William Tell

by Friedrich Schiller

Free public domain classic — Noveliopdf

The Project Gutenberg eBook of Wilhelm Tell

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: Wilhelm Tell

Author: Friedrich Schiller

Translator: Sir Theodore Martin

Release date: August 1, 2001 [eBook #2782] Most recently updated: April 4, 2015

Language: English

Other information and formats: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2782

Credits: Etext prepared by Dagny Emma Dudding and John Bickers

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK WILHELM TELL ***

Etext prepared by Dagny, dagnyj@hotmail.com

Emma Dudding, emma_302@hotmail.com and John Bickers, jbickers@ihug.co.nz

Wilhelm Tell

by Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller

Translator: Theodore Martin

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller was born at Marbach, Wurtemberg, Germany, November 10, 1759. His father had served both as surgeon and soldier in the War of the Austrian Succession, and at the time of the poet's birth held an appointment under the Duke of Wurtemberg. Friedrich's education was begun with a view to holy orders, but this idea was given up when he was placed in a military academy established by the Duke. He tried the study of law and then of medicine, but his tastes were literary; and, while holding a position as regimental surgeon, he wrote his revolutionary drama, "The Robbers," which brought down on him the displeasure of his ducal master. Finding the interference with his personal liberty intolerable, he finally fled from the Duchy, and in various retreats went on with his dramatic work. Later he turned to philosophy and history and through his book on "The Revolt of the Netherlands" he was appointed professor extraordinarius at Jena, in 1789. His "History of the Thirty Years' War" appeared in 1790-93, and in 1794 began his intimate relation with Goethe, beside whom he lived in Weimar from 1799 till his death in 1805. His lyrical poems were produced throughout his career, but his last period was most prolific both in these and in dramatic composition, and includes such great works as his "Wallenstein," "Marie Stuart," "The Maid of Orleans," "The Bride of Messina," and "William Tell" (1804). His life was a continual struggle against ill-health and unfavorable circumstances; but he maintained to the end the spirit of independence and love of liberty which are the characteristic mark of his writings.

This enthusiasm for freedom is well illustrated in "William Tell," the most widely popular of his plays. Based upon a world-wide legend which became localized in Switzerland in the fifteenth century and was incorporated into the history of the struggle of the Forest Cantons for deliverance from Austrian domination, it unites with the theme of liberty that of the beauty of life in primitive natural conditions,

and both in its likenesses and differences illustrates Schiller's attitude toward the principles of the French Revolution.

WILHELM TELL

by Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HERMANN GESSLER, governor of Schwytz, and Uri. WERNER, Baron of Attinghausen, free noble of Switzerland. ULRICH VON RUDENZ, his Nephew.

People of Schwytz: WERNER STAUFFACHER. CONRAD HUNN. HANS AUF DER MAUER. JORG IM HOFE. ULRICH DER SCHMIDT. JOST VON WEILER. ITEL REDING.

People of Uri: WALTER FURST. WILHELM TELL. ROSSELMANN, the Priest. PETERMANN, Sacristan. KUONI, Herdsman. WERNI, Huntsman. RUODI, Fisherman.

People of Unterwald: ARNOLD OF MELCHTHAL. CONRAD BAUMGARTEN. MEYER VON SARNEN. STRUTH VON WINKELRIED. KLAUS VON DER FLUE. BURKHART AM BUHEL. ARNOLD VON SEWA.

PFEIFFER of Lucerne. KUNZ of Gersau. JENNI, Fisherman's son. SEPPI, Herdsman's son. GERTRUDE, Stauffacher's wife. HEDWIG, wife of Tell, daughter of Furst. BERTHA of Bruneck, a rich heiress. ARMGART, peasant woman. MECHTHILD, peasant woman. ELSBETH, peasant woman. HILDEGARD, peasant woman. WALTER, Tell's son. WILHELM, Tell's son. FRIESSHARDT, Soldier. LEUTHOLD, Soldier. RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, Gessler's master of the horse. JOHANNES PARRICIDA, Duke of Suabia. STUSSI, Overseer. The Mayor of Uri. A Courier. Master Stonemason, Companions, and Workmen. Taskmaster. A Crier.

Monks of the Order of Charity. Horsemen of Gessler and Landenberg. Many Peasants; Men and Women from the Waldstetten.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A high rocky shore of the Lake of Lucerne opposite Schwytz. The lake makes a bend into the land; a hut stands at a short distance from the shore; the fisher boy is rowing about in his boat. Beyond the lake are seen the green meadows, the hamlets and farms of Schwytz, lying in the clear sunshine. On the left are observed the peaks of The Hacken, surrounded with clouds; to the right, and in the remote distance, appear the Glaciers. The Ranz des Vaches, and the tinkling of cattle bells, continue for some time after the rising of the curtain.

FISHER BOY (sings in his boat) Melody of the Ranz des Vaches The smile-dimpled lake woo'd to bathe in its deep, A boy on its green shore had laid him to sleep; Then heard he a melody Floating along, Sweet as the notes Of an angel's song. And as thrilling with pleasure he wakes from his rest, The waters are rippling over his breast; And a voice from the deep cries, "With me thou must go, I charm the young shepherd, I lure him below."

HERDSMAN (on the mountains) Air.—Variation of the Ranz des Vaches Farewell, ye green meadows, Farewell, sunny shore, The herdsman must leave you, The summer is o'er. We go to the hills, but you'll see us again, When the cuckoo calls, and the merry birds sing, When the flowers bloom afresh in glade and in glen, And the brooks sparkle bright in the sunshine of Spring. Farewell, ye green meadows, Farewell, sunny shore, The herdsman must leave you, The summer is o'er.

CHAMOIS HUNTER (appearing on the top of a cliff) Second Variation of the Ranz des Vaches On the heights peals the thunder, and trembles the bridge, The huntsman bounds on by the dizzying ridge. Undaunted he hies him O'er ice-covered wild,

Where leaf never budded, Nor Spring ever smiled; And beneath him an ocean of mist, where his eye No longer the dwellings of man can espy; Through the parting clouds only The earth can be seen, Far down 'neath the vapour The meadows of green.

[A change comes over the landscape. A rumbling, cracking noise is heard among the mountains. Shadows of clouds sweep across the scene. Ruodi, the fisherman, comes out of his cottage. Werni, the huntsman, descends from the rocks. Kuoni, the shepherd, enters, with a milkpail on his shoulders, followed by Seppi, his assistant.]

RUODI. Come, Jenni, bustle; get the boat on shore. The grizzly Vale-King[*] comes, the Glaciers moan, The Mytenstein[+] is drawing on his hood, And from the Stormcleft chilly blows the wind; The storm will burst before we know what's what.

[*] The German is, Thalvogt, Ruler of the Valley—the name given figuratively to a dense grey mist which the south wind sweeps into the valleys from the mountain tops. It is well known as the precursor of stormy weather.

[+] A steep rock, standing on the north of Rutli, and nearly opposite to Brumen.

KUONI. 'Twill rain ere long; my sheep browse eagerly, And Watcher there is scraping up the earth.

WERNI. The fish are leaping, and the water-hen Keeps diving up and down. A storm is brewing.

KUONI (to his boy). Look, Seppi, if the beasts be all in sight.

SEPPI. There goes brown Liesel, I can hear her bells.

KUONI. Then all are safe; she ever ranges farthest.

RUODI. You've a fine chime of bells there, master herdsman.

WERNI. And likely cattle, too. Are they your own?

KUONI. I'm not so rich. They are the noble lord's Of Attinghaus, and told off to my care.

RUODI. How gracefully yon heifer bears her ribbon!

KUONI. Ay, well she knows she's leader of the herd, And, take it from her, she'd refuse to feed.

RUODI. You're joking now. A beast devoid of reason—

WERNI. Easily said. But beasts have reason, too,— And that we know, we chamois-hunters, well. They never turn to feed—sagacious creatures! Till they have placed a sentinel ahead, Who pricks his ears whenever we approach, And gives alarm with clear and piercing pipe.

RUODI (to the shepherd). Are you for home?

KUONI. The Alp is grazed quite bare.

WERNI. A safe return, my friend!

KUONI. The same to you! Men come not always back from tracks like yours.

RUODI. But who comes here, running at topmost speed?

WERNI. I know the man; 'tis Baumgart of Alzellen.

KONRAD BAUMGARTEN (rushing in breathless). For God's sake, ferryman, your boat!

RUODI. How now? Why all this haste?

BAUM. Cast off! My life's at stake! Set me across!

KUONI. Why, what's the matter, friend?

WERNI. Who are pursuing you? First tell us that.

BAUM. (to the fisherman). Quick, quick, man, quick! they're close upon my heels! It is the Viceroy's men are after me; If they should overtake me, I am lost.

RUODI. Why are the troopers in pursuit of you?

BAUM. First make me safe and then I'll tell you all.

WERNI. There's blood upon your garments—how is this?

BAUM. The Imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg—

KUONI. How! What! The Wolfshot?[*] Is it he pursues you?

[*] In German, Wolfenschiessen—a young man of noble family, and a native of Unterwalden, who attached himself to the House of Austria, and was appointed Burvogt, or Seneschal, of the Castle of Rossberg. He was killed by Baumgarten in the manner, and for the cause, mentioned in the text.

BAUM. He'll ne'er hurt man again; I've settled him.

ALL (starting back). Now, God forgive you, what is this you've done!

BAUM. What every free man in my place had done. Mine own good household right I have enforced 'Gainst him that would have wrong'd my wife—my honour.

KUONI. How? Wronged you in your honour, did he so?

BAUM. That he did not fulfil his foul desire, Is due to God, and to my trusty axe.

WERNI. And you have cleft his skull then with your axe?

KUONI. O, tell us all! You've time enough, and more, While he is getting out the boat there from the beach.

BAUM. When I was in the forest felling timber, My wife came running out in mortal fear. "The Seneschal," she said, "was in my house, Had ordered her to get a bath prepared, And thereupon had ta'en unseemly freedoms, From which she rid herself, and flew to me." Arm'd as I was, I sought him, and my axe Has given his bath a bloody benison.

WERNI. And you did well; no man can blame the deed.

KUONI. The tyrant! Now he has his just reward! We men of Unterwald have owed it long.

BAUM. The deed got wind, and now they're in pursuit. Heavens! whilst we speak, the time is flying fast.

[It begins to thunder.]

KUONI. Quick, ferryman, and set the good man over.

RUODI. Impossible! a storm is close at hand, Wait till it pass! You must.

BAUM. Almighty heavens! I cannot wait; the least delay is death.

KUONI (to the fisherman). Push out—God with you! We should help our neighbours; The like misfortune may betide us all.

[Thunder and the roaring of the wind.]

RUODI. The South-wind's up![*] See how the lake is rising! I cannot steer against both wind and wave.

[*] Literally, The Fohn is loose! "When," says Muller, in his History of Switzerland, "the wind called the Fohn is high, the navigation of the lake becomes extremely dangerous. Such is its vehemence, that the laws of the country require that the fires shall be extinguished in the houses while it lasts, and the night watches are doubled. The inhabitants lay heavy stones upon the roofs of their houses, to prevent their being blown away."

BAUM. (clasping him by the knees). God so help you as now you pity me!

WERNI. His life's at stake. Have pity on him, man!

KUONI. He is a father: has a wife and children.

[Repeated peals of thunder.]

RUODI. What! and have I not, then, a life to lose, A wife and child at home as well as he? See how the breakers foam, and toss, and whirl, And the lake eddies up from all its depths! Right gladly would I save the worthy man, But 'tis impossible, as you must see.

BAUM. (still kneeling). Then must I fall into the tyrant's hands. And with the shore of safety close in sight! Yonder it lies! My eyes can see it clear, My very voice can echo to its shores. There is the boat to carry me across, Yet must I lie here helpless and forlorn.

KUONI. Look! who comes here?

RUODI. 'Tis Tell, ay, Tell, of Burglen.[*]

[*] Burglen, the birthplace and residence of Tell. A chapel, erected in 1522, remains on the spot formerly occupied by his house.

[Enter Tell with a crossbow.]

TELL. What man is he that here implores of aid?

KUONI. He is from Alzellen, and to guard his honour From touch of foulest shame, has slain the Wolfshot, The Imperial Seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg. The Viceroy's troopers are upon his heels; He begs the ferryman to take him over, But frightened at the storm he says he won't.

RUODI. Well, there is Tell can steer as well as I. He'll be my judge, if it be possible.

[Violent peals of thunder—the lake becomes more tempestuous.]

Am I to plunge into the jaws of hell? I should be mad to dare the desperate act.

TELL. The brave man thinks upon himself the last. Put trust in God, and help him in his need!

RUODI. Safe in the port, 'tis easy to advise. There is the boat, and there the lake! Try you!

TELL. The lake may pity, but the Viceroy never. Come, risk it, man!

SHEPHERD and HUNTSMAN. O save him! save him! save him!

RUODI. Though 'twere my brother, or my darling child, I would not go. 'Tis Simon and Jude's day, The lake is up, and calling for its victim.

TELL. Nought's to be done with idle talking here. Each moment's precious; the man must be help'd, Say, boatman, will you venture?

RUODI. No; not I.

TELL. In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will, With my poor strength, see

what is to be done!

KUONI. Ha, gallant Tell!

WERNI. That's like a huntsman true.

BAUM. You are my angel, my preserver, Tell.

TELL. I may preserve you from the Viceroy's power, But from the tempest's rage another must. Yet better 'tis you fall into God's hands, Than into those of men.

[To the herdsman.]

Herdsman, do thou Console my wife if I should come to grief. I could not choose but do as I have done.

[He leaps into the boat.]

KUONI (to the fisherman). A pretty man to keep a ferry, truly! What Tell could risk, you dared not venture on.

RUODI. Far better men would never cope with Tell. There's no two such as he 'mong all our hills.

WERNI (who has ascended a rock). Now he is off. God help thee, gallant sailor! Look how the little boat reels on the waves! There! they have swept clean over it. And now—

KUONI (on the shore). 'Tis out of sight. Yet stay, there 'tis again! Stoutly he stems the breakers, noble fellow!

SEPPI. Here come the troopers hard as they can ride!

KUONI. Heavens! so they do! Why, that was help, indeed.

[Enter a troop of horsemen.]

1ST H. Give up the murderer! You have him here!

2ND H. This way he came! 'Tis useless to conceal him!

RUODI and KUONI. Whom do you mean?

1ST H. (discovering the boat). The devil! What do I see?

WERNI. (from above). Isn't he in yonder boat ye seek? Ride on, If you lay to, you may o'ertake him yet.

2ND H. Curse on you, he's escaped!

1ST H. (to the shepherd and fisherman). You help'd him off, And you shall pay for it! Fall on their herds! Down with the cottage! burn it! beat it down!

[They rush off.]

SEPPI (hurrying after them). Oh, my poor lambs!

KUONI (following him). Unhappy me, my herds!

WERNI. The tyrants!

RUODI (wringing his hands). Righteous Heaven! Oh, when will come Deliverance to this doom-devoted land?

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE II.

A lime tree in front of Stauffacher's house at Steinen, in Schwytz, upon the public road, near a bridge.

Werner Stauffacher and Pfeiffer, of Lucerne, enter into conversation.

PFEIFF. Ay, ay, friend Stauffacher, as I have said, Swear not to Austria, if you can help it. Hold by the Empire stoutly as of yore, And God preserve you in your ancient freedom!

[Presses his hand warmly, and is going.]

STAUFF. Wait till my mistress comes. Now do! You are My guest in Schwytz—I in Lucerne am yours.

PFEIFF. Thanks! thanks! But I must reach Gersau to-day. Whatever grievances your rulers' pride And grasping avarice may yet inflict, Bear them in patience—soon a

change may come. Another emperor may mount the throne. But Austria's once, and you are hers for ever.

[Exit.]

[Stauffacher sits down sorrowfully upon a bench under the lime tree. Gertrude, his wife, enters, and finds him in this posture. She places herself near him, and looks at him for some time in silence.]

GERT. So sad, my love! I scarcely know thee now. For many a day in silence I have mark'd A moody sorrow furrowing thy brow. Some silent grief is weighing on thy heart. Trust it to me. I am thy faithful wife, And I demand my half of all thy cares.

[Stauffacher gives her his hand and is silent.]

Tell me what can oppress thy spirits thus? Thy toil is blest—the world goes well with thee— Our barns are full—our cattle, many a score; Our handsome team of well-fed horses, too, Brought from the mountain pastures safely home, To winter in their comfortable stalls. There stands thy house—no nobleman's more fair! 'Tis newly built with timber of the best, All grooved and fitted with the nicest skill; Its many glistening windows tell of comfort! 'Tis quarter'd o'er with' scutcheons of all hues, And proverbs sage, which passing travellers Linger to read, and ponder o'er their meaning.

STAUFF. The house is strongly built, and handsomely, But, ah! the ground on which we built it quakes.

GERT. Tell me, dear Werner, what you mean by that?

STAUFF. No later gone than yesterday, I sat Beneath this linden, thinking with delight, How fairly all was finished, when from Kussnacht The Viceroy and his men came riding by. Before this house he halted in surprise: At once I rose, and, as beseemed his rank, Advanced respectfully to greet the lord, To whom the Emperor delegates his power, As judge supreme within our Canton here. "Who is the owner of this house?" he asked, With mischief in his thoughts, for well he knew. With

prompt decision, thus I answered him: "The Emperor, your grace—my lord and yours, And held by me in fief." On this he answered, "I am the Emperor's viceregent here, And will not that each peasant churl should build At his own pleasure, bearing him as freely As though he were the master in the land. I shall make bold to put a stop to this!" So saying, he, with menaces, rode off, And left me musing with a heavy heart On the fell purpose that his words betray'd.

GERT. My own dear lord and husband! Wilt thou take A word of honest counsel from thy wife? I boast to be the noble Iberg's child, A man of wide experience. Many a time, As we sat spinning in the winter nights, My sisters and myself, the people's chiefs Were wont to gather round our father's hearth, To read the old imperial charters, and To hold sage converse on the country's weal. Then heedfully I listened, marking well What now the wise man thought, the good man wished, And garner'd up their wisdom in my heart. Hear then, and mark me well; for thou wilt see, I long have known the grief that weighs thee down. The Viceroy hates thee, fain would injure thee, For thou hast cross'd his wish to bend the Swiss In homage to this upstart house of princes, And kept them staunch, like their good sires of old, In true allegiance to the Empire. Say, Is't not so, Werner? Tell me, am I wrong?

STAUFF. 'Tis even so. For this doth Gessler hate me.

GERT. He burns with envy, too, to see thee living Happy and free on thine ancestral soil, For he is landless. From the Emperor's self Thou hold'st in fief the lands thy fathers left thee. There's not a prince i' the Empire that can show A better title to his heritage; For thou hast over thee no lord but one, And he the mightiest of all Christian kings. Gessler, we know, is but a younger son, His only wealth the knightly cloak he wears; He therefore views an honest man's good fortune With a malignant and a jealous eye. Long has he sworn to compass thy destruction. As yet thou art uninjured. Wilt thou wait Till he may safely give his malice vent? A wise man would anticipate the blow.

STAUFF. What's to be done?

GERT. Now hear what I advise. Thou knowest well, how here with us in Schwytz All worthy men are groaning underneath This Gessler's grasping, grinding tyranny. Doubt not the men of Unterwald as well, And Uri, too, are chafing like ourselves, At this oppressive and heart-wearying yoke. For there, across the lake, the Landenberg Wields the same iron rule as Gessler here— No fishing-boat comes over to our side, But brings the tidings of some new encroachment, Some fresh outrage, more grievous than the last. Then it were well, that some of you—true men— Men sound at heart, should secretly devise, How best to shake this hateful thraldom off. Full sure I am that God would not desert you, But lend His favour to the righteous cause. Has thou no friend in Uri, one to whom Thou frankly may'st unbosom all thy thoughts?

STAUFF. I know full many a gallant fellow there, And nobles, too,—great men, of high repute, In whom I can repose unbounded trust.

[Rising.]

Wife! What a storm of wild and perilous thoughts Hast thou stirr'd up within my tranquil breast! The darkest musings of my bosom thou Hast dragg'd to light, and placed them full before me; And what I scarce dared harbour e'en in thought, Thou speakest plainly out with fearless tongue. But hast thou weigh'd well what thou urgest thus? Discord will come, and the fierce clang of arms, To scare this valley's long unbroken peace, If we, a feeble shepherd race, shall dare Him to the fight, that lords it o'er the world. Ev'n now they only wait some fair pretext For setting loose their savage warrior hordes, To scourge and ravage this devoted land, To lord it o'er us with the victor's rights, And, 'neath the show of lawful chastisement, Despoil us of our chartered liberties.

