

The Story of My Life — Volume 06 eBook

The Story of My Life — Volume 06 by Georg Ebers

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CHAPTER XXI.

At the university.

The weeks following my graduation were as ill suited as possible to the decision of any serious question.

After a gay journey through Bohemia which ended in venerable Prague, I divided my time between Hosterwitz, Blasewitz, and Dresden. In the latter city I met among other persons, principally old friends, the son of my uncle Brandenstein, an Austrian lieutenant on leave of absence. I spent many a pleasant evening with him and his comrades, who were also on leave. These young gentlemen considered the Italians, against whom they fought, as rebels, while a cousin of my uncle, then Colonel von Brandenstein, but afterwards promoted in the Franco-Austrian war in 1859 and 1866 to the rank of master of ordnance, held a totally different opinion. This clever, warmhearted soldier understood the Italians and their struggle for unity and freedom, and judged them so justly and therefore favorably, that he often aroused the courteous opposition of his younger comrades. I did not neglect old friends, however, and when I did not go to the theatre in the evening I ended the day with my aunt at Blasewitz. But, on my mother's account, I was never long absent from Hosterwitz. I enjoyed being with her so much. We drove and walked together, and discussed everything the past had brought and the future promised.

Yet I longed for academic freedom, and especially to sit at the feet of an Ernst Curtius, and be initiated by Waitz into the methodical study of history.

The evening before my departure my mother drove with me to Blasewitz, where there was an elegant entertainment at which the lyric poet Julius Hammer, the author of "Look Around You and Look Within You," who was to become a dear friend of mine, extolled in enthusiastic verse the delights of student liberty and the noble sisters Learning and Poesy.

The glowing words echoed in my heart and mind after I had torn myself from the arms of my mother and of the woman who, next to her, was dearest to me on earth, my aunt, and was travelling toward my goal. If ever the feeling that I was born to good fortune took possession of me, it was during that journey.

I did not know what weariness meant, and when, on reaching Gottingen, I learned that the students' coffee-house was still closed and that no one would arrive for three or four days, I went to Cassel to visit the royal garden in Wilhelmshohe.

At the station I saw a gentleman who looked intently at me. His face, too, seemed familiar. I mentioned my name, and the next instant he had embraced and kissed me.

Two Keilhau friends had met, and, with sunshine alike in our hearts and in the blue sky, we set off together to see everything of note in beautiful Cassel.

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When it was time to part, Von Born told me so eagerly how many of our old school-mates were now living in Westphalia, and how delightful it would be to see them, that I yielded and went with him to the birthplace of Barop and Middendorf. The hours flew like one long revel, and my exuberant spirits made my old school-mates, who, engaged in business enterprises, were beginning to look life solemnly in the face, feel as if the carefree Keilhau days had returned. On going back to Gottingen, I still had to wait a few days for the real commencement of the term, but I was received at the station by the "Saxons," donned the blue cap, and engaged pleasant lodgings—though the least adapted to serious study in the "Schonhutte," a house in Weenderstrasse whose second story was occupied by our corps room.

My expectations of the life with young men of congenial tastes were completely fulfilled. Most of them belonged to the nobility, but the beloved "blue, white, and blue" removed all distinctions of birth.

By far the most talented of its members was Count (now Prince) Otto von Stolberg-Wernegerode, who was afterwards to hold so high a position in the service of the Prussian Government.

Among the other scions of royal families were the hereditary Prince Louis of Hesse-Darmstadt and his brother Henry. Both were vivacious, agreeable young men, who entered eagerly into all the enjoyments of student and corps life. The older brother, who died as Grand Duke, continued his friendship for me while sovereign of his country. I was afterwards indebted to him for the pleasure of making the acquaintance of his wife Alice, one of the most remarkable women whom I have ever met.—[Princess Alice of England, the daughter of Queen Victoria.-TR.]

Oh, what delightful hours we spent in the corps room, singing and revelling, in excursions through the beautiful scenes in the neighbourhood, and on the fencing ground, testing our strength and skill, man to man! Every morning we woke to fresh pleasures, and every evening closed a spring festal day, radiant with the sunlight of liberty and the magic of friendship.

Our dinner was eaten together at the "Krone" with the most jovial of hosts, old Betmann, whose card bore the pictures of a bed and a man. Then came coffee, drunk at the museum or at some restaurant outside of the city, riding, or a duel, or there was some excursion, or the entertainment of a fellow-student from some other university, and finally the tavern.

Many an evening also found me with some friends at the Schuttenhof, where the young Philistines danced with the little burgher girls and pretty dressmakers. They were all, however, of unsullied reputation, and how merrily I swung them around till the music ceased! These innocent amusements could scarcely have injured my robust frame, yet when some unusual misfortune happens it is a trait of human nature to seek its first

germ in the past. I, too, scanned the period immediately preceding my illness, but reached the conclusion that it was due to acute colds, the first of which ran into a very violent fever.



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Had the result been otherwise I certainly should not have permitted my sons to enjoy to the utmost the happy period which in my case was too soon interrupted.

True, the hours of the night which I devoted to study could scarcely have been beneficial to my nervous system; for when, with burning head and full of excitement, I returned from the tavern which was closed, by rule, at eleven—from the “Schuttenhof,” or some ball or entertainment, I never went to rest; that was the time I gave the intellect its due. Legal studies were pursued during the hours of the night only at the commencement of my stay in Gottingen, for I rarely attended the lectures for which I had entered my name, though the brevity of the Roman definitions of law, with which Ribbentropp’s lectures had made me familiar, afforded me much pleasure. Unfortunately, I could not attend the lectures of Ernst Curtius, who had just been summoned to Gottingen, on account of the hours at which they were given. My wish to join Waitz’s classes was also unfulfilled, but I went to those of the philosopher Lotze, and they opened a new world to me. I was also one of the most eager of Professor Unger’s hearers.

Probably his “History of Art” would have attracted me for its own sake, but I must confess that at first his charming little daughter was the sole magnet which drew me to his lectures; for on account of displaying the pictures he delivered them at his own house.

Unfortunately, I rarely met the fair Julie, but, to make amends, I found through her father the way to that province of investigation to which my after-life was to be devoted.

In several lessons he discussed subtly and vividly the art of the Egyptians, mentioning Champollion’s deciphering of the hieroglyphics.

This great intellectual achievement awakened my deepest interest. I went at once to the library, and Unger selected the books which seemed best adapted to give me further instruction.

I returned with Champollion’s *Grammaire Hieroglyphique*, Lepsius’s *Lettre a Rosellini*, and unfortunately with some misleading writings by Seyffarth.

How often afterward, returning in the evening from some entertainment, I have buried myself in the grammar and tried to write hieroglyphics.

True, I strove still more frequently and persistently to follow the philosopher Lotze.

Obedient to a powerful instinct, my untrained intellect had sought to read the souls of men. Now I learned through Lotze to recognize the body as the instrument to which the emotions of the soul, the harmonies and discords of the mental and emotional life, owe their origin.



I intended later to devote myself earnestly to the study of physiology, for without it Lotze could be but half understood; and from physiologists emanated the conflict which at that time so deeply stirred the learned world.

In Gottingen especially the air seemed, as it were, filled with physiological and other questions of the natural sciences.



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In that time of the most sorrowful reaction the political condition of Germany was so wretched that any discussion concerning it was gladly avoided. I do not remember having attended a single debate on that topic in the circles of the students with which I was nearly connected.

But the great question "Materialism or Antimaterialism" still agitated the Georgia Augusta, in whose province the conflict had assumed still sharper forms, owing to Rudolf Wagner's speech during the convention of the Guttingen naturalists three years prior to my entrance.

Carl Vogt's "Science and Bigotry" exerted a powerful influence, owing to the sarcastic tone in which the author attacked his calmer adversary. In the honest conviction of profound knowledge, the clever, vigorous champion of materialism endeavoured to brand the opponents of his dogmas with the stigma of absurdity, and those who flattered themselves with the belief that they belonged to the ranks of the "strong-minded" followed his standard.

Hegel's influence was broken, Schelling's idealism had been thrust aside. The solid, easily accessible fare of the materialists was especially relished by those educated in the natural sciences, and Vogt's maxim, that thought stands in a similar relation to the brain as the gall to the liver and the excretions of the other organs, met with the greater approval the more confidently and wittily it was promulgated. The philosopher could not help asserting that the nature of the soul could be disclosed neither by the scalpel nor the microscope; yet the discoveries of the naturalist, which had led to the perception of the relation existing between the psychical and material life seemed to give the most honest, among whom Carl Vogt held the first rank; a right to uphold their dogmas.

Materialism versus Antimaterialism was the subject under discussion in the learned circles of Germany. Nay, I remember scarcely any other powerful wave of the intellect visible during this period of stagnation.

Philosophy could not fail to be filled with pity and disapproval to see the independent existence of the soul, as it were, authoritatively reaffirmed by a purely empirical science, and also brought into the field all the defensive forces at her command. But throngs flocked to the camp of Materialism, for the trumpets of her leaders had a clearer, more confident sound than the lower and less readily understood opposing cries of the philosophers.

Vogt's wrath was directed with special keenness against my teacher, Lotze. These topics were rarely discussed at the tavern or among the members of the corps. I first heard them made the subject of an animated exchange of thought in the Dirichlet household, where Professor Baum emerged from his aristocratic composure to denounce vehemently materialism and its apostles. Of course I endeavoured to gain

information about things which so strongly moved intellectual men, and read in addition to Lotze's books the polemical writings which were at that time in everybody's hands.

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Vogt's caustic style charmed me, but it was not due solely to the religious convictions which I had brought from my home and from Keilhau that I perceived that here a sharp sword was swung by a strong arm to cut water. The wounds it dealt would not bleed, for they were inflicted upon a body against which it had as little power as Satan against the cross.

When, before I became acquainted with Feuerbach, I flung my books aside, wearied or angered, I often seized in the middle of the night my monster Poem of the World, my tragedy of Panthea and Abradatus, or some other poetical work, and did not retire till the wick of the lamp burned out at three in the morning.

When I think how much time and earnest labour were lavished on that poem, I regret having yielded to the hasty impulse to destroy it.

I have never since ventured to undertake anything on so grand a scale. I could repeat only a few lines of the verses it contained; but the plan of the whole work, as I rounded it in Gottingen and Hosterwitz, I remember perfectly, and I think, if only for the sake of its peculiarity and as the mirror of a portion of my intellectual life at that time, its main outlines deserve reproduction here.

I made Power and Matter, which I imagined as a formless element; the basis of all existence. These two had been cast forth by the divine Ruler of a world incomprehensible to human intelligence, in which the present is a moment, space a bubble, as out of harmony with the mighty conditions and purposes of his realm. But this supreme Ruler offered to create for them a world suited to their lower plane of existence. Power I imagined a man, Matter a woman. They were hostile to each other, for he despised his quiet, inert companion, she feared her restless, unyielding partner; yet the power of the ruler of the higher world forced them to wed.

From their loveless union sprang the earth, the stars-in short, all inorganic life.

When the latter showed its relation to the father, Power, by the impetuous rush of the stars through space, by terrible eruptions, *etc.*, the mother, Matter, was alarmed, and as, to soothe them, she drew into her embrace the flaming spheres, which dashed each other to pieces in their mad career, and restrained the fiercest, her chill heart was warmed by her children's fire.

Thus, as it were, raised to a higher condition, she longed for less unruly children, and her husband, Power, who, though he would have gladly cast her off, was bound to her by a thousand ties, took pity upon her, because her listlessness and coldness were transformed to warmth and motion, and another child sprang from their union, love.

But she seemed to have been born to misery, and wandered mournfully about, weeping and lamenting because she lacked an object for which to labour. True, she drew from

the flaming, smoking bodies which she kissed a soft, beneficent light, she induced some to give up their former impetuosity and respect the course of others, and plants and trees sprang from the earth where her lips touched it, yet her longing to receive something which would be in harmony with her own nature remained unsatisfied.



