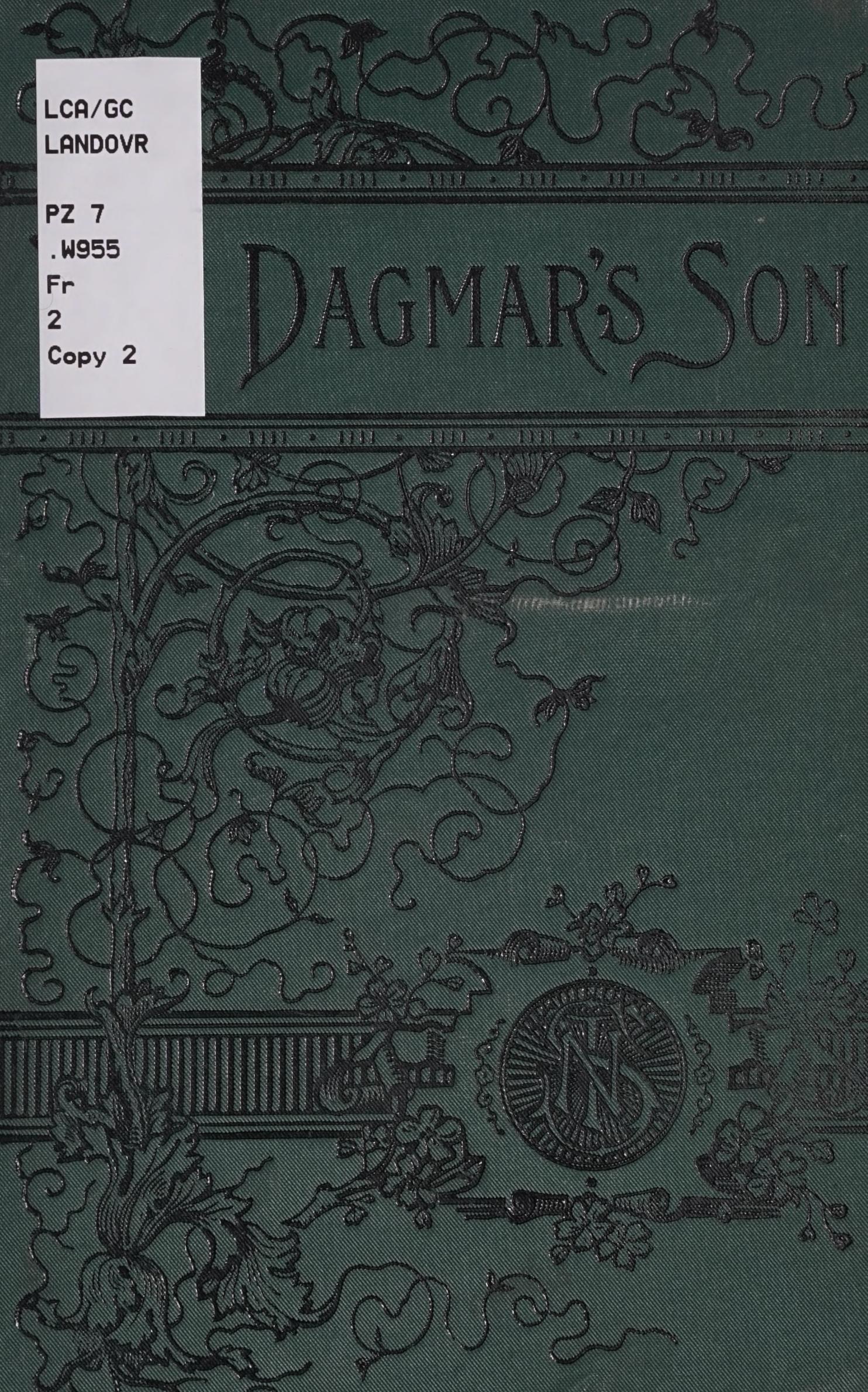


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DAGMAR'S SON



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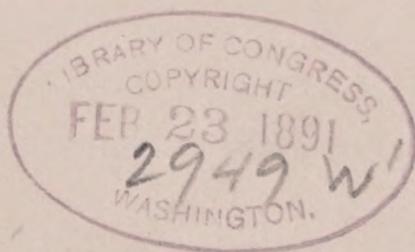
FRÜ DAGMAR'S SON.

A SURVIVOR OF THE DANMARK."

BY ✓

JULIA McNAIR WRIGHT,

AUTHOR OF "THE CAPTAIN'S BARGAIN," "THE STORY OF RASMUS," "A MADE
MAN," "THE DRAGON AND THE TEA-KETTLE," "HANNAH, ONE OF THE
STRONG WOMEN," "FIREBRANDS," "THE LIFE CRUISE OF CAP-
TAIN BESS ADAMS," "THE BEST FELLOW IN THE
WORLD," "JUG OR NOT," ETC. ETC.



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58 READE STREET, NEW YORK,

IN ancient days, from the time when King Arthur's heroes sat about the famous Round Table, until the gentle Don Quixote crowned and closed the days of chivalry, there were knights-errant wandering up and down the world. These slew great dragons, rescued distressed maidens, executed the evil, vindicated the right, captured castles, and returned home laden with the spoils of the unjust, over whom they had triumphed. In these modern days there are also giants and dragons to conquer, and there is fair field for display of all knightly virtues; and here, in the following pages, we show you a valiant little gentleman, worthy of Arthur's accolade,—a nineteenth century Sir Galahad.

THE AUTHOR.

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FRÜ DAGMAR'S SON.



CHAPTER I.

UNCLE KARS AND THE KAT.

*“ The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, singing spins from brand and mail ;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads
And gilds the driving hail.
I leave the plain, I climb the height ;
No branchy thicket shelter yields :
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.”*

A MARCH evening and cold. Sleet beginning to fall in the streets of Praesto, a little Danish village on the Island of Zeeland. There were four or five street lamps in Praesto, and the dull yellow gleam of one limned certain small concentric zones of light on the muddy sidewalk before Herr Abt's shop. Two candles dimly burning on Herr Abt's counter revealed the interior of the shop, but refused to send more than an uncertain straggling ray through the

coarse thick window glass. With his arms about the lamp-post, and "bowing" upon it with all his weight, as Samson in the House of Dagon, was a boy of thirteen. Clad in homespun, with no over-garment suited to the keenness of the weather, his yellow curls cropping from under a small home-made cap, giving way to hearty grief, and clinging, for want of a living sympathizing person, to the weather-beaten lamp-post, at his feet a pitiful little bundle tied in a red kerchief, Lars Waldsen was met and overwhelmed by the sorrows of orphanage and exile. A heavy portion that for a boy of thirteen, my masters! But this is a world where the majority are not coddled upon rose-leaves for any great length of time.

Around the corner of the nearest cross-street came a stalwart young Dane, crashing along in wooden sabots over the small stones in the foot-path; his full tawny beard blowing in the raw wind, his arms folded over his chest to help keep himself warm. The big chest had a very big heart in it, and this descendant of the Vikings stopped short at sight of the boy. With one large hand he lifted the bowed head, with not unkindly force, and then cried out—"Why, it's never Lars Waldsen! crying here in the street!" Then, as his toe touched the bundle

in the kerchief—"Lars! Lars, what has happened to Frü Dagmar?"

"She's dead," sobbed Lars, "dead and buried!"

"Dead"—said the Viking, with a sudden choke in his voice. "Dead—and why are you out here in the night, Lars? Where are you going?"

"I'm going to Korsor with my Uncle Kars Barbe. He is in the shop here. I wait for him."

"A nice uncle he must be," stormed the Viking, "to take you out on such a night without a cape coat; no wonder you are crying with cold."

"I'm not crying with cold," retorted Lars indignantly. "I can stand cold as well as any man; but my uncle has sold all our things! He sold the little house and all that was in it; he sold the wheel by which my mother always sat singing as she spun; he sold the hand-loom where she wove the cloth for our clothes; he sold all her dresses and other things; nothing is left but this one silk kerchief which Frü Lisbet bought and gave to me"—and Lars opened the breast of his jacket, and showed, lying on his bosom, a purple silk kerchief, that his mother had been wont to wear on her neck on Sundays.

“And who gave him leave to sell all your things?”

“The Hofmeister, no doubt. You see Uncle Barbe is my guardian, and my only relation, and when my mother found that she was about to die, she sent for him, as he was her brother. But she had not seen him for many years, and when he came, I think she feared him. But it was too late. Soon she died. He promised her that he would do well by me and make a son of me; but he has sold all our things, our home and all, for two hundred rix dollars, and Frü Lisbet says she makes sure I'll never get any of it.”

“Is that Uncle Kars in the shop talking with Abt?” demanded Jens Iveson, putting his whiskered face against the small dull window-panes, and glaring malignly into Herr Abt's shop. “He don't look much like being a father to any body.”

“He told my mother that he had also adopted his wife's niece Gerda, and was a father to her.”

“I wouldn't trust him,” vouchsafed Jens. “What is he doing in there?”

He is selling the last of the things—my mother's rings and hair ornaments and a silk shawl, and the big Bible. He is selling the big picture Bible where my mother used to

read to me every night! It had her name and my father's in it. That's why I'm crying. It is our family Bible he sells, and our family record is there, do you see? and the marriage of my father and mother, and my birth, and the certificate of my baptism and confirmation—he is selling it!” *

“Selling your records! Why that is to blot you out, and leave you as no more than a dog or a pig,” quoth Jens. “Let us see if he shall do that!” Whereupon he stalked into the shop, and leaning over the counter where the leather-bound Bible lay, he demanded: “You sell the Bible of Frø Dagmar, and the records of her son? If you rob the boy Lars in that manner, you shall have Jünker Jens Iveson to reckon with,” and coolly pulling from the band of his trousers a great knife used by the Karles, or farm hands, in their work, he turned open the Bible, and cut out the family record.

“Who is that?” demanded Uncle Kars, trembling so that his teeth chattered and clicked like dice shaken in a box.

“It is Jens Iveson,” said Herr Abt, with a

* Ninety-nine per cent of the Danish population are Lutherans. Children are confirmed early and the records of baptism and confirmation are legal papers, and are greatly cherished.

quavering voice, "a man with whom no one should quarrel. He is strong—I have seen him, when he had taken much brandy, so as one would think him Thor come back to the earth. The old Jotuns were nothing to him, nor Samson of whom this book tells! But Frü Dagmar could wind him round her little finger, or subdue him by a look of her eye. It was she that got him to give up drinking, and that set his brother Thorrold on going to America."

"I wish this one had gone to America too," growled Uncle Kars. "America is the place for all fiends and fierce creatures, who make Europe too hot to hold decent people. Come, Herr Abt, the price agreed upon is the same; the fellow has not hurt the book. Indeed, it will sell far better without those pages."

Meanwhile Jens Iveson strode out to Lars and gave him the precious written pages, saying—"Keep them safely. They have the writing of your father, whom you don't remember, and of your mother, who was one of God's saints, and is now in glory. A boy with both parents in Heaven cannot come to much evil, for surely the angels will have a care of him. How are you going to Korsor to-night?"

"We are to walk out to the cross-roads and

catch the stage at midnight," said Lars, folding his family record in the purple silk kerchief, and tucking both carefully in his bosom.

"Have you had supper?"

"Frü Lisbet gave us supper. I could not eat, I was so sick in my heart of sorrow; but Uncle Kars ate well. He ate an entire pork pie and almost a pound of cheese! He told me it was always well to eat heartily of what cost us nothing."

"One would not think such a weazened whiffet of a man could hold so much," quoth Jens, again addressing his face to the window-pane.

"I see also he considers it well to drink heartily of what costs him nothing. He is using up Herr Abt's schnapps until he turns Herr Abt pale."

"He is very fond of brandy and beer and schnapps," said Lars. "The doctor had left a pint bottle of brandy in our house, and Uncle Kars drank it all the day he came. It made him sleep. He was asleep when my mother died."

"Did she know that?" asked Jens.

"No, of course not. Why should I grieve her at the last, by letting her know the man I was left to lay drunk as a pig?"

“If he is as miserly as you say,” replied Jens, “he will not get drunk very often, it costs too much money. When I drank I was in debt from year to year; now I have a purse full of money. You shall have it, Lars. Only for your mother every penny of it would be in the wine house till. Here, boy, take the whole of it, nine rix dollars.”

“No, I have money,” whispered Lars, repulsing the proffered purse. “I shall not need money; my uncle promised to take care of me, and put me in his business.”

Jens shook his big head unbelievably.

“Count on me for your friend, and if the little uncle does not treat you well, say the word, and I’ll come to Korsor and break him as I would a rye straw.”

“I’ll try mother’s way first,” said Lars. “I promised her that I would be good all my life. that I would endure patiently what could be endured. I guess I can get on with Uncle Kars.”

Herr Abt’s bottle of schnapps being emptied, Uncle Kars appeared on the threshold, and, looking timorously at the big Jens said, “Come, boy, we need to be going.”

“Good-bye, Jens,” said Lars, holding out his hand.

“Good-bye,” said Jens, shaking the cold, slender hand vigorously, “and good-bye to you, Uncle Kars, and if you don’t treat this boy well, never forget that if his mother can’t get out of Heaven to come down and punish you, here’s a big Karle named Jens Iveson who could beat you to a jelly in three minutes, and would take pleasure in doing it.”

Away went Jens, not now whistling and cheery, but hanging his head, his sabots seeming to cleave to the pavement, for that Frø Dagmar, his friend and preserver, was dead, and Lars, her son, had fallen upon evil times.

“I should say the devil was inside of him with his hair and hoofs on,”* said Uncle Kars, hurrying along toward the post-road. “I’ll see to it that in Korsør you don’t make any such evil acquaintances as that.”

The heart of Lars was too heavy even to rise up to defend his friend. Besides he instinctively felt that defence of Jens would be based on principles which Uncle Kars could not comprehend. On, on, he and Uncle Kars tramped along the half-frozen roads. The sleet ceased falling, and the moon came out through rifts of clouds, but the raw air was nothing warmer.

* This is a very common phrase in Denmark for a violent person.

The waiting under a little thatched shed, for half an hour, until the coach came by, was even worse than the walk, for the motion had kept Lars' blood in circulation, and now he was nearly perished with cold. Uncle Kars had saved a few pennies, by walking to the cross-roads to meet the night coach, and he now saved a few more by taking places on top of the vehicle, instead of inside. As the middle place in the seat was warmer and more sheltered than the outer one, Uncle Kars took that and left his nephew the worse position. Lars was overcome with drowsiness, cold and exhaustion. Thus it happened that as the coach rattled along, the driver was startled by seeing in the moonlight the shadow of a passenger losing balance and swaying far out over the coach side.

There was a little tumult on top of the coach, and the driver pulled up his horses. Looking angrily around, he saw the pale handsome face of the sleepy boy who had narrowly escaped falling, the moonlight illuminating the circle of fair short curls cropping out from under his cap.

"How now!" cried Jehu to Uncle Kars. "What sort of a man are you to put a drowsy, slim lad like that on the outside place, and take no manner of care of him! Do you want

to get his neck broken? And I vow if this boy is not travelling without any cape-coat such a night as this. A pretty spectacle of a father you are with your coat."

"I'm not his father, nor anybody's father," growled Uncle Kars. "I'm his uncle; it's not my business if he has no coat."

"His uncle! Well, I don't know whether that's so much the worse or so much the better; depends on how much you have to do with him," said the driver. "Come down here into the boot with me, my boy; you'll be safe here."

So he dragged Lars down into the empty and envied place at his own side, into a thick pocket of furs. Lars felt a delightful warm footstone pushed under his benumbed feet, and a wolf-skin robe tucked up about his ears.

"Sleep away," said the coachman; "you'll be as warm as an apple baking on the hearth, and I'll warrant you can't fall out of there."

The next that Lars knew it was broad day, and the stage had stopped at a little tavern. The stable boys were leading away the horses, the driver was climbing down to the doorstep. Beside the driver stood the inside passenger, a tall, slender man in a high, pointed felt hat, a long cloak, a ruff about his neck which indicated his clerical estate.

“Lars!” cried out Uncle Kars from his seat on top, “did you do as I told you last night, and put a breakfast in your pocket from Frü Lisbet’s supper table?”

“No,” said Lars slowly. How very hungry he was!

“So much the worse for you,” grinned Uncle Kars. “I helped myself. I always do when victuals are freely offered.”

He took out an immense sandwich and began munching it.

“So, the boy is to go without his breakfast?” cried the driver.

“No, he is not,” said the man with the ruff. “I invite him to eat with me. I enjoy a meal better when it is shared.”

Lars needed no second invitation from the pleasant face and winning voice; he scrambled out of the boot.

“I should have asked him myself, Priest Andersen,” said the driver, “if you had not. But it is right that you do it. A true Priest is the father of the people.*”

“I see you have a crape on your sleeve,” said Priest Andersen, as he and Lars entered the dining-room, and sat down by the breakfast table.

* In Denmark the Lutheran pastor is always called a priest, and is usually so addressed.

There was a strip of coarse crape tied above Lars' elbow, by Frø Lisbet.

"I am mourning," said Lars, "my mother has just died."

"And your father?"

"He died before I was a week old. I seemed to forget him, you know. But my mother, oh she was the best! We lived at Praesto. Did you ask if I had a good time? Of course I did. Wouldn't any boy have a good time living with his mother?"

"A good mother is never lost to her son," said Priest Andersen. "I speak from experience; mine died when I was of your age. But she has never seemed to perish out of my life. She has always seemed near me. I have tried to guide my life by her counsels, and daily I think of the time when we shall meet again. She will have the same eyes, the same smile the same warm love in her heart. When we finally meet, it will seem like only a little while since we parted. Time passed is always short. I think you may feel that your mother will be glad when you are honestly happy, and she will rejoice when you obey her counsels. Don't forget that."

The Herr Pastor was filling up Lars' plate

as he spoke, and a certain matter-of-fact cheerfulness in his tone encouraged Lars.

Here was a man who had suffered a loss like his own, and had lived through the years, and was good and happy.

“Make a man of yourself, even if there are difficulties in your way. Go to school all that you can, and learn all that you can. Go to church and keep in mind the doctrines that have been taught you. Don't forget your prayers, and be sure and read your Bible. I suppose you have a Bible?” said Pastor Andersen.

“We had a nice big one,” said Lars, getting red in the face, “and my uncle, out in the coach there, sold it.”

“That is bad. Still, as I always carry a Bible, I can remedy the loss, in a way. You shall have this of mine. It is just like one I gave to my son last week. You may not have the easiest time in the world if you live with your uncle, so I will advise you for your help two things—Yield where you can ; and never yield a principle.”

The friendly talk of Herr Pastor, and the fine hot breakfast began to revive Lars' spirits. He felt more equal to his fate. As they left the dining-room the stage driver said :

“Come, Priest Andersen, you have fulfilled

your duty; you have given the lad a breakfast and a Bible, food for the body and food for the soul, finish up by giving him your blessing. A good man's blessing is not like water spilled on the ground."

Lars, with ingenuous grace, pulled off his scrap of a cap and bent his curly head. The tall pastor laid his hand on the bowed head and said, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

"Let me write your name in my note-book," he said, before they returned to their places in the coach; and he looked a little curiously at Lars' homespun and home-made suit, and coarse shoes, and his fine, aristocratic face and pose. He said to himself, "The dress is that of the Insidder, but the face is the face of a Herremand."

An Insidder is a laborer, a Herremand a gentleman.

"My name is Lars Waldsen," said the boy. "We are poor now, but my mother's name was Barbe, and my mother's grandfather was a Herremand, and my father's grandfather was a Gaardmand"—for in Denmark class distinctions are rigidly maintained, and the blood of a Herremand, or country gentleman, and of a

Gaardmand, a yeoman farmer, is held in great esteem by his descendants, especially if they have fallen in the social scale.

Once more tucked into the boot beside the driver, Lars began to ponder. His future looked dark enough. His humble home of the past had been quiet, hospitable, happy, lit by his mother's smile. His future lay in the keeping of Uncle Kars, while Frü Lisbet, Jens, the coach driver, Priest Andersen, all seemed to hold Uncle Kars in very low esteem. And then a man who lay drunk when his only sister was dying! A man who sold his nephew's family Bible!

"My little chap," said the voice of the driver, "if you are going to live with yon man on the top of the coach, just remember the old proverbs, 'hard words break no bones,' and 'least said soonest mended.' Don't rile him by talk, for talk does no good when you can't back it up with actions. The hardest things don't last forever; you'll be a man in a matter of eight or nine years. Moreover, there is a law in the land, if he gets to be too cantankerous."

A flight of ravens from a wood swept round the coach and their harsh cries interrupted the driver's counsels. But all men seemed to Lars as ravens croaking of evil to come, as he rode toward Korsor.

Korsor at last! Uncle Kars and his nephew left the coach at the entrance of the little town. This street, that street, here was Uncle Kars' house—a brick house standing close to the uneven brick walk, and touched by the branches of two lime trees which grew before it. Across the front of the house, between the two stories ran a huge carved oak beam, wrought in cherubs and lilies, with *GLORY BE TO GOD* carved in great Gothic text in the centre. Down the side of the house stretched a big leaden pipe for rain water, with a big lion's head for the water to run out through. The front door was carved, double, heavy; all manner of imps and satyrs and grinning beasts chiselled on the panels, mocked at Lars as he entered with his uncle. The house was dark and fireless. Uncle Kars led the way to a cold kitchen. No living thing appeared but the very thinnest cat Lars had ever seen, a great brindle cat with green eyes. She did not come to meet them, but shrunk into a corner and glared.

“Where is the little girl Gerda?” asked Lars.

“Oh Gerda? Children are lonely and need occupation, you know, so I hired Gerda out to work for Frü Heitzen, next door. Girls should learn things. What could I teach a girl?”

“Do you mean to hire me out?” asked Lars,

“No, I can use a boy in my business.”

“But I must go to school a year. The law is to go to school till you are fourteen. I am only just past thirteen.”

“You are fourteen, mind. If any one asks, you are fourteen. I say it. You will not go to school. You will live here with me and my Kat.”



CHAPTER II.

CASTLE FAMINE AND THE PRINCESS.

*“ A residence for woman, man or child,
A dwelling-place—and yet no habitation;
A house—but under some tremendous ban
Of excommunication.”*

“ WE don't need any dinner, since we had our breakfast,” said Uncle Kars. “ There is nothing so wasteful and dangerous for people, as over-eating. Two meals a day are enough to keep people alive.”

“ Shall I make a fire for you ? ” asked Lars. “ Where is the wood ? ”

“ There is nothing so dangerous as fire,” said Uncle Kars. “ It might burn the house up. It is also wasteful ; also it is unnecessary. Exercise is better than fire to warm one. Let us get to work.”

“ And what is your business, and what can I do ? ”

“ My business is to collect curiosities and antiques from Sweden, Norway, and Denmark,

Heligoland, Finnland, for a great house in England. -Your business will be to help repair and get in order and clean up the things I purchase; you can keep the house for me when I go away to buy things."

"When do you go?" asked Lars. "How long do you stay?"

"I stay for a few days, and I go whenever I hear of some auction sale in the large towns, or that some great Herremand's house is breaking up. Then I go to the sales and buy cheap and sell dear. As I am to teach you my business, boy, that is the first principle of business. Buy cheap. Say it is trash and you don't care for buying it. Sell dear. Say it is rare, and you don't care for parting with it. That is the way to thrive."

"It is written in the Bible," said Lars: "'It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer, but when he goeth his way, then he boasteth.' I don't think it means to praise up that way though."

Uncle Kars had taken some brasses from a chest and was spreading them upon a table. They were old and dim. He took out similar brasses, new and evidently just from the foundry. Next he found in a drawer a bottle of dark liquid and a soft brush.

“Now, boy,” he said to his nephew, “the stuff in this bottle is a secret, but if you wash those brasses over with it carefully, they will soon look as old as these others.”

“I think they are much prettier new,” said Lars, as he began the task. “Why do you spoil them?”

“Because those greedy kites and thieves of Englishmen like them better that way,” said Uncle Kars; “and I make my living by the English trade.”

“There must be honest men in the world to trade with,” said Lars. “Why don’t you trade with our own countrymen? My mother told me that Danes are honest men. Why do you trade with thieves?”

“No matter how big a thief a man is,” said Uncle Kars, polishing a brass, “his money is just as good. The English thieves have the most money, so I trade with them. But never fear. They can’t cheat me. I’m a match for the best of them.”

In fact, Lars shivering and hungry, tarnishing the brass cups and servers, began to think that he had fallen into the talons of the greatest kite in the whole falconry! He looked about the old kitchen; the floor was dirty and warped, the walls blackened by smoke, the

plaster fallen in places, the beams overhead festooned with cobwebs, the hearth foul, the lean cat crouched in a window ledge, her bones nearly piercing her skin. Only the upper half of the shutters was open, and Lars and his uncle worked in the semi-gloom.

“I don't see why you sent Gerda to work out,” said Lars eyeing his dismal environment. “You need a girl here, some one to tidy up, to clean the floor and windows, and brighten the hearth and set a good kettle of soup steaming for you; some one to keep your house as it should be.”

“And waste soap and coals and food!” screamed Uncle Kars. “If those are your notions, no wonder your mother died poor. I don't care for the state of my house.”

“We were not poor,” said Lars. “My mother said no one was poor who had a stout heart, hands to work, the love of his fellow creatures, and the fear of God before his eyes. We had all that. And my mother always taught me that a good man cares for his living place, for the roof over his head, and the hearth he sits by, and that it is his home, and he should love it. I loved mine—and—you sold it.”

“Nonsense,” said Uncle Kars, “the money

will be worth more to you. How would you get food if you had had no money? I am a poor man. If I shelter you, it is all I can do."

"A poor man," said Lars stoutly, "should not live in a house with carved doors."

Uncle Kars laughed with joy that his nephew was so observing. "Did you notice the doors? And the beam? And the leaden spout? You have an eye for my trade! That is well. Let me tell you I got the house for a song—from a young man who wasted his property. He is dead. The house—the house could be sold in pieces for a noble pile of kronen. I could sell the doors, the beam, the ceiling, the stair ballusters, the casements, the leaded windows, the wainscotings."

Lars was growing so faint and hungry that he could not listen to Uncle Kars' discourse. He concluded to lead up gently to the idea of food. He ceased to work on the brass, and leaning his arms on the table remarked: "You must have forgotten to leave food for the cat while you were gone. See how thin she is. If you'll tell me where to get her some milk, I'll feed her. It's dreadful to be hungry."

"One soon learns not to be greedy and gorge themselves," said Uncle Kars, calmly. "As for the cat, are you crazy? If I fed her,

she would never catch mice and rats. It is wasteful and dangerous to feed cats."

"How can she catch rats and mice if there are none in the house?" demanded Lars. "And they won't come, where nothing is around for them to eat, will they?"

"I give her a bit of bread twice a day when I eat," said Uncle Kars, "it is wasteful and dangerous to eat too much."

Uncle Kars, having finished his work on the brass, told Lars to pick up his bundle and come with him through the house. Dark rooms and stairways and halls, dirty, unaired, and filled with old treasures: old dishes, and old furniture, old cloaks of velvet and silk; rags of lace, old coins, old cups and plates, of silver bronze or gold; carved chests, ancient weapons, worm-eaten books, curious musical instruments; tapestries hung along the walls, dim pictures in antique frames, clocks of whimsical make, all dull and dusty and having the scent of tombs. Lars shivered more and more. This house could never have been warm since it was built.

"I never saw such a lot of horrid old things," said Lars frankly.

"English and Americans are willing to pay high for them," replied his Uncle.

“English and Americans must have money to waste, if they give it for cracked china and old black pictures, and cupboards full of worm holes, and rusty money that won't go,” said Lars, eying the collection with growing disfavor, “and clothes you can't wear. I don't believe in throwing money away like that.”

Uncle Kars chuckled at this sentiment; he patted his nephew on the shoulder; “I'll make a man of you yet,” he said.

Someway that commendation did not elate Lars. He felt that a man, after Uncle Kars' fashion, was not the pattern of man worthy to be Frü Dagmar's son.

“Why don't you keep the place lighter?” he asked, as he fell against an ancient chair, whose cushion had been perhaps embroidered by some royal princess years on years ago.

“Light is wasteful and dangerous; we might set something on fire,” replied Uncle Kars. “When I want to find things I take a lantern. Why do your teeth chatter so? You will soon get used to living in a house that is not too warm. Nothing is so bad as being overheated. If you are very cold, you can wrap some of those old curtains or table-cloths about you, only do not tread on them.”

Arrived at the third story, Uncle Kars told

his nephew to lay down his bundle. "You can sleep here," he said.

"I don't see any bed," said Lars.

"No—too soft beds are wasteful and dangerous—they make folks idle and weakly. There are three or four cushions under that table. You can pile up them, and cover yourself with some of those things lying over yon chair."

The articles in question were certain old cloaks, and a well-worn Persian rug. Lars concluded he could manage a bed for himself out of the antiquities, though accustomed as he had been to the well-aired bedding cared for by Frü Dagmar, he could not esteem his proposed couch as either wholesome or luxurious. He kept wondering if Gerda, the girl who had lived with Uncle Kars, had been treated in this fashion. His curiosity was greatly excited about her.

Returning to the second floor, Uncle Kars entered a little room opening from a large one. The large room had in it evidently the choicest antiquities. Even the inexperienced eyes of Lars could see that. The little room was no doubt Uncle Kars' den. There was a small, ill-furnished iron bed, a small grate, a table near the fireplace, with a decanter and a green

wine glass standing on a tray ; an iron-bound chest, with a pistol lying on it, cocked, and a tall, strong secretary, bound in brass. Uncle Kars opened the secretary and took a small packet from his breast. Before he consigned it to the secretary, he undid the packet. Lars saw the one heirloom and pride of his mother's heart—six thick silver teaspoons, with curiously twisted handles, embracing a heraldic device. The spoons were a relic of Herremand Barbe, his great-grandfather.

“Those are mine!” he cried impulsively. “They were my mother's.”

“I only keep them for you, till you are a man,” said his uncle, hurrying the treasure into a pigeon-hole of the secretary. Then, to divert Lars' mind : “See, I also keep for Gerda her ‘Bridal Crown.’ He held up a small cap of rich lace, adorned across the top with a broad, thin band of glittering gold, in which two or three small garnets and emeralds were set.

“I wish she lived here now,” said Lars. “I shall be so lonesome. I have been used to my mother always with me.”

“Gerda is a little demon,” said Uncle Kars. “She was greedy. She was never satisfied. Because I would not let her gorge herself, what did she do when I set her to darn a most

splendid tapestry, but cut out ever so many of the heads. Then she is more agile than the brindle cat ; when I was about to beat her, she scrambled to the top of yonder press, and there she jibed and flouted me, and took out a bunch of matches, and threatened to drop them lighted into the dust and rubbish behind the press and burn the house. I was obliged to go and fetch Frü Heitzen from next door, and bind Gerda out to her until she is eighteen, before the girl would give up the matches or come down. What do you think of such enormous ingratitude as that ? ”

“ As Gerda is a girl, perhaps she had no better way to defend herself, if she was not well treated,” said Lars.

“ Not well treated ! And what would you do ? ”

“ I don't know,” said Lars simply. “ I should try and defend myself more like a man.”

A clock in Uncle Kars' den struck six. Already the little old lantern had been lit. “ We will have supper,” said Uncle Kars.

O joyful word ! The two went back to the kitchen. Uncle Kars unlocked a cupboard, and took out a loaf of rye bread, very hard and stale. Lars, as a Danish boy, was used to rye bread, but Denmark is a prosperous country, where

even the poorest are well fed, and he had been given milk, cheese or herring with his bread. Uncle Kars cut off two thick slices of the loaf, and giving one to his nephew said, "Help yourself to all the water you want," then leaned back against the closed cupboard, and without ceremony of dishes began munching his bread.

"Is this supper?" asked Lars. "And are you not going to feed the cat? See how hungry she looks! Where is her dish of milk?"

"Give her some water," said Uncle Kars coolly. "I never feed cats milk. Cats and children should not be pampered."

Lars was very hungry, but the dumb imploring of the brindle cat's green eyes was more than he could resist. He knelt on the floor and began to feed her crumbs of his bread.

"You do it at your own risk," said Uncle Kars. "I shall not give you any more. However, if you get very hungry, you can pull your belt a little tighter, and you will not mind it so much. Also people sleep better on an empty stomach."

"Do you always eat your supper without setting a table, or asking a blessing, or making porridge?" inquired Lars.

"Always," replied his guardian, finishing his bread.

"As to a blessing, I can ask it for myself," said Lars. "I was so surprised at the little supper, that to-night I forgot it. Still, my mother told me we should be thankful for small things when we had not great ones. But though I forgot to give thanks, I fed the cat, and as the good Lord loves deeds better than words, perhaps He will not mind my forgetting."

They returned to the den, and Uncle Kars made a very small fire in his grate, and seated himself close by it in an ancient, stuffed chair. Then, from a closet in the mantel, he took out a small bottle of brandy and filled the little green glass. He looked askance at his nephew.

"I take it for my health. It is some that was left in the cellar by the young man who once owned the house. I hope you do not want any; it is not good for boys. I keep it all locked up."

"You need not be afraid of my wanting your brandy," said Lars. "I should be very little my mother's son if I cared for strong drink, which is a thing she hated. She said a drunkard and a sluggard would always come to poverty."

“That is true. Don’t forget it,” said Uncle Kars, sipping a drop of his brandy, and smacking his lips.

A great banging arose at the lower back door.

“Take the lantern and go let her in,” said Uncle Kars, crossly, “she will bang the door down else.”

When Lars had opened the kitchen door an elfish looking girl of twelve came in, a little wiry girl with red cheeks and with yellow pig-tails hanging down her back, a girl with superfluous vim in her mouth and eyes. She wore a short scant dress of brown homespun, knitted hose, wooden sabots, a white kerchief pinned over her shoulders, and instead of a hood, wore a close, quaint, little linen cap.

Lars heart warmed to her; this simple costume of Danish women and girls brought back his mother!

“I’m Gerda,” said the girl. “Frü Heitzen said you had come with my uncle. How many things have you been already told were wasteful and dangerous?”

“Fire, light, food, beds, and feeding animals,” said Lars, promptly, and could not forbear laughing.

“As for animals, where is that cat? I have

some rinds of pork in my pocket for her. Here, kitty, kitty, kitty! We don't feast like kings at Frü Heitzen's, but it is not quite Castle Famine, as it is here. Don't you feel dreadfully hollow already?"

Lars admitted that he did.

"We shall see what stuff you are made of by-and-by," said Gerda, skipping up the stairs in the dark, as one who knew the way.

"The stuff in me of which you will soon see most is my bones," said Lars, stoically, as he followed with the lantern.

Gerda looked back from the top stair. "Ah, there's something in you! We shall have rare fun here."

"Here I am, Uncle Kars," she announced, pulling a big church chair as near the fire as possible, and perching upon it.

"I don't see why you can't stay where you belong," said her host.

"I shall come here every night to cheer up the boy, and see that you don't kill him. What's your name, boy?" cried Gerda.

"Lars."

"I like that name. It has a good strong Danish sound. So your mother died, did she? I'm sorry. You've come to a poor place."

“Poor enough, poor enough! I’m a very poor man,” said Uncle Kars.

“Bah!” said Gerda. “Did you stop the clock when your sister died, Uncle Kars?”

“I don’t know. I think not,” said Uncle Kars.

“Frü Korner says, if you did not, misfortune will follow you all the year, and serve you right, too! Did you turn the looking glass to the wall?”

“No, we didn’t,” said Lars; “why should we?”

“Why!!!” cried Gerda. “To look in a glass while one lies dead, is a sure sign of death. Of course Uncle Kars looked in the glass when he got ready for the funeral. You’ll die within the year Uncle Kars, sure. See if you don’t.”

“Hush up,” said Uncle Kars, uneasily, sipping his brandy.

“Was she buried before Sunday?” persisted Gerda.

“She was buried Saturday,” said Lars, softly.

“That was well. If the corpse had stayed in the house, or the grave had lain open over Sunday, you would both have died this very year. And I should have been the only one to have all these things of Uncle Kars’.”

“Will you hush up!” cried Uncle Kars, starting violently.

Gerda, seated on the arm of the high straight chair, her feet in their sabots dangling in the red light of the small fire, her little lean figure in its dark dress, her gleaming eyes, speaking mischief, persisted in detailing her omens. To Lars she looked like an uncanny little raven croaking of death.

“What do you shiver for, Uncle Kars? It is a sign that some one is walking over your grave! I have heard the death-bell every time I have come into this house for a month, too.”

Uncle Kars sunk his chin in his coat, and pretended not to hear. Gerda seemed satisfied with having reduced him to misery. She jumped down from the chair, crying, “Come Lars! Let us play! Let me show you the fun I have in here with Uncle Kars’ things!” She ran into the large room and Lars followed her.

“You will be much warmer playing,” she said; “there is no heat in that cupfull of fire, and Uncle Kars is such an ugly sight crouched up there sipping his brandy! I always say something to make him wretched when I first come in. How I have plagued him to-night!”

“Why do you do it—it’s—it’s—” said Lars seeking for a word.

Gerda cut short the condemnation: “Why does he starve the cat? Why did he starve me? Why will he starve you? Why is he the very meanest man that ever lived? He is not a true Dane at all. A true Dane is honest, generous, strong. Uncle Kars Barbe is a fairy changeling, the Kobolds put him in his mother’s cradle. Do you know what Kobolds do that for?”

“No, I never heard of such a thing,” said Lars, who had not been reared on legends and other fiction.

“They put little Kobolds in cradles, to try and get souls for them. But Kobold changelings mostly grow up bad men and love brandy and money far more than the souls they have stolen. Now I will be the Princess Bertelda. Help me to get the things from this shelf.”

Gerda pulled off her sabots and put on a pair of red satin shoes, worked with tinsel; then she put on a long trained skirt of brocade, and made a short mantle of an embroidered altar cloth; on her head she placed a cap with a feather, part of some theatrical trappings, that had become Uncle Kars’ prey. She held in her hand a large brush of peacocks’ feathers.

Then she bade Lars put on a great blue cloak, and buckled a sword belt and sword at his waist; she fastened spurs to the heels of his clacking, wooden sabots, and laying her long train over his arm, named him Lord Fritz, and said he was her servant. Then in state, the Princess marched up and down the large gloomy room, lost in darkness with her train bearer for the most part, but emerging into light, as the moon from eclipse, as pursuing her way, she came within the gleam cast by the lantern standing on a chair in the doorway, between the two rooms. But in all their progress Gerda talked, saw visions, told tales. Now they tarried while Lord Fritz slew a monster darting at the Princess Bertelda from the shadow of a tall clothes press. Now again they delayed while Lord Fritz distributed largess to her kneeling subjects. Now a great flood was represented by a rug, and Lord Fritz gallantly carried the Princess through the waves. Lord Fritz grew warm and forgot that he was hungry, and neither of them noted the wizzened head of Uncle Kars bent forward with a grim smile to watch the splendors, graces and maneuvers of the Princess Bertelda and her knight.

CHAPTER III.

FRÜ KORNER CONVEYS SUPPLIES TO THE GARRISON.

*“ Rich hangings storied by the needle’s art
With Scriptive history, or classic fable;
But all had faded, save one ragged part
Where Cain was slaying Abel ! ”*

To Lars, Gerda became guide, philosopher and friend. It was Gerda who informed him that the work in tarnishing brasses was done in order that cheaply made modern brass might be sold as antiques ; and that some of the ancient brasses with curious inscriptions were bought by Uncles Kars from men who had nefariously robbed tombs in ancient churches. After that Lars declined to work in brass. “ It is not honest,” he said, “ and to be honest is the duty of my mother’s son.”

“ It may be well for me,” said Uncle Kars, after a little consideration, “ that you are so particularly honest, but it will be bad for you when you come to be in business for yourself.”

“ No, it will not,” said Lars; “ my mother taught me that if we fear God we shall have

his blessing, and that 'the blessing of the Lord maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it.' "

"It was Gerda told you about the brass," said Uncle Kars. "She will soon make you as detestable as she is herself. Has she not tried to fill your head about this house being haunted."

"Those are only fun stories, to pass the time," said Lars. "My mother taught me that there are neither witches, goblins nor ghosts, and that he who fears God need have no other fear. But while I won't touch your cheating brasses, I will do what I can. My mother taught me to sew, one winter when I was laid up with a broken leg. I can mend tapestry, and I will not cut the heads out as Gerda did."

In truth, Lars spent much time cleaning and repairing tapestry and other ancient handwork. As his own attic was the only light place in the house, he did his work there. The windows of the attic had no shutters and the sun came in there all day, as the house stood east and west, and the attic was a single room with windows at each end. At first that attic had seemed terribly lonely to the boy whose cot bed at night had always stood near his mother's, and who had heard a loving voice the first

sound in the morning and the last before he slept.

