

credit and valuable assistance, to accord to said town some reasonable respite for payment, with security. To this earnest pleading Herr Gotzkowsky yielded, and, as a true philanthropist, without any ulterior views of profit to himself, did in the most praiseworthy manner assist us, and averted this misfortune from the town. These services we are compelled to acknowledge. We therefore offer our services in return on all possible occasions, not doubting that the mercantile community of this place entertain the same sentiments, and feel themselves equally bound to all imaginable reciprocity.

[SIGNED]

“THE COUNCIL OF LEIPSIK.”

“LEIPSIK, *February 26, 1761.*”

“This paper I will carry to my daughter, as a souvenir,” said Gotzkowsky, folding it up carefully, and then added thoughtfully: “Who knows but what the time may come when it will be necessary to remind the merchants of Leipsic of this document? The opinions and destinies of men are very variable.”

But Gotzkowsky himself was to have occasion to remind unthankful Leipsic of her professions of gratitude—not to call on her to perform reciprocal favors, but to protect himself against calumny and unfriendly suspicions. For a day came, when Leipsic forgot the affliction and grief she had suffered, and only remembered that John Gotzkowsky was her creditor, and that she owed him large sums of money. So, when at last, weary of long waiting, he pressed for payment, they accused him of self-interest, and said that he had unnecessarily mixed himself up in their affairs, and that it would have been better if he had left them to their captivity; for although they might have had much to suffer, they would have had but little to pay.

Gotzkowsky answered these accusations in a manner characteristic of his noble, proud self—he was silent about them. But hard times and oppression came again upon the rich town of Leipsic.

The Prussian king exacted fresh contributions—and now they recalled to mind the services of Gotzkowsky; again they sent him humble letters, begging him to have pity on them; and now the cunning, calculating magistracy of Leipsic saw fit to take notice of these calumnies, which they had shortly before so industriously circulated through the public newspapers, and solemnly to declare in all the journals: “We hereby certify, in compliance with truth, through these writings, that the worshipful Herr Gotzkowsky, as well in past years, as at the late Leipsic fair, out of unchanged and innate love and friendly kindness to us, this town, and its inhabitants, has given just cause for gratitude.”

Gotzkowsky forgot the insults, and was again of assistance to them. A second time he persuaded the king to mitigate their contribution, and guaranteed the new bonds issued by them. A second time the magistrates and merchants thanked him in the most touching words for his noble and disinterested assistance, and a second time were they destined to forget their vows of gratitude.

## CHAPTER V.

### FOUR YEARS' LABOR.

FOUR years of work, of industry, of productive activity, had passed away since the stormy year of 1760. They had produced but little alteration in the life of Gotzkowsky and his daughter.

Gotzkowsky toiled and worked as he always had done; his factories were enlarged, his wealth increased, and his fame as a merchant sounded through the whole world.

But all this would he have given, if he could have seen the light on the lips, the rosy glow on the cheek of his daughter, as in bygone days. But the beautiful and impassioned young girl had altered into the pale, serious, silent young woman, who had learned to throw the veil of quiet resignation over the secret of her heart, and to suppress any manifestation of pain.

Elise had grown old *internally*—old, despite her two-and-twenty years; she looked upon the life before her as a joyless, desert waste, which she had to traverse with bleeding feet and broken heart; and in the desolation of her soul, she sometimes shuddered at the death-like apathy and quiet of her feelings, broken by no sound, no note, not even the wail of woe.