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But she was a lovely child and the darling of her father, whom, by her entreaties, she persuaded to animate with his own nature the shapes which she created in sport, those of the animals.

From this time there were living creatures moved by Power and Love. But again they brought trouble to the mother; for they were stirred by fierce passions, under whose influence they attacked and rent each other. But Love did not cease to form new shapes until she attained the most beautiful, the human form.

Yet human beings were stirred by the same feelings as the animals, and Love's longing for something in which she could find comfort remained unsatisfied, till, repelled by her savage father and her listless mother, she flung herself in despair from a rock. But being immortal, she did not perish.

Her blood sprinkled the earth, and from her wounds exhaled an exquisite fragrance, which rose higher and higher till it reached the realm whence came her parents; and its supreme ruler took pity on the exile's child, and from the blood of Love grew at his sign a lily, from which arose, radiant in white garments, Intellect, which the Most High had breathed into the flower.

He came from that higher world to ours, but only a vague memory of his former home was permitted, lest he should compare his present abode with the old one and scorn it.

As soon as he met Love he was attracted towards her, and she ardently accepted his suit; yet the first embrace chilled her, and her fervour startled and repelled him. So, each fearing the other's tenderness, they shunned each other, though an invincible charm constantly drew them together.

Love continued to yearn for him even after she had sundered the bond; but he often yielded to the longing for his higher home, of whose splendours he retained a memory, and soared upward. Yet whenever he drew near he was driven back to the other.

There he directed sometimes with Love, sometimes alone, the life of everything in the universe, or in unison with her animated men with his breath.

He did this sometimes willingly, sometimes reluctantly, with greater or less strength, according to the nearness he had attained to his heavenly home; but when he had succeeded in reaching its circle of light, he returned wonderfully invigorated. Then whoever Love and he joined in animating with their breath became an artist.

There was also a thoroughly comic figure and one with many humorous touches. Intellect's page, Instinct, who had risen from the lily with him, was a comical fellow. When he tried to follow his master's flight he fell after the first few strokes of his wings, and usually among nettles. Only when some base advantage was to be gained on

earth did this servant succeed better than his master. The mother, Matter, whom for the sake of the verse I called by her Greek name Hyle, was also invested with a shade of comedy as a dissatisfied wife and the mother-in-law of Intellect.

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In regard to the whole Poem of the World I will observe that, up to the time I finished the last line, I had never studied the kindred systems of the Neo-Platonics or the Gnostics.

The verses which described the moment when Matter drew her fiery children to her heart and thus warmed it, another passage in which men who were destitute of intellect sought to destroy themselves and Love resolved to sacrifice her own life, and, lastly, the song where Intellect rises from the lily, besides many others, were worthy, in my opinion, of being preserved.

What first diverted my attention from the work was, as has been mentioned, the study of Feuerbach, to which I had been induced by a letter from the geographer Karl Andree. I eagerly seized his books, first choosing his "Axioms of the Philosophy of the Future," and afterwards devoured everything he had written which the library contained. And at that time I was grateful to my friend the geographer for his advice. True, Feuerbach seemed to me to shatter many things which from a child I had held sacred; yet I thought I discovered behind the falling masonry the image of eternal truth.

The veil which I afterwards saw spread over so many things in Feuerbach's writings at that time produced the same influence upon me as the mist whence rise here the towers, yonder the battlements of a castle. It might be large or small; the grey mist which forbids the eye from definitely measuring its height and width by no means prevents the traveller, who knows that a powerful lord possesses the citadel, from believing it to be as large and well guarded as the power of its ruler would imply.

True, I was not sufficiently mature for the study of this great thinker, whom I afterwards saw endanger other unripe minds. As a disciple of this master there were many things to be destroyed which from childhood had become interlaced by a thousand roots and fibres with my whole intellectual organism, and such operations are not effected without pain.

What I learned while seeking after truth during those night hours ought to have taught me the connection between mind and body; yet I was never farther from perceiving it. A sharp division had taken place in my nature. By night, in arduous conflict, I led a strange mental life, known to myself alone; by day all this was forgotten, unless—and how rarely this happened—some conversation recalled it.

From my first step out of doors I belonged to life, to the corps, to pleasure. What was individual existence, mortality, or the eternal life of the soul! Minerva's bird is an owl. Like it, these learned questions belonged to the night. They should cast no shadow on the brightness of my day. When I met the first friend in the blue cap no one need have sung our corps song, "Away with cares and crotchets!"



At no time had the exuberant joy in mere existence stirred more strongly within me. My whole nature was filled with the longing to utilize and enjoy this brief earthly life which Feuerbach had proved was to end with death.



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Better an hour's mad revel,
E'en a kiss from a Moenad's lip,
Than a year of timid doubting,
Daring only to taste and sip,

were the closing lines of a song which I composed at this time.

So my old wantonness unfolded its wings, but it was not to remain always unpunished.

My mother had gone to Holland with Paula just before Advent, and as I could not spend my next vacation at home, she promised to furnish me with means to take a trip through the great German Hanse cities.

In Bremen I was most cordially received in the family of Mohr, a member of my corps, in whose circle I spent some delightful hours, and also an evening never to be forgotten in the famous old Rathskeller.

But I wished to see the harbour of the great commercial city, and the ships which ploughed the ocean to those distant lands for which I had often longed.

Since I had shot my first hare in Komptendorf and brought down my first partridge from the air, the love of sport had never slumbered; I gratified it whenever I could, and intended to take a boat from Bremerhaven and go as near as possible to the sea, where I could shoot the cormorants and the bald-headed eagles which hunters on the seashore class among the most precious booty.

In Bremerhaven an architect whose acquaintance I had made on the way became my cicerone, and showed me all the sights of the small but very quaint port. I had expected to find the bustle on shore greater, but what a throng of ships and boats, masts and smoke-stacks I saw!

My guide showed me the last lighthouse which had been built, and took me on board of a mail steamer which was about to sail to America.

I was deeply interested in all this, but my companion promised to show me things still more remarkable if I would give up my shooting excursion.

Unfortunately, I insisted upon my plan, and the next morning sailed in a pouring rain through a dense mist to the mouth of the Weser and out to sea. But, instead of pleasure and booty, I gained on this expedition nothing but discomfort and drenching, which resulted in a violent cold.

What I witnessed and experienced in my journey back to Cuttingen is scarcely worth mentioning. The only enjoyable hours were spent at the theatre in Hanover, where I saw Niemann in Templar and Jewess, and for the first time witnessed the thoroughly



studied yet perfectly natural impersonations of Marie Seebach. I also remember with much pleasure the royal riding-school in charge of General Meyer. Never have I seen the strength of noble chargers controlled and guided with so much firmness, ease, and grace as by the hand of this officer, the best horseman in Germany.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SHIPWRECK

The state of health in which, still with a slight fever recurring every afternoon, I returned to Gottingen was by no means cheering.

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Besides, I was obliged at once to undergo the five days' imprisonment to which I had been justly sentenced for reckless shooting across the street.

During the day I read, besides some very trashy novels, several by Jean Paul, with most of which I had become familiar while a school-boy in the first class.

They had given me so much pleasure that I was vexed with the indifference with which some of my friends laid the works of the great humorist aside.

There were rarely any conversations on the more serious scientific subjects among the members of the corps, though it did not lack talented young men, and some of the older ones were industrious.

Nothing, perhaps, lends the life of the corps a greater charm than the affectionate intercourse which unites individuals.

I was always sure of finding sympathizers for everything that touched my feelings.

With regard to the results of my nocturnal labour the case was very different. If any one else had "bored" me at the tavern about his views of Feuerbach and Lotze, I should undoubtedly have stopped him with Goethe's "Ergo bibamus."

There was one person in Gottingen, however, Herbert Pernice, from whom I might expect full sympathy. Though only five years my senior, he was already enrolled among the teachers of the legal faculty. The vigour and keenness of his intellect and the extent of his knowledge were as amazing as his corpulence.

One evening I had met him at the Krone and left the table at which he presided in a very enthusiastic state of mind; for while emptying I know not how many bottles of Rhine wine he directed the conversation apparently unconsciously.

Each of his statements seemed to strike the nail on the head.

The next day, to my great delight, I met him again at Professor Baum's. He had retreated from the ladies, whom he always avoided, and as we were alone in the room I soon succeeded in turning the conversation upon Feuerbach, for I fairly longed to have another person's opinion of him. Besides, I was certain of hearing the philosopher criticised by the conservative antimaterialistic Pernice in an original manner—that is, if he knew him at all. True, I might have spared myself the doubt; for into what domain of humanistic knowledge had not this highly talented man entered!

Feuerbach was thoroughly familiar to him, but he condemned his philosophy with pitiless severity, and opposed with keen wit and sharp dialectics his reasons for denying the immortality of the soul, inveighing especially against the phrase and idea "philosophy of religion" as an absurdity which genuine philosophy ought not to permit



because it dealt only with thought, while religion concerned faith, whose seat is not in the head, the sacred fount of all philosophy, but the heart, the warm abode of religion and faith. Then he advised me to read Bacon, study Kant, Plato, and the other ancient philosophers—Lotze, too, if I desired—and when I had them all by heart, take up the lesser lights, and even then be in no hurry to read Feuerbach and his wild theology.



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I met and conversed with him again whenever I could, and he availed himself of the confidence he inspired to arouse my enthusiasm for the study of jurisprudence. So I am indebted to Pernice for many benefits. In one respect only my reverence for him entailed a certain peril.

He knew what I was doing, but instead of warning me of the danger which threatened me from toiling at night after such exciting days, he approved my course and described episodes of his own periods of study.

One of the three essays for which he received prizes had been written to compel his father to retract the "stupid fellow" with which he had insulted him. At that time he had sat over his books day and night for weeks, and, thank Heaven, did not suffer from it.

His colossal frame really did seem immovable, and I deemed mine, though much slighter, capable of nearly equal endurance. It required severe exertions to weary me, and my mind possessed the capacity to devote itself to strenuous labour directly after the gayest amusements, and there was no lack of such "pastimes" either in Gottingen or just beyond its limits.

Among the latter was an excursion to Cassel which was associated with an adventure whose singular course impressed it firmly on my memory.

When we arrived, chilled by the railway journey, an acquaintance of the friend who accompanied me ordered rum and water for us, and we laughed and jested with the landlord's pretty daughters, who brought it to us.

As it had been snowing heavily and the sleighing was excellent, we determined to return directly after dinner, and drive as far as Munden. Of course the merry girls would be welcome companions, and we did not find it very difficult to persuade them to go part of the way with us.

So we hired two sleighs to convey us to a village distant about an hour's ride, from which we were to send them back in one, while my friend and I pursued our journey in the other.

After a lively dinner with our friends they joined us.

The snow-storm, which had ceased for several hours, began again, growing more and more violent as we drove on. I never saw such masses of the largest flakes, and just outside the village where the girls were to turn back the horses could barely force their way through the white mass which transformed the whole landscape into a single snowy coverlet.

The clouds seemed inexhaustible, and when the time for departure came the driver declared that it would be impossible to go back to Cassel.



The girls, who, exhilarated by the swift movement through the cold, bracing air, had entered into our merriment, grew more and more anxious. Our well-meant efforts to comfort them were rejected; they were angry with us for placing them in such an unpleasant position.

The lamps were lighted when I thought of taking the landlady into our confidence and asking her to care for the poor frightened children. She was a kind, sensible woman, and though she at first exclaimed over their heedlessness, she addressed them with maternal tenderness and showed them to the room they were to occupy.