Uncle Kars always sent his nephew to bed without a light; and groping his way up to the long attic, Lars would undress, pile the cushions together and cover himself with the antique draperies and quilts as best he could. It was small comfort that lords or princesses might once have slept under the old satin quilts, or rested their heads on the musty cushions! The darkness was like that of the ninth plague, a darkness that might be felt. On moonlight nights the attic was almost more overwhelming. Then, all the queer assemblage of antiquities seemed to grow larger and more fantastic, to cast threatening shadows, and to move as if living things. The tall truncheons, the spears that had been used in long-gone tilts and tourneys, the suits of armor that had once cased heroes or ruffians, the high posts of dismembered bedsteads, the carved wooden giants, angels, demons, that had been carried in processions, or ornamented guild houses, or churches, or town-halls, seemed infused with vitality as Lars lay in his improvised couch, staring at them. And as cloudlets drifted over the moon, and the "pearl of night" travelled her ecliptic way, these relics

heaped about him appeared to move, the plumes waved, the morions bowed, the banners eddied as on a ghostly breeze, eyes glared again through the rusty helmets, and iron hands grasped iron pikes, and hanging garments rose and fell as if human hearts yet beat and human lungs yet breathed beneath them.

For the first few nights in his attic, Lars felt as if he should go wild. Fortunately hunger and weariness brought the deep sleep of childhood. Then wakening day after day, and finding himself unharmed, and that these exuviae of the past were harmless prey of dust and age, at last Lars' natural valor came to his aid, and he made not only an acquaintance but friendship with his surroundings. He fancied himself the long-gone knight who wore the armor or brandished the lance, or battle-axe. He conversed with visionary queens and dames who wore the gowns, turned the spinning-wheels, and wrought on the tapestry about him. But this was not until Gerda, by her plays and tales, had roused his sleeping imagination and lent it wings. For the education of Lars had been hitherto very matter-of-fact. He had gone regularly to Church and school, and his mother had talked with him of his lessons. She had told him stories from history and from Scripture.

Her staid, simple mind had never traversed the fields of fairy lore, of romance and witchcraft where Gerda seemed naturally to dwell.

Every evening Gerda spent with Lars. The boy could not tell whether the girl amused or intimidated Uncle Kars, or whether he had a secret liking for her, that he never refused her admission. When Gerda had put Frø Heitzen's three children to bed, and washed the porridge bowls from the simple supper, she was at liberty to go to Uncle Kars until ten o'clock.

Why his Uncle had ever brought him to Korsør was a problem to Lars. Was it that he expected real help in his business from Lars or that he wanted to secure the few rix dollars resulting from the sale of Frø Dagmar's effects; or did he fear to refuse a dying woman's request? "I think it is that he wants you to be here in the house when he makes his trips," said Gerda. "He is afraid to leave the house alone. He knows you won't rob him. He makes great pretense of being poor, but everybody knows he has piles of kronen.* Frø Heitzen says that he has been telling about Korsør that you are as wakeful as a weasel; that you are brave as a lion; that you can fire a pistol and hit what you aim at every time, just like an American."

* Crowns.

“If he wants me to be so brave, he should feed me better,” said Lars. “That’s the worst of all here, having nothing to eat. It makes you feel hollow round your waist, and dizzy in your head, and shaky in your legs. I get so starved sometimes I could eat the brindle cat if there was anything of her to eat but bones and skin. And I fancy the cat thinks just so about me. Anyway, I’m afraid to have her in my attic at night. She looks so ravenous. I’m afraid she’d forget herself, and I’d wake up and find a piece of myself gone. She seems to like me, though, for I cannot help giving her some of my bread, she looks so dreadful out of her eyes.”

It was Gerda who occasionally brought supplies in her incursions to Castle Famine. Gerda herself was not being abundantly fed. Frü Heitzen was a widow who lived rent free for the care she took of the house in which she occupied only the basement. Otherwise she made shirts for a living, and her table gave barely enough of porridge, cheese, rye-bread and dried fish, to maintain existence. But Gerda denied herself sometimes to slip a lump of cheese, or rye-bread or a part of herring, from her plate to her pocket for Lars; and Lars when thus provisioned could not for the life of him resist

sharing with the unhappy feline, his companion in distress.

Uncle Kars never allowed his nephew to go to Church nor to school. For the Church, he held, is waste of time, for the school, as Lars could read, write, and keep accounts well, Uncle Kars held him abundantly educated. But Uncle Kars taught him English which he himself could read and write, and also French, of which he knew enough for trading purposes. For weeks after Lars was brought into Castle Famine, he was not allowed to go out of the house, but finally Uncle Kars seemed to feel that his nephew would not rob him, nor tell the secrets of his prison, and then he permitted him to go every second day for bread to Fr \ddot{u} Korner, the baker's wife. Lars was instructed to buy stale bread, and then Uncle Kars kept it a long time, often until it was hard as a bone, or had uncanny green streaks in it.

"I don't see what you live on," said Fr \ddot{u} Korner. "Kars Barbe buys no more bread than he did before you came, and it was little enough then."

"At least he gives me half," said Lars, desirous that justice should be done even to Uncle Kars.

"You look half starved and grow leaner all

the time," said the good-wife, "it goes against my grain to see a fine Danish boy defrauded of his just growth as you are." Probably the eyes of Lars affected Frü Korner, as the eyes of the brindle cat affected Lars himself, for presently she began to give him stale rolls, or makeweight crusts, or even tarts or buns of a few days old, saying: "Those are not to be seen by your uncle—they are for yourself."

Lars hid these gifts safely in the breast of his coat. He was now so despoiled of his plump proportions that he could put a good large biscuit in his jacket, and Uncle Kars never suspect it. Whatever Frü Korner gave him he scrupulously shared with the brindle cat.

The only thing of which Uncle Kars was generous was water—of that he said, "help yourself." But when you come to toilet purposes; what is water, cold water, without soap? "Soap!" cried Uncle Kars, "Soap is wasteful and dangerous! Who knows of what foul poisonous fat soap may be made!"

How he was to wash his clothes without soap, Lars could not tell, but that shrewd little demosel, Gerda, saw his dilemma, and helped him out of it by taking his change of clothes home with her each week, and washing them with Frü Heitzen's family linen. Still, having

his clothes washed would not bestow on Lars the blessing of a clean skin, and Frü Dagmar had taught him that cleanliness is next to godliness.

Lars sat up in his pallet one night meditating on these things. Frü Korner was giving him alms of bread. Gerda was denying her own appetite to keep him from hunger. The brindle cat was starving: he had no soap. Here was extremity. He took from his neck a little chamois skin bag, and trembling lest, two stories below and also asleep, Uncle Kars should hear the click of coin, he told out the contents of that secret purse. He remembered when he received it. It was after Uncle Kars had come, and when his mother was dying. No doubt she foresaw the troubles of her child, and distrusted her brother. She gave to Lars this little bag, in which were three large gold pieces, a rix dollar, and two kronen. She bade him tie the bag about his neck, never let his uncle see it, and use its contents only in a case of great need.

Lars had asked Gerda to make him a larger bag from a piece of the homespun of her dress, and in that he had put the folded purple silk neck-kerchief with the pages cut from the family record hidden in the silken folds, and

with the record lay the chamois skin bag of money, of which even Gerda knew nothing.

Almost nightly Lars touched or kissed these relics, tears running over his cheeks ; it was like saying good-bye to his mother over again ! This night, Lars was questioning whether he ought not to use some of this money for his needs. Ought he to starve, to accept alms, to let the cat perish, to go without soap when he had these coins ?

“ But then I must not spend all that I have on food—merely ”—said Lars betraying some of the Barbe prudence and self-restraint. “ There will be greater needs.”

He decided to use the two kronen for present necessity. No doubt Frü Korner was to be trusted. Accordingly, next day he took the two kronen when he went to the baker's shop. “ I ought not to beg when I have money,” he said, “ and this is my own, my mother gave it to me. I suppose being past thirteen I'm too big to cry,—but—I always cry when I think of my mother. I wish you'd keep the money, and give me stale rolls for it now and then—when I am very hungry—until it is all gone—only I must have enough out of it first to buy some soap. I hate to have dirty hands.”

“ I'll sell you the soap,” said Frü Korner,

taking down a large piece, "and be sure I shall not tell that old rascal of a Kars Barbe what you have."

Lars was surprised at the size and cheapness of the rolls she gave him for his private supply, and at the length of time which she said the two kronen would hold out.

Spring came early that year. The air grew mild. Lars no longer shivered all day, for up in his attic the sun came in warmly. The lime trees put forth their buds, and on the branches the linnets, finches, thrush and black birds sang while, oh joy! on the opposite roof a pair of storks came back to their nests on the chimney top. But there were no storks, Gerda told him, on Uncle Kars' chimney. Uncle Kars' den being unsunned was as damp and chilly as ever, and each evening he lit the cupfull of fire, and sat and sipped his brandy, and watched the play of the two children.

"Sit down here in the big chair with me," cried Gerda to Lars, and let us wrap this big saddle cloth over us to keep us warm, and I will tell you the story of Dagmar the Peerless, the best Queen of Denmark, and the best woman that ever lived in the world. Did you know your mother was named after Queen Dagmar?"

“Yes, and she was just as good as Queen Dagmar,” said Lars, stoutly.

“No doubt,” said Gerda. “When Dagmar the Peerless was a girl, she was Princess of Bohemia, and her fame for goodness and beauty went out over all the world. The King of the Danes heard of her and sent his lords to ask her to marry him. She came to Denmark and there was a great wedding, and the King put a gold crown covered with jewels on her head. Uncle Kars, don't you wish you could find that crown now, and buy it cheap to sell it dear? But Dagmar the Peerless loved the Danish people, and it made her miserable to see how cruelly the king treated them. Also the good bishop was shut up in prison, because he had told the king that he must treat the people better. I fancy the King of Denmark must have been like you, Uncle Kars, only younger and better dressed, and better looking. Well, one day, Dagmar came to the king, and gave him back her crown saying ‘I cannot wear a crown, while my dear people are serfs, and the man of God lies in a dungeon.’ That made the king ashamed, and he said ‘Keep your crown, peerless Dagmar; I will set the people and the bishop free.’ On the whole, Uncle Kars, the king was not like you. He was a better man;

you would have kept the crown, and not have given it back for anything! So the king's armies and the people had a great meeting, and it was all arranged; the people were to be free as they have been ever since, and they were to farm what land they could pay for, and taxes were to be just, and every man's house was to be his castle. When the messenger came to tell Queen Dagmar this, she met him with her harp, singing a beautiful hymn which she made. 'How beautiful are thy feet, oh thou that bringeth good tidings.' "

"She did not make that" said Lars, "she found it in her Bible. 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings, who publisheth peace.' "

"But Dagmar was too good to live," said Gerda. "Just as your mother was. She died, and left a little boy just like you, to have a great deal of trouble. The cause of the trouble was Benjerd the bad queen, whom the king married after Dagmar. When Dagmar died, all Denmark wept, but when Benjerd died all Denmark danced for joy. Uncle Kars, which will people do when you die? "

"Go to your nonsense play, and let me alone," said Uncle Kars.

But many thoughts had been striving in Lars'

mind for days, and he spoke out frankly. "Uncle Kars, what are you going to do with your money when you die?"

"What! What!" cried Uncle Kars.

"You see," said Lars, remorselessly, "you'll have to die sometime, and you look very—old—and—little—and weakly. There was a man died in Praesto, and he had no children, and made no will, and all the money went to the king. The king is rich and does not need money; you don't want him to have yours, do you?"

"You think I'd better leave it to you and Gerda, do you! You are calculating that you two little kites will get it, are you!" shrieked Uncle Kars, shaking with excitement.

"No, of course not," said the matter-of-fact Lars. "Why should we get it? We never earned it. But you see, I was thinking. If you leave it without any will it seems the king gets it. If you will it to a Church or a Hospital, you don't get any good of it. And you must leave it, you know, for it is written in the Bible: 'We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out of it.' So then, Uncle Kars, why do you not get some good of it? If you would have more fire and light and food, and a better bed, you

would feel more comfortable and you would live longer.”

“Better bed!” cried Uncle Kars. “The Emperor of Prussia, William III., slept on an iron bed like mine.”

“I’m certain sure it had a thicker mattress, and more covers,” said Lars. “What I mean is, why don’t you spend your money on your own self, and on what you need, and not save it up for other people? If you’d open this house, and have air and light in it, and have it clean, and a nice fire in the kitchen, and your dinner good and hot every day, you’d be ever so much more comfortable.”

“I have hardly any money,” said Uncle Kars, “and what I have I like better to lay up than waste it on eating and drinking.”

“As for drinking,” said Lars, “you need not lay out money on that; for cold water is the best of all drinks and don’t cost a penny; but as for eating, folks weren’t made to live without it. There’s no good laying up money just for love of money, for in the Bible it says ‘there’s a sore evil under the sun, and that is money laid up by the owners of it for their hurt.’ Solomon said it.”

“Solomon didn’t know every thing,” said Uncle Kars.

“Don't talk to him,” said Gerda to Lars, “he won't listen to you. Frü Heitzen says he'll go on laying up kronen, until some night people come in and murder him for his money, and carry off my bridal crown and your teaspoons. Let us play about Freya and Baldur! I'm Freya, and you are my son Baldur. They were Northland gods once. Baldur was killed by a little splinter. Now I am Freya going about to lay a spell on all things, that they will not harm you, all but the little ling bush, that I think too small to do any harm, but you are hit with it on the heel, and fall down dead. When you are dead you lie flat on these two chairs, and I will cover you up, and pretend it is the fire-ship, in which your body will float out to sea and be burned. Do you know, Lars, when we read in school the story of Baldur and the splinter of ling, our teacher said that was to show the power and danger that might be in little things. And she said when parents take the greatest care of their children to keep them from all danger, sometimes they neglect some little bad habit, that in the end will destroy the child. Come, it is time you were dead, and I'll cover you with this cloth.”

“Let that cloth alone!” shouted Uncle Kars.

“It is worth hundreds of rix-dollars. It is perhaps a thousand years old. It was found under the foundations of a very old ruined German castle.”

“How do you suppose it came there?” demanded Gerda, looking at the ancient square of tarnished mildewed embroidery.

“I suppose the ladies of the castle went into the dungeons for safety from flying weapons, at a time of siege, and while there amused themselves in sewing, woman fashion,” said Uncle Kars.

“O, let’s play that!” said Gerda. “Lars! I’ll be the castle lady, and I’ll sit on the floor and work on this cloth. Get the brindle cat and roll her up, and lay her down here for my baby, and I’ll sing to her, and you climb up on the table, which is the castle wall, and flourish that long sword, and describe to me the armies of enemies coming over the river, and up among the trees.”

The next night, when Gerda came pounding at the back door, Lars, indeed, as a beleaguered garrison, addressed her from the upper window of Castle Famine

“You can’t get in, Gerda; Uncle Kars went off early, to stay three or four days, and he has

carried the keys away, and locked up all so fast I would have to break the house down to open it."

"Suppose there is fire, or there are robbers!" cried Gerda.

"I'm not afraid of robbers," said Lars, "and if there's a fire I might perhaps climb down the lime-tree, without breaking my neck."

"Have you anything to eat?" demanded Gerda.

"That's the worst of it," said Lars. "He left only part of a loaf, and the cat and I were so hungry we have eaten it all up!"

"I'll come up in my attic and talk to you through the window, in the morning," said Gerda, cheerfully.

CHAPTER IV.

MY AUNT HENRIETTA IB.

*' No other sound or stir of life was there,
Except my steps in solitary clamber
From flight to flight, from humid stair to stair,
From chamber unto chamber.'*

THE hungry Lars had not been long awake next morning when he heard a very cheerful "Hello-o!" and thrusting his head from the back window of the attic, lo the white cap, red cheeks and yellow pig-tails of Gerda, leaning from the corresponding window in the mansion of Frü Heitzen. The children were about ten feet apart.

"I've brought you some breakfast," said Gerda. "I know you're starved."

Here the brindle cat thrust its shaggy head, long whiskers and green eyes out beside the handsome face of Lars, to watch the victualling of Castle Famine.

Gerda had a long cane, upon the end of which she tied a meagre package done up in a cotton

cloth. Then, both Lars and Gerda leaning from a window, the precious bundle came within reach of Lars' hands. Two thick slices of rye bread made into a sandwich with some strips of fried pork—three or four cheese rinds for the cat, these were received with equal joy by boy and beast.

“Frü Heitzen was real cross about giving it to me,” said Gerda; “she said she had enough to do to feed her own young ones, and if Uncle Kars was starving you, I better go complain to the magistrate.”

These remarks fell like gall or ashes on Lars' breakfast. It was hard to eat the bread of grudging charity—and then Frü Heitzen was quite right!

“But,” continued Gerda, “I told her if she'd give it to me I'd work initials in cross-stitch for her to-day on Herremand Thur's towels, faster than ever I did in my life.”

“Frü Heitzen is right,” said Lars, “she can not afford to feed me; she is a poor widow. You can go and tell Frü Korner about it, and she will send me some bread.”

“Where's your money?” demanded Gerda.

“I needn't send any,” said Lars, resolved to keep his secret from the nimble-tongued damsel. “She will send me bread all the same.”

“ I’ll tell her when I go this evening for Frù Heitzen’s bread.”

“ What did Uncle Kars say when he went away? ”

“ He told me to sleep in his room, and if any one came in to fire the pistol right at them. He took away all the matches, so I could not light a fire or the lantern. He said he’d be back in a few days, and not to waste the bread. But I didn’t sleep in his room, it is so cold and damp there. If any one did come in my firing the pistol would not do any good. If it went off at all it would no doubt go through some of Uncle Kars’ old pictures or mirrors, and I wouldn’t want it to go through a burglar; I wouldn’t want to kill any one, would I? It would be dreadful to make a man die in his sins, wouldn’t it? And of course no one can get into the house. If it is locked up so fast I can’t get out, they can’t get in, can they? ”

“ What are you going to do all day? ” asked Gerda.

“ I’ve got some work,” said Lars. “ Uncle Kars says I must earn my clothes, so he has got me skate soles* to make. We went out yesterday and got a pattern, and the wood, and

* The making of wooden skate soles is a Danish industry.

a draw-knife. If I have some money I earn myself I can buy meat for me, and milk for the cat, as well as my clothes."

"Uncle Kars will keep it all, every cent," said Gerda.

"He wouldn't be so wicked!" cried Lars.

"Yes, he would. I worked all day, knitting or towel fringing, and he kept every penny, and never got me clothes or food. I'll tell you, Lars. I'll go get the towels I'm to work initials on, and the two children I'm to take care of, and I'll sit in this window and work, and you sit in your window and we'll talk. Won't it be lots of fun!"

Accordingly Gerda, and her heap of towels, and her little paper work box, soon occupied one attic window, and Lars, his pieces of wood and the brindle cat, the other. Careful mothers might have thought the pair dangerously placed, but fear never entered their heads. Indeed, Gerda said—"I wonder if after tea I could creep along the lead pipe to your window? I'm not afraid."

"Don't you try to do it," said Lars. "If you don't say you won't, I'll shut the window and go down-stairs! Creep along! why a cat could scarcely do it. Do you want to be killed!"

"I'd about as lief be killed as live the way I

do," said Gerda. "Frü Heitzen is sometimes cross, and I must work and tend these children all the time."

Here a couple of round, clean Danish child faces in little close, womanly caps peeped over Gerda's window-sill at the brindle cat.

"I never had anything nice or pretty," continued Gerda, working cross-stitch vigorously. "I would like some gold beads for my neck, a velvet bodice, silk petticoats, and nice morocco shoes in bronze or blue, not these horrid sabots. I want to learn to play the harp or piano, like the ladies in pictures. I want to have a coach and fine clothes, like the ladies I read of; I want to go to school and to travel, like the Herremand's daughters. Oh, how I wish I lived with my Aunt Henrietta Ib!"

"Where is your Aunt Henrietta Ib?" asked the sympathetic Lars.

"She lives in Copenhagen," said Gerda. "Every night when I go to bed I think about my Aunt Henrietta Ib, and what a nice time I should have with her, she is so rich, and so nice."

"You never told me about her before," said Lars.

"Didn't I? That's queer! I'll tell you now then!" cried Gerda, with animation. "She is my great-aunt, you see, and an old lady, quite

old. She has a grand house, all handsomely furnished with new things, no old musty things in it. She sold Uncle Kars all the old things. She has every window open to the sun, and has flowers growing in all the house, and plenty of servants, and five hot meals every day! She never allows any beer or schnapps, but she has tea or coffee every meal, and lets everybody have all they want. She has fires in every room, and in the hall is a great china stove all painted in birds and flowers—Aunt Henrietta Ib always sits in the parlor, in a great, red, velvet chair. Her hair is white, and she wears glasses with gold rims, and always a satin gown that goes ‘frou, frou, frou’ when she moves. She has gold chains and rings, and beside her, on a cushion, lies a great, fat maltese cat; and at her feet, on another cushion, a fat, white, poodle dog, and the cat and dog never fight.”

“That is because they have enough to eat,” said Lars, carving on a skate sole.

“Every one in my Aunt Henrietta Ib’s house is fat,” continued Gerda, with growing enthusiasm, “just as fat as they can be!”

“Why don’t you go there and live?” demanded Lars, much moved by this picture of a terrestrial paradise.

“I am going—sometime,” said Gerda, vaguely. “Aunt Henrietta Ib is going to adopt me. Then I shall have all I want.”

“But why don’t you go now?” persisted Lars.

“Well—you see, Copenhagen is a long way off, and I haven’t any money—and—I’m going to wait until I am older—for my Aunt Henrietta Ib is old, and don’t like children very well. Besides, she thinks I ought to learn a great many things here with Frø Heitzen, that I couldn’t learn at her house. When I am at my Aunt Henrietta’s, I shall only learn to sing and play music and be a young lady.”

“I don’t see how she ever let you come here to Uncle Kars,” said Lars with conviction.

“She didn’t know what a mean man he was,” said Gerda.

“Why didn’t you write and tell her?” insisted Lars.

“I didn’t want to worry her, and I had no paper, and no stamps—and it will be all right by-and-by, when I go. Oh, it will be splendid then! I shall dress like the Herremand Thur’s eldest daughter, and when I go to church, a servant dressed in gilt buttons shall walk behind me, and carry my Bible done up in a silk

handkerchief! Every day I shall have roast meat and pudding, and cakes and rödgröd. Did you ever eat any rödgröd, Lars?"

"Once—at a wedding," said Lars.

"Well, at Aunt Henrietta Ib's they have it every day," said Gerda, solemnly. "Aunt Henrietta Ib is as rich as the king."

"I wish I had an Aunt Henrietta Ib," cried Lars, "I'd go to her in a hurry, you'd better believe. I'd ask her to send me to school for a year or two, and get me work in an office, or a store in Copenhagen, and I'd promise her that I would do well, and pay her back all she had laid out for me."

"When I go to live with my Aunt Henriette Ib," said Gerda, "I will tell her about you, and perhaps she will send for you to go to Copenhagen, and will get you a place with a salary of a thousand rix-dollars!"

"A quarter of that would be all I'd want, and all I was worth," observed Lars.

Aunt Henrietta proved an inexhaustible theme. Gerda described her dress, her food, her house, her words, her ways, her dog and her cat, over and over again. This conversation was interspersed with, "Lars! do you see what a lovely letter I have worked on this towel! Lars! I've finished another towel!"

Lars, I shall get the whole dozen done to-day."

And from Lars: "Gerda! look at my skate sole! Gerda, do you suppose the man will pay me for these? Gerda, is my skate sole pretty nearly as good as the pattern? Suppose I make a thousand, would I have money enough to go to Copenhagen and get work, do you think?"

"Work away as hard as you like," said the astute Gerda. "You will never see a stiver of the money you earn by those skate soles."

That night, just at dusk, Lars heard pebbles thrown against the front of his home, and the voice of Frü Korner, calling. He leaned from the front attic window.

"Drop me a cord," said Frü Korner, "and I will send you up a basket of food! The idea of that old rascal leaving you alone for days, with only half a loaf. It is my duty to go to the magistrate and complain of him, and I'll do it."

"Don't, don't, please don't, Frü Korner," pleaded Lars. "I am sure he does not mean to be very bad, and I have come to no harm yet. If the magistrate took me away, and bound me to a strange man, I might be much worse treated. I know of a man who used to

beat a boy he had. Besides, Uncle Kars is a Barbe, and it is my mother's name, and I do not want to throw shame on it. Don't say a word, Frü Korner."

Meanwhile the basket was drawn up by a rope Lars had let down, and now there were joyous cries, "Oh Frü Korner, you have sent me hot bread soup! Oh, Frü Korner, milk, for the cat! Oh, a baked potato, and a turnip, oh oh!"

Uncle Kars was gone four days, and Lars had a fine heap of skate soles finished when Uncle Kars unexpectedly walked into the attic. "I was kept longer than I meant to be," said Uncle Kars, looking greatly relieved to find Lars busy, and not in a state of inanition. But Lars, boy-like did not realize the danger that had been, the fears, nor the relief.

"I see—you have got on," said Uncle Kars.

"Oh yes," said Lars, cheerfully, "and Gerda has sat in her window and told me all about her rich Aunt Henrietta Ib, who lives in Copenhagen."

"Her rich Aunt Henrietta Ib, who lives in Copenhagen!" repeated Uncle Kars, astonished, "she told you of her, did she! Well, come down and let us eat. I have brought home a large Strasberg pie and a bottle of

Danish mead.* Eat all you want," said Uncle Kars, "it cost nothing. It was given to me by a man who wanted to borrow money."

After this, as the weather was now fine for travelling, Uncle Kars frequently went away for periods varying from two to ten days, leaving his nephew alone in the house. He never made further provision than a little rye bread for Lars' sustenance, during these times when he was imprisoned alone. The two kronen left at the baker's shop were soon exhausted, and then Lars found a new method for getting food. He let down out of the window to Gerda a dozen or so pairs of skate soles, and she, taking them to the shop, received a few pennies to buy bread and fish for Lars, which supplies she sent up on the rope on which the skate soles had come down.

When Uncle Kars was at home, and as summer grew warm, he allowed Lars to stay as much as he chose in a little grassy yard behind the house. In this yard grew two poplar-trees, and under them Lars made a bench, and there he worked at skate soles and basket making. Gerda would open the little gate in the high, wooden fence which divided Uncle

* Honey mixed with water and called mead is a favorite Danish drink.

Kars' yard from that of Frü Heitzen, and she would sit in the gateway with her knitting, or cross-stitch, and Frü Heitzen's children would thrust their fat, honest, little faces through the gateway, and hold discourse with Lars about the brindle cat. The children never ventured into Uncle Kars' yard, they were afraid of him. But in the summer evenings Uncle Kars would bring out a chair, a little table, and his glass of brandy, and sit in the yard listening to Gerda's talk with Lars, and her endless tales. Gerda masqueraded in all the old Scandinavian myths and characters. She was Loki, and Lars was Thor, and the poplar-trees were Jotuns, and a barrel was the giant Scrymer's glove. She unbraided her yellow hair, and wrapped a sheet about her, and tore through the two yards, as a Valkyra, and generally prophesied Uncle Kars' speedy death! Kars was Esben Snare, building the miraculous church, and she was the Kobold Fyne's wife, singing in the hill—the cave in the hill being represented by the barrel. Half a dozen capped heads of children, or even grown people, were generally thrust from the windows of adjoining houses, to watch the "games of Gerda."

Meanwhile, Frü Heitzen enjoyed a gossip with her commeres on the front doorstep, hav-

ing sent her hygienically brought-up children to bed at six o'clock. Often, however, the faces of the supposedly sleeping Heitzen trio ornamented one of the windows, watching with breathless interest the race of Lars and Gerda, when Gerda, the fairy, had stolen some treasure from Lars, or when Lars, the knight, pursued the enchanted maiden to deliver her from a spell.

Now, wearied by these plays, Lars and Gerda returned to the bench under the poplars, and as the daylight faded they watched the tall, upright figures of the storks upon the roofs and Gerda discoursed of "my rich, great-Aunt Henrietta Ib, at Copenhagen."

"My Aunt Henrietta is very generous," said Gerda. "She never refuses to give to any one who asks of her, and at Christmas she has a big tree which reaches to the ceiling of the room. It is covered with candles and bonbons, with a Christ-child flying from the top, and Santa Claus standing at the bottom. On New-Year's day she fills a great tub with pepper cakes, and another with nuts and apples, and invites all the poor children around to come in and help themselves. On her birthday she gives every one in the house a gold piece. Also on her birthday, she has a big

cake, with a candle on it for every year of her life, and her last cake had seventy-eight candles, for she is very old, and to hold so many candles it had to be nearly as big as a cart wheel. She gave all her friends a slice. She sent me a slice in a box, tied up, like wedding cake among rich folks. On the king's birthday my Aunt Henrietta Ib goes to call on him, and takes him a bouquet, and she wears a red velvet gown with a train four yards long."

"I don't see why you don't go and live with her!" cried Lars. "I'd walk there if I were you!"

"I am going—as soon as I am a year older," said Gerda. "She is the nicest woman in the world. Very different from you, Uncle Kars."

"Yes, but very good all the same," said Uncle Kars; "she made me a present of this brandy."

"She never!" cried Gerda, shaking her fist at him. "She hates all brandy and strong drink, and says it is the curse of the world. She hates you, too. She is just as not like you as she can be! She is handsome and kind, and clean, and generous, and honest, and despises brandy, and feeds her cat and dog, and is fat!"

At this tirade Uncle Kars sat chuckling for some time.

“Uncle Kars,” said his nephew, ingenuously, “perhaps if you had not loved money and brandy so much, you might have been a good man ; sometimes you seem to be rather kind.”

Emphasis should have certainly been laid on that “sometimes” and “rather.” Before that summer ended here was the long count of Uncle Kars’ crimes, admitted in Lars’ mind:—Uncle Kars kept Lars at work on skate soles and baskets, for the purpose, as he said, of earning money for clothes, and then he took every penny of the boy’s earnings, except that surreptitiously spent for food, and refused to buy him any clothes, although Lars was now bare-footed, and had but one shirt left.

Again, Lars, hearing a noise late one night, crept softly down-stairs, and saw Uncle Kars privately feasting on bologna sausage, beer, cheese and white bread, when he had kept Lars for three days on mouldy bread that made him sick.

Inquiry being one day made, no doubt at Fr \ddot{u} Korner’s instance, by the School Commissioner, whether Lars were not under fourteen, and so obliged to attend school, Lars heard his Uncle make solemn oath that the boy, though small of his age, was fifteen.

A poor widow, coming with a chain to sell,

Uncle Kars swore it was only brass, but out of charity he would give her a crown for it. When she was gone, the fiendish little man danced for joy, saying it was gold, and worth ten rix-dollars. Lars three times found Uncle Kars lying on the floor, dead drunk.

Naturally, Lars had neither respect nor affection for Uncle Kars. "I would run away," said Lars to Gerda, "I truly would, only my mother used to say that the place where God put us was very likely to be the place where in some way we could get the most good. And she always said boys who ran away generally came to a bad end. And I promised her I would try and stay with Uncle Kars and be good. I want to, truly I do. But it makes me cry at night to think how every thing goes, and how sad my mother would feel if she knew all about it. But they don't know such things up in heaven, do they, Gerda? They perhaps only know that the end will be good."

"Let us both run away!" cried Gerda. "I'll go with you!"

"Then I surely won't go," said Lars, loftily. "The idea of a girl roaming up and down the country, like a beggar! And then, Frü Heitzen is real good to you. You stay with her till your Aunt Henrietta sends for you next spring."

But one day Lars and Gerda did run away. Uncle Kars was gone. Frü Heitzen and her children had gone to the country. Gerda, the astute, had discovered that Lars could climb out the scuttle-hole in the garret roof, by unhooking the trap door from the inside. Then he could cross over to her roof, and descend through her house. She planned and prayed that he would so escape, and go and spend the day with her, playing in the beautiful beech woods. They would have a picnic. Fru Heitzen had left Gerda a good dinner of boiled pudding and white bread, buttered; she also had sixpence which she would spend; she had found it in the street. Lars could not resist. As soon as Frü Heitzen was gone, about seven in the morning, this blessed little pair ran off to the glorious, famous beech woods of Denmark, and for twelve beautiful hours they were as happy as the angels.

“When I was little,” said Gerda, “my Aunt Henrietta Ib, took me for a trip to the ‘Mountain of Heaven,’ on the island of Jutland. We had cheese-cakes and cream, and roast-beef, but we didn’t have a bit nicer time than we have to-day!”

They brought back moss, flowers, empty last-year’s nests, fallen birds’ feathers, snails’

shells, and the day of this escapade was as a fountain of new life to them, and stood forth in their memories in a golden haze of glory, making it seem longer, brighter and more joyous even than it really had been.

“We'll go again!” cried Gerda.

“I think not,” said Lars. “Someway it seemed not quite right. I think perhaps my mother would have said I had better not go.”



CHAPTER V.

THE EVACUATION OF "CASTLE FAMINE."

*"A gentle boy
With moods of sadness and of mirth,
Quick tears and sudden joy,
Grew up beside the peasant's hearth."*

THE cold days of October came and found Lars still without the clothes he had been diligently striving to earn.

One raw, frosty morning he went to Frü Korner's for the stale rye loaf which represented household supplies at "Castle Famine." Lars' face was blue and pinched, he shivered in spite of himself, and had a loud, harsh cough. Frü Korner leaned over the counter and looked at his feet.

"Bare-footed this time of year! Where are your stockings and sabots?"

"I have none," said Lars, turning crimson. "My stockings are all worn out, and my sabots grew so old that one of them cracked in two pieces."

Frü Korner, reaching out a strong arm, drew him closer, and turned open the neck of his jacket.

“Nothing on but this old homespun suit? No shirt! Where is your shirt?”

“Gerda is washing and mending it. I have but one, and I had worn it two weeks,” murmured the abashed Lars.

“Well, of all things! You’ll catch your death of cold!”

“I earned money all summer to buy clothes. I have worked as hard as I could at skate soles and baskets! And Uncle Kars has kept the money,” cried the boy.

“Uncle Kars has me to reckon with,” said Frü Korner, pulling Lars into the kitchen sitting-room behind the shop, and placing him by the great, glowing stove. “Now get warm, and eat this bowl of hot soup,” she said. “That is a grave-yard cough you have, sure enough,” and going to the street she sent a passing boy to tell “Kars Barbe that Frü Korner wanted to see him.”

No sooner had the wizened, cringing figure of Kars appeared in the shop, than Frü Korner, irate, advanced upon him, threatening as a Valkyra.

“Kars Barbe, how do you dare starve and

freeze and rob a young boy, as you are doing? Look at your nephew! bare-footed and nearly naked, and half sick, and less than half fed. I wouldn't have believed Denmark could produce a man so mean, so miserly, so cruel, so vile, so contemptible."

"Come, come, Frü," interposed Uncle Kars, "I have not yet asked for your opinion, nor for your interference."

"All the same, Kars Barbe, you'll get both. Unless you see to it at once that this boy has woolen socks and woolen underclothes, new sabots, a warm cap, mittens and a muffler, mind you, I'm going to take him, half naked and starved as he is, before the magistrate, and tell the tale, and ask if even Danish dogs are to be treated so outrageously, let alone the boys of Denmark!"

"I want no trouble with my neighbors, Frü," remonstrated Uncle Kars. "I intended—in time, to get him something."

"The time is now, this hour: the something is what I have said. If you don't, to the court I go, and if there is no law in Denmark to protect your nephew, you shall see there is a law in public opinion, and Korsor will be too hot to hold you. The very boys on the street shall chase and hoot you, for a man who starves and

freezes his own flesh and blood. Take your choice."

"Well, well, Frü, the boy shall come along with me, and I'll see about it."

"He sha'n't go one step! What! go back to that cold, dark house of yours, to lie ill of lung fever, and die like a beast? I wonder his mother don't haunt you! I wonder Satan don't come to carry you away in your hat and boots! No, Kars Barbe, the boy is to stay here, three or four days, until he is well; meanwhile the clothes must be had at once. If he were sick at your house could doctor or friend visit him? I reckon not. What have you in your house, that you so fear for honest neighbors to see? We had better come in a body and demand entrance! I wish we had American fashions here, that I have read of, where they take rascals like you and tar and feather them, and carry them about on a rail!"

"O come, come, Frü Korner," said the terrified Uncle Kars, turning ashen pale, "your husband and I were friends. We are friends, you and I, I am sure. Even if I am wrong, you would not wish to commit a wrong on your part! So, you invite the boy for a visit—that is kind—and as to the clothes, how much will they cost?"

Frü Korner promptly named the price. Uncle Kars reluctantly drew out a leather purse, and told the required money upon the table—"It is much, outrageous much, for a poor man to pay for charity," he said, querulously. But here Lars stood up and spoke with indignation:

"It is not charity! This summer I have earned, and you have taken of my earnings, all that is there, and one rix-dollar, two kronen, besides. I have kept my accounts, I know. You still have the dollar, two crowns in your purse!"

"He, he, he!" laughed Uncle Kars. "So you keep accounts do you, and know how to balance your books? He! he! he! he! There is real Barbe blood in you! Well, then, we'll call the account square. You owe me the dollar and the crowns, for the food I have bought for you, to say nothing of the rent of the room, he! he! he!"

But Frü Korner swept up the money, nothing placated.

"Villain, robber of children," she said. "God will judge you and that speedily. Is it not written, 'A Father of the fatherless and a Judge of widows is God in His holy habitation'?"

Uncle Kars went over to his nephew and whispered in his ear!

"Boy, be sure you don't tell Frü Korner a word about what is in my house. She will ask, women are curious, but mind you do not talk about my affairs."

"All right," said Lars, calmly, "your affairs are your own."

And Uncle Kars, who had not a particle of honor in him, went away relying on the honor of his nephew.

For a blessed week Lars stayed with Frü Korner. He was kept warm and well fed, he wore the new clothes, and he luxuriated in nice, hot baths. He seemed to himself to be living in Paradise. His cough disappeared, and his thin, pale cheeks began to redden and fill out, for Lars was of a robust constitution, and readily rebounded from ill treatment.

But Frü Korner could not keep him indefinitely; he returned to "Castle Famine," to the joy of Gerda, whose evenings, open to no pleasure but jibing and threatening Uncle Kars with ill omens, had grown tedious. Now, when it was too cold to play games, Lars and Gerda sat down by Uncle Kars' starveling fire, wrapped themselves in a great woolen curtain, that had once hung behind the pulpit of

a church, and Gerda's incessant talk flowed on.

Until she was eight, Gerda had lived in Copenhagen, where her father, Nicolas Palle, had been a ship's carpenter. For a year after that, when her father was dead, she and her mother had lived in Jutland. Thus Gerda had travelled more, and had seen more of the world than Lars.

Lars enjoyed her descriptions of Copenhagen more than he did her fairy stories. She told him of the museums full of curious and beautiful things; of the art galleries where were long lines of "men, women, beasts and angels, all made out of white stone," and walls lined with pictures where you "could see kings, queens, palaces, oceans, mountain peaks, just as plain as really true ones." She told him of stores so great that all the shops of Korsor could be put into one; of grand churches where carved roofs shook with the volume of music poured from grand organs, on the tops of which "brass boys blew brass trumpets." She described the long lines of docks, the ships from many lands, the tumult of labor in the street, the throngs of people, the blazing lights at night.

"I shall see all these things, every day, when I go to live with my Aunt Henrietta Ib,"

Gerda would say, in conclusion of every animated description.

The human providence of Lars' life was this red-cheeked, yellow-haired Gerda. She mended and washed his clothes, brought him elder tea, hot and sweet, when he took cold in the damp, chilly house, and when the Fröken Thure gave her at Christmas a whole crown when she took home their new linen, neatly made by Frü Heitzen, Gerda, pining for so many things for herself, made Lars a Christmas and a New Year's feast of rye cake and sausage, and laid by a few pennies to lay out for him in baked potatoes, to help tide over some unusually cold days.

"How long are you going to stay here like this?" asked Gerda of Lars, "without food, fire, bed, clothes? Frü Heitzen says the wicked people in prison have much more comfort than you do. She says if you live here very long, you will either die of misery or grow up to be just like Uncle Kars."

"I'd rather die fifty times, than be like Uncle Kars," said the boy. "I wouldn't at all mind dying. Then I could go and be with my mother, you know, and wouldn't any boy rather be with his mother?"

"Well, I want to live, and see and know

and do what is in this world," said the energetic Gerda, "and after that I'll go be with my mother."

But the winter wore away, and Lars had been nearly a year with Uncle Kars, and was now past fourteen. Matters did not grow better, but rather worse, if possible, and Lars, who had matured rapidly in his long, lonely hours, began to look his future carefully in the face. What would become of his manhood if his boyhood continued thus dwarfed and meagre? What opportunities in life were likely to open to him? Would his mother have wished him to live on in this wretched fashion? Had she not been ambitious for him? Had she not rejoiced in his quickness at his books, and forecast the time when he should bring back his fallen family fortunes to the estate of Herremand which had been theirs three generations before? And Lars felt that in spite of cold, starvation, misery, he had reaped a rich harvest in Uncle Kars' house, in having learned to speak and write fairly well in English, and to write and read fairly well in French. What Uncle Kars' plans had been in teaching him these two languages he did not know, but he rejoiced in their possession, as one who findeth great spoil. His mother

would have been glad of that, he knew. But watching the ungodly old miser and brandy-tippler, Lars felt sure that he was not the man with whom his dead mother would have wished to cast the life of her child. He had obeyed her will to the letter for a year, it was now time to obey it to the spirit. One day he said to Gerda :

“ Gerda, I can't stand it here. As soon as the weather is better, I mean to run away to Copenhagen, and find work. I shall go sometime when Uncle Kars is off for a trip. Don't you suppose if I went to your Aunt Henrietta Ib she would tell me of some place where I could get work? I am willing to do anything. I can write. I know three languages. Now and then I pick up old papers that Uncle Kars brings home, and I see advertisements for clerks who know French or English and can write a good hand. No doubt I could get a big salary, and in a few years I should be a rich man.”

