeed it was. Moreover, the ass of a *_Custos_*, having finished the *_Te Deum_* before we were come to the bridge, straightway struck up the next following hymn, which was a funeral

one, beginning, "The body let us now inter." (God be praised that no harm has come of it till _datum_.) My beloved gossip rated him not a little, and threatened him that for his stupidity he should not get the money for the shoes which he had promised him out of the church dues. But my child comforted him, and promised him a pair of shoes at her own charges, seeing that peradventure a funeral hymn was better for her than a song of gladness.

And when this vexed the young lord, and he said, "How now, sweet maid, you know not how enough to thank God and me for your rescue, and yet you speak thus?" she answered, smiling sadly, that she had only spoken thus to comfort the poor _Custos_. But I straightway saw that she was in earnest, for that she felt that although she had escaped one fire, she already burned in another.

Meanwhile we were come to the bridge again, and all the folks stood still, and gazed open-mouthed, when the young lord jumped down from the cart, and after stabbing his horse, which still lay kicking on the bridge, went on his knees, and felt here and there with his hand. At length he called to the worshipful court to draw near, for that he had found out the witchcraft. But none save _Dom. Consul_ and a few fellows out of the crowd, among whom was old Paasch, would follow him; _item_, my dear gossip and myself. And the young lord showed us a lump of tallow about the size of a large walnut which lay on the ground, and wherewith the whole bridge had been smeared, so that it looked quite white, but which all the folks in their fright had taken for flour out of the mill; _item_, with some other _materia_, which stunk like fitchock's dung, but what it was we could not find out. Soon after a fellow found another bit of tallow, and showed it to the people; whereupon I cried, "Aha! none hath done this but that ungodly miller's man, in revenge for the stripes which the sheriff gave him for reviling my child." Whereupon I told what he had done, and _Dom. Consul_, who also had heard thereof, straightway sent for the miller.

He, however, did as though he knew naught of the matter, and only said that his man had left his service about an hour ago. But a young lass, the miller's maid-servant, said that that very morning, before daybreak, when she had got up to let out the cattle, she had seen the man scouring the bridge. But that she had given it no further heed, and had gone to sleep for another hour: and she pretended to know no more than the miller whither the rascal was gone. When the young lord had heard this news, he got up into the cart, and began to address the people, seeking to persuade them no longer to believe in witchcraft, now that they had seen what it really was. When I heard this, I was horror-stricken (as was but right) in my conscience, as a priest, and I got upon the cart-wheel, and whispered into his ear, for God His sake, to leave this _materia_, seeing that if the people no longer feared the devil, neither would they fear our Lord God. [Footnote: Maybe a profound truth.]

The dear young lord forthwith did as I would have him, and only asked the people whether they now held my child to be perfectly innocent? And when they had answered, Yes! he begged them to go quietly home, and to thank God that he had saved innocent blood. That he, too, would now return home, and that he hoped that none would molest me and my child if he let us return to Coserow alone. Hereupon he turned hastily towards her, took her hand, and said, "Farewell, sweet maid; I trust that I shall soon clear your honour before the world, but do you thank God therefore, not me." He then did the like to me and to my dear gossip, whereupon he jumped down from the cart, and went and sat beside _Dom. Consul_ in his coach. The latter also spake a few words to the people, and likewise begged my child and me to forgive him (and I must say it to his honour, that the tears ran down his cheeks the while), but he was so hurried by the young lord that he brake short his discourse, and they drove off over the little bridge, without so much as looking back. Only _Dom. Consul_ looked round once, and called out to me, that in his hurry he had forgotten to tell the executioner that no one was to be burned to-day: I was therefore to send the churchwarden of Uekeritze up the mountain, to say so in his name; the which I did. And the bloodhound was still on the mountain, albeit he had long since heard what had befallen; and when the bailiff gave him the orders of the worshipful court, he began to curse so fearfully that it might have awakened the dead; moreover, he plucked off his cap and trampled it under foot, so that any one might have guessed what he felt.