GERT. You, too are men; can wield a battle axe As well as they. God ne'er deserts the brave.

STAUFF. Oh wife! a horrid, ruthless fiend is war, That smites at once the shepherd and his flock.

GERT. Whate'er great Heaven inflicts, we must endure; But wrong is what no noble heart will bear.

STAUFF. This house—thy pride—war, unrelenting war Will burn it down.

GERT. And did I think this heart Enslaved and fettered to the things of earth, With my own hand I'd hurl the kindling torch.

STAUFF. Thou hast faith in human kindness, wife; but war Spares not the tender infant in its cradle.

GERT. There is a Friend to innocence in heaven. Send your gaze forward, Werner—not behind.

STAUFF. We men may die like men, with sword in hand; But oh, what fate, my Gertrude, may be thine?

GERT. None are so weak, but one last choice is left. A spring from yonder bridge and I am free!

STAUFF. (embracing her). Well may he fight for hearth and home, that clasps A heart so rare as thine against his own! What are the host of emperors to him? Gertrude, farewell! I will to Uri straight. There lives my worthy comrade, Walter Furst; His thoughts and mine upon these times are one. There, too, resides the noble Banneret Of Attinghaus. High though of blood he be, He loves the people, honours their old customs. With both of these I will take counsel, how To rid us bravely of our country's foe. Farewell! and while I am away, bear thou A watchful eye in management at home. The pilgrim journeying to the house of God, And holy friar, collecting for his cloister, To these give liberally from purse and garner. Stauffacher's house would not be hid. Right out Upon the public way it stands, and offers To all that pass a hospitable roof.

[While they are retiring, Tell enters with Baumgarten.]

TELL. Now, then, you have no further need of me. Enter yon house. 'Tis Werner Stauffacher's, A man that is a father to distress. See, there he is, himself! Come, follow me.

[They retire up. Scene changes.]

SCENE III.

A common near Altdorf. On an eminence in the background a castle in progress of erection, and so far advanced that the outline of the whole may be distinguished. The back part is finished: men are working at the front. Scaffolding, on which the workmen are going up and down. A slater is seen upon the highest part of the roof. All is bustle and activity.

Taskmaster, Mason, Workmen and Labourers.

TASK. (with a stick, urging on the workmen). Up, up! You've rested long enough. To work! The stones here! Now the mortar, and the lime! And let his lordship see the work advanced, When next he comes. These fellows crawl like snails!

[To two labourers, with loads.]

What! call ye that a load? Go, double it. Is this the way ye earn your wages, laggards?

1ST W. 'Tis very hard that we must bear the stones, To make a keep and dungeon for ourselves!

TASK. What's that you mutter? 'Tis a worthless race, For nothing fit but just to milk their cows, And saunter idly up and down the hills.

OLD MAN (sinks down exhausted). I can no more.

TASK. (shaking him). Up, up, old man, to work!

1ST W. Have you no bowels of compassion, thus To press so hard upon a poor old man, That scarce can drag his feeble limbs along?

MASTER MASON and WORKMEN. Shame, shame upon you—shame! It cries to heaven.

TASK. Mind your own business. I but do my duty.

1ST W. Pray, master, what's to be the name of this Same castle, when 'tis built?

TASK. The Keep of Uri; For by it we shall keep you in subjection.

WORK. The Keep of Uri?

TASK. Well, why laugh at that?

2ND W. Keep Uri, will you, with this paltry place!

1ST W. How many molehills such as that must first Be piled up each on each, ere you make A mountain equal to the least in Uri?

[Taskmaster retires up the stage.]

MAS. M. I'll drown the mallet in the deepest lake, That served my hand on this accursed pile.

[Enter Tell and Stauffacher.]

STAUFF. O, that I had not lived to see this sight!

TELL. Here 'tis not good to be. Let us proceed.

STAUFF. Am I in Uri,—Uri, freedom's home?

MAS. M. O, sir, if you could only see the vaults Beneath these towers. The man that tenants them Will ne'er hear cock crow more.

STAUFF. O God! O God!

MASON. Look at these ramparts and these buttresses, That seem as they were built to last for ever.

TELL. What hands have built, my friend, hands can destroy.

[Pointing to the mountains.]

/That/ home of freedom God hath built for us.

[A drum is heard. People enter bearing a cap upon a pole, followed by a crier. Women and children thronging tumultuously after them.]

1ST W. What means the drum? Give heed!

MASON. Why, here's a mumming! And look, the cap—what can they mean by that?

CRIER. In the Emperor's name, give ear!

WORK. Hush! silence! hush!

CRIER. Ye men of Uri, ye do see this cap! It will be set upon a lofty pole In Altdorf, in the market place: and this Is the Lord Governor's good will and pleasure; The cap shall have like honour as himself, All do it reverence with bended knee, And head uncovered; thus the king will know Who are his true and loyal subjects here; His life and goods are forfeit to the crown That shall refuse obedience to the order.

[The people burst out into laughter. The drum beats and the procession passes on.]

1ST W. A strange device to fall upon indeed: Do reverence to a cap! A pretty farce! Heard ever mortal anything like this?

MAS. M. Down to a cap on bended knee, forsooth! Rare jesting this with men of sober sense!

1ST W. Nay, an it were the imperial crown! A cap! Merely the cap of Austria! I've seen it Hanging above the throne in Gessler's hall.

MASON. The cap of Austria? Mark that! A snare To get us into Austria's power, by Heaven!

WORK. No freeborn man will stoop to such disgrace.

MAS. M. Come—to our comrades, and advise with them!

[They retire up.]

TELL (to Stauffacher). You see how matters stand. Farewell, my friend.

STAUFF. Whither away? Oh, leave us not so soon.

TELL. They look for me at home. So fare ye well.

STAUFF. My heart's so full, and has so much to tell you.

TELL. Words will not make a heart that's heavy light.

STAUFF. Yet words may possibly conduct to deeds.

TELL. Endure in silence! We can do no more.

STAUFF. But shall we bear what is not to be borne?

TELL. Impetuous rulers have the shortest reigns. When the fierce Southwind rises from its chasms, Men cover up their fires, the ships in haste Make for the harbour, and the mighty spirit Sweeps o'er the earth, and leaves no trace behind. Let every man live quietly at home; Peace to the peaceful rarely is denied.

STAUFF. And is it thus you view our grievances?

TELL. The serpent stings not till it is provoked. Let them alone; they'll weary of themselves, When they shall see we are not to be roused.

STAUFF. Much might be done—did we stand fast together.

TELL. When the ship founders, he will best escape, Who seeks no other's safety but his own.

STAUFF. And you desert the common cause so coldly?

TELL. A man can safely count but on himself!

STAUFF. Nay, even the weak grow strong by union.

TELL. But the strong man is strongest when alone.

STAUFF. So, then, your country cannot count on you, If in despair she rise against her foes.

TELL. Tell rescues the lost sheep from yawning gulfs: Is he a man, then, to desert his friends? Yet, whatsoe'er you do, spare me from council! I was not born to ponder and select; But when your course of action is resolved, Then call on Tell: you shall

not find him fail.

[Exeunt severally. A sudden tumult is heard around the scaffolding.]

MASON (running in). What's wrong?

FIRST WORKMAN (running forward). The slater's fallen from the roof.

BERTHA (rushing in). Heavens! Is he dashed to pieces? Save him, help! If help be possible, save him! Here is gold.

[Throws her trinkets among the people.]

MASON. Hence with your gold,—your universal charm, And remedy for ill! When you have torn Fathers from children, husbands from their wives, And scattered woe and wail throughout the land, You think with gold to compensate for all. Hence! Till we saw you, we were happy men; With you came misery and dark despair.

BERTHA (to the Taskmaster, who has returned). Lives he?

[Taskmaster shakes his head.]

Ill-omened towers, with curses built, And doomed with curses to be tenanted!

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.

The House of Walter Furst. Walter Furst and Arnold von Melchthal enter simultaneously at different sides.

MELCH. Good Walter Furst.

FURST. If we should be surprised! Stay where you are. We are beset with spies.

MELCH. Have you no news for me from Unterwald? What of my father? 'Tis not to be borne, Thus to be pent up like a felon here! What have I done so heinous that I must Skulk here in hiding, like a murderer? I only laid my staff across the fists Of the pert varlet, when before my eyes, By order of the governor, he tried To drive away my handsome team of oxen.

FURST. You are too rash by far. He did no more Than what the Governor had ordered him. You had transgress'd, and therefore should have paid The penalty, however hard, in silence.

MELCH. Was I to brook the fellow's saucy gibe, "That if the peasant must have bread to eat, Why, let him go and draw the plough himself!" It cut me to the very soul to see My oxen, noble creatures, when the knave Unyoked them from the plough. As though they felt The wrong, they lowed and butted with their horns. On this I could contain myself no longer, And, overcome by passion, struck him down.

FURST. O, we old men can scarce command ourselves! And can we wonder youth breaks out of bounds?

MELCH. I'm only sorry for my father's sake! To be away from him, that needs so much My fostering care! The Governor detests him, Because, whene'er occasion served, he has Stood stoutly up for right and liberty. Therefore they'll bear him hard—the poor old man! And there is none to shield him from their gripe. Come what come may, I must go home again.

FURST. Compose yourself, and wait in patience till We get some tidings o'er from Unterwald. Away! away! I hear a knock! Perhaps A message from the Viceroy! Get thee in! You are not safe from Landenberger's[*] arm In Uri, for these tyrants pull together.

[*] Berenger von Landenberg, a man of noble family in Thurgau, and Governor of Unterwald, infamous for his cruelties to the Swiss, and particularly to the venerable Henry of the Halden. He was slain at the battle of Morgarten, in 1315.

MELCH. They teach us Switzers what we ought to do.

FURST. Away! I'll call you when the coast is clear.

[Melchthal retires.]

Unhappy youth! I dare not tell him all The evil that my boding heart predicts! Who's

there? The door ne'er opens, but I look For tidings of mishap. Suspicion lurks With darkling treachery in every nook. Even to our inmost rooms they force their way, These myrmidons of power; and soon we'll need To fasten bolts and bars upon our doors.

[He opens the door, and steps back in surprise as Werner Stauffacher enters.]

What do I see? You, Werner? Now, by Heaven! A valued guest, indeed. No man e'er set His foot across this threshold, more esteem'd, Welcome! thrice welcome, Werner, to my roof! What brings you here? What seek you here in Uri?

STAUFF. (shakes Furst by the hand). The olden times and olden Switzerland.

FURST. You bring them with you. See how glad I am, My heart leaps at the very sight of you. Sit down—sit down, and tell me how you left Your charming wife, fair Gertrude? Iberg's child, And clever as her father. Not a man, That wends from Germany, by Meinrad's Cell,[*] To Italy, but praises far and wide Your house's hospitality. But say, Have you come here direct from Fluelen, And have you noticed nothing on your way, Before you halted at my door?

[*] A cell built in the 9th century, by Meinrad, Count of Hohenzollern, the founder of the Convent of Einsiedeln, subsequently alluded to in the text.

STAUFF. (sits down). I saw A work in progress, as I came along, I little thought to see—that likes me ill.

FURST. O friend! you've lighted on my thought at once.

STAUFF. Such things in Uri ne'er were known before. Never was prison here in man's remembrance, Nor ever any stronghold but the grave.

FURST. You name it well. It is the grave of freedom.

STAUFF. Friend, Walter Furst, I will be plain with you. No idle curiosity it is That brings me here, but heavy cares. I left Thraldom at home, and thraldom meets me here. Our wrongs, e'en now, are more than we can bear And who shall tell us where

they are to end? From eldest time the Switzer has been free, Accustom'd only to the mildest rule. Such things as now we suffer ne'er were known, Since herdsman first drove cattle to the hills.

FURST. Yes, our oppressions are unparallel'd! Why, even our own good lord of Attinghaus, Who lived in olden times, himself declares They are no longer to be tamely borne.

STAUFF. In Unterwalden yonder 'tis the same; And bloody has the retribution been. The imperial Seneschal, the Wolfshot, who At Rossberg dwelt, long'd for forbidden fruit— Baumgarten's wife, that lives at Alzellen, He tried to make a victim to his lust, On which the husband slew him with his axe.

FURST. O, Heaven is just in all its judgments still! Baumgarten, say you? A most worthy man. Has he escaped, and is he safely hid?

STAUFF. Your son-in-law conveyed him o'er the lake, And he lies hidden in my house at Steinen. He brought the tidings with him of a thing That has been done at Sarnen, worse than all, A thing to make the very heart run blood!

FURST. (attentively). Say on. What is it?

STAUFF. There dwells in Melchthal, then, Just as you enter by the road from Kerns, An upright man, named Henry of the Halden, A man of weight and influence in the Diet.

FURST. Who knows him not? But what of him? Proceed.

STAUFF. The Landenberg, to punish some offence Committed by the old man's son, it seems, Had given command to take the youth's best pair Of oxen from his plough; on which the lad Struck down the messenger and took to flight.

FURST. But the old father—tell me, what of him?

STAUFF. The Landenberg sent for him, and required He should produce his son upon the spot; And when the old man protested, and with truth, That he knew

nothing of the fugitive, The tyrant call'd his torturers.

FURST. (springs up and tries to lead him to the other side). Hush, no more!

STAUFF. (with increasing warmth). "And though thy son," he cried, "has 'scaped me now, I have thee fast, and thou shalt feel my vengeance." With that they flung the old man to the ground, And plunged the pointed steel into his eyes.

FURST. Merciful Heaven!

MELCH. (rushing out). Into his eyes, his eyes?

STAUFF. (addresses himself in astonishment to Walter Furst). Who is this youth?

MELCH. (grasping him convulsively). Into his eyes? Speak, speak!

FURST. Oh, miserable hour!

STAUFF. Who is it, tell me?

[Stauffacher makes a sign to him.]

It is his son! All-righteous Heaven!

MELCH. And I Must be from thence! What! Into both his eyes?

FURST. Be calm, be calm; and bear it like a man!

MELCH. And all for me— for my mad willful folly! Blind, did you say? Quite blind—and both his eyes?

STAUFF. Ev'n so. The fountain of his sight is quench'd, He ne'er will see the blessed sunshine more.

FURST. Oh, spare his anguish!

MELCH. Never, never more!

[Presses his hands upon his eyes and is silent for some moments: then turning from one to the other, speaks in a subdued tone, broken by sobs.]

O, the eye's light, of all the gifts of Heaven, The dearest, best! From light all beings live— Each fair created thing—the very plants Turn with a joyful transport to the

light, And he—he must drag on through all his days In endless darkness! Never more for him The sunny meads shall glow, the flow'rets bloom; Nor shall he more behold the roseate tints Of the iced mountain top! To die is nothing. But to have life, and not have sight,—oh that Is misery, indeed! Why do you look So piteously at me? I have two eyes, Yet to my poor blind father can give neither! No, not one gleam of that great sea of light, That with its dazzling splendour floods my gaze.

STAUFF. Ah, I must swell the measure of your grief, Instead of soothing it. The worst, alas! Remains to tell. They've stripp'd him of his all; Nought have they left him, save his staff, on which, Blind, and in rags, he moves from door to door.

MELCH. Nought but his staff to the old eyeless man! Stripp'd of his all—even of the light of day, The common blessing of the meanest wretch? Tell me no more of patience, of concealment! Oh, what a base and coward thing am I, That on mine own security I thought, And took no care of thine! Thy precious head Left as a pledge within the tyrant's grasp! Hence, craven-hearted prudence, hence! And all My thoughts be vengeance, and the despot's blood! I'll seek him straight—no power shall stay me now— And at his hands demand my father's eyes. I'll beard him 'mid a thousand myrmidons! What's life to me, if in his heart's best blood I cool the fever of this mighty anguish?

[He is going.]

FURST. Stay, this is madness, Melchthal! What avails Your single arm against his power? He sits At Sarnen high within his lordly keep, And, safe within its battlemented walls, May laugh to scorn your unavailing rage.

MELCH. And though he sat within the icy domes Of yon far Schreckhorn—ay, or higher, where, Veil'd since eternity, the Jungfrau soars, Still to the tyrant would I make my way; With twenty comrades minded like myself, I'd lay his fastness level with the earth! And if none follow me, and if you all, In terror for your homesteads and your herds, Bow in submission to the tyrant's yoke, Round me I'll call the

herdsmen on the hills, And there beneath heaven's free and boundless roof, Where men still feel as men, and hearts are true, Proclaim aloud this foul enormity!

STAUFF. (to Furst.) The measure's full—and are we then to wait Till some extremity—

MELCH. Peace! What extremity Remains for us to dread? What, when our eyes No longer in their sockets are secure? Heavens! Are we helpless? Wherefore did we learn To bend the cross-bow,—wield the battle-axe? What living creature but in its despair, Finds for itself a weapon of defence? The baited stag will turn, and with the show Of his dread antlers hold the hounds at bay; The chamois drags the hunstman down th' abyss, The very ox, the partner of man's toil, The sharer of his roof, that meekly bends The strength of his huge neck beneath the yoke, Springs up, if he's provoked, whets his strong horn, And tosses his tormentor to the clouds.

FURST. If the three Cantons thought as we three do, Something might then be done, with good effect.

STAUFF. When Uri calls, when Unterwald replies, Schwytz will be mindful of her ancient league.[*]

[*] The League, or Bond, of the Three Cantons was of very ancient origin. They met and renewed it from time to time, especially when their liberties were threatened with danger. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the end of the 13th century, when Albert of Austria became Emperor, and when, possibly, for the first time, the Bond was reduced to writing. As it is important to the understanding of many passages of the play, a translation is subjoined of the oldest known document relating to it. The original, which is in Latin and German, is dated in August, 1291, and is under the seals of the whole of the men of Schwytz, the commonalty of the vale of Uri, and the whole of the men of the upper and lower vales of Stanz.

THE BOND

Be it known to every one, that the men of the Dale of Uri, the Community of

Schwytz, as also the men of the mountains of Unterwald, in consideration of the evil times, have full confidently bound themselves, and sworn to help each other with all their power and might, property and people, against all who shall do violence to them, or any of them. That is our Ancient Bond.

Whoever hath a Seignior, let him obey according to the conditions of his service.

We are agreed to receive into these dales no Judge, who is not a countryman and indweller, or who hath bought his place.

Every controversy amongst the sworn confederates shall be determined by some of the sagest of their number, and if any one shall challenge their judgment, then shall he be constrained to obey it by the rest.

Whoever intentionally or deceitfully kills another, shall be executed, and whoever shelters him shall be banished.

Whoever burns the property of another shall no longer be regarded as a countryman, and whoever shelters him shall make good the damage done.

Whoever injures another, or robs him, and hath property in our country, shall make satisfaction out of the same.

No one shall distrain a debtor without a judge, nor any one who is not his debtor, or the surety of such debtor.

Every one in these dales shall submit to the judge, or we, the sworn confederates, all will take satisfaction for all the injury occasioned by his contumacy. And if in any internal division the one party will not accept justice, all the rest shall help the other party. These decrees shall, God willing, endure eternally for our general advantage.

MELCH. I've many friends in Unterwald, and none That would not gladly venture life and limb, If fairly back'd and aided by the rest. Oh! sage and reverend fathers of this land, Here do I stand before your riper years, An unskill'd youth, who in the Diet must Into respectful silence hush his voice. Yet do not, for that I am young, and

want Experience, slight my counsel and my words. 'Tis not the wantonness of youthful blood That fires my spirit; but a pang so deep That e'en the flinty rocks must pity me. You, too, are fathers, heads of families, And you must wish to have a virtuous son, To reverence your grey hairs, and shield your eyes With pious and affectionate regard. Do not, I pray, because in limb and fortune You still are unassailed, and still your eyes Revolve undimm'd and sparkling in their spheres; Oh, do not, therefore, disregard our wrongs! Above you, also, hangs the tyrant's sword. You, too, have striven to alienate the land From Austria. This was all my father's crime: You share his guilt, and may his punishment.

STAUFF. (to Furst). Do thou resolve! I am prepared to follow.

FURST. First let us learn what steps the noble lords Von Sillinen and Attinghaus propose. Their names would rally thousands to the cause.

MELCH. Is there a name within the Forest Mountains That carried more respect than yours—and yours? On names like these the people build their trust In time of need—such names are household words. Rich was your heritage of manly worth, And richly have you added to its stores. What need of nobles? Let us do the work Ourselves. Yes, though we have to stand alone, We shall be able to maintain our rights.