She was without a wish, without a hope. Grief had spent itself on her. She wept no more—she wrestled no longer with her love, for she had conquered it. But she could not rise again to any new joys of life—she could only be resigned. She had accepted life, and she bore it as does the bird shut up in a gilded cage, robbed of freedom and fresh air, and given in return a brilliant prison. She, too, was an imprisoned bird; and her wounded heart lay in the cage of her breast, sorrowful and infinitely wretched. She prayed to God for peace, for resignation, no longer for happiness, for she did not believe happiness any more possible. She had sunk into that apathy which desires nothing more than a quiet, dreamy fading away. Her grief was deficient in the animating consolation of the thought that “it came from God.” Real and sacred suffering, which does come

from God, and is imposed upon us by fate, always carries with it the divine power of healing; and at the same time that it casts us down and humbles us, raises us again, steels our courage, and makes us strong and proud to suffer and to bear. Quite different is that misfortune which comes from man—which is laid upon us by the envy, hatred, and malice of mankind. This carries with it no consolation, no comfort—a misfortune full of bitterness and murmuring—a misfortune which abases us without elevating us again, which casts us down in the mire, from the soil of which not all the hot streams of our tears can purify and cleanse us. Had she lost her lover, had he been snatched away from her by death, Elise, while she gave him back to God, would have regarded this heavy and sacred affliction as her great and holy happiness; she would have accepted it as a precious promise which elevated her, and inspired her with a blissful hope.

But she had lost him by his own treachery, by worldly sin, and she had given him up, not to God, but to his own unrighteousness and disloyalty. She had therefore lost him irretrievably, and for always—not for a short space of time, but for all eternity; and she dared not even weep for him, for her misfortune was at the same time her disgrace, and even her tears filled her with humiliation and shame. For that reason she never spoke, either with her father or with Bertram, about the sad and painful past, about the errors and disappointments of her youth; and neither of them in their pure and indulgent love ever trespassed on the silence which Elise had spread over her sorrow. Toward her father she was a careful, attentive, and submissive daughter; toward Bertram a confiding and loving sister; but to both she felt as if she were only giving what was saved

from the shipwreck of her affections. They both knew that Elise could no longer offer them an entire, unbroken heart. But they were both content to rest on the embers of this ruined edifice, to gather the leaves of this rose, broken by the tempest, and to remember how beautiful it was in its bloom.

Gotzkowsky only asked of his daughter that she should live, that she should become again healthy and strong for new happiness.

Bertram, in the strength and fidelity of his affections, had no other wish than that he should some day see her cheerful and content again, and once more brightened by the beams which only love and happiness can spread over a human countenance; and in his great and self-sacrificing love he said to himself: "If I only knew that her happiness lay in the remotest corner of the world, thither would I go to fetch it for her, even if she there were lost to me forever!"

And thus did four years pass away—externally, bright and clear, surrounded by all the brilliancy of wealth and happiness—inwardly, silent and desolate, full of privation and deep-rooted sorrow.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### DAYS OF MISFORTUNE.

GOTZKOWSKY was alone in his room. It was an elegant, brilliantly ornamented apartment, which the greatest prince might have envied. The most select pictures by celebrated old masters hung around on the walls; the most costly Chinese vases stood on gilt tables;

and between the windows, instead of mirrors, were placed the most exquisite Greek marble statues. The furniture of the room was simple. Gotzkowsky had but one passion, on which he spent yearly many thousands, and that was for art-treasures, paintings, and antiques. His house resembled a temple of art; it contained the rarest and choicest treasures; and when Gotzkowsky passed through the rooms on the arm of his daughter, and contemplated the pictures, or dwelt with her on one of the sublime statues of the gods, his eye beamed with blissful satisfaction, and his whole being breathed cheerfulness and calm. But at this moment his countenance was careworn and anxious, and however pleasantly and cheerfully the pictures looked down upon him from the walls, his eye remained sad and clouded, and deep grief was expressed in his features.

He sat at his writing-table, and turned over the papers which lay piled up high before him. At times he looked deeply shocked and anxious, and his whole frame trembled, as with hasty hand he transcribed some notes from another sheet. Suddenly he let the pen drop, and sank his head on his breast.

"It is in vain," he muttered in a low voice—"yes, it is in vain. If I were to exert all my power, if I were to collect all my means together, they would not be sufficient to pay these enormous sums."