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They came down again at supper reassured, and we ate the rustic meal together very merrily. One of them wrote a letter to her father, saying that they had been detained by the snow at the house of an acquaintance, and a messenger set off with it at sunrise, but we were told that the road would not be passable before noon.

Yet, gay as our companions were at breakfast, the thought of entertaining them longer seemed irksome, and as the church bells were ringing some one proposed that we should go.

A path had been shovelled, and we were soon seated in the country church. The pastor, a fine-looking man of middle age, entered, and though I no longer remember his text, I recollect perfectly that he spoke of the temptations which threaten to lure us from the right paths and the means of resisting them.

One of the most effectual, he said, was the remembrance of those to whom we owe love and respect. I thought of my mother and blind old Langethal, of Tzschirner, and of Herbert Pernice, and, dissatisfied with myself, resolved to do in the future not only what was seemly, but what the duty of entering more deeply into the science which I had chosen required.

The childish faith which Feuerbach's teachings had threatened to destroy seemed to gaze loyally at me with my mother's eyes. I felt that Pernice was right—it was the warm heart, not the cool head, which should deal with these matters, and I left the church, which I had entered merely to shorten an hour, feeling as if released from a burden.

Our return home was pleasant, and I began to attend the law lectures at Gottingen with tolerable regularity.

I was as full of life, and, when occasion offered, as reckless, as ever, though a strange symptom began to make itself unpleasantly felt. It appeared only after severe exertion in walking, fencing, or dancing, and consisted of a peculiar, tender feeling in the soles of my feet, which I attributed to some fault of the shoemaker, and troubled myself the less about it because it vanished soon after I came in.

But the family of Professor Baum, the famous surgeon, where I was very intimate, had thought ever since my return from the Christmas vacation that I did not look well.

With Marianne, the second daughter of this hospitable household, a beautiful girl of remarkably brilliant mind, I had formed so intimate, almost fraternal, a friendship, that both she and her warm-hearted mother called me "Cousin Schorge."

Frau Dirichlet, the wife of the great mathematician, the sister of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, in whose social and musical home I spent hours of pleasure which will never be forgotten, also expressed her anxiety about my loss of flesh. When a girl she had



often met my mother, and at my first visit she won my affection by her eager praise of that beloved woman's charms.

As the whole family were extremely musical they could afford themselves and their friends a great deal of enjoyment. I have never heard Joachim play so entrancingly as to her accompaniment. At a performance in her own house, where the choruses from Cherubini's *Water-Carrier* were given, she herself had rehearsed the music with those who were to take part, and to hear her play on the piano was a treat.



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This lady, a remarkable woman in every respect, who gave me many tokens of maternal affection, insisted on the right to warn me. She did this by reminding me, with delicate feminine tact, of my mother when she heard of a wager which I now remember with grave disapproval. This was to empty an immense number of bottles of the heavy Wurzburg Stein wine and yet remain perfectly sober. My opponent, who belonged to the Brunswick Corps, lost, but as soon after I was attacked by illness, though not in consequence of this folly, which had occurred about a fortnight before, he could not give the breakfast which I had won. But he fulfilled his obligation; for when, several lustra later, I visited his native city of Hamburg as a Leipsic professor, to deliver an address before the Society of Art and Science, he arranged a splendid banquet, at which I met several old Gottingen friends.

The term was nearly over when an entertainment was given to the corps by one of its aristocratic members. It was a very gay affair. A band of music played, and we students danced with one another. I was one of the last to depart, long after midnight, and on looking for my overcoat I could not find it. One of the guests had mistaken it for his, and the young gentleman's servant had carried his own home. This was unfortunate, for mine contained my door-key.

Heated by dancing, in a dress-coat, with a thin white necktie, I went out into the night air. It was cold, and, violently as I pounded on the door of the Schonhutte, no one opened it. At last I thought of pounding on the gutter-spout, which I did till I roused the landlord. But I had been at least fifteen minutes in the street, and was fairly numbed. The landlord was obliged to open the room and light my lamp, because I could not use my fingers.

If I had been intoxicated, which I do not believe, the cold would have sobered me, for what happened is as distinct as if it had occurred yesterday.

I undressed, went to bed, and when I was roused by a strange burning sensation in my throat I felt so weak that I could scarcely lift my arm. There was a peculiar taste of blood in my mouth, and as I moved I touched something moist. But my exhaustion was so great that I fell asleep again, and the dream which followed was so delightful that I did not forget it. Perhaps the distinctness of my recollection is due to my making it the subject of a poem, which I still possess. It seemed as if I were lying in an endless field of poppies, with the notes of music echoing around me. Never did I have a more blissful vision.

The awakening was all the more terrible. Only a few hours could have passed since I went to rest. Dawn was just appearing, and I rang for the old maid-servant who waited on me. An hour later Geheimrath Baum stood beside my bed.



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The heavy tax made upon my physical powers by exposure to the night air had caused a severe haemorrhage. The excellent physician who took charge of my case said positively that my lungs were sound, and the attack was due to the bursting of a blood-vessel. I was to avoid sitting upright in bed, to receive no visitors, and have ice applied. I believed myself destined to an early death, but the departure from life caused me no fear; nay, I felt so weary that I desired nothing but eternal sleep. Only I wanted to see my mother again.

Then let my end come!

I was in the mood to write, and either the day after the haemorrhage or the next one I composed the following verses:

A field of poppies swaying to and fro,
Their blossoms scarlet as fresh blood,
I see, While o'er me, radiant in the noontide glow,
The sky, blue as corn-flowers, arches free.

Low music echoes through the breezes warm;
The violet lends the poppy her sweet breath;
The song of nightingales is heard, a swarm
Of butterflies flit hov'ring o'er the heath.

While thus I lie, wrapped in a morning dream,
Half waking, half asleep, 'mid poppies red,
A fresh breeze cools my burning cheeks; a gleam
Of light shines in the East. Hath the night sped?

Then upward from an opening bud hath flown
A poppy leaf toward the azure sky,
But close beside it, from a flower full-blown,
The scattered petals on the brown earth lie.

The leaflet flutters, a fair sight to view,
By the fresh matin breezes heavenward borne,
The faded poppy falls, the fields anew
To fertilize, which grateful thanks return.

Starting from slumber round my room I gaze
My hand of my own life-blood bears the stain;
I am the poppy-leaf, with the first rays
Of morning snatched away from earth's domain.



Not mine the fate the world's dark ways to wend,
And perish, wearied, at the goal of life;
Still glad and blooming, I leave every friend;
The game is lost—but with what joys 'twas rife!

I cannot express how these verses relieved my heart; and when on the third day I again felt comparatively well I tried to believe that I should soon recover, enjoy the pleasures of corps life, though with some caution, and devote myself seriously to the study of jurisprudence under Pernice's direction.

The physician gave his permission for a speedy return, but his assurance that there was no immediate danger if I was careful did not afford me unmixed pleasure. For my mother's sake and my own I desired to live, but the rules he prescribed before my departure were so contradictory to my nature that they seemed unbearably cruel. They restricted every movement. He feared the haemorrhage far less than the tender feeling in the soles of my feet and other small symptoms of the commencement of a chronic disease.



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Middendorf had taught us to recognize God's guidance in Nature and our own lives, and how often I succeeded in doing so! But when I examined myself and my condition closely it seemed as if what had befallen me was the result of a malicious or blind chance.

Never before or since have I felt so crushed and destitute of support as during those days, and in this mood I left the city where the spring days of life had bloomed so richly for me, and returned home to my mother. She had learned what had occurred, but the physician had assured her that with my vigorous constitution I should regain my health if I followed his directions.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The hardest time in the school of life.

The period which now followed was the most terrible of my whole life. Even the faithful love that surrounded me could do little to relieve it.

Medicines did not avail, and I had not yet found the arcanum which afterwards so greatly benefitted my suffering soul.

The props which my mother and Middendorf had bestowed upon me when a boy had fallen; and the feeling of convalescence, which gives the invalid's life a sense of bliss the healthy person rarely knows, could not aid me, for the disease increased with wonderful speed.

When autumn came I was so much worse that Geheimrath von Ammon, a learned and experienced physician, recalled his advice that my mother and I should spend the winter in the south. The journey would have been fatal. The correctness of his judgment was proved by the short trip to Berlin which I took with my mother, aided by my brother Martin, who was then a physician studying with the famous clinical doctor Schonlein. It was attended with cruel suffering and the most injurious results, but it was necessary for me to return to my comfortable winter quarters. Our old friend and family physician, who had come to Hosterwitz in September to visit me, wished to have me near him, and in those days there was probably no one who deserved more confidence; for Heinrich Moritz Romberg was considered the most distinguished pathologist in nervous diseases in Germany, and his works on his own specialty are still valued.

In what a condition I entered the home which I had left so strong and full of youthful vigour! And Berlin did not receive me kindly; for the first months I spent there brought days of suffering with fever in the afternoon, and nights whose condition was no less torturing than pain.



But our physician had been present at my birth, he was my godfather, and as kind as if I were his son. He did everything in his power to relieve me, but the remedies he used were not much easier to bear than many a torturing disease. And hardest of all, I was ordered to keep perfectly still in bed. What a prospect! But when I had once resolved to follow the doctor's advice, I controlled



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with the utmost care every movement of my body. I, who had so often wished to fly, lay like my own corpse. I did not move, for I did not want to die, and intended to use every means in my power to defer the end. Death, which after the haemorrhage had appeared as the beautiful winged boy who is so easily mistaken for the god of love—- Death, who had incited me to write saucy, defiant verses about him, now confronted me as a hollow-eyed, hideous skeleton.

In the guise of the most appalling figure among the apocalyptic riders of Cornelius, who had used me when a child for the model of a laughing angel, he seemed to be stretching his hand toward me from his emaciated steed. The poppy leaf was not to flutter toward the sky, but to wither in the dust.

Once, several weeks after our return home, I saw the eyes of my mother, who rarely wept, reddened with tears after a conversation with Dr. Romberg. When I asked my friend and physician if he would advise me to make my will, he said that it could do no harm.

Soon after Hans Geppert, who meanwhile had become a notary, arrived with two witnesses, odd-looking fellows who belonged to the working class, and I made my will in due form. The certainty that when I was no more what I possessed would be divided as I wished was a ray of light in this gloomy time.

No one knows the solemnity of Death save the person whom his cold hand has touched, and I felt it for weeks upon my heart.

What days and nights these were!

Yet in the presence of the open grave from which I shrank something took place which deeply moved my whole nature, gave it a new direction, led me to self-examination, and thence to a knowledge of my own character which revealed many surprising and unpleasing things. But I also felt that it was not yet too late to bring the good and evil traits, partly hereditary, partly acquired, into harmony with one another and render them of use to the same higher objects.

Yes, if I were permitted time to do so!

I had learned how quickly and unexpectedly the hour strikes which puts an end to all struggle towards a goal.

Besides, I now knew what would protect me from a relapse into the old careless waste of strength, what could aid me to do my utmost, for the mother's heart had again found the son's, fully and completely.



I had been forced to become as helpless as a child in order again to lay my head upon her breast and belong to her as completely as during the first years of life. During the long nights when fever robbed me of sleep she sat beside my bed, holding my hands in hers.

At last one came which contained hours of the most intense suffering, and in its course she asked, "Can you still pray?" The answer, which came from my inmost heart, was, "When you are with me, and with you, certainly."

We remained silent a long time, and whenever impatience, suffering, and faintness threatened to overpower me, I found, like Antaeus when he touched the earth that had given him birth, new strength in my mother's heart.



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My old life seemed henceforward to lie far behind me.

I did not take up Feuerbach's writings again; his way could never again have been mine. In my suffering it had become evident from what an Eden he turns away and into what a wilderness he leads. But I still value this thinker as an honest, virile, and brilliantly gifted seeker after truth.

I also laid aside the other philosophers whose works I had been studying.