STAUFF. The noble's wrongs are not so great as ours. The torrent, that lays waste the lower grounds, Hath not ascended to the uplands yet. But let them see the country once in arms, They'll not refuse to lend a helping hand.

FURST. Were there an umpire 'twixt ourselves and Austria, Justice and law might then decide our quarrel. But out oppressor is our Emperor too, And judge supreme. 'Tis God must help us, then, And our own arm! Be yours the task to rouse The men of Schwytz. I'll rally friends in Uri. But whom are we to send to Unterwald?

MELCH. Thither send me. Whom should it more concern!

FURST. No, Melchthal, no; you are my guest, and I Must answer for your safety.

MELCH. Let me go. I know each forest track and mountain path; Friends too, I'll find, be sure, on every hand, To give me willing shelter from the foe.

STAUFF. Nay, let him go; no traitors harbour there: For tyranny is so abhorred in Unterwald, No tools can there be found to work her will. In the low valleys, too, the Alzeller Will gain confederates, and rouse the country.

MELCH. But how shall we communicate, and not Awaken the suspicion of the tyrants?

STAUFF. Might we not meet at Brunnen or at Treib, Where merchant vessels with their cargoes come?

FURST. We must not go so openly to work. Hear my opinion. On the lake's left bank, As we sail hence to Brunnen, right against The Mytenstein, deep-hidden in the wood A meadow lies, by shepherds called the Rootli, Because the wood has been uprooted there.

[To Melchthal.]

'Tis where our Canton bound'ries verge on yours;

[To Stauffacher.]

Your boat will carry you across from Schwytz.

Thither by lonely bypaths let us wend At midnight, and deliberate o'er our plans. Let each bring with him there ten trusty men, All one at heart with us; and then we may Consult together for the general weal, And, with God's guidance, fix what next to do.

STAUFF. So let it be. And now your true right hand! Yours, too, young man! and as we now three men Among ourselves thus knit our hands together In all sincerity and truth, e'en so Shall we three cantons, too, together stand In victory and defeat, in life and death.

FURST and MELCH. In life and death!

[They hold their hands clasped together for some moments in silence.]

MELCH. Alas, my old blind father! The day of freedom, that thou canst not see, But thou shalt hear it, when from Alp to Alp The beacon fires throw up their flaming signs, And the proud castles of the tyrants fall, Into thy cottage shall the Switzer burst, Bear the glad tidings to thine ear, and o'er Thy darken'd way shall Freedom's radiance pour.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The mansion of the Baron of Attinghausen. A Gothic Hall, decorated with escutcheons and helmets. The Baron, a grey-headed man, eighty- five years old, tall and of a commanding mien, clad in a furred pelisse, and leaning on a staff tipped with chamois horn. Kuoni and six hinds standing round him with rakes and scythes. Ulrich of Rudenz enters in the costume of a knight.

RUD. Uncle, I'm here! Your will?

ATTING. First let me share, After the ancient custom of our house, The morning cup, with these my faithful servants!

[He drinks from a cup, which is then passed round.]

Time was, I stood myself in field and wood, With mine own eyes directing all their toil, Even as my banner led them in the fight, Now I am only fit to play the steward: And, if the genial sun come not to me, I can no longer seek it on the hills. Thus slowly, in an ever-narrowing sphere, I move on to the narrowest and the last, Where all life's pulses cease. I now am but The shadow of my former self, and that Is fading fast—'twill soon be but a name.

KUONI (offering Rudenz the cup). A pledge, young master!

[Rudenz hesitates to take the cup.]

Nay, Sir, drink it off! One cup, one heart! You know our proverb, Sir?

ATTING. Go, children, and at eve, when work is done, We'll meet and talk the country's business over.

[Exeunt servants.]

Belted and plumed, and all thy bravery on! Thou art for Altdorf—for the castle, boy?

RUD. Yes, uncle. Longer may I not delay—

ATTING. (sitting down). Why in such haste? Say, are thy youthful hours Doled in such niggard measure, that thou must Be chary of them to thy aged uncle?

RUD. I see my presence is not needed here, I am but as a stranger in this house.

ATTING. (gazes fixedly at him for a considerable time). Ay, pity 'tis thou art! Alas, that home To thee has grown so strange! Oh, Uly! Uly! I scarce do know thee now, thus deck'd in silks, The peacock's feather[*] flaunting in thy cap, And purple mantle round thy shoulders flung; Thou look'st upon the peasant with disdain; And tak'st his honest greeting with a blush.

[*] The Austrian knights were in the habit of wearing a plume of peacock's feathers in their helmets. After the overthrow of the Austrian dominion in Switzerland, it was made highly penal to wear the peacock's feather at any public assembly there.

RUD. All honour due to him I gladly pay, But must deny the right he would usurp.

ATTING. The sore displeasure of its monarch rests Upon our land, and every true man's heart, Is full of sadness for the grievous wrongs We suffer from our tyrants. Thou alone Art all unmoved amid the general grief. Abandoning thy friends, thou tak'st thy stand Beside thy country's foes, and, as in scorn Of our distress, pursuest giddy joys, Courting the smiles of princes all the while Thy country bleeds beneath their cruel scourge.

RUD. The land is sore oppress'd, I know it, uncle. But why? Who plunged it into this distress? A word, one little easy word, might buy Instant deliverance from all

our ills, And win the good will of the Emperor. Woe unto those who seal the people's eyes. And make them adverse to their country's good— The men who, for their own vile, selfish ends, Are seeking to prevent the Forest States From swearing fealty to Austria's House, As all the countries round about have done. It fits their humour well, to take their seats Amid the nobles on the Herrenbank;[*] They'll have the Kaiser for their lord, forsooth, That is to say, they'll have no lord at all.

[*] The bench reserved for the nobility.

ATTING. Must I hear this, and from thy lips, rash boy!

RUD. You urged me to this answer. Hear me out. What, uncle, is the character you've stoop'd To fill contentedly through life? Have you No higher pride, than in these lonely wilds To be the Landamman or Banneret,[*] The petty chieftain of a shepherd race? How! Were it not a far more glorious choice, To bend in homage to our royal lord, And swell the princely splendours of his court, Than sit at home, the peer of your own vassals, And share the judgment-seat with vulgar clowns?

[*] The Landamman was an officer chosen by the Swiss Gemeinde, or Diet, to preside over them. The Banneret was an officer entrusted with the keeping of the State Banner, and such others as were taken in battle.

ATTING. Ah, Uly, Uly; all too well I see, The tempter's voice has caught thy willing ear, And pour'd its subtle poison in thy heart.

RUD. Yes, I conceal it not. It doth offend My inmost soul, to hear the stranger's gibes, That taunt us with the name of "Peasant Nobles!" Think you the heart that's stirring here can brook, While all the young nobility around Are reaping honour under Hapsburg's banner, That I should loiter, in inglorious ease, Here on the heritage my fathers left, And, in the dull routine of vulgar toil, Lose all life's glorious spring? In other lands Great deeds are done. A world of fair renown Beyond these mountains stirs in martial pomp. My helm and shield are rusting in the hall; The martial trumpet's spirit-stirring blast, The herald's call, inviting to the lists, Rouse not

the echoes of these vales, where nought Save cowherd's horn and cattle bell is heard, In one unvarying dull monotony.

ATTING. Deluded boy, seduced by empty show! Despise the land that gave thee birth! Ashamed Of the good ancient customs of thy sires! The day will come, when thou, with burning tears, Wilt long for home, and for thy native hills, And that dear melody of tuneful herds, Which now, in proud disgust, thou dost despise! A day when wistful pangs shall shake thy heart, Hearing their music in a foreign land. Oh! potent is the spell that binds to home! No, no, the cold, false world is not for thee. At the proud court, with thy true heart, thou wilt For ever feel a stranger among strangers. The world asks virtues of far other stamp Than thou hast learned within these simple vales. But go—go thither,—barter thy free soul, Take land in fief, be minion to a prince, Where thou might'st be lord paramount, and prince Of all thine own unburden'd heritage! O, Uly, Uly, stay among thy people! Go not to Altdorf. Oh, abandon not The sacred cause of thy wrong'd native land! I am the last of all my race. My name Ends with me. Yonder hang my helm and shield; They will be buried with me in the grave.[*] And must I think, when yielding up my breath, That thou but wait'st the closing of mine eyes, To stoop thy knee to this new feudal court, And take in vassalage from Austria's hands The noble lands, which I from God received, Free and unfetter'd as the mountain air!

[*] According to the custom, by which, when the last male descendant of a noble family died, his sword, helmet, and shield were buried with him.

RUD. 'Tis vain for us to strive against the king. The world pertains to him:—shall we alone, In mad presumptuous obstinacy, strive To break that mighty chain of lands, which he Hath drawn around us with his giant grasp? His are the markets, his the courts,—his, too, The highways; nay, the very carrier's horse, That traffics on the Gotthardt, pays him toll. By his dominions, as within a net, We are enclosed, and girded round about. And will the Empire shield us? Say, can it Protect itself 'gainst

Austria's growing power? To God, and not to emperors must we look! What store can on their promises be placed, When they, to meet their own necessities, Can pawn, and even alienate the towns That flee for shelter 'neath the Eagle's wings?[*] No, uncle! It is wise and wholesome prudence, In times like these, when faction's all abroad, To vow attachment to some mighty chief. The imperial crown's transferred from line to line.[+] It has no memory for faithful service: But to secure the favour of these great Hereditary masters, were to sow Seed for a future harvest.

[*] This frequently occurred. But in the event of an imperial city being mortgaged for the purpose of raising money, it lost its freedom, and was considered as put out of the realm.

[+] An allusion to the circumstance of the Imperial Crown not being hereditary, but conferred by election on one of the Counts of the Empire.

ATTING. Art so wise? Wilt thou see clearer than thy noble sires, Who battled for fair freedom's priceless gem, With life, and fortune, and heroic arm? Sail down the lake to Lucerne, there inquire, How Austria's thraldom weighs the Cantons down. Soon she will come to count our sheep, our cattle, To portion out the Alps, e'en to their peaks, And in our own free woods to hinder us From striking down the eagle or the stag; To set her tolls on every bridge and gate, Impoverish us, to swell her lust of sway, And drain our dearest blood to feed her wars. No, if our blood must flow, let it be shed In our own cause! We purchase liberty More cheaply far than bondage.

RUD. What can we, A shepherd race, against great Albert's hosts?

ATTING. Learn, foolish boy, to know this shepherd race! I know them, I have led them on in fight,— I saw them in the battle at Favenz. What! Austria try, forsooth, to force on us A yoke we are determined not to bear! Oh, learn to feel from what a stock thou'rt sprung; Cast not, for tinsel trash and idle show, The precious jewel of thy worth away, To be the chieftain of a free-born race, Bound to thee only by their unbought love, Ready to stand—to fight—to die with thee, Be that thy pride, be that

thy noblest boast! Knit to thy heart the ties of kindred—home— Cling to the land, the dear land of thy sires, Grapple to that with thy whole heart and soul! Thy power is rooted deep and strongly here, But in yon stranger world thou'lt stand alone, A trembling reed beat down by every blast. Oh come! 'tis long since we have seen thee, Uly! Tarry but this one day. Only to-day! Go not to Altdorf. Wilt thou? Not to-day! For this one day, bestow thee on thy friends.

[Takes his hand.]

RUD. I gave my word. Unhand me! I am bound.

ATTING. (drops his hand and says sternly). Bound, didst thou say? Oh yes, unhappy boy, Thou art indeed. But not by word or oath. 'Tis by the silken mesh of love thou'rt bound.

[Rudenz turns away.]

Ah, hide thee, as thou wilt. 'Tis she, I know, Bertha of Bruneck, draws thee to the court; 'Tis she that chains thee to the Emperor's service. Thou think'st to win the noble knightly maid By thy apostasy. Be not deceived. She is held out before thee as a lure; But never meant for innocence like thine.

RUD. No more, I've heard enough. So fare you well.

[Exit.]

ATTING. Stay, Uly! Stay! Rash boy, he's gone! I can Nor hold him back, nor save him from destruction. And so the Wolfshot has deserted us;— Others will follow his example soon. This foreign witchery, sweeping o'er our hills, Tears with its potent spell our youth away. O luckless hour, when men and manners strange Into these calm and happy valleys came, To warp our primitive and guileless ways! The new is pressing on with might. The old, The good, the simple, all flee fast away. New times come on. A race is springing up, That think not as their fathers thought before! What do I hear? All, all are in the grave With whom erewhile I moved, and held converse; My age has long been laid beneath the sod; Happy the man, who may not live to see

What shall be done by those that follow me!

SCENE II.

A meadow surrounded by high rocks and wooded ground. On the rocks are tracks, with rails and ladders, by which the peasants are afterwards seen descending. In the back-ground the lake is observed, and over it a moon rainbow in the early part of the scene. The prospect is closed by lofty mountains, with glaciers rising behind them. The stage is dark, but the lake and glaciers glisten in the moonlight.

Melchthal, Baumgarten, Winkelried, Meyer von Sarnen, Burkhart am Buhel, Arnold von Sewa, Klaus von der Flue, and four other peasants, all armed.

MELCHTHAL (behind the scenes). The mountain pass is open. Follow me! I see the rock, and little cross upon it: This is the spot; here is the Rootli.

[They enter with torches.]

WINK. Hark!

SEWA. The coast is clear.

MEYER. None of our comrades come? We are the first, we Unterwaldeners.

MELCH. How far is't i' the night?

BAUM. The beacon watch Upon the Selisberg has just called two.

[A bell is heard at a distance.]

MEYER. Hush! Hark!

BUHEL. The forest chapel's matin bell Chimes clearly o'er the lake from Switzerland.

VON F. The air is clear, and bears the sound so far.

MELCH. Go, you and you, and light some broken boughs, Let's bid them welcome with a cheerful blaze.

[Two peasants exeunt.]

SEWA. The moon shines fair to-night. Beneath its beams The lake reposes, bright as burnish'd steel.

BUHEL. They'll have an easy passage.

WINK. (pointing to the lake). Ha! look there! Do you see nothing?

MEYER. Ay, indeed, I do! A rainbow in the middle of the night.

MELCH. Formed by the bright reflection of the moon!

VON F. A sign most strange and wonderful, indeed! Many there be, who ne'er have seen the like.

SEWA. 'Tis doubled, see, a paler one above!

BAUM. A boat is gliding yonder right beneath it.

MELCH. That must be Werner Stauffacher! I knew The worthy patriot would not tarry long.

[Goes with Baumgarten towards the shore.]

MEYER. The Uri men are like to be the last.

BUHEL. They're forced to take a winding circuit through The mountains; for the Viceroy's spies are out.

[In the meanwhile the two peasants have kindled a fire in the centre of the stage.]

MELCH. (on the shore). Who's there? The word?

STAUFF. (from below). Friends of the country.

[All retire up the stage, towards the party landing from the boat. Enter Stauffacher, Itel Reding, Hans auf der Mauer, Jorg im Hofe, Conrad Hunn, Ulrich der Schmidt, Jost von Weiler, and three other peasants, armed.

ALL. Welcome!

[While the rest remain behind exchanging greetings, Melchthal comes forward with Stauffacher.]

MELCH. Oh, worthy Stauffacher, I've look'd but now On him, who could not look on me again, I've laid my hands upon his rayless eyes, And on their vacant orbits sworn a vow Of vengeance, only to be cool'd in blood.

STAUFF. Speak not of vengeance. We are here, to meet The threatened evil, not to avenge the past. Now tell me what you've done, and what secured, To aid the common cause in Unterwald. How stand the peasantry disposed, and how Yourself escaped the wiles of treachery?

MELCH. Through the Surenen's fearful mountain chain, Where dreary ice-fields stretch on every side, And sound is none, save the hoarse vulture's cry, I reach'd the Alpine pasture, where the herds From Uri and from Engelberg resort, And turn their cattle forth to graze in common. Still as I went along, I slaked my thirst With the coarse oozings of the glacier heights that thro' the crevices come foaming down, And turned to rest me in the herdsmen's cots, Where I was host and guest, until I gain'd The cheerful homes and social haunts of men. Already through these distant vales had spread The rumour of this last atrocity; And wheresoe'er I went, at every door, Kind words saluted me and gentle looks. I found these simple spirits all in arms Against our ruler's tyrannous encroachments. For as their Alps through each succeeding year Yield the same roots,—their streams flow ever on In the same channels,—nay, the clouds and winds The selfsame course unalterably pursue, So have old customs there, from sire to son, Been handed down, unchanging and unchanged; Nor will they brook to swerve or turn aside From the fixed even tenor of their life. With grasp of their hard hands they welcomed me,— Took from the walls their rusty falchions down,— And from their eyes the soul of valour flash'd With joyful lustre, as I spoke those names, Sacred to every peasant in the mountains, Your own and Walter Furst's. Whate'er your voice Should dictate as the right, they swore to do; And you they swore to follow e'en to death. So sped I on from house to house, secure In the guest's sacred privilege;—and when I reached at last the valley of my home, Where dwell my kinsmen, scatter'd far and near— And when I found my

father, stript and blind, Upon the stranger's straw, fed by the alms Of charity—

STAUFF. Great Heaven!

MELCH. Yet wept I not! No—not in weak and unavailing tears Spent I the force of my fierce burning anguish; Deep in my bosom, like some precious treasure, I lock'd it fast, and thought on deeds alone. Through every winding of the hills I crept,— No valley so remote but I explored it; Nay, at the very glacier's ice-clad base, I sought and found the homes of living men; And still, where'er my wandering footsteps turn'd, The selfsame hatred of these tyrants met me. For even there, at vegetation's verge, Where the numb'd earth is barren of all fruits, Their grasping hands had been for plunder thrust. Into the hearts of all this honest race, The story of my wrongs struck deep, and now They, to a man, are ours; both heart and hand.

STAUFF. Great things, indeed, you've wrought in little time.

MELCH. I did still more than this. The fortresses, Rossberg and Sarnen, are the country's dread; For from behind their adamantine walls The foe, like eagle from his eyrie, swoops, And, safe himself, spreads havoc o'er the land. With my own eyes I wish'd to weigh its strength, So went to Sarnen, and explored the castle.

STAUFF. How! Venture even into the tiger's den?

MELCH. Disguised in pilgrim's weeds I entered it; I saw the Viceroy feasting at his board— Judge if I'm master of myself or no! I saw the tyrant, and I slew him not!

STAUFF. Fortune, indeed, upon your boldness smiled.

[Meanwhile the others have arrived and join Melchthal and Stauffacher.]

Yet tell me now, I pray, who are the friends, The worthy men, who came along with you? Make me acquainted with them, that we may Speak frankly, man to man, and heart to heart.

MEYER. In the three Cantons, who, sir, knows not you? Meyer of Sarnen is my name; and this Is Struth of Winkelried, my sister's son.

STAUFF. No unknown name. A Winkelried it was, Who slew the dragon in the fen at Weiler, And lost his life in the encounter, too.

WINK. That, Master Stauffacher, was my grandfather.

MELCH. (pointing to two peasants). These two are men who till the cloister lands Of Engelberg, and live behind the forest. You'll not think ill of them, because they're serfs, And sit not free upon the soil, like us. They love the land, and bear a good repute.

STAUFF. (to them). Give me your hands. He has good cause for thanks, That to no man his body's service owes. But worth is worth, no matter where 'tis found.

HUNN. That is Herr Reding, sir, our old Landamman.

MEYER. I know him well. I am at law with him About a piece of ancient heritage. Herr Reding, we are enemies in court, Here we are one.

[Shakes his hand.]

STAUFF. That's well and bravely said.

WINK. Listen! They come. The horn of Uri! Hark!

[On the right and left armed men are seen descending the rocks with torches.]

MAUER. Look, is not that the holy man of God? A worthy priest! The terrors of the night, And the way's pains and perils scare not him, A faithful shepherd caring for his flock.

BAUM. The Sacrist follows him, and Walter Furst. But where is Tell? I do not see him there.

[Walter Furst, Rosselmann the Pastor, Petermann the Sacrist, Kuoni the Shepherd, Werni the Huntsman, Ruodi the Fisherman, and five other countrymen, thirty-three in all, advance and take their places round the fire.]

FURST. Thus must we, on the soil our fathers left us, Creep forth by stealth to meet like murderers, And in the night, that should her mantle lend Only to crime and

black conspiracy, Assert our own good rights, which yet are clear As is the radiance of the noonday sun.