But to return to ourselves: my child sat as still and as white as a pillar of salt, after the young lord had left her so suddenly and so unawares, but she was somewhat comforted when the old maid-servant came running with her coats tucked up to her knees, and carrying her shoes and stockings in her hand. We heard her afar off, as the mill had stopped, blubbing for joy, and she fell at least three times on the bridge, but at last she got over safe, and kissed now mine and now my child her hands and feet; begging us only not to turn her away, but to keep her until her life's end; the which we promised to do. She had to climb up behind where the impudent constable had sat, seeing that my dear gossip would not leave me until I should be back in mine own manse. And as the young lord his servant had got up behind the coach, old Paasch drove us home, and all the folks who had waited till _datum_ ran beside the cart, praising and pitying as much as they had before scorned and reviled us. Scarce, however, had we passed through Uekeritze, when we again heard cries of "Here comes the young lord, here comes the young lord!" so that my child started up for joy, and became as red as a rose, but some of the folks ran into the buckwheat by the road, again thinking it was another ghost. It was, however, in truth the young lord, who galloped up on a black horse, calling out as he drew near us, "Notwithstanding the haste I am in, sweet maid, I must return and give you safe conduct home, seeing that I have just heard that the filthy people reviled you by the way, and I know not whether you

are yet safe." Hereupon he urged old Paasch to mend his pace, and as his kicking and trampling did not even make the horses trot, the young lord struck the saddle horse from time to time with the flat of his sword, so that we soon reached the village and the manse. Howbeit, when I prayed him to dismount awhile, he would not, but excused himself, saying that he must still ride through Uzedom to Anclam, but charged old Paasch, who was our bailiff, to watch over my child as the apple of his eye, and should anything unusual happen, he was straightway to inform the town clerk at Pudgla or _Dom. Consul_ at Uzedom thereof, and when Paasch had promised to do this, he waved his hand to us, and galloped off as fast as he could.

But before he got round the corner by Pagel his house, he turned back for the third time: and when we wondered thereat he said we must forgive him, seeing his thoughts wandered to-day.

That I had formerly told him that I still had my patent of nobility, the which he begged me to lend him for a time. Hereupon I answered that I must first seek for it, and that he had best dismount the while. But he would not, and again excused himself, saying he had no time. He therefore stayed without the door, until I brought him the patent, whereupon he thanked me and said, "Do not wonder hereat, you will soon see what my purpose is." Whereupon he struck his spurs into his horse's sides, and did not come back again.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Of our next great sorrow, and final joy.

And now might we have been at rest, and have thanked God on our knees by day and night. For, besides mercifully saving us out of such great tribulation, He turned the hearts of my beloved flock, so that they knew not how to do enough for us. Every day they brought us fish, meat, eggs, sausages, and whatsoever besides they could give me, and which I have since forgotten. Moreover, they, every one of them, came to church the next Sunday, great and small (except goodwife Kliene of Zempin, who had just got a boy, and still kept her bed), and I preached a thanksgiving sermon on Job v., 17th, 18th, and 19th verses, "Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: for He maketh sore, and bindeth up; and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." And during my sermon I was oftentimes forced to stop by reason of all the weeping, and to let them blow their noses. And I might truly have compared myself to Job, after that the Lord had mercifully released him from his troubles, had it not been for my child, who prepared much fresh grief for me.

She had wept when the young lord would not dismount, and now that he came not again, she grew more uneasy from day to day. She sat and read first the Bible, then the hymnbook, *_item_*, the history of Dido in *_Virgilius_*, or she climbed up the mountain to fetch flowers (likewise sought after the vein of amber there, but found it not, which shows the cunning and malice of Satan). I saw this for awhile with many sighs, but spake not a word (for, dear reader, what could I say?) until it grew worse and worse; and as she now recited her *_carmina_* more than ever both at home and abroad, I feared lest the people should again repute her a witch, and one day I followed her up the mountain. Well-a-day, she sat on the pile which still stood there, but with her face turned towards the sea, reciting the *_versus_* where Dido mounts the funeral pile in order to stab herself for love of Aeneas--

"At trepida et coeptis immanibus effera Dido
Sanguineam volvens aciem, maculisque trementes
Interfusa genas, et pallida morte futura
Interiora domus irrumpit limina et altos
Conscendit furibunda rogos..."

[Footnote:

"But furious Dido, with dark thoughts involv'd,
Shook at the mighty mischief she resolv'd.
With livid spots distinguish'd was her face,
Red were her rolling eyes, and discompos'd her pace;

Ghastly she gazed, with pain she drew her breath,
And nature shiver'd at approaching death.
Then swiftly to the fatal place she pass'd,
And mounts the funeral pile with furious haste."