Gerda gazed at Lars with her mouth open, and round, astonished eyes. The brilliancy of this proposal fairly dazzled her.

“ I'll go with you! ” she exclaimed. “ How will you go? ”

“ I shall walk,” said Lars, “ and it will take

many days, and I shall have to sleep at night in outbuildings and haystacks. You cannot go with me. It is not fit for a girl to do such things. Besides, there is no need for you to go; you are well treated." Then, seeing tears coming into Gerda's round, blue eyes, he added: "But I'll tell your Aunt Henrietta Ib all about you, and how pretty you are, and how hard you have to work, and she will send for you at once. She will send money for your ticket."

"Let me go with you," said Gerda, coaxingly. "I've travelled so much more than you have, and I've been in Copenhagen, and oh, we would have such a jolly walk! We'd play tag all along the roadside, and we'd pick flowers all day."

"No," said Lars, firmly. "I'll stay here myself rather than have you go that way. But I'll carry a letter from you to your Aunt Henrietta Ib, and I'll speak for you just the best I can."

This projected expedition was the staple of conversation after that. It beguiled many a dreary, chilly hour, and Uncle Kars, when the children would put their heads under the great curtain which wrapped them, would say testily: "Why don't you talk out loud? Why do you

whisper. I want to hear you." One evening when Uncle Kars, after a sip of brandy, said this, Lars put his head boldly from the sheltering curtain, and said, "Uncle, I just told Gerda that perhaps you did not know what is said in the Bible—and if you did you would be very different—and—and I should tell you."

"And I told him," said the shrewd Gerda, bending forward her rosy moon of a face, "that you liked to be just as you are, and no doubt you had heard all he ever has of the Bible, and don't care to follow it. Say, weren't you confirmed when you were a boy, like all Lutherans?"

"Stuff and nonsense! what good did that ever do me?"

"Not much," said Gerda, "evidently—but then it ought to."

"Uncle Kars," said his nephew, "God says in the Bible to keep the Sabbath day holy. You treat Sabbath like any day—you work Sabbath—you wanted me to make baskets."

"I don't believe in wasting good time; Sunday has as many hours as any day, and they ought to be used."

"So they ought—in getting to heaven," said Lars. "Mother said the Sabbaths were golden stairs on which we should climb toward

God. Then, Uncle Kars, the Bible says 'Do good and lend, hoping for nothing again.' It says, 'Give to him that asketh of thee and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away.'"

"No more I will," chuckled Uncle Kars, "if he offers a good rate of interest with a well-secured principal, I'll lend every time."

"That big interest is usury, and the Bible says to 'Leave off usury' and 'thou shalt not be a usurer.' Did you know that? It also says to do good to all men, as you have opportunity. And it says, 'No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of God.' Uncle Kars, had you not rather live just as the Bible tells you, and be sure of the kingdom of God, than to live as you do, and be cast out of that kingdom?"

"You were born for a priest," said Uncle Kars; "you must earn money for a gown and a ruff, and that is all you need to fit you for a pulpit. Since when did boys begin to teach their elders? Don't you suppose I can read, and find out what is in the Bible for myself? The fact is, I don't care for it, and I don't believe in it. Every man for himself, and let every man make what he can in this world."

"This world don't last forever," said Lars. "See how soon my father and mother, and Gerda's father and mother went out of it."

“ You'll get out of it soon, too,” said Gerda. “ There was a coffin in my candle last night, and it flew off right toward this house; I'm sure it meant you, Uncle Kars.”

“ Trash!” said Uncle Kars, “ why can't you talk of something amusing ? ”

“ There was a man up in Jutland,” began Gerda, “ who had on his farm a great fairy ring, and he respected it, and never let the plow-share cross it, nor the cattle graze on it, and he set a bowl of milk in it every night, for the fairies. Well, one midsummer eve, as he was going home, he saw the earth open in the ring, and stairs leading down to a place full of light. He could not resist going in, and there the elves were dancing. They treated him very nicely, and when he wished to go home each one gave him a stone. He took the stones, out of politeness, for they were heavy to carry. When he got home he found he had been gone fifty years ; all his family and friends were dead, and he was an old man, but the load of stones he had brought turned out to be gold.”

“ He was in luck,” said Uncle Kars. “ Gold, was it ? ”

“ He was in bad luck,” cried Lars ; “ every one he cared for dead, his strength gone, himself old, what good was gold to him ? ”

The days went on, and still Lars' purpose grew, and he and Gerda talked of his flight to Copenhagen and how Aunt Henrietta would receive him, and soon Gerda should be sent for, and, like people in the fairy tale, "they should live happy ever after." Gerda seemed as content with her lot of waiting as if she had been brought up on the theory: "for men must work and women must weep."

Lars determined to tell no one of his project. Even good Frü Korner must not know it. She might think the proposed remedy worse than the disease, and feel it to be her duty to frustrate his intentions. He meant to write her a letter which Gerda should deliver when he was gone. Privately, he meant to use his rix-dollar for food on the journey, and reach Copenhagen with the three gold pieces in the chamois skin bag; but of this private fortune Gerda knew nothing. Had not Frü Dagmar told her son to let no one know of that fund?

The plan of flight was very simple. Gerda was to see that Lars' clothes were clean and well mended, and she was to take some skate soles to the shop and get a sixpence to lay out in rye rolls and sausage for the first stage of the journey. Uncle Kars sold all the work finished while he was at home, but Gerda and

Lars outgeneraled him by sending a neat basket of soles over from Lars' attic to Gerda's attic on a rope.

Uncle Kars' first spring trip was awaited with eagerness. Then Lars was to get out of the garret scuttle-door, and cross from his house to Gerda's, and Gerda would let him out to the street. The flight was to be at night, so that Uncle Kars should not learn which direction Lars had taken.

Gerda carefully questioned Lars as to his fear of ghosts, or "dopple-gangers," and was assured that he believed in none of the bodiless gentry.

"I do," said Gerda, firmly, "and make up your mind, Lars, you will when you have seen one. You will see a dopple-ganger, but remember they are for good luck. Just follow where a dopple-ganger leads, without questioning him, and he will bring you good fortune."

Finally, Uncle Kars was gone. At ten Lars was to begin his journey into the world. Gerda waited for him. She waited on the stairs of her home, Frü Heitzen and her children sleeping tranquilly in their room. The moonlight rifted into a window high up, and fell over the little dark figure on the stair. Ten, eleven, twelve, one—and Lars did not come!

Gerda was furious. Was he afraid? Was he asleep? Had he rolled from the roof into the street? Gerda could not have recourse to the attic window, for Fr \ddot{u} Heitzen conscientiously locked every door in the house at night and put the keys under her pillow. There was no door to the garret from the ladder-like stair, but it was of no use for Gerda to go to the garret, for she could not raise the scuttle—she was too short. She had done all she could do, when, standing on a barrel, she had unhooked the scuttle so Lars could get in when he came.

It was ten next day before Gerda could get up to her attic to interview the prisoner in the next house.

"Lars!" she called mournfully, "are you dead in there?" and as Lars' head came forth into the morning sunshine, she changed her tone to scorn and rage, "Did you over-sleep, stupid? Did you forget, you goose? Did you feel afraid at the last, you silly?"

"No, indeed," said Lars, "but Satan must have got in Uncle Kars, or a bird must have told him, for I found the scuttle of this house held down with a big bar of iron, with a padlock as big as my hand."

"I know, I know!" cried Gerda. "I heard Fr \ddot{u} Heitzen and her commeres telling how it

was in the papers, that robbers in Copenhagen had come down through a scuttle, and murdered a rich miser and taken all his treasures. Uncle Kars has seen it, and has been afraid. What will you do? Give it up?"

"No," said Lars, "I am going to-night. The moonlight is very bright, almost like day, at ten. I shall climb down by the lime tree near my front window. I have looked, and I feel sure I can swing myself into it safely."

"Oh, you will fall and be killed, dear, brave Lars," sobbed Gerda.

"No. I am not afraid. I can do it safely. But if I am killed, all right, I shall go to my mother, and I want to see my mother."

CHAPTER VI.

LARS MATERIALIZES A GHOST.

*“He had never a penny left in his purse,
Never a penny left but three,
And one was brass, and one was lead,
And the other, it was white money.”*

LARS and Gerda said “good-bye” and kissed hands to each other from the attic window. Gerda sent her love to her Aunt Henrietta Ib, and Lars gave Gerda a letter for Frø Korner. About ten o'clock Lars made ready to evacuate “Castle Famine.” He brought up a large bronze truncheon, and a thick silk sash from the room below. Tying the sash firmly to the truncheon, he laid that across the attic window. The lime-tree was so near that its outmost twigs touched the house, and Lars meant to take firm hold of the knotted sash, drop off, push with his feet against the wall, and so swing himself among the thicker branches of the tree that would bear his weight as he descended to the ground.

His little bundle of food and a change of clothes was tied about his neck, and he had just seated himself astride the window-sill, measuring the space with his eye, when the brindle cat came up and began a pitiful outcry. The creature seemed to feel that Lars was departing forever, and that with him went her last hope of food or friendship. Lars felt his pity stirred; he and the cat had been fellow captives for some thirteen months! If he left her, Uncle Kars might be gone indefinitely, and the beast would starve. He felt that he would hear her piteous "miaules" as long as he lived. He picked up the lean cat and buttoned her inside his jacket. The creature was perfectly quiet. She seemed to feel that her part in the adventure was passivity.

The jacket Lars wore was the same in which he had come to Korsor. His mother had spun the thread, woven the cloth, and made the garment. Danish women still pursue these homely industries. If his mother had lived the jacket would no doubt have been outgrown long before, but Uncle Kars fed his adopted son so sparsely that the jacket seemed to get bigger and bigger all the time. It was now large enough for both Lars and the brindle cat.

The cat disposed of, Lars swung off from the window seat, and thrusting with his feet from the wall spun out toward the tree. Happily for his perilous venture, at the very first he swung among the thick branches, and clasping his legs about one, he let go the scarf with one hand, and seized upon a second branch and so drew himself into the tree. He felt weak and dizzy, and resting in the tree he at once released the cat. After a moment or two he took breath, and began to climb to the ground. The cat followed his example and reached the walk first. It was rather a long slide down the trunk from the lowest limb, but Lars found a projection or two, and so got down.

He had his sabots tied about his neck. One cannot climb in wooden shoes. He sat on Gerda's step to put them on. He felt just a little disappointed that Gerda did not softly draw the bolt, open the door, and say "good-bye" once more. But all Frü Heitzen's house, indeed all quiet and orderly Korsor, seemed asleep, and it was now eleven o'clock.

With the brindle cat at his heels Lars began his pilgrim way. From much imprisonment and fasting he was weak, and could go but slowly. Gerda had carefully described to him

the course he should take to get upon the road leading in the general direction of Copenhagen. The big town pump was to be his point of departure. Lifting the handle, he should go exactly where the handle, like an index finger, pointed. Lars reached the pump, but still trembling from his climb, he sat down on the big water-trough to rest. He took a deep draught of water, and then ate a roll and some sausage. The fresh outer air had greatly aggravated his appetite, and what boy is provident for future meals when present hunger presses? The brindle cat rested its big lean head on Lars' knee, and fared sumptuously with him. Hunger banished for the nonce, Lars sat still on the end of the huge stone water-trough. The moon, almost at full, marched through a blue and cloudless sky, and the water, welling to the stone brim, shone as limpid silver. The solemn silence of the hour awed and comforted Lars. The prison of Uncle Barbe was now out of sight, the long draughts of pure air filled his lungs and set his blood to circulating with new vigor. All the world took the sudden splendor which the moon lent to the streets and houses of sleeping Korsør. Copenhagen seemed not far away, and the road thither straight and easy; friends

and work seemed assured ; Aunt Henrietta Ib seemed to smile a welcome to him, as she sat by her fire, her white dog at her feet, and her grey cat at her side. Manhood seemed not far away, when the little fugitive of the night should be all that was worthiest of Frü Dagmar's son. The poet, the philosopher within the boy were aroused ; his hands resting on his lap, his small bundle at his feet, he gave himself up to contemplation. The peace of the world, the glory of the sky, uplifted him. How short seemed human troubles, how grand the eternal ages—that timeless time, that joyful activity that must lie outside of this world, where we come as swallows flying through their little arc of space, and are gone ! How debased and loathsome seemed the appetites and aims of Uncle Kars ! The ants that had built their hills between the paving stones, the night insects wheeling about his head, seemed far nobler than Uncle Kars, because they were pursuing their proper destiny and Uncle Kars had sunk so far below his.

Meanwhile the brindle cat also felt the joys of freedom, of outer air, of moonlight. The cat promenaded with soft, cautious steps round and round the stone rim of the trough, then scaled the pump, and, sitting erect on the top,

made a long silhouette of itself on the moonlit pavement. Then it came down, and, drawing its feet together, arched its back, erected its tail and stretched all its emaciated muscles. Climbing then to Lars' knee, it rested against his breast, and purred the gamut of its content, as in Uncle Kars' house it had mewed the gamut of its woes.

The town clock of Korsor struck twelve.

Lars sprung up. Why was he idling here, while the handle of the pump relentlessly pointed out the road to Copenhagen?

Away then! One more drink from the town pump, and good-bye to Korsor. The town pump was no prophet, and foretold him nothing of the strangeness of his return thither. Away, away! His little bundle in his hand, the brindle cat at his heels, Frü Dagmar's son goes out to seek his fortune. Like Whittington, he has a cat. The night was mild; the air was soft; this first of April was more like June; the low hum of insects was in the air; already the frogs and tree-toads croaked and called, and there was a delicate, illusive scent of fresh-turned earth and growing things. Lars, who had lived much out of doors until immured in Castle Famine, felt his soul revive. He whistled as he marched along. He

had not whistled before since his mother died!

On he went, the road was dry, straight and deserted, trees and bushes had as yet their beauty of branch and twig little blurred by leafage. There was nothing to break the monotony of the trip, and as Lars tramped along and went beyond the sound of the town clock of Korsor, he felt as if he had been travelling a long long time, and before he had been walking an hour wondered which way was east, and where the sun would rise. Also he was weak from long privation and inaction, and while his aching legs, and loudly beating heart made him think he was going very fast, he was after all making but small progress. The long shadows cast by the descending moon, the distant cry of owl or howl of dog, gave Lars a lonely, eerie feeling, and he began to think of the stories told by Gerda, and her hints of ghosts and kobolds and bogies and dopple-gangers. He renewed his whistle at its loudest, and presently, as if evoked by the throstle-shrill notes, a figure released itself from the shadows of a clump of bushes, and flitted up the road before him. The dopple-ganger, sure enough! Slim, dark, about his own height, carrying a bundle, going his own

way—on, on, the dopple-ganger! But Gerda had said you must not talk to a dopple-ganger, nor challenge its intent. Lars hesitated an instant. But then he was going to Copenhagen, he and his cat, and he would not be stopped by a dopple-ganger, which might be going there or elsewhere. The road was wide enough for them both, and long enough. So on, on for a mile or more—the same distance between them, went Lars Waldsen—and his dopple-ganger. Then the distance began to decrease by slow degrees, and by the next mile surely they were within hailing distance, and Lars had lost that “creepy” feeling of the first encounter. He hailed boldly—“I say! Who are you?” No answer. A dopple-ganger is always speechless. Frü Dagmar’s son having a “good conscience toward all men,” did not walk on the same side of the road as Fear, and he hailed sturdily again. “I say! Where are you going?” Then, as silence still prevailed, two or three quick strides put him near enough to the dopple-ganger to see in its lines and movements something amazingly familiar. He sprang on and seized it by the shoulders. “I believe you are Gerda!”

Then a clear laugh rang out on the night.

“Mew! mew! mew-ou-ou-ou,” said the brin-

dle cat, rubbing against Gerda's ankles and mindful of past favors in the food line.

"Did you think I was goose enough to give up, and stay behind?" demanded Gerda. "I started before you did! I am sick of Korsor, and Frü Heitzen, and my work. I bought me some rolls, and made up my bundle, and slid out of the house at seven, when the Frü sent me to bed. Say you are glad I came, Lars."

"No, I won't!" said Lars. "I'm sorry. It is all wrong. I shall take you back home, and give it all up."

"Good-bye then; if you're going back, you won't get me to go with you," said Gerda. "I'm bound for my Aunt Henrietta Ib. And what will you do in Korsor without me?"

What indeed? They stood gazing at each other. The moon hung low in the horizon.

"There's a mile-stone ahead there," said Gerda; "let us run to it as fast as we can, and see what it says. Who gets there first!"

Away they went in a headlong race, pursued by the cat.

"5 M. to Korsor," said the stone.

"I see a little grey line over there," said Gerda. "That is east. A yellowish line—it must be three in the morning. Come on, boy!"

Copenhagen cannot be far off. Let us go to my rich great-aunt Henrietta Ib."

"Won't you go back?" demanded Lars.

"Indeed I won't," retorted Gerda.

"Come on then! My mother always told me girls were master hands to get their own way, and I think they must be. Shall I carry your bundle?"

"No," said Gerda; "I'm taking this journey on my own account," and she walked on a little in advance of Lars, and with her nose in the air, to indicate her independence. But by the next mile, the walk, the raw air of early dawn, and their fasting, began to tell on these children. Their steps lagged. Finally they came to a small shed, whereof the door was half open, showing straw within. Gerda proposed to go in there and rest, until the sun was high enough to warm them. Lars explored the shed, and found there a pile of straw, and four or five sheep. Accordingly, he and Gerda climbed up on the straw, covered themselves well, and almost instantly fell asleep, with the brindle cat snugly ensconced between them.

When they awoke, the sun was high and the sheep had left the shed and were nibbling at the short pasture round about. The adventurers sat up on the straw, ate each a rye roll, and

once more set out on their trip. At first they made good time ; but soon moved more slowly, and the cat, instead of following cheerily, mewed and cried to be carried on Lars' shoulder.

"I say, Lars," said Gerda, " we can't take the cat to Copenhagen ; she'll quarrel with Aunt Henrietta's poodle-dog, and may not like her grey cat. Besides, we can't carry her, and you see she won't walk. She needs milk too, and we have none to give her. Don't you think she would enjoy living in the country ? I believe she'd like a barn."

Lars meditated. " I think the first nice, kind-looking Parcelist wife we see, I'll ask her if she will let me leave my cat with her."

Now a Parcelist is a Dane who rents or owns twenty-five or thirty acres of land, keeps from four to eight cows and a few sheep, has barns and garden, and is generally a very comfortable and thriving personage.

Lars and Gerda had not wandered much further, when they saw the substantial home of a Parcelist, and in the yard the Parcelist's wife, with a child clinging to her big blue apron, and surrounded by over a hundred fowls, which she was feeding ; a fine red cow stood near, with a young calf at her side, and the child, reaching up, fondled the calf's wet black nose.

It was a pretty picture of rural peace and comfort, and as the housewife talked to her poultry, and flung grain to them with a liberal hand, Lars and his cat and his cousin marched boldly up to her.

“Frü,” said Lars, with a low bow, “would you like a good cat?”

“Save us all!” cried the dame; “as if cats were not plenty! Is this a new trade, cat selling? Who are you? I never saw either of you before? Where do you come from?”

Gerda, aware of Lars' positive habit of speaking the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, on all occasions, hastened to interpose.

“Frü, we are cousins; our parents are all dead, and we are going to Copenhagen, to live with Aunt Henrietta Ib.”

“I am going to get work,” said Lars. “I can speak English.”

“English, can you? Ah, you are well learned for your years! But how are you going to get to Copenhagen? It is right far.”

“Not so far,” said Gerda, “and we are strong, and not afraid. We had no money for fares, so we walk. We do not mind. But the cat followed us, and she cries, and will not walk, and she is heavy to carry, and she needs some milk.”

“She is a good cat,” explained Lars. “If you will allow her to live in your barn, she will hunt rats and mice.”

“She looks starved,” said the dame, “and so do you! Hey there, Gretchen! bring out a saucer of milk. Yes, you may leave the cat. But, going alone to Copenhagen! On foot! I wish my good man were home, to hear what he thinks of that. But he has gone to Copenhagen himself with four fine horses to send to England. Ah, if he could speak English as you say you can, he would be less liable to be cheated in his trading!”

The cat was now lapping greedily at an immense saucer of milk.

“There, let her be,” said the house-mother, “and do you children come into the kitchen and have a good breakfast.”

The house was square, thatched, and, with barns and stables joining it on either side, formed three sides of a quadrangle. A bed or two for flowers, where gilly-flowers, violets and periwinkle were coming into bloom, lay among newly worked beds for vegetables, and tall lines of hop-poles. A rose bush climbed over the kitchen door, and on the low, overhanging roof, two storks stood dressing their black and white plumage.

“ Will you have some bread soup ? ” asked the dame.

“ Please, may I have just the bread ; I don't like beer,” said Lars ; for Danish farmers' bread soup is made of rye bread and beer, and is the usual soup breakfast dish in Zeeland.

“ Right you are,” said the dame. “ I wish none of the Danish boys liked beer, or schnapps. We use far too much of it. I told my good man the other day, that we would do well to take up with the new Temperance ways, and, for my part, I'd be quite willing to give the servants a trifle more of wages, if they would go without any drink but milk, water, or coffee, with a glass of mead for Sundays.”

“ I know a Karle who did that,” said Lars. “ His name is Thorrold Iveson. He wanted to go to America, and he was saving up all he could, he and Jens his brother. Thorrold was so steady he was made foreman for a Gaardmand, and he got two hundred and fifty kronen a year, and three years ago he went to America.”

“ Aye,” said the dame, “ we lose much good Danish blood, going to America. But that land is large, and ours is but small. There now, sit down ; here is all the bread and milk you can eat, and a fine slice of cheese, and some

herring, and what you don't eat you can take with you for dinner."

"And you'll keep the cat?" asked Lars.

"Yes, I'll keep the cat. Hie there, Gretchen! Take that brindle cat and shut her up in the barn till noon, and then feed her again. She'll get wonted to stay after that."

Breakfast finished, Lars and Gerda took a good wash by the pump trough, and bidding the hospitable Frü good day set off for Copenhagen. Gerda had discovered from Gretchen that they were but eight miles from Korsor, and Lars had learned from the dame that Copenhagen, by the post-road, was sixty-seven miles away.

The fresh air and the breakfast were doing them good, and, much strengthened, they set out full of courage. But soon the cowslips in a field tempted them, and then from the field they wandered to a running stream that purred among green cresses, and alder bushes where birds were building. They gathered cress, and sailed boats, and then concluded that the stream would run toward Copenhagen, as all waters ran toward the sea. So they followed the stream for a guide, and the stream meandered now this way and now that. They found a hay-rick in a field, and, having been up so much

the previous night, they climbed upon the rick for a three hours' nap. As the sun was sinking low in the west, Lars insisted upon returning to the main road, which, after devious wanderings, they did.

"There's a mile-stone!" cried Gerda; "we must have travelled—oh twenty miles to-day. How tired I am!"

So they hurried to the mile-stone and read:
"Twelve miles to Korsor!"

CHAPTER VII.

PRIEST ANDERSEN.

*“ She saw a sun on a summer’s sky,
And clouds of amber sailing by;
A lovely land beneath her lay,
And that land had lakes and mountains grey;
And that land had valleys and hoary piles
And marled seas, and a thousand isles.”*

WHEN Lars read the enormous revelation of the mile-stone, that four miles had been the sum of their day’s journey, he was tempted to sit down in despair. He had been sure that the morrow would reveal the spires and chimneys and heaped-up roofs of Copenhagen against the sky.

“ If we go on like this,” he cried, “ we shall be over two weeks in getting to Copenhagen ! ”

Gerda looked astonished for a minute or two, but she was of a more buoyant disposition. “ Never mind, who cares ! ” she said. “ We are having a lovely time ! I’d as lief be all summer in getting to Copenhagen. Let us go on

until we find a sheepfold, or an open barn, and we will stop in it for the night."

"Very well," said Lars firmly, "but to-morrow we must keep to the road, and have no play, and go straight, straight on to Copenhagen. I care about getting there. How will our clothes look in a little? Suppose it rains? People will take us for vagrants, and will stop us. I don't like roaming around homeless. My mother would not have liked it for me. And for a girl! I'm sure it is not right for a girl."

"I'm as strong as you are; don't talk girl to me!" cried Gerda.

The stars had come out before the children found a shed in which to sleep. They feared to stop in any Insidder's* house, lest too many questions should be asked, and they might be given in charge as vagrants.

The night was cold. They woke early. The day was raw, and there was threat of rain. All their food was gone. Gerda had sixpence in pennies, which the Fröken Thure had given her when she carried home work. She proposed to stop at the first Insidder's cottage on the way, and buy a breakfast of coffee, herring and bread. The Insidder's wife questioned them

* A cottager, a laboring man.

sharply, and as they refused to be very communicative, she took fourpence for the breakfast, which was quite contrary to Danish hospitality. "But," said the dame, "the sooner you get out of money, the sooner you will go home and behave yourselves."

Crestfallen by these remarks, the little pilgrims set forth again, when Gerda, either speaking her real fears, or using the plea to secure her coveted enjoyment of the country, said if they kept the main road they would very likely meet Uncle Kars, who would take them back to Korsor! To escape that danger, she persuaded Lars to enter a lovely beech wood, and continue their trip in its shelter.

"We can keep in sight of the roads," said Gerda, "and it is so nice to walk on the rustling dead leaves, and see the violets, and anemones growing up at the roots of the trees, and hear the birds in the branches. Come, Lars, suppose we should meet Uncle Kars on the road!"

So these two little pilgrims, like the two on the way to the Celestial City, turned out of the road once more, and by degrees the wood paths led away from the highroad, but down to one of those many small silver lakes which dot Zeeland. Oh how beautiful it was at the lake!

The rushes swayed in the edge of the water; a splash here, a splash there, told of the frogs jumping in for a swim, and Lars and Gerda saw the sharp noses of the creatures held just above the surface of the lake. Then too they could see little fish darting here and there, and water spiders glancing in little ripples over the calm surface. They forgot time, and that this was Saturday, and that Copenhagen was yet far away.

But at last Gerda felt a big drop of water falling on her nose. She gave a cry—"Oh Lars! It begins to rain!" Sure enough, the sky had grown very dark, and here were more drops coming to keep the first one company.

"Let us run back into the wood to keep dry," said Gerda.

"There are not leaves enough on the trees to shelter us, and the rain is to be long," said Lars. "We must hurry and find a house. I have a rix-dollar in my pocket, and at some Insidder's we can perhaps stay over Sunday for that."

"A rix-dollar!" cried Gerda, astonished at such riches.

But as they ran clattering along in their sabots through the edge of the wood, they dashed almost against a gentleman going calmly under

shelter of a cotton umbrella. The stranger wore a long cloak, leather shoes, a ruff, a wide-winged hat. He stopped.

“Why, children! where are you running? Are you caught in the rain? But who are you? I do not know you?”

“But I know you,” said Lars. “Don’t you remember me, Herr Priest? You gave me good words and a breakfast over a year ago.”

“Good words and breakfast,” said the smiling pastor, “I give to many, but I do not recall you particularly, my boy.”

“It was on the coach from Praesto to Korsor,” said Lars. “I was with my uncle—and you gave me a Bible, don’t you know? Here it is.”

“Ah, I do remember! And you are out here with this little girl? But run both of you before me, as fast as you can, to the house at the first turn of the path. You will get wet. I will be there in a minute.”

The children set off on a run, the good man hurried his pace, and soon all three were in the kitchen of the parsonage. The kitchen was clean as scrubbing could make it; the board floor was white, the little diamond panes of the windows shone, the walls were whitewashed, but overhead the old oak beams were dark from the smoke of many years, and from them

hung strings of apples, onions, dried herbs interspersed with smoked tongues, hams and fitches of bacon. The family dining table stood at one side, draped in a large cloth of homespun linen, and with a pot of myrtle in the centre; near the stove sat a comely Danish girl preparing vegetables for soup, while a boy and girl of about the ages of Lars and Gerda were winding yarn near a window.

“I have brought you some company, Alex and Louise,” said the pastor, as he came to the threshold where stood the runaway couple. “Go in, children.”

Lars and Gerda at once stooped, and took off their sabots, for sabots are too noisy for the house, and besides would soil the clean kitchen floor. The sabots off, they entered, and Gerda looked bashfully at her young hosts, while Lars pulled off his faded cap, and made a courtly bow.

“Take them to your rooms, and carry up each of you a jug of hot water, so that they can wash and dress. Then I will have some talk with them before Marie has dinner,” said the father.

Louise took Gerda up to a neat little room over the front hall.

“This is small,” she said, “but it is all my own. Now do you want to wash and comb?”

Gerda took from her bundle a comb, a clean pair of knitted hose, a clean kerchief for her neck, and a blue ribbon to tie her hair, bought with part of the Fröken Thure's Christmas crown. She had soon made herself very neat.

"As you are my company," said the hospitable Louise, who, seated on the side of the bed, her feet swinging, had observed these operations, "I will lend you one of my white aprons, and a pair of list shoes."

Louise was dressed like Gerda, except that she had on shoes and not sabots, and about her plump little neck was a white frill, instead of a kerchief. When they returned down-stairs, they found Lars also washed and brushed, and wearing list slippers, while, as the occasion was a great one, he had tied about his neck Frö Dagmar's purple kerchief.

The Herr Pastor led the two children into a little room which served him for a study. When they were alone he said,

"My son—what little maid is this?"

"She is the niece of my Uncle Kars' dead wife," said Lars. "Uncle Kars had taken her to bring up."

"And what are you two doing here, nearly twenty miles from Korsor? You live at Korsor, do you not, with your Uncle?"

"I did, Herr Priest, but—I have run away."

Priest Andersen looked grave and shook his head.

"You think I have done wrong?" asked Lars anxiously.

"I fear so. It is almost invariably wrong to run away."

Here Gerda interposed: "Sir, you do not know what a very bad man Uncle Kars is. He starved Lars, he stole all he earned, he kept him locked up, he got drunk, he lies, he does not keep Sabbath, Lars never got to school nor to Church"—and then Gerda launched into a circumstantial description of Uncle Kars house, works and ways, and of Lars' life with him, also of Frü Korner, and the cat.

When Gerda paused in her fluent tale, Lars said—"Sir, I stood it for over a year. I could do no more. I am sure my mother would not have wished me to stay longer."

"It is a hard story, indeed," said Priest Andersen; "but now, what?"

Again Gerda interposed: "Sir, we are going to Copenhagen, to my Aunt Henrietta Ib, who will take care of me, and she will find work for Lars. It is not far to Copenhagen. We are strong, we do not mind walking there," and in her heart Gerda registered a vow, that if

ever she escaped the grave scrutiny of Priest, Andersen's eyes, she would keep to the road, and travel to Copenhagen at the best of her speed.

"Sir," said Lars, "I had to leave Uncle Kars. I had no other way to grow up a decent man, and be what my mother would have wished. But it was not right for Gerda to come. Uncle Kars had been very bad to her, but she was put out to live next door with Fr \ddot{u} Heitzen, who was not bad to her. If I had known Gerda meant to come, I should not have set out myself. But she started first, and I found her five miles on the road, and she would not return."

"Fr \ddot{u} Heitzen is poor, and cross," said Gerda, "and I have to work all the time. I want to go to my Aunt Henrietta. She will send me to school."

"Why not wait here then, until I write to Mistress Ib," said the pastor. "She could send money for your coach fare."

"No, no," said Gerda, "she is old, and does not like to be troubled with letters. She hates to be meddled with. And we have money. Lars has a whole rix-dollar—haven't you, Lars?"

"I thought I had better walk, and keep my money to use in Copenhagen," said Lars.

“As it is stormy to-day,” said Pastor Andersen, “and to-morrow will be the Sabbath, I will keep you here until Monday. Then I will ask the carrier to take you to Soro, two miles from here, and from there I advise you to go by the railroad to Thune, which you can do for your rix-dollar. I will give you some food and a crown, and I wish I could do more for you, but there is nothing so scarce as money in my house just now. However, as Thune is but twenty-five miles from Copenhagen, and you have a relative there, no doubt you will do very well. Let us go to dinner.”

In the kitchen they found Frü Andersen and her eldest girl, who had been spinning in a room above the kitchen. Herr Andersen explained that one of his sons was at the Herremand's, acting as tutor, and the other had gone to Zurich to college. “And that takes all our crowns at present,” said Herr Pastor, “but Fritz is a very good boy, and a brave fellow at his books, and no doubt he will make it all up to us some day.”

The dinner was of soup, fish, potatoes and rye bread, but it was all orderly; a blessing was asked when they sat down, the family, the little guests, and the maid Marie, daughter of a neighboring Insidder. After dinner Gerda

showed herself very dexterous in helping clear away the dishes, and Lars aided Alexis to prepare fuel for over Sunday.

Then Gerda and Louise went up to the room over the kitchen, and Frø Andersen and Marie the maid were busy at the hand-loom, where homespun for every day clothing was being woven, and Louise and her sister spun linen yarn, and Gerda, perched in a window-seat, knit diligently on a long woolen stocking.

“I never saw such a knitter,” cried Louise. “Look, mamma, she knits faster than you do. My! I wish I could knit as fast.”

Meanwhile, in the little study, Lars talked with Herr Andersen. He explained that he hoped to get a clerk's place in some shipping office, where his French and English would be valuable. Gerda would be all right with her aunt, who was kind and well off. No doubt he too could stay with Frø Ib, until he found a place. All this seemed simple and feasible to the country pastor. He greatly admired Lars' linguistic proficiency. “There is nothing I should more like for Alexis,” he said, “than a knowledge of those two languages. If I could afford it, I would keep you here for six months, to teach him and my eldest girl. My second girl is with an Aunt in Jutland who keeps a

school. With power to use three tongues you are rich. You can become all that your good mother desired for you."

"My mother," said Lars, "wished me to rise in the world, for our ancestors were Herremaend. But one of my great-grandfathers lost his property by fire and by becoming security for a friend. But the other great-grandfather loved wine too well, and also loved play, and so lost his money."

"Well, my child," said Herr Pastor, smiling, "we have not the privilege of choosing our ancestors, whether they shall be Herremaend or Insidders. It is not what we have risen from, which should make us blush. It is our ourselves, and what we shall have to report of ourselves at God's bar, that will be the great fact of our destiny. Our progeny, not our forefathers, will make us sad or glad. I am not responsible for my grandfather, I am for my children. If one of my children does ill, I shall be disgraced indeed. So it is open to you to do honor to your mother, Frü Dagmar, or to disgrace her name, and her rearing of you. All the more honor to you if you rise out of the wreck of a fallen house, and arrive at greatness from a mean and low beginning. Having neither home nor parents, and no money but a

rix-dollar, you may feel as if your fate is hard. But let me tell you what you have—

“You have the alphabet, which is at the base of all knowledge. You have the Ten Commandments, the foundation of all morals. The multiplication tables you have also, the foundation of all fortunes. Now, having the alphabet, Ten Commandments, and multiplication tables, you need fear nothing, you are well provided. You have also the Lord’s Prayer, by which to take hold of the protection of Heaven, and you know it is written, “Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find.”

The good man spoke so kindly, and so encouraged Lars that the boy almost felt as if he were acting treacherously in not revealing to him that he had three gold pieces in a bag. But his mother had told him to keep that money secret. He resolved not to take the good pastor’s crown on Monday morning. Pastor Andersen went on to give Lars advice as to escaping the temptations of the city. To live frugally, be industrious and zealous in work, spend his spare time in self-improvement, these were the pathways of success.

“We Danes are a kindly, orderly, sober, cheerful people,” he said, “but all people have their faults, and all cities their temptations.

Keep out of the streets at night, keep out of saloons, and don't play games for any stakes, even pins."

After a time, Louise and Gerda came downstairs, and the children were shown through the parsonage, a roomy, square, substantial building like a Gaardmand's house. The floors were waxed and had home-made rugs laid upon them. The furniture was oak and heavy, and had already served two or three generations, for Herr Andersen's father had been Priest here before him. Gerda was especially interested in three great oaken chests, richly carved, belonging to the three Andersen girls, and being slowly filled with a rich stock of home-made linen, beautifully bleached, made up and marked with embroidered initials, in readiness for the day when they should marry.

"I had just such a splendid chest, that was my mother's," sighed Gerda, "and Uncle Kars sold it to an Englishman!"

"Never mind," said Lars, "your Aunt Henrietta Ib will give you another."

Lars thought the parsonage very fine; he had nothing to contrast it with except the plain three-roomed cottage of his mother in Praesto and the gloomy, dirty store-house of antiques, in which his uncle lived at Korsor. Gerda saw

his admiration and whispered that "the house of her Aunt Henrietta Ib was a million times larger and more beautiful."

"Come," said Louise to Gerda, "let us go and set the tea-table. We have early tea to-night because our father's catechism class meets here this evening. He has it here every Saturday."

After the tea of porridge and milk, white rolls and smoked herring, Alexis and Lars took their lamps up to the spinning room. The wheels were then set back beside the wall and two long benches were set out facing each other. Between the benches was a table covered with a white cloth and having on it a book, a lamp and a violin.

Presently all the young folks of the neighborhood, from nine to sixteen years old, came trooping in. Their sabots made a great clatter to the kitchen door, but then they put on felt slippers. They came crowding upstairs, and sat down, the girls on one long bench with Louise at their head, the boys on the other bench with Alexis as their leader. Then the pastor came in, having added his clerical bands to his long gown and ruff. He passed along the benches, shaking hands with each boy or girl, asking how they did, and for news of the

family of each. Then taking his place at the table, he lifted his hand and they all said in concert the Lord's Prayer. Next he read out a hymn, and giving them the key on the violin they all sang. After that the first fifteen verses of the Sermon on the Mount were repeated by pastor and class alternately. Next about twenty minutes were spent in questioning the class in the catechism : when an answer was missed by any one, it was repeated by the class in concert several times. Lastly, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments were recited in concert.

"Now, my children," said the good pastor, "if you always keep in your heads and hearts and practice in your lives the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Catechism, you will none of you fall away into by and forbidden paths, but you will follow justice and temperance in this world, and in the world to come see life everlasting. God bless you. Now you have an hour for play."

The children at once began some kind of a marching game with singing, accompanied by the pastor's violin. After two or three games of this kind, like genuine Danes, they began to dance, quaint country dances.

“Lars,” said Louise, “will you dance the Rigel with me?”

“I don’t know how,” said Lars, “I never danced.”

“Come and I will show you,” said Louise, holding out her hand. “Make me a bow, take your place there, take my hand, and do just as I do.”

The long attic was soon filled with the demure little figures in homespun, dressed just like elderly people, the little girls in long kirtles and snug caps, the boys in smock frocks or short jackets, all dancing away in time to the pastor’s violin. Up and down, in the shadows and out, now pausing to laugh and take breath, now wheeling on again in the same old-fashioned mazes kept generations back by their grandparents and great-grandparents. At last the pastor’s violin sounded a note that meant “stop!”

The children separated into two lines, girls in one, boys in the other. For ten minutes the pastor gave out words for spelling. Then the texts given out for the evening were asked for and repeated.

“Good night,” said Priest Andersen; “go straight to your homes, without any delay, and may God go with ycu.”

Away went the guests, each answering "Good night," and soon the noise of their sabots had died out along the road. Pastor Andersen took his violin to the kitchen and for half an hour played sweet old tunes for his family. "It is my one recreation, and saved for Saturday night," he said to Lars.

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO LITTLE PILGRIMS.

*“ The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For unoffending creatures whom He loves.”*

SABBATH passed pleasantly at the parsonage. The family were all at church in the morning and afternoon. At five o'clock they had a dinner of boiled fowl and pudding. Louise told Gerda that this was unusual luxury in honor of having guests.

As they sat at table after dinner the pastor said—“As Lars will perhaps never be here again, I shall give him some good advice, which will be just as suitable to the rest of you. You will, no doubt, find in this world those who wrong you, enemies—be sure and give them forgiveness, for it is written ‘If ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your heavenly Father forgive you.’ You will find those who differ from you, give them courteous tolera-

tion, 'considering yourselves lest you also be tempted,' and remembering the Scripture 'With what judgment you judge ye shall be judged.' You will have friends, love them heartily, for 'whoso dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.' Give to all those about you a good example, 'Let all your works so shine that all about you may glorify your Father in heaven': give to your masters and rulers, deference, respect: for they are set over you by God. Give to your parents, dead or living, such noble conduct as will honor their memories: to yourselves give honorable respect, knowing that your bodies are temples of the living God, therefore encourage no base appetites but follow after temperance and the love of God; and finally, my children, give to all humanity charity and do good to all men as ye have opportunity."

This was the after-dinner sermon preached by Priest Andersen to his family.

Early next morning the carrier's cart for Soro stopped at the parsonage, and, furnished with a package of luncheon, the two little pilgrims once more set forth toward Copenhagen.

"Write to me when you get safely to Mistress Ib," said the pastor, who had no notion how long it would be before he should hear from Lars, nor how soon he should again see him!

Arrived at Soro, the morning train had left for Copenhagen, and as there would not be another train until late at night, the children concluded to walk on. The weather was lovely, and already the passion for wandering in the verdant country had laid hold upon them. Gerda especially longed to ramble idly on her way, the green grass under her feet, the songs of birds about her head, and all the witchery of spring stealing upon her senses with the odors of the flowers.