MELCH. So be it. What is hatch'd in gloom of night Shall free and boldly meet the morning light.

ROSSEL. Confederates! Listen to the words which God Inspires my heart withal. Here we are met, To represent the general weal. In us Are all the people of the land convened. Then let us hold the Diet, as of old, And as we're wont in peaceful times to do. The time's necessity be our excuse, If there be aught informal in this meeting. Still, wheresoe'er men strike for justice, there Is God, and now beneath His heav'n we stand.

STAUFF. 'Tis well advised.—Let us, then, hold the Diet, According to our ancient usages.— Though it be night, there's sunshine in our cause.

MELCH. Few though our numbers be, the hearts are here Of the whole people; here the BEST are met.

HUNN. The ancient books may not be near at hand, Yet are they graven in our inmost hearts.

ROSSEL. 'Tis well. And now, then, let a ring be formed, And plant the swords of power within the ground.[*]

[*] It was the custom at the Meetings of the Landes Gemeinde, or Diet, to set swords upright in the ground as emblems of authority.

MAUER. Let the Landamman step into his place, And by his side his secretaries stand.

SACRIST. There are three Cantons here. Which hath the right To give the head to the united Council? Schwytz may contest that dignity with Uri, We Unterwald'ners enter not the field.

MELCH. We stand aside. We are but suppliants here, Invoking aid from our more

potent friends.

STAUFF. Let Uri have the sword. Her banner takes, In battle, the precedence of our own.

FURST. Schwytz, then, must share the honour of the sword; For she's the honoured ancestor of all.

ROSSEL. Let me arrange this generous controversy. Uri shall lead in battle—Schwytz in Council.

FURST. (gives Stauffacher his hand). Then take your place.

STAUFF. Not I. Some older man.

HOFE. Ulrich, the smith, is the most aged here.

MAUER. A worthy man, but not a freeman; no!— No bondman can be judge in Switzerland.

STAUFF. Is not Herr Reding here, our old Landamman? Where can we find a worthier man than he?

FURST. Let him be Amman and the Diet's chief! You that agree with me, hold up your hands!

[All hold up their right hands.]

REDING. (stepping into the center). I cannot lay my hands upon the books; But by yon everlasting stars I swear, Never to swerve from justice and the right.

[The two swords are placed before him, and a circle formed; Schwytz in the centre, Uri on his right, Unterwald on his left.]

REDING. (resting on his battle sword). Why, at the hour when spirits walks the earth, Meet the three Cantons of the mountains here, Upon the lake's inhospitable shore? What may the purport be of this new league We here contract beneath the starry heaven?

STAUFF. (entering the circle). 'Tis no new league that here we now contract, But

one fathers framed, in ancient times, We purpose to renew! For know, confederates, Though mountain ridge and lake divide our bounds, And each Canton by its own laws is ruled, Yet are we but one race, born of one blood, And all are children of one common home.

WINK. Is then the burden of our legends true, That we came hither from a distant land? Oh, tell us what you know, that our new league May reap fresh vigour from the leagues of old.

STAUFF. Hear, then, what aged herdsmen tell. There dwelt A mighty people in the land that lies Back to the north. The scourge of famine came; And in this strait 'twas publicly resolved, That each tenth man, on whom the lot might fall, Should leave the country. They obey'd—and forth, With loud lamentings, men and women went, A mighty host; and to the south moved on. Cutting their way through Germany by the sword, Until they gained these pine-clad hills of ours; Nor stopp'd they ever on their forward course, Till at the shaggy dell they halted, where The Muta flows through its luxuriant meads. No trace of human creature met their eye, Save one poor hut upon the desert shore, Where dwelt a lonely man, and kept the ferry. A tempest raged—the lake rose mountains high And barr'd their further progress. Thereupon They view'd the country—found it rich in wood, Discover'd goodly springs, and felt as they Were in their own dear native land once more. Then they resolved to settle on the spot; Erected there the ancient town of Schwytz; And many a day of toil had they to clear The tangled brake and forest's spreading roots. Meanwhile their numbers grew, the soil became Unequal to sustain them, and they cross'd To the black mountain, far as Weissland, where, Conceal'd behind eternal walls of ice, Another people speak another tongue. They built the village Stanz, beside the Kernwald; The village Altdorf, in the vale of Reuss; Yet, ever mindful of their parent stem, The men of Schywtz, from all the stranger race, That since that time have settled in the land, Each other recognize. Their hearts still know, And beat fraternally to kindred blood.

[Extends his hand right and left.]

MAUER. Ay, we are all one heart, one blood, one race!

ALL (joining hands). We are one people, and will act as one.

STAUFF. The nations round us bear a foreign yoke; For they have to the conqueror succumbed. Nay, e'en within our frontiers may be found Some, that owe villein service to a lord, A race of bonded serfs from sire to son. But we, the genuine race of ancient Swiss, Have kept our freedom from the first till now. Never to princes have we bow'd the knee; Freely we sought protection of the Empire.

ROSSEL. Freely we sought it—freely it was given. 'Tis so set down in Emperor Frederick's charter.

STAUFF. For the most free have still some feudal lord There must be still a chief, a judge supreme, To whom appeal may lie, in case of strife. And therefore was it, that our sires allow'd, For what they had recover'd from the waste This honour to the Emperor, the lord Of all the German and Italian soil; And, like the other free men of his realm, Engaged to aid him with their swords in war; The free man's duty this alone should be, To guard the Empire that keeps guard for him.

MELCH. He's but a slave that would acknowledge more.

STAUFF. They followed, when the Heribann[*] went forth, The imperial standard, and they fought its battles! To Italy they march'd in arms, to place The Caesars' crown upon the Emperor's head. But still at home they ruled themselves in peace, By their own laws and ancient usages. The Emperor's only right was to adjudge The penalty of death; he therefore named Some mighty noble as his delegate, That had no stake or interest in the land, Who was call'd in, when doom was to be pass'd, And, in the face of day, pronounced decree, Clear and distinctly, fearing no man's hate. What traces here, that we are bondsmen? Speak, If there be any can gainsay my words!

[*] The Heribann was a muster of warriors similar to the /arriere ban/ of France.

HOFE. No! You have spoken but the simple truth; We never stoop'd beneath a tyrant's yoke.

STAUFF. Even to the Emperor we did not submit, When he gave judgment 'gainst us for the church; For when the Abbey of Einsiedlen claimed The Alp our fathers and ourselves had grazed, And showed an ancient charter, which bestowed The land on them as being ownerless— For our existence there had been concealed— What was our answer? This: "The grant is void. No Emperor can bestow what is our own: And if the Empire shall deny our rights, We can, within our mountains, right ourselves!" Thus spake our fathers! And shall we endure The shame and infamy of this new yoke, And from the vassal brook what never king Dared, in his plenitude of power, attempt? This soil we have created for ourselves, By the hard labour of our hands; we've changed The giant forest, that was erst the haunt Of savage bears, into a home for man; Extirpated the dragon's brood, that wont To rise, distent with venom, from the swamps; Rent the thick misty canopy that hung Its blighting vapours on the dreary waste; Blasted the solid rock; across the chasm Thrown the firm bridge for the wayfaring man. By the possession of a thousand years The soil is ours. And shall an alien lord, Himself a vassal, dare to venture here, Insult us by our own hearth fires,—attempt To forge the chains of bondage for our hands, And do us shame on our own proper soil? Is there no help against such wrong as this?

[Great sensation among the people.]

Yes! there's a limit to the despot's power! When the oppress'd for justice looks in vain, When his sore burden may no more be borne, With fearless heart he makes appeal to Heaven, And thence brings down his everlasting rights, Which there abide, inalienably his, And indestructible as are the stars. Nature's primaeval state returns again, Where man stands hostile to his fellow man; And if all other means shall fail his need, One last resource remains—his own good sword. Our dearest treasures call to us for aid, Against the oppressor's violence; we stand For country, home, for

wives, for children here!

ALL (clashing their swords). Here stand we for our homes, our wives, and children.

ROSSEL. (stepping into the circle). Bethink ye well, before ye draw the sword. Some peaceful compromise may yet be made; Speak but one word, and at your feet you'll see The men who now oppress you. Take the terms That have been often tendered you; renounce The Empire, and to Austria swear allegiance!

MAUER. What says the priest? To Austria allegiance?

BUHEL. Hearken not to him!

WINK. 'Tis a traitor's counsel, His country's foe!

REDING. Peace, peace, confederates!

SEWA. Homage to Austria, after wrongs like these!

FLUE. Shall Austria extort from us by force What we denied to kindness and entreaty?

MEYER. Then should we all be slaves, deservedly.

MAUER. Yes! Let him forfeit all a Switzer's rights, Who talks of yielding thus to Austria's yoke! I stand on this, Landamman. Let this be The foremost of our laws!

MELCH. Even so! Whoe'er Shall talk of bearing Austria's yoke, let him Of all his rights and honours be despoiled, No man thenceforth receive him at his hearth!

ALL (raising their right hands). Agreed! Be this the law!

REDING. (After a pause). The law it is.

ROSSEL. Now you are free—this law hath made you free. Never shall Austria obtain by force What she has fail'd to gain by friendly suit.

WEIL. On with the order of the day! Proceed!

REDING. Confederates! Have all gentler means been tried? Perchance the Emp'ror knows not of our wrongs, It may not be his will we suffer thus: Were it not well to

make one last attempt, And lay our grievances before the throne, Ere we unsheath the sword? Force is at best A fearful thing e'en in a righteous cause; God only helps, when man can help no more.

STAUFF. (to Conrad Hunn). Here you can give us information. Speak!

HUNN. I was at Rheinfeld, at the Emperor's Court, Deputed by the Cantons to complain Of the oppressions of these governors, And of our liberties the charter claim, Which each new king till now has ratified. I found the envoys there of many a town, From Suabia and the valley of the Rhine, Who all received their parchments as they wish'd, And straight went home again with merry heart. But me, your envoy, they to the Council sent, Where I with empty cheer was soon dismiss'd: "The Emperor at present was engaged; Some other time he would attend to us!" I turn'd away, and passing through the hall, With heavy heart, in a recess I saw The Grand Duke John[*] in tears, and by his side The noble lords of Wart and Tegerfeld, Who beckon'd me, and said, "Redress yourselves. Expect not justice from the Emperor. Does he not plunder his own brother's child, And keep from him his just inheritance?" The Duke claims his maternal property, Urging he's now of age, and 'tis full time, That he should rule his people and estates; What is the answer made to him? The King Places a chaplet on his head; "Behold The fitting ornament," he cries, "of youth!"

[*] The Duke of Suabia, who soon afterwards assassinated his uncle, for withholding his patrimony from him.

MAUER. You hear. Expect not from the Emperor Or right or justice! Then redress yourselves!

REDING. No other course is left us. Now, advise What plan most likely to ensure success.

FURST. To shake a thraldom off that we abhor, To keep our ancient rights inviolate, As we received them from our fathers,—this, Not lawless innovation, is our aim. Let

Caesar still retain what is his due; And he that is a vassal, let him pay The service he is sworn to faithfully.

MEYER. I hold my land of Austria in fief.

FURST. Continue, then, to pay your feudal dues.

WEIL. I'm tenant of the lords of Rappersweil.

FURST. Continue, then, to pay them rent and tithe.

ROSSEL. Of Zurich's Abbess humble vassal I.

FURST. Give to the cloister, what the cloister claims.

STAUFF. The Empire only is my feudal lord.

FURST. What needs must be, we'll do, but nothing more. We'll drive these tyrants and their minions hence, And raze their towering strongholds to the ground, Yet shed, if possible, no drop of blood, Let the Emperor see that we were driven to cast The sacred duties of respect away; And when he finds we keep within our bounds, His wrath, belike, may yield to policy; For truly is that nation to be fear'd, That, arms in hand, is temperate in its wrath.

REDING. But prithee tell us how may this be done? The enemy is arm'd as well as we, And, rest assured, he will not yield in peace.

STAUFF. He will, whene'er he sees us up in arms; We shall surprise him, ere he is prepared.

MEYER. Easily said, but not so easily done. Two strongholds dominate the country—they Protect the foe, and should the King invade us, Our task would then be dangerous, indeed. Rossberg and Sarnen both must be secured, Before a sword is drawn in either Canton.

STAUFF. Should we delay, the foe would soon be warned; We are too numerous for secrecy.

MEYER. There is no traitor in the Forest States.

ROSSEL. But even zeal may heedlessly betray.

FURST. Delay it longer, and the keep at Altdorf Will be complete,—the governor secure.

MEYER. You think but of yourselves.

SACRIS. You are unjust!

MEYER. Unjust! said you? Dares Uri taunt us so?

READING. Peace, on your oath!

SACRIS. If Schwytz be leagued with Uri, Why, then, indeed, we must perforce be dumb.

READING. And let me tell you, in the Diet's name, Your hasty spirit much disturbs the peace. Stand we not all for the same common cause?

WINK. What, if till Christmas we delay? 'Tis then The custom for the serfs to throng the castle, Bringing the Governor their annual gifts. Thus may some ten or twelve selected men Assemble unobserved, within its walls. Bearing about their persons pikes of steel, Which may be quickly mounted upon staves, For arms are not admitted to the fort. The rest can fill the neighb'ring wood, prepared To sally forth upon a trumpet's blast, Soon as their comrades have secured the gate; And thus the castle will with ease be ours.

MELCH. The Rossberg I will undertake to scale. I have a sweetheart in the garrison, Whom with some tender words I could persuade To lower me at night a hempen ladder. Once up, my friends will not be long behind.

READING. Are all resolved in favor of delay?

[The majority raise their hands.]

STAUFF. (counting them). Twenty to twelve is the majority.

FURST. If on the appointed day the castles fall, From mountain on to mountain we shall speed The fiery signal: in the capital Of every Canton quickly rouse the

Landsturm.[*] Then, when these tyrants see our martial front, Believe me, they will never make so bold As risk the conflict, but will gladly take Safe conduct forth beyond our boundaries.

[*] A sort of national militia.

STAUFF. Not so with Gessler. He will make a stand. Surrounded with his dread array of horse, Blood will be shed before he quits the field, And even expell'd he'd still be terrible. 'Tis hard, nay, dangerous, to spare his life.

BAUM. Place me where'er a life is to be lost; I owe my life to Tell, and cheerfully Will pledge it for my country. I have clear'd My honour, and my heart is now at rest.

REDING. Counsel will come with circumstance. Be patient! Something must still be to the moment left. Yet, while by night we hold our Diet here, The morning, see, has on the mountain tops Kindled her glowing beacon. Let us part, Ere the broad sun surprise us.

FURST. Do not fear. The night wanes slowly from these vales of ours.

[All have involuntarily taken off their caps, and contemplate the breaking of day, absorbed in silence.]

ROSSEL. By this fair light which greeteth us, before Those other nations, that, beneath us far, In noisome cities pent, draw painful breath, Swear we the oath of our confederacy! A band of brothers true we swear to be, Never to part in danger or in death!

[They repeat his words with three fingers raised.]

We swear we will be free as were our sires, And sooner die than live in slavery!

[All repeat as before.]

We swear, to put our trust in God Most High, And not to quail before the might of man!

[All repeat as before, and embrace each other.]

STAUFF. Now every man pursue his several way Back to his friends, his kindred, and his home. Let the herd winter up his flock, and gain In secret friends for this great league of ours! What for a time must be endured, endure, And let the reckoning of the tyrants grow, Till the great day arrive when they shall pay The general and particular debt at once. Let every man control his own just rage, And nurse his vengeance for the public wrongs: For he whom selfish interests now engage Defrauds the general weal of what to it belongs.

[As they are going off in profound silence, in three different directions, the orchestra plays a solemn air. The empty scene remains open for some time showing the rays of the sun rising over the Glaciers.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Court before Tell's house. Tell with an axe. Hedwig engaged in her domestic duties. Walter and William in the background, playing with a little cross-bow.

(Walter sings) With his cross-bow, and his quiver, The huntsman speeds his way, Over mountain, dale and river, At the dawning of the day. As the eagle, on wild pinion, Is the king in realms of air, So the hunter claims dominion Over crag and forest lair. Far as ever bow can carry, Thro' the trackless airy space, All he sees he makes his quarry, Soaring bird and beast of chase.

WILL. (runs forward). My string has snapped! Oh, father, mend it, do!

TELL. Not I; a true-born archer helps himself.

[Boys retire.]

HEDW. The boys begin to use the bow betimes.

TELL. 'Tis early practice only makes the master.

HEDW. Ah! Would to heaven they never learned the art!

TELL. But they shall learn it, wife, in all its points. Whoe'er would carve an independent way Through life, must learn to ward or plant a blow.

HEDW. Alas, alas! and they will never rest Contentedly at home.

TELL. No more can I! I was not framed by nature for a shepherd. My restless spirit ever yearns for change; I only feel the flush and joy of life, If I can start fresh quarry every day.

HEDW. Heedless the while of all your wife's alarms, As she sits watching through long hours at home. For my soul sinks with terror at the tales The servants tell about the risks you run, Whene'er we part, my trembling heart forebodes, That you will ne'er come back to me again. I see you on the frozen mountain steeps, Missing, perchance, your leap from crag to crag. I see the chamois, with a wild rebound, Drag you down with him o'er the precipice. I see the avalanche close o'er your head, The treacherous ice give way, and you sink down Intombed alive within its hideous gulf. Ah! in a hundred varying forms does death Pursue the Alpine huntsman on his course. That way of life can surely ne'er be blessed, Where life and limb are perill'd every hour.

TELL. The man that bears a quick and steady eye, And trusts in God, and his own lusty thews, Passes, with scarce a scar, through every danger. The mountain cannot awe the mountain child.

[Having finished his work, he lays aside his tools.]

And now, methinks, the door will hold awhile, Axe in the house oft saves the carpenter.

[Takes his cap.]

HEDW. Whither away?

TELL. To Altdorf, to your father.

HEDW. You have some dangerous enterprise in view? Confess!

TELL. Why think you so?

HEDW. Some scheme's on foot Against the governors. There was a Diet Held on the Rootli—that I know—and you Are one of the confederacy, I'm sure.

TELL. I was not there. Yet will I not hold back, Whene'er my country calls me to her aid.

HEDW. Wherever danger is, will you be placed. On you, as ever, will the burden fall.

TELL. Each man shall have the post that fits his powers.

HEDW. You took—ay, 'mid the thickest of the storm The man of Unterwald across the lake. 'Tis marvel you escaped. Had you no thought Of wife and children, then?

TELL. Dear wife, I had; And therefore saved the father for his children.

HEDW. To brave the lake in all its wrath! 'Twas not To put your trust in God! 'Twas tempting Him.

TELL. Little will he that's over cautious do.

HEDW. Yes, you've a kind and helping hand for all; But be in straits, and who will lend you aid?

TELL. God grant I ne'er may stand in need of it!

[Takes up his cross-bow and arrows.]

HEDW. Why take your cross-bow with you? leave it here.

TELL. I want my right hand, when I want my bow.

[The boys return.]

WALT. Where, father, are you going?

TELL. To grand-dad, boy— To Altdorf. Will you go?

WALT. Ay, that I will!

HEDW. The Viceroy's there just now. Go not to Altdorf!

TELL. He leaves to-day.

HEDW. Then let him first be gone, Cross not his path.—You know he bears us grudge.

TELL. His ill-will cannot greatly injure me. I do what's right, and care for no man's hate.

HEDW. 'Tis those who do what's right, whom most he hates.

TELL. Because he cannot reach them. Me, I ween, His knightship will be glad to leave in peace.

HEDW. Ay!—Are you sure of that?

TELL. Not long ago, As I was hunting through the wild ravines Of Shechenthal, untrod by mortal foot,— There, as I took my solitary way Along a shelving ledge of rocks, where 'twas Impossible to step on either side; For high above rose, like a giant wall, The precipice's side, and far below The Shechen thunder'd o'er its rifted bed;

[The boys press towards him, looking upon him with excited curiosity.]

There, face to face, I met the Viceroy. He Alone with me—and I myself alone— Mere man to man, and near us the abyss; And when his lordship had perused my face, And knew the man he had severely fined On some most trivial ground, not long before, And saw me, with my sturdy bow in hand, Come striding towards him, his cheek grew pale, His knees refused their office, and I thought He would have sunk against the mountain side. Then, touch'd with pity for him, I advanced, Respectfully, and said, "'Tis I, my lord." But ne'er a sound could he compel his lips To frame in answer. Only with his hand He beckoned me in silence to proceed. So I pass'd on, and sent his train to seek him.