Again he turned over the papers, and pointing with his finger to one of them, he continued: "Yes, there it stands. I am a rich man on paper. Leipsic owes me more than a million. If she pays, and De Neufville comes, I am saved. But if not—if Leipsic once more, as she has already done three times, protests her inability to pay—if De Neufville does not come, what shall I do? How can I save myself from ruin and shame?"

Deeper and deeper did he bury himself silently in the papers. A terrible anxiety oppressed him, and sent his blood rushing to his heart and head. He arose and paced up and down the room, muttering occasionally a few words, betraying the anguish and terror which possessed him. Then standing still, he pressed his hands to his temples, as if to crowd back the pain which throbbled and ached there.

"Oh, it is terrible!" he uttered in a subdued voice; "with my eyes open I stand on the brink of a precipice. I see it, and cannot draw back. If no helping hand is stretched out to save me, I must fall in, and my good name must perish with me. And to be obliged to confess that not my own want of judgment, no rashness nor presumption on my part, but only love of mankind, love of my brethren, has brought me to this! To each one who held out his hand to me, I gave the hand of a friend, every one in need I helped. And for that reason, for the good I have done, I stand on the verge of an abyss."

He cast his looks toward heaven, and tears shone in his eyes. "Was it, then, wrong? O my God! was it, then, culpable to trust men, and must I atone with my honor for what I did from love?"

But this compunction, this depression, did not last long. Gotzkowsky soon arose above his grief, and bearing his head aloft as if to shake off the cares which lowered around it, he said in a determined tone: "I must not lose my courage. This day requires all my presence of mind, and the decisive moment shall not find me cowed and pusillanimous."

He was about to set himself to work again, when a repeated knocking at the door interrupted him. At his reluctant bidding it opened, and Bertram appeared on

the threshold. "Pardon me," he said, almost timidly; "I knew that you wished to be alone, but I could not bear it any longer. I must see you. Only think, Father Gotzkowsky, it is a fortnight since I arrived, and I have scarcely seen you in this time; therefore do not be angry with me if I disobey your orders, and come to you, although I know that you are busy."

Gotzkowsky nodded to him with a sad smile. "I thank you for it," said he. "I had ordered Peter not to admit any one. You are an exception, as you know, my son."

A pause ensued, during which Bertram examined Gotzkowsky with a searching look. The latter had seated himself again at his writing-table, and with troubled looks was examining his papers.

Bertram had been absent for nearly a year. The silent grief which day and night gnawed at his heart had undermined his health and exhausted his physical strength. The physicians had deemed a prolonged residence in Nice necessary. If Bertram yielded to their judgment and repaired to Nice, it was because he thought, "Perhaps Elise will think of me when I am no longer near her. Perchance absence may warm her heart, and she may forget the brother, some day to welcome the husband."

Returning after a year's absence, strengthened and restored to health, he found Elise as he had left her. She received him with the same quiet, calm look with which she had bid him farewell. She placed her hand as coolly and as friendly in his, and although she inquired cordially and sympathizingly after his welfare, Bertram still felt that her heart and her inmost soul had not part in her questioning.

Elise had not altered—but how little was Gotzkow-

sky like himself! Where was the ardent man, powerful of will, whom Bertram had embraced at his departure? where was his clear, ringing voice, his proud bearing, his energy, his burning eloquence—what had become of all these? What diabolical, dismal influence had succeeded in breaking this iron will, in subduing this vital power?

Bertram felt that a deep grief was corroding Gotzkowsky's life—a grief whose destructive influence was greater because he avoided the expression of it, and sought no relief nor consolation by communicating it to others. "He shall, at least, speak to me," said Bertram. "I will compel him to make me the confidant of his grief, and to lighten his heart by imparting a portion of his burden to mine." With this determination he had entered Gotzkowsky's room; he now stood opposite to him, and with gentle sympathy looked into his pale, sorrow-worn countenance.