--DRYDEN'S *_Virgil_*.]

When I saw this, and heard how things really stood with her, I was affrighted beyond measure, and cried, "Mary, my child, what art thou doing?" She started when she heard my voice, but sat still on the pile, and answered, as she covered her face with her apron, "Father, I am burning my heart." I drew near to her and pulled the apron from her face, saying, "Wilt thou then again kill me with grief?" Whereupon she covered her face with her hands, and moaned, "Alas, father, wherefore was I not burned here? My torment would then have endured but for a moment, but now it will last as long as I live?" I still did as though I had seen naught, and said, "Wherefore, dear child, dost thou suffer such torment?" Whereupon she answered, "I have long been ashamed to tell you; for the young lord, the young lord, my father, do I suffer this torment! He no longer thinks of me; and albeit he saved my life he scorns me, or he would surely have dismounted and come in awhile; but we are of far too low degree for him!" Hereupon I indeed began to comfort her and to persuade her to think no more of the young lord, but

the more I comforted her the worse she grew. Nevertheless I saw that she did yet in secret cherish a strong hope by reason of the patent of nobility which he had made me give him. I would not take this hope from her, seeing that I felt the same myself, and to comfort her I flattered her hopes, whereupon she was more quiet for some days, and did not go up the mountain, the which I had forbidden her. Moreover, she began again to teach little Paasch, her god-daughter, out of whom, by the help of the all-righteous God, Satan was now altogether departed. But she still pined, and was as white as a sheet; and when soon after a report came that none in the castle at Mellenthin knew what was become of the young lord, and that they thought he had been killed, her grief became so great that I had to send my ploughman on horseback to Mellenthin to gain tidings of him. And she looked at least twenty times out of the door and over the paling to watch for his return; and when she saw him coming she ran out to meet him as far as the corner by Pagels. But, blessed God! he brought us even worse news than we had heard before, saying, that the people at the castle had told him that their young master had ridden away the self-same day whereon he had rescued the maiden. That he had, indeed, returned after three days to his father's funeral, but had straightway ridden off again, and that for five weeks they had heard nothing further of him, and knew not whither he was gone, but supposed that some wicked ruffians had killed him.

And now my grief was greater than ever it had been before; so patient and resigned to the will of God as my child had shown herself heretofore, and no martyr could have met her last hour stronger in God and Christ, so impatient and despairing was she now. She gave up all hope, and took it into her head that in these heavy times of war the young lord had been killed by robbers. Naught availed with her, not even prayer, for when I called upon God with her, on my knees, she straightway began so grievously to bewail that the Lord had cast her off, and that she was condemned to naught save misfortunes in this world; that it pierced through my heart like a knife, and my thoughts forsook me at her words. She lay also at night, and "like a crane or a swallow so did she chatter; she did mourn like a dove; her eyes did fail with looking upward," [Footnote: Isa. xxxviii. 14.] because no sleep came upon her eyelids. I called to her from my bed, "Dear child, wilt thou then never cease? sleep, I pray thee!" and she answered and said, "Do you sleep, dearest father; I cannot sleep until I sleep the sleep of death. Alas, my father; that I was not burned!" But how could I sleep when she could not? I, indeed, said each morning that I had slept awhile in order to content her; but it was not so; but, like David, "all the night made I my bed to swim; I watered my couch with my tears." [Footnote: Ps. vi. 6.] Moreover, I again fell into heavy unbelief, so that I neither could nor would pray. Nevertheless the Lord "did not deal with me after my sins, nor reward me according to mine iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great was His mercy toward" me, miserable sinner! [Footnote: Ps ciii. 10,11.]