I never resumed Lotze, though later, with two other students, I attended Trendelenburg's difficult course, and tried to comprehend Kant's "critiques."

I first became familiar with Schopenhauer in Jena.

On the other hand, I again devoted many leisure hours to Egyptological works.

I felt that these studies suited my powers and would satisfy me. Everything which had formerly withheld me from the pursuits of learning now seemed worthless. It was as if I stood in a new relation to all things. Even the one to my mother had undergone a transformation. I realized for the first time what I possessed in her, how wrong I had been, and what I owed to her. One day during this period I remembered my Poem of the World, and instantly had the box brought in which I kept it among German favours, little pink notes, and similar trophies.

For the first time I perceived, in examining the fruits of the labour of so many days and nights, the vast disproportion between the magnitude of the subject and my untrained powers. One passage seemed faulty, another so overstrained and inadequate, that I flung it angrily back among the rest. At the same time I thought that the verses I had addressed to various beauties and the answers which I had received ought not to be seen by other eyes. I was alone with the servant, a bright fire was blazing in the stove, and, obedient to a hasty impulse, I told him to throw the whole contents of the box into the fire.

When the last fragment was consumed to ashes I uttered a sigh of relief.

Unfortunately, the flames also destroyed the greater part of my youthful poems. Even the completed acts of my tragedy had been overtaken by destruction, like the heroes of Panthea and Abradatus.

If I had formerly obeyed the physician's order to lie motionless, I followed it after the first signs of convalescence so rigidly that even the experienced Dr. Romberg admitted that he had not given me credit for so much self-control. Toward the end of the winter my former cheerfulness returned, and with it I also learned to use the arcanum I have formerly mentioned, which makes even the most bitter things enjoyable and lends them a taste of sweetness. I might term it "the practice of gratitude." Without intending it, I



acquired the art of thankfulness by training my eyes to perceive the smallest trifle which gave cause for it. And this recognition of even the least favour of Fortune filled the rude wintry days with so much sunshine, that when children of my own were given me my first effort was to train them to gratitude, and especially to an appreciation of trifles.



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The motto 'Carpe diem,' which I had found in my father's Horace and had engraved upon my seal ring, unexpectedly gained a new significance by no longer translating it "enjoy," but "use the day," till the time came when the two meanings seemed identical.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The apprenticeship.

Firmly as I had resolved to follow the counsel of Horace, and dear as earnest labour was becoming, I still lacked method, a fixed goal towards which to move with firm tread in the seclusion to which my sufferings still condemned me.

I had relinquished the study of the law. It seemed more than doubtful whether my health would ever permit me to devote myself to a practical profession or an academic career, and my interest in jurisprudence was too slight to have it allure me to make it the subject of theoretical studies.

Egyptology, on the contrary, not only attracted me but permitted me to devote my whole strength to it so far as my health would allow. True, Champollion, the founder of this science, termed it "a beautiful dowerless maiden," but I could venture to woo her, and felt grateful that, in choosing my profession, I could follow my inclination without being forced to consider pecuniary advantages.

The province of labour was found, but with each step forward the conviction of my utter lack of preparation for the new science grew clearer.

Just then the kind heart of Wilhelm Grimm's wife brought her to me with some delicious fruit syrup made by her own hands. When I told her what I was doing and expressed a wish to have a guide in my science, she promised to tell "the men" at home, and within a few days after his sister-in-law's visit Jacob was sitting with me.

He inquired with friendly interest how my attention had been called to Egyptology, what progress I had made, and what other sciences I was studying.

After my reply he shook his venerable head with its long grey locks, and said, smiling:

"You have been putting the cart before the horse. But that's the way with young specialists. They want to become masters in the workshops of their sciences as a shoemaker learns to fashion boots. Other things are of small importance to them; and yet the special discipline first gains value in connection with the rest or the wider province of the allied sciences. Your deciphering of hieroglyphics can only make you a dragoman, and you must become a scholar in the higher sense, a real and thorough one. The first step is to lay the linguistic foundation."



This was said with the engaging yet impressively earnest frankness characteristic of him. He himself had never investigated Egyptian matters closely, and therefore did not seek to direct my course minutely, but advised me, in general, never to forget that the special science was nothing save a single chord, which could only produce its full melody with those that belonged to the same lute.



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Lepsius had a broader view than most of those engaged in so narrow a field of study. He would speak of me to him.

The next Thursday Lepsius called on me. I know this because that day was reserved for his subsequent visits.

After learning what progress I had made by my own industry, he told me what to do next, and lastly promised to come again.

He had inquired about my previous education, and urged me to study philology, archaeology, and at least one Semitic language. Later he voluntarily informed me how much he, who had pursued philological, archaeological, Sanscrit, and Germanistic studies, had been impeded in his youth by having neglected the Semitic languages, which are more nearly allied to the Egyptian. It would be necessary also for me to understand English and Italian, since many things which the Egyptologist ought to know were published in these languages, as well as in French. Lastly he advised me to obtain some insight into Sanscrit, which was the point of departure for all linguistic studies.

His requirements raised mountain after mountain in my path, but the thought of being compelled to scale these heights not only did not repel me, but seemed extremely attractive. I felt as if my strength increased with the magnitude and multiplicity of the tasks imposed, and, full of joyous excitement, I told Lepsius that I was ready to fulfil his requirements in every detail.

We now discussed in what sequence and manner I should go to work, and to this day I admire the composure, penetration, and lucidity with which he sketched a plan of study that covered years.

I have reason to be grateful to this great scholar for the introduction to my special science, but still more for the wisdom with which he pointed out the direction of my studies. Like Jacob Grimm, he compelled me, as an Egyptologist, to remain in connection with the kindred departments.

Later my own experience was to teach me the correctness of his assertion that it would be a mistake to commence by studying so restricted a science as Egyptology.

My pupils can bear witness that during my long period of teaching I always strove to urge students who intended to devote themselves to Egyptology first to strengthen the foundations, without which the special structure lacks support.

Lepsius's plan of instruction provided that I should follow these principles from the beginning. The task I had to perform was a great and difficult one. How infinitely easier it was for those whom I had the privilege of introducing to this science! The lecture-



rooms of famous teachers stood open to them, while my physical condition kept me for weeks from the university; and how scanty were the aids to which the student could turn! Yet the zeal—nay, the enthusiasm—with which I devoted myself to the study was so great that it conquered every difficulty.



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[I had no dictionary and no grammar for the hieroglyphic language save Champollion's. No Stern had treated Coptic in a really scientific manner. I was obliged to learn it according to Tuki, Peyron, Tattam, and Steinthal-Schwarze. For the hieratic there was no aid save my own industry and the lists I had myself compiled from the scanty texts then at the disposal of the student. Lepsius had never devoted much time to them. Brugsch's demotic grammar had appeared, but its use was rendered very difficult by the lack of conformity between the type and the actual signs.]

When I recall the amount of knowledge I mastered in a few terms it seems incredible; yet my labour was interrupted every summer by a sojourn at the springs—once three months, and never for a less period than six weeks. True, I was never wholly idle while using the waters, but, on the other hand, I was obliged to consider the danger that in winter constantly threatened my health. All night-work was strictly forbidden and, if I sat too long over my books by day, my mother reminded me of my promise to the doctor, and I was obliged to stop.

During the first years I worked almost exclusively at home, for I was permitted to go out only in very pleasant weather.

Dr. Romberg had wisely considered my reluctance to interrupt my studies by a residence in the south, because he deemed life in a well-ordered household more beneficial to sufferers from spinal diseases than a warmer climate, when leaving home, as in my case, threatened to disturb the patient's peace of mind.

For three winters I had been denied visiting the university, the museum, and the libraries. On the fourth I was permitted to begin, and now, with mature judgment and thorough previous preparation, I attended the academic lectures, and profited by the treasures of knowledge and rich collections of the capital.

After my return from Wildbad Lepsius continued his Thursday visits, and during the succeeding winters still remained my guide, even when I had also placed myself, in the department of the ancient Egyptian languages, under the instruction of Heinrich Brugsch.

At school, of course, I had not thought of studying Hebrew. Now I took private lessons in that language, to which I devoted several hours daily. I had learned to read Sanscrit and to translate easy passages in the chrestomathy, and devoted myself with special zeal to the study of the Latin grammar and prosody. Professor Julius Geppert, the brother of our most intimate family friend, was my teacher for four terms.

The syntax of the classic languages, which had been my weak point as a school-boy, now aroused the deepest interest, and I was grateful to Lepsius for having so earnestly insisted upon my pursuing philology. I soon felt the warmest appreciation of the Roman comedies, which served as the foundation of these studies. What sound wit, what



keenness of observation, what a happy gift of invention, the old comic writers had at their disposal! I took them up again a few years ago, after reading with genuine pleasure in Otto Ribbeck's masterpiece, *The History of Roman Poetry*, the portions devoted to Plautus and Terence.

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The types of character found in these comedies strengthened my conviction that the motives of human actions and the mental and emotional peculiarities of civilized men in every age always have been and always will be the same.

With what pleasure, when again permitted to go out in the evening, I witnessed the performances of Plautus's pieces given by Professor Geppert's pupils!

The refreshed and enlarged knowledge of school Latin was of great service in writing, and afterwards discussing, a Latin dissertation. I devoted perhaps a still larger share of my time to Greek, and, as the fruit of these studies, still possess many translations from Anacreon, Sappho, and numerous fragments from the Bergk collection of Greek lyrics, but, with the exception of those introduced into my novels, none have been printed.

During my leisure hours translating afforded me special pleasure. An exact rendering of difficult English authors soon made Shakespeare's language in both prose and poetry as intelligible as German or French.

After mastering the rules of grammar, I needed no teacher except my mother. When I had conquered the first difficulties I took up Tennyson's *Idyls of the King*, and at last succeeded in translating two of these beautiful poems in the metre of the original.

My success with *Enid* I think was very tolerable. The manuscript still lies in my desk unpublished.

As I was now engaged in studying the languages I easily learned to read Italian, Spanish, and Dutch books.

In view of this experience, which is not wholly personal, I have wondered whether the instruction of boys might not be shortened to give them more outdoor exercise. In how brief a time the pupils, as men studying for their own benefit, not the teacher's, would acquire many things! Besides the languages, I studied, at first exclusively under Lepsius's thoroughly admirable instruction, ancient history and archeology.

Later I owed most to Gerhard, Droysen, Friederichs, and August Bockh.

A kind fate afterwards brought me into personal relations with the latter, whose lectures on the Athenian financial system were the finest and the most instructive I have ever heard. What clearness, what depth of learning, what a subtle sense of humour this splendid old man possessed! I attended his lectures in 1863, and how exquisite were the allusions to the by no means satisfactory political conditions of the times with which he spiced them. I also became sincerely attached to Friederichs, and it made me happy to be able to requite him in some small degree in Egypt for the kindness and unselfishness he had shown me in Berlin.

Bopp's lectures, where I tried to increase my meagre knowledge of Sanscrit, I attended, unfortunately, only a few hours.

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The lectures of the African traveller Heinrich Barth supplied rich sources of material, but whoever expected to hear bewitching narratives from him would have been disappointed. Even in more intimate intercourse he rarely warmed up sufficiently to let others share the rich treasure of his knowledge and experience. It seemed as if, during his lonely life in Africa, he had lost the necessity of exchanging thoughts with his fellow-men. During this late period Heinrich Brugsch developed in the linguistic department of Egyptology what I had gained from Lepsius and by my own industry, and I gladly term myself his pupil.

I have cause to be grateful for the fresh and helpful way in which this great and tireless investigator gave me a private lecture; but Lepsius had opened the door of our science, and though he could carry me only to a certain stage in the grammar of the ancient Egyptians, in other departments I owe him more than any other of my intellectual guides. I am most indebted to him for the direction to use historical and archaeological authorities critically, and his correction of the tasks he set me; but our conversations on archaeological subjects have also been of the greatest interest.