HEDW. He trembled, then, before you? Woe the while You saw his weakness; that he'll ne'er forgive.

TELL. I shun him, therefore, and he'll not seek me.

HEDW. But stay away to-day. Go hunt instead!

TELL. What do you fear?

HEDW. I am uneasy. Stay!

TELL. Why thus distress yourself without a cause?

HEDW. Because there is no cause. Tell, Tell! stay here!

TELL. Dear wife, I gave my promise I would go.

HEDW. Must you,—then go. But leave the boys with me.

WALT. No, mother dear, I go with father, I.

HEDW. How, Walter! Will you leave your mother then?

WALT. I'll bring you pretty things from grandpapa.

[Exit with his father.]

WIL. Mother, I'll stay with you!

HEDW. (embracing him). Yes, yes! thou art My own dear child. Thou'rt all that's left to me.

[She goes to the gate of the court and looks anxiously after Tell and her son for a considerable time.]

SCENE II.

A retired part of the forest.—Brooks dashing in spray over the rocks.

Enter Bertha in a hunting dress. Immediately afterwards Rudenz.

BERTH. He follows me. Now, then, to speak my mind!

RUD. (entering hastily). At length, dear lady, we have met alone In this wild dell, with rocks on every side, No jealous eye can watch our interview. Now let my heart throw off this weary silence.

BERTH. But are you sure they will not follow us?

RUD. See, yonder goes the chase! Now, then, or never! I must avail me of this

precious chance,— Must hear my doom decided by thy lips, Though it should part me from thy side forever. Oh, do not arm that gentle face of thine With looks so stern and harsh! Who—who am I, That dare aspire so high, as unto thee? Fame hath not stamp'd me yet; nor may I take My place amid the courtly throng of knights, That, crown'd with glory's lustre, woo thy smiles. Nothing have I to offer, but a heart That overflows with truth and love for thee.

BERTH. (sternly and with severity). And dare you speak to me of love—of truth? You, that are faithless to your nearest ties! You, that are Austria's slave—bartered and sold To her—an alien, and your country's tyrant!

RUD. How! This reproach from thee! Whom do I seek, On Austria's side, my own beloved, but thee?

BERTH. Think you to find me in the traitor's ranks? Now, as I live, I'd rather give my hand To Gessler's self, all despot though he be, Than to the Switzer who forgets his birth, And stoops to be a tyrant's servile tool.

RUD. Oh Heaven, what words are these?

BERTH. Say! What can lie Nearer the good man's heart than friends and kindred? What dearer duty to a noble soul, Than to protect weak, suffering innocence, And vindicate the rights of the oppress'd? My very soul bleeds for your countrymen. I suffer with them, for I needs must love them; They are so gentle, yet so full of power; They draw my whole heart to them. Every day I look upon them with increased esteem. But you, whom nature and your knightly vow, Have given them as their natural protector, Yet who desert them and abet their foes In forging shackles for your native land, You—you incense and wound me to the core. It tries me to the utmost not to hate you.

RUD. Is not my country's welfare all my wish? What seek I for her, but to purchase peace 'Neath Austria's potent sceptre?

BERTH. Bondage, rather! You would drive Freedom from the last stronghold That

yet remains for her upon the earth. The people know their own true int'rests better: Their simple natures are not warp'd by show. But round your head a tangling net is wound.

RUD. Bertha, you hate me—you despise me!

BERTH. Nay! And if I did, 'twere better for my peace. But to see him despised and despicable,— The man whom one might love—

RUD. Oh Bertha! You Show me the pinnacle of heavenly bliss, Then, in a moment, hurl me to despair!

BERTH. No, no! the noble is not all extinct Within you. It but slumbers,—I will rouse it. It must have cost you many a fiery struggle To crush the virtues of your race within you. But, Heaven be praised, 'tis mightier than yourself, And you are noble in your own despite!

RUD. You trust me, then? Oh, Bertha, with thy love What might I not become!

BERTH. Be only that For which your own high nature destin'd you. Fill the position you were born to fill;— Stand by your people and your native land— And battle for your sacred rights!

RUD. Alas! How can I win you—how can you be mine, If I take arms against the Emperor? Will not your potent kinsmen interpose, To dictate the disposal of your hand?

BERTH. All my estates lie in the Forest Cantons; And I am free, when Switzerland is free.

RUD. Oh! what a prospect, Bertha, hast thou shown me!

BERTH. Hope not to win my hand by Austria's grace; Fain would they lay their grasp on my estates, To swell the vast domains which now they hold. The selfsame lust of conquest, that would rob You of your liberty, endangers mine. Oh, friend, I'm mark'd for sacrifice;—to be The guerdon of some parasite, perchance! They'll drag

me hence to the Imperial court, That hateful haunt of falsehood and intrigue, And marriage bonds I loathe await me there. Love, love alone—your love can rescue me.

RUD. And thou couldst be content, love, to live here; In my own native land to be my own? Oh Bertha, all the yearnings of my soul For this great world and its tumultuous strife, What were they, but a yearning after thee? In glory's path I sought for thee alone, And all my thirst of fame was only love. But if in this calm vale thou canst abide With me, and bid earth's pomps and pride adieu, Then is the goal of my ambition won; And the rough tide of the tempestuous world May dash and rave around these firm-set hills! No wandering wishes more have I to send Forth to the busy scene that stirs beyond. Then may these rocks, that girdle us, extend Their giant walls impenetrably round, And this sequestered happy vale alone Look up to heaven, and be my paradise!

BERTH. Now art thou all my fancy dream'd of thee. My trust has not been given to thee in vain.

RUD. Away, ye idle phantoms of my folly; In mine own home I'll find my happiness. Here, where the gladsome boy to manhood grew, Where ev'ry brook, and tree, and mountain peak, Teems with remembrances of happy hours, In mine own native land thou wilt be mine. Ah, I have ever loved it well, I feel How poor without it were all earthly joys.

BERTH. Where should we look for happiness on earth, If not in this dear land of innocence? Here, where old truth hath its familiar home. Where fraud and guile are strangers, envy ne'er Shall dim the sparkling fountain of our bliss, And ever bright the hours shall o'er us glide. There do I see thee, in true manly worth, The foremost of the free and of thy peers, Revered with homage pure and unconstrain'd, Wielding a power that kings might envy thee.

RUD. And thee I see, thy sex's crowning gem, With thy sweet woman's grace and wakeful love, Building a heaven for me within my home, And, as the spring-time

scatters forth her flowers, Adorning with thy charms my path of life, And spreading joy and sunshine all around.

BERTH. And this it was, dear friend, that caused my grief, To see thee blast this life's supremest bliss With thine own hand. Ah! what had been my fate, Had I been forced to follow some proud lord, Some ruthless despot, to his gloomy keep! Here are no keeps, here are no bastion'd walls To part me from a people I can bless.

RUD. Yet, how to free myself; to loose the coils Which I have madly twined around my head?

BERTH. Tear them asunder with a man's resolve. Whate'er ensue, firm by thy people stand! It is thy post by birth.

[Hunting horns are heard in the distance.]

But hark! The chase! Farewell,—'tis needful we should part—away! Fight for thy land; thou fightest for thy love. One foe fills all our souls with dread; the blow That makes one free, emancipates us all.

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE III.

A meadow near Altdorf. Trees in the foreground. At the back of the stage a cap upon a pole. The prospect is bounded by the Bannberg, which is surmounted by a snow-capped mountain.

Friesshardt and Leuthold on guard

FRIESS. We keep our watch in vain. Zounds! not a soul Will pass, and do obeisance to the cap. But yesterday the place swarm'd like a fair; Now the old green looks like a desert, quite, Since yonder scarecrow hung upon the pole.

LEUTH. Only the vilest rabble show themselves, And wave their tattered caps in mockery at us. All honest citizens would sooner make A weary circuit over half the town, Than bend their backs before our master's cap.

FRIESS. They were obliged to pass this way at noon, As they were coming from the Council House. I counted then upon a famous catch, For no one thought of bowing to the cap, But Rosselmann, the priest, was even with me: Coming just then from some sick man, he takes His stand before the pole,—lifts up the Host— The Sacrist, too, must tinkle with his bell, When down they dropp'd on knee—myself and all— In reverence to the Host, but not the cap.

LEUTH. Hark ye, companion, I've a shrewd suspicion, Our post's no better than the pillory. It is a burning shame, a trooper should Stand sentinel before an empty cap, And every honest fellow must despise us. To do obeisance to a cap, too! Faith, I never heard an order so absurd!

FRIESS. Why not, an't please you, to an empty cap? You've duck'd, I'm sure, to many an empty sconce.

[Hildegard, Mechthild, and Elsbeth enter with their children, and station themselves around the pole.]

LEUTH. And you are a time—serving sneak, that takes Delight in bringing honest folks to harm. For my part, he that likes may pass the cap: I'll shut my eyes and take no note of him.

MECH. There hangs the Viceroy! Your obeisance, children!

ELS. I would to God he'd go, and leave his cap! The country would be none the worse for it.

FRIESS. (driving them away). Out of the way! Confounded pack of gossips! Who sent for you? Go, send your husbands here, If they have courage to defy the order.

[Tell enters with his cross-bow, leading his son Walter by the hand. They pass the hat without noticing it, and advance to the front of the stage.]

WALT. (pointing to the Bannberg). Father, is't true, that on the mountain there The trees, if wounded with a hatchet, bleed?

TELL. Who says so, boy?

WALT. The master herdsman, father! He tells us there's a charm upon the trees, And if a man shall injure them, the hand That struck the blow will grow from out the grave.

TELL. There is a charm about them—that's the truth. Dost see those glaciers yonder—those white horns— That seem to melt away into the sky?

WALT. They are the peaks that thunder so at night, And send the avalanches down upon us.

TELL. They are; and Altdorf long ago had been Submerged beneath these avalanches' weight, Did not the forest there above the town Stand like a bulwark to arrest their fall.

WALT. (after musing a little). And are there countries with no mountains, father?

TELL. Yes, if we travel downwards from our heights, And keep descending where the rivers go, We reach a wide and level country, where Our mountain torrents brawl and foam no more, And fair large rivers glide serenely on. All quarters of the heaven may there be scann'd Without impediment. The corn grows there In broad and lovely fields, and all the land Is like a garden fair to look upon.

WALT. But, father, tell me, wherefore haste we not Away to this delightful land, instead Of toiling here, and struggling as we do?

TELL. The land is fair and bountiful as Heaven; But they who till it never may enjoy The fruits of what they sow.

WALT. Live they not free, As you do, on the land their fathers left them?

TELL. The fields are all the bishop's or the king's.

WALT. But they may freely hunt among the woods?

TELL. The game is all the monarch's—bird and beast.

WALT. But they, at least, may surely fish the streams?

TELL. Stream, lake, and sea, all to the king belong.

WALT. Who is this king, of whom they're so afraid?

TELL. He is the man who fosters and protects them.

WALT. Have they not courage to protect themselves?

TELL. The neighbour there dare not his neighbour trust.

WALT. I should want breathing room in such a land. I'd rather dwell beneath the avalanches.

TELL. 'Tis better, child, to have these glacier peaks Behind one's back, than evil-minded men!

[They are about to pass on.]

WALT. See, father, see the cap on yonder pole!

TELL. What is the cap to us? Come, let's begone.

[As he is going, Friesshardt, presenting his pike, stops him.]

FRIESS. Stand, I command you, in the Emperor's name!

TELL. (seizing the pike). What would ye? Wherefore do ye stop me thus?

FRIESS. You've broke the mandate, and with us must go.

LEUTH. You have not done obeisance to the cap.

TELL. Friend, let me go.

FRIESS. Away, away to prison!

WALT. Father to prison. Help!

[Calling to the side scene.]

This way, you men! Good people, help! They're dragging him to prison!

[Rosselmann the priest and the Sacristan, with three other men, enter.]

SACRIS. What's here amiss?

ROSSEL. Why do you seize this man?

FRIESS. He is an enemy of the King—a traitor.

TELL. (seizing him with violence). A traitor, I!

ROSSEL. Friend, thou art wrong. 'Tis Tell, An honest man, and worthy citizen.

WALT. (descries Furst, and runs up to him). Grandfather, help; they want to seize my father!

FRIESS. Away to prison!

FURST (running in). Stay, I offer bail. For God's sake, Tell, what is the matter here?

[Melchthal and Stauffacher enter.]

LEUTH. He has contemn'd the Viceroy's sovereign power, Refusing flatly to acknowledge it.

STAUFF. Has Tell done this?

MELCH. Villain, you know 'tis false!

LEUTH. He has not made obeisance to the cap.

FURST. And shall for this to prison? Come, my friend, Take my security, and let him go.

FRIESS. Keep your security for yourself—you'll need it. We only do our duty. Hence with him.

MELCH. (to the country people). This is too bad—shall we stand by and see Him dragged away before our very eyes?

SACRIS. We are the strongest. Friends, endure it not, Our countrymen will back us to a man.

FRIESS. Who dares resist the governor's commands?

OTHER THREE PEASANTS (running in). We'll help you. What's the matter? Down with them!

[Hildegard, Mechthild and Elsbeth return.]

TELL. Go, go, good people, I can help myself. Think you, had I a mind to use my strength, These pikes of theirs should daunt me?

MELCH. (to Friesshardt). Only try— Try from our midst to force him, if you dare.

FURST and STAUFF. Peace, peace, friends!

FRIESS. (loudly). Riot! Insurrection, ho!

[Hunting horns without.]

WOMEN. The Governor!

FRIESS. (raising his voice). Rebellion! Mutiny!

STAUFF. Roar till you burst, knave!

ROSSEL. and MELCH. Will you hold your tongue?

FRIESS. (calling still louder). Help, help, I say, the servants of the law!

FURST. The Viceroy here! Then we shall smart for this!

[Enter Gessler on horseback, with a falcon on his wrist; Rudolph der Harras, Bertha, and Rudenz, and a numerous train of armed attendants, who form a circle of lances round the whole stage.]

HAR. Room for the Viceroy!

GESSL. Drive the clowns apart. Why throng the people thus? Who calls for help?

[General silence.]

Who was it? I will know.

[Friesshardt steps forward.]

And who art thou? And why hast thou this man in custody?

[Gives his falcon to an attendant.]

FRIESS. Dread sir, I am a soldier of your guard. And station'd sentinel beside the cap; This man I apprehended in the act Of passing it without obeisance due, So as

you ordered, I arrested him, Whereon to rescue him the people tried.

GESSL. (after a pause). And do you, Tell, so lightly hold your King, And me, who act as his viceregent here, That you refuse obeisance to the cap, I hung aloft to test your loyalty? I read in this a disaffected spirit.

TELL. Pardon me, good my lord! The action sprung From inadvertence,—not from disrespect. Were I discreet, I were not Wilhelm Tell. Forgive me now—I'll not offend again.

GESSL. (after a pause). I hear, Tell, you're a master with the bow, From every rival bear the palm away.

WALT. That's very truth, sir! At a hundred yards He'll shoot an apple for you off the tree.

GESSL. Is that boy thine, Tell?

TELL. Yes, my gracious lord.

GESSL. Hast any more of them?

TELL. Two boys, my lord.

GESSL. And, of the two, which dost thou love the most?

TELL. Sir, both the boys are dear to me alike.

GESSL. Then, Tell, since at a hundred yards thou canst Bring down the apple from the tree, thou shalt Approve thy skill before me. Take thy bow— Thou hast it there at hand—make ready, then, To shoot an apple from the stripling's head! But take this counsel,—look well to thine aim, See, that thou hit'st the apple at the first, For, shouldst thou miss, thy head shall pay the forfeit.

[All give signs of horror.]

TELL. What monstrous thing, my lord, is this you ask? What! from the head of mine own child!—No, no! It cannot be, kind sir, you meant not that— God, in His grace, forbid! You could not ask A father seriously to do that thing!

GESSL. Thou art to shoot an apple from his head! I do desire—command it so.

TELL. What, I! Level my crossbow at the darling head Of mine own child? No—rather let me die!

GESSL. Or thou must shoot, or with thee dies the boy.

TELL. Shall I become the murderer of my child! You have no children, sir—you do not know The tender throbbings of a father's heart.

GESSL. How now, Tell, on a sudden so discreet? I had been told thou wert a visionary,— A wanderer from the paths of common men. Thou lov'st the marvellous. So have I now Cull'd out for thee a task of special daring. Another man might pause and hesitate;— Thou dashest at it, heart and soul, at once.

BERTH. Oh, do not jest, my lord, with these poor souls! See, how they tremble, and how pale they look, So little used are they to hear thee jest.

GESSL. Who tells thee that I jest?

[Grasping a branch above his head.]

Here is the apple. Room there, I say! And let him take his distance— Just eighty paces,—as the custom is,— Not an inch more or less! It was his boast, That at a hundred he could hit his man. Now, archer, to your task, and look you miss not!

HAR. Heavens! this grows serious—down, boy, on your knees, And beg the governor to spare your life.

FURST (aside to Melchthal, who can scarcely restrain his indignation). Command yourself,—be calm, I beg of you!

BERTHA (to the Governor). Let this suffice you, sir! It is inhuman To trifle with a father's anguish thus. Although this wretched man had forfeited Both life and limb for such a slight offence, Already has he suffer'd tenfold death. Send him away uninjured to his home; He'll know thee well in future; and this hour He and his children's children will remember.

GESSL. Open a way there—quick! Why this delay? Thy life is forfeited; I might dispatch thee, And see, I graciously repose thy fate Upon the skill of thine own practised hand. No cause has he to say his doom is harsh, Who's made the master of his destiny. Thou boastest thine unerring aim. 'Tis well! Now is the fitting time to show thy skill; The mark is worthy and the prize is great. To hit the bull's eye in the target;—that Can many another do as well as thou; But he, methinks, is master of his craft, Who can at all times on his skill rely, Nor lets his heart disturb or eye or hand.

FURST. My lord, we bow to your authority; But oh, let justice yield to mercy here. Take half my property, nay, take it all, But spare a father this unnatural doom!

WALT. Grandfather, do not kneel to that bad man! Say, where am I to stand? I do not fear; My father strikes the bird upon the wing, And will not miss now when 'twould harm his boy!

STAUFF. Does the child's innocence not touch your heart?

ROSSEL. Bethink you, sir, there is a God in heaven, To whom you must account for all your deeds.

GESSL. (pointing to the boy). Bind him to yonder lime tree!

WALT. What! Bind me? No, I will not be bound! I will be still. Still as a lamb—nor even draw my breath! But if you bind me, I can not be still. Then I shall writhe and struggle with my bonds.

HAR. But let your eyes at least be bandaged, boy!

WALT. And why my eyes? No! Do you think I fear An arrow from my father's hand? Not I! I'll wait it firmly, nor so much as wink! Quick, father, show them what thy bow can do. He doubts thy skill—he thinks to ruin us. Shoot then and hit, though but to spite the tyrant!

[He goes to the lime tree, and an apple is placed on his head.]

MELCH. (to the country people). What! Is this outrage to be perpetrated Before our

very eyes? Where is our oath?

STAUFF. Resist we cannot! Weapons we have none. And see the wood of lances round us! See!

MELCH. Oh! would to heaven that we had struck at once! God pardon those who counsell'd the delay!

GESSL. (to Tell). Now to your task! Men bear not arms for naught. To carry deadly tools is dangerous, And on the archer oft his shaft recoils. This right, these haughty peasant churls assume, Trenches upon their master's privileges: None should be armed, but those who bear command. It pleases you to carry bow and bolt;—Well,—be it so. I will prescribe the mark.

TELL. (bends the bow, and fixes the arrow). A lane there! Room!

STAUFF. What, Tell? You would—no, no! You shake—your hand's unsteady—your knees tremble.

TELL (letting the bow sink down). There's something swims before mine eyes!

WOMEN. Great Heaven!

TELL. Release me from this shot! Here is my heart!

[Tears open his breast.]

Summon your troopers—let them strike me down!

GESSL. 'Tis not thy life I want—I want the shot, Thy talent's universal! Nothing daunts thee! The rudder thou canst handle like the bow! No storms affright thee, when a life's at stake. Now, saviour, help thyself,—thou savest all!

[Tell stands fearfully agitated by contending emotions, his hands moving convulsively, and his eyes turning alternately to the Governor and Heaven. Suddenly he takes a second arrow from his quiver, and sticks it in his belt. The Governor notes all he does.]

WALT. (beneath the lime tree). Shoot, father, shoot! fear not!

TELL. It must be!

[Collects himself and levels the bow.]