For mark what happened on the very next Saturday! Behold, our old maid-servant came running in at the door quite out of breath, saying that a horseman was coming over the Master's Mount, with a tall plume waving on his hat; and that she believed it was the young lord. When my child, who sat upon the bench combing her hair, heard this, she gave a shriek of joy, which would have moved a stone under the earth, and straightway ran out of the room to look over the paling. She presently came running in again, fell upon my neck, and cried without ceasing, "The young lord! the young lord!" whereupon she would have run out to meet him, but I forbade her, saying she had better first bind up her hair, which she then remembered, and laughing, weeping, and praying, all at once, she bound up her long hair. And now the young lord came galloping round the corner, attired in a green velvet doublet with red silk sleeves, and a grey hat with a heron's feather therein; _summa_, gaily dressed as beseems a wooer. And when we now ran out at the door, he called aloud to my child in the Latin, from afar off, "Quomodo stat dulcissima virgo?_" Whereupon she gave answer, saying, "_Bene, te aspecto._" He then sprang smiling off his horse and gave it into the charge of my ploughman, who meanwhile had come up together with the maid; but he was affrighted when he saw my child so pale, and taking her hand spake in the vulgar tongue, "My God! what is it ails you, sweet maid? you look more pale than when about to go to the stake." Whereupon she answered, "I have been at the stake daily since you left us, good my lord, without coming into our house, or so much as sending us tidings of whither you were gone."

This pleased him well, and he said, "Let us first of all go into the chamber, and you shall hear all." And when he had wiped the sweat from his brow, and sat down on the bench beside my child, he spake as follows:--That he had straightway promised her that he would clear her honour before the whole world, and the self-same day whereon he left us he made the worshipful court draw up an authentic record of all that had taken place, more especially the confession of the impudent constable, _item_, that of my ploughboy Claus Neels; wherewith he rode throughout the same night, as he had promised, to Anclam, and next day to Stettin, to our gracious sovereign Duke Bogislaw: who marvelled greatly when he heard of the wickedness of his sheriff, and of that which he had done to my child: moreover, he asked whether she were the pastor's daughter who once upon a time had found the signet-ring of his princely Highness Philippus Julius of most Christian memory in the castle garden at Wolgast? and as he did not know thereof, the Duke asked, whether she knew Latin? And he, the young lord, answered yes, that she knew the Latin better than he did himself. His princely Highness said, "Then indeed, it must be the same," and straightway he put on his spectacles, and read the _Acta_ himself. Hereupon, and after his princely Highness had read the record of the worshipful court, shaking his head the while, the young lord humbly besought his princely Highness to give him an _amende honorable_ for my child, _item_, literas commendatitias_ for himself to our most gracious Emperor at

Vienna, to beg for a renewal of my patent of nobility, seeing that he was determined to marry none other maiden than my daughter so long as he lived.

When my child heard this, she gave a cry of joy, and fell back in a swoon with her head against the wall. But the young lord caught her in his arms, and gave her three kisses (which I could not then deny him, seeing, as I did with joy, how matters went), and when she came to herself again, he asked her whether she would not have him, seeing that she had given such a cry at his words? Whereupon she said, "Whether I will not have you, my lord! Alas! I love you as dearly as my God and my Saviour! You first saved my life, and now you have snatched my heart from the stake whereon, without you, it would have burned all the days of my life!" Hereupon I wept for joy, when he drew her into his lap, and she clasped his neck with her little hands.

They thus sat and toyed awhile, till the young lord again perceived me, and said, "What say you thereto? I trust it is also your will, reverend Abraham." Now, dear reader, what could I say, save my hearty good-will? seeing that I wept for very joy, as did my child, and I answered, how should it not be my will, seeing that it was the will of God? But whether the worthy, good young lord had likewise considered that he would stain his noble name if he took to wife my child, who had been habit and repute a witch, and had been well-nigh bound to the stake?

Hereupon he said, By no means; for that he had long since prevented this, and he proceeded to tell us how he had done it, namely, his princely Highness had promised him to make ready all the *_scripta_* which he required, within four days, when he hoped to be back from his father's burial. He therefore rode straightway back to Mellenthin, and after paying the last honour to my lord his father, he presently set forth on his way again, and found that his princely Highness had kept his word meanwhile. With these *_scripta_* he rode to Vienna, and albeit he met with many pains, troubles, and dangers by the way (which he would relate to us at some other time), he nevertheless reached the city safely. There he by chance met with a Jesuit with whom he had once upon a time had his *_locamentum_* for a few days at Prague, while he was yet a *_studiosus_*, and this man having heard his business, bade him be of good cheer, seeing that his Imperial Majesty stood sorely in need of money in these hard times of war, and that he, the Jesuit, would manage it all for him. This he really did, and his Imperial Majesty not only renewed my patent of nobility, but likewise confirmed the *_amende honorable_* to my child granted by his princely Highness the Duke, so that he might now maintain the honour of his betrothed bride against all the world, as also hereafter that of his wife.