After his death I tried to return in some small degree what his unselfish kindness had bestowed by accepting the invitation to become his biographer. In "Richard Lepsius," I describe reverently but without deviating one step from the truth, this wonderful scholar, who was a faithful and always affectionate friend.

I can scarcely believe it possible that the dignified man, with the grave, stern, clear-cut, scholarly face and snow-white hair, was but forty-five years old when he began to direct my studies; for, spite of his erect bearing and alert, movements, he seemed to me at that time a venerable old man. There was something in the aristocratic reserve of his nature and the cool, penetrating sharpness of his criticism, which is usually found only in men of more mature years. I should have supposed him incapable of any heedless word, any warm emotion, until I afterwards met him under his own roof and enjoyed the warm-hearted cheerfulness of the father of the family and the graciousness of the host.

It certainly was not the cool, calculating reason, but the heart, which had urged him to devote so many hours of his precious time to the young follower of his science.

Heinrich Brugsch, my second teacher, was far superior to Lepsius as a decipherer and investigator of the various stages of the ancient Egyptian languages. Two natures more totally unlike can scarcely be imagined.



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Brugsch was a man of impulse, who maintained his cheerfulness even when life showed him its serious side. Then, as now, he devoted himself with tireless energy to hard work. In this respect he resembled Lepsius, with whom he had other traits in common—first, a keen sense of order in the collection and arrangement of the abundant store of scientific material at his disposal; and, secondly, the circumstance that Alexander von Humboldt had smoothed the beginning of the career of investigation for both. The attention of this great scholar and influential man had been attracted by Brugsch's first Egyptological works, which he had commenced before he left school, and his keen eye recognized their value as well as the genius of their author. As soon as he began to win renown Humboldt extended his powerful protection to him, and induced his friend, the king, to afford him means for continuing his education in Paris and for a journey to Europe.

Though it was Bunsen who first induced Lepsius to devote himself to Egyptology, that he might systematize the science and prune with the knife of philological and historical criticism the shoots which grew so wildly after Champollion's death, Humboldt had opened the paths to learning which in Paris were closed to the foreigner.

Finally, it was the great naturalist who had lent the aid of his powerful influence with Frederick William IV to the enterprise supported by Bunsen of an expedition to Egypt under the direction of Lepsius. But for the help of the most influential man of his day it would have been difficult—nay, perhaps impossible—to obtain for themselves and German investigation the position which, thanks to their labour, it now occupies.

I had the privilege of meeting Alexander von Humboldt at a small dinner party, and his image is vividly imprinted on my memory. He was at that time far beyond the span of life usually allotted to man, and what I heard him say was hardly worth retaining, for it related to the pleasures of the table, ladies' toilettes, court gossip, etc. When he afterwards gave me his hand I noticed the numerous blue veins which covered it like a network. It was not until later that I learned how many important enterprises that delicate hand had aided.

Heinrich Brugsch is still pursuing with fresh creative power the profession of Egyptological research. The noble, simple-hearted woman who was so proud of her son's increasing renown, his mother, died long ago. She modestly admired his greatness, yet his shrewdness, capacity for work, and happy nature were a heritage from her.

Heinrich Brugsch's instruction extended beyond the actual period of teaching.

With the commencement of convalescence and the purposeful industry which then began, a time of happiness dawned for me. The mental calmness felt by every one who, secluded from the tumult of the world, as I was at that time, devotes himself to the

faithful fulfilment of duty, rendered it comparatively easy for me to accommodate myself patiently to a condition which a short time before would have seemed insupportable.



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True, I was forced to dispense with the companionship of gay associates of my own age. At first many members of my old corps, who were studying in Berlin, sought me, but gradually their places were filled by other friends.

The dearest of these was Dr. Adolf Baeyer, son of the General. He is now one of the leaders in his chosen science, chemistry, and is Justus Liebig's successor in the Munich University.

My second friend was a young Pole who devoted himself eagerly to Egyptology, and whom Lepsius had introduced as a professional comrade. He called me Georg and I him Mieczy (his name was Mieczyslaw).

So, during those hard winters, I did not lack friendship. But they also wove into my life something else which lends their memory a melancholy charm.

The second daughter of my mother's Belgian niece, who had married in Berlin the architect Fritz Hitzig, afterwards President of the Academy of Arts, was named Eugenie and nicknamed "Nenny."

If ever any woman fulfilled the demands of the fairy tale, "White as snow and black as ebony," it was she. Only the "red as blood" was lacking, for usually but a faint roseate hue tinged her cheeks. Her large blue eyes had an innocent, dreamy, half-melancholy expression, which I was not the only person who found unspeakably charming. Afterwards it seemed to me, in recalling her look, that she beheld the fair boy Death, whose lowered torch she was so soon to follow.

About the time that I returned to Berlin seriously ill she had just left boarding-school, and it is difficult to describe the impression she made when I saw her for the first time; yet I found in the opening rose all that had lent the bud so great a charm.

I am not writing a romance, and shall not permit the heart to beautify or transfigure the image memory retains, yet I can assert that Nenny lacked nothing which art and poesy attribute to the women who allegorically personate the magic of Nature or the fairest emotions and ideals of the human soul. In this guise poet, sculptor, or artist might have represented Imagination, the Fairy Tale, Lyric Poetry, the Dream, or Compassion.

The wealth of raven hair, the delicate lines of the profile, the scarlet lips, the pearly teeth, the large, long-lashed blue eyes, whose colour formed a startling contrast to the dark hair, the slender little hands and dainty feet, united to form a beauty whose equal Nature rarely produces. And this fair body contained a tender, loving, pure, childlike heart, which longed for higher gifts than human life can bestow.



Thus she appeared before me like an apparition from a world opened only to the poet. She came often, for she loved my mother, and rarely approached my couch without a flower, a picture which pleased her, or a book containing a poem which she valued.

When she entered I felt as if happiness came with her. Doubtless my eyes betrayed this distinctly enough, though I forced my lips to silence; for what love had she, before whom life was opening like a path through a blooming garden, to bestow on the invalid cousin who was probably destined to an early death, and certainly to many a year of illness? At our first meeting I felt that I loved her, but for that very reason I desired to conceal it.



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I had grown modest. It was enough for me to gaze at her, hear her dear voice, and sometimes—she was my cousin—clasp her little hand.

Science was now the object of my devotion. My intellect, passion, and fire were all hers. A kind fortune seemed to send me Nenny in order to bestow a gift also upon the heart, the soul, the sense of beauty.

This state of affairs could not last; for no duty commanded her to share the conflict raging within me, and a day came when I learned from her own lips that she loved me, that her heart had been mine when she was a little school-girl, that during my illness she had never wearied of praying for me, and had wept all night long when the physician told her mother of the danger in which I stood.

This confession sounded like angel voices. It made me infinitely happy, yet I had strength to entreat Nenny to treasure this blissful hour with me as the fairest jewel of our lives, and then help me to fulfil the duty of parting from her.

But she took a different view of the future. It was enough for her to know that my heart was hers. If I died young, she would follow me.

And now the devout child, who firmly believed in a meeting after death face to face, permitted me a glimpse of the wondrous world in which she hoped to have her portion after the end here.

I listened in astonishment, with sincere emotion. This was the faith which moved mountains, which brings heaven itself to earth.

Afterwards I again beheld the eyes with which, gazing into vacancy, she tried to conjure up before my soul these visions of hope from the realm of her fairest dreams—they were those of Raphael's Saint Cecilia in Bologna and Munich. I also saw them long after Nenny's death in one of Murillo's Madonnas in Seville, and even now they rise distinctly before my memory.

To disturb this childish faith or check the imagination winged by this devout enthusiasm would have seemed to me actually criminal. And I was young. Even the suffering I had endured had neither silenced the yearning voice of my heart nor cooled the warmth of my blood. I, who had believed that the garden of love was forever closed against me, was beloved by the most beautiful girl, who was even dearer to me than life, and with new hope, which Nenny's faith in God's goodness bedewed with warm spring rain, I enjoyed this happiness.

Yet conscience could not be silenced. The warning voice of my mother, to whom I had opened my heart, sharpened the admonitions of mine; and when Wildbad brought me only relief, by no means complete recovery, I left the decision to the physician. It was



strongly adverse. Under the most favourable circumstances years must pass ere I should be justified in binding any woman's fate to mine.

So this beginning of a beautiful and serious love story became a swiftly passing dream. Its course had been happy, but the end dealt my heart a blow which healed very slowly. It opened afresh when in her parents' house, where during my convalescence I was a frequent guest, I myself advised her to marry a young land-owner, who eagerly wooed her. She became his wife, but only a year later entered that other world which she had regarded as her true home even while here. Her beloved image occupies the most sacred place in the shrine of my memory.



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I denied myself the pleasure of introducing her character in one of my novels, for I felt that if I should succeed in limning it faithfully the modern reader would be justified in considering her an impossible figure for our days. She would perhaps have suited a fairy tale; and when I created Bianca in *The Elixir* I gave her Nenny's form. The gratitude which I owe her will accompany me to my life's end, for it was she who brought to my sick-room the blue sky, sunlight, and the thousand gifts of a blooming Garden of Eden.

CHAPTER XXV.

The summers of my convalescence.

While I spent the winters in my mother's house in industrious work and pleasant social life, the summers took me out of the city into the open air. I always went first with my faithful nurse and companion to Wildbad; the remainder of the warm season I spent on the Elbe, sometimes with my mother, sometimes with my aunt.

I used the Wildbad springs in all seventeen times. For two summers, aided by a servant, I descended from a wheel-chair into the warm water; in the third I could dispense with assistance; and from the fourth for several lustra I moved unchecked with a steady step. After a long interval, owing to a severe relapse of the apparently conquered disease, I returned to them.

The Wurtemberg Wildbad is one of the oldest cures in Germany. The legend of the Count Mirtemberg, who discovered its healing powers by seeing a wild boar go down to the warm spring to wash its wound, has been rendered familiar by Uhland to every German. Ulrich von Hutten also used it. It rises in a Black Forest valley inclosed by stately mountains, a little stream, the Enz, crystal clear, and abounding in trout.

The small town on both banks of the river expands, ere the Enz loses itself in the leafage, into the Kurplatz, where one stately building of lightred sandstone adjoins another. The little white church stands at the left. But the foil, the background for everything, is the beautiful foliage, which is as beneficial to the eyes as are the springs to the suffering body. This fountain of health has special qualities. The Swabian says, "just right, like Wildbad." It gushes just the right degree of heat for the bath from the gravelly sand. After bathing early in the morning I rested an hour, and when I rose obeyed any other directions of the physician in charge of the watering-place.

The remainder of the day, if the weather was pleasant, I spent out of doors, usually in the grounds under the leafy trees and groups of shrubs on the shore of the Enz. On the bank of the clear little stream stood a wooden arbour, where the murmur of the waves rippling over the mossy granite blocks invited dreams and meditation. During my whole sojourn in Wildbad I always passed several hours a day here. During my period of



instruction I was busied with grammatical studies in ancient Egyptian text or archaeological works. In after years, instead of Minerva, I summoned the muse and committed to paper the thoughts and images which had been created in my mind at home. I wrote here the greater portion of An Egyptian Princess, and afterwards many a chapter of Uarda, Homo Sum, and other novels.



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I was rarely interrupted, for the report had spread that I wished to be alone while at work; yet even the first year I did not lack acquaintances.