RUD. (who all the while has been standing in a state of violent excitement, and has with difficulty restrained himself, advances). My lord, you will not urge this matter further; You will not. It was surely but a test. You've gained your object. Rigour push'd too far Is sure to miss its aim, however good, As snaps the bow that's all too straitly bent.

GESSL. Peace, till your counsel's ask'd for!

RUD. I will speak! Ay, and I dare! I reverence my king; But acts like these must make his name abhorr'd. He sanctions not this cruelty. I dare Avouch the fact. And you outstep your powers In handling thus my harmless countrymen.

GESSL. Ha! thou grow'st bold, methinks!

RUD. I have been dumb To all the oppressions I was doomed to see. I've closed mine eyes to shut them from my view, Bade my rebellious, swelling heart be still, And pent its struggles down within my breast. But to be silent longer, were to be A traitor to my king and country both.

BERTH. (casting herself between him and the Governor). Oh, Heavens! you but exasperate his rage!

RUD. My people I forsook—renounced my kindred— Broke all the ties of nature, that I might Attach myself to you. I madly thought That I should best advance the general weal By adding sinews to the Emperor's power. The scales have fallen from mine eyes—I see The fearful precipice on which I stand. You've led my youthful judgment far astray,— Deceived my honest heart. With best intent, I had well-nigh achiev'd my country's ruin.

GESSL. Audacious boy, this language to thy lord?

RUD. The Emperor is my lord, not you! I'm free. As you by birth, and I can cope

with you In every virtue that beseems a knight. And if you stood not here in that king's name, Which I respect e'en where 'tis most abused, I'd throw my gauntlet down, and you should give An answer to my gage in knightly sort. Ay, beckon to your troopers! Here I stand; But not like these

[Pointing to the people,]

—unarmed. I have a sword, And he that stirs one step—

STAUFF. (exclaims). The apple's down!

[While the attention of the crowd has been directed to the spot where Bertha had cast herself between Rudenz and Gessler, Tell has shot.]

ROSSEL. The boy's alive!

MANY VOICES. The apple has been struck!

[Walter Furst staggers and is about to fall. Bertha supports him.]

GESSL. (astonished). How? Has he shot? The madman!

BERTH. Worthy father! Pray you, compose yourself. The boy's alive.

WALT. (runs in with the apple). Here is the apple, father! Well I knew You would not harm your boy.

[Tell stands with his body bent forwards, as if still following the arrow. His bow drops from his hand. When he sees the boy advancing, he hastens to meet him with open arms, and, embracing him passionately, sinks down with him quite exhausted. All crowd round them deeply affected.]

BERTH. Oh, ye kind Heavens!

FURST (to father and son). My children, my dear children!

STAUFF. God be praised!

LEUTH. Almighty powers! That was a shot indeed! It will be talked of to the end of time.

HAR. This feat of Tell, the archer, will be told Long as these mountains stand upon their base.

[Hands the apple to Gessler.]

GESSL. By Heaven! the apple's cleft right through the core. It was a master shot, I must allow.

ROSSEL. The shot was good. But woe to him who drove The man to tempt his God by such a feat!

STAUFF. Cheer up, Tell, rise! You've nobly freed yourself, And now may go in quiet to your home.

ROSSEL. Come, to the mother let us bear her son!

[They are about to lead him off.]

GESSL. A word, Tell.

TELL. Sir, your pleasure?

GESSL. Thou didst place A second arrow in thy belt—nay, nay! I saw it well. Thy purpose with it? Speak!

TELL (confused). It is a custom with all archers, sir.

GESSL. No, Tell, I cannot let that answer pass. There was some other motive, well I know. Frankly and cheerfully confess the truth;— Whate'er it be, I promise thee thy life. Wherefore the second arrow?

TELL. Well, my lord, Since you have promised not to take my life, I will, without reserve, declare the truth.

[He draws the arrow from his belt, and fixes his eyes sternly upon the governor.]

If that my hand had struck my darling child, This second arrow I had aimed at you, And, be assured, I should not then have miss'd.

GESSL. Well, Tell, I promised thou shouldst have thy life; I gave my knightly word,

and I will keep it. Yet, as I know the malice of thy thoughts, I'll have thee carried hence, and safely penn'd, Where neither sun nor moon shall reach thine eyes. Thus from thy arrows I shall be secure. Seize on him, guards, and bind him!

[They bind him.]

STAUFF. How, my lord— How can you treat in such a way a man On whom God's hand has plainly been reveal'd?

GESSL. Well, let us see if it will save him twice! Remove him to my ship; I'll follow straight, At Kussnacht I will see him safely lodged.

ROSSEL. You dare not do't. Nor durst the Emperor's self So violate our dearest chartered rights.

GESSL. Where are they? Has the Emp'ror confirm'd them? He never has. And only by obedience May you that favour hope to win from him. You are all rebels 'gainst the Emp'ror's power,— And bear a desperate and rebellious spirit. I know you all—I see you through and through. Him do I single from amongst you now, But in his guilt you all participate. If you are wise, be silent and obey!

[Exit, followed by Bertha, Rudenz, Harras, and attendants. Friesshardt and Leuthold remain.]

FURST (in violent anguish). All's over now! He is resolved to bring Destruction on myself and all my house.

STAUFF. (to Tell). Oh, why did you provoke the tyrant's rage?

TELL. Let him be calm who feels the pangs I felt.

STAUFF. Alas! alas! Our every hope is gone. With you we all are fettered and enchain'd.

COUNTRY PEOPLE (surrounding Tell). Our last remaining comfort goes with you!

LEUTH. (approaching him). I'm sorry for you, Tell, but must obey.

TELL. Farewell!

WALT. (clinging to him in great agony). Oh, father, father, father dear!

TELL (pointing to Heaven). Thy father is on high—appeal to Him!

STAUFF. Have you no message, Tell, to send your wife?

TELL. (clasping the boy passionately to his breast). The boy's uninjured; God will succour me!

[Tears himself suddenly away, and follows the soldiers of the guard.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Eastern shore of the Lake of Lucerne; rugged and singularly shaped rocks close the prospect to the west. The lake is agitated, violent roaring and rushing of wind, with thunder and lightning at intervals.

Kunz of Gersau, Fisherman and Boy

KUNZ. I saw it with these eyes! Believe me, friend, It happen'd all precisely as I've said.

FISHER. How! Tell a prisoner, and to Kussnacht borne? The best man in the land, the bravest arm, Had we for liberty to strike a blow!

KUNZ. The Viceroy takes him up the lake in person: They were about to go on board, as I Started from Fluelen; but the gathering storm, That drove me here to land so suddenly, May well have hindered them from setting out.

FISHER. Our Tell in chains, and in the Viceroy's power! O, trust me, Gessler will entomb him, where He never more shall see the light of day; For Tell once free, the tyrant well might dread The just revenge of one so deeply wrong'd.

KUNZ. The old Landamman, too—von Attinghaus— They say, is lying at the point of death.

FISHER. Then the last anchor of our hopes gives way! He was the only man that

dared to raise His voice in favour of the people's rights.

KUNZ. The storm grows worse and worse. So, fare ye well! I'll go and seek out quarters in the village. There's not a chance of getting off to-day.

[Exit]

FISHER. Tell dragg'd to prison, and the Baron dead! Now, tyranny, exalt thy brazen front,— Throw every shame aside! Truth's voice is dumb! The eye that watch'd for us, in darkness closed, The arm that should have struck thee down, in chains!

BOY. 'Tis hailing hard—come, let us to the hut! This is no weather to be out in, father!

FISHER. Rage on, ye winds! Ye lightnings, flash your fires! Burst, ye swollen clouds! Ye cataracts of Heaven Descend, and drown the country! In the germ Destroy the generations yet unborn! Ye savage elements, be lords of all! Return, ye bears: ye ancient wolves, return To this wide howling waste! The land is yours. Who would live here, when liberty is gone?

BOY. Hark! How the wind whistles, and the whirlpool roars. I never saw a storm so fierce as this!

FISHER. To level at the head of his own child! Never had father such command before. And shall not Nature, rising in wild wrath, Revolt against the deed? I should not marvel, Though to the lake these rocks should bow their heads, Though yonder pinnacles, yon towers of ice, That, since creation's dawn, have known no thaw, Should, from their lofty summits, melt away,— Though yonder mountains, yon primeval cliffs, Should topple down, and a new deluge whelm Beneath its waves all living men's abodes!

[Bells heard.]

BOY. Hark, they are ringing on the mountain, yonder! They surely see some vessel in distress. And toll the bell that we may pray for it.

[Ascends a rock.]

FISHER. Woe to the bark that now pursues its course, Rock'd in the cradle of these storm-tost waves! Nor helm nor steersman here can aught avail; The storm is master. Man is like a ball, Toss'd 'twixt the winds and billows. Far or near, No haven offers him its friendly shelter! Without one ledge to grasp, the sheer smooth rocks Look down inhospitably on his despair, And only tender him their flinty breasts.

BOY (calling from above). Father, a ship: from Fluelen bearing down.

FISHER. Heaven pity the poor wretches! When the storm Is once entangled in this strait of ours, It rages like some savage beast of prey, Struggling against its cage's iron bars! Howling, it seeks an outlet—all in vain; For the rocks hedge it round on every side, Walling the narrow gorge as high as Heaven.

[He ascends a cliff.]

BOY. It is the Governor of Uri's ship; By its red poop I know it, and the flag.

FISHER. Judgments of Heaven! Yes, it is he himself, It is the Governor! Yonder he sails, And with him bears the burden of his crimes. The avenger's arm has not been slow to strike! Now over him he knows a mightier lord. These waves yield no obedience to his voice. These rocks bow not their heads before his cap. Boy, do not pray; stay not the Judge's arm!

BOY. I pray not for the Governor, I pray For Tell, who's with him there on board the ship.

FISHER. Alas, ye blind, unreasoning elements! Must ye, in punishing one guilty head, Destroy the vessel and the pilot too?

BOY. See, see, they've clear'd the Buggisgrat;[*] but now The blast, rebounding from the Devil's Minster,[*] Has driven them back on the Great Axenberg.[*] I cannot see them now.

FISHER. The Hakmesser[*] Is there, that's founder'd many a gallant ship. If they

should fail to double that with skill, Their bark will go to pieces on the rocks, That hide their jagged peaks below the lake. The best of pilots, boy, they have on board. If man could save them, Tell is just the man, But he is manacled both hand and foot.

[*] Rocks on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.

[Enter William Tell, with his cross-bow. He enters precipitately, looks wildly round, and testifies the most violent agitation. When he reaches the centre of the stage, he throws himself upon his knees, and stretches out his hands, first towards the earth, then towards Heaven.]

BOY (observing him). See, father! A man on's knees; who can it be?

FISHER. He clutches at the earth with both his hands, And looks as though he were beside himself.

Boy (advancing). What do I see? Come father, come and look!

FISHER. (approaches). Who is it? God in Heaven! What! Wilhelm Tell! How came you hither? Speak, Tell!

BOY. Were you not In yonder ship, a prisoner, and in chains?

FISHER. Were they not carrying you to Kussnacht, Tell?

TELL (rising). I am released.

FISHER. and BOY. Released, oh miracle!

BOY. Whence came you here?

TELL. From yonder vessel!

FISHER. What?

BOY. Where is the Viceroy?

TELL. Drifting on the waves.

FISHER. Is't possible? But you! How are you here? How 'scaped you from your fetters and the storm?

TELL. By God's most gracious providence. Attend.

FISHER. And BOY. Say on, say on!

TELL. You know what passed at Altdorf.

FISHER. I do—say on!

TELL. How I was seized and bound, And order'd by the governor to Kussnacht.

FISHER. And how at Fluelen he embarked with you. All this we know. Say, how have you escaped?

TELL. I lay on deck, fast bound with cords, disarm'd, In utter hopelessness. I did not think Again to see the gladsome light of day, Nor the dear faces of my wife and boys, And eyed disconsolate the waste of waters.—

FISHER. Oh, wretched man!

TELL. Then we put forth; the Viceroy, Rudolph der Harras, and their suite. My bow And quiver lay astern beside the helm; And just as we had reached the corner, near The little Axen,[*] Heaven ordain'd it so, That from the Gotthardt's gorge, a hurricane Swept down upon us with such headlong force, That every oarsman's heart within him sank, And all on board look'd for a watery grave. Then heard I one of the attendant train, Turning to Gessler, in this wise accost him: "You see our danger, and your own, my lord, And that we hover on the verge of death. The boatmen there are powerless from fear, Nor are they confident what course to take;— Now, here is Tell, a stout and fearless man, And knows to steer with more than common skill, How if we should avail ourselves of him In this emergency?" The Viceroy then Address'd me thus: "If thou wilt undertake To bring us through this tempest safely, Tell, I might consent to free thee from thy bonds." I answer'd, "Yes, my lord; so help me God, I'll see what can be done." On this they loosed The cords that bound me, and I took my place Beside the helm, and steered as best I could, Yet ever eyed my shooting gear askance, And kept a watchful eye upon the shore, To find some point where I might leap to land; And when I had descried a shelving crag, That jutted,

smooth atop, into the lake—

[*] A rock on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.

FISHER. I know it. At the foot of the Great Axen; So steep it looks, I never could have dreamt That from a boat a man could leap to it.

TELL. I bade the men to row with all their force Until we came before the shelving ledge. For there, I said, the danger will be past! Stoutly they pull'd, and soon we near'd the point; One prayer to God for His assisting grace, And, straining every muscle, I brought round The vessel's stern close to the rocky wall; Then snatching up my weapons, with a bound I swung myself upon the flattened shelf, And with my feet thrust off, with all my might, The puny bark into the watery hell. There left it drift about, as Heaven ordains! Thus am I here, deliver'd from the might Of the dread storm, and man's more dreadful still.

FISHER. Tell, Tell, the Lord has manifestly wrought A miracle in thy behalf! I scarce Can credit my own eyes. But tell me, now, Whither you purpose to betake yourself? For you will be in peril, should perchance The Viceroy 'scape this tempest with his life.

TELL. I heard him say, as I lay bound on board, At Brunnen he proposed to disembark, And, crossing Schwytz, convey me to his castle.

FISHER. Means he to go by land?

TELL. So he intends.

FISHER. Oh, then conceal yourself without delay! Not twice will Heaven release you from his grasp.

TELL. Which is the nearest way to Arth and Kussnacht?

FISHER. The public road leads by the way of Steinen, But there's a nearer road, and more retired, That goes by Lowerz, which my boy can show you.

TELL (gives him his hand). May Heaven reward your kindness! Fare ye well.

[As he is going, he comes back.]

Did not you also take the oath at Rootli? I heard your name, methinks.

FISHER. Yes, I was there, And took the oath of confederacy.

TELL. Then do me this one favour; speed to Burglen— My wife is anxious at my absence—tell her That I am free, and in secure concealment.

FISHER. But whither shall I tell her you have fled?

TELL. You'll find her father with her, and some more, Who took the oath with you upon the Rootli; Bid them be resolute, and strong of heart,— For Tell is free and master of his arm; They shall hear further news of me ere long.

FISHER. What have you, then, in view? Come, tell me frankly!

TELL. When once 'tis /done/, 'twill be in every mouth.

[Exit.]

FISHER. Show him the way, boy. Heaven be his support! Whate'er he has resolved, he'll execute.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.

Baronial mansion of Attinghausen. The Baron upon a couch dying. Walter Furst, Stauffacher, Melchthal, and Baumgarten attending round him. Walter Tell kneeling before the dying man.

FURST. All now is over with him. He is gone.

STAUFF. He lies not like one dead. The feather, see, Moves on his lips! His sleep is very calm, And on his features plays a placid smile.

[Baumgarten goes to the door and speaks with some one.]

FURST. Who's there?

BAUM. (returning). Tell's wife, your daughter, she insists That she must speak with

you, and see her boy.

[Walter Tell rises.]

FURST. I who need comfort—can I comfort her? Does every sorrow centre on my head?

HEDW. (forcing her way in). Where is my child? unhand me! I must see him.

STAUFF. Be calm! Reflect, you're in the house of death!

HEDW. (falling upon her boy's neck). My Walter! Oh, he yet is mine!

WALT. Dear mother!

HEDW. And is it surely so? Art thou unhurt?

[Gazing at him with anxious tenderness.]

And is it possible he aim'd at thee? How could he do it? Oh, he has no heart— And he could wing an arrow at his child!

FURST. His soul was rack'd with anguish when he did it. No choice was left him, but to shoot or die!

HEDW. Oh, if he had a father's heart, he would Have sooner perish'd by a thousand deaths!

STAUFF. You should be grateful for God's gracious care, That ordered things so well.

HEDW. Can I forget What might have been the issue? God of Heaven, Were I to live for centuries, I still Should see my boy tied up,—his father's mark,— And still the shaft would quiver in my heart.

MELCH. You know not how the Viceroy taunted him!

HEDW. Oh, ruthless heart of man! Offend his pride, And reason in his breast forsakes her seat; In his blind wrath he'll stake upon a cast A child's existence, and a mother's heart!

BAUM. Is then your husband's fate not hard enough, That you embitter it by such reproaches? Have you not feeling for his sufferings?

HEDW. (turning to him and gazing full upon him). Hast thou tears only for thy friend's distress? Say, where were you when he—my noble Tell— Was bound in chains? Where was your friendship then? The shameful wrong was done before your eyes; Patient you stood, and let your friend be dragg'd, Ay, from your very hands. Did ever Tell Act thus to you? Did he stand whining by, When on your heels the Viceroy's horsemen press'd, And full before you roared the storm-toss'd lake? Oh, not with idle tears his pity show'd; Into the boat he sprang, forgot his home, His wife, his children, and delivered thee!

FURST. It had been madness to attempt his rescue, Unarm'd and few in numbers as we were!

HEDW. (casting herself upon his bosom). Oh, father, and thou, too, hast lost my Tell! The country—all have lost him! All lament His loss; and, oh, how he must pine for us! Heaven keep his soul from sinking to despair! No friend's consoling voice can penetrate His dreary dungeon walls. Should he fall sick! Ah! In the vapours of the murky vault He must fall sick. Even as the Alpine rose Grows pale and withers in the swampy air, There is no life for him, but in the sun, And in the breath of Heaven's fresh-blowing airs. Imprison'd! Liberty to him is breath; He cannot live in the rank dungeon air!

STAUFF. Pray you be calm! And hand in hand we'll all Combine to burst his prison doors.

HEDW. He gone, What have you power to do? While Tell was free, There still, indeed, was hope—weak innocence Had still a friend, and the oppress'd a stay. Tell saved you all! You cannot all combined Release him from his cruel prison bonds.

[The Baron wakes.]

BAUM. Hush, hush! He starts!

ATTING. (sitting up). Where is he?

STAUFF. Who?

ATTING. He leaves me,— In my last moments he abandons me.

STAUFF. He means his nephew. Have they sent for him?

FURST. He has been summoned. Cheerly, sir! Take comfort! He has found his heart at last, and is our own.

ATTING. Say, has he spoken for his native land?

STAUFF. Ay, like a hero!

ATTING. Wherefore comes he not, That he may take my blessing ere I die? I feel my life fast ebbing to a close.

STAUFF. Nay, talk not thus, dear sir! This last short sleep Has much refresh'd you, and your eye is bright.

ATTING. Life is but pain, and that has left me now; My sufferings, like my hopes, have pass'd away.

[Observing the boy.]

What boy is that?

FURST. Bless him. Oh, good my lord! He is my grandson, and is fatherless.

[Hedwig kneels with the boy before the dying man.]

ATTING. And fatherless—I leave you all, ay, all! Oh wretched fate, that these old eyes should see My country's ruin, as they close in death! Must I attain the utmost verge of life, To feel my hopes go with me to the grave?

STAUFF. (to Furst). Shall he depart 'mid grief and gloom like this? Shall not his parting moments be illumed By hope's inspiring beams? My noble lord, Raise up your drooping spirit! We are not Forsaken quite—past all deliverance.

ATTING. Who shall deliver you?

FURST. Ourselves. For know, The Cantons three are to each other pledged, To hunt the tyrants from the land. The league Has been concluded, and a sacred oath Confirms our union. Ere another year Begins its circling course—the blow shall fall. In a free land your ashes shall repose.

ATTING. The league concluded! Is it really so?

MELCH. On one day shall the Cantons rise together. All is prepared to strike—and to this hour The secret closely kept, though hundreds share it; The ground is hollow 'neath the tyrants' feet; Their days of rule are number'd, and ere long No trace will of their hateful sway be left.

ATTING. Ay, but their castles, how to master them?