“It is but ten miles to Ringsted,” said Gerda, looking at a guide board. “Let us walk that far, and save your money.” Strolling merrily along, looking rather like two children just sent out to school by some careful mother, than two little homeless strays seeking their fortune, went Lars and Gerda toward Copenhagen. They seemed as safe and as happy and to fit the world as well as the finches and field-fares that twittered and fluttered along the roadsides, darting with merry-making calls from spray to spray. Birds and children alike helpless, innocent and fearless, held in the All-Father’s hand!

“See there! See there!” cried Gerda. “I believe it is an Invitation man! Oh Lars, if we could only go to the wedding!” She pointed to a tall Insidder, dressed in his best

caped coat, a tall, felt hat, ornamented with peacock's feathers, corduroy knee-breeches, long-ribbed stockings, undressed leather shoes, a silver chain on his neck, a silver-headed cane in his hand, and a fine parti-colored bow on his arm. He was standing at the door of a Herremand's house, apparently delivering an oration. The smiling house-wife and her daughters heard him with attention. Then one of the housemaids appeared with a glass and bottle, and the distinguished Insidder drank off a liberal potation.

"He'll be as drunk as an idiot before night," observed Gerda, "the Invitation man always gets drunk. Why don't they give him milk, or mead, or gooseberry shrub? Say, Lars, let us go with him, and take him home at night. You wouldn't want to have him lie out-of-doors and forget the invitations, would you? Then we'll be bid stay to the wedding! I was at one once. Oh the best fun! You have bushels of cakes, and cream cheese, and rödgröd till you're tired of it!"

Now, what boy of fourteen, who has been starved for a year on stale bread would be proof against such a bill of fare? Rödgröd *ad lib!* Now, rödgröd is barberries stewed to a jam in sugar, and deluged with thick cream: to

the palate of a Danish boy it is the nectar of the gods.

As the children lingered at the gate, forth came the Invitation man, elate and stepping proudly.

“Please, sir, is it a wedding?” asked Gerda.

“Indeed it is, my pretty little dear, the finest wedding that has been in this country for many a year. Gaardmand Lotze’s daughter is to marry Gaardmand Müller’s son. They are both young, rich and handsome, and were called in church yesterday by Priest Kope. Next Sunday they are to be called twice, and then a week from to-morrow they are to be married, and a hundred and ten invitations are to be given out, and it will take me four days. If you will come with me to the house yonder, you will hear me recite the invitation; it is poetry. My name is Jan Braun, and I am Gaardmand Lotze’s best Insidder.”

Here they reached the next house, and rapping sharply on the door with his silver headed cane, as soon as the expectant family within appeared, Jan Braun threw himself into a majestic pose, and began to recite—

“By me the Gaardmand Lotze sends
A wedding greeting to his friends.
His daughter and Herr Müller’s son
To morrow week will be made one.

To grace the wedding you he calls,
Which properly on Tuesday falls.
On Tuesday wear the myrtle crown
And blessed be the bride the sun shines on."

"That is beautiful poetry," said the listening dame, while her servant poured for Jan Braun liberal schnapps.

"Herr Pastor made it for us," said Jan, draining the glass.

"Will you have a taste, my little dears?" asked the girl of Lars and Gerda, offering to pour out more schnapps.

"No thank you—I don't like it," said Lars, drawing back.

"That's a good boy," said the housewife. "I wish no one liked it. For shame, Elspeth, to offer children strong-drink! Go bring them each a peffer cake and a taste of barberry syrup, pretty little dears! Your children, Braun?"

This suggestion so incensed Lars that he was obliged to retire behind Jan Braun, and shake his fist, for he was a proud little fellow, and it infuriated him to be taken for the son of the schnapps-loving Insider.

As they proceeded to the next house, Gerda said, "Herr Braun, if you drink so much schnapps at each house, you will soon be very drunk, won't you?"

To be called Herr tickled Jan's fancy hugely, and he replied, "Oh, my little dear, I can hold a great deal of schnapps," and he patted his diaphragm approbatively.

"But even the largest pig gets full sometime," said the astute Gerda, "and you have many houses to visit."

"That is true," assented Jan, "and there lies my danger. When my Gaardmand's eldest girl was married, I got so very drunk the first day that I lay down by the roadside. The night was rainy, and all my finery would have been spoiled if my wife had not come out to look for me, and drag me home. Now my wife cannot come, for she has a lame leg. If our Gaardmand had known about that time, I should not have been sent out as Inviter to-day. Now, my children, the weather is fine, and you are in no haste; suppose you keep with me to-day, and see me home safe at night? You shall have as good beds, and as good supper and breakfast as any Insidder in Denmark could give you, and, being strangers, you will not chatter if I should take a little more schnapps than is good for me."

"In that case you might be violent," said the cautious Lars.

"Bless you," replied Jan, "when I'm drunk I'm mild as a cow without horns."

Lars and Gerda had made vigorous resolutions to hasten on their way to Copenhagen, but liberty was sweet, and curiosity was strong, and as they found the calls with the ' Invitation man' very amusing, they lingered along with him. They were such a neat, handsome, manly little pair that the dames at the houses looked at them with kindly eyes, and the day furnished a succession of cakes, tartines, crumpets and milk or gooseberry shrub. Many of the invitations were given in a small village or hamlet, for at a Gaardmand wedding every one is invited, except Insidders not immediately working for the Gaardmand. By dint of hinting and elbow pulling, and finally by plain speaking to the dispensers of schnapps, the energetic Gerda succeeded in keeping the Insidder on his feet, and sufficiently in possession of his senses to know his way home, where he arrived at sunset with his guests.

" Here you are ! " cried his wife, who was knitting on the doorstep. " Bless me ! I made sure you would forget your promises, and be dead drunk by this time. "

" I wouldn't let him, " said Gerda. " Why should a man turn himself into a pig ? "

" She wouldn't let me, " chuckled Jan. " Oh she's a master hand, the little red-cheeked girl ! "

I've asked them for the night, my wife, and the little one will fly round and help you get supper."

The Insidder Braun's cottage consisted of two rooms. The first was the kitchen with a brick hearth raised a yard above the floor, and on the hearth burned a wood fire. The deal floor was scrubbed with sand to a polished white, a deal table and chairs had also been scrubbed until they had acquired a fine satin-like gloss; a cupboard with blue dishes stood in a corner; copper utensils shone on nails above the wall, and on a shelf stood an American clock, and four or five old and black bound books.

Gerda hastened to help the good wife get supper, and while doing so answered a flood of questions with a flood of explanations. All their friends were dead, and she and her Cousin Lars were going to their Aunt Henrietta Ib, who would do well for them. Gerda also volunteered that she was in no hurry to go her way, and that she wished she could go to the wedding. Once she had been to a wedding. It had been the gala day of her life.

After supper was eaten and cleared away, said Fr \ddot{u} Braun, "As you are company, we will sit in the best room," so she ushered them to the inner room. There the deal floor was even

whiter than in the kitchen, and gay mats made by the Frü lay upon it. Against one wall stood two beds, bright with canopies and curtains and flounces of green and red-striped cotton, and piled high with feather beds under home-woven, check counterpanes. Against the opposite wall stood two carved chests, and these the Frü proudly opened and displayed linen and blankets woven by her own hands, the best Sunday clothes of herself and Jan, and the golden-crowned lace cap, which she had inherited from her grandmother. The beds looked very short and high, for they were built telescope fashion, to shut up short by day, and pull out at night, when the surrounding curtains reduced them to little state-rooms. Gerda slept with Frü Braun in one bed, and the good woman was so enchanted to see the little maid kneeling down to say her little prayer, her yellow hair unbound, her little pink, bare feet sticking out from beneath her night-dress, that she gave her a hug, and said "she would see that she stayed to the wedding if she wished to."

If Gerda and Frü Braun decreed a week's delay for the wedding, of course the choice of Lars for haste was hopeless. Next day Frü Braun said that Frü Lotze was much in need of a quick, tidy little girl to run errands, go to the

door, beat eggs, and be of general utility during the nuptial celebrations. The little girl she had depended on was ill of measles, and Frü Lotze feared to call in other children of the farm, for how sad it would be if the bride elect took the measles! "Lars too could be useful. They would have a good time, and a feast; who knew, they might even earn a crown or two?"

"Besides," said Gerda, "I need time to wash and iron our clothes, Lars. You know you haven't a clean shirt."

After such cogent reasoning, who shall wonder that by noon Gerda was established at the house of Gaardmand Lotze, and Lars was gone forth as body-guard to Jan the Invitation man. All at the Gaardmand's was stir and excitement. Laid out in the best room were the clothes of the bride, and heaped on chairs were her piles of household linen, all ready for the inspection of her admiring friends. The pots of myrtle, which she had tended all winter for her marriage crown, were set in the sunniest window. Scrubbing brushes were plied everywhere, to make the Gaardmand's house shine from cellar to garret. Gaardmand Lotze being rich, owning his ninety acres, lived almost in the style of a Herremand.

Gerda helped feed the chickens, gather eggs,

dress vegetables, and at every idle hour she ran to the Spinde Stue to knit or spin. At evening all the women and girls of the establishment assembled in the Spinde Stue, or large spinning room, with Frü Lotze and her daughters, and the wheels hummed merrily. Lars, as a very pretty and courteous boy, was taken into favor, and admitted to the Spinde Stue with Herr Lotze's youngest son, to wind yarn or card wool.

Meantime the wedding presents began to flow in, and Gerda was constantly bearing gifts away to be stored in pantry or cellar, for in Denmark wedding gifts are to the parents and not to the bride, and consist chiefly of food for the wedding party. Thus one friend sent a platter with ten pounds of butter set in a wreath of parsley ; another, six dozen of eggs in a decorated basket; another, a dressed lamb ; yet another, a leg of beef wreathed with sweet herbs ; others still, dressed geese, ducks, fowls, a sucking pig, a jar of honey, a huge bowl of preserved barberries, a cask of mead, a firken of cream. The guests were to be many, but provisions for more than as many were sent in.

Finally the wedding day came, as sunny and mild as bride could wish. There were no more interested spectators of the ceremonies than Lars and Gerda. By ten o'clock carts and chaises

began to arrive with the guests, and waited in a long line before the house.

At eleven, down came the bride and her sisters, the bride dressed in a dark blue velvet skirt, short enough to show her silk stockings and high heeled, patent-leather shoes; her black velvet bodice, embroidered in gold, was laced over a full white guimp; a silk sash, with ends of gold fringe, hung carelessly looped at her left side. On her neck was a thick chain of gold beads, and on her head a simple myrtle crown. Lars and Gerda thought they had never seen any one so beautiful.

Then the procession arranged itself. The two best men on gaily-ribboned horses went first, then came a cart with the village band of three or four brass instruments, and, throned high above the rest, the village fiddler. Next came a cart ornamented with wreaths and ribbons, in which rode the bride alone. After this came the bridegroom, alone in another cart, and glorious in a tall hat, and a huge coat with many capes, which he wore as proudly as a judge wears his ermine. Lars, Gerda and many other children strewed flowers before their carts, and then ran on to the church to be ready to strew flowers there, under the feet of the entering bride and groom. After the groom's cart came

all the carts and chaises of friends and relatives in long succession. The groom's parents attended, but the bride's father and mother were bound to stay at home and see that the last touches were given to the table.

Old Gaardmand Lotze, the grandfather, gave the bride away. The ceremony over at the church, the procession returned: the newly wedded pair riding together in the bride's cart, preceded by the band with a great fanfare of trumpets and cornets.

The yeomanry of Denmark are a hearty, jolly race; they hail occasions for feasting and dancing in all good fellowship. In the great upper room, reserved in all rich homes for such festivities, a table was made of boards laid on barrels and covered with fine home-made damask. The guests seated, the bridegroom on Herr Lotze's right, Herr Pastor on his left, Herr Pastor with patriarchal simplicity asked a blessing on the meal. A Dane would consider himself a heathen indeed if his festal meal were unblest. The presence of Herr Pastor was no damper on the jollity of the occasion. He entered into the simple mirth of his people just as cheerfully as he made "poetry" for the wedding invitations.

The wives of the farm Insidders, Lars, Gerda,

and some other children, waited on the table. Soups, meats, cakes in endless variety, cheese, and rödgröd were dispersed lavishly. Milk, mead, gooseberry shrub, raspberry vinegar, a mixture of lemons, spice, water and brown sugar with coffee, cocoa and tea, flowed freely—but no schnapps.

“Frü Lotze,” cried a guest, “where are your schnapps, to help a little our digestion, before all these puddings and pies!”

“Herr Müller, my son-in-law,” said Frü Lotze, is one of the temperance men, and he requested me to have no schnapps. In our house and Herr Müller’s there is to be no more strong drink.”

“Frü Lotze,” said Herr Pastor, “you are happy in being sure that your son-in-law will never dissipate his property and leave his wife in poverty.”

“Ah, yes, it is safe,” “No doubt it is best,” “Perhaps it is well,” were the exclamations that followed Frü Lotze’s explanation.

After a dinner three hours’ long, the tables were cleared away for dancing. It was now five o’clock, and the long room would soon be lighted with lanterns, and with candles fastened on hoops which depended from the rafters.

The band and the fiddler struck up their

music, and the bride opened the ball, according to custom, with her grandfather. Next she danced with her father, her father-in-law and uncles and eldest brother. Then there was a pause. The bride was blindfolded, led out in a group of her girl friends, and taking off her myrtle crown flung it high into the air. She flung it so high that it went beyond the maidens in the group, and the active Gerda caught it. "O that is not fair!" "She has no right!" "The little chit that will not be ready to be married this ten years!"

For the girl who catches the myrtle crown will be the next girl married. Lars took the myrtle crown from Gerda, and restoring it to the bride, said, "Fling it again, Frü Müller. Gerda meant no harm." His voice was full of conciliation.

"I will dance the Rigel with you, Lars," said the bride.

The dancing continued until daybreak, when the guests dispersed, but at two in the afternoon all were back for another feast and dance of twelve hours. Then on Thursday the feast and dance were for the third time repeated, and at dawn the bride and groom set off for the home of Herr Müller. They rode in a decorated cart driven by the best men, and carrying

in the back the huge carved chest, stored with the bride's household linen.

"I'll tell you what it is, Gerda," said Lars, as about seven in the morning he and Gerda met at the pump-trough for a wash. "If you choose to idle along here, and grow up servant to Frü Lotze, you may do it. But at half-past eight, as soon as I have fed the pigs and chickens, I'm going to say 'Good-bye,' and start for Copenhagen. I mean to be something better than a farm Karle. Take your choice, come or stay, but I'll make no delays."

"O Lars! Well, I'll go with you," said Gerda, "if you don't like it here."

"It is all very good, only I mean to grow up into a gentleman, and do my mother credit. Frü Dagmar's son can do better than feed pigs. Pigs don't understand French or English. I shall soon forget all I know, at this rate."

CHAPTER IX.

“I’VE KILLED MY AUNT HENRIETTA!”

*“Such tricks hath strong Imagination,
That if he would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night imagining some fear,
How easy is a Bush supposed a Bear?”*

By nine o’clock good-byes were said. Lars and Gerda each received a little wicker basket filled with remainders of the wedding feast, and being kissed heartily, and wished “good luck,” they set out once more toward Copenhagen.

Lars moved along briskly. Gerda’s little clattering sabots seemed glued to the ground.

They had not gone far, when they came to a mite of a child, blue-eyed, fair-haired, her mother’s miniature in dress, with the long blue homespun gown, the big apron, the close cap, the sabots—only five years old, but out for her day’s work of herding poultry. Armed with a long rod, she easily managed her feathered subjects, among which she had grown up. At an age when most American children are closely

watched by mother or nurse, the litte dimpled Dane was paying her own way in cares for the clacking hens and noisy geese.

"Good-bye, dear little Mai," said Gerda, kissing her, and as she went on Lars saw that her eyes were full of tears, and her lips trembled. It irritated him. He cried, crossly:—

"I just believe you want to stay here all your life, working among the Insidders girls in the dairy or Spinde Stue! Such a chance as you have with your aunt, you ought to be ashamed!"

At this Gerda's tears welled over, and wet her red cheeks. The sight reduced Lars to contrition. He put his arms about her. "Don't cry, dear Gerda. I'm as mean as can be to speak so to you, and you've been so good to me! No wonder you feel bad. This is no life for a girl! I said you shouldn't try it."

"It is a life for a girl! And I wanted to try it!" cried Gerda, dashing away her tears. "I like it! Let's race. I can reach that poplar tree up the road before you can!"

Away they dashed—but who can be fleet in wooden shoes? That day they made a very good journey. They rested for over an hour at noon, eating their dinner in a fine oak wood. They were much stronger and stouter than when they set out from Korsor. They rode for two or three

miles with a factor who was collecting butter, eggs, cheese and fowls to send to Copenhagen for shipment to England. For, while England keeps her poor hungry, idle and pauperized, by preserving the land, she is necessitated to buy farm products from Denmark; while thrifty Denmark turns every rood of land to food producing, and a happy and well-fed peasantry grow rich on selling their surplus food stuffs to England.

This Friday's journey was of ten miles; and, tired but contented, when the daylight had faded, our travellers came to a blacksmith shed on the edge of an oak wood. The smith had locked up his tools and departed, but the forge fire still shone in the gloom of the smithy, and in its gentle warmth Lars and Gerda sat down to eat their supper, and then Lars spread an armful of hay that was in a corner, and which made them a very good bed. Gerda went to sleep at once, but Lars sat with his arms about his knees, and until late at night meditated on their remarkably slow progress. Two weeks out, and they had gone but thirty miles! For the town through which they had just passed was Ringsted, and Korsor and Ringsted are but about thirty miles apart.

On Saturday morning they set forth again, but more slowly, and making various delays

now to watch birds building, now to see some frisky rabbits making merry in the edge of the wood; now to make a détour to a little lakelet to drink and wash, and to find cresses in a little rivulet. Then they finished eating the bountiful luncheon provided by Frü Lotze, and at two o'clock came in sight of Kjøge cross-roads. Along the sides of the Naseby and Kjøge Roads, booths of fir and beech were set up, carts were drawn up in order, and there was a crowd of people, men and women, the Insider dress largely predominating, while the caped-coats of Gaardmand and Parcelist or the gay shawls of their wives were seen scattered through the groups. Lars recognized the gathering, he had seen such at Praesto. "It is a servants' fair," he said, "the Karles and Maids are here to hire out for the half year. Do you see the magistrate there to sign the books and to settle disputes? This is the spring hiring. A good Karle will get a hundred and fifty kronen a year."

"Perhaps somebody would want to hire us," said Gerda, anxiously.

"Well, they won't get us," said Lars, proudly. "I'm going to be a clerk for French and English, and you are going to be a lady, and live with your Aunt Henrietta."

The interest of the fair, the booths, with their cheap wares, the two or three puppet and dancing bear shows, was such, that the two children lingered among them until the sun was low. No one questioned them, everybody supposed that they belonged to somebody else. Then suddenly Lars bethought himself that it was drawing toward night, their provisions were gone, and they had no place to sleep! Among the throng he had noticed especially one Husmand, a big, fatherly looking man, who had come to the fair to hire out his two sons, one to a wainwright to learn a trade, the other as gardener's assistant at the Herremand's. Lars had noticed his kindly way with the lads, and had overheard him giving them very good advice. To him he addressed himself.

"Herr, my cousin and I are on our way to our aunt, at Copenhagen, and we do not want to travel on Sunday. May we go to your house until Monday? We have each a kroner to pay for our lodging."

"Where are your parents?" asked the Husmand.

"They are all dead, Herr; Gerda's and mine."

"And you are going to live with your aunt?"

"Our Aunt Henrietta Ib," said Gerda, eagerly.

"Very well, come with me, the good wife will not object. The boys' bed is now empty, and my little daughter will take this girl in. It is a sad lot for children to wander alone."

"We shall soon get to Aunt Henrietta Ib," said Lars cheerfully; "we are not afraid, and we like to walk."

"We have about two miles to go," said the Husmand, "and as soon as I bid my boys good-bye, we will start."

Leaving the Kjoge road, they turned north-east, and the Husmand remarked that his house was not much out of their way, as it was on the road to Sobrad. "At my house," he said, "I have on the wall a good map of Zealand, and you can see all the villages and roads plainly marked out."

A Husmand's house is much like an Insider's. The Husmand owns a few acres, from two to eight, which he farms for himself, and when his children are old enough, he puts them in the way of learning trades, and from the children of Husmaend the mechanics of Denmark are recruited, while the Insidders are day laborers, and farm-hands; the young farm-hands living with their employers being called Karles.

As Husmand Bauer went homewards, he told Lars that he had a daughter who was a

dressmaker, and an eldest son who was a journeyman carpenter. He owned seven acres, which he farmed, while his wife raised poultry, and attended to her kitchen garden and spinning; he had a very valuable cow and had sold eighty pounds of butter the last year.

“I knew a Husmand once, near Praesto, named Iveson,” said Lars, “he owned eight acres, and had two sons, Jens and Thorrold. Thorrold has gone to America. After his father and mother died, the eight acres were sold to the Gaardmand, and Thorrold took the money to America to buy land. Jens is going too, sometime. Jens and Thorrold were foremen, and they got big wages because they take money instead of beer and schnapps.”

“That is no doubt a fine plan, if all the masters would agree to it,” said the Husmand, and, they might very well, as the men would do more work and better without strong drink; the notion that people need strong drink to work on, is going out of fashion.”

The Husmand's cottage, white walled thatched, bare of vines, to which the Denmark winters are inimical, soon came in sight.

The Husmand's wife stood in the doorway, eager to hear what had been the fortune of her boys. She received Lars and Gerda with

true Danish hospitality, and Gerda and the daughter of the house were soon off together to milk the famous cow that had Jersey blood in her.

Lars spent several hours in the study of the Husmand's map and in taking down the names of the towns through which he should pass. He astounded the Husmand by the information that he could speak English.

"In that case your fortune is made," said the Husmand, "for in Copenhagen, at the shippers', those who can speak French and English are always in demand. Though as far as English goes, our Danish of Jutland is so like the English of Newcastle that when I was a boy on Jutland, twice I went to England, with a shipload of beef cattle, and I talked my tongue, and the North countryman talked his, and we got on very well. It made me think what a pity that men by their wickedness ever got themselves so out of the Lord's favor that He put the curse of Babel between them. Hey? That Babel has cost us a deal of work learning languages. Hey?"

No people are more hospitable than the Danes. The housewife refused the money the children offered her on Monday, and gave them a good luncheon of rye bread and boiled bacon

to take with them ; then with motherly kisses and hearty desires that she might hear of their welfare, she sent them forth toward Copenhagen.

“ Gerda,” said Lars, “ I have studied the map, and I find if we keep right on this road to Sobrad, we shall come to the sea. Would you like to go along the sea beach? We can walk on the sand, and see the sea-birds and the waves, and perhaps we can find some shells to take to your Aunt Henrietta.”

Gerda was overjoyed at this proposal. She had been to the sea as a child, and while at Korsor had gone to the beach of the Great Belt channel, near which Korsor lies. But Lars at Korsor had been too much a prisoner to get that little distraction.

The road toward Sobrad was not very direct, nor was it thickly settled. They left the highway once or twice to get water, and it was evening before they reached Sobrad. Tired and hungry they stopped at a little public house, and for a crown each were to have tea, bed and breakfast. They slept late, but by nine o'clock, after a hearty breakfast of porridge and milk, they set off along the beach. They were now thirty miles from Copenhagen. They had intended to travel briskly, but who could resist the attractions of the beach? They took off

their sabots and stockings and waded; they made whole fleets of boats and sailed them—slowly toward Copenhagen. The Sound was full of fishing boats and vessels, and who could forego the enchantment of sitting on the warm sand, and watching the sails come up out of the distance, or drift away into distance—the distance so blue, the sails so white in sun, so dark in shadow! Noon came and they were hungry, but then, oh joy! a fisher's boat came ashore, and the fishers gave the children several fish, and some matches and paper. They gathered dry drift, made a fire, cooked the fish after a fashion and thought it delicious. At night they slept under an up-turned boat, but awoke very cold, stiff and hungry, and only five miles nearer Copenhagen than they had been the day before. Gerda began to cry; she seemed to be losing her elastic courage.

"Don't cry, Gerda," said Lars; "you know I have yet my rix-dollar. Come, Thune is less than three miles off, inland, let us go there, and we will go in an eating house and I will buy you a great big hot breakfast; coffee and stewed meat, and potato. After that we will go direct to Roeskild. Roeskild is only ten miles from Thune, and only fifteen from Copenhagen. I found it all on the map. Don't you believe

you could walk to Roeskild before night? We won't go by the beach, we play too much, and the sand is hard to walk in. Come, I'll have enough of my dollar left, after our breakfast, to pay for our lodging at Roeskild. Wash your face and comb your hair, Gerda, and we will walk on fast, and warm ourselves, and you'll feel better."

Gerda cheered up at this programme, and as Thune proved to be only two miles off, they were soon there, and seated before a hot breakfast.

But oh, that was a long road to Roeskild! Somehow Gerda could not get on; her heart and her feet seemed equally heavy, and by dark they had made only seven miles, and Roeskild was yet three miles away. After inquiring for shelter at several cottages, Lars found an old woman, living by herself, who agreed to give them lodging and supper and breakfast. The old woman seemed friendly, excusing herself for receiving money from them, by saying that she was very poor. In the morning she said if Lars would bring her some fuel from the neighboring beech wood, she would bake some rye crumpets for them to carry with them for dinner.

"We shall surely get to Copenhagen tomorrow, Gerda," said Lars noting the melan-

choly face of his companion, as they neared Roeskild, "and then the nice times you will have at your Aunt Henrietta's will pay you for all. She don't think you are so near, does she? I wonder if she is sitting with her dog and her cat, or if, as it is a splendid day, she has gone out to ride?"

"I don't know," said poor Gerda dolefully. "What is this coming?"

"It is a funeral procession," said Lars; "let us sit down here by the hedge and watch it go by. I saw a grave-yard just up the road."

Accordingly Lars and Gerda sat down close under shelter of the tall hedge, just freshened by the green of spring. The chaise with the clergyman headed the procession, then came a cart with eight men, next the hearse, then numerous carts and chaises, and about fifty people on foot. Nearly every one had a few flowers to scatter into or around the grave. Funerals are well attended in Denmark; in all well-to-do country families they are observed by a two days' feast. During this feast much of the mourning is banished with tale and song. The custom is a survival of the old Norse religion, and is sung in the Sagas. Lars listened to the chanting of the funeral hymn, but Gerda began to sob.

“ We'll die in Copenhagen, I know!” she cried.

“ Well, we must all die sometime, and somewhere,” said Lars philosophically. “ I don't want to die in an almshouse or a hospital, and I mean to earn money so I won't. You needn't be afraid, your Aunt Henrietta Ib will take care of you if you are sick.”

The funeral had gone by, but still the children sat in the sun under the fragrant shelter of the hedge. Lars felt sleepy, bees buzzed about his head, and shrill crickets called at his feet. He put his bundle on his knees, laid his head upon it, and dozed. But into his somnolence stole sounds of woe, of violent and painful sobbing. He started up, Gerda was gone. He listened. The sobbing was from behind the hedge, the voice was Gerda's. A yard or two off was a hole in the hedge. Gerda must have crawled through there. Lars went to the opening, got on his knees, and thrust his head and shoulders through the hedge. There sat Gerda, a little way from him, on a big stone. Her face was in her lap, her long striped apron was flung up over her head and shoulders, her arms circled her knees, her little brown hands worked convulsively, and her sobbing pitifully shook all her small frame. Aghast at such excess of grief from the generally buoyant and self-

asserting Gerda, Lars could not speak, but still on his hands and knees, with his head thrust through the hedge, like the head of an observant dog, he endeavored to grasp the situation, and devise a remedy for Gerda's woe. But what was the cause of woe?

"Gerda," he said finally, "Gerda! Gerda!!" As she did not heed, "I say Gerda! whatever are you crying about?"

No answer, only intensified weeping. Lars grew desperate.

"Gerda! Gerda, are you sick?"

"N-o-o-o-o," sobbed Gerda.

"Are you mad at me, Gerda? Have I done anything?"

"N-o-o-o-o," moaned the inconsolable Gerda.

"Well, what is the matter? Tell me quick! Speak! If you don't tell me—I'll—I'll go down the road and leave you alone—I'll—I'll say you are a coward—and I knew it would turn out this way. Do you wish you were back with Frø Heitzen? I knew you would!"

Gerda dropped the sheltering apron and turned a red, swollen, tearful face to Lars. She tried several times to speak—

"Oh—it's—it's worse than that! Oh dear, oh dear, what shall I do? I've killed my Aunt Henrietta!"

“Killed your Aunt Henrietta!” shouted Lars, looking all about, and seeing no signs of carnage on the fresh spring sward. “Gerda, are you crazy? What do you mean? Killed your Aunt Henrietta! Why, girl, you must be dreaming. She’s in Copenhagen, in her fine house, with her cat and her dog, and her big china stove.”

“No, no, she’s not—I’ve killed her! She’s gone. Oh Lars, there isn’t any Aunt Henrietta Ib. There is no one for me to go to in Copenhagen, no one to find you a place. There isn’t any Aunt Henrietta—for—I made my Aunt Henrietta.”

“You made her?” said Lars, “what do you mean?”

“I made her. I pretended her. She is all make-believe, and she was so nice, and it made me feel so much better, to have a rich Aunt Henrietta, and I thought about her so much—oh, I felt as if I really, truly had her—but now—I’ve given her up. I’ve killed her—she’s gone!”

During this explanation, Lars, still on his knees, felt cold chills creeping over him, as he faced his future desolated of the goodly presence of Aunt Henrietta. Bereaved of her, life seemed a spectre cold and pale, that threatened him.

What now in all his environment could be relied on? He had never heard that all that is, is but the figment of our thought, a percept of our ego, but it seemed to him that if Aunt Henrietta, fat and genial in a satin dress, was but a breath, mere air, if her big house and her china stove were dreams, if her dog and her cat were not even so much as stuffed skins, but nonentities, there could be nothing in the world assured and true, firm enough foundation whereon to build a hope, or fix faith.

Stunned and dazed by the enormity of the situation, he dimly realized that Gerda, rent by passionate sobbing, was feeling even more unhappy than himself. Reft of her Aunt Henrietta, whom had she left? He went to her, put his arms about her, pulled the apron from her little capped head, and asked,—“ Oh, Gerda, why did you do it? ”

“ I had to do it,” moaned Gerda. “ I was so lonesome! I wanted somebody—and—and I made Aunt Henrietta, thinking that would be so nice, and make me so happy, and she's gone! ”

No mourners in the funeral train that had just passed wept more heartily, nor felt a keener sense of loss and need than Lars and Gerda, suddenly deprived of Aunt Henrietta. Forlorn

in the shadow of the hedge, they sat and bewailed, following with tearful eyes a coffin, a hearse, a funeral cortege. And yet, this dead aunt whom they lamented had never existed, and coffin, hearse and funeral train were products of their own fancy.



CHAPTER X.

JENS IVESON AND THE BLUE-EYED MAID.

*“Heaven forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,
Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one man’s weakness grows the strength of all.”*

THE ears of Lars and Gerda were so filled with their own mourning, that they could not hear the sturdy tramp of a pair of big sabots down the Roeskild road. Their eyes were so dimmed by tears, and their heads so bowed earthward, that they could not see a pair of big muscular shoulders, a tawny-forked beard, a bronzed face and a pair of keen, kindly grey eyes that leaned over the hedge, attracted by their sobs and sighs. But only the dead or totally deaf could have failed to hear the loud challenge—
“What’s to pay, youngsters? Who’s been hurting you? Have you lost anything? Did you run away from school?”

Up sprang Lars at these words, dashed through the break in the hedge, and, clasping

his arms about the intruder on their grief, shouted—"Jens! Jens Iveson!"

"What, what!" cried Jens. "You here, my boy? You here, Lars! Frü Dagmar's son away off here on the road to Copenhagen? Where are you going?"

"To Copenhagen, to look for work," said Lars.

"And what little girl is this, crying with you behind the hedge? Is she lost? What is she crying about?"

"It is Gerda Palle, and her aunt was Uncle Kars' wife, and we have both run away from Korsor. She is crying over her Aunt—Henrietta—Gerda! I say, Gerda! stop crying! Never mind if your Aunt Henrietta is dead, we can get along without her."

"Crying because her aunt is dead?" said Jens compassionately—"and do I hear you speaking that way about one's dead kin? I never thought Frü Dagmar's son could be so hard hearted."

"But, Jens—she wasn't a really true aunt, only make-believe."

"But adopted aunts are very kind sometimes," said Jens.

"No, no, Jens, not even adopted. There was never any Aunt Henrietta at all, but a make-up, and—and now—and—"

“Come out here, little girl,” cried Jens, “come out, and tell me all your trouble. I’ll look after you. Let’s see about all this.”

Gerda crawled through the hedge, and Jens seating himself on the roadside took her on his knee, and wiped her eyes and wet cheeks on the long ends of his neck-kerchief. “There,” he said, “tell me all about it. Where was your aunt?”

“I didn’t have any,” began Gerda, “only, I was lonesome, and liked to pretend things to myself, and to tell Lars nice stories, and so I said there was an Aunt Henrietta; I played there was.”

“See here,” interrupted Lars, “let me explain it. Jens, you must know that Gerda is a very good girl, and it is not that she tells any lies, nor wants to deceive, for she don’t. But you see, Gerda hadn’t any relations, or any one to be nice to her, and no mother to pet her any, and so she began to think how nice an Aunt Henrietta would be, and she kept on thinking, until she most believed, and she told me so honest, that I truly believed there was one, when there wasn’t. Just, you see, as it is when you’re real hungry, you think of good things to eat, and you imagine all about a nice big dinner, and how it tastes, and all, you know.”

“No, I don't know,” said big Jens shaking his head; “whenever I have been hungry I've had somewhat solid to eat, sure enough.”

“Then you never lived with Uncle Kars,” said Lars with conviction.

“Where is that shriveled, mean, half-made, Bible-selling old heathen?” demanded Jens, with infinite frankness.

“I'd better begin at the beginning, and tell you the whole story” said Lars, “then you'll know how it all is,” and forthwith he began to rehearse the Iliad of his woes, and Gerda, comfortably resting against Jens' shoulder, only interrupted when it was necessary to add a deeper blackness to the character and conduct of Uncle Kars, or depict in more heart-rending colors the sufferings of Lars, or her own deep disgust at the tenor of her life with Frü Heitzen.

“And so you see,” said Lars, “I knew I ought not to stay there any longer. I'd grow to be just like him perhaps.”

“Stay? I should say not! You stayed long enough. What! the son of Frü Dagmar living with a drunken miser! That would never do,” cried Jens.

“And I thought Gerda's Aunt Henrietta would help me to get work in Copenhagen, and

so I came away, and then Gerda came too, to go to her Aunt Henrietta," continued Lars, for Aunt Henrietta had been to him so long a real personage that he could not at once reduce her to a myth, and in his story Aunt Henrietta had had so large a part that she had been in the rehearsal re-invested with all her reality, and he for the nonce believed in her as an entity.

Jens meditated in silence for a while, his honest mind worked slowly, finally he said: "I'll tell you, boy, a better thing by half. You remember that when our father died we sold our eight acres, to Gaardmand Bauer, and with the proceeds and his savings Thorrold went to America. Since then, I have sent him all my earnings also. Thorrold went to a great state called Missouri. Missouri is four times as large as all Denmark, though it is only a small piece of America. It is almost never cold there. The stock can feed out of doors nearly all winter; the grain and vegetables grow like miracles, and nobody is poor there. Thorrold has prospered wonderfully there. He has bought land and a house."

"He is a Husmand there, then?" said Lars.

"A Husmand!" said Jens, with great scorn, "better than that."

“ So! A Parcelist then? ” suggested Lars.

“ A Parcelist! Nothing so low down as that, I promise you,” replied Jens loftily. “ He is a Gaardmand, and a bigger one than we have in Denmark. He has two hundred acres of noble land, spread out flat as a table, rich as cheese, and with a stream of water flowing along it, and a belt of woods. Now, Lars, I am on my way to Copenhagen, to sail in the ship ‘ Danmark ’ for New York, as I am to share all with Thorrold, for we bought this together. You shall come with me. This will be a fine thing for you, and, as you know English, it will be fine for us. Thorrold will be glad to see Frü Dagmar’s son, and no doubt you will so prosper that in time you will be a Herremand, as you have learning in your head, and Herremand blood in your veins. I can manage enough for your fare, and when you are with me,” and Jens held out a brawny arm, “ no one will dare put upon you.”

“ Oh ”—said Lars with a long breath—“ but Gerda! What will Gerda do? ”

“ Gerda? oh she can go to her Aunt Henrietta,” replied Jens, completely beguiled by the verisimilitude of Lars’ story.

“ But, Jens, haven’t I told you there is no real Aunt Henrietta? She was only a make-believe person, like a fairy, for instance.”

Brought back to the original statement of the case, Jens meditated again. It was hard for him to understand this. He had never heard of Schelling nor Fichte nor Hegel nor Idealism, nor concept nor percept, all he knew was plain matter-of-fact; things were or they were not; if they were not, who should talk about them as if they were? He could not grasp the situation that people should think and speak of the non-existent. If Aunt Henrietta Ib had played so conspicuous a part in this story, surely she must be.

Lars continued—"What shall Gerda do? She has no home and nobody to care for her. Can't Gerda go to America too?"

"Ah," said Jens—"there's the rub. Now I'd like such a nice pretty little maid about the house, and so would Thorrold, and so for sure would Gretchen Kirche. You know that Thorrold and Gretchen have been promised to marry, this five years; and Gretchen has been nurse in a Herremand's family in Copenhagen, and she has been getting ready her household plenishing, and laying up a little purse, to furnish the house in Missouri, and to buy fowls and so on. Well, now all her gear is got ready, and Thorrold is able to marry, and I am to take Gretchen along with me, and

they are to be married as soon as Thorrold meets us at a city called St. Louis. I make sure Gretchen would be glad of this little girl going with her, but—where's the money? It would take a broad gold piece. As we go by steerage, and I would share with you, and under fifteen you go half-price, I could manage for you, but I have not money to take two—there's the worst of it."

"If that is all the trouble," cried Lars joyfully—"then Gerda can go! I can pay for Gerda, and for myself—see here!" He thrust his hand into his bosom, and, pulling out the bag, took from it the chamois skin purse, and emptied on his palm three broad gold pieces, and held them before Jens and Gerda. Gerda shrieked in ecstasy at sight of so much money. Jens stared hard.

"My mother gave them to me," said Lars, "the night that she died. She told me not to let anybody know of it, but to keep it for some very great need. I'm sure she would like my letting you know of it, for you are my friend; and there can't be any greater need or better way to spend it than this; can there?"

"The good Lord," said Jens solemnly, "must have put it into the Frü Dagmar's heart to make a store of savings, and to trust you with it pri-

vately, and not give it to your wicked uncle. The good Lord foresees all our ways in this world, from the beginning, and He has foreseen that you should go to America with me, and should take this little girl, who has no friends, and we will be her friends in the land beyond the ocean. Now those three gold pieces are meant one to pay your fare, and one for the fare of the little girl, and one to take you across that very wide land, once we get there. And I will take the money I thought to pay for your fare, and I will buy you a caped-coat, and the little girl a shawl for ship-board."

"Oh, am I to go to America! Am I to go and live where Lars does!" cried Gerda rapturously, smiles breaking over her lately wet and mournful face, as the sun gleams out after rain. "Oh I am so happy! This is much better than living with my rich Aunt Henrietta!"

"But perhaps your aunt—" began Jens, and stopped. He was met by the remembrance that her aunt had never existed.

"You are the best boy," said Gerda to Lars. "I will mend all your clothes, and knit all your stockings, and spin and weave—"

"In America," interrupted Jens, "the women never spin or weave; they buy all cloth ready made, so Thorrold writes."

“Never spin nor weave!” cried Gerda. “Then what do they do? Do they sit idle with their hands in their laps, half the time?”

“Perhaps,” said Lars, “they work out in the fields, as I hear they do in Germany. I should be sorry for that. To plow and dig is not work fit for girls or women.”

“They do not work out of doors,” said Jens, “except as our Danish women do, when they choose, in their gardens; or to feed their poultry, or see to the milking, and much of the milking is done by men. In America, Thorrold tells me, that when men are sober and industrious women have comfortable lives. But of course the wife of a drunkard never has an easy life, for her heart is always over-full, if her hands are not.”

“Well, we are all Temperance people,” said Lars, “and I shall work hard, and Gerda shall go to school, and be a lady, the same as she would have done with Aunt Henrietta Ib—if there had been any Aunt Henrietta,” he added, slowly.

“I will help Frü Gretchen cook dinner for you, and Jens and all,” said Gerda eagerly.

“Let us have dinner now,” said Lars. “I’m hungry. Jens, we have some rye crumpets.”

“And I have a good lump of cheese, and a

couple of dry herring," said Jens; "so if you will get us a cup of water from the cottage over in the field, we will have our dinner, and then go on our way."

"Shall we get to Copenhagen to-day?" asked Gerda, less fearful now of reaching the end of her journey across Zeeland.