Even during our first stay at Wildbad, which, with the Hirsau interruption, lasted more than three months, my mother had formed an intimate friendship with Frau von Burckhardt, in which I too was included. The lady possessed rare tact in harmonizing the very diverse elements which her husband, the physician in charge, brought to her. Every one felt at ease in her house and found congenial society there. So it happened that for a long time the Villa Burckhardt was the rendezvous of the most eminent persons who sought the healing influence of the Wildbad spring. Next to this, it was the Burckhardts who constantly drew us back to the Enz.

Were I to number the persons whom I met here and whose acquaintanceship I consider a benefit, the list would be a long one. Some I shall mention later. The first years we saw most frequently the song-writer Silcher, from Tübingen, Justus von Liebig, the Munich zoologist von Siebold, the Belgian artist Louis Gallait, the author Moritz Hartmann, Gervinus, and, lastly, the wife of the Stuttgart publisher Eduard Hallberger, and the never-to-be-forgotten Frau Puricelli and her daughter Jenny.

Silcher, an unusually attractive old man, joined us frequently. No other composer's songs found their way so surely to the hearts of the people. Many, as "I know not what it means," "I must go hence to-morrow," are supposed to be folk-songs. It was a real pleasure to hear him sing them in our little circle in his weak old voice. He was then seventy, but his freshness and vivacity made him appear younger. The chivalrous courtesy he showed to all ladies was wonderfully winning.

Justus Liebig's manners were no less attractive, but in him genuine amiability was united to the elegance of the man of the world who had long been one of the most distinguished scholars of his day. He must have been remarkably handsome in his youth, and though at that time past fifty, the delicate outlines of his profile were wholly unmarred.

Conversation with him was always profitable and the ease with which he made subjects farthest from his own sphere of investigation—chemistry perfectly clear was unique in its way. Unfortunately, I have been denied any deeper insight into the science which he so greatly advanced, but I still remember how thoroughly I understood him when he explained some results of agricultural chemistry. He eagerly endeavoured to dissuade the gentlemen of his acquaintance from smoking after dinner, which he had found by experiment to be injurious.

For several weeks we played whist with him every evening, for Liebig, like so many other scholars, regarded card-playing as the best recreation after severe tension of the mind. During the pauses and the supper which interrupted the game, he told us many

things of former times. Once he even spoke of his youth and the days which determined his destiny. The following event seems to me especially worth recording.



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When a young and wholly unknown student he had gone to Paris to bring his discovery of fulminic acid to the notice of the Academy. On one of the famous Tuesdays he had waited vainly for the introduction of his work, and at the close of the session he rose sadly to leave the hall, when an elderly academician in whose hand he thought he had seen his treatise addressed a few words to him concerning his discovery in very fluent French and invited him to dine the following Thursday. Then the stranger suddenly disappeared, and Liebig, with the painful feeling of being considered a very uncivil fellow, was obliged to let the Thursday pass without accepting the invitation so important to him. But on Saturday some one knocked at the door of his modest little room and introduced himself as Alexander von Humboldt's valet. He had been told to spare no trouble in the search, for the absence of his inexperienced countryman from the dinner which would have enabled him to make the acquaintance of the leaders of his science in Paris had not only been noticed by Humboldt, but had filled him with anxiety. When Liebig went that very day to his kind patron he was received at first with gay jests, afterwards with the kindest sympathy.

The great naturalist had read his paper and perceived the writer's future promise. He at once made him acquainted with Gay Lussac, the famous Parisian chemist, and Liebig was thus placed on the road to the lofty position which he was afterwards to occupy in all the departments of science.

The Munich zoologist von Siebold we first knew intimately years after. I shall have more to say of him later, and also of the historian Gervinus, who, behind apparently repellent arrogance, concealed the noblest human benevolence.

After the first treatment, which occupied six weeks, the physician ordered an intermission of the baths. I was to leave Wildbad to strengthen in the pure air of the Black Forest the health I had gained. On the Enz we had been in the midst of society. The new residence was to afford me an opportunity to lead a lonely, quiet life with my mother and my books, which latter, however, were only to be used in moderation.

Shortly before our departure we had taken a longer drive with our new friends Fran Puricelli and her daughter Jenny to the Hirsau cloister.

The daughter specially attracted me. She was pretty, well educated, and possessed so much independence and keenness of mind that this alone would have sufficed to render her remarkable.

Afterwards I often thought simultaneously of her and Nenny, yet they were totally unlike in character, having nothing in common save their steadfast faith and the power of looking with happy confidence beyond this life into death.

The devout Protestant had created a religion of her own, in which everything that she loved and which she found beautiful and sacred had a place.



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Jenny's imagination was no less vivid, but she used it merely to behold in the form most congenial to her nature and sense of beauty what faith commanded her to accept. For Jenny the Church had already devised and arranged what Nenny's poetic soul created. The Protestant had succeeded in blending Father and Son into one in order to pray to love itself. The Catholic, besides the Holy Trinity, had made the Virgin Mother the embodiment of the feeling dearest to her girlish heart and bestowed on her the form of the person whom she loved best on earth, and regarded as the personification of everything good and beautiful. This was her older sister Fanny, who had married a few years before a cousin of the same name.

When she at last appeared I was surprised, for I had never met a woman who combined with such rare beauty and queenly dignity so much winning amiability. Nothing could be more touching than the manner in which this admired, brilliant woman of the world devoted herself to the sick girl.

This lady was present during our conversations, which often turned upon religious questions.

At first I had avoided the subject, but the young girl constantly returned to it, and I soon perceived that I must summon all my energies to hold my ground against her subtle dialectics. Once when I expressed my scruples to her sister, she answered, smiling: "Don't be uneasy on that score; Jenny's armour is strong, but she has sharp arrows in her quiver."

And so indeed it proved.

She felt so sure of her own convictions that she might investigate without peril the views of those who held a different belief, and beheld in me, as it were, the embodiment of this opportunity, so she gave me no peace until I had explained the meaning of the words pantheism, atheism, materialism, *etc.*

At first I was very cautious, but when I perceived that the opinions of the doubters and deniers merely inspired her with pity, I spoke more freely.

Her soul was like a polished plate of metal on which a picture is etched. This, her belief, remained uninjured. Whatever else might be reflected from the mirror-like surface soon vanished, leaving no trace.

The young girl died shortly after our separation the following year. She had grown very dear to my heart. Her beloved image appears to me most frequently as she looked in the days when she was suffering, with thick, fair hair falling in silken masses on her white dress, but amid keen physical pain the love of pleasure natural to youth still lingered. She went with me—both in wheel-chairs—to a ball at the Kursaal, and looked so pretty in an airy, white dress which her mother and sister had arranged for their



darling, that I should have longed to dance with her had not this pleasure been denied me.

Hirsau had first been suggested as a resting-place, but it was doubtful whether we should find what we needed there. If not, the carriage was to convey us to beautiful, quiet Herrenalb, between Wildbad and Baden-Baden.

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But we found what we sought, the most suitable house possible, whose landlady proved to have been trained as a cook in a Frankfort hotel.

The lodgings we engaged were among the most “romantic” I have ever occupied, for our landlord’s house was built in the ruins of the monastery just beside the old refectory. The windows of one room looked out upon the cloisters and the Virgin’s chapel, the only part of the once stately building spared by the French in 1692.

A venerable abode of intellectual life was destroyed with this monastery, founded by a Count von Calw early in the ninth century. The tower which has been preserved is one of the oldest and most interesting works of Romanesque architecture in Germany.

A quieter spot cannot be imagined, for I was the first who sought recreation here. Surrounded by memories of olden days, and absolutely undisturbed, I could create admirably. But one cannot remain permanently secluded from mankind.

First came the Herr Kameralverwalter, whose stately residence stood near the monastery, and in his wife’s name invited us to use their pretty garden.

This gentleman’s title threw his name so far into the shade that I had known the pleasant couple five weeks before I found it was Belfinger.

We also made the acquaintance of our host, Herr Meyer. Strange and varied were the paths along which Fate had led this man. As a rich bachelor he had welcomed guests to his ever-open house with salvos of artillery, and hence was still called Cannon Meyer, though, after having squandered his patrimony, he remained absent from his home for many years. His career in America was one of perpetual vicissitudes and full of adventures. Afore than once he barely escaped death. At last, conquered by homesickness, he returned to the Black Forest, and with a good, industrious wife.

His house in the monastery suited his longing for rest; he obtained a position in the morocco factory in the valley below, which afforded him a support, and his daughters provided for his physical comfort.

The big, broad-shouldered man with the huge mustache and deep, bass voice looked like some grey-haired knight whose giant arm could have dealt that Swabian stroke which cleft the foe from skull to saddle, and yet at that time he was occupied from morning until night in the delicate work splitting the calf skin from whose thin surfaces, when divided into two portions, fine morocco is made.

We also met the family of Herr Zahn, in whose factory this leather was manufactured; and when in the East I saw red, yellow, and green slippers on the feet of so many Moslems, I could not help thinking of the shady Black Forest.



Sometimes we drove to the little neighbouring town of Calw, where we were most kindly received. The mornings were uninterrupted, and my work was very successful. Afternoon sometimes brought visitors from Wildbad, among whom was the artist Gallait, who with his wife and two young daughters had come to use the water of the springs. His paintings, "Egmont in Prison," "The Beheaded Counts Egmont and Horn," and many others, had aroused the utmost admiration. Praise and honours of all kinds had consequently been lavished upon him. This had brought him to the Spree, and he had often been a welcome guest in our home.

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Like Menzel, Cornelius, Alma Tadema, and Meissonier, he was small in stature, but the features of his well-formed face were anything but insignificant. His whole person was distinguished by something I might term “neatness.” Without any touch of dudishness he gave the impression of having “just stepped out of a bandbox.” From the white cravat which he always wore, to the little red ribbon of the order in his buttonhole, everything about him was faultless.

Madame Gallait, a Parisian by birth, was the very embodiment of the French woman in the most charming sense of the word, and the bond which united her to her husband seemed enduring and as if woven by the cheeriest gods of love. Unfortunately, it did not last.

After leaving Hirsau, we again met the Gallaits in Wildbad and spent some delightful days with them. The Von Burckhardts, Fran Henrietta Hallberger, the wife of the Stuttgart publisher, the Puricellis, ourselves, and later the author Moritz Hartmann, were the only persons with whom they associated. We always met every afternoon at a certain place in the grounds, where we talked or some one read aloud. On these occasions, at Gallait’s suggestion, everybody who was so disposed sketched. My portrait, which he drew for my mother at that time in black and red pencils, is now in my wife’s possession. I also took my sketch-book, for he had seen the school volume I had filled with arabesques just before leaving Keilhau, and I still remember the ‘merveilleux and incroyable, inoui, and insense’ which he lavished on the certainly extravagant creatures of my love-sick imagination.

During these exercises in drawing he related many incidents of his own life, and never was he more interesting than while describing his first success.

He was the son of a poor widow in the little Belgian town of Tournay. While a school-boy he greatly enjoyed drawing, and an able teacher perceived his talent.

Once he saw in the newspaper an Antwerp competition for a prize. A certain subject—if I am not mistaken, Moses drawing water from the rock in the wilderness—was to be executed with pencil or charcoal. He went to work also, though with his defective training he had not the least hope of success. When he sent off the finished drawing he avoided taking his mother into his confidence in order to protect her from disappointment.

On the day the prize was to be awarded the wish to see the work of the successful competitor drew him to Antwerp, and what was his surprise, on entering the hall, to hear his own name proclaimed as the victor’s!

His mother supported herself and him by a little business in soap. To increase her delight he had changed the gold paid to him into shining five franc pieces. His pockets almost burst under the weight, but there was no end to the rejoicing when he flung one

handful of silver coins after another on the little counter and told how he had obtained them.



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No one who heard him relate this story could help liking him.