But Gotzkowsky avoided his eye. He seemed entirely occupied with his papers, and turned them over again and again. Bertram could bear it no longer; he hastened to him, and taking his hand pressed it affectionately to his lips. "My father," said he, "forgive me; but when I look at you, I am possessed by a vague fear which I cannot explain to myself. You know that I love you as my father, and for that reason can read your thoughts. Gotzkowsky, since my return I have read much care and sorrow in your face."

"Have you?" said Gotzkowsky, painfully; "yes, yes, sorrow does not write in hieroglyphics. It is a writing which he who runs can read."

"You confess, then, that you have sorrow, and yet you hide it from me. You do not let me share your cares. Have I deserved that of you, father?"

Gotzkowsky arose and paced the room, thoughtful and excited. For the first time he felt that the sympathy of a loving heart did good. Involuntarily the crust which surrounded his heart gave way, and he became gentle and eager for sympathy. He held out his hand to Bertram and nodded to him. "You are right, my son," said he, gently, "I should not have kept my sorrows from you. It is a comfort, perhaps, to unbosom one's self. Listen, then—but no! first tell me what is said of me in the city, and, above all, what is said of me at the Bourse? Ah? you cast your eyes down—Bertram, I must and will know all. Speak out freely. I have courage to hear the utmost." But yet his voice trembled as he spoke, and his lips twitched convulsively.

Bertram answered sadly: "What do you care about the street gossip of envious people? You know that you have enemies, because you are rich and high-minded. You have long been envied because your house is the most extensive and solid in all Europe, and because your drafts stand at par in all the markets. They are jealous of the fame of your firm, and for that very reason they whisper all sorts of things that they do not dare to say aloud. But why should you let such miserable scandal worry you?"

Bertram tried to smile, but it was a sorrowful, anxious one, which did not escape Gotzkowsky. "Ah!" said he, "these light whisperings of calumny are like the single snow-flakes which finally collect together and roll on and on, and at last become an avalanche which buries up our honor and our good name. Tell me, then, Bertram, what do they whisper?"

Bertram answered in a low, timid voice: "They pretend to know that your house has suffered immense losses; that you were not able to meet your drafts; that

all your wealth is unfounded; and that—but why should I repeat all the old women's and newspaper stories?"

"Even the newspapers talk about it, then?" muttered Gotzkowsky to himself.

"Yes, the *Vossian Gazette*," continued Bertram, "has an article in which it speaks mysteriously and sympathizingly of the impending failure of one of our most eminent houses. This is said to aim at you, father."

"And the other paper, *Spener's Journal*?"

"Is sorry to join in the statement, and confirms it to-day."

Gotzkowsky broke out into a mocking laugh, his countenance brightened with indignation, and his features expressed their former energy and decision. "O world! O men!" he exclaimed, "how pitiful, how mean you are! You know, Bertram, how much good I have done these men. I have protected them as a friend in the time of their need and affliction. I saved them from punishment and shame. In return they trumpet forth my misfortunes, and that which might have been altered by the considerate silence of my friends, they cry aloud to all the world, and thereby precipitate my fall."

"It is, then, really true?" asked Bertram, turning pale. "You are in danger?"

"To-day is the last term for the payment of the five hundred thousand dollars, which I have to pay our king, for the town of Leipsic. Our largest banking-houses have bought up these claims of the king against me."

"But that is not your own debt. You only stood good for Leipsic."

"That I did; and as Leipsic cannot pay, I must."

"But Leipsic can assume a portion of the debt at least."