"No," said Jens, "it will be too far for you to walk. We will stop at some Parcelist's or Herremand's, and Lars and I will sleep in the lodging with the Karles, and the housewife will give you a place in the house. By to-morrow noon we shall reach the home of Gretchen's father. He is a Husmand, with six acres."

"And when does the ship sail?" demanded Lars.

"Next Saturday morning," replied Jens. "We shall have just time to buy your passage and coat, and a tin cup, plate and spoon for each of you. Then, hurrah for the new world and the big state of Missouri, where we shall all be great Gaardmaend!"

After their luncheon by the wayside, Lars and Gerda resumed their journey, now one on each side of the big Jens. Since the time when two hours before they sat down on the edge of the road to watch the funeral proces-

sion, all the fashion of their future had changed. Aunt Henrietta was dead and buried,—and yet she kept obstinately forcing herself into the foreground of their thoughts, accompanied by her big house, her dog, her cat, and her china stove. Copenhagen did not now loom upon their horizon as a home; it was merely a place to pass through, as they pressed to the greater home beyond seas. A new family was proposed to them, Thorrold, Jens, Gretchen, but Thorrold and Gretchen did not seem nearly as real to them as their mythic Aunt Henrietta. They could not tell what was the color of Gretchen's hair, nor the fashion of her gown, but they knew Aunt Herrietta's hair was white, and her gown was of black satin, and had a sweeping train like a lady in a picture!

At evening the three wayfarers were admitted to a Herremand's farm quarters, and among the Karles Jens and Lars awakened much interest as en route for America, Jens being already partially a proprietor in that famous country, and Lars being able to speak English.

Gerda also was fêted in the Herremand's kitchen, and the housekeeper carrying report to the mistress and her daughters, Gerda was sent for to the family sitting-room. She was such a tidy, sweet-voiced, dimpled little woman, that

she made friends at once, and learning that she had no parents, and was being taken to America by the munificence of her cousin Lars, and that she had no baggage but the little bundle with a single change of clothing, there was a clamor that they must fit her out for America.

Danish girls have ample store of clothing, and the housekeeper having a little niece of Gerda's size, the Herremand's lady and her daughters purchased for Gerda a new suit complete. They also gave her a pair of leather shoes, half a dozen kerchiefs, two aprons, and two pair of stockings, and not only a new cap, but a warm knit scarf to wrap about her head while at sea. Then the youngest of the Fröken tied on Gerda's neck a goodly string of large blue beads, which Gerda thought worth all the other presents combined—except the leather shoes. She felt that already she was becoming the young lady Lars had said she should be, and she slept in happy indifference to her recent sad loss of Aunt Henrietta Ib.

The Herremand gave Lars and Gerda each a crown at parting, and wished them good fortune in their emigrant life. He was interested in the Thingvalla Line to which the steamship "Danmark" belonged, and told them that she

was a good ship, with very kind officers and a good crew.

Before noon Lars and his two companions came to the home of Gretchen Kirche. A thatched, square-built, four-roomed cottage in a garden surrounded by well-tilled fields, it was a pleasant place, but pleasanter yet to see was the sunny-faced Gretchen, in her quaint peasant's dress, standing in the door and looking up the road, watching for her prospective brother-in-law. She ran to meet him crying—

“Why, Jens! we looked for you yester evening, and now, seeing you come with these two children, I could not believe it was you.”

By this time the parents of Gretchen, her little brother and her elder sister, were also out to welcome Jens Iveson.

“I waited because the children could not travel fast. They are to go to America with us, Gretchen. This lad is Lars, the son of Frü Dagmar, the best friend Thorrold and I ever had. We have told you of Frü Dagmar, who was as a mother to us, when our own mother died and we were wild boys.”

“Is this Frü Dagmar's son!” cried the Kirche family. “And he is to go to America with you! Ah, that is well! Good luck goes

with the son of a good mother. And who is the little maid?"

"She is Lars' cousin, or something near a cousin," said Jens, "and he takes her because she is a lonely orphan, and I make sure Gretchen will be glad to have her along."

"Indeed I will!" said the amiable Gretchen. "She looks a dear little girl," and she took Gerda in her arms, and kissed her.

"For my part," said the mother, "I'm glad a Danish girl is to go with Gretchen. Time was we fancied Lisbet would go, but Lisbet has other plans now, and it is much better. I shall not be left alone of my daughters."

Lisbet looked down, blushing, and pulling her apron. She was a very beautiful girl, and was to marry a Gaardmand's son, which was a great honor, and in Denmark a very romantic incident. Frø Kirke was very proud of the success of her daughters.

After dinner,—which lasted a long time, for in honor of Jens there was a roast goose, the same as if it had been New Year's, and it took a long while to tell the curious adventures of Lars and Gerda, and all the family were much mystified about Aunt Henrietta Ib, and could not understand about her, and finally gave her up, as they did tales of Kobold or Nix,—after dinner, all

went into the best front room to see the outfit of Gretchen, which was spread on chairs and beds, ready for packing after a final exhibit. Gretchen, her mother, grandmother, aunts and cousins, had had this plenishing in view for five years, and bed and table linen, counter-panes, blankets and clothing, had been added as they had opportunity. The Herremand's family where Gretchen had been nurse, had given her many little trinkets, and proudest of their gifts, a handsome family Bible, and a purse of seven pieces of gold. The old grandmother came in from an adjoining cottage to admire and re-admire Gretchen's trousseau. She tied about the girl's neck a string of solid gold beads saying:

“There, these were mine at my wedding, and you shall have them, since you are going far from your native land, and I do not wish the foreign strangers to think we are poor in Denmark. Your eldest sister has the beads of your mother's mother, and you have mine. Promise me to fasten to them your bag of gold, and never take the two off, till you stand in the house of your husband, with God's blessing.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE SAILING OF THE SHIP.

*“There’s a track upon the deep
And a path across the sea,
But the weary ne’er return
To their ain countree !”*

IN the afternoon the relatives and friends of Gretchen Kirche came in to see her in her bridal dress, since they could not see her when she was married. Lars and Gerda thought the peasant maid looked quite as pretty as Frülen Lotze. Gretchen wore a skirt of dark green woollen, short enough to show a pair of red morocco slippers with steel buckles: her waist was of white muslin, fine and full, and over it an open jacket of black broadcloth, with flowing sleeves. The sleeves and the wide collar of the jacket were embroidered in red and gold, and she wore a wide red belt, also worked in gold. The little green cloth cap which partly covered the blond hair bound in thick braids about her head, was also worked on the edge

with gold thread; about her neck lay her grandmother's gold beads.

The lace cap and thin gold band which belonged to the mother was reserved for Lisbet, the elder girl, but that did not matter, for Thorrold had written that in America brides did not wear wedding crowns.

After the exhibition of the wedding dress, and plentiful shedding of tears by the mother, grandmother, Lisbet and the aunts and cousins, the Kirche family began to look on the bright side of affairs.

“Thorrold is a good young man and prosperous.”

“Gretchen is twenty-one, and knows how to take care of herself.”

“And to think Lisbet is to marry a Gaardmand, on her twenty-third birthday!”

“They get so rich in America, Gretchen will be coming home to visit in ten years, and ten years soon pass.”

“She goes far, but she does not go beyond the care of the good Lord who is over all.”

“The waters are wide, but God holds them in His hand.”

“Rachel left her own land and her father's house to go to Isaac.”

“Jens is to go with her, and this pretty boy

and girl; she will not be over-lonely, though it is true there is no one like a mother."

"She will write every two or three weeks. How proud you will be of the letters, Fr \ddot{u} Kirche!"

After the administration of these consolations, Gretchen, aided by kinsfolks, packed the great oak chests.

Next morning the chests were taken on a cart to Copenhagen, and Jens and Lars went along, and purchased for Lars a caped coat of a bottle green, and for Gerda a big red and black plaid shawl.

Meanwhile at the cottage Gerda washed and mended all her clothes, and those of Lars, and made two bags of oil cloth, of a piece given Gretchen by the Herremand's wife, and these bags were to hold all her and Lars' possessions. When Lars returned from Copenhagen, Fr \ddot{u} Kirche said that as he was going far, and was a good Danish boy, she would give him two shirts and two pair of stockings, which she had just made for her youngest son. She should have time enough to make Zander some more, before he went to the joiner's to learn his trade in the fall."

"I'm afraid you rob yourself, Fr \ddot{u} ," said Lars anxiously.

“Not a bit of it,” replied Frü Kirche. “Does it not say in the Good Book, ‘There is that giveth and yet increaseth; there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty’?”

“And you are to be a joiner?” said Lars to Zander.

“Yes,” said Zander, “it is a good trade and I like to use tools. The cousin of our next Gaardmand’s wife is a distiller, and he offered to take me; he said distilling is a good and easy business, and one could make plenty of money at it. But my father says no—it is not a good business, for it makes what makes men idle, quarrelsome, poor and wicked. It makes drunkards, and drunkards cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and my father wishes to see no Danes shut out of that kingdom. Also, my mother says that it is written in the Good Book, ‘Woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken,’ and if it is woe to give any one your bottle, it must be woe to make the bad stuff that is in the bottle, for a bottle is only bad from what is in it; don’t you see? So, though the distiller makes plenty of money easy, I’m not to be one; my father says it is better to have a trade that builds up, than one that pulls down.”

“ I’m glad you told me all that,” said Lars, “ for when I look for work in America, I will now remember not to be a distiller. Of course I would have known not to go in a shop to sell drink, but I might not have thought equal wrong of the distillery. Sometimes we don’t see the wrong as much on the big side of things as on the little side. The bigness makes it look sort of respectable.”

Jens and the children had reached the home of Gretchen Kirche on Thursday noon; early Saturday morning they were all to set forth in two carts for Copenhagen, as the ship was to sail at eleven.

Soon after breakfast, Gerda beckoned to Lars and led him around behind the house.

“ Lars,” she said solemnly, “ we are going to a far-off land, over the big sea, and we have no money, and no one to take care of us but God. I have heard Frü Korner and Frü Heitzen say, that if you get on your knees before you do any great thing, and say the Lord’s prayer over you, it will bring you good fortune, and the Lord will remember you. Yesterday at dinner, I heard Herr Kirche tell his cousin, that when a man named Thorwaldsen, first went away from home, and bid his grandmother good-bye, he got on his knees behind a wall

and said the Lord's prayer, and that after that, he became the greatest son of Denmark. I don't know just what he did, but it was something very great. Don't you think we'd better say the Lord's prayer too, Lars?"

"Yes," said Lars, "I think we had. I think my mother would have liked me to do that. She and I used to say it together every morning."

So down on their knees went Lars and Gerda, to say their prayer, and Frü Kirche in the room above, helping her daughter to get dressed, heard the murmur of voices, and looked out of the window. Her eyes were so dim with tears that at first she could not see plainly, but then the tears cleared away, and she saw the two kneeling figures, and the two heads reverently bent, while Lars held his cap in one hand, and Gerda's little red hands were folded over the bosom of her homespun gown.

"Gretchen, Gretchen child," whispered Frü Kirche, "come here and look! Have no fear for the ship nor for the voyage, for the good Lord will surely watch over the wood which carries these two of His dear little children, bless their hearts!"

"Gretchen! Gretchen!" cried her aunt's voice from the kitchen, "here is great news for

you. Zander Linnie has sent money for his wife Marie. Zander has found a fine place for himself, and Marie has made up her affairs in a hurry, and her uncle has spoken to the ship's clerk, that she shall have the berth next beside yours, and she is going in the 'Danmark.' She would hardly dare start now, only you are going, and she is so longing to see Zander."

"Your friend Marie going!" cried Lisbet. "Oh how nice, Gretchen!"

"You will need take great care of Marie," said Fr \ddot{u} Kirche.

And now the carts were at the door. The Kirche family rode in one, and Jens, the children, and Gretchen's aunt, uncle and cousin in the other. Gretchen and her mother and sister were crying.

"I do not wonder," said the aunt, "that my sister cries at parting with her daughter, for so far and so long, but things are very much better for emigrants now than they were when I was young. In those days the steerage passengers took all their own beds and bedding and food. The ships were very slow. It took from four to six weeks to reach America, and no one knew just how long it would be. As the people took their own food, it very often happened that their provisions gave out, while they were

yet far from port. Then, to keep them from dying with hunger, the ship's steward gave them something, often refuse and half-spoiled food, left over from the cabin, and between hunger and bad fare, cholera and fevers broke out, and many a good Scandinavian died at sea, or reached the New World only to get a grave instead of a home. But new laws were made, and the shipping companies were required to furnish beds, and keep the steerage clean and well aired, and to provide food, which is ordered and inspected by law, so it shall be wholesome and plenty. Now too the Thingvalla Line can get to New York in two weeks, or even a day less, so you see the danger and trouble and time are all far less, and yet the price is also less. Ah, the world is a power better managed than it was when I was young. I have been telling my sister, that going from one country to another is now so easy, that she and Gretchen can look to visiting each other as readily as one went from Zeeland to Jutland, when I was young. Friends of mine have written me, that all in the steerage is kept as orderly and clean as in your own home. The men have their berths on one side, the women on the other, with the eating room between, and the steerage is in the best and saf-

est part of the ship, and steerage passengers are always let land first. My friend also wrote that no drinking nor carousing nor quarreling is allowed in the steerage, and on Sundays they have a sermon, and every night they have games and singing and dancing or story-telling, as merry as you please. Oh, going to America is a very nice thing now, compared to what it was when I was young."

To those thrifty Danes, Jens Iveson and Gretchen Kirche, it would have seemed a reckless waste of money to go in the cabin or in the intermediate, instead of in the steerage. "Why," they would have asked, "should they spend good money in a little extra luxury in travelling, instead of keeping it to buy furniture, pigs and poultry, in their new home? Would not the steerage passengers get there as safely and as speedily as the other passengers? Why then waste their money, merely to have carpets and table-cloths and sweetmeats and desserts? Good tea, coffee, bread, butter, potatoes, turnips, and meat, would be served out to them, and on Sunday's a good boiled pudding,—what did people need more? If one wanted luxuries, one might carry some peffer cakes and a jar of barberry preserves for themselves, or a boiled ham to serve as a relish,

or a roll of sausage." So reasoned most of the Danish emigrants who were to sail by the "Danmark."

Arrived at the wharf where the Thingvalla Line ship "Danmark" lay, our party found the decks already crowded, and the wharf thronged with emigrants, their baggage, their friends, the vehicles in which they had come; the freight destined for the "Danmark."

Jens engineered his party skilfully through the piers, found the clerk, exhibited the tickets, and escorted the Kirche family down to the women's side of the steerage, to the berth he had obtained for Gretchen. The berth of Gerda was above that of Gretchen, and next Gretchen's berth was one, on the edge of which sat a young woman, crying, and an elderly woman with her arm about her, comforting her with—"There, there, my dear, only think how glad you'll be to see Zander, and how well he has done to be sure, in six months, and little over! Don't cry, dear!"

These were Frü Marie Linnie, aged nineteen, and her aunt.

Frü Kirche at once proceeded to make up Gretchen's berth with the bedding she had brought, sparing a good brown blanket for Gerda, and telling her to use her shawl also at

night, for a covering. Gretchen and Lisbet began to cheer up Marie, while Jens and Herr Kirche went with Lars to the men's part of the steerage, where Jens had secured two berths as near as he could to the women's side, so as to be not too far from his charge, Gretchen, Marie and Gerda.

When all was put in order below, the entire party went out upon the deck to watch the final preparations for the sailing of the ship. As they stood there, Lars saw a little three-year old child that had escaped from its overburdened mother, and, being crowded back, was almost under the feet of the dray horses. As the ship lay close along the wharf, he scrambled over the side, and rescuing the little one, carried it back on his shoulder and reached it up to Jens, just in time to silence a great clamor from the mother, for her missing youngster.

"Well done, my lad," said a hearty voice from above, and looking up Lars saw a big jolly faced man with a gold band about his cap.

Lars took off his own cap, and made a low bow.

"Is it the captain?" he asked of Jens.

"No," said an old sailor near by, who was storing some rope. "No, lad, it is Engineer Haas, and a mighty fine man too."

“Are you off for America with your parents?” said Engineer Haas, leaning over to speak to Lars.

“I am off to America to try and make my fortune,” said Lars; “but I have no parents. I am going with friends.”

“And is that your sister?” nodding at Gerda, who clung to Lars’ jacket pocket, to prevent further expeditions to the quai.

“No, sir. She is—well—a kind of cousin, and she has no one in the world but me. I mean to take care of her.”

“He gave half his money to bring me along,” spoke up Gerda; “he is the best boy that ever lived, and his name is Lars Waldsen.”

Mr. Haas laughed.

“That is a very pretty pair of children,” he said to the second officer, who stood near him. “There are many childless parents who would be proud of such a boy and girl. I’m most sorry to see so many good Danes go out of the fatherland. But Denmark is small, and America is very large.”

Finally the rushing and crowding on the wharf abated a little. The stream of people that had set in toward the ship began to turn; the friends who stayed in the homeland were taking leave of the emigrants. Marie Linnie’s

aunt kissed her a final good-bye, and left Marie crying in Gretchen's arms. Then a voice sounded through the ship, commanding all who had not tickets to go ashore. This was the signal for the Kirche family to make an onset on Gretchen, hugging, blessing and kissing her, overwhelming her with advice and parting words. Marie, Lars and Gerda drew away, and sat down by themselves, and Jens stood with folded arms and sympathetic face, much overcome by the Kirche grief. Finally he shouted out: "Don't break your hearts this way, good people; think of Thorrold waiting on the other side! The girl goes because she's willing, and you'll all sing another tune, when she and Thorrold get rich and come home for a visit, and bring two or three pretty little boys and girls with them."

A Danish pastor, going out with a large colony of his flock, to Minnesota, came by at this moment, and laying his hand on Frü Kirche's shoulder said, "Good woman, the girl is not going out of God's sight, though she goes out of yours. The God of her fathers will go with her, and we are none of us far from each other, when we are all watched over by Him."

"That is true, good wife," said Herr Kirche

with a broken voice, "and we ought to be brave enough to wish the child a cheerful good-bye. You left your father's house in Jutland, to come with me, and you have not repented of it, and our girl goes to an honest, sober man, who will give her a good welcome, and use her well."

Thus exhorted on all hands, Frü Kirche summoned up her courage and kissed Gretchen good-bye. Lars and Jens watched with interest the Kirche family making their way back to the carts, but Gerda was occupied in wiping with one of her new kerchiefs the pale cheeks of Marie, and Gretchen, though her face was turned shoreward, could not see for tears. Jens stepped to her side, put his arm around her, and waved his hand to Herr Kirche; Lars, on the other side, took Gretchen's hand, and waved his cap to her parents. The pretty Danish girl looked well protected between the stalwart Jens and the handsome boy.

"Do not cry, my little sister," said Jens; "it is the way of the world that young birds should fly from the nest, else no other nests would be built, and all the woods would be desolate."

And after that good Jens spoke to Gretchen by no other name than "my little sister."

And now the "Danmark" was free of her moorings, and began to swing out into the

stream. She had on board seven hundred steerage passengers, twenty-one intermediate, eighteen cabin passengers, and sixty-one in the crew. Out into the sound dropped the "Danmark," and from the sound to the Cattegat, and night fell before they had left Kullen Head behind, and the shores of Sweden and Denmark had dropped beneath the sea.

Those emigrants, and they were many, who had left kindred behind, saw the land and the shipping in the sound, large and dim through their tears. The few who went as entire families, were full of hope and joy, and turned smiling faces toward that New World of fabulous wealth, which should welcome them as children.

"Oh Jens," sobbed Gretchen, "people should not go away from the fatherland in this way, by one or two; they should all go together!"

"With emigrating it is as with dying," said the practical Jens, "it is not usual for families all to go at once. But think how lonely poor Thorrold was, who went all alone to a world where he had not a friend, and when he knew it would be four or five or even more years before any of us could come to him."

"Oh," said Marie, "it seems as if, if I could just get safe once to my husband, I'd not ask for another thing!"

"Never fear," said Jens, "we are all in God's keeping."

The night closed in, the lanterns were lit here and there, flaming along the darkness of the deck and steerage. Through the quieting groups passed the Danish pastor in his gown and ruff, a calm picture out of the life of the fatherland.

"My children," he said, "we are beginning a new life this day, let us all draw together and commend ourselves to God, that He may bring us to our desired haven."

Most of the steerage passengers crowded together on the deck, from the upper deck the cabin passengers and some of the ship's officers looked down, foremost among them Engineer Haas, who had just come from his supper. The intermediate passengers stood outside the larger throng of the steerage. Then Pastor Hama lifted up his hand, and recited the Ninety-first Psalm and offered a prayer. Then slowly the people went to their berths, and in the increasing silence the "Danmark" plowed her way along the Cattegat.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MAN WHO DIED AT HIS POST.

*“I saw the new moon late yes'treen,
With the old moon in her arm,
And if we gang to sea, master
I fear we'll come to harm.”*

HERR PASTOR HAMA with three or four of the richer families of his flock, who were the leaders of the Danish colony, were the cabin passengers of the “Danmark.” The pastor visited the steerage and intermediate passengers each day, and nightly had prayers on the lower deck.

Jens speedily found some emigrants who had been to America and had returned home for a visit, or to bring away their families, and he spent his time chiefly with them, learning all that he could of the crops, customs, manners, and habits of his future country. Marie Linnie was quite sick, and Gretchen remained by her berth much of the time, except when she could take pillows and blankets to the deck, and big Jens could carry the young wife there, where, resting on her improvised bed, she could get

fresher air and be entertained by seeing what was going on. Gerda found plenty of children to play with, though she liked best to linger with Gretchen and Marie, and hear their talk. As for Lars, he showed his ancient Viking blood. The sea seemed to be to him a natural home. The higher the wind blew, and the more the "Danmark" pitched or rolled, the better Lars liked it. He went by special license to every part of the ship. He climbed the masts like a monkey, to the admiration of the sailors: he plunged into the depths among the stokers: he made particular friends with the engineers, whose sleeping quarters and mess room were next the steerage, and they often called him in to talk with them, or to dine with them. The cabin passengers, leaning over from the upper deck, talked to the handsome jolly boy and dropped apples, oranges, cakes or bags of figs and nuts to him, which he shared with Gerda and her attendant train of children. The officers of the ship talked with him, and advised him to be a sailor. Hour after hour Lars might be seen waiting on sick and feeble old dames, or carrying about the crying babies of sick mothers. As a nurse he was unsurpassable, and could carry two babies at once, and soothe the most belligerent spirits. But of all

his friends in the ship Gorg, the oldest sailor, and chief Engineer Haas, were first and best. Gorg, the old sailor, was much occupied about the decks, keeping things orderly, and Lars enjoyed following him up and holding conversation while he was engaged in this way. To him the sea-life of Gorg seemed a romance; the boy had the Danish love of the sea. Jens would shake his head and say, "Unless we look out, Frø Dagmar's son will turn sailor."

"Gorg," said Lars, "how long have you been at sea?"

"Over forty years," said Gorg. "I went first when I was sixteen."

"And why haven't you got to be a captain? I thought sailors could go up and up, learning more and more about ships, until they became captains. I did not know one could be a fore-mast hand all one's life."

"That is as it is," said Gorg oracularly. "There were several things in my way. In the first place, when I was a lad and young man, I was fond of drink. When I was ashore I broke out in sprees, and spent my money, and was often carried aboard drunk. Now there is nobody more low down in the world, and with less chance of getting on, than a drunken sailor."

“And how came you to give up drinking?” asked Lars.

“I got converted, and a converted man is no longer fond of strong drink. I was the slave of the devil, and his chain was strong drink; but the Lord Jesus Christ set me free of Satan's chain. After that I was the Lord's freedman.”

“Well then, after you gave up liquor, why did you not rise and get to be at least second officer?” demanded Lars. “You know all about a ship, and the name of everything.”

“To be a ship's officer one needs more than that,” said Gorg. “One must have education. Now I cannot write more than to write my name; and as for reading, I can make out my Bible, and I can read a bit of a book or tract or a newspaper, if so be I skip the longest words and hard names. But, my lad, a ship's officer has to understand a great science called Navigation, and he has maps and charts to study. Now the words in the navigation books, and the charts, would floor me at once, also the calculations when one makes an observation. My ignorance kept me back, and my ignorance was my own fault. When I was a boy, instead of going to school, I made off fishing and sailing little boats, and other play, lounging near taverns by and by; so you see I learned nothing.

Ah, I tell you, many a man has to pay all his life by poverty and hard knocks for neglecting his opportunities when he was a boy! Now-a-days education in Denmark is free; and, more than that, it is compulsory, and I am glad of it. It's well to take lads in hand when they don't know what is good for them. After this our Danes will be able to hold their own in the world handsomely."

"Do you think I would like to be a sailor?" asked Lars.

"You might; you'd get on. You'd be a captain, no doubt. I see from the mannerly ways you have, and the style of your talk, that you have had a good up-bringing. Then, too, you read masterly well, and I've remarked you writing letters for people in the steerage. You haven't neglected your opportunities."

"Jens says for me not to get fond of the ship, or hanker after a sailor's life," said Lars.

"Well, you'd better take Jens' advice; he seems a great friend of yours, and a very good fellow. He is always clean and good-natured, and I never see him sneaking round a corner to hold a black bottle to his mouth, as some of those chaps do. I feel rare sorry when I remark a young man, that has no more respect for himself than to consider he is made for

nought better than to be a bottle to hold rum."

"Jens would be a mighty big bottle," laughed Lars. "He is six feet four inches tall, and over thirty inches across his back. You never saw a bottle so big as that, did you?"

"I have indeed, plenty of them. I have seen bottles standing twenty or thirty together, bottles nearly sixty feet high, and forty feet round at the bottom."

"O! Truly? And what kind of corks did they have?"

"The cork was very fancy, shaped like an umbrella, or a fine bunch of feathers, or a peacock's tail brush."

"Are you fooling me? Where did you see such bottles?"

"In Australia. I'm telling you true—but they were very honest bottles, and had nothing bad in them."

"Who made them?"

"He who makes all things very good," said Gorg reverently. "The bottles I tell of were trees, growing in Australia. They stand in small groves of thirty or so, by themselves, and are called "bottle-trees" from their shape. For forty feet up they are smooth and round as a glass bottle; then they narrow into a neck,

just like a bottle, and in that neck the stems of the long leaf-branches start, but they go straight up, not changing the neck shape until the top, and then they plume out like a fancy trimmed cork. They are a queer sight, I promise you, and good bottles, as I said, for only pure sap is in them. If every man in that regard was as good as a bottle-tree, and kept his blood clean as the Lord made it for him, there'd be sounder bodies and brains in this world ; you believe it, my son."

Having received thus much information from Gorg, Lars thought it time to wander down and see Mr. Haas, who was on duty at that hour of the day. He skipped down the stairs to the engine-room. The engine-room had its upper half made of panels, like window frames set with glass, that can slide up and down. Instead of going into the engine-room, where he feared he might be in the way, Lars' habit was to climb up on some boxes in the passage-way, beside the engine-room, and, sitting astride the top box, he folded his arms on the casing and thrust his head and shoulders into the engine-room.

He derived great satisfaction looking at the machinery, listening to the bells if they happened to strike, hearing the conversation between Mr. Haas and any one who chanced

to be in the engine-room, and meditating on affairs generally. Was the leather sofa running along one side of the room very comfortable? Did it not seem queer to Mr. Haas to stand way down there, and send the vessel on a track he could not see? Did he ever think that the cold rushing waters were really far up above him, and if anything knocked in the side of the ship the great waves would dash in over him in a moment? Suppose anything happened to the ship, would Mr. Haas still stand there at his post, and drive the "Danmark" along her course, striving to save her and her freight, while all others were in excitement and confusion, thinking each one for himself?

When Mr. Haas was not busy with other callers in the engine-room, or was in a talking mood, he and Lars held long conversations.

When Lars descended to the depths of the ship, and mounted his boxes after Gorg had told him about the Australian wonder, he found Mr. Haas alone and affable, and at once called out, "Mr. Haas! Gorg says he has seen bottles nearly sixty feet tall and forty feet round—lots of them!"

"Ah, Gorg has been telling you about his bottle-trees, has he? That sight impressed the old fellow greatly. No doubt they are the

biggest bottles in the world. But I have seen the smallest bottles in the world; how large do you guess they were?"

"As—big as my little finger?" questioned Lars cautiously.

"Not so long as the nail on your little finger."

"Made of glass? Were they empty?"

"They were alive, and they were full."

"Alive? live bottles? and so little! Why, Mr Haas, I think that is more wonderful than what Gorg told me."

"And also they were full of a kind of drink, kept for other—well other creatures, to feast on, or get drunk on, perhaps."

"O Mr. Haas, won't you tell me what they were?"

"Down in Mexico, there is a kind of ant which seizes another kind of ant to make bottles of. The ants which are to be bottles, are kept in the ant-hill, and the other ants go out and gather honey which they bring back and pour into the throats of the bottle ants. Before this, they bite the bodies of the bottle ants in such a way, that they will swell out, and will close up the outer openings, so that the honey which is poured into the throat cannot get out. In this way the poor ant becomes a mere bottle for its owner's use, and is filled up with honey until its

little body is distended to look like a black currant. When the owners want a drink, they go and suck up honey through the throat of one of these unlucky bottles. I think the stored up honey may become sharp or fermented, being kept in this way, for people open the ant-hills, dig out the ant bottles and sell them by the pint, to make of them a drink something like mead, only of a little sharper taste."

"Why, that's the most horrid thing I ever heard of!" cried Lars.

"I have seen things much worse," said Mr Haas. "The ant has no mind, and no soul, lives but a few months, and perhaps has not many nerves to feel with. When I see a rum-seller coaxing a man to become a drunkard, just that he may make gain out of the man, and feast on his earnings, while the poor sot brings him every cent he can make, then I think that is much more horrid and cruel than the bottle-ant business. Don't the poor fellow that drinks get full of fever and pains; don't he bloat up, and get sores on him; does not his head ache, and don't he feel cross and gloomy and degraded? and may he not live for years an outcast and miserable, just because he had to be filled up with whiskey, so that the whiskey seller may have luxuries? I call that cruel."

“So do I!” cried Lars. “It is cruel—the cruellest thing that ever was,” and as one of the officers came into the engine-room, he jumped down from his perch, and ran up to the steerage deck, where, first to Jens and a group of men, and then to Marie and Gretchen and the women and children about them, he told the marvels of “bottle trees” and “bottle ants,” and comments thereon, and so delivered two nice little Temperance Lectures without knowing it.

“Don’t you know of some more queer bottles, Mr. Haas?” he asked the next time he went to the engine-room.

“Yes,” said Mr. Haas. “I have seen men carrying to market, on their backs, the queerest looking things that ever were. They were bodies without heads, but had each four legs sticking out in a sort of reckless fashion, and the men who carried them held them by one leg and the tail. They were filled with wine, or a kind of rum, or beer. These bottles were made of the skins of pigs or goats, and I told a carrier one day that it seemed to me that that kind of stuff had much better fill the skin of a dead pig, or goat, than of a live man.”

“After it had been in such a kind of bottle, I should say people would think it too dirty to drink,” said Lars, disgusted.

“Strong drink is never too dirty for the man who loves to use it,” said Mr. Haas; “if it is dirt that drinkers would object to, they had better quit liquors at once, for they are made out of rottenness and filth and poison, made in dirty ways, kept in dirty places, handled by dirty people, produce dirty actions.”

“Sometimes,” said Lars, “I fancy how fine it would be, if I were a great king or general, and could go over the world like the knights Gerda tells about, and set every wrong right, and make all that is bad good, and live a wonderful life.”

“That little Gerda,” said Mr. Haas, “seems to be always inventing remarkable plays up on deck, or telling marvellous stories. I have seen as much as thirty women and children listening to her with their mouths wide open.”

“You can't help but believe all she tells,” said Lars. “She fooled me dreadfully about—about Aunt Henrietta Ib, and sometimes I don't know yet whether there is any Aunt Henrietta or not.”

“No doubt there are plenty of them; I had one myself,” said Mr. Haas, “but as for doing wonderful actions, my boy, few of us are sent into the world to do wonderful things. If we spend our lives waiting for extraordinary oppor-

tunities, before we set about good actions, we shall spend our lives without doing anything, and the good Lord will have to say to us, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' Our part is just to make use of common situations. A great many little good deeds may foot up equal to one big one; and the habit of doing good is worth a great deal."

"You might do some very great good action, Mr. Haas; you might stick to your engine down here, when every one was frightened by a collision or something."

"Whatever comes, I hope I'll do my duty," said Mr. Haas.

"Do you suppose anything will happen to the ship, Mr. Haas?"

"No, I don't suppose so. Accidents are the exception, not the rule. Are you afraid?"

"No, I'm not afraid. Mother always said it was no good to be afraid of things that might happen; better wait till they came. And then, I don't believe I'm as afraid to die as most people are. I haven't anybody in this world to leave, you know, except Gerda, and she has Gretchen and Marie, and if I should die, I'd go to my mother, you know, and wouldn't a boy rather be with his mother than with anybody else? I'm not fretting to die, you know.

I'm having a pretty good time, I've had lots of trouble, but mother said it was no good of fretting about trouble that is past and done. All we had to do with trouble, she said, was to try and get some good out of it, and learn what it would teach us."

"I think she was a very wise woman," said Mr Haas.

"Oh, she was! You never saw any one so wise and good. She was as good as Queen Dagmar the Peerless, that Gerda tells about. As long as I live, I'm going to try and be the best I can, so that people will believe what a good woman my mother was. I would like it if Gerda would be as good as my mother, but I suppose she never could. Do you think she could?"

"Very likely. She is but a little girl now. She seems a very sweet child, and remember, your mother was once only a little girl."

One great pleasure Lars had was in examining a big map, or chart, that Mr. Haas had in the engine-room. He would stand on the deck and get the points of the compass, turning his back to the north, holding his right arm to the west toward the course they must travel, and his left arm to the east toward the shores they were hourly leaving farther behind. Then he

would think of the countries falling far in their northwestern wake : Denmark beyond the blue floods of Cattegat and Skager-Rack, and the cold North Sea ; and the British Isles, green in the arms of the nourishing Gulf Stream, and, far far south, Bermuda and the West Indies, and, westward still, the chilly, rocky shores of Newfoundland, and still south and west, that fairer land of welcome and promise that was to be his home. And then he would hurry down after the noonday observation had been taken, and look at the chart in the engineer's room, asking : " How many miles did the ' Danmark ' make since yesterday noon ? And where are we now, Mr. Haas ? "

" We are here," said Mr. Haas, one day, pointing to the map, " just eight hundred miles from Newfoundland. Ah, Lars my boy, it is a weary way across the sea at best, and often as I have gone over it, I never like to be so far from the fatherland. Once let me get money laid up for my old age and let me reach a time of life when I can feel that I have done a man's fair work, then I will settle down and be at rest—and at home."

And at that word—there was a fearful crash, and the ship " Danmark " reeled and quivered, and in the roar and smoke and steam, the

stokers and second and third engineers rushed forward, and then, while feet trampled and voices shouted overhead, up the narrow, brass-bound staircases came grimy men carrying inert and heavy loads, and side by side upon the steerage-deck they laid Engineer Haas and Lars Waldsen, quiet and white and limp, struck suddenly out of life.

The ship's surgeon came, the officers and the engineers hurried below. Gretchen held Lars' yellow head in her lap, Marie and Gerda rubbed his drooping hands, calling on him to open his eyes, to speak to them.

"The boy is only stunned by the shock," said the surgeon, pouring a cordial between his lips; "rub him, he will come to before long."

But there were no such words for Engineer Haas; he had found rest and home, but not in Denmark; the man had died at his post.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW DEATH STOOD AT THE HELM.

*“ Since danger, toil and trouble still molest
The wandering vassals of the faithless deep,
O happier they escaped to endless rest,
Than we who still survive to wake and weep.”*

FINALLY Lars opened his eyes. “ Oh dear Lars, you are not dead, are you ! ” screamed Gerda.

“ Dead ? ” said Lars, in a weak voice. “ What has happened ? ”

“ You are safe now, be quiet, ” said Gretchen ; but in a few moments Lars struggled to his elbow, lifting his head from her lap, and there, near him on the deck, lay Mr. Haas, and the ship’s doctor was pressing the lids down over his eyes, and old Gorg was tying his hands together with one of Gerda’s treasured kerchiefs. Lars said not a word. He could understand nothing of all this.

Presently Jens came, and saying to Gretchen, “ Look after Marie, ” he took Lars up in his arms.

Then Lars heard the ship's captain, in a loud voice like a trumpet, crying, "Silence all! There is no danger! The ship is safe! All will go well if you are quiet, and make no tumult!"

Jens carried Lars through a crowd of people, and laid him in his berth. Then he bathed his head and throat with camphor, and gave him a big drink of water.

"Are you afraid for me to leave you here for a little, Lars?" he asked.

"Afraid? No; what is there to be afraid of?" said Lars. He was still dazed and half-stunned. He lay alone in his berth; the "Danmark" did not seem to be moving, except as she rolled slowly on the long Atlantic swells. There was a strange noise as of scarcely restrained cries and weeping, in the ship. Lars only realized that his friend Mr. Haas was dead.

After a little Jens came back. "Gretchen wishes us all to be together," he said. "I will carry you back to her."

"There's no need to carry me," said Lars; "I'm all right;" but when he was on his feet, he said, "My legs feel queer and shaky, as when Uncle Kars did not give me enough to eat," and he was glad of the strong arm of Jens thrown about him, as they went to Gretchen in the familiar corner of the deck. Marie made a

place for Lars to lie down by her and rest his head on her pillow. He heard mothers crying softly, and pitying their little ones for "poor dears who would never see America, but find a bed in the waters." He saw the men grouped together excitedly comparing experiences, or with pale faces searching the horizon for ships; the children had ceased their play: Gerda knelt close by him, her hand grasping his collar; he felt the hand tremble, but the usually loquacious Gerda said not a word. Jens sat down on a coil of rope, and putting his big hand on Gretchen's capped head said, "Do not fear, my little sister, we shall win through safely yet."

"I am not afraid," said Gretchen, quietly looking at the quivering lips and closed eyelids of Marie.

Then through the crowds came the ship's captain, and first officer, saying, "Courage all of you! There is nothing to fear. The 'Danmark' has broken her shaft, but we are safe. As soon as there is any wind, we will try and make sail. Have no fear! If anything worse happens, remember that you will be the first cared for, before the cabin passengers, and I shall be the last man on the ship. Keep quiet and obey orders, that is all you have to do."

Then came the Herr Pastor Hama: "Children and brothers, do not be terrified or excited. The good Lord has us in his keeping here, the same as on land. He will bring us to our desired haven. Pray to him and play your parts like true men."

Then followed the ship's doctor, a young man with a cheery voice: "Here now, good people, show yourselves true Danes! Are we not half fish, being Danes, and why should we fear the sea? Did not our fathers live on it and rule it? Our old Viking ancestors crossed the waters in a much worse kind of craft than the 'Danmark' is, even with a broken shaft. What kind of cockle-shells did our grand-dads go in, when they captured England, and raided France, and went way down to Sardinia, and even to Turkey, some say? Hallo now! let us show ourselves true Danes. Every Danish woman is as strong and brave as a man of another race; and every Danish man is worth five other men, for sure. Keep calm now."

Thus exhorted by authority, religion, and patriotism, the hundreds of passengers in the steerage remained quiet and courageous, though such words went round as:—

"The 'Danmark' can never go with those bits of sails."

“I make sure there’s more wrong than a broken shaft.”

“She rolls heavily.”

“Shan’t we ever get to America, Gretchen?” demanded Gerda.

“Yes: the good Lord will send a ship to help us,” said Gretchen.

“Jens,” said Lars, “we are now just eight hundred miles east, and a tiny bit north, of Newfoundland. We are much farther from New York, but if we could get to Newfoundland, as I have seen by the maps, there are railroads there, and we could go on to New York so, if we have money enough.”

“Never fear,” said Jens, “the good Book tells us the Lord had compassion on Nineveh because of the many children there who did not know good from evil, and the much cattle; and I make sure He will remember this ship, with its crowds of children, and scores of simple people upon her, who are all the same as silly sheep.”

About an hour after this, Lars and Jens stood by the ship’s side and watched the burial of Mr. Haas. The body was rolled up in a sail, and weighted and laid on a plank placed over the ship’s side. Pastor Hama read the burial service, and when he said, “We commit our bro-

ther to the deep," the plank was tilted and the swathed body fell with a heavy splash into the sea. "My brothers," said Pastor Hama, "do not forget that it is written, 'The sea shall give up its dead.' God will call forth from the waters the body of this his servant, at the last day."

Whispers now went through the ship that the "Danmark" could not make any progress with her sails, and that their chief hope lay in being overtaken or met by some ship. No one went to their berths; the lamps were lit, food, was passed around; but wrapped in blankets the passengers sat in groups huddled together; though some of the women laid their little ones in the lower berths, and sat on the floor near them.

The captain sent for Lars. "I hear, my boy, that you were in the engine-room when the accident happened; what can you tell about it?"

"I cannot tell any thing," said Lars. "I was leaning into the room, as I often did, talking to Mr. Haas, and he said he would be glad to be at home to stay, and as he spoke, he stooped down to pick up his pencil, and the next thing I knew I didn't know anything; and I was lying on the deck, and Mr. Haas was there, dead."

The night was long, and full of anxiety.