Another distinguished visitor at Hirsau was Prince Puckler Muskau. He had heard that his young Kottbus acquaintance had begun to devote himself to Egyptology. This interested the old man, who, as a special favourite of Mohammed Ali, had spent delightful days on the Nile and made all sorts of plans for Egypt. Besides, he was personally acquainted with the great founders of my science, Thomas Young and Francois Champollion, and had obtained an insight into deciphering the hieroglyphics. He knew all the results of the investigations, and expressed an opinion concerning them. Without having entered deeply into details he often hit the nail on the head. I doubt whether he had ever held in his hand a book on these subjects, but he had listened to the answers given by others to his skilful questions with the same keen attention that he bestowed on mine, and the gift of comprehension peculiar to him enabled him to rapidly shape what he heard into a distinctly outlined picture. Therefore he must have seemed to laymen a very compendium of science, yet he never used this faculty to dazzle others or give himself the appearance of erudition.

“Man cannot be God,” he wrote—I am quoting from a letter received the day after his visit—“yet ‘to be like unto God’ need not remain a mere theological phrase to the aspirant. Omniscience is certainly one of the noblest attributes of the Most High, and the nearer man approaches it the more surely he gains at least the shadow of a quality to which he cannot aspire.”

Finally he discussed his gardening work in the park at Branitz, and I regret having noted only the main outlines of what he said, for it was as interesting as it was admirable. I can only cite the following sentence from a letter addressed to Blasewitz: “What was I to do? A prince without a country, like myself, wishes at least to be ruler in one domain, and that I am, as creator of a park. The subjects over whom I reign obey me better than the Russians, who still retain a trace of free will, submit to their Czar. My trees and bushes obey only me and the eternal laws implanted in their nature, and which I know. Should they swerve from them even a finger’s breadth they would no longer be themselves. It is pleasant to reign over such subjects, and I would rather be a despot over vegetable organisms than a constitutional king and executor of the will of the ‘images of God,’ as men call the sovereign people.”

He talked most delightfully of the Viceroy of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, and described the plan which he had laid before this brilliant ruler of arranging a park around the temple on the island of Philae, and creating on the eastern bank of the hill beneath shady trees, opposite to the beautiful island of Isis, a sanitarium especially for consumptives; and whoever has seen this lovely spot will feel tempted to predict great prosperity for such an enterprise. My mother had heard the prince indulge in paradoxical assertions in gay society, and the earnestness which he now showed led her to remark that she had never seen two natures so radically unlike united in one individual. Had she been able to follow his career in life she would have recovered a third, fourth, and fifth.

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These visits brought life and change into our quiet existence, and when four weeks later my brother Ludo joined us he was delighted with the improvement in my appearance, and I myself felt the benefit which my paralyzed muscles had received from the baths and the seclusion.

The second season at Wildbad, thanks to the increased intimacy with the friends whose acquaintance we had made there, was even more enjoyable than the first.

Frau Hallberger was a very beautiful young woman. Her husband, who was to become my dearest friend, was detained in Stuttgart by business. She was unfortunately obliged to use the waters of the springs medicinally, and many an hour was clouded by mental and physical discomfort.

Yet the vivacity of her intellect, her rare familiarity with all the newest literature, and her unusually keen appreciation of everything which was beautiful in nature stimulated and charmed us. I have never seen any one seek flowers in the field and forest so eagerly, and she made them into beautiful bouquets, which Louis Gallait called "bewitching flower madrigals."

Moritz Hartmann had not fully recovered from the severe illness which nearly caused his death while he was a reporter in the Crimean War. His father-in-law, Herr Rodiger, accompanied him and watched him with the most touching solicitude. My mother soon became sincerely attached to the author, who possessed every quality to win a woman's heart. He had been considered the handsomest member of the Frankfort Parliament, and no one could have helped gazing with pleasure at the faultless symmetry of his features. He also possessed an unusually musical voice. Gallait said that he first thought German a language pleasing to the ear when he heard it from Hartmann's lips.

These qualities soon won the heart of Frau Puricelli, who had at first been very averse to making his acquaintance. The devout, conservative lady had heard enough of his religious and political views to consider him detestable. But after Hartmann had talked and read aloud to her and her daughter in his charming way, she said to me, "What vexes me is that in my old age I can't help liking such a red Democrat."

During that summer was formed the bond of friendship which, to his life's premature end, united me to Moritz Hartmann, and led to a correspondence which afforded me the greater pleasure the more certain I became that he understood me. We met again in Wildbad the second and third summers, and with what pleasure I remember our conversations in the stillness of the shady woods! But we also shared a noisy amusement, that of pistol practice, to which we daily devoted an hour. I was obliged to fire from a wheel-chair, yet, like Hartmann, I could boast of many a good shot; but the skill of Herr Rodiger, the author's father-in-law, was really wonderful. Though his hand

trembled constantly from an attack of palsy, I don't know now how many times he pierced the centre of the ace of hearts.



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It was Hartmann, too, who constantly urged me to write. With all due regard for science, he said he could not admit its right to prison poesy when the latter showed so strong an impulse towards expression. I secretly admitted the truth of his remark, but whenever I yielded to the impulse to write I felt as if I were being disloyal to the mistress to whom I had devoted all my physical and mental powers.

The conflict which for a long time stirred my whole soul began. I could say much more of the first years I spent at Wildbad, but up to the fifth season they bore too much resemblance to one another to be described in detail.

A more brilliant summer than that of 1860 the quiet valley of the Enz will hardly witness again, for during that season the invalid widow of the Czar Nicholas of Russia came to the springs with a numerous suite, and her presence attracted many other crowned heads—the King of Prussia, afterwards the Emperor William I, her royal brother; her beautiful daughter, Queen Olga of Wurtemberg, who, when she walked through the grounds with her greyhound, called to mind the haughty Artemis; the Queen of Bavaria—But I will not enumerate all the royal personages who visited the Czarina, and whose presence gave the little town in the Black Forest an atmosphere of life and brilliancy. Not a day passed without affording some special feast for the eyes.

The Czarina admired beauty, and therefore among her attendants were many, ladies who possessed unusual attractions. When they were seated in a group on the steps of the hotel the picture was one never to be forgotten. A still more striking spectacle was afforded by a voyage made on the Enz by the ladies of the Czarina's court, attired in airy summer dresses and adorned with a lavish abundance of flowers. From the shore gentlemen flung them blossoms as they were borne swiftly down the mountain stream. I, too, had obtained some roses, intended especially for Princess Marie von Leuchtenberg, of whom the Czarina's physician, Dr. Karel, whose acquaintance we made at the Burckhardts, had told so many charming anecdotes that we could not help admiring her.

We also met a very beautiful Countess Keller, one of the Czarina's attendants, and I can still see distinctly the brilliant scene of her departure.

Wildbad was not then connected with the rest of the world by the railroad. The countess sat in an open victoria amid the countless gifts of flowers which had been lavished upon her as farewell presents. Count Wilhorsky, in the name of the Czarina, offered an exquisitely beautiful bouquet. As she received it, she exclaimed, "Think of me at nine o'clock," and the latter, with his hand on his heart, answered with a low bow, "Why, Countess, we shall think of you all day long."

At the same instant the postillion raised his long whip, the four bays started, a group of ladies and gentlemen, headed by the master of ceremonies, waved their handkerchiefs, and it seemed as if Flora herself was setting forth to bless the earth with flowers.



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For a long time I imagined that during the first summer spent there I lived only for my health, my scientific studies, and from 1861 my novel *An Egyptian Princess*, to which I devoted several hours each day; but how much I learned from intercourse with so great a variety of persons, among whom were some whom a modest scholar is rarely permitted to know, I first realized afterwards. I allude here merely to the leaders of the aristocracy of the second empire, whose acquaintance I made through the son of my distinguished Parisian instructor, Vicomte de Rouge.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Continuance of convalescence and the first novel.

The remainder of the summer I spent half with my mother, half with my aunt, and pursued the same course during the subsequent years, until from 1862 I remained longer in Berlin, engaged in study, and began my scientific journeys.

There were few important events either in the family circle or in politics, except the accession to the throne of King William of Prussia and the Franco-Austrian war of 1859. In Berlin the "new era" awakened many fair and justifiable hopes; a fresher current stirred the dull, placid waters of political life.

The battles of Magenta and Solferino (June 4 and 24, 1859) had caused great excitement in the household of my aunt, who loved me as if I were her own son, and whose husband was also warmly attached to me. They felt the utmost displeasure in regard to the course of Prussia, and it was hard for me to approve of it, since Austria seemed a part of Germany, and I was very fond of my uncle's three nearest relatives, who were all in the Austrian service.

The future was to show the disadvantage of listening to the voice of the heart in political affairs. Should we have a German empire, and would there be a united Italy, if Austria in alliance with Prussia had fought in 1859 at Solferino and Magenta and conquered the French?

At Hosterwitz I became more intimately acquainted with the lyric poet, Julius Hammer. The Kammergerichtrath-Gottheiner, a highly educated man, lived there with his daughter Marie, whose exquisite singing at the villa of her hospitable sister-in-law so charmed my heart. Through them I met many distinguished men-President von Kirchmann, the architect Nikolai, the author of *Psyche*, Privy Councillor Carus, the writer Charles Duboc (Waldmuller) with his beautiful gifted wife, and many others.

Many a Berlin acquaintance, too, I met again at Hosterwitz, among them the preacher Sydow and Lothar Bucher.



To the friendship of this remarkable man, whom I knew just at the time he was associated with Bismarck, I owe many hours of enjoyment. Many will find it hardly compatible with the reserved, quiet manner of the astute, cool politician, that during a slight illness of my mother he read Fritz Reuter's novels aloud to her—he spoke Plattdeutsch admirably—as dutifully as a son.

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So there was no lack of entertainment during leisure hours, but the lion's share of my time was devoted to work.

The same state of affairs existed during my stay with my aunt, who occupied a summer residence on the estate of Privy-Councillor von Adelssohn, which was divided into building lots long ago, but at that time was the scene of the gayest social life in both residences.

The owner and his wife were on the most intimate terms with my relatives, and their daughter Lina seemed to me the fairest of all the flowers in the Adelssohn garden. If ever a girl could be compared to a violet it was she. I knew her from childhood to maidenhood, and rejoiced when I saw her wed in young Count Uexküll-Guldenbrand a life companion worthy of her.

There were many other charming girls, too, and my aunt, besides old friends, entertained the leaders of literary life in Dresden.

Gutzkow surpassed them all in acuteness and subtlety of intellect, but the bluntness of his manner repelled me.

On the other hand, I sincerely enjoyed the thoughtful eloquence of Berthold Auerbach, who understood how to invest with poetic charm not only great and noble subjects, but trivial ones gathered from the dust. If I am permitted to record the memories of my later life, I shall have more to say of him. It was he who induced me to give to my first romance, which I had intended to call *Nitetic*, the title *An Egyptian Princess*.

The stars of the admirable Dresden stage also found their way to my aunt's.

One day I was permitted to listen to the singing of Emmy La Gruas, and the next to the peerless Schroder-Devrient. Every conversation with the cultured physician Geheimerath von Ammon was instructive and fascinating; while Rudolf von Reibisch, the most intimate friend of the family, whose great talents would have rendered him capable of really grand achievements in various departments of art, examined our skulls as a phrenologist or read aloud his last drama. Here, too, I met Major Serre, the bold projector of the great lottery whose brilliant success called into being and insured the prosperity of the Schiller Institute, the source of so much good.

This simple-hearted yet energetic man taught me how genuine enthusiasm and the devotion of a whole personality to a cause can win victory under the most difficult circumstances. True, his clever wife shared her husband's enthusiasm, and both understood how to attract the right advisers. I afterwards met at their beautiful estate, Maxen, among many distinguished people, the Danish author Andersen, a man of insignificant personal appearance, but one who, if he considered it worth while and was interested in the subject, could carry his listeners resistlessly with him. Then his talk



sparkled with clever, vivid, striking, peculiar metaphors, and when one brilliant description of remarkable experiences and scenes followed another he swiftly won the hearts of the women who had overlooked him, and it seemed to the men as if some fiend were aiding him.