Hereupon he drew forth the *_Acta_* from his bosom and put them into my hand, saying, "And now, reverend Abraham, you must also do me a pleasure; to wit, to-morrow morning, when I hope to go with

my betrothed bride to the Lord's table, you must publish the banns between me and your daughter, and on the day after you must marry us. Do not say nay thereto, for my pastor the reverend Philippus says that this is no uncommon custom among the nobles in Pomerania, and I have already given notice of the wedding for Monday at mine own castle, whither we will then go, and where I purpose to bed my bride." I should have found much to say against this request, more especially that in honour of the holy Trinity he should suffer himself to be called three times in church according to custom, and that he should delay awhile the espousals; but when I perceived that my child would gladly have the marriage held right soon, for she sighed and grew red as scarlet, I had not the heart to refuse them, but promised all they asked. Whereupon I exhorted them both to prayer, and when I had laid my hands upon their heads, I thanked the Lord more deeply than I had ever yet thanked Him, so that at last I could no longer speak for tears, seeing that they drowned my voice.

Meanwhile the young lord his coach had driven up to the door, filled with chests and coffers: and he said, "Now, sweet maid, you shall see what I have brought you," and he bade them bring all the things into the room. Dear reader, what fine things were there, such as I had never seen in all my life! all that women can use was there, especially of clothes, to wit, bodices, plaited gowns, long robes, some of them bordered with fur, veils, aprons, item, the bridal shift with gold fringes, whereon the merry lord had laid some six or seven bunches of myrtle to make herself a wreath withal. Item, there was no end to the rings, neck-chains, ear-drops, &c., the which I have in part forgotten. Neither did the young lord leave me without a gift, seeing he had brought me a new surplice (the enemy had robbed me of my old one), also doublets, hosen, and shoes, summa, whatsoever appertains to a man's attire; wherefore I secretly besought the Lord not to punish us again in His sore displeasure for such pomps and vanities. When my child beheld all these things she was grieved that she could bestow upon him naught save her heart alone, and the chain of the Swedish king, the which she hung round his neck, and begged him, weeping the while, to take it as a bridal gift. This he at length promised to do, and likewise to carry it with him into the grave: but that my child must first wear it at her wedding, as well as the blue silken gown, for that this and no other should be her bridal dress, and this he made her promise to do.

And now a merry chance befell with the old maid, the which I will here note. For when the faithful old soul had heard what had taken place, she was beside herself for joy, danced and clapped her hands, and at last said to my child, "Now to be sure you will not weep when the young lord is to lie in your bed," whereat my child blushed scarlet for shame, and ran out of the room; and when the young lord would know what she meant therewith she told him that he had already once slept in my child her bed when he came from Güzkow with me, whereupon he bantered her all the evening after

that she was come back again. Moreover, he promised the maid that as she had once made my child her bed for him, she should make it again, and that on the day after to-morrow, she and the ploughman too should go with us to Mellenthin, so that masters and servants should all rejoice together after such great distress.

And seeing that the dear young lord would stop the night under my roof, I made him lie in the small closet together with me (for I could not know what might happen). He soon slept like a top, but no sleep came into my eyes for very joy, and I prayed the livelong blessed night, or thought over my sermon. Only near morning I dosed a little; and when I rose the young lord already sat in the next room with my child, who wore the black silken gown which he had brought her, and, strange to say, she looked fresher than even when the Swedish king came, so that I never in all my life saw her look fresher or fairer. *_Item_*, the young lord wore his black doublet, and picked out for her the best bits of myrtle for the wreath she was twisting. But when she saw me, she straightway laid the wreath beside her on the bench, folded her little hands, and said the morning prayer, as she was ever wont to do, which humility pleased the young lord right well, and he begged her that in future she would ever do the like with him, the which she promised.