MELCH. On the same day they, too, are doom'd to fall.

ATTING. And are the nobles parties to this league?

STAUFF. We trust to their assistance, should we need it; As yet the peasantry alone have sworn.

ATTING. (raising himself up in great astonishment). And have the peasantry dared such a deed On their own charge, without the nobles' aid— Relied so much on their own proper strength? Nay then, indeed, they want our help no more; We may go down to death cheer'd by the thought, That after us the majesty of man Will live, and be maintain'd by other hands.

[He lays his hand upon the head of the child who is kneeling before him.]

From this boy's head, whereon the apple lay, Your new and better liberty shall spring; The old is crumbling down—the times are changing— And from the ruins blooms a fairer life.

STAUFF. (to Furst). See, see, what splendour streams around his eye! This is not Nature's last expiring flame, It is the beam of renovated life.

ATTING. From their old towers the nobles are descending, And swearing in the

towns the civic oath. In Uechtland and Thurgau the work's begun; The noble Berne lifts her commanding head, And Freyburg is a stronghold of the free; The stirring Zurich calls her guilds to arms; And now, behold!—the ancient might of kings Is shiver'd 'gainst her everlasting walls.

[He speaks what follows with a prophetic tone; his utterance rising into enthusiasm.]

I see the princes and their haughty peers, Clad all in steel, come striding on to crush A harmless shepherd race with mailed hand. Desp'rate the conflict; 'tis for life or death; And many a pass will tell to after years Of glorious victories sealed in foeman's blood.[*] The peasant throws himself with naked breast, A willing victim on their serried spears; They yield—the flower of chivalry's cut down, And Freedom waves her conquering banner high.

[*] An allusion to the gallant self-devotion of Arnold Struthan of Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach [9th July, 1386], who broke the Austrian phalanx by rushing on their lances, grasping as many of them as he could reach, and concentrating them upon his breast. The confederates rushed forward through the gap thus opened by the sacrifice of their comrade, broke and cut down their enemy's ranks, and soon became the masters of the field. "Dear and faithful confederates, I will open you a passage. Protect my wife and children," were the words of Winkelried, as he rushed to death.

[Grasps the hands of Walter Furst and Stauffacher.]

Hold fast together, then,—forever fast! Let freedom's haunts be one in heart and mind! Set watches on your mountain tops, that league May answer league, when comes the hour to strike. Be one—be one—be one—

[He falls back upon the cushion. His lifeless hands continue to grasp those of Furst and Stauffacher, who regard him for some moments in silence, and then retire, overcome with sorrow. Meanwhile the servants have quietly pressed into the chamber, testifying different degrees of grief. Some kneel down beside him and

weep on his body: while this scene is passing, the castle bell tolls.]

RUD. (entering hurriedly). Lives he? Oh say, can he still hear my voice?

FURST. (averting his face). You are our seignior and protector now; Henceforth this castle bears another name.

RUD. (gazing at the body with deep emotion). Oh, God! Is my repentance, then, too late? Could he not live some few brief moments more, To see the change that has come o'er my heart? Oh, I was deaf to his true counselling voice, While yet he walked on earth. Now he is gone,— Gone, and forever,—leaving me the debt— The heavy debt I owe him—undischarged! Oh, tell me! did he part in anger with me?

STAUFF. When dying, he was told what you had done, And bless'd the valour that inspired your words!

RUD. (kneeling down beside the dead body). Yes, sacred relics of a man beloved! Thou lifeless corpse! Here, on thy death-cold hand Do I abjure all foreign ties for ever! And to my country's cause devote myself. I am a Switzer, and will act as one, With my whole heart and soul.

[Rises.]

Mourn for our friend, Our common parent, yet be not dismay'd! 'Tis not alone his lands that I inherit,— His heart—his spirit have devolved on me; And my young arm shall execute the task, Which in his hoary age he could not pay. Give me your hands, ye venerable sires! Thine, Melchthal, too! Nay, do not hesitate, Nor from me turn distrustfully away. Accept my plighted vow—my knightly oath!

FURST. Give him your hands, my friends! A heart like his, That sees and owns its error, claims our trust.

MELCH. You ever held the peasantry in scorn, What surety have we, that you mean us fair?

RUD. Oh, think not of the error of my youth!

STAUFF. (to Melch.). Be one! They were our father's latest words. See they be not forgotten!

MELCH. Take my hand,— A peasant's hand,—and with it, noble sir, The gage and the assurance of a man! Without us, sir, what would the nobles be? Our order is more ancient, too, than yours!

RUD. I honour it—will shield it with my sword!

MELCH. The arm, my lord, that tames the stubborn earth, And makes its bosom blossom with increase, Can also shield its owner's breast at need.

RUD. Then you shall shield my breast, and I will yours, Thus each be strengthen'd by the other's strength. Yet wherefore talk ye, while our native land Is still to alien tyranny a prey? First let us sweep the foemen from the soil, Then reconcile our difference in peace!

[After a moment's pause.]

How! You are silent! Not a word for me? And have I yet no title to your trust?—Then must I force my way, despite your will, Into the League you secretly have form'd. You've held a Diet on the Rootli,—I Know this,—know all that was transacted there; And though not trusted with your secret, I Have kept it closely like a sacred pledge. Trust me—I never was my country's foe, Nor would I ever have against you stood! Yet you did wrong—to put your rising off. Time presses! We must strike, and swiftly too! Already Tell is lost through your delay.

STAUFF. We swore that we should wait till Christmastide.

RUD. I was not there,—I did not take the oath. If you delay, I will not!

MELCH. What! You would—

RUD. I count me now among the country's chiefs, And my first duty is to guard your rights.

FURST. Your nearest and holiest duty is Within the earth to lay these dear remains.

RUD. When we have set the country free, we'll place Our fresh victorious wreaths upon his bier. Oh, my dear friends, 'tis not your cause alone!— I with the tyrants have a cause to fight, That more concerns myself. My Bertha's gone, Has disappear'd,—- been carried off by stealth,— Stolen from amongst us by their ruffian hands!

STAUFF. So fell an outrage has the tyrant dared Against a lady free and nobly born!

RUD. Alas! my friends, I promised help to you, And I must first implore it for myself! She that I love, is stolen—is forced away, And who knows where she's by the tyrant hid, Or with what outrages his ruffian crew May force her into nuptials she detests? Forsake me not!—Oh, help me to her rescue! She loves you! Well, oh, well, has she deserved, That all should rush to arms in her behalf!

STAUFF. What course do you propose?

RUD. Alas! I know not. In the dark mystery that shrouds her fate,— In the dread agony of this suspense,— Where I can grasp at nought of certainty,— One single ray of comfort beams upon me. From out the ruins of the tyrant's power Alone can she be rescued from the grave. Their strongholds must be levell'd, every one, Ere we can penetrate her dungeon walls.

MELCH. Come, lead us on! We follow! Why defer Until to-morrow, what to-day may do? Tell's arm was free when we at Rootli swore. This foul enormity was yet undone. And change of circumstance brings change of vow; Who such a coward as to waver still?

RUD. (to Walter Furst). Meanwhile to arms, and wait in readiness. The fiery signal on the mountain tops! For swifter than a boat can scour the lake Shall you have tidings of our victory; And when you see the welcome flames ascend Then, like the lightning, swoop upon the foe, And lay the despots and their creatures low!

SCENE III.

The pass near Kussnacht, sloping down from behind, with rocks on either side. The

travellers are visible upon the heights, before they appear on the stage. Rocks all round the stage. Upon one of the foremost a projecting cliff overgrown with brushwood.

TELL. (enters with his crossbow). Through this ravine he needs must come. There is No other way to Kussnacht. Here I'll do it! The ground is everything I could desire. Yon elder bush will hide me from his view, And from that point my shaft is sure to hit. The straitness of the gorge forbids pursuit. Now, Gessler, balance thine account with Heaven! Thou must away from earth,—thy sand is run. Quiet and harmless was the life I led, My bow was bent on forest game alone; No thoughts of murder rested on my soul. But thou hast scared me from my dream of peace; The milk of human kindness thou hast turn'd To rankling poison in my breast; and made Appalling deeds familiar to my soul. He who could make his own child's head his mark, Can speed his arrow to his foeman's heart. My boys, poor innocents, my loyal wife, Must be protected, tyrant, from thy rage! When last I drew my bow—with trembling hand— And thou, with fiendishly remorseless glee Forced me to level at my own boy's head, When I, imploring pity, writhed before thee, Then in the anguish of my soul, I vow'd A fearful oath, which met God's ear alone, That when my bow next wing'd an arrow's flight, Its aim should be thy heart. The vow I made, Amid the hellish torments of that moment, I hold a sacred debt, and I will pay it. Thou art my lord, my Emperor's delegate; Yet would the Emperor not have stretch'd his power, So far as thou hast done. He sent thee here To deal forth law—stern law—for he is wroth; But not to wanton with unbridled will In every cruelty, with fiend-like joy:— There lives a God to punish and avenge. Come forth, thou bringer once of bitter pangs, My precious jewel now,—my chiefest treasure— A mark I'll set thee, which the cry of grief Could never penetrate,—but thou shalt pierce it,— And thou, my trusty bowstring, that so oft For sport has served me faithfully and well, Desert me not in this dread hour of need,— Only be true this once, my own good cord, That hast so often wing'd the biting shaft:— For shouldst thou fly successless from my

hand, I have no second to send after thee.

[Travellers pass over the stage.]

I'll sit me down upon this bench of stone, Hewn for the way-worn traveller's brief repose— For here there is no home. Men hurry past Each other, with quick step and careless look, Nor stay to question of their grief. Here goes The merchant, all anxiety,—the pilgrim, With scanty furnished scrip,—- the pious monk, The scowling robber, and the jovial player, The carrier with his heavy-laden horse, That comes to us from the far haunts of men; For every road conducts to the world's end. They all push onwards—every man intent On his own several business—mine is murder!

[Sits down.]

Time was, my dearest children, when with joy You hail'd your father's safe return to home From his long mountain toils; for, when he came, He ever brought with him some little gift,— A lovely Alpine flower—a curious bird— Or elf-bolt such as on the hills are found. But now he goes in quest of other game, Sits in this gorge, with murder in his thoughts, And for his enemy's life-blood lies in wait. But still it is of you alone he thinks, Dear children. 'Tis to guard your innocence, To shield you from the tyrant's fell revenge, He bends his bow to do a deed of blood!

[Rises.]

Well—I am watching for a noble prey— Does not the huntsman, with unflinching heart, Roam for whole days, when winter frosts are keen, Leap at the risk of death from rock to rock,— And climb the jagged, slippery steeps, to which His limbs are glued by his own streaming blood— And all to hunt a wretched chamois down? A far more precious prize is now my aim— The heart of that dire foe, who seeks my life.

[Sprightly music heard in the distance, which comes gradually nearer.]

From my first years of boyhood I have used The bow—been practised in the archer's

feats; The bull's eye many a time my shafts have hit, And many a goodly prize have I brought home From competitions. But this day I'll make My master-shot, and win what's best to win In the whole circuit of our mountain range.

[A bridal party passes over the stage, and goes up the pass. Tell gazes at it, leaning on his bow. He is joined by Stussi, the Ranger.]

STUSSI. There goes the cloister bailiff's bridal train Of Morlischachen. A rich fellow he! And has some half score pastures on the Alps. He goes to fetch his bride from Imisee. At Kussnacht there will be high feast to-night— Come with us—ev'ry honest man is asked.

TELL. A gloomy guest fits not a wedding feast.

STUSSI. If you've a trouble, dash it from your heart! Take what Heaven sends! The times are heavy now, And we must snatch at pleasure as it flies. Here 'tis a bridal, there a burial.

TELL. And oft the one close on the other treads.

STUSSI. So runs the world we live in. Everywhere Mischance befalls and misery enough. In Glarus there has been a landslip, and A whole side of the Glarnisch has fallen in.

TELL. How! Do the very hills begin to quake? There is stability for nought on earth.

STUSSI. Of strange things, too, we hear from other parts. I spoke with one but now, from Baden come, Who said a knight was on his way to court, And, as he rode along, a swarm of wasps Surrounded him, and settling on his horse, So fiercely stung the beast, that it fell dead, And he proceeded to the court on foot.

TELL. The weak are also furnish'd with a sting.

[Armgart enters with several children, and places herself at the entrance of the pass.]

STUSSI. Tis thought to bode disaster to the land,— Some horrid deeds against the course of nature.

TELL. Why, every day brings forth such fearful deeds; There needs no prodigy to herald them.

STUSSI. Ay, happy he who tills his field in peace, And sits at home untroubled with his kin.

TELL. The very meekest cannot be at peace If his ill neighbour will not let him rest.

[Tell looks frequently with restless expectation towards the top of the pass.]

STUSSI. So fare you well! You're waiting some one here?

TELL. I am.

STUSSI. God speed you safely to your home! You are from Uri, are you not? His grace The Governor's expected thence to-day.

TRAVELLER (entering). Look not to see the Governor to-day. The streams are flooded by the heavy rains, And all the bridges have been swept away.

[Tell rises.]

ARM. (coming forward). Gessler not coming?

STUSSI. Want you aught with him?

ARM. Alas, I do!

STUSSI. Why, then, thus place yourself Where you obstruct his passage down the pass?

ARM. Here he cannot escape me. He must hear me.

FRIESS. (coming hastily down the pass and calls upon the stage). Make way, make way! My lord, the Governor, Is close behind me, riding down the pass.

[Exit TELL.]

ARM. (excitedly). The Viceroy comes!

[She goes towards the pass with her children, Gessler and Rudolph der Harras appear on horseback at the upper end of the pass.]

STUSSI. (to Friess.). How got ye through the stream, When all the bridges have been carried down?

FRIESS. We've fought, friend, with the tempest on the lake; An Alpine torrent's nothing after that.

STUSSI. How! Were you out, then, in that dreadful storm?

FRIESS. We were! I'll not forget it while I live.

STUSSI. Stay, speak—

FRIESS. I can't—must to the castle haste, And tell them, that the Governor's at hand.

[Exit.]

STUSSI. If honest men, now, had been in the ship, It had gone down with every soul on board: Some folks are proof 'gainst fire and water both.

[Looking round.]

Where has the huntsman gone with whom I spoke?

[Exit.]

[Enter Gessler and Rudolph der Harras on horseback.]

GESSL. Say what you will; I am the Emperor's liege, And how to please him my first thought must be. He did not send me here to fawn and cringe, And coax these boors into good humour. No! Obedience he must have. The struggle's this: Is king or peasant to be sovereign here?

ARM. Now is the moment! Now for my petition!

GESSL. 'Twas not in sport that I set up the cap In Altdorf—or to try the people's hearts— All this I knew before. I set it up That they might learn to bend those stubborn necks They carry far too proudly—and I placed What well I knew their pride could never brook Full in the road, which they perforce must pass, That, when their eye fell on it, they might call That lord to mind whom they too much forget.

HAR. But surely, sir, the people have some rights—

GESSL. This is not time to settle what they are. Great projects are at work, and hatching now. The imperial house seeks to extend its power. Those vast designs of conquest which the sire Has gloriously begun, the son will end. This petty nation is a stumbling-block— One way or other, it must be put down.

[They are about to pass on. Armgart throws herself down before Gessler.]

ARM. Mercy, Lord Governor! Oh, pardon, pardon!

GESSL. Why do you cross me on the public road? Stand back, I say.

ARM. My husband lies in prison; My wretched orphans cry for bread. Have pity, Pity, my lord, upon our sore distress!

HAR. Who are you? and your husband, what is he?

ARM. A poor wild hay-man of the Rigiberg, Kind sir, who on the brow of the abyss, Mows the unowner'd grass from craggy shelves, To which the very cattle dare not climb.

HAR. (to GESSL.). By Heaven! a sad and pitiable life! I pray you set the wretched fellow free. How great soever may be his offence, His horrid trade is punishment enough.

[To Armgart.]

You shall have justice. To the castle bring Your suit. This is no place to deal with it.

ARM. No, no, I will not stir from where I stand, Until your grace gives me my husband back. Six months already has he been shut up, And waits the sentence of a judge in vain.

GESSL. How! would you force me, woman? Hence! Begone!

ARM. Justice, my lord! Ay, justice! Thou art judge: Vice-regent of the Emperor—of Heaven. Then do thy duty,—as thou hopest for justice From Him who rules above, show it to us!

GESSL. Hence! Drive this insolent rabble from my sight!

ARM. (seizing his horse's reins). No, no, by Heaven, I've nothing more to lose—Thou stir'st not, Viceroy, from this spot, until Thou dost me fullest justice. Knit thy brows, And roll thine eyes—I fear not. Our distress Is so extreme, so boundless, that we care No longer for thine anger.

GESSL. Woman, hence! Give way, or else my horse shall ride you down.

ARM. Well, let it!—there—

[Throws her children and herself upon the ground before him.]

Here on the ground I lie, I and my children. Let the wretched orphans Be trodden by thy horse into the dust! It will not be the worst that thou hast done.

HAR. Are you mad, woman?

ARM. (continuing with vehemence). Many a day thou hast Trampled the Emperor's lands beneath thy feet. Oh, I am but a woman! Were I man, I'd find some better thing to do, than here Lie grovelling in the dust.

[The music of the bridal party is again heard from the top of the pass, but more softly.]

GESSL. Where are my knaves? Drag her away, lest I forget myself, And do some deed I may repent me of.

HAR. My lord, the servants cannot force their way; The pass is block'd up by a bridal train.

GESSL. Too mild a ruler am I to this people, Their tongues are all too bold—nor have they yet Been tamed to due submission, as they shall be. I must take order for the remedy; I will subdue this stubborn mood of theirs, This braggart spirit of freedom I will crush, I will proclaim a new law through the land; I will—

[An arrow pierces him,—he puts his hand on his heart and is about to sink—with a feeble voice.]

Oh God, have mercy on my soul!

HAR. My lord! my lord! Oh God! What's this? Whence came it?

ARM. (starts up). Dead, dead! He reels, he falls! 'Tis in his heart!

HAR. (springs from his horse). Horror of horrors! Heavenly powers! Sir Knight, Address yourself for mercy to your God! You are a dying man.

GESSL. That shot was Tell's.

[He slides from his horse into the arms of Rudolph der Harras, who lays him down upon the bench. Tell appears above upon the rocks.]

TELL. Thou know'st the marksman—I, and I alone. Now are our homesteads free, and innocence From thee is safe: thou'lt be our curse no more.

[Tell disappears. People rush in.]

STUSSI. What is the matter? Tell me what has happen'd?

ARM. The Viceroy's shot,—pierced by a cross-bow bolt!

PEOPLE (running in). Who has been shot?

[While the foremost of the marriage party are coming on the stage, the hindmost are still upon the heights. The music continues.]

HAR. He's bleeding fast to death. Away, for help—pursue the murderer! Unhappy man, is this to be your end? You would not listen to my warning words.

STUSSI. By Heaven, his cheek is pale! Life's ebbing fast.

MANY VOICES. Who did the deed?

HAR. What! Are the people mad, That they make music to a murder? Silence!

[Music breaks off suddenly. People continue to flock in.]

Speak, if you can, my lord. Have you no charge To trust me with?

[Gessler makes signs with his hand, which he repeats with vehemence, when he finds they are not understood.

Where shall I take you to? To Kussnacht? What you say I can't make out. Oh, do not grow impatient! Leave all thought Of earthly things and make your peace with Heaven.

[The whole marriage party gather round the dying man.]

STUSSI. See there! how pale he grows! Death's gathering now About his heart;—his eyes grow dim and glazed.

ARM. (holds up a child). Look, children, how a tyrant dies!

HAR. Mad hag! Have you no touch of feeling, that your eyes Gloat on a sight so horrible as this? Help me—take hold. What, will not one assist To pull the torturing arrow from his breast?

WOMEN. What! touch the man whom God's own hand has struck!

HAR. All curses light on you!

[Draws his sword.]

STUSSI (seizes his arm). Gently, Sir Knight! Your power is at end. 'Twere best forbear. Our country's foe has fallen. We will brook No further violence. We are free men.

ALL. The country's free.

HAR. And is it come to this? Fear and obedience at an end so soon?

[To the soldiers of the guard who are thronging in.]

You see, my friends, the bloody piece of work Has here been done. 'Tis now too late for help, And to pursue the murderer were vain. We've other things to think of. On to Kussnacht. And let us save that fortress for the king! For in a moment such as this, all ties Of order, fealty and faith, are rent. And we can trust to no man's loyalty.