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During the first years of my convalescence I could enjoy nothing save what came or was brought to me. But the cheerful patience with which I appeared to bear my sufferings, perhaps also the gratitude and eagerness with which I received everything, attracted most of the men and women for whom I really cared.

If there was an entertaining conversation, arrangements were always made that I should enjoy it, at least as a listener. The affection of these kind people never wearied in lightening the burden which had been laid upon me. So, during this whole sad period I was rarely utterly wretched, often joyous and happy, though sometimes the victim to the keenest spiritual anguish.

During the hours of rest which must follow labour, and when tortured at night by the various painful feelings and conditions connected even with convalescence from disease, my restrictions rose before me as a specially heavy misfortune. My whole being rebelled against my sufferings, and— why should I conceal it?—burning tears drenched my pillows after many a happy day. At the time I was obliged to part from Nenny this often happened. Goethe's "He who never mournful nights" I learned to understand in the years when the beaker of life foams most impetuously for others. But I had learned from my mother to bear my sorest griefs alone, and my natural cheerfulness aided me to win the victory in the strife against the powers of melancholy. I found it most easy to master every painful emotion by recalling the many things for which I had cause to be grateful, and sometimes an hour of the fiercest struggle and deepest grief closed with the conviction that I was more blessed than many thousands of my fellow-mortals, and still a "favourite of Fortune." The same feeling steeled my patience and helped to keep hope green and sustain my pleasure in existence when, long after, a return of the same disease, accompanied with severe suffering, which I had been spared in youth, snatched me from earnest, beloved, and, I may assume, successful labour.

The younger generation may be told once more how effective a consolation man possesses—no matter what troubles may oppress him—in gratitude. The search for everything which might be worthy of thankfulness undoubtedly leads to that connection with God which is religion.

When I went to Berlin in winter, harder work, many friends, and especially my Polish fellow-student, Mieczyslaw helped me bear my burden patiently.

He was well, free, highly gifted, keenly interested in science, and made rapid progress. Though secure from all external cares, a worm was gnawing at his heart which gave him no rest night or day—the misery of his native land and his family, and the passionate longing to avenge it on the oppressor of the nation. His father had sacrificed the larger portion of his great fortune to the cause of Poland, and, succumbing to the most cruel persecutions, urged his sons, in their turn, to sacrifice everything for their

native land. They were ready except one brother, who wielded his sword in the service of the oppressor, and thus became to the others a dreaded and despised enemy.



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Mieczyslaw remained in Berlin raging against himself because, an intellectual epicurean, he was enjoying Oriental studies instead of following in the footsteps of his father, his brothers, and most of his relatives at home.

My ideas of the heroes of Polish liberty had been formed from Heinrich Heine's Noble Pole, and I met my companion with a certain feeling of distrust. Far from pressing upon me the thoughts which moved him so deeply, it was long ere he permitted the first glimpse into his soul. But when the ice was once broken, the flood of emotion poured forth with elementary power, and his sincerity was sealed by his blood. He fell armed on the soil of his home at the time when I was most gratefully rejoicing in the signs of returning health—the year 1863. I was his only friend in Berlin, but I was warmly attached to him, and shall remember him to my life's end.

The last winter of imprisonment also saw me industriously at work. I had already, with Mieczyslaw, devoted myself eagerly to the history of the ancient East, and Lepsius especially approved these studies. The list of the kings which I compiled at that time, from the most remote sources to the Sassanida, won the commendation of A. von Gutschmid, the most able investigator in this department. These researches led me also to Persia and the other Asiatic countries. Egypt, of course, remained the principal province of my work. The study of the kings from the twenty-sixth dynasty—that is, the one with which the independence of the Pharaohs ended and the rule of the Persians under Cambyses began in the valley of the Nile—occupied me a long time. I used the material thus acquired afterward for my habilitation essay, but the impulse natural to me of imparting my intellectual gains to others had induced me to utilize it in a special way. The material I had collected appeared in my judgment exactly suited for a history of the time that Egypt fell into the power of Persia. Jacob Burckhardt's Constantine the Great was to serve for my model. I intended to lay most stress upon the state of civilization, the intellectual and religious life, art, and science in Egypt, Greece, Persia, Phoenicia, *etc.*, and after most carefully planning the arrangement I began to write with the utmost zeal.

[I still have the unfinished manuscript; but the farther I advanced the stronger became the conviction, now refuted by Eduard Meyer, that it would not yet be possible to write a final history of that period which would stand the test of criticism.]

While thus engaged, the land of the Pharaohs, the Persian court, Greece in the time of the Pisistratidae and Polycrates grew more and more distinct before my mental vision. Herodotus's narrative of the false princess sent by Pharaoh Amasis to Cambyses as a wife, and who became the innocent cause of the war through which the kingdom of the Pharaohs lost its independence, would not bear criticism, but it was certainly usable material for a dramatic or epic poem. And this material gave me no peace.



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Yes, something might certainly be done with it. I soon mastered it completely, but gradually the relation changed and it mastered me, gave me no rest, and forced me to try upon it the poetic power so long condemned to rest.

When I set to work I was not permitted to leave the house in the evening. Was it disloyal to science if I dedicated to poesy the hours which others called leisure time? The question was put to the inner judge in such a way that he could not fail to say "No." I also tried successfully to convince myself that I merely essayed to write this tale to make the material I had gathered "live," and bring the persons and conditions of the period whose history I wished to write as near to me as if I were conversing with them and dwelling in their midst. How often I repeated to myself this well-founded apology, but in truth every instinct of my nature impelled me to write, and at this very time Moritz Hartmann was also urging me in his letters, while Mieczyslaw and others, even my mother, encouraged me.

I began because I could not help it, and probably scarcely any work ever stood more clearly arranged, down to the smallest detail, in its creator's imagination, than the Egyptian Princess in mine when I took up my pen. Only the first volume originally contained much more Egyptian material, and the third I lengthened beyond my primary intention. Many notes of that time I was unwilling to leave unused and, though the details are not uninteresting, their abundance certainly impairs the effect of the whole.

As for the characters, most of them were familiar.

How many of my mother's traits the beautiful, dignified Rhodopis possessed! King Amasis was Frederick William IV, the Greek Phanes resembled President Seiffart. Nitetis, too, I knew. I had often jested with Atossa, and Sappho was a combination of my charming Frankfort cousin Betsy, with whom I spent such delightful days in Rippoldsau, and lovely Lina von Adelsson. Like the characters in the works of the greatest of writers—I mean Goethe—not one of mine was wholly invented, but neither was any an accurate portrait of the model.

I by no means concealed from myself the difficulties with which I had to contend or the doubts the critics would express, but this troubled me very little. I was writing the book only for myself and my mother, who liked to hear every chapter read as it was finished. I often thought that this novel might perhaps share the fate of my Poem of the World, and find its way into the fire.

No matter. The greatest success could afford me no higher pleasure than the creative labour. Those were happy evenings when, wholly lifted out of myself, I lived in a totally different world, and, like a god, directed the destinies of the persons who were my creatures. The love scenes between Bartja and Sappho I did not invent; they came to me. When, with brow damp with perspiration, I committed the first one to paper in a

single evening, I found the next morning, to my surprise, that only a few touches were needed to convert it into a poem in iambics.



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This was scarcely permissible in a novel. But the scene pleased my mother, and when I again brought the lovers together in the warm stillness of the Egyptian night, and perceived that the flood of iambs was once more sweeping me along, I gave free course to the creative spirit and the pen, and the next morning the result was the same.

I then took Julius Hammer into my confidence, and he thought that I had given expression to the overflowing emotion of two loving young hearts in a very felicitous and charming way.

While my friends were enjoying themselves in ball-rooms or exciting society, Fate still condemned me to careful seclusion in my mother's house. But when I was devoting myself to the creation of my Nitetis, I envied no man, scarcely even a god.

So this novel approached completion. It had not deprived me of an hour of actual working time, yet the doubt whether I had done right to venture on this side flight into fairer and better lands during my journey through the department of serious study was rarely silent.

At the beginning of the third volume I ventured to move more freely.

Yet when I went to Lepsius, the most earnest of my teachers, to show him the finished manuscript, I felt very anxious. I had not said even a word in allusion to what I was doing in the evening hours, and the three volumes of my large manuscript were received by him in a way that warranted the worst fears. He even asked how I, whom he had believed to be a serious worker, had been tempted into such "side issues."

This was easy to explain, and when he had heard me to the end he said: "I might have thought of that. You sometimes need a cup of Lethe water. But now let such things alone, and don't compromise your reputation as a scientist by such extravagances."

Yet he kept the manuscript and promised to look at the curiosity.

He did more. He read it through to the last letter, and when, a fortnight later; he asked me at his house to remain after the others had left, he looked pleased, and confessed that he had found something entirely different from what he expected. The book was a scholarly work, and also a fascinating romance.

Then he expressed some doubts concerning the space I had devoted to the Egyptians in my first arrangement. Their nature was too reserved and typical to hold the interest of the unscientific reader. According to his view, I should do well to limit to Egyptian soil what I had gained by investigation, and to make Grecian life, which was familiar to us moderns as the foundation of our aesthetic perceptions, more prominent. The advice was good, and, keeping it in view, I began to subject the whole romance to a thorough revision.



Before going to Wildbad in the summer of 1863 I had a serious conversation with my teacher and friend. Hitherto, he said, he had avoided any discussion of my future; but now that I was so decidedly convalescing, he must tell me that even the most industrious work as a "private scholar," as people termed it, would not satisfy me. I was fitted for an academic career, and he advised me to keep it in view. As I had already thought of this myself, I eagerly assented, and my mother was delighted with my resolution.

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How we met in Wildbad my never-to-be-forgotten friend the Stuttgart publisher, Eduard von Hallberger; how he laid hands upon my Egyptian Princess; and how the fate of this book and its author led through joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, I hope, ere my last hour strikes, to communicate to my family and the friends my life and writings have gained.

When I left Berlin, so far recovered that I could again move freely, I was a mature man. The period of development lay behind me. Though the education of an aspiring man ends only with his last breath, the commencement of my labours as a teacher outwardly closed mine, and an important goal in life lay before me. A cruel period of probation, rich in suffering and deprivations, had made the once careless youth familiar with the serious side of existence, and taught him to control himself.

After once recognizing that progress in the department of investigation in which I intended to guide others demanded the devotion of all my powers, I succeeded in silencing the ceaseless longing for fresh creations of romance. The completion of a second long novel would have imperilled the unity with myself which I was striving to attain, and which had been represented to me by the noblest of my instructors as my highest goal in life. So I remained steadfast, although the great success of my first work rendered it very difficult. Temptations of every kind, even in the form of brilliant offers from the most prominent German publishers, assailed me, but I resisted, until at the end of half a lifetime I could venture to say that I was approaching my goal, and that it was now time to grant the muse what I had so long denied. Thus, that portion of my nature which was probably originally the stronger was permitted to have its life. During long days of suffering romance was again a kind and powerful comforter.

Severe suffering had not succeeded in stifling the cheerful spirit of the boy and the youth; it did not desert me in manhood. When the sky of my life was darkened by the blackest clouds it appeared amid the gloom like a radiant star announcing brighter days; and if I were to name the powers by whose aid I have again and again dispelled even the heaviest clouds which threatened to overshadow my happiness in existence, they must be called gratitude, earnest work, and the motto of blind old Langethal, "Love united with the strife for truth."

The end.

ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Appreciation of trifles

Carpe diem

How effective a consolation man possesses in gratitude

Men studying for their own benefit, not the teacher's

Phrase and idea "philosophy of religion" as an absurdity



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