Then the sun rose clear, and eyes and glasses scanned all the horizon, but not a sail was to be seen. Flags of distress were flying from the "Danmark." The officers passed through the ship, commending the behavior of the people, urging them to eat and to sleep, and to continue to keep calm.

"All will go right," said the captain.

Gerda went to her berth and to Lars' berth; and came back with the little oil-skin bags she had made.

"I'm going to have our things with us," she said calmly, tying one bag to her own waist, the other to the waist of Lars. Then she considered a minute—

"Marie, shall I go get the flannel bag of things on your berth? I will throw mine away, and carry those for you."

"You are a dear wise child, Gerda!" cried Gretchen. "Keep your things as they are, I will take care of Marie's bag."

At noon there was a loud shout, a "Steamer!" and far off against the sky trailed a long dark plume of vapor, too straight and too low down to be a cloud. "It is a ship from London," said old Gorg to Lars, who was near him. "She will come near enough to us to see our signals."

“Why don't we get up sails and go a little, even if we cannot go a great ways? My mother always told me half a loaf was better than no bread,” said Lars.

“We cannot take even the half loaf now,” said Gorg. “The fact is, the ‘Danmark’ is leaking. If we put on sail, the strain will only make her leak worse. But now that ship will see our distress flag. God has sent us help, you see.”

Lars had climbed up beside Gorg, and was where he could look down on the crowds of steerage passengers. “Gorg!” he cried suddenly, “don't you see some of those men are drunk? I see more men showing drink than in all the voyage. There's Peter Kime, I did not know he drank, and see, he has a bottle to his mouth!”

“If they get drunk,” cried Gorg, below his breath, “all hope is lost! We never could get them into the boats!” He hurried off to find an officer, and Lars swung himself back among his travelling companions, making his way to Peter Kime.

“Peter! what are you taking that whiskey for? I didn't know you drank whiskey, Peter!”

“So I don't very often,” said Peter, evidently already partly intoxicated, “but you see now

if we are going under I don't want to know it."

"What!" cried Lars, "do you mean you want to die drunk?"

"Yes," said Peter. "Do I want to know I am drowning like a pig, with no one to help me?"

"You'll drown like a pig if you are drunk," said Lars angrily. "You don't talk like a man. If you keep your senses to help yourself as long as you can, and to say a little prayer to God if you find you must go under, then you won't die like a pig, but like a man."

"Ain't you afraid yourself?" demanded Peter.

Lars thought a minute. "Perhaps I am a little afraid. I do not want to drown. I hope very much the ship will help us. And then, think of all these people going to their friends, and of all the friends in Denmark! I think of Marie's husband, and of Thorrold Iveson waiting for Gretchen, and how Frü Kirche would break her heart—oh, I hope very very much the ship will get here. Peter, who is waiting for you in America?"

"My brother," said Peter.

"And who is thinking of you in Denmark?"

"My mother," said Peter with a thick voice.

"And if they hear you went down, won't they hope you went down like an honest man,

asking God to save your soul? That is what my mother would want of me. But I am better off than you, for if I go down with this ship I shall see my mother. I am not crying for myself, Peter," added Lars, as he brushed off two tears. "I always cry when I think of my mother. You may think me too big for that, as I've walked across Zeeland, and am in a shipwreck, but when his mother is all a boy has—"

Peter flung his rum-bottle far out into the water. "There! 'Don't drink, Peter,' was the last word my poor old mother said, and I said to her, 'No, I won't; keep heart up, mother, and Cris and I will soon send the money to fetch you to us.' Now I make a vow, if I can get safe over to America, a drop of that stuff shall not pass my lips again, for my old mother's sake."

But now the ship's officers were passing through the crowds with the pastor, doctor and steward. They had taken the alarm, and were making requisition for the whiskey.

"Your lives may depend on keeping sober," cried the captain. "Whiskey makes cowards and breeds broils. If we have to take to the boats a drunken crowd would swamp them. Keep sober, and you'll behave like men, and let the women and children go first. Get drunk,

and you'll crowd like crazy beasts, each one for himself. Give it up—hand it over!”

At this presentation of the Temperance question, many of the women, and the sober men, resolved themselves into a committee of public safety, and began searching for the secret stores of strong drink, and throwing it overboard. Many of the drinking men, overawed by authority, or impressed by reason, gave up their bottles; some naturally rebellious, or overstimulated by their potations, began to quarrel in a loud voice: “The captain had wrecked the ship, he had brought them into danger, he was going to drown them all, he shouldn't deprive them of what little comfort they had. The drink was all that would keep their strength and courage up. It was good Danish whiskey, fit for Danish men. They'd not be robbed, not they!”

With these rebels the captain made short work. “I act for the good of the whole,” he said firmly. “You are most of you behaving grandly, and a few rowdies shall not ruin us. I'll knock down any man who refuses to give up his liquor, or who drinks another drop.”

He re-inforced these words by exhibiting a short club, like a policeman's billy, and in fact knocked down two belligerents. The rest sur-

rendered at discretion, and Gorg and another sailor having thoroughly soused in sea water two who lay drunk, they were restored to their senses, and Prohibition triumphed on the ship "Danmark."

"If we go down," said old Gorg grimly, "we'll go down in our sober senses."

"Do you think we will go down?" asked Jens.

"No," said the old sailor; "the Lord has brought me through three shipwrecks and I believe he'll bring me through this." He stood by them, anxiously watching the steamer, which now showed her dark hull against the blue sky. He spoke to beguile the time.

"I'm hoping to spend the last few years of my life in Copenhagen. I've a little plan of my own. I want to see it through. For thirty years I've been laying up my savings. A man like me, always aboard ship, with only his rough clothes to buy, can save quite a pretty penny in time. My hope is to be able to get a little house in Copenhagen, near the water, with a sitting-room, a kitchen to cook and eat in, and five or six other rooms for bed-rooms. I'll furnish it plain, fit for sailors, and I'll do the cooking and all the work; and then I'll watch for young sailors, who might while ashore get led off to drink, or game, and

I'll board them for less than the other places do, and I'll have some books and papers, and checkers and other games, on the table in the sitting-room, and will tell sea yarns, and I'll have a good open fire and make the lads feel at home, and I'll help them find good ships; keeping them from vice ashore, I will send them aboard sober, with a little bank book in their pockets. So doing, I may prevent some fellows from going down, and may send some mothers' sons home safe."

The old sailor spoke in such a quiet, matter-of-fact tone, that those who heard him were diverted for the moment from their cares. In fact the captain had ordered him to remain among the steerage passengers, to see that nothing went wrong, and to keep up their courage by his own calmness.

"O I think that would be fine!" cried Lars. "I'd like to do a thing like that. I'd like to do something real worth doing."

"You will, never fear," said old Gorg. "You are only a lad now, crossing in the steerage, but you will be going over these seas as a man in the best cabin on the ship, and with plenty of money to use, and you'll have the heart to do good with it."

Slowly, slowly the steamer from London drew

near. She was in plain sight now. Not so large a ship as the "Danmark," her sides, her pipes, her decks plainly visible.

"What is she doing now?" asked Peter Kime.

"She's lying to," replied Gorg.

"Why don't she come up to us, if she wants to help us?"

"Too near would be as bad as too far. We don't want a collision. At sea one remembers the old proverb of our homes, 'It is often better to be friends than neighbors,'" said old Gorg, coolly.

"But what are they going to do?" asked Lars eagerly.

"They are going to talk," replied Gorg.

"Why, they can't hear that long way, not even if our captain just shouts and screams through his trumpet," said Gerda.

"Did you know that at sea ships have a language of their own, and talk with flags?" said Gorg. "You watch, and I will tell you what is said. They send up little flags of different colors, and according to the colors and the way they are placed, they mean sentences. These sentences in the signals, are the same in all nations, and the captains have each a book where the meanings of the flags are all printed. So this language of the ships is known

to all, and the captains read the signal flags through their glasses, even far off. We can see their flags without glasses. You see the signal we have, a flag at half-mast meant—' We are in trouble.' ”

The officers of the “ Danmark ” were now on the bridge, and on the other ship's bridge stood her officers. A man who had a glass made out that this was the steamer “ Missouri,” from London. Up ran the signal flags.

“ Read them!” cried the people about old Gorg. And as he translated the signals the word was passed along to all the eager throng of seven hundred emigrants, crowded to look at the ship “ Missouri.”

“ ‘ Can you take us aboard?’ our Captain Kundsén asks,” said Gorg.

“ How many are there of you?” asks the other ship.

“ Eight hundred,” says Captain Kundsén.

“ My ship cannot hold so many,” replied the “ Missouri's ” captain—Captain Murrell, as they afterwards learned his name.

“ We will give you a rope and tow you to Newfoundland,” said the “ Missouri.” “ We will not desert you.”

“ How many people have you room for?” asked Captain Kundsén's flag.

“ Only twenty,” was the reply. “ Can you keep afloat ? ”

“ I think so,” said Captain Kundsén. “ Give us the rope.”

Then the “ Missouri ” drew nearer and nearer, and a boat was let down, and a rope was sent out to the “ Danmark,” and fastened to her head, and then slowly and laboriously the great hulk of the “ Missouri ” ploughed through the waters, dragging the helpless “ Danmark ” with its freight of eight hundred souls.

Aboard the “ Danmark ” the heavy sound of the pumps was heard, and the men of the steerage eagerly lent a hand at whatever they could do, anxious to have something to divert their minds.

“ How strange,” said Gretchen, “ that this ship which helps us is named the ‘ Missouri,’ after the very state to which we are going.”

“ If we don't go faster than this,” said Peter Kime, “ we'll never get there.”

“ If a wind would rest fair for us, it would be a great help,” said old Gorg. “ The ‘ Missouri ’ could then use her sails as well as her engines, and she could make better time. Perhaps we could use some sail also, if we gain on the water.”

The weather turned much colder, and before

sunset, just in the crimson and golden splendor of the sky, rose up above the waters a great snowy temple, whose towers glittered in the glory of the setting sun.

“What is it? What is it?” cried many voices.

“It is an iceberg,” said Jens softly to Lars, “and I’m sorry to see it.”

Herr Pastor Hama came down, begging the people to eat and to sleep, and not exhaust themselves with watching. Then he had prayers. But late into the night, Jens and Lars, watching, saw silver palaces and temples stealing by them in the light of the moon.



CHAPTER XIV.

“OUT OF THE DEPTHS HAVE I CRIED UNTO THEE.”

*“And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold,
And ice, mast high, came floating by
As green as emerald.”*

THE morning rose grey and cold. A band of pale yellow light lay along the eastern sky, and in its reflection, far to the northwest there seemed to lie upon the water a vast silver shield. There were no sails now set on the “Missouri,” a strong wind was blowing from the northwest, and she labored heavily along, dragging the unwieldy “Danmark,” which lay lower in the water than she had the day before. Jens and Lars were standing near the prow, watching the great dripping hawser strained between the two ships, when Gorg came near them. He said nothing, but pointed to the distance where, tinted by the struggling day, rocked upon the tumultuous waters one of those wandering palaces of the North—a berg.

“Yes, there are three of them in sight,”

said Jens; "and in the night, I saw three go by under the clear light of the moon."

Lars remembered that under the light of the last moon he had sat on the well-trough at Korsor. How far away that time seemed! Then he watched homes in the moonlight; now—icebergs. "I wish one would come nearer!" he said.

"I don't," said Gorg, "these two ships would have a poor time getting out of the way. One of these bergs could trample us down under the water, as an elephant would tread on a mouse. They are eight times as large below water as above. Only the tip of them, so to speak, lifts above the waves. As soon as the bottom melts off, until it is only six times the size of the top, over the thing goes. Ah, that's a form of water it's well to give a wide berth!"

"What makes the sea shine so over there, where it's so rough?" asked Lars, pointing northwest.

"It is an ice field," said Gorg. "This heavy wind from that quarter is bringing down the Baffin's Bay ice. It lies right in our course to Newfoundland. I doubt the 'Missouri' will hold to that tack very long."

"What makes our ship lie so low?" asked Lars. "At this rate, the waters will wash the

deck after a little while, unless the waves go down."

"If the waves do go down, we seem to be going down too," said Gorg, in a low tone.

"Then the 'Missouri' will have to cast off that cable, else we will pull her under too," said Jens with a groan.

"That is not the way ships and sailors behave. She will not see us perish under her eyes. The captain, it is to be hoped, will jettison the cargo and take us aboard."

"What is jettison?" demanded Lars.

"It is to fling overboard the cargo," said Gorg. "Don't you see the 'Missouri' is piled high over her decks with bales. Her cargo is chiefly rags, going to America. Men are worth more than rags."

"What do they take rags to America for?" demanded Lars, who could not understand that, while all seemed so orderly and quiet about him, danger was hourly increasing. Curiosity rather than fear was in the ascendant: the peril of the hour excited him, satisfied his love of adventure, and—as it is ever with youth—it could not seem possible that death was near at hand. The over-wearied crowds about him were most of them "sleeping for sorrow"

and for fasting. The officers were sounding the water in the hold.

"The rags are to make paper of, boy," said Jens, "but we have other things than rags and paper to think of now."

"Hallo!" cried Gorg, "the 'Missouri' speaks to us."

The passengers were waking up, realizing once more their state.

"What is it? What does she say?" cried one after another.

"'I cannot keep this course any longer,' she says," interpreted Gorg.

"Do whatever you think right," our flag says.

"I shall have to take you to the Azores," says the "Missouri."

"All right," says the "Danmark."

And now the rope slackened in the water. The head of the "Missouri" turned, describing the segment of a great circle. Slowly she changed her course. No longer the sharp prow pointed to the west. South, south and by east, she turned, and with her swayed the helpless bulk of the "Danmark," turning, turning, until the backs of the emigrants were toward the land where they would be. Then a great tumult began to rise from the crowded decks.

“Where are we going? What is to become of us? Why does she change her course?”

Now sails were set on the “Missouri.” She had the strong northwest wind at her back, and cut a wide white furrow, which broke in foam against the low-lying bow of the “Danmark,” as she followed the “Missouri’s” track, and trembled and quivered at the shock of waters, and the laboring of her pumps.

“Where are we going? Where are we going?” was the cry.

The ship’s officers strove to quiet the confusion with explanation.

“The ‘Missouri’ cannot hold her way against the northwest wind. She cannot risk meeting the ice. She has left her course for us, and is running toward the Azores, hoping to meet on the way ships which will help us; or at least to land us at the Azores, so that we can find other ships there. Still we are safe. Be patient: be quiet: be brave: show yourself Danes.”

“Where are the Azores? Is it far?” asked Marie, looking at Jens.

He pulled the elbow of Gorg. “Tell the woman—is it far?”

“About half as far as it would be to go to Newfoundland,” said the sailor. “Don’t fret: see how much easier it is now that we go with

the waves ; and also we go faster, and the course will be shorter, and we shall be running away from the ice and cold, into warmer parts.”

“ Islands !” cried some, who had heard of Iceland, or even of the adventures of Robinson Crusoe. “ Islands ! what like are they ? Will there be aught to eat ? When will we get to America ? Are the Azores savage islands, with wild cannibals on them ? ”

“ Why, idiots,” said Peter Kime bluntly, “ I’ve seen ships from the Azores at Copenhagen, bringing embroidery, and linen, and lemons, and I make sure they are no more cannibals there than we are.”

“ The islands belong to Portugal,” said Gorg, “ and they are fine and warm and friendly ; and there will be ships there to carry you to America, and us sailors back to Europe. The Azores lie about on a line with New York and Philadelphia, and you’ll get to one of those ports, no doubt.”

“ I will be glad,” said a poor mother, “ to get where it is warmer, for the little ones are perishing with cold and wet. What a time we have ! I wish I’d been satisfied to stay in Denmark, and had not egged on my husband to go to America. But I was so ambitious for the children, that they should rise in the world,

and not be Insidders, like their grandparents before them. Ah, pride's an ill weed to get in the heart! It thrives till soon it is all the same as if the devil with his horns and hoofs were inside of one. Here are my poor babes, to be drowned corpses, and not Parcelists or Gaardmaend!"

"Hush, woman," said Jens, gently. "A year from now you will be all settled in Minnesota, and you at your house-cares, and the children at school, and this will be only something to talk about."

For a few hours hope and comparative peace reigned on the "Danmark." The people ate, dried their clothes, washed the children, and gave them clean aprons; and the question of how much the length of the voyage might be increased by their disaster was discussed.

"There's one comfort," said an elderly couple, who were going to their children, who had come over among the pioneers of the Minnesota colony, "our folks in America will know nothing of this, and will not have to worry over us, before we get there to say we are safe. Nor will they hear news in Denmark till they hear good news."

They none of them knew that at the time of

the accident to the shaft, a boat and some other wreckage bearing the name of the “ Denmark ” had gotten adrift, and, being picked up by New York bound vessels, would fill the hearts of waiting friends with unspeakable dread.

“It is always so much easier,” said an old woman, “to bear trouble when you can bear it alone, and are not breaking other hearts.”

As none of the children felt like playing, the situation being still too full of gloom, some of them came about Gerda, and asked her to tell them a story. Gerda’s tongue had been silent under the restraint of terror for so long, that she did not now need much urging to take up her chronicles.

“Once—when I was a little girl, and lived in Copenhagen, I went to the theatre. The king and queen were there. They had on their crowns, and they sat in splendid chairs, all gold, and you never saw such a splendid place in all your lives! I went with my Aunt Henrietta Ib.”

At these familiar syllables, Lars turned about quickly. “Gerda, I do not think you ought to say that any more since—”

“ Well,” said Gerda, looking puzzled as to how to get on without her favorite mythus—“ well I really truly did go once to the theatre in

Copenhagen, when I was a little girl, before my father died—I did honestly. Perhaps the king and queen were not there.”

“Then tell about that, then,” said Lars.

“So I am, boy! Why don't you let me alone? It was splendid there, and I don't know what they were playing, only there was a drinking cellar, and a lot of men there in gowns like priests, only not priests.”

“Students, perhaps,” suggested Peter Kime, who was listening; “there are always plenty of them in drinking cellars—more's the shame, for learned men ought to know better.”

“Yes, maybe students,” said Gerda: “and a man came in and said he would treat them. And he took a gimlet and bored for each one a hole in the table,* and made a wax cork for it. Then he said for every man to drink all he liked, only he must not spill one single drop. So they all drank, and they got noisy, and by and by they let the drops spill on the floor. Then, wherever a drop fell, fire sprang up and burnt and flamed, and scorched them and blazed all along the cellar. It looked awful. Then all the students began to quarrel, and to catch hold of each others' hair and noses, and pull out knives and fight—”

* Scene from “Faust.”

“ What !” cried a little Copenhagen girl, who had been to a Christmas or Easter pantomime, “ wasn’t there any little Cinderella carried off in a pumpkin to marry a king? Wasn’t there any Sindbad hanging to the leg of a great big bird, nor any men that knocked—”

“ There were knocks enough,” said Gerda with asperity, vexed to have her province of *narrateur* intruded upon. “ Didn’t I tell you they were all fighting? That is all I remember about it. And I would not have remembered that, only my father took me, and he said the play was true, for whiskey drink was fire, and when it went into a man’s throat it burnt up his heart, and his mind and his soul, just like the drops burnt in the cellar, and he said that fights always rose out of drinking.”

“ Aye,” said Jens, “ treat and beat; that’s about it. Bring a man in and treat him, and in no time you are ready to beat him.”

“ Bars and broils, beer and blows, go as naturally together,” said Peter Kime, “ as the toasting fork and the toast, the gridiron and the meat.”

“ My father,” said Gretchen, “ used to read us this verse from Proverbs, ‘ The beginning of strife is as the letting out of water, therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.’

And he said we might turn it to the drinking, for the beginning of a drinking carouse was as the letting in of water through one of our dykes, and it was well to leave it off before you began with it."

"I've made a vow," said Peter Kime, "that if ever I get safe ashore to my brother, I'll not touch a strong drop more. I'll work hard to send for my old mother, and she shall see some good of her days with her two lads."

"Woe's me," cried a woman, bursting into tears. "We are more likely to be ruined this trip by too much water, than by too much beer or rum. You're safe taking the vow, Peter Kime. It's my belief you'll never see land. Yon ship will cut us loose in the night, and slip away from us, and leave us rolling on the seas."

"Not if the captain fears God," said Marie. "He who fears God will not desert his brother in his need."

"Aye, aye, it would be passing easy to say the rope broke, and they didn't know we were missing. It is like the man will go four or five hundred miles out of his way for a few hundred poor Danes!" replied the woman, crying bitterly. "Me and my man have had hard times all our lives. And we've worked and saved

to get the rix-dollars to take us to America to try and have a comfortable home for our old age, and we meant to send for our two girls and the little boy. But here's the end of it.”

“ The end is as God wills,” said Gretchen. “ I believe we will be saved.”

“ You young folks can take it easy, you left no children behind,” replied the woman. But this brought before Gretchen all she had left on the Danish shores, and the lover who was waiting in America. Her fortitude failed her. She bent her head upon Marie's and moaning—“ Oh mother, my mother! Oh, Thorrold, Thorrold—” burst into bitter weeping. Marie put her arms about her, and cried in company. In truth there was a growing discouragement shown aboard the ship. Watching, the irregularity of their meals, owing to their excitement and distress, was telling on the people; they were less strong, and with failing strength came increasing despondency. They had also suffered from cold, fearing, as they had, to go to their beds at night. The children partaking of the discomforts of their elders, cold, weary, no longer played merrily, but crouched by their parents, and by their fretting and crying added to the miseries of the hour.

Now suddenly a gun sounded over the sea,

and a puff of smoke curled away from the bows of the "Danmark." A small gun at the bow had been fired, to call the particular attention of the "Missouri," amid the increasing uproar of winds and waves. Jens looked at old Gorg. The sailor shook his head.

"It is a distress gun," he said—"see, they are throwing out signals."

"What do they say? What is it? What is wrong?" were the cries.

Gorg replied, "Wait a little, wait until I see the answers," but he whispered to Jens—"Our captain says to the captain of the 'Missouri,' 'We are leaking badly.' And the 'Missouri' replies, 'What shall we do?' Now the flags of Captain Kundsén say—'Keep on towing.'"

"What time is it?" demanded some one, "will this day never end?"

"Most like it will end in another world," replied a man with a watch; "it is now ten o'clock."

"Aye," said another, "we're done for. It is well to be prepared to die."

"It is always well to be prepared to die, my friends," said Herr pastor, coming among them. "In the midst of life we are in death, and no man knows at morning whether he will see evening, though most of us live as if our

souls had a long lease of our bodies. There is no fresh danger here. Your part is still patience, obedience, courage. And we hope all will be well. But the captain wishes you to put on your warm clothes, take all your money upon your persons, and eat a full meal, that you may be warm and strong, and ready for whatever happens.”

At this there was on some parts a great outburst of weeping and moaning, but the wiser portion at once began to obey orders, and to exhort the others to confidence. So presently, by force of good example, every one was busy securing valuables, putting on more clothing, and making and drinking hot tea and coffee, and distributing abundant bread and meat.

In a painful crisis, having something to do cheers the heart, and the effect of these little activities among the steerage passengers was renewed calm and ability to obey orders. This was fortunate, for in less than two hours the flags were speaking again. This time the message was short and sharp. “ Help ! we sink ! ” At once the “ Missouri ” slackened speed. “ Can you take us aboard ? ” asked Captain Kundsén.

“ Yes, I will ! ” came from Captain Murrell.

And now those on the “ Danmark ” saw the

decks of the "Missouri" swarmed with men flinging her cargo into the sea. Over went the huge bales, bobbed awhile on the water like corks, and then, water-logged, began to sink, and went rolling away nearly submerged. The two steamships drew as near together as was safe, boats were let down from both ships and Captain Kundsén, trumpet in hand, made proclamation—

"Your lives now depend on quiet and obedience! If you keep still and obey orders exactly, we will put every man, woman, and child of you safely aboard the 'Missouri.' This ship will not stay above water over seven or eight hours longer. Yield yourselves quietly to our help and the plans we make. The women and children are to go aboard first. Then the men from the steerage, then the men of the cabin and intermediate, then last of all the sailors. The first officer and I will be the last men on this ship. Now act like good Christians, and good Danes."

There was profound silence. A sudden calm settled over all these seven hundred emigrants as they summoned up courage and resolved to meet their fate bravely. Mothers hugged their children closer and shed a few silent tears; families drew together; women who

had no small children, took up in their arms the little ones of some women whose children were all small. Men exhorted their wives to have no fears in the boats and that they themselves would soon join them on the other ship.

The doctor came down. "You, women, all of you! remember that on your being quiet and letting yourselves be put into and out of the boats quickly the lives of these men depend! If you make the matter long, this ship may go down before we are all out of it."

The sun shone brightly. It was high noon. The sea rolled in great swells like hills, and it seemed as if it must be impossible to make the transfer from ship to ship, in those small boats on those heavy seas.

Jens whispered to the pastor and the doctor, then he and Gorg picked up Marie, Lars seized the arm of Gerda, some one took Gretchen, another group was swept up quickly, and Marie, Gretchen and Gerda were in the first boat, while Jens and Lars scrambled back to the deck like cats. "Hi! boy, you may come!" cried one of the men in the boat. "There's room for a younker."

"Take her then," said Lars, seizing a little girl and pushing her into the arms of Gorg, who flung her into the strong grasp of the sailor.

Lars looked at Jens. "Jens, let us be the last; some one must be, and we've no mothers nor such—"

"Aye," said Jens, "we'll let the family men, and the mothers' sons go first, my boy; our mothers are both higher up."

Boat after boat, boat after boat, no struggles, no loud cries, a few sobs, many pallid faces, a wringing of hands that might be parting forever, and hour after hour the work of transfer went on with ever-increasing speed.

CHAPTER XV.

WHEN THE NIGHT WAS DARKEST.

*“ And now the storm blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong,
He struck with his o’ertaking wings,
And hurried us along.”*

It took five hours to make the change of passengers from the “Danmark” to the “Missouri.” Not an accident occurred, not a limb was broken, not a life lost. The hardy sailors, English and Danish, worked, each man a hero; such mighty Danes as Jens and Peter Kime lifted women, and weaker men, and tossed little children in safety over the great green swells, into arms outstretched to hand them to their mothers. When the last boat-load of women reached the “Missouri,” and the transfer of the men began, a loud cry went up from the decks of the “Missouri,” from women in deadly terror of seeing the “Danmark” go down with their husbands and sons aboard, and every boat-load was welcomed with wild shouts of joy and relief, and friends were greeted with rapturous

embraces, as if they had been parted for years or had come back to earth from beyond the borders of the grave. Every passenger had left the "Danmark" when, in the first boat that carried sailors, went Jens, Lars and Peter Kime, Pastor Hama, the ship's surgeon, and certain sailors. Still on the deck of the "Danmark," now low to the water's edge, stood Captain Kundsén and his officers alone. "Come at once or you will go down!" shouted Captain Murrell, and then, having "saved all that were with them in the ship," these heroes of the sea flung themselves into the last boat, and as they stepped upon the "Missouri" the hawser between the ships was cast off, and with great strokes of her engine, the "Missouri" made haste to put more sea-room between herself and her sinking neighbor. As soon as the feet of Lars touched the "Missouri" a little figure in a blue gown, the ends of a red kerchief fluttering behind her neck, came flying down the deck to meet him. "Oh Lars, Lars!" cried Gerda clasping her arms about him. "I was so afraid you would be drowned! I cried all the time! Why didn't you come in the boat with us? The men said you could."

"Do you think," demanded Lars with scorn, "that I'd be so mean and greedy as to crowd off

first, when there were women and little children left behind?"

"I went," said Gerda, much abashed. "Was I mean and greedy?"

"No, of course not," said Lars, loftily, "you are a girl, and that makes the difference; besides it was your business to keep with Gretchen. Where are Gretchen and Marie?"

"They're in the cabin!" cried Gerda. "They have a little room all to themselves, and Frù Klum,—just like ladies. No one else except the first cabin passengers has a little room," and Gerda tossed her yellow head, with just pride in the promotion of her especial friends.

But oh, how the "Missouri" was crowded! Packed together, not even room to lie down, except for the very feeble. And yet at first not a word of murmur or complaint was heard. Every face was full of joy and gratitude at feeling once more a strong ship under them. Thankfulness for spared lives overpowered every other emotion. The families settled themselves together, taking up as little room as possible. The children were distributed wherever there was a lap to hold them; men put strong arms about their wives to give them support, and now it was six o'clock, and the last

vestige of the wreck of the "Danmark" was out of sight.

The dark came down early, for the sun had set in black clouds, the wind rose to a gale, and an awful storm broke upon the over-crowded "Missouri"; the waves washed across the decks, wetting the frightened, huddled, groups. The sailors of the "Missouri" hastened to spread sails over the crowds on the open decks, to shelter them a little from the wind and water. The cabins, the fore-castle, every sheltered part of the ship was thronged with women and children, and it was beautiful to see the self-sacrifice and heart-kindness shown.

"Take my place; you are an old woman, and I can stand the exposure better."

"Come in under shelter, and I will go on deck; your baby is but young."

"Take my place down here, for you are the mother of little children, you cannot afford to die yet, and I am a woman alone."

Added to the storm, the cold and the wet, was hunger. The "Missouri" had not food for eight hundred guests, that every one should have enough. Soup was made, and a small portion of ship's biscuit and soup passed to each one. Here again with homely kindness men pressed their portion of food to

the lips of nursing mothers, or silenced with it the ravenous hunger of children.

And now some sobbed that they were as surely lost as ever: this ship could not stand the storm, they must sink before day. Others moaned over their lost property: household gear, clothes, tools, seeds, their little all had gone down with the "Danmark." Destitute and homeless, they would be landed on the shores of the new world. The thrifty Danes little liked the prospect of being pauper emigrants.

"The Thingvalla Line will pay us for all our losses," suggested a man. "I know the laws."

"Aye, but when? We'll have a chance to starve to death, before we're paid."

"Not we. Them as is to drown before day won't live to starve."

"We might as well starve as reach America without a change of clothes, or a blanket to our beds."

"And never a bed to lack a blanket either. We're doomed."

"What's the use of lamenting, man? They've done for us all they could."

"If this ship had run by us in our trouble, she would now be safe beyond this storm. We're guests aboard, as one may say, and why be

ungrateful? If we must drown, let's make no noise over it."

"The good Lord may deliver us out of this, as out of what's gone before."

And so amid their troubles, staunch courage and faithful patience prevailed, and order was maintained on the "Missouri."

Jens had seized on Lars and Gerda and put them in a corner of the cabin. "I'll be just beyond the door," he said; "if I'm needed, call for me. You stay here."

Gerda pitying the condition of those without, went and wrapped her plaid shawl about a woman and young girl, a mother and daughter, clinging close together. Lars handed his soup over to double the portion of an infirm old man who leaned on Jen's broad shoulder for support; and then he and Gerda shared what was given Gerda.

"Lars," said Gerda, "I think you and I are the only ones who saved all our things; our oil-skin bags are just as safe tied to us as ever."

"It is a time when it is well to have nothing," said a mother near them; "you have the less to mourn over. Ah, the good oak chests of clothes and bedding I have lost in yon ship!"

"But think of Gretchen!" cried Gerda. "She saved nothing. All her beautiful marriage

dress, and the goods she has worked on this four years, and all the gifts from her friends at home, gone down in the sea."

Just then the voice of Gretchen called "Lars! Lars! come to me." Lars, by the dull light of a swinging lamp, made his way over and among the crowded figures on the floor, to the little door behind which stood Gretchen with a bundle.

"Lars, Marie Linnie has a little baby, and I don't know how to take care of it. I can't keep my feet, and if I put it in the berth it will be thrown out and killed. Bless the little dear! She has come to a world of trouble. I believe you are the only creature on this ship that can keep your legs in all this pitching and rolling! Won't you take her? Whatever you do, keep her rolled up, and don't let her head get hit. Here's my shawl to wrap over you, to keep her sheltered."

"All right," said Lars, "hand her over. Don't fear for her, Marie! I'll keep her as safe as if she was in a cradle. I don't mind the way the ship acts. When you want her, call out, Gretchen," and very proud of his appointment as head nurse to the new passenger on the "Missouri," he made his way back to Gerda. Thinking it kind and polite to inform Jens, he

put his head out of the cabin door and shouted, "Jens! Frü Marie Linnie has an awfully nice little girl—only—she isn't very big."

"Bless the boy, how well he handles that baby!" cried one of the women. "I'd take it myself, only I'm tumbled about like a ball with every lurch of the ship. I can't take care of myself, let alone a baby."

"It's well for us we are packed so tight we haven't far to fall or roll," replied another, "or we'd get our bones broken each plunge. Ill fare the day I left my home in Denmark!"

Meanwhile Lars was bestowing himself in his crowded corner. "I've got Gretchen's big shawl, Gerda," he said. "Now you wrap it round you, and leave an end to fetch up in front of me over this baby, and you get in here between me and the wall, and try and go to sleep: then if I do give a jerk with the ship, why, the baby will have you to hit against and she won't be hurt. I'll put out my elbow and my knee and make a kind of brace for you, Gerda, so you will not be tumbled about, and you can sleep as snug as a kitten."

"I wish I could see the baby," said Gerda.

"So you can," replied Lars. "I'll pull open the corner of her blanket. Oh look! Her eyes are wide open, and she is sucking her thumb."

“Poor little soul, she’s hungry,” cried one of the women. “She’ll starve before morning. And the cold and colic she’ll get! She ought to have a drop of hot sling. There’s nothing equal to a taste of gin-sling for a baby to keep the cold off. I’ve a spoonful or so of gin in a bottle, in my pocket; if I had a little hot water, I’d give her what would send her to sleep like a top.”

“Her mother didn’t say she was to have anything,” said Lars.

“Frü Heitzen always said all gin and such stuff, was bad for babies,” interposed Gerda; “she never gave it to her three, and they were as strong as rocks.”

“And I’ve raised six without it,” quoth an old woman, lifting her grey head from an opposite side of the cabin. “I say, why give a child a bad taste when the Lord sends ’em into the world free of it? The world’s full enough of evil for ’em, poor dears.”

“They don’t all be born without the taste then, Frü,” said a younger woman. “There’s them as has parents who takes over-much, are born with a real craving for the stuff, and smacks their lips over it, like toppers. I’ve seen it.”

“More blame to the parents of them then,”

cried another. "It is a hard world, as you say, sure enough, Frü; what with poverty and toil and sickness and fire and accidents, and losses, and death, and disappointments and going to sea in ships, it's hard enough; and it is a pity to stir up more trouble with stuff that always does more harm than good. It's a bad world the child's come to, in this storm."

"Well, she's not going to have anything unless Frü Linnie says it," proclaimed Lars, feeling himself master of the situation, as in possession of the baby, and the only one able to keep his legs. "She is going to sleep just as nice. Why don't you go to sleep too, Gerda?"

"Lars," said Gerda, "I—I want to say my prayers before I go to sleep. Don't you think we'd better say the Lord's prayer again, Lars?"

"Yes, let's," said Lars, so Gerda scrambled to her knees, clinging to his shoulder, and they bowed their heads together over the baby.

Jens, standing on the deck, leaning against the cabin door, saw this simple scene. Captain Murrell had come down through the ship, to see how all was going, leaving for the instant the first officer on the bridge. Jens could speak no English, but he gently touched the captain's elbow, and pointed within the cabin.

Captain Murrell turned; under the wavering

light of the swinging lamp he saw the little group, the two foreheads bent together in an arch above the bundle clasped in Lars' arms.

He stepped nearer. The children murmured in Danish, but the cadences and the similarity of many Danish and English vocables made the prayer plain to the English captain; he lifted his gold-corded cap, bowed his head, and his heart joined in the orison.

The prayer was ended, and Gerda, content, nestled down between Lars and the wall. Lars raised his head. There was the captain. He spoke in English.

"Gerda, sir, is wanting to go to sleep, and we said our prayer."

"And what have you there in your arms?"

"Frü Linnie's new baby. Would you like to see her, sir?" and uncovering the little head that Captain Murrell might view the last arrived passenger on his over-burdened ship, he said—"Some of them think she wants something to eat, and some of them think she wants gin, but I don't think she wants anything but her thumb, and that she's got! Isn't she a pretty baby, sir?"

"Very fine indeed," said the captain. "What do they mean to name her?"

"I don't believe they've thought of that yet; she's just come," said Lars.

"Well, to-morrow I'll give her a name, a right staunch, sailor-like name," said the captain, laughing. He was intent on lending the distressed crowd about him some encouragement.

He went out—back to the bridge, and somehow the sight of the tranquil babe, the fearless children, the calm confidence of Gerda lying down to sleep as if in her bed at home; the prayer breathed humbly and trustfully to Him who holds the waters in His hand, had comforted and revived the heart of Captain Murrell. In darkness and tempest, with nearly nine-hundred souls under his care, the burden had pressed heavily upon him—and now all at once, he felt it shared, nay verily carried, by Him who bears up the pillars of the universe. His voice sang cheerily as he went back to the bridge.

Lars translated the promise of the captain for the benefit of the listening women. It had the effect intended. "I wonder what the name will be," said one. "A boy's name, no doubt; he'll forget she's a girl." "He will be sure to give her a fine present for the name," cried a third. "She is a lucky baby, sure enough." "Stormy Petrel is the only name fit for her," interposed Jens.

What! then the captain was talking of to-morrow and calm, the baby needing a name, as assured? Certainly the danger could not be so great as they had thought! No doubt their fears arose from their ignorance, and the storm was not so terrible after all! These suggestions passed around the cabin and quieted the terror there. Soon others beside Gerda were asleep: one by one, the women and children, exhausted by two nights of watching, by the alarms of the transfer from ship to ship, by hunger and by sorrow, slept and for a time forgot their woes. Lars, too, after assuring the safety of his charge, fell asleep, and never did a baby behave better than this little Danish maiden who had come into the world in mid-ocean. She slept all night in Lars' arms, asking for no further comfort than could be found in her tiny thumb.

Morning came; the wind fell: the waves gradually quieted. The "Missouri" had run out of the ice and the air was less cold. The sun came out and the sailors of both ships set themselves to remove the sails spread over the huddled passengers on the decks, and to try and provide drier quarters. People stretched and rubbed themselves, and those who had been in the cabin or below, gave their places to those who, cramped and cold, had lain all night on the

decks. Coffee and biscuit were served, with the explanation that very small rations must suffice, as the "Missouri" was not provisioned for such a throng.

Lars restored the baby to Frü Linnie with the information, that the captain meant to name her when he could find time to think about it.

"Poor little soul," said one of the women, "without a robe to put on it, or a morsel of lace to spread over its pillow."

"Yes, it has a dress too," said Gerda; "Gretchen brought Frü Marie's bundle, though she left all her own things. Gretchen has lost all her nice clothes, and all her bridal dress, and all her house goods and the Bible the Herremand gave her."

"Poor soul! Poor dear! That is what comes of going to sea!"

"But she couldn't have left a little baby without any clothes, could she?" demanded Lars. "Of course she brought the baby's things; big folks can get on. And then Gretchen loves Frü Linnie, for they went to school together. Besides, Gerda, she has something: she has on her neck a string of gold beads, and nine broad pieces of gold. That will buy clothes for her."

"But not good Danish clothes, and strong homespun, and good hand-made linen, and

woollen, that would wear a hundred years ! And oh, where are clothes and goods equal to those you spun on your own wheel, and wove on your own loom, and the fingers of your own home folks set stitches in ? ” Thus the listening woman.

“ Well,” said Lars, “ we ought to be glad we didn’t go down with the goods, oughtn’t we ? Gretchen’s mother, and Thorrold would feel a deal worse, if she was lost as well as the chests ; wouldn’t they ? ”

“ True for the boy ; we’re an ungrateful set,” said Frū Goerner. “ Why, neighbors ! suppose the ‘ Danmark ’ had sunk before they could get our men-folks off to us ? Or suppose some of the children had been drowned, tossing from one ship to the other ! We are a very ungrateful set, and regard little the mercy of the good God. ”

Captain Murrell, intent on cheering his uncomfortable passengers, and diverting their minds from their losses to the ordinary incidents of life, requested Pastor Hama to hold a little service and announce the name of the baby of Frū Linnie. When all the people were gathered and quiet, Pastor Hama made them a little speech, telling them that in four days more it was to be expected that the “ Missouri ” would

make the Azores, where food would be found in plenty, and transportation to the United States for those who could not be carried further by the "Missouri." They would probably have no more storms, and would be running into milder air, also they would have no more passage money to pay, and they might comfort their hearts about their lost property, inasmuch as the Thingvalla Line was rich and honorable, and would make, in good time, fair compensation. Then Pastor Hama pointed out the further need of patience with their crowded quarters and short supply of food; he remarked on the great humanity of Captain Murrell and his officers and crew, and begged the rescued people to show their appreciation of his humanity, by exemplary behavior and making all things as pleasant, orderly and easy as possible. Finally, he praised them all, in the names of Captains Murrell and Kundsén, for their admirable courage and quiet during the terrible scenes of the day before.

After that he said, smiling, that instead of losing any of their passengers they had added one to their number, a little maid, none the less a true Dane that she had been born in mid-ocean.

Then Lars stepped proudly forth, holding

the babe, dressed in its simple best, and Herr Pastor announced the "first-born child of Herr Zander and Frü Marie Linnie," and asked the good Danes all to unite with him in prayer for a blessing on the little one and her parents. "Herr Captain has promised to select a name," he said. "What is the name, Captain?"