"Perhaps so," said Gotzkowsky. "I have sent a courier to Leipsic, and look for his return every hour. But it is not that alone which troubles me," continued he, after a pause. "It would be easy to collect the five hundred thousand dollars. The new and unexpected ordinance from the mint, which renders uncurrent the light money, deprives me of another half million. When I foresaw Leipsic's insolvency, I had negotiated alone with Hamburg for half a million of light money. But the spies of the Jews of the mint discovered this, and when my money was in the course of transmission from Hamburg they managed to obtain a decree from the king forbidding immediately the circulation of this coin. In this way my five hundred thousand dollars became good for nothing."

"Horrible!" cried Bertram; "have you, then, not endeavored to save a portion of this money?"

"Yes, indeed," cried Gotzkowsky, with a bitter laugh, "I have tried. I wished to send fifty thousand dollars of my money to the army of the allies, to see if it would be current there; but Ephraim had foreseen this, too, and obtained a decree forbidding even the transit of this money through the Prussian dominions. This new and arbitrary law was only published after my money had left Hamburg, and I had grounds to hope that I would not be prevented from bringing it through the Prussian dominions, for it was concealed in the double bottom of a wagon. But avarice has sharp eyes, and the spies who were set upon all my actions succeeded in discovering this too. The wagon was stopped at the gates of Berlin, and the money was discovered where they knew it was beforehand, under this false bottom. But who do you think it was, Bertram, who denounced me in this affair? You would never guess it—the chief

burgomaster, President von Kircheisen! He stood himself at the gate, watched for the wagon, and searched until he found the money."

"Kircheisen! The same, father, whom you saved from death when the Russians were here?"

"The same, my son; you shake your head incredulously. Read for yourself." He took from his writing-table a large paper provided with the official seal, and handed it to Bertram. "Read for yourself, my son. It is an order from the minister Von Finkenstein."

It was written thus: "The half of the sum is awarded by the king to President von Kircheisen, as detective and informer."

"A worthy title, 'detective and informer,'" continued Gotzkowsky. "By Heaven, I do not envy him it! But now you shall know all. It does me good to confide to you my sorrows—it lightens my poor heart. And now I have another fear. You have heard of my speculation in the Russian magazines?"

"Of the magazines which you, with De Neufville and the bankers Moses and Samuel, bought?" asked Bertram.

"Yes, that is it. But Russia would not enter into the bargain unless I made myself responsible for the whole sum."

"And you did so?" asked Bertram, trembling.

"I did. The purchase-money has been due for four months. My fellow-contractors have not paid. If Russia insists upon the payment of this debt, I am ruined."

"And why do not Samuel and Moses pay their part?"

Gotzkowsky did not answer immediately, but when he did, his features expressed scorn and contempt:

"Moses and Samuel are no longer obliged to pay, because yesterday they declared themselves insolvent."

Bertram suppressed with effort a cry of anger, and covered his face with his hands. "He is lost," he muttered to himself, "lost beyond redemption, for he founds his hopes on De Neufville, and he knows nothing of his unfortunate fate."

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## CHAPTER VII.

### CONFESSIONS.

WHEN Bertram raised his head again, Gotzkowsky was standing near him, looking brightly and lovingly into his sorrowful, twitching face. It was now Gotzkowsky who had to console Bertram, and, smiling quietly and gently, he told him of the hopes which still remained to him.

"De Neufville may return," he said. "He has only gone to the opening of the bank at Amsterdam, and if he succeeds in collecting the necessary sum there, and returns with it as rapidly as possible to Berlin, I am saved."

"But if he does not come?" asked Bertram with a trembling voice, fixing his sad looks penetratingly on Gotzkowsky.

"Then I am irretrievably lost," answered Gotzkowsky, in a loud, firm voice.

Bertram stepped quickly up to him, and threw himself in his arms, folding him to his breast as if to protect him against all the danger which threatened him. "You must be saved!" cried he, eagerly; "it is not possible

that you should fall. You have never deserved such a misfortune."

"For that very reason I fear that I must suffer it. If I deserved this disgrace, perhaps it never would have happened to me. The world is so fashioned, that what we deserve of good or evil never happens to us."