Soon after we went to the blessed church to confession, and all the folk stood gaping open-mouthed because the young lord led my child on his arm. But they wondered far more when, after the sermon, I first read to them in the vulgar tongue the *_amende honorable_* to my child from his princely Highness, together with the confirmation of the same by his Imperial Majesty, and after that my patent of nobility; and, lastly, began to publish the banns between my child and the young lord. Dear reader, there arose a murmur throughout the church like the buzzing of a swarm of bees. (*_N.B._*-These *_scripta_* were burnt in the fire which broke out in the castle a year ago, as I shall hereafter relate, wherefore I cannot insert them here *_in origine_*.)

Hereupon my dear children went together with much people to the Lord's table, and after church nearly all the folks crowded round them and wished them joy. *_Item_*, old Paasch came to our house again that afternoon, and once more besought my daughter's forgiveness because that he had unwittingly offended her; that he would gladly give her a marriage-gift, but that he now had nothing at all; howbeit that his wife should set one of her hens in the spring, and he would take the chickens to her at Mellenthin himself. This made us all to laugh, more especially the young lord, who at last said, "As thou wilt bring me a marriage-gift, thou must also be asked to the wedding, wherefore thou mayest come to-morrow with the rest."

Whereupon my child said, "And your little Mary, my god-child, shall come too, and be my bridemaiden, if my lord allows it." Whereupon she began to tell the young lord all that had befallen

the child by the malice of Satan, and how they laid it to her charge until such time as the all-righteous God brought her innocence to light; and she begged that since her dear lord had commanded her to wear the same garments at her wedding which she had worn to salute the Swedish king, and afterwards to go to the stake, he would likewise suffer her to take for her bridemaiden her little god-child, as *_indicium secundum_* of her sorrows.

And when he had promised her this, she told old Paasch to send hither his child to her, that she might fit a new gown upon her which she had cut out for her a week ago, and which the maid would finish sewing this very day. This so went to the heart of the good old fellow that he began to weep aloud, and at last said, she should not do all this for nothing, for instead of the one hen his wife should set three for her in the spring.

When he was gone, and the young lord did naught save talk with his betrothed bride both in the vulgar and in the Latin tongue, I did better--namely, went up the mountain to pray, wherein, moreover, I followed my child's example, and clomb up upon the pile, there in loneliness to offer up my whole heart to the Lord as an offering of thanksgiving, seeing that with this sacrifice He is well pleased, as in Ps. li. 19, "The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, shall Thou not despise."

That night the young lord again lay in my room, but next morning, when the sun had scarce risen-----

* * * * *

Here end these interesting communications, which I do not intend to dilute with any additions of my own. My readers, more especially those of the fair sex, can picture to themselves at pleasure the future happiness of this excellent pair.

All further historical traces of their existence, as well as that of the pastor, have disappeared, and nothing remains but a tablet fixed in the wall of the church at Mellenthin, on which the incomparable lord, and his yet more incomparable wife, are represented. On his faithful breast still hangs "the golden chain, with the effigy of the Swedish king." They both seem to have died within a short time of each other, and to have been buried in the same coffin. For in the vault under the church there is still a large double coffin, in which, according to tradition, lies a chain of gold of incalculable value. Some twenty years ago, the owner of Mellenthin, whose unequalled extravagance had reduced him to the verge of beggary, attempted to open the coffin in order to take out this precious relic, but he was not able. It appeared as if some powerful spell held it firmly together; and it has remained unopened down to the present time. May it remain so until the last awful day, and may the impious hand of avarice or curiosity never desecrate these holy ashes of holy beings!

THE END.

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especially those of the fair sex, can picture to themselves at

pleasure the future happiness of this excellent pair.

All further historical traces of their existence, as well as that of the pastor, have disappeared, and nothing remains but a tablet fixed in the wall of the church at Mellenthin, on which the incomparable lord, and his yet more incomparable wife, are represented. On his faithful breast still hangs "the golden chain, with the effigy of the Swedish king." They both seem to have died within a short time of each other, and to have been buried in the same coffin. For in the vault under the church there is still a large double coffin, in which, according to tradition, lies a chain of gold of incalculable value. Some twenty years ago, the owner of Mellenthin, whose unequalled extravagance had reduced him to the verge of beggary, attempted to open the coffin in order to take out this precious relic, but he was not able. It appeared as if some powerful spell held it firmly together; and it has remained unopened down to the present time. May it remain so until the last awful day, and may the impious hand of avarice or curiosity never desecrate these holy ashes of holy beings!

THE END.

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