"Atlantic Missouri," responded the brave sailor firmly.

And Atlantic Missouri the babe was ever after called.

Gerda regarded the baby with great pride. Gretchen had put on it a long robe, and laid it upon one of the berth pillows, which Lars had covered with his mother's treasured purple handkerchief. Lars was somewhat confounded by the curious name, and remarked aside to Jens "that it was longer than the baby," but added, "It don't seem to hurt her a bit; she didn't cry a whimper when she heard it."

"'Tis a queer name," said Jens; "but then one can find something for short, and so long as she thrives and behaves herself, the name makes small difference."

This little scene on the deck gave the people new subject of conversation. The sun shone brilliantly, the "Missouri" pursued her way in

a steady, business-like fashion which promised well for reaching the Azores. The children began to chatter, and tell stories, as they had no space to run around and play; the young people, clustering together, began to sing Danish songs or church hymns, and peace reigned on the good ship.

CHAPTER XVI.

A TROPIC ISLAND.

*“ Yon deep bark goes
Where traffic blows
From lands of sun to lands of snows,
This happier one,
Her course hath run,
From lands of snow to lands of sun.”* 1

TIME was when Portugal was mighty. Prince Henry the Navigator, early aroused an interest in geography, navigation and astronomy.

Tristram Vaz discovered Madeira, one Diaz found for his country the Cape Verde Islands, lying as treasure-trove upon the seas ; another Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope, provoking, less than eight years later, the ambition of Columbus, and Vasco de Gama found the southern path around Africa and over the India Ocean to India, and then Goa, Ceylon, the Moluccas, and all the Empire of India began to pour their riches into the harbors of Portugal —“ ivory apes and peacocks and the peculiar treasure of

kings." Then Cabral discovered and seized Brazil, and cruising round to find so splendid a spot, came upon the Azores on his way, and picked them up for his king, as one might pick up a few scattered coins.

Nine goodly islands, cone-shaped mostly, clad in vineyards, lemon and orange groves, fields of wheat, green brakes of sugar cane, great plantations of coffee, luxuriating in volcanic soil—a people clean, temperate, ignorant, indolent, carelessly tilling ground owned by European landlords—islands where songs and tales of ghosts, witches, demons, fairies and saints form the staple of thought and entertainment—these are the Azores.

Hither, burdened with her hungry and crowded but patient passengers, the "Missouri" slowly struggled through the tossing waters of the Atlantic.

On the evening of the fourth day after the loss of the "Danmark" Lars was on deck with his friend Gorg, who for once was at sea with nothing to do.

"Look you," said Gorg, "do you see, yonder to the northwest of us, any land? Look low against the sky."

"No," said Lars, "I can't see anything—unless perhaps a thin bit of cloud."

“That bit of cloud is two islands, Flores and Corvo—the crow and the flowers. I don’t know how they came to get those names unless it is that Flores, like all the rest of the Azores, is a garden for bloom. Those two are the first group of the Azores.”

“Why didn’t we run in there then?” asked Lars. “We are leaving them behind, and going southeast. Don’t the captain know they are there?”

“Aye,” laughed Gorg, “he knows—and by to-morrow about noon you will see that we are still leaving behind us as we run southeast some more islands, the second group of the Azores, five of them, Fayal, Pico, St. George, Graciosa, Terceira—and still we shall keep on southeast.”

“But why don’t he stop and let us off? We want to get to the United States, and they lie west. We are crowded and hungry—almost as hungry as Uncle Kars would keep us!”

“We shall run seventy miles southeast of this group that we shall sight to-morrow morning and along toward evening we will come to two more of the Azores, the last two, St. Michael’s and St. Mary’s. It is to St. Michael’s the captain is steering, and he knows well enough what he is doing. The Azores are islands made, as I’m told, ages ago by volcanoes. They have

not good ports or harbors, almost none fit for a ship of the size of this 'Missouri.' There are reefs around the islands—and you see we all want to get ships to go somewheres, and only at St. Michael's will we be likely to find a big ship. There's ships run from Fayal to Boston, but they are small. You see, though you don't understand his ways, the captain is really doing what is right, and for the best good of all, and so, my boy, I'll preach you a short sermon, seeing as you and I are soon to part company. My sermon is this, that often the ways of the Lord may seem dark and strange, and as if He is not doing the right thing for us. But He knows more than we do. He sees the whole of our lives from beginning to end, and He does what will come out right, and we'll be glad of, once it is done."

"Gorg—did you say we were soon to part company? Aren't you going to the United States with us?" cried Lars anxiously.

"No," said Gorg, "we sailors have no call to go to the United States, now we have no ship to take there. They'll send us on ships going to Lisbon or Havre or Amsterdam, and from there we'll get on to Copenhagen, and ship again there."

"And will I never see you again? I think

so much of you, Gorg, oh I'd hate not to see you again !”

“ Aye,” said the sailor, “ I've seen a plenty of partings in this world, and partings are not pleasant. Think of the partings that take place every emigrant ship that sails! But, lad, even if we don't fall in with each other here below, no doubt we'll meet higher up. That will be a rare place for meetings up there.”

The next day about three o'clock there was much excitement on board the “ Missouri.” One by one rose out of the sea five beautiful tropic islands, hung green and inviting for a while upon the horizon, then dropped like plantoms behind the waters. First Pico lifted its green peak seven thousand feet above the gently sloping vineyards and plantations; then Graciosa, a garden in the deep, where balmy airs were playing, allured them as it allures to its healthful groves many invalids from harsher climates. Fayal, with its terraces and fragrant groves fell away into the distance, and, despite the longing of her crowded hundreds for the green and pleasant land, the “ Missouri ” ploughed straight on—stroke after stroke, of her great engines driving her still south and east.

“ Oh how warm and beautiful it is here!” cried Gerda, “ see, we can be on deck without

shawls or cape coats! Gretchen has Marie's baby out! How I wish this was the United States and that we were to live in one of these beautiful places. Why don't we stop?"

"You might not like it so well if you tried it," said Gorg. "You might find it too hot, and then, these islands have fearful earthquakes, and volcanoes break out, and whole villages have been known to sink in chasms opening suddenly in the earth, or have been buried under hot ashes and lava. In the first ten years of this century there were terrible times here."

"That was long ago," said Gerda lightly, "perhaps there won't be any more. Jens says that oranges and lemons and all kinds of good things, grow here as thick as barberries or currants in Denmark."

"Aye, aye," said Gorg, "but the good Book tells us that 'a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth,' and 'all that a man hath will be give for his life,' is a remark mostly true, even if Satan was the one who made it. You'd be glad of firm earth under your feet, even if no oranges grow on it, once you had been shaken by an earthquake. I was on the Island of St. Thomas, when there was an earthquake, and I never want to see another. Look over that way, Lars. In 1811,

just about where you see yon sail, an island rose up out of the sea, a new bit of land come out to look at the sun."

"Oh, did it have grass and flowers and orange trees on it?" cried Gerda.

"To be sure not, child. Just rocks and lava and ashes. No doubt, in course of time, what with rain and mist and sun, and seeds blown or brought by birds or tides, it might at last have come to look like these others. I hear that is the way that God makes islands. But this one did not stay long. It came up, and in months more or less, back it went, much as a Jack jumps out and in a box, in toys I've seen for children."

"I wish one would come up here, right here," cried Gerda, "so I could see it! Wouldn't it be splendid?"

"There'd be not much left of the 'Missouri' if that happened," said Gorg. "The waves would rise like mountains, and swallow us up. We all, young and old, wish for a vast of things that would ruin us. I mind when I was a lad, and wild, I kept wishing I'd find a pot of gold, or get a fortune somehow. But if I had, it would have been the worst thing ever could have happened me. I'd have drunk and rioted it up, and ruined myself, body and soul."

“Do you suppose I'd be ruined by a fortune?” inquired Lars, with as much interest as if he expected to receive one immediately.

“I can't tell,” replied Gorg; “it is open to the Lord to give sense in the spending of it.”

“Jens says,” continued Lars, “that when a man has health and a pair of good hands, he has fortune enough, and more than most men know how to use.”

“And quite right Jens is,” replied Gorg.

Gerda was paying no attention to this talk; she was looking backward at the distant islands that would soon be quite out of sight. She wondered ‘What kind of children lived there, what they did, what they played with, were they afraid of volcanoes?’

The small supper rations were received that night with the remark that “next morning they would be where they could get plenty to eat.” Besides hunger was less keen now that the air was so much warmer. To the people of the north, fresh from the chilly early spring of Denmark, the latitude, 36°, and the Gulf Stream, made a midsummer temperature.

Early in the morning all were astir. They were drawing near to St. Michael's, the largest of the Azores. Never had land looked more lovely than this fifty miles of fruit and flower

covered island : terraces of grape vines just putting forth fragrant buds, and lemon and orange trees in bloom, scenting the soft air for miles ; white houses were dotted along the green slopes ; birds wheeled in the air ; there were small boats and ships in plenty and there lay the Port of St. Michael's. Captain Kundsen came among his people to tell them how matters would now be arranged. "The 'Missouri' cannot take you all to the United States, she has not room, and cannot take food and water for so many. I will go on to the United States in the 'Missouri,' and three hundred and forty of you will go with me. All the women and children travelling alone, whose husbands, and fathers are expecting them in America, will be first chosen for this three hundred and forty. Pastor Hama and the 'Danmark's' cabin passengers will also be of them, for they will know how to provide for the Minnesota colony. The sailors will go to London or Lisbon, on ships ready to start for those places, and the other half of the 'Danmark's' passengers will be put aboard some other ship. Your voyage may then be longer, but you will all be well provided for, and will be safe in the United States in a few weeks at the farthest."

After this the captain, first officer, and chief

steward, with Pastor Hama, selected the emigrants who were to remain on the "Missouri." Of these were Marie Linnie, Gretchen, Lars and Gerda, and as some men also were to be taken, Jens Iveson was of them, so that little company was unbroken, to the vast content of each of them. It was announced that the "Missouri" would leave St. Michael's that same evening.

And now food in plenty was brought aboard, and every one feasted. The sun rose high, and all the Danes thought that the Azores, or especially St. Michael's, must be the hottest spot on the surface of the earth. Now there were leave-takings as the passengers who had begun to feel like old friends in their season of peril and privation, were divided, and some were told off to other ships. A steamer that had called at St. Michael's going from Demerara sailed within an hour, taking three of Lars' friends, the engineers.

"That ship has a bad cargo," observed old Gorg to Lars. "She is loaded with rum, and a lot of sugar that will go into rum."

"Say, Lars, what is that?" demanded Gerda, pointing to a huge column of smoke, rising a little back of the town. "Do you guess it is a little mite of a volcano?"

“Aye, it is; a very bad kind of a volcano, too,” said Gorg, who had heard the question. “It’s a distillery. They make brandy there, and send it to the United States and to Lisbon. I doubt, in the long run, but that column of smoke will foot up as much damage as a first-class volcano, in ruined men, and ruined homes, and ruined fortunes.”

And now it was the turn of old Gorg to go. The ship “Acor” was to sail for Lisbon, and forty-two sailors of the “Danmark,” two officers and three hundred of the steerage passengers, were to go in the “Acor” to Lisbon, there to catch a ship bound for New York. The party of Jens Iveson were crowded about the kindly old tar to bid him good-bye. Gerda brought Marie’s baby for a final look. Lars watched the old man out of sight, and felt sure he should never see him again. In this world we are sure of a great many things which do not happen.

Jens now took his party ashore. There was time for a walk of several hours. Leaving the narrow and noisy streets of the town, they went into the country. Here flowers grew in profusion, and Gerda and Gretchen soon filled their hands. They sat under the trees to rest, and watched the many beautiful birds, or the

children playing about. The kindly Portuguese, perceiving that these were some of the shipwrecked Danes, whose story had flown quickly over the islands, came from their cottages and beckoned them to enter, offering them figs, oranges, bread, milk, and cakes. Lars and Gerda feasted, and several children crowding their pockets with good things, they had something to take to Marie. In one house where there was a young baby, Gerda made signs that she had a little baby aboard the ship. Whereupon the baby's mother gave her a very pretty embroidered dress to take to it, for the women of the Azores are skilful in embroidery, and in nearly every house Gerda saw embroidery and straw work going on for the Boston, London and New York markets. A young woman gave Gretchen a handkerchief and an apron. They all seemed full of kindness and hospitality.

Lars and Gerda returned to the ship, each carrying a long sugar cane, which Jens then cut in short pieces for them to distribute among some of those who had not been able to leave the "Missouri." The two children almost wished that the Azores were to be their future home, they seemed so beautiful, so warm and so full of charming things.

At evening the "Missouri" steamed out of the port of St. Michael's, directing her way almost due west to Philadelphia. The passengers were now provided with bedding and had space to lie down and to walk about, and there was plenty to eat. Captain Murrell was so cheerful and kind, the weather was so fine that every one was in good spirits. Lars missed his friend Gorg, but Lars could speak English, so he talked with the sailors of the "Missouri" and sometimes even Captains Murrell and Kundsén chatted with him.

"How long will we be before we get to Philadelphia?" Lars asked of one of the sailors.

"Eleven or twelve days. You'll be tired of sea-going by then."

"Not I," said Lars. "I'd as lief sail on and sail on in a nice ship like this, with such good weather, forever."

"You'd not make much of your life at that rate," said the sailor. "Seafaring men have a poor time of it, and don't die rich, unless captains, and there's many sailors to one captain. If you like the sea so much, perhaps you'll follow it."

"No, Jens says not, and Gerda wouldn't like it; and then, when we had our wreck on the 'Danmark,' I felt I'd rather be on

dry land, and that might happen again, you know."

"Well, I'll be tired of the ship and the sea by eleven days more," cried Gerda. "I want to be on land, and help Gretchen keep house, and last night Gretchen and Marie cried, and said Thorrold and Zander Linnie would make sure they were lost, and would go crazy, or break their hearts. I wish they would hurry this ship up."

"More haste, less speed," said the sailor, when Lars had translated to him Gerda's remarks.

"You do well, Lars," said Jens, "to talk with these English sailors all you can, so you will learn more and more English; for the more English you know the better wages you are likely to earn in the United States. You'll be a rare help to us, though it is true Thorrold can now speak English well. I often forget that."

"You and Gerda and Gretchen will learn it too in a short time."

"So we will; and then our children will be brought up to speak only English, and so we will soon all forget the tongue of our fathers. That seems a pity. In a few years we shall no longer be Danes."

“ I shall always be a Dane, because my mother was, and I shall never forget my mother’s tongue,” said Lars.

And now the shores of America were in sight, and a pilot boat had come up, and a pilot was taken aboard, and as the sun set, lo the green earth stretching out arms on either side, and a wide water-way between.

“ Those are Capes May and Henlopen,” said a sailor to Lars, “ and this is the entrance to Delaware Bay. All night and a share of to-morrow we shall go on, from Delaware Bay to Delaware river, before we are at our wharf in Philadelphia.”

The next morning the wide bay had been exchanged for the river, and on each side were lovely green shores covered with peach orchards in bloom, and apple and cherry trees in bud.

The news of the rescue of the passengers of the “ Danmark ” by the “ Missouri ” had been sent to the city and telegraphed thence over all the United States. Thousands of people crowded the river banks as the steamship “ Missouri ” drew near her landing. Hats and kerchiefs were waved, shouts arose, the new

world pealed her welcome as if all these were brothers.

“ They don't know us, do they ? ” said Gerda. “ Are Thorrold and Zander there ? why do they make such a fuss over us ? ”

“ I think they are the kindest ! ” cried Lars, with his eyes aflame. “ Every one is the kindest ! I think there never was such a nice man as Captain Murrell, except Captain Kundsén, and Mr. Haas, and you, Jens, and Thorrold. ”

“ It makes me think, ” said Gretchen, “ of what it tells in the good Book of the coming home of the Prodigal Son, and what is said— ‘ This thy brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found. ’ ”

“ And what it says of ‘ joy in heaven, ’ you know, ” added Lars, as the wild cheering grew louder and louder. “ Do you suppose my mother knows it, and is glad ? Or is she sorry I did not come ? ”

“ She's glad you did not, because God wills it so, ” said Gretchen.

And now steam tugs sounded their whistles, and steamers blew steam off to swell the tumult, and bells rang, and the huzzas rose louder and louder, and on the wharves the rescued emigrants saw friends, brothers, husbands, fathers, lovers, and mounted high on a pile of merchandise, shouting with the best, Marie saw Zander.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE HOME OF THORROLD IVESON.

*“ A sunshiny world, full of laughter and leisure,
And fresh hearts unconscious of sorrow and thrall,
Send down on their pleasure, smiles passing measure,
God who is over us all! ”*

THE rest of that day was to Lars and Gerda as a splendid dream, or the revolving of a great and magnificent kaleidoscope. The large and stately city, the well-dressed crowds full of enthusiasm, the streets thronged with vehicles, the street railways, the stores of costly and beautiful goods, dazzled the eyes of these little Danish village children. Besides this, there was such a furore of admiration for Captain Murrell, who had been so fortunate as to save seven hundred people. Lars looked on the brave captain with admiring eyes, and “wished that Heaven had made him such a man.”

“Everybody wants to hug everybody, whether they know them or not,” said Gerda to Lars, “they all seem as glad we’re not drowned, as if they had known us all our lives.”

Drawn apart on the deck, Jens Iveson's party waited for the moment when Zander Linnie could join them, and tell them what to do. Lars observed that many gentlemen came among the emigrants, examined their tickets, and seemed to take them in charge.

"They say," said Jens to Lars, "that there are bath-houses where they are to be taken to, free, and plenty of clothes are to be distributed, and money too for those who have saved none; and on the night trains all are to be sent on where they are to go. We'll do as Zander Linnie says."

And finally Zander got on board, and when his raptures over wife and baby had a little subsided, he took the whole party off to a little boarding house kept by a Dane, and the good wife went out and bought clothes for Marie and Gretchen, while they bathed and rested, and had dinner and tea; and finally, through the streets blazing with electric lights, they were taken to a railroad station, which looked like a palace, and they were put on a train bound for St. Louis. Whirling along in steam-cars for the first time in their lives, Lars and Gerda watched street lamps and lighted houses flashing by; and then they were out in the open country and darkness shut all in. It was time

that wonders ceased; they were so tired they could scarcely hold up their heads. "I've seen so many things,—and I've cried rivers," said Gerda. "I'm most dead."

Jens put her oil-skin bag under her head for a pillow, and as she lay on the car-seat covered her snugly up with her shawl. Gerda knew nothing more until morning. Lars also slept, sitting in the seat with Jens, and in his sleep falling against the stalwart Dane, who gladly during the night hours supported Frü Dagmar's slumbering son.

What an admirable car that was! "It is just like a little house on wheels," said Gerda. "Why, Lars, there's a little room with a looking glass, and a wash bowl, and soap and big towels in it. Do you see how nicely I've done up my hair?"

"Yes," said Lars, "there's one for us at the other end of the car. You just pull a little handle, and all the water you want runs into the basin."

The Danish people in Philadelphia had provided Gretchen with a great, covered, splint basket of luncheon; and the morning toilettes being made, the party proceeded to have breakfast. First in the basket was a big clean towel to spread over their laps, and then out of the

basket came bread and butter, cheese, meat, pickles, doughnuts, and bottles of cold tea. They made a royal breakfast. After that the day was a panorama. They sped through towns and villages, by rivers and through broad farm lands, and forests just coming into leaf and bloom. What wonders they saw! White dog-wood, a sheet of snowy blossoms; red-bud, making the wood-depths crimson; orchards, where every tree stood up a grand fragrant bouquet, perfuming the air that entered the car.

They went by country school-houses, where children were at play at recess or for noon; and great was Gerda's amazement that no one wore wooden shoes, and none of the little girls wore caps, and all their dresses were nearly up to their knees, not demurely hanging to their ankles, like her homespun gown.

The doors of many of the country and village houses were open, and Gretchen, curiously observing the interiors, saw neither looms nor spinning wheels. Some women sat on the door-steps sewing, a few old women she saw knitting, and once, close by where the engine stopped for water, she saw a girl seated at a sewing-machine. Now she had seen a sewing machine in Denmark, at the Herremand's house,

but here it seemed that quite poor people had them!

There was so much that looked odd to Lars and Gerda, that their tongues kept flying, and shouts of laughter intermingled with their quaint remarks.

“What! No storks! No birds on the roof! but those funny short-legged little sparrows! Well, where would they put storks! Only see what little small chimneys, and sometimes only a tin pipe poked through a hole! Could a stork build there? There were also no thatched roofs, only wooden roofs, ‘shingles and tin’ did Zander say? Oh my, storks did well not to try it!”

“Only look! geese and hens out, and no one to look after them! Wouldn’t they be lost? Wouldn’t they be stolen? Look! The geese with their necks stretched out run at that girl, a girl nearly as large as Gerda, and she runs screaming! what a coward of a girl. Why does she not take a rod and teach those geese good Danish manners?”

“Do but see! Here are hens and chickens all shut off in narrow yards, with very high fine fences between, and they put their heads through the fences to look at each other! How very funny!”

“Wh , here is an Insidder's house—evidently an Insidder's,—and in the kitchen, see! a great iron stove, and at the best room window lace curtains! Oh! Oh!”

“Look! Look! our cars are now running along by the tops of the houses! and we can see into all the bedrooms. Do but see the beds! Not one has a curtain, and how big they are, and all in white covers! No bed curtains! Won't all the people get sick of head colds?”

“Did you ever see such vines over the houses? How pretty! Let us have vines over our house. Let us have our house—Gretchen's house—covered with vines, only leave room for the doors and the windows.”

See the numbers of cows, of sheep, of horses,—this must be a very rich Gaardmand's house. Oh, what a fine residence! All the people here seem to be Herremaend! But look! quite a small house near the station, surely not more than a Husmand's, and the window is open, and there is a little girl with lace on her apron, playing on a piano just like a Herremand's daughter! What a very queer country? Do you suppose Gretchen will ever be rich enough to have a piano? Do you suppose Zander will ever be able to buy one for ‘Atlantic Missouri,’” and then shrieks of joy at the idea of ‘Atlantic

Missouri' ever being old enough to sit at a piano and evoke a tune.

"I shall earn plenty of money," says Lars to Gerda, "and you shall have a piano, and you shall wear short frocks, and lace aprons, and leather shoes, and never do a bit of hard work."

"What a lady I shall be!" cried Gerda with rapture.

"Dear me," said Gerda, as Jens tucked her up on the car-seat for the night, "I'm so tired. I have laughed till I am nearly crazy. Yesterday I was happy, and I cried rivers; to-day I am happy, and I do nothing but laugh. Why do people show how glad they are by both laughing and crying?"

And yet another day began in the cars. The children were now somewhat accustomed to the sights about them. The New World was becoming a real world to them, and not a fairy-land. They were nearing St. Louis, and in the towns and villages they saw poor ragged women, dirty, neglected children, filthy living places which could not be called homes—places where the door-steps were broken and the windows had in many places bundles of foul rags stuffed in them in lieu of panes.

"Yes, yes," said Jens, when Lars pointed this out, "it is the same curse that makes rags

and dirt and misery, all over the world,—drink. We've passed distilleries and breweries, and plenty of drinking places; and here's what they produce. The finest land in the world can't stay fine, if drink gets the better of it. If strong drink could get into heaven, it would turn heaven into the bad place in no time. But heaven has gates, we're told, that keep out all evil. 'There enters nothing that shall offend.' Well, here are men, and women too, that are the worse for drink even so early in the morning!"

"Thorrold wrote me," said Gretchen, "that in the township where he lived, they did not allow any liquor sold. So we will be free of it, at least."

"It will be all around us," said Zander, "living in the city. I hope I can get into the country before I have boys to rear."

"It is well you are a girl, Atlantic Missouri," laughed Marie, patting her baby's cheek. "I can keep you in the house with me, and out of harm's way."

"Unless the harm gets into the house!" cried Gerda.

"Please God, it shall not," said Zander.

And now over a great bridge, and into a very net-work of tracks, and under the roof of

a monstrous station--and who was there but Thorrold Iveson, to whom Zander had telegraphed as soon as the "Missouri" reached Philadelphia.

Oh, now what joy for Gretchen and Thorrold and Jens, united at last after so many years and so many vicissitudes! Thorrold first hugged Gretchen, and then hugged Jens, and returned to Gretchen, and then considered Jens, and then grasped both in his arms at once.

Meanwhile Lars and Gerda stood at one side and hand in hand. Jens and Gretchen simultaneously remembered them, and made a dash at them. Gretchen seized Gerda, Jens laid hands on Lars.

"Thorrold! It is our friend, Frø Dagmar's son. I wrote you his mother was dead. Well, the uncle I wrote of, was a vile drunken miser and beast. And the boy had to leave him. He had money to emigrate, and I told him to come along, our house was always big enough for Frø Dagmar's son."

"So it is, so it is!" cried Thorrold, who had begun shaking Lars' hands, and clapping him on the back. "I'm glad you came! Here's the place for you."

"He is learned and can speak French and English," said Jens.

"A little," interposed Lars, who, since he had been among English-speaking people had discovered his limitations, and esteemed his linguistic abilities far less than he had in Denmark.

"That's fine, fine," said Thorrold. "You'll come on here! Oh, this is a great country—a powerful country! Just wait till you see my fields of corn and clover, and winter wheat!"

Then Gretchen advanced Gerda's claims. "Thorrold, this dear little girl is Lars' distant cousin. He brought her along, as she is an orphan, and she will be such a nice little sister for me, Jens says; won't she?"

"That is well," said Thorrold, taking Gerda by the arm, and laying his big hand on her little, capped head. "It does my eyes good to see a Danish maid, as modest as a small spring flower! Ah, she looks like home—and like our little sister that died, when we were boys, hey, Jens?"

"It is so," said Jens nodding.

"My house will be full!" cried Thorrold with joy. "My house that I thought would be empty—with you all in the bottom of the sea. Oh, how my heart broke those days—and now I have all and more."

"Except the house plenishing—and, Thor-

rold,"—said Gretchen, "I have no bridal dress,"—and she looked down blushing.

"Hey? Who cares for a bridal dress?" cried Thorrold. "I feel like a king, just getting you, Gretchen. So come away, and let us all have breakfast, and then we'll go to the Lutheran priest—a minister he is called in this country—that I've spoken to to marry us." And then he found time to remember his old friends Zander and Marie, and to admire and kiss the baby, and to conclude that they all should have breakfast together.

Zander took them to a little hotel where he must leave Marie for some hours. He must go, and report to his employers, for he had been absent many days, waiting in New York for news of the "Danmark," and hastening to Philadelphia when he heard the "Missouri" would carry the saved to that city.

"Don't you fear you've lost your place?" asked Marie, anxiously.

"Not I. The master himself wrote me to keep heart up, and if you got through safe he would lend me money to set up our housekeeping on, if all your things were lost."

After breakfast Zander bade good-bye and went to his employer.

Then farewells were taken of Marie and the

baby, for as soon as the wedding ceremony was over Thorrold would take his family by the first afternoon train home.

“But we'll write, and we will visit,” said Marie and Gretchen. “We and Gerda feel all the same as sisters now.”

Away they went through the city streets to find the Swedish minister. They walked hand in hand, in good old-country fashion. Gretchen had lost all her wedding gala dress, but the gold beads of her grandmother shone around her soft white throat; she wore the embroidered white apron given her by the gentle citizen of the Azores, and around her pretty head and under her chin was knotted the famous purple silk handkerchief of Frü Dagmar, lent by Lars for this especial occasion. And very pretty Gretchen looked with her innocent pink and white face and yellow hair, surrounded by the purple folds: people turned with an approving smile to look at her as she went by, Thorrold leading her so proudly, and Jens with Lars and Gerda closely following.

Thorrold had spoken the previous day to the Swedish pastor, and the news having spread that here was a survival of the “Danmark” to be married, several Swedish and Danish ladies had gathered in, and the pastor's wife took

Gretchen to a room where a number of wedding presents of clothing, and a nice valise had been laid ready for her. Gretchen could speak Swedish, and she told of all the treasures she had lost, and showed the six broad gold pieces yet remaining of her dowry, one piece having been spent in Philadelphia. The pastor's wife advised her to have this money exchanged in the city, as she could not pass it in a country town, and then it was decided that as soon as the marriage ceremony was over, Gretchen and the pastor's wife should go and spend the money in household goods to be sent to Gretchen's new home.

The pastor gave Gretchen a Bible for a marriage present,—it was not so large as the lost one, and was in English; but Gretchen meant to learn English, and then Thorrold had a little Bible in Danish. When the ceremony was concluded the sharp-eyed Gerda observed that Thorrold gave the minister a strip of green paper, and the minister gave it to Gretchen. She was surprised to learn that the green paper was money worth three rix-dollars, and that Gretchen was to buy a gown with it.

The trip to the stores, next charmed Gerda. When it was found that Gretchen was "from the 'Danmark,'" the store-keepers dealt very

liberally with her, and her gold pieces bought dishes, kitchen utensils, blankets, counter-panes and bolts of flannel and cotton and gingham, and crash towelling enough to keep Gretchen and Gerda sewing for a long time to come.

After this delightful experience, away to the cars; and finally at six o'clock the party left the train and found, tied near the station, a large blue farm wagon drawn by a pair of big grey mules. This outfit Thorrold proudly presented as the first sample of his Missouri property. A brisk drive of three miles followed, and—"Here is our home!" cried Thorrold, with joy, stopping at a gate in a picket fence stretching before a snug white house, behind which rose the roofs of barns and stables.

A comely German dame, a neighbor who had agreed to set the house in order and prepare supper for the new comers, met them with a hearty hand-shake, and they all understood each other at once. The dame showed Gretchen and Lars and Gerda through the house, while Jens and his brother took the mules to the barn. What a fine house it was! There was a sitting-room with gay carpet, bright blue window shades, a table, chairs, a clock, and a mantel-piece with a big china vase, the German dame's own gift. Next the sitting-room was a

bedroom, and there were three bedrooms upstairs. But the kitchen was the splendid centre of the house, large and clean, with shining tinware, and a big stove, and a table laid for tea.

And surely the tea was very good—white bread, fried chicken, a great platter of sausages, apple sauce, potatoes, and an enormous pie! “Who could ask more?” said Lars to Gerda. “It is nearly as fine as a Gaardmand’s wedding!”

After tea, Lars and Gerda helped the family friend to wash the dishes and set the kitchen in order. Then she laid the table for breakfast, and, using Lars as interpreter, told Gerda and Lars how to get breakfast. “First make the coffee—do you know how?” Yes, Gerda knew how—but what! coffee every day? What dreadful extravagance! What next?

“And the sausages—you will fry them.”

“Yes, we know how to do that, dame. Where is the rye bread,” said Lars.

“Rye bread? Oh, child we always use wheat bread here.”

“Wheat bread every day! Just like the Herremaend! Oh! Oh!”

“And when you have taken the sausages from the pan, break these eight eggs in gently, and let them fry. And set on the table this

butter, and this dish of doughnuts. Can you remember?"

Yes, Gerda said she could remember—but what luxurious living!

"We all live so in this country, as you will soon find out."

"But, dame," demanded Gerda, "what becomes of all this chicken that was left from supper?"

"No doubt," said the neighbor, "there will be a paste made, and have it for a chicken-pie for dinner."

"Chicken pie for dinner on a common day!" cried Gerda wildly.

"To-morrow, Gerda," said Lars, "will not be a common day, but Sunday."

True—possibly chicken pie on Sunday would not be criminal wastefulness. Still Gerda considered this style of living extravagant.

She and Lars prepared the breakfast next morning after the directions of the good neighbor, who had gone to her own home. After breakfast Gretchen put on a big apron and said it was time she took charge of her house-keeping.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THORROLD IVESON SEES HIS WAY CLEARLY.

*“ Ah, Tom had eyes to see
When tyranny should be sped,
She’s coming! She’s coming! says he,
Courage boys! wait and see—
Freedom’s ahead.”*

WEARIED with being like pious Eneas “much tossed both by land and the high seas,” the little family at Thorrold Iveson’s remained quietly at home that Sabbath. The day was warm, the windows and doors were open to the mild spring air, fragrant of newly-turned earth and budding things. The grass was thick and green and in it ran robins searching for food, their bright breasts shining against the dark verdure; over the fences, lighting on the posts, to twitter forth their joy, wheeled bluebirds; saucy jays called and scolded and displayed their antics on the boughs of oak and chincapin, while red-headed woodpeckers whirled about the trunks, and made the bark of the locust trees fly, as they searched

for grubs. Upon the barn roofs pruned and strutted scores of purple and white pigeons. Dandelions and spring beauties and buttercups made all the little front garden a choice parterre of Nature's own cultivating.

"This is better than the Azores," said Lars and Gerda, nodding to each other in their deep satisfaction. "Aren't you glad you came!"

How much there was for this little family to tell each other! As Thorrold only went to town, and had a newspaper, once a week, he had not heard the first news about the "Danmark." Then, when he heard of the fears entertained, they were coupled with hopes that the ship's crew and passengers had been saved. Then he had gone to Mr. Howe, and Mr. Howe had told him he felt very sure there would be a rescue, and every one would arrive safely. On this encouragement Thorrold got strength to do his work and feed his stock, and Frü Bauer had been very kind, and had come over and made ready his house, saying she knew his friends would soon be there; but he could neither eat nor sleep. Then, on that happy day when the telegram had been sent from Philadelphia, that all were safe, he was out ploughing in the big cornfield, and the boy

Mr. Howe had sent with the dispatch found him there, and he was so glad, he gave the boy a silver dollar, and as soon as he read the good words—"All safe Will reach St. Louis Saturday"—which indeed the boy had to help him make out—he fell right down on his knees in the furrow and began to thank God.

Then all cried out their hopes that the good news would reach Denmark as fast as the evil, so that the many anxious hearts there might not be broken. And Jens and Gretchen had so much to tell of home, and of the parting, and the prospects and messages of the home-folks. But even that theme faded into insignificance before the stories the newly arrived had to tell of the wonders of the deep, and of the perils through which they had passed. With what relish one tells adventures with the refrain, *Magna pars fui!*

After that Thorrold resumed his narrative, repeating and expanding much that had been hinted at in his home letters, for Thorrold was but a laborious scribe. He told how he had looked at various farms, how he had come upon this, and luckily found a lawyer who had lived in Denmark, and who could advise him and explain all things to him. He had also found a Swede who served him as hired man

and interpreter until he could himself speak English. What he had paid out, what remained to be paid, on what terms, and how the money was to be made, Thorrold expounded. And he revelled in descriptions of his crops—especially of fields of corn lifting its plumed rows as far as eye could see.

“And what do you do with all that corn? You have still much on hand; little houses full of it,” said Jens. “Is there a good market?”

“In some places they use it for fuel,” said Thorrold, “so I am told; but here fuel of wood and coal are too cheap, and the corn is too dear to use up so. Many sell it to the distilleries to be turned into whiskey. They told me to take that market, but it seemed to me not quite right. You know, Jens, Frü Dagmar used to talk much to us of such things—so, as I wanted to be clear in my own mind, I went to Herr Pastor, who is over our Lutheran Church here, and I asked his opinion of selling to the distilleries; and Herr Pastor said it was not right at all, and for me to be content to make honest money like an honest man. So then I determined to do as many in this country do, feed the corn out on my own farm, and turn it into honest meat and mules. And I have found, too, that the honest way was the

paying way also. I raise hogs and mules for the markets at St. Louis and Chicago. I have twenty pigs now in the pens to fatten for fall; and I have twenty horses and mules and colts in the fields, and twenty-five cows and calves together; and a hundred fowls; and the corn fed out to all these will bring me a fair price a bushel, and no one will be hurt by it, and Thorrold Iveson's conscience will be like white paper, do you see?"

All admired the honest Thorrold and his snowy conscience immensely. Then it finally became time for Lars' story to be detailed. Jens told how he had found Lars and Gerda crying by the roadside. But here the good Jens met a difficulty. He had never been able to settle to his own satisfaction—what they had been crying about. The shadow of Aunt Henrietta Ib had been too illusive for him to grasp. "You see," he said, "they had started for Copenhagen to live with the little girl's aunt, but she—had died—or—gone away—or they had lost her—somehow, and they had nowhere to go, and no one to take care of them—since the aunt—"

Gerda hung her head and gave the good Jens no help; already the crowding realities of life were making her ashamed of her fictitious Aunt Henrietta.

But there was one theme where Jens felt heartily assured, and abandoning Aunt Henrietta, he devoted his eloquence to Uncle Kars Barbe. "This Uncle Kars was a pig, a far worse pig than any in your pens. He had eyes like a ferret, a nose like a bottle, a voice that squeaked like a rat. He was without honor or good feeling. He was not a Dane—he was a vile Kobold, who had no business to live above ground. He starved Frü Dagmar's son, and set him a most evil example of avarice, and thieving and drunkenness."

"Frü Dagmar's son did well to leave such a man," said Thorrold. "I am glad you found them, Jens, to bring them here," and he nodded at Lars and Gerda, seated side by side.

Jens then told about the three gold pieces, and explained that Gerda was the niece of Uncle Kars' dead wife. He had nearly shipwrecked his speech on the shoal Aunt Henrietta again, when Gerda glibly interposed, and detailed her own life and the life of Lars, in Castle Famine. "And Uncle Kars is rich," she said. "Frü Korner and Frü Heitzen both said he was rich, nearly as rich as the king himself."

"That cannot be true," said Lars. "He had nothing in his house, but very, very old

things, things hundreds of years old; and old things are worth nothing, are they? It is new things that are worth money, is it not? Uncle Kars slept on the hard little miserable cot bed; he had the small spark of fire; he wore such clothes as were frayed at the edges, and shone slick all down the seams, and had patches. Do the men who are rich dress like that? and then Uncle Kars did not buy half food for himself; he was most starved, and even the brandy he would not have had, only he got it with the house, for almost nothing, from the foolish young man. A rich person would not go hungry day after day, would he?"

"Frü Heitzen says it is that he is a miser," insisted Gerda, "and a miser is one who loves money more than the comfort money will buy. But Uncle Kars is an idiot to do as he does. He will have to leave his money. He will die soon, Frü Heitzen says; he has been very ill twice, at the door of death—and the way he lives will only make him die sooner. Then what will become of all his money?"

"It will go to the king," said Lars, "since Uncle Kars has not any children, the money will go to the king, who will use it well."

"Then I shall write to the king, to send me my things, my gold bridal crown and the lace

cap, shut up in the press drawer; for the queen will not want them, she has plenty. Also, Lars, you had better write for your mother's spoons. The queen will not need them."

"But we shall not know when Uncle Kars is dead," said Lars.

"We can write soon then, and say, 'When you get all Uncle Kars' things, will you please send us the spoons, and the bridal crown, and cap.'"

"Why did you go there to live, Lars?" demanded Thorrold.

"I had no other relation. Uncle Kars is my mother's only brother—all the rest of the family are dead. See, it is written here, in this record. For this was in the family Bible of my grandfather Barbe, and my mother had that and the six tea-spoons"—and Lars took from the bag about his neck the pages of his family record, and spread them before Thorrold, who read them thoughtfully.

"Gretchen," said Thorrold, "take these, and keep them carefully for the boy, in the safest drawer you have. To-morrow iron the pages out smooth, and lay them between two sheets of pasteboard for a cover, and tie them up like a book, and keep them well."

At breakfast the next day, Lars said to his host: "Thorrold, I did not come here for you to take care of me and Gerda. I want you to tell me where I can get work to take care of us both. I will work hard, if you will tell me what to do. Is there not a shop, a factory, a mill—"

"Jens and Gretchen and I have talked it over," said Thorrold. "This is a big farm, and much work is needed. Why should you not stay and work with us who are your friends? If you did not stay, much of the time we must hire another lad. Gretchen will also need Gerda to help her in the house, and the garden, and with the fowls. Let us be one family. But first you must learn much English. There is a school half a mile from here, and there are yet six weeks of the term. I will take you both there this morning. I know about it, for the teacher has been giving me evening lessons in writing, and in arithmetic of American money and measures.

Lars went to Thorrold and put his hand on his shoulder. "You are very good; but tell me, what shall I do, that I may be sure I shall do enough, and not be a burden to you?"

"You can work before and after school, and Saturdays, and vacations. There are pigs and calves to feed; the wood for the kitchen to cut

and bring in; churning to help do; the garden to work in. In vacation there will be haying and harvesting—oh, quite enough.”

“It is quarter past six, Gerda,” cried Lars joyfully. “Let us begin our work at once, so we can do much in two hours before we start for school.”

There was no lack of work surely. Gerda with Gretchen washed dishes, made beds, swept and dusted the house, fed the chickens, collected eggs. Gretchen said she meant to wash, and Lars pumped water, and helped her get her tubs and washing bench. Then Thorold came and told the two children to wash and brush themselves, and get ready a basket of luncheon, as he must take them to school. “You’ll learn English there with the children and teachers, faster than anywhere else,” he said.

After school at four o’clock, they raced home over the fields; and then again pigs, calves and poultry were to be fed, fuel carried in, water drawn, milking to help with, and work in the garden to be done.