"But you have friends; thousands are indebted to your generosity, and to your ever-ready, helping hand. There is scarcely a merchant in Berlin to whom, some time or other, you have not been of assistance in his need!"

Gotzkowsky laid his hand on his shoulder, and replied with a proud air: "My friend, it is precisely those who owe me gratitude, who are now trying to ruin me. The very fact of having obliged them, makes them my bitter enemies. Gratitude is so disagreeable a virtue, that men become implacably hostile to those who impose it on them."

"When you speak thus, my father," said Bertram, glowing with noble indignation, "you condemn me, too. You have bound me to everlasting gratitude, and yet I love you inexpressibly for it."

"You are a rare exception, my son," replied Gotzkowsky, sadly, "and I thank God, who has taught me to know you."

"You believe, then, in me?" asked Bertram, looking earnestly in his eyes.

"I believe in you," said Gotzkowsky, solemnly, offering him his hand.

"Well, then, my father," cried Bertram, quickly and gladly, "in this important moment let me make an urgent request of you. You call me your son; give me, then, the rights of a son. Allow me the happiness of offering you the little that I can call mine. My fortune

is not, to be sure, sufficient to save you, but it can at least be of service to you. Father, I owe you every thing. It is yours—take it back."

"Never!" interrupted Gotzkowsky.

But Bertram continued more urgently: "At least consider of it. When you founded the porcelain factory, you made me a partner in this business, and I accepted it, although I had nothing but what belonged to you. When the king, a year ago, bought the factory from you, you paid me a fourth of the purchase-money, and gave me thirty thousand dollars. I accepted it, although I had not contributed any part of the capital."

"You are mistaken, my son. You forget that you contributed the capital of your knowledge and genius."

"One cannot live on genius," cried Bertram, impatiently; "and with all my knowledge I might have starved, if you had not taken me by the hand."

Gotzkowsky would have denied this, but Bertram continued still more pressingly: "Father, if I were, indeed, your son, could you then deny me the right of falling and being ruined with you? Can you deny your son the right of dividing with you what is his?"

"No!" cried Gotzkowsky, "from my son I could demand the sacrifice, but it is not only a question of earthly possessions, it is a question of my most sacred spiritual good, it is the honor of my name. Had I a son, I would exact of him that he should follow me unto death, so that the honor of my name might be saved."

"Well, then, let me be, indeed, your son. Give me your daughter!"

Gotzkowsky stepped back in astonishment and gazed at Bertram's noble, excited countenance. "Ah!" cried he, "I thank you, Bertram; you are a noble man! I understand you. You have found out the sorrow which



gnaws most painfully at my heart; that Elise, by my failure, becomes a beggar. You wish most nobly to assist her and protect her from want."

"No, father, I desire her for her own sake—because I love her! I would wish to be your son, in order to have the right to give up all for you, and to work for you. During your whole life you have done so much for others; now grant me the privilege of doing something for you. Give me your daughter; let me be your son."

Gotzkowsky was silent for some minutes, then looked at Bertram sadly and sorrowfully. "You know that this has always been the wish of my heart. But what I have longed for, for so many years, that I must now refuse. I dare not drag you down in my misfortune, and even if I were weak enough to yield to your request, I cannot sacrifice the happiness of my daughter to my welfare. Do you believe, Bertram, that Elise loves you?"

"She is kind to me, and is anxious for my welfare—that is enough," said Bertram, sadly. "I have learned for many a long year to renounce all claim to her love."

"But if she loves another? I fear her heart is but too true, and has not forgotten the trifier who destroyed her happiness. Ah! when I think of this man, my heart trembles with anger and grief. In the hour of death I could forgive all my enemies, but the hatred toward this man, who has so wantonly trifled with the faith and love of my child, that hatred I will take with me into the grave—and yet, I fear, Elise has not forgotten him."

"This dead love does not give me any uneasiness," said Bertram. "Four years have passed since that unlucky day."