The children revelled in this life; every one was kind and cheery. The school teacher brought them along famously, and the school children vied with each other in teaching the

little Danes English. At home, as Thorrold had said, they were all one family; the hopes, aims, and labors of the household were the same for all. What joy it was to count the increasing broods of downy chickens, ducks, geese! What rapture to find that the pretty calves and foals knew them, and ran at their call to eat salt from their hands, or corn, or oats; or drink bran and water from the buckets held out to them. Every day the garden afforded new work and new pleasure; there were poles to be planted for the long rows of beans, and brush must be set for the peas to grow over; the tomato plants needed frames, and the cabbages and cucumbers must be inspected, and relieved of slugs, caterpillars and snails; weeds must be pulled, and new seeds planted, and lettuce and onions, radishes and young potatoes, and beet-greens, must be brought in for the table. Every day was a fresh round of interest.

Each Saturday the wagon went to the town three miles off, with a load of farm produce to sell. Eggs, butter, little Danish cheeses, combs of honey, fresh vegetables, dressed fowls, or a lamb, or veal—the thrifty Gretchen always had something to send; and now Gerda went, and again Lars.

Sunday was also a gala day. They went to morning church, and returning home had tea and dinner together, generally out of doors under the trees—a whim of Lars' which everyone soon enjoyed. Then sitting around on the grass, or porch, Gretchen read the Bible to them, and Thorrold gave out some questions of the catechism, and they sang the hymns and slumber songs of Denmark, and read the home letters over again, or wrote letters home; and talked of the home folks, and Gerda came out strongly in tales, and mingled the life of Joseph or Daniel or John the Baptist with stories of how Neckan wept to find a soul—

“ He wept—the earth hath kindness,
The sea, the starry poles ;
Earth, sea, and sky, and God above,—
But, ah, not human souls.”

Gerda was as a right hand to Gretchen; she was a rare little genius in housekeeping; and the two cooked, and ironed, and made soap, and cut out and sewed all the goods bought in St. Louis, and much more bought with egg money. How proud was Gerda, seated after supper on the door-step, and working Gretchen's initials in cross-stitch on the sheets and towels and table-cloths ! Meanwhile

Gretchen knit, and Thorrold, Jens, and Lars rested, after the heavy work of the day.

At such times they were apt to indulge in reminiscences of the summer before.

“I spent my evenings looking forward to this,” said Jens. “Ah how lonely I would be, lying here on the steps alone, and thinking—would you ever ever come!” cried Thorrold.

“At this time, I would be taking the Herremand’s children out for a cool evening walk,” said Gretchen.

“We didn’t have such luck,” said Gerda. “Perhaps we were playing in the yard, or perhaps Uncle Kars had gone off, and locked Lars up, and we sat and talked to each other from the attic windows, and Frø Korner sent him up food in a basket. Oh, Lars! do you remember the time we ran away and stayed in the beech woods all day?”

“I don’t look much as I did then,” said Lars. “Then I got smaller all the time. I could count all my bones; now see how fat I am, and see my muscle—what do you think of that!” and he opened and shut his hand, and drew back his forearm to the shoulder with just pride in well-developed biceps.

“Aye, it’s fine,” said Jens admiringly.

“And you have such a broad back,” said Gretchen; “you will be nearly as big as Jens, some day.”

“Uncle Kars will get come up with yet,” said Gerda, “God will punish him; he is a wicked man; he oppresses the poor and robs the widow and orphan; and he will be judged for it,—Frü Korner said so.” She spoke with gusto; she was still in the state of rabid indignation against Uncle Kars.

“Pshaw, Gerda! He liked you better than he did me. But I know one thing he never spent on me half the rix-dollars he got for my mother's things. I cost him nothing,” said Lars.

“He didn't spend on you all you earned in skate soles and baskets,” retorted Gerda.

“Baskets! Oh, Gretchen! I'd forgotten. I can make baskets. There's a place here where I can get hoop poles, and split them as fine as I like, and make baskets! I will make you a clothes-basket, and two or three market baskets, and potato baskets, and work-baskets for you and Gerda. I'll get the stuff to-morrow.”

“You call Uncle Kars poor,” burst out Gerda, who had meditated on her favorite theme. “If he is poor, why is he so afraid of

robbers? Robbers go to the rich, not to the poor! I know that chest in his room is full of silver and gold. And think of all the silver cups and spoons and plates, and the gold chains and watches he has in the big press. Oh, he's rich as can be; and no doubt he is dead by this time, and so he has bid good-bye to his money; for don't the Book say, 'We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out of it'?"

"Lars," said Thorrold, "I want you to go to town with me to-morrow; so if we are to get a load in the wagon early, let us be off to bed."

Next day after other business was done in the town, Thorrold left Lars to hold the mules, while he went up into an office. Lars could not read one long word on the office sign.

Thorrold remained in the office nearly an hour.

"Thorrold, what is that word under—'Charles Howe'?" asked Lars, when finally Thorrold climbed into the wagon and took up the reins.

"Attorney—Attorney at Law," said Thorrold.

"And what is that?" demanded Lars.

"He's a man that gives people advice."

"That is very good of him," said Lars, admiringly.

“All the same, you have to pay for it. Like other things that are worth having, it is worth paying for. It is well not to go to those fellows too often, but sometimes they serve you a good turn. Mr. Howe has been very kind to me. His father was Consul in Copenhagen once, and Mr. Howe lived there four years, and can speak Danish.”

The next Saturday Thorrold told Lars to dress up his best, and take his family record and come with him to call on Mr. Howe. Mr. Howe examined the record carefully, and asked Lars a number of questions, which Lars answered politely.

“Did you know any one in Korsor?” asked Mr. Howe?

“Only Frü Korner and Frü Heitzen,” replied Lars.

“What, no men at all—no official, or preacher, or lawyer?”

“Oh, no! only those two. Uncle Kars kept me shut up all the time.”

“And those two women knew you well? And the two Ivesons knew you and your mother?”

“Yes, sir,” replied Lars, courteously; but thought Mr. Howe very inquisitive.

“May I keep this record a week?” said the lawyer.

“If Thorrold says so—and—and you are very careful of it—it has my mother’s writing on it,” said Lars anxiously.

Mr. Howe detained Thorrold as Lars went down stairs.

“I’ll write and inquire. The record is as clear as day. But don’t disturb the boy’s mind with talk. The old man may live forever, or may be poor as a church mouse, or may have made a cranky will. The less you say, Iveson, the safer.”



CHAPTER XIX.

NEWS THAT FLIES FAST.

*“It sounds to him like his mother’s voice
Singing in Paradise ;
He needs must think of her once more
How in the grave she lies.”*

SUMMER and vacation came, and every day was to Lars and Gerda as a new song ; they set the gladness of their hearts to the rhythmic chords of nature all about them. And with what music the world was full ! The breezes made pleasant murmurs, the corn rustled its broad blades, insects chirred and hummed along the grass which rippled under the winds like the pulsing of the sea ; the black-birds whistled, the wood pigeon cooed its monotone of sweetness, the song thrush poured her la — — — quans piped in the bush, the leaves whispered low and the brooks purling over pebbles and among the rushes, and rolling rare fossils as they ran along their way, all swelled

the harmonies of the summer time. From the fields where Lars plied the hoe—for Thorrold farmed much in the old Danish fashion, and had fields planted with beets, turnips and carrots to feed to his stock—rose the blithe whistle of the boy, happy in his toil, although the hot southern sun scorched him even under the shade of his wide straw hat. And the whistle of Lars chimed with the carol of Gerda, as she trudged up and down the long rows in potato field, capturing the wicked Colorado beetle, or sprinkling Paris green along the vines. Work in the garden, or work in the house, or this light work in the fields, it was all one to Gerda—she was strong and free and enjoyed herself, and she sang the folk songs of her fatherland with a right good will.

Could anything be more pleasant than haying time? With what awe and wonder they watched the huge machines rolling across the meadows, and the great swaths of luxuriant grass falling in windrows. Then, under the smiting of the sun what delicious fragrance rose; and what game could be merrier than to turn the hay with forks, and follow the laden wagons to the barnyard at last, or even to ride atop the perfumed load! Then there were days spent in picking cherries, and other days

—days swept back out of the lost golden age surely—when Lars and Gerda spent the entire time in the thickets and pastures, picking blackberries, and ate their luncheon as a picnic, while they sat swinging in great loops of wild grapevine, festooned from tree to tree. What a pleasure it was while working in hot harvest fields, to see Gerda's large blue sunbonnet moving along beside the yellow grain, and have the little maid arrive with her big pitcher of new buttermilk, or a jug of true Danish mead—water fresh from the well with spice and honey stirred therein! This arrival of the little Danish Hebe several times a day on the scene of labor refreshed greatly those busy sons of the old Vikings, Thorrold, and Jens and Lars.

Gerda and Gretchen were very busy at the house laying in stores for winter. Frü Bauer came often to expound to them how things must be done in America. She insisted much on canning fruit, but when the frugal Gretchen heard that this process required not only sugar, but for every quart, a can costing ten cents, she cried out that that was far too expensive for young people who had a mortgage on their farm.

“But what will you do for your table in the winter?” asked Frü Bauer.

“It will not be hard to provide food for the table, in a land where, as Thorrold tells me, you have only to dig holes in the ground, and fill them with turnips, apples, beets, potatoes, and cover up with some leaves and earth, and there they are, sound and unfrozen whenever you wish to dig some out.”

“But the relishes, Frū Iveson,” said Frū Bauer, “what will you do for them? In this country we use so much relishes.”

“And what is this hot sun meant for, if not to dry fruit for winter?” demanded Gretchen. “Thorrold shall make me some nice wooden drying trays, such as we have in Denmark, and the sun and hot air here will do the work far better than the biggest oven on a Herremand’s place.”

So to work went Gretchen and Gerda, and dried cherries and berries, plums, peaches, pears, and even tomatoes, after cooking away part of the juice. Later they dried apples and sliced pumpkins and squashes, and the kitchen was decorated with white and yellow chains of drying fruit. Autumn brought labors as varied and as pleasant. There were the apples to gather; some must be sold, some dried, some buried for winter use—and what a world of fun they found in making a whole

barrel of apple butter! Jens constructed a little cider-press, and squeezed out the rich amber juice of the apples for making the apple butter, and for vinegar, and Gretchen boiled some of it down into jelly—a jelly that could be made without sugar, and stored in any odd cups or jars, was a joy to her frugal soul.

Then came days when corn was husked, out in the fields in the crisp October air and mellow sunshine; the whole family party worked, tearing off the pale dry husks from the generous ears; and Thorrold told Gretchen what fine beds could be made by stripping up the best of the dried shucks. There were other days spent by Lars, Gerda, the Bauer children and others of their schoolmates, in nutting, and they stored up walnuts, hazel, hickory, and butternuts for winter, and some for sale. They brought home persimmons mellowed by the frost, and dainty brown chinca-pins, and as Thorrold had planted them a row of pop-corn, the Bauer youngsters initiated them into the mystery of corn balls, and popped corn, and molasses candy pulling, and nut candy. Gerda said this new home had everything that was nice except Rodgröd.

With all this work there were seeds to be

gathered and marked, and laid safely away for next summer's garden: dried peas and beans were to be threshed out of their pods, and divided between use and sale.

The Bauer children had instructed their new neighbors to plant peanuts, and Lars and Gerda had a whole bushel of them for their harvest. Lars arranged with a good-natured grocer in the town, and sold him nuts, popcorn, peanuts, and persimmons, and made for himself and Gerda each a big silver dollar. Lars also engaged some basket making which he meant should occupy part of the long winter evenings.

One of those beautiful late October days, when all at the Iveson farm were very busy, Thorrold saw Mr. Howe riding up to the gate. He left the yard where the thrashing machine was at work, and went to speak to the lawyer.

"I have news about the boy, Lars Waldsen, whose mother was Frø Dagmar Barbe Waldsen," he said. "I wrote to the American Consul at Copenhagen, and he wrote to the Magistrate of Korsør, and finally received an answer, and it was sent on to me. It is true that the old man, Kars Barbe, is very rich—no one knows how much he has; he is a terrible old miser. The boy is his only relative, and

the old man is in very feeble health, and likely to die at any minute. Also he will not admit this, will not take any advice, nor allow himself any comforts. He probably has not made a will, and says he is hearty and will see out his century. It is likely that he will drop off suddenly, intestate, and the boy will come in for the whole fortune. The magistrate at Korsor has his address, and will communicate with me if any thing happens."

"Then Lars is to be very rich?" said Thorrold thoughtfully.

"He may not be. The old man may suddenly speculate away all that he has; or, he may make a will bequeathing his money to the town, or the king, or a charity. No one knows what these cranky old fellows will do. By no means say a word to the boy to disturb his mind or raise expectations that may vanish as smoke."

"But what ought to be done with him, if he is to be rich and a gentleman? We are only very plain people here."

Just at this word Lars dashed by on horseback, sent in haste for a missing bit of machinery. His hat on the back of his head, his hair flying, his cheeks tanned, his eyes full of joy; sitting his horse firmly, his broad shoulders

held well up, as he rode on, giving a smile and a courteous salute, he was a vision of innocent and happy boyhood.

“How old is he?” asked Mr. Howe.

“He will be fifteen next spring,” said Thorrold.

“And he looks well and happy. No harm can come from his building up good health and learning to win his bread from the ground. Have you a good school near here?”

“I am not a judge of schools; but Miss Burroughs from the town, teaches it. Every one says it is a good school.”

“Miss Burroughs! I know her. I will call on her and ask her to give especial attention to the boy. It seems to me, Iveson, that you cannot do better, for this winter at least, than just to let him live here as he has done, and help in your work, keep busy, go regularly to school, and hear nothing at all of what may be in store for him. He cannot be harmed by this course, and may be the better for it all his life. It is the lads brought up in industry and sober simplicity, that make strong men.”

The next morning Lars and Gerda were ordered off to school with earnest exhortation from Thorrold to learn all that they possibly could. “Frü Dagmar’s son,” said Thorrold

to Lars, "should not grow up as unlearned a man as I am. You must consider that you have Herremand blood in you, and that your grandfathers had been to colleges, and knew learned languages. No man should fall below his ancestors."

Lars was nothing loth to learn; he enjoyed study, and he felt that only by educating himself could he arrive at such honorable and useful position as his mother had desired for him.

Miss Burroughs was an excellent teacher, interested in all her pupils; and as Mr. Howe had told her Lars' story, she felt that for the present the task of refining his manners and informing his mind was chiefly in her hands.

But whatever extra attention Lars received Gerda must share. Lars never thought of monopolizing Miss Burroughs' after-school talks and instruction, or paying visits to her alone. Gerda must share all.

Miss Burroughs was not only delighted with the quaint little Gerda herself, but realized the need of making Gerda the cultivated little companion that Lars needed. The children fell into a habit of spending Sunday afternoon, and two evenings a week, with their teacher at her boarding house, and on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, she took them home

with her to the town, and initiated them into American fashions of holiday keeping, while they explained to her how things were done in Denmark.

Miss Burroughs was one of those fortunate and ingenious teachers who instinctively apply themselves to developing mind in their pupils.

She did not confine herself to instructing them in methods, and filling their brains with formulas, rules, tables and boundaries. To think, to get at the real meaning of things, this was what she made the aim of her pupils. She introduced new fashions and original exercises in her school. Notably, every second Friday afternoon was devoted to a conversation, or original speaking exercise. The pupils were encouraged to read, hear or observe curious facts, and then narrate them in turn to the rest. While a narration was in progress the teacher, if possible, refrained from all suggestion or interference. When it was ended, she corrected mispronunciations or careless or ungrammatical expressions; and then asked questions to elicit more careful information, and to draw out the views and interest of the pupils who had listened. She closed the programme by herself narrating a historic event or describing a scientific fact.

On one such afternoon, when it was Lars' turn to narrate, he detailed what old Gorg had told him about the bottle tree, and what Mr. Haas had said about the bottle ants, with their comments thereupon. This awoke a lively discussion among the school-children, with various bits of information about trees and ants. Finally Miss Burroughs said: "It is nearly time for school to close, and I will tell you about what I consider the most wonderful and also the most dreadful tree in the world. This tree is so terrible in its ways, that it is called 'the devil tree.' It is a tree which catches and devours living creatures, as birds and little wild beasts, and even human creatures if they get within its fatal reach. Happily there are very few places in the world where this monster tree grows. In the Island of Sumatra, in Australia, and lately in Mexico, it has been found. It grows, fortunately, in inaccessible places, its roots twisted about great bare rocks, in dense forests where few people go. The devil tree is not of very high growth, and its shape is something like a huge pine-apple; it is about twelve or fifteen feet high, and ten or twelve feet around at the base. The leaves spring from the top of the tree, or what you would call the tip of the pine-ap-

ple: they are dark green and as long as the height of the tree. They hang down to the ground loosely, like the folds of a closed umbrella. They are from fifteen to eighteen inches wide, and nearly twenty inches thick. Above the leaves on the top of the tree, are two round fleshy plates, growing one above the other. From these plates constantly drips a juice which is rather sweet, and very intoxicating. Around these plates are set long green rope-like arms, or tendrils, much like the arms of a cuttle fish. When a bird or wild animal climbs up to the plates or discs to taste the juice, at once these long arms or palpi begin to rise and twist like snakes. The juice intoxicates at once the creature that tastes it, and it begins to jump and struggle. This motion increases the action of the green arms; they wrap around their prey and hold it close. Then the huge board-like leaves begin to rise, and close together, forming a mighty press which crowds the struggling captive, crushing it into a mere soft pulp, which is drunk up by hundreds of little mouths or suckers upon the long green arms. When nothing is left but dry husk, skin, feathers, bones, the leaves open, relax, fall back, the plates spread out once more their intoxicating honey, and are ready

for another victim. Even people are sometimes killed by the devil tree. The botanist who found the one in Mexico, thought he would venture to touch with his forefinger one of the long green arms. The little suckers seized so fast upon his finger that he could hardly pull it away, and as it was, the cruel plant stripped off the skin. Now, as old sailor Gorg and good Mr. Haas found a little temperance lesson for Lars in the bottle tree, and the bottle ant, so I will find a temperance lesson for you all in the devil tree. I think every liquor store should have the terrible devil tree for its sign. The saloon spreads out its enticing advertisements, its colored glasses, its gaily tinted bottles of drink; it even brings pictures, flowers, birds, good food, to add to the attraction, just as on the barren rock the devil tree shows long rich green leaves and arms, and gay and honey-bearing discs. But you know, the Bible says of the wine, 'At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder;' and as the devil tree seizes the animal which comes to drink the honey, and squeezes it to death, leaving nothing of it which can be devoured, so the liquor saloon seizes upon those who go to it and get a love of drink, and holds them fast, until

their honor, happiness, work, fortune, friends, homes, health, even life, are gone. So keep away from places where drink is sold, just as you would keep away from the devil tree. Remember how the curious botanist lost the skin from his finger, just by trying to experiment a little with the devil tree."

With such a teacher, the progress of Lars and Gerda was rapid; their natural gifts were good and their aptitudes were for refinement and courtesy, especially as they both possessed that root of all courtesy—unselfish hearts. Was not a heart unselfish and self-forgetting in thee, last of the knights, most gentle and admirable Don Quixote?

Spring drew near, and Lars was almost fifteen; already he began to question of his future, and wonder what he had better do to open up a way through the world for himself. He could not spend all his days doing farm "chores," making baskets in the evenings, and going to the country school.

Nevertheless, the basket making had been so profitable that he had bought himself a very nice full suit of dark blue clothes, and a dress and hat for Gerda, who was now giving up her quaint Danish costume, the more the pity!

One March afternoon, just as the Ivesons

were at their early tea, Mr. Howe came in. Gretchen, kindly hospitable, offered him a place at her table.

“I will take a cup of your tea, please, Mrs. Iveson,” he said, “while I talk with this boy. Lars, how would you like to go back to Denmark?”

“To Denmark!” cried Lars, “I would like to see Denmark again—it is my mother’s land; but I have made up my mind to live in America. I have no home nor friends in Denmark.”

“But your Uncle Kars. You have been sent for, to Denmark.”

“Has Uncle Kars sent for me?” cried Lars, flushing. “Then I will not go. I was ready to stay and be as a good son to him, and he said he would be a father to me. He broke all his words. He starved me; he made me a prisoner. No, I will not go back. I will not!”

“Your Uncle Kars is dead,” said Mr. Howe, “and he left a large property. He has been dead just a month.”

“Then the king will get the property. He is a good king, and will use it well—only I wish he would give me my mother’s six spoons.”

“The king only gets the property of those

who have no legal heirs. You are your uncle's legal heir and the property falls to you."

"To me!" said Lars starting. "Why does it come to me? Not to Gerda?"

"Because you are his own nephew. Gerda is only his wife's niece."

"I've no doubt," said Lars, "that Uncle Kars' wife had as much right to the money as he had, and starved and worked for it, and Gerda has as much right as I have."

"The law does not so look at it, Lars. The property is yours, and you must go to Korsor, and be identified, and choose guardians; and many formalities must be gone through; and then if you like, you can come back to America and live, and have one of your guardians in this country."

"Then that will be Thorrold—" cried Lars.

"No," said Thorrold, "I am not educated enough. I will be your friend, but choose you Mr. Howe for one of your guardians; and, Lars, you cannot go back alone; you will do well to have Mr. Howe go with you."

CHAPTER XX.

HOW CHICKENS FINALLY COME HOME TO ROOST.

*“Far o'er the purple seas,
They wait in sunny ease
The balmy southern breeze,
To bring them to their northern homes once more.”*

A WEEK from that day Lars and Mr. Howe appeared as passengers on a steamship sailing direct for Copenhagen. When they sat down to dinner, these two as chief passengers, having the best stateroom, were placed next the Captain. It was Captain Kundsén. But Captain Kundsén did not recognize in the well-grown, handsomely dressed boy the slim little steerage passenger of the year before. Lars however was in no whit ashamed of his antecedents.

“Do you forget me, Captain?” he said. “I am Lars. I was in the steerage on the ‘Danmark,’ and by Mr. Haas when he was killed.”

“Why, so you are!” cried the Captain, with an amazed look at the fine green broadcloth

suit, and at the overcoat richly lined with otter fur, that hung over the back of Lars' chair.

"I might have known there was but one pair of such blue eyes in the world. What, going back so soon?"

"This is my guardian, Mr. Howe. He takes me back on business," said Lars simply. "My Uncle died, and it seems I have his money."

"So? You are fortunate! And what has become of the little girl, and the people who were with you? You have left them, I suppose?"

"Only for a little, while I have to be in Denmark. Then I will go to them; they are my family. I could not leave them always, you know," said Lars, detecting the Captain's tone of indifference.

Lars' voyage this time was fortunate, and in two weeks he was in Copenhagen. After two days there, he and Mr. Howe went to Korsor. It happened as they entered Korsor, the town clock clanged out the twelve strokes for noon. Lars stopped suddenly; it was just a year since he had fled from this town of Korsor! He recalled it all, how in the bright moonlight he and the brindle cat had sat on the stone trough of the town pump, and taken mute

leave of the silent town. Then the houses were closed, the market place was deserted, only he and the cat seemed to wake of living things. Now it was high noon, the sun shone broadly over the town, doors and windows of the houses were open, people and vehicles were busy in the streets. For himself, then he was a shabbily-clad, half-starved boy with a roll of biscuits and sausages under his arm, and a cat at his heels, his sole property. Now he was stout and well fed, dressed in fine cloth, his foreign guardian at his side, and said to be worth a very great deal of money!

The Mayor's house was on the public square, and there Mr. Howe was to go first. The Mayor was very kind, questioned Lars about many things, read over the precious family record, and also the papers brought by Mr. Howe, wherein Jens and Thorrold Iveson testified that they knew Lars to be the only child of Frü Dagmar Waldsen, and they had known him, and had seen him every year of his life, but one, from his infancy.

"Do you know any one here in Korsor?" asked the Mayor.

"Only Frü Heitzen and Frü Korner; but they know me very well."

Then there was a long talk about the voy-

age of the "Danmark," and about Lars' life with his uncle, and about Uncle Kars who had died all alone in his house and it had not been known for a long time that he was dead. Then the Mayor and Mr. Howe began to talk about business, and Lars did not feel much interested in that, and presently said: "You don't need me now, do you? I want to go over to the baker's shop."

"The baker's shop?" said the Mayor; "the baker's? We shall have our dinner in a short time."

"Oh, I don't want to buy bread or cake. I am not hungry," said Lars laughing. "I was hungry though, all the time, when I lived here. But I want to see Fr \ddot{u} Korner. She was so good to me. I should have starved to death only for her"—and without farther parley he dashed off. In the street he felt that it was due to his new clothes to walk, but when he came in sight of the well known shop door, and through it spied an affable dame, behind the counter and somewhat floury, he could restrain himself no longer, but rushed along at the top of his speed, leaped the counter without ceremony, caught Fr \ddot{u} Korner about the neck, and kissed her on both cheeks.

Thus suddenly assailed, the good Fr \ddot{u} took

her enthusiastic guest by the shoulders to have a look at him.

“Why, Lars! Lars! It's never Lars! But so it is! Why, what a fine big fellow you have grown, and how happy you look—and what a splendid foreign dress—like a Herremand's oldest son! There, my boy, I must hug you for sure. I have heard the poor foolish wicked old man is gone, and the money is yours! God send a blessing with it! And you didn't forget Frü Korner, did you, my dear? Ah, I can see you yet, such a pale slim little fellow, barefoot and thinly clad, and with such a racking cough, sitting in by my stove yonder!”

“Yes, and you gave me soup, and fed me full, and fought my battles for me, and kept me here a week, and gave me hot elder tea. And you remember how you used to send up baskets of food to the attic window by a rope?”

“Well I do. And when you disappeared I should have raised the town, only Frü Heitzen found a bit of paper Gerda had put in her work basket, saying, ‘Lars and I have gone to live with my Aunt Henrietta Ib,’ but where that was we could not guess. Where did you go sure enough?”

Faced once more by the phantom Aunt Henrietta Ib, Lars began to laugh and flush. We

started for Copenhagen ; but we met a friend of my mother's, and he took us to America ; and we were wrecked on the ' Danmark,' and then the American lawyer wrote here to the mayor about me ; and when Uncle Kars died they sent for me, and I must be here awhile ; but I am going back to America to live, and Gerda is to have her share of all."

Frü Korner wanted a long talk about Gerda, shipwrecks and America, but Lars recalled that he must be back to the mayor's for dinner ; so he bought two kroner worth of cakes and tarts for Frü Heitzen's plump children, and hurried to the well known house next Castle Famine. There again were exclamations and greetings, and many promises to come in again and talk it all over. And now Lars must hurry to the mayor's dinner.

After dinner, they went to Castle Famine, the mayor, a lawyer, Mr. Howe, and Lars. Lars said nothing at first, as they walked through the dreary house. On the attic floor yet lay the small chippings from his skate-sole and basket work. There lay the wretched relics which had formed his bed. He thought of Gerda, her antics, his own privations, of Uncle Kars, and the cat. Finally: "May I open any of these drawers?" he demanded.

“Certainly,” said the mayor, taking out a bunch of keys. “Which one?”

“That one,” said Lars pointing, and the mayor opened it. Lars rumaged it promptly, and brought out a little roll. “These are mine,” he said; “they were my mother’s spoons! I was so afraid he had sold them! And here is the crown and veil Gerda is always talking about. She ought to have that. Can I take it to her?”

“Boy,” said the mayor, “do you not understand that these things are all yours, as much as those six spoons are?”

“To do what I please with?” inquired Lars.

“Your guardians no doubt would interfere against any wrong use of them; still they are yours, and you would be allowed a fair share of liberty in your disposition of them.”

At once Lars eagerly searched the drawer, and brought out a gold chain. “This belongs to the old widow who lives opposite Frü Korner. Uncle Kars told her it was copper when he knew it was gold. I mean to give it back to her—and here are two gold watches! One is for Jens, and one for Thorrold—and oh! here’s a pile of lace. Gerda says she loves lace, and wishes she were a lady to have some. I am going to give her this.” Then he opened

a leather case, and there were bracelets, necklace and rings of gold well set with jewels. "Gerda shall have these too ! Oh, Mr. Howe! won't she like them ever so much! She'll want to wear them to school!"

Mr. Howe came to the rescue. A carved and silver mounted box stood on the table; he opened it. "Let me tell you, Lars. Gerda is too little to have these gifts now; they would simply turn her head. See here, put the lace and the jewels in this box, and keep it a secret; and I will see that it is taken care of for you; and you can give it to her when she is eighteen, and old enough to wear lace and jewels. You are as the French say, 'embarrassed with riches.'"

Lars was still exploring the drawer. "Oh, Mr. Howe! Here are more teaspoons, and tablespoons in boxes. I want to give them to Gretchen! and here is a silver cup, just the thing for 'Atlantic Missouri!' and here is such a pretty knife for butter, and a pair of tongs to pick up sugar lumps; I know Marie would like them! Can't we take them back with us?"

"Yes," said Mr. Howe; "no doubt you can take presents for all your friends, and you had better take the newest things for them."

“Of course I shall,” said Lars. “Who would want the rusty old rubbish? What will be done with it, sir? Will it be burnt up, or thrown away?” This to the Mayor, who broke into laughter.

“This is the true modern boy! He has no reverence for antiquities! My lad, no doubt all this rubbish which you despise, will be shipped to Paris, or London, or New York, and bring a great price.”

Lars could not quite understand about all the business which followed. He was identified as Kars Barbe's proper heir, and he signed papers and other people signed papers, and he was taken before the court, and prayed the court to appoint him, as guardians, Mr. Howe and the Mayor and a Danish lawyer, and he was given leave to reside in America, which he thought very queer, because he certainly meant to live there any way.

He was asked many questions about what he wanted, and how he would like things to be; and generally didn't know, and left it to Mr. Howe and the Mayor. But one day when they began to remark on “surplus, and more income than one boy could use,” he broke out. “I don't know what you are talking about. I'm not only one boy to use it. If the law does

say Gerda hasn't any right, I know she has. Frü Korner says her aunt was a nice lady, and Uncle Kars worried her to death! and Gerda is to have all the things I have. The good clothes and the books, and school, and a piano and kid gloves and a long plume for her hat. I know what Gerda likes, and she must have it."

The gentlemen laughed. "It is only fair to let him use part of the income so. In strict justice the girl should be provided for. When she first came here, the old man said she was to be his daughter. But he took no legal steps and the child would not stay with him."

"She ought to have it all!" cried Lars with a burning face. "He hit her! He hit Gerda with a big stick; she should have all the money to pay for that. He never hit me."

"Gerda evidently will never be hit again, but live in clover to the end of her days," chuckled the Mayor.

Concession emboldened Lars. "And, if you please, I want to give away a great many presents. I want to give Frü Heitzen as much as a hundred rix-dollars, and a dress; and a dress and a doll for each of the children. She used to send me food. And I want to give Frü Korner a watch and a silk dress and a big

shawl. And I want to go to see all the people that were good to me on the road to Copenhagen, and give them presents."

A day or two after this, Lars asked Mr. Howe to take him to Praesto.

"What do you want there?" asked Mr. Howe.

"I want to see my mother's grave, and I want to put up a great tall white stone, with flowers carved on it, for her and my father, and I want put on it: 'Frü Dagmar, from her Son,' and to say that she was 'as good as Queen Dagmar, The Peerless.' And I want to see if old Herr Abt has sold my mother's Bible; and to buy it back, and paste the record where it belongs again. And I want to take Frü Lisbet Gar a muff and a boa, because she was good to my mother, and gave me the purple silk kerchief."

"We will write to Copenhagen to have a monument such as you wish sent at once to Praesto," said Mr. Howe, "and we will go there in time to see it set up."

And at Korsor, while all these affairs were cumbrously moving on, and then at Praesto, Lars had a great honor, which filled his soul with secret but overwhelming joy. The people, especially the little boys, called him Jun-

ker Lars! He had always been called a boy, or Lars—but Junker Lars! A young man! O, that was grandeur; he had rather be called Junker than Prince. You may be a Prince and yet a baby—but to be a Junker, ah, you must be big and grown-up-like, almost a man. It is the prelude to Herr! Junker! it was music to his soul. He stood before the glass and held himself erect, to see if Junker suited; and he went out privately and bought himself some shoes with very thick soles and big heels. It would never do, after being called Junker, to subside to plain Lars or boy again! Junker! Ah, if his mother could but hear!

Finally all the formalities in Korsor were concluded, and the visit to Praesto had been made, and the family Bible found, all dusty, in Herr Abt's shop, marked for sale at three kroner.

Then Mr. Howe hired a chaise, and presents were packed in, and they were to go to Copenhagen by the highway, and call on Lars' friends. The first call was at the Parcelist's where Lars and Gerda had breakfasted. And there on the doorsill lay an enormous brindle cat. "I do believe," cried Lars, "that's my very own cat—but isn't it fat! There's milk here, sure!"

So he knocked at the door, and out came the Parcelist's rosy wife, whom he recognized

at once. "Frü," he said, "it was I left you this cat. Do you remember? I stopped to call on you."

"Save us! the cat! So it was; but you are a different looking young gentleman now. Do you want the cat back?"

"No, thank you. I live in America now. I could not take her."

"In America! What wonder then that you look so rich."

"I stopped to bring you a little present, from me and Gerda. It is a music-box to set on your best room table and play tunes. I hope it pleases you, Frü. I did not know what you liked best."

"Why, bless the boy! I like this best; but I shall never be contented unless you and the gentleman come in and taste some Rodgröd."

The next call was at Herr Pastor Andersen's. As it was Saturday they remained here over Sabbath, and great was the joy of the Pastor's family over the good fortune of their little friends, and deep their wonder at the story of his adventures. Lars told the Pastor that he had sent him a box of books, and a tea-set for Frü Pastorin; and when he went away on Monday, he left an envelope on the study table, with four hundred kroner, that money

might not be so scarce at the parsonage as it had been the year before.

Then on, until they came to the house of Gaardmand Lotze, where they had tarried for the famous wedding, and here indeed were raptures of greeting, somewhat increased by the chaise, the American gentleman, and Lars' dress, but very honest still. And Lars gave Frø Lotze a silver milk pitcher, and to each of her daughters a mosaic medallion: and he ran over to Insidder Jan Braun's and gave the Frø five rix dollars and six handkerchiefs.

The next visit was to the good Husmand near the Kjøge cross-roads, where he and Gerda had spent Sabbath. Here there was a loving welcome, and the dame said she had often thought of them, and prayed God to take care of them. They took dinner here, and Lars gave the good wife some knives and a dozen tea-spoons—for take it all in all, Lars thought there was nothing to compare in dignity and elegance with silver tea-spoons.

Then three miles from Roeskild, Lars found the old woman who had in her poverty given himself and Gerda a night's shelter. She was making her meager living by goose-herding and knitting. She could hardly recall the children, and could not understand Lars' flourish-

ing estate, except as he had been to the American wonder land.

“But the money I got here, Frü,” he said laughing.

“No, no, money don't grow that way in Denmark,” she said. “It is gotten in America, where there are Kobolds.”

“Will you be afraid of some of the money, Frü?” asked Lars.

“No, no, not I. I'll say the Lord's Prayer over it three times, and that will make it good enough,” replied the dame.

So he left her, blessing him for thirty rix dollars.

And now, what happiness! They were at the house of the dear Gretchen's father, and here was jubilee. The whole back of the chaise was packed with books, candlesticks, table-covers, cups, jugs, brass tea-tray and kettle, whatever Lars thought would decorate the home of Frü Kirche. They must stay all night, there was so much to tell. The table was spread with the best, and the aunts and uncles of Gretchen came.

“Fortunate I am,” said Frü Kirche, wiping her eyes, “to hear that my Gretchen is well and happy. And then, too, one of my daughters is married to a Gaardmand!”

“Both your daughters are married to Gaardmaend, Frü,” said Lars promptly, with zealous pride for Thorrold. “What would you call a man who has two hundred broad acres, all cultivated; who has twenty pigs, and two hundred fowls; and twenty colts, mules and horses, and twenty-five cows and beef cattle; who lives in a house of six rooms; and has two stables and two big barns, besides other out-buildings?”

“I should call him a Herremand!” said Herr Kirche with conviction.

“That is what Thorrold is,” said Lars, “only the Herremand does not work, but sits in his office and directs the men, and he has had also a Herremand father. But Thorrold’s father was a Husmand, and Thorrold works himself as well as hires work.

Next day, loaded with gifts for Gretchen, they went on to Copenhagen.

They had been in the city a few days when, as Lars was out walking with Mr. Howe and his two other guardians, who had come for some final business, he broke from them and raced along the street to an old sailor and clasped his arms about him shouting, “Hurrah, Gorg! Hurrah! I’m Lars!”

It took Gorg some minutes to be sure that here was his little friend of the steerage.

“And what are you doing, Gorg? Have you got your sailors' home yet?”

“I'm just on my way to ship, in a new steamer,” said Gorg, “and I must have about five hundred rix dollars more, before I get my little home. I am working hard for it.”

Lars had dragged Gorg along to his friends. “Here's Gorg! my friend Gorg! It's Gorg, Mr. Howe, that is going to keep the sailors' home. Come home to dinner with us, Gorg. Don't ship again. Open your home right off. I'll give you the five hundred rix dollars. Won't I, Mr. Howe? Tell him I will. Or say, can't it be seven or eight hundred? I'll be very saving of my clothes, and I won't want the spending money you said you would give me. Tell him, Mr. Howe, that I'll give him the money.”

“Yes, yes; we'll see to it,” said Mr. Howe. “Go on with Gorg to our hotel and order dinner.”

Then as Lars pulled the old sailor away, Mr. Howe explained—“I have heard all about this Gorg and his life and his plans, some fifty times. I have no doubt it will be a proper form of giving; and it seems to me we cannot do better than foster this boy's generous instincts.”

“Old Kars Barbe's fortune,” said the Mayor,

“was scraped together by avarice, cheating, and cruel wrong. It is gold with a curse on it. We cannot find the wronged, to make them restitution, as easily as the boy did the widow with the gold chain. But this money can be sanctified in the boy’s hands by generosity. We can cultivate in him the liberal and the philanthropic, so that he shall not receive the old man’s nature with his money; and the curse shall become a blessing.”

The summer was nearly ended when Lars returned to Missouri. He spent three or four weeks with Thorrold, and paid off the mortgage on the good Dane’s farm. Then Mr. Howe fitted him out and sent him to school to prepare for college, telling him that his one work for the next six years must be vigorous study. “After you leave college,” said Mr. Howe, “you can enter into business, or follow a profession; and you must manage your property. Make yourself fit to do it.”

Meantime Gerda, being provided by Miss Burroughs’ care, according to Lars’ earnest request, with “all that other girls had,” was delivered over to a boarding school, to learn music and many other things.

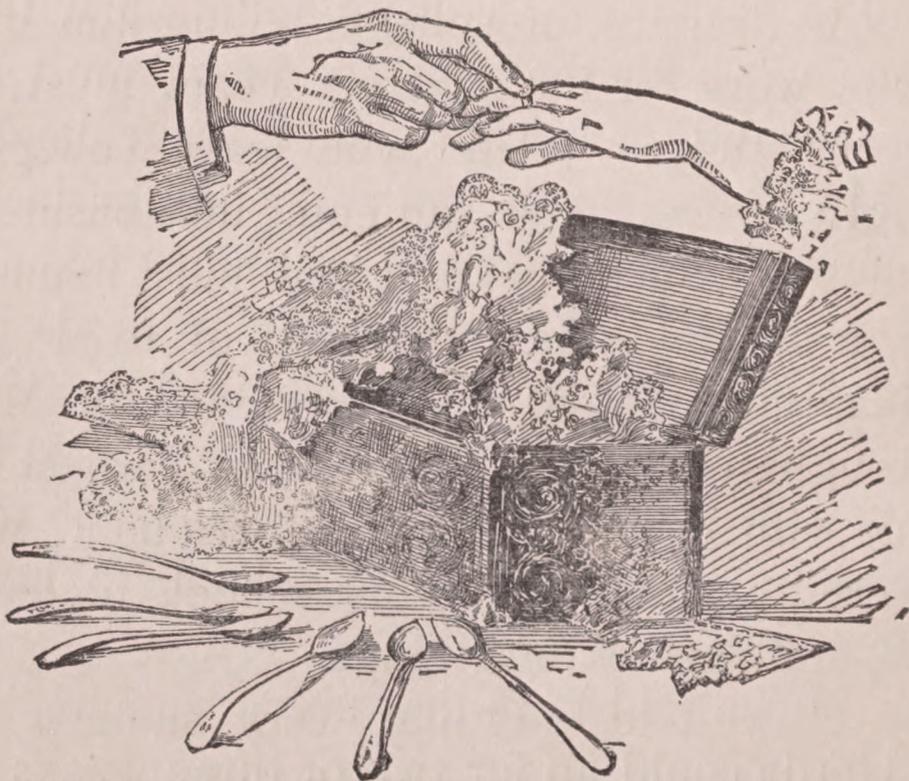
Mr. Howe told Lars that every summer he and Gerda could go for two or three weeks to

Thorrold's farm; and that every Christmas vacation they could spend in town with him.

"How can we, when you are not married and have no house?" said Lars.

"Ask Miss Burroughs if she cannot settle that," said Mr. Howe laughing.

In Mr. Howe's office safe, among many valuable things, reposes the sandal-wood box filled with the lace and the jewels which Lars intends to give to Gerda when she is eighteen. Beside the box, wrapped up in chamois skin, lie Frü Dagmar's famous six spoons; and no doubt Lars will give them also to Gerda with the other treasures. Who else would be worthy of the heirloom? The story is told.



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