"And for four years have I been faithful in my

hatred to him. May not Elise have been as constant in her love?"

Bertram sighed and drooped his head. "It is too true, love does not die so easily." Then after a pause he added in a determined voice: "I repeat my request—give me your daughter!"

"You know that she does not love you, and yet you still desire her hand?"

"I do. I have confidence enough in her and in myself to believe Elise will not refuse it to me, but will freely make this sacrifice, when she learns that you will only allow me, as your son, the privilege of sharing my little fortune with you. For her love to you, she will give me her hand, and invest me with the rights of a son toward you."

"Never!" cried Gotzkowsky, vehemently. "She must never be informed of that of which we have been speaking. She does not forebode the misfortune which threatens her. I have not the courage to tell her, and why should I? When the terrible event happens, she will learn it soon enough, and if it can be averted, why then I can spare her this unhappiness. For my child I wish a clear, unclouded sky; let *me* bear the clouds and storms. That has always been the object of my life, and I will remain faithful to it to the last."

"You refuse me, then?" asked Bertram, pained.

"No, my son. I accept you, and that which you have given me in this hour, the treasure of your love; that I can never lose. That remains mine, even if they deprive me of all else."

He opened his arms, and Bertram threw himself weeping on his breast. Long did they thus remain, heart to heart, in silence; but soul spoke to soul without words and without expressions of love.

When Gotzkowsky raised himself from Bertram's embrace, his countenance was calm, and almost cheerful. "I thank you, my son; you have given me new courage and strength. Now I will preserve all my composure. I will humble my pride, and apply to those who in former times professed gratitude toward me. The Council of Berlin have owed me twenty thousand ducats since the time that the Russians were here, and I had to travel twice in the service of the town to Petersburg and Warsaw. These accounts have never been asked for. I will make it my business to remind the Council of them, as in the days of their need they swore eternal gratitude to me. Come, Bertram, let us see whether these worshipful magistrates are any better than other men, and whether they have any recollection of those sacred promises which they made me in the days when they needed help, and when misfortune threatened them."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE RUSSIAN PRINCE.

BEFORE the door of the first hotel in Berlin stood a travelling-carriage covered with dust. The team of six post-horses, and the two servants on the coach-box, showed that it was a personage of quality who now honored the hotel with a visit; and it was therefore very natural that the host should hurry out and open the carriage door with a most respectful bow.

A very tall, thin man descended from the carriage with slow and solemn dignity, and as he entered the house gravely and in silence, his French valet asked the

host whether he had rooms elegant enough to suit the Prince Stratimojeff.

The countenance of the host expanded into a glowing smile; he snatched the candlestick hastily from the hands of the head butler, and flew up the steps himself to prepare the room of state for the prince.

The French valet examined the rooms with a critical eye, and declared that, though they were not worthy of his highness, yet he would condescend to occupy them.

The prince still remained silent, his travelling-cap drawn deep down over his face, and his whole figure concealed in the ample robe of sable fur, which reached to his feet. He motioned to the host with his hand to leave the room; then, in a few short words, he ordered his valet to see to supper, and to have it served up in an adjoining room, and as at that moment a carriage drove up to the house, he commissioned him to see whether it was his suite. The valet stated that it was his highness's private secretary, his man of business, and his chaplain.

"I will not see them to-day—they may seek their own pleasure," said the prince, authoritatively. "Tell them that our business begins to-morrow. But for you, Guillaume, I have an important commission. Go to the host and inquire for the rich banker, John Gotzkowsky; and when you have found where he lives, enter into further conversation, and get some information about the circumstances of this gentleman. I wish to learn, too, about his family; ask about his daughter—if she be still unmarried, and whether she is now in Berlin. In short, find out all you can."

The courteous and obedient valet had left the room some time, but Prince Stratimojeff still stood motionless, his eyes cast on the ground, and muttering some unin-