[As he is going out with the soldiers, six Fratres Misericordiae appear.]

ARM. Here comes the brotherhood of mercy. Room!

STUSSI. The victim's slain, and now the ravens stoop.

BROTHERS OF MERCY (form a semicircle round the body, and sing in solemn tones). Death hurries on with hasty stride, No respite man from him may gain, He cuts him down, when life's full tide Is throbbing strong in every vein. Prepared or not the call to hear, He must before his Judge appear.

[While they are repeating the two last lines, the curtain falls.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A common near Altdorf. In the background to the right the keep of Uri, with the scaffold still standing, as in the third scene of the first Act. To the left, the view opens upon numerous mountains, on all of which signal fires are burning. Day is breaking, and distant bells are heard ringing in several directions.

Ruodi, Kuoni, Werni, Master Mason, and many other country people, also women and children.

RUODI. See there! The beacons on the mountain heights!

MASON. Hark how the bells above the forest toll!

RUODI. The enemy's routed.

MASON. And the forts are storm'd.

RUODI. And we of Uri, do we still endure Upon our native soil the tyrant's keep? Are we the last to strike for liberty?

MASON. Shall the yoke stand, that was to curb our necks? Up! Tear it to the ground!

ALL. Down, down with it!

RUODI. Where is the Stier of Uri?

URI. Here. What would ye?

RUODI. Up to your tower, and wind us such a blast, As shall resound afar, from peak to peak; Rousing the echoes of each glen and hill, To rally swiftly all the mountain men!

[Exit Stier of Uri—Enter Walter Furst.]

FURST. Stay, stay, my friends! As yet we have not learn'd What has been done in Unterwald and Schwytz. Let's wait till we receive intelligence!

RUODI. Wait, wait for what? The accursed tyrant's dead And on us freedom's glorious day has dawn'd!

MASON. How! Are these flaming signals not enough, That blaze on every mountain-top around?

RUODI. Come all, fall to—come, men and women, all! Destroy the scaffold! Burst the arches! Down, Down with the walls, let not a stone remain!

MASON. Come, comrades, come! We built it, and we know How best to hurl it down.

ALL. Come! Down with it!

[They fall upon the building on every side.]

FURST. The floodgate's burst. They're not to be restrained.

[Enter Melchthal and Baumgarten.]

MELCH. What! Stands the fortress still, when Sarnen lies In ashes, and the Rossberg's in our hands?

FURST. You, Melchthal, here? D'ye bring us liberty? Are all the Cantons from our tyrants freed?

MELCH. We've swept them from the soil. Rejoice, my friend, Now, at this very moment, while we speak, There's not one tyrant left in Switzerland!

FURST. How did you get the forts into your power?

MELCH. Rudenz it was who by a bold assault With manly valour mastered Sarnen's keep. The Rossberg I had storm'd the night before. But hear, what chanced. Scarce had we driven the foe Forth from the keep, and given it to the flames, That now rose crackling upwards to the skies, When from the blaze rush'd Diethelm, Gessler's page, Exclaiming, "Lady Bertha will be burnt!"

FURST. Good heavens!

[The beams of the scaffold are heard falling.]

MELCH. 'Twas she herself. Here had she been By Gessler's orders secretly immured. Up sprang Rudenz in frenzy. For even now The beams and massive posts were crashing down, And through the stifling smoke the piteous shrieks Of the unhappy lady.

FURST. Is she saved?

MELCH. 'Twas not a time to hesitate or pause! Had he been but our baron, and no more, We should have been most chary of our lives; But he was our confederate, and Bertha Honour'd the people. So, without a thought, We risk'd the worst, and rush'd into the flames.

FURST. But is she saved?

MELCH. She is. Rudenz and I Bore her between us from the blazing pile. With crashing timbers toppling all around. And when she had revived, the danger past, And raised her eyes to look upon the sun, The baron fell upon my breast; and then A silent vow between us two was sworn, A vow that, welded in yon furnace heat, Will last through ev'ry shock of time and fate.

FURST. Where is the Landenberg?

MELCH. Across the Brunig. 'Twas not my fault he bore his sight away; He who had robb'd my father of his eyes! He fled—I followed—overtook him soon, And dragg'd him to my father's feet. The sword Already quiver'd o'er the caitiff's head, When

from the pity of the blind old man, He wrung the life which, craven-like, he begged. He swore URPHEDE,[*] never to return: He'll keep his oath, for he has felt our arm.

[*] The Urphede was an oath of peculiar force. When a man, who was at feud with another, invaded his lands and was worsted, he often made terms with his enemy by swearing the Urphede, by which he bound himself to depart, and never to return with a hostile intention.

FURST. Oh! well for you, you have not stain'd with blood Our spotless victory!

CHILDREN (running across the stage with fragments of wood). We're free! we're free!

FURST. Oh! what a joyous scene! These children will Remember it when all their heads are grey.

[Girls bring in the cap upon a pole. The whole stage is filled with people.]

RUODI. Here is the cap, to which we were to bow!

BAUM. What shall we do with it? Do you decide!

FURST. Heavens! 'Twas beneath this cap my grandson stood!

SEVERAL VOICES. Destroy the emblem of the tyrant's power! Let it be burnt!

FURST. No. Rather be preserved; 'Twas once the instrument of despots—now 'Twill of our freedom be a lasting sign.

[Peasants, men, women, and children, some standing, others sitting upon the beams of the shattered scaffold, all picturesquely grouped, in a large semicircle.]

MELCH. Thus now, my friends, with light and merry hearts, We stand upon the wreck of tyranny; And gloriously the work has been fulfilled, Which we at Rootli pledged ourselves to do.

FURST. No, not fulfilled. The work is but begun: Courage and concord firm, we need them both; For, be assured, the king will make all speed, To avenge his Viceroy's death, and reinstate, By force of arms, the tyrant we've expelled.

MELCH. Why let him come, with all his armaments! The foe's expelled, that press'd us from within. The foe without we are prepared to meet!

RUODI. The passes to our Cantons are but few; These with our bodies we will block, we will!

BAUM. Knit are we by a league will ne'er be rent, And all his armies shall not make us quail.

[Enter Rosselmann and Stauffacher.]

ROSSEL. (speaking as he enters). These are the awful judgments of the Lord!

PEAS. What is the matter?

ROSSEL. In what times we live!

FURST. Say on, what is't? Ha, Werner, is it you? What tidings?

PEAS. What's the matter?

ROSSEL. Hear and wonder!

STAUFF. We are released from one great cause of dread.

ROSSEL. The Emperor is murdered.

FURST. Gracious Heaven!

[Peasants rise up and throng round Stauffacher.]

ALL. Murder'd!—the Emp'ror? What! The Emp'ror! Hear!

MELCH. Impossible! How came you by the news?

STAUFF. 'Tis true! Near Bruck, by the assassin's hand, King Albert fell. A most trustworthy man, John Muller, from Schaffhausen, brought the news.

FURST. Who dared commit so horrible a deed?

STAUFF. The doer makes the deed more dreadful still; It was his nephew, his own brother's son, Duke John of Austria, who struck the blow.

MELCH. What drove him to so dire a parricide?

STAUFF. The Emp'ror kept his patrimony back, Despite his urgent importunities; 'Twas said, he meant to keep it for himself, And with a mitre to appease the duke. However this may be, the duke gave ear To the ill counsel of his friends in arms: And with the noble lords, Von Eschenbach, Von Tegerfeld, Von Wart and Palm, resolved, Since his demands for justice were despised, With his own hands to take revenge at least.

FURST. But say—the dreadful deed, how was it done?

STAUFF. The king was riding down from Stein to Baden, Upon his way to join the court at Rheinfeld,— With him a train of high-born gentlemen, And the young Princes John and Leopold; And when they'd reach'd the ferry of the Reuss, The assassins forced their way into the boat, To separate the Emperor from his suite. His highness landed, and was riding on Across a fresh plough'd field—where once, they say, A mighty city stood in Pagan times— With Hapsburg's ancient turrets full in sight, That was the cradle of his princely race. When Duke John plunged a dagger in his throat, Palm ran him thro' the body with his lance, And Eschenbach, to end him, clove his skull; So down he sank, all weltering in his blood, On his own soil, by his own kinsmen slain. Those on the opposite bank beheld the deed, But, parted by the stream, could only raise An unavailing cry of loud lament. A poor old woman, sitting by the way, Raised him, and on her breast he bled to death.

MELCH. Thus has he dug his own untimely grave, Who sought insatiably to grasp it all.

STAUFF. The country round is fill'd with dire alarm, The passes are blockaded everywhere, And sentinels on ev'ry frontier set; E'en ancient Zurich barricades her gates, That have stood open for these thirty years, Dreading the murd'rers and th' avengers more. For cruel Agnes comes, the Hungarian Queen, By all her sex's tenderness untouch'd, Arm'd with the thunders of the ban, to wreak Dire vengeance for her parent's royal blood, On the whole race of those that murder'd him,— Their

servants, children, children's children,—yea, Upon the stones that built their castle walls. Deep has she sworn a vow to immolate Whole generations on her father's tomb, And bathe in blood as in the dew of May.

MELCH. Is't known which way the murderers have fled?

STAUFF. No sooner had they done the deed, than they Took flight, each following a different route, And parted ne'er to see each other more. Duke John must still be wand'ring in the mountains.

FURST. And thus their crime has borne no fruit for them. Revenge bears never fruit. Itself, it is The dreadful food it feeds on; its delight Is murder—its satiety despair.

STAUFF. The assassins reap no profit by their crime; But we shall pluck with unpolluted hands The teeming fruits of their most bloody deed. For we are ransomed from our heaviest fear; The direst foe of liberty has fallen, And, 'tis reported, that the crown will pass From Hapsburg's house into another line; The Empire is determined to assert Its old prerogative of choice, I hear.

FURST (and several others). Is any named?

STAUFF. The Count of Luxembourg's Already chosen by the general voice.

FURST. 'Tis well we stood so staunchly by the Empire! Now we may hope for justice, and with cause.

STAUFF. The Emperor will need some valiant friends. He will 'gainst Austria's vengeance be our shield.

[The peasantry embrace. Enter Sacristan with Imperial messenger.]

SACRIS. Here are the worthy chiefs of Switzerland!

ROSSEL. (and several others.) Sacrist, what news?

SACRIS. A courier brings this letter.

ALL (to Walter Furst). Open and read it.

FURST (reading). "To the worthy men Of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwald, the Queen

Elizabeth sends grace and all good wishes."

MANY VOICES. What wants the queen with us? Her reign is done.

FURST (reading). "In the great grief and doleful widowhood, In which the bloody exit of her lord Has plunged the queen, still in her mind she bears The ancient faith and love of Switzerland."

MELCH. She ne'er did that in her prosperity.

ROSSEL. Hush, let us hear!

FURST (reading). "And she is well assured, Her people will in due abhorrence hold The perpetrators of this damned deed. On the three Cantons, therefore, she relies, That they in nowise lend the murderers aid; But rather, that they loyally assist, To give them up to the avenger's hand, Remembering the love and grace which they Of old received from Rudolph's royal house."

[Symptoms of dissatisfaction among the peasantry.]

MANY VOICES. The love and grace!

STAUFF. Grace from the father we, indeed, received, But what have we to boast of from the son? Did he confirm the charter of our freedom, As all preceding emperors had done? Did he judge righteous judgment, or afford Shelter, or stay, to innocence oppress'd? Nay, did he e'en give audience to the men We sent to lay our grievances before him? Not one of all these things did the king do, And had we not ourselves achieved our rights By our own stalwart hands, the wrongs we bore Had never touch'd him. Gratitude to him! Within these vales he sowed no seeds of that; He stood upon an eminence—he might Have been a very father to his people, But all his aim and pleasure was to raise Himself and his own house: and now may those Whom he has aggrandized, lament for him.

FURST. We will not triumph in his fall, nor now Recall to mind the wrongs that we endured. Far be't from us! Yet, that we should avenge The sovereign's death, who

never did us good, And hunt down those who ne'er molested us, Becomes us not, nor is our duty. Love Must be a tribute free, and unconstrain'd; From all enforced duties death absolves, And unto him we owe no further debt.

MELCH. And if the queen laments within her bower, Accusing Heaven in sorrow's wild despair; Here see a people, from its anguish freed, To that same Heav'n send up its thankful praise. Who would reap tears, must sow the seeds of love.

[Exit the Imperial courier.]

STAUFF. (to the people). But where is Tell? Shall he, our freedom's founder, Alone be absent from our festival? He did the most—endured the worst of all. Come—to his dwelling let us all repair, And bid the Saviour of our country hail!

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE II.

Interior of Tell's cottage. A fire burning on the hearth. The open door shows the scene outside.

Hedwig, Walter, and Wilheim

HEDW. My own dear boys! your father comes to-day; He lives, is free, and we and all are free; The country owes its liberty to him!

WALT. And I, too, mother, bore my part in it! I must be named with him. My father's shaft Ran my life close, but yet I never flinch'd.

HEDW. (embracing him). Yes, yes, thou art restored to me again! Twice have I seen thee given to my sad eyes, Twice suffered all a mother's pangs for thee! But this is past—I have you both, boys, both! And your dear father will be back to-day.

[A monk appears at the door.]

WILL. See, mother, yonder stands a holy friar; He comes for alms, no doubt.

HEDW. Go lead him in, That we may give him cheer, and make him feel That he has come into the house of joy.

[Exit, and returns immediately with a cup.]

WILL. (to the monk). Come in, good man. Mother will give you food!

WALT. Come in and rest, then go refresh'd away!

MONK (glancing round in terror, with unquiet looks). Where am I? In what country? Tell me.

WALT. How! Are you bewildered, that you know not where? You are at Burglen, in the land of Uri, Just at the entrance of the Shechenthal.

MONK (to Hedwig). Are you alone? Your husband, is he here?

HEDW. I am expecting him. But what ails you, man? There's something in your looks, that omens ill! Whoe'er you be, you are in want—take that.

[Offers him the cup.]

MONK. Howe'er my sinking heart may yearn for food, Nought will I taste till you have promised first—

HEDW. Touch not my garments, come not near me, monk! You must stand farther back, if I'm to hear you.

MONK. Oh, by this hearth's bright, hospitable blaze, By your dear children's heads, which I embrace—

[Grasps the boys.]

HEDW. Stand back, I say! What is your purpose, man? Back from my boys! You are no monk,—no, no, Beneath the robe you wear peace should abide, But peace abides not in such looks as yours.

MONK. I am the wretchedest of living men.

HEDW. The heart is never deaf to wretchedness; But your look freezes up my inmost soul.

WALT. (springs up). Mother, here's father!

HEDW. Oh, my God!

[Is about to follow, trembles and stops.]

WILL. (running after his brother). My father!

WALT. (without). Here, here once more!

WILL. (without). My father, my dear father!

Tell (without). Yes, here once more! Where is your mother, boys?

[They enter.]

WALT. There at the door she stands, and can no further, She trembles so with terror and with joy.

TELL. Oh Hedwig, Hedwig, mother of my children! God has been kind and helpful in our woes. No tyrant's hand shall e'er divide us more.

HEDW. (falling on his neck). Oh, Tell, what anguish have I borne for thee!

[Monk becomes attentive.]

TELL. Forget it, now, and live for joy alone! I'm here again with you! This is my cot! I stand again upon mine own hearthstone!

WILL. But, father, where's your crossbow? Not with you?

TELL. Thou shalt not ever see it more, my boy. Within a holy shrine it has been placed, And in the chase shall ne'er be used again.

HEDW. Oh, Tell! Tell!

[Steps back, dropping his hand.]

TELL. What alarms thee, dearest wife?

HEDW. How—how dost thou return to me? This hand— Dare I take hold of it? This hand—Oh, God!

TELL (with firmness and animation). Has shielded you and set my country free; Freely I raise it in the face of Heaven.

[Monk gives a sudden start—he looks at him.]

Who is this friar here?

HEDW. Ah, I forgot him; Speak thou with him; I shudder at his presence.

MONK (stepping nearer). Are you the Tell who slew the Governor?

TELL. Yes, I am he. I hide the fact from no man.

MONK. And you are Tell! Ah! it is God's own hand, That hath conducted me beneath your roof.

TELL (examining him closely). You are no monk. Who are you?

MONK. You have slain The Governor, who did you wrong. I, too, Have slain a foe, who robb'd me of my rights. He was no less your enemy than mine. I've rid the land of him.

TELL (drawing back). You are—oh, horror! In—children, children—in, without a word, Go, my dear wife! Go! Go! Unhappy man, You should be—

HEDW. Heav'ns, who is it?

TELL. Do not ask. Away! away! the children must not hear it. Out of the house—away! You must not rest 'Neath the same roof with this unhappy man!

HEDW. Alas! What is it? Come.

[Exit with the children.]

TELL (to the Monk). You are the Duke Of Austria—I know it. You have slain The Emperor, your uncle and liege lord.

JOHN. He robb'd me of my patrimony.

TELL. How! Slain him—your king, your uncle! And the earth Still bears you! And the sun still shines on you!

JOHN. Tell, hear me; are you—

TELL. Reeking, with the blood Of him that was your Emperor, your kinsman, Dare

you set foot within my spotless house, Dare to an honest man to show your face, And claim the rights of hospitality?

JOHN. I hoped to find compassion at your hands. You took, like me, revenge upon your foe!

TELL. Unhappy man! Dare you confound the crime Of blood-imbrued ambition with the act Forced on a father in mere self-defence? Had you to shield your children's darling heads, To guard your fireside's sanctuary—ward off The last, the direst doom from all you loved? To Heaven I raise my unpolluted hands, To curse your act and you! I have avenged That holy nature which you have profaned. I have no part with you. You murdered, I Have shielded all that was most dear to me.

JOHN. You cast me off to comfortless despair!

TELL. I shrink with horror while I talk with you. Hence, on the dread career you have begun! Cease to pollute the home of innocence!

[John turns to depart.]

JOHN. I cannot and I will not live this life!

TELL. And yet my soul bleeds for you. Gracious Heaven, So young, of such a noble line, the grandson Of Rudolph, once my lord and Emperor, An outcast—murderer—standing at my door, The poor man's door—a suppliant, in despair!

[Covers his face.]

JOHN. If you have power to weep, oh let my fate Move your compassion—it is horrible! I am—say, rather was—a prince. I might Have been most happy, had I only curb'd The impatience of my passionate desires: But envy gnaw'd my heart—I saw the youth Of mine own cousin Leopold endow'd With honour, and enrich'd with broad domains, The while myself, of equal age with him, In abject slavish nonage was kept back.

TELL. Unhappy man, your uncle knew you well, When from you land and subjects he withheld! You, by your mad and desperate act have set A fearful seal upon his wise resolve. Where are the bloody partners of your crime?

JOHN. Where'er the avenging furies may have borne them; I have not seen them since the luckless deed.

TELL. Know you the Empire's ban is out,—that you Are interdicted to your friends, and given An outlaw'd victim to your enemies!

JOHN. Therefore I shun all public thoroughfares, And venture not to knock at any door— I turn my footsteps to the wilds, and through The mountains roam, a terror to myself! From mine own self I shrink with horror back, If in a brook I see my ill-starr'd form! If you have pity or a human heart—

[Falls down before him.]

TELL. Stand up, stand up! I say.

JOHN. Not till you give Your hand in promise of assistance to me.

TELL. Can I assist you? Can a sinful man? Yet get ye up—how black soe'er your crime— You are a man. I, too, am one. From Tell Shall no one part uncomforted. I will Do all that lies within my power.

JOHN (springs up and grasps him ardently by the hand). Oh, Tell, You save me from the terrors of despair.

TELL. Let go my hand! You must away. You can not Remain here undiscover'd, and, discover'd, You cannot count on succour. Which way, then, Would you be going? Where do you hope to find A place of rest?

JOHN. Alas! I know not where.

TELL. Hear, then, what Heaven unto my heart suggests. You must to Italy,—to Saint Peter's City— There cast yourself at the Pope's feet,—confess Your guilt to him, and ease your laden soul!

JOHN. Will he not to the avengers yield me up?

TELL. Whate'er he does, accept it as from God.

JOHN. But how am I to reach that unknown land? I have no knowledge of the way, and dare not Attach myself to other travellers.

TELL. I will describe the road, so mark me well! You must ascend, keeping along the Reuss, Which from the mountains dashes wildly down.

JOHN (in alarm). What! See the Reuss? The witness of my deed!

TELL. The road you take lies through the river's gorge, And many a cross proclaims where travellers Have been by avalanches done to death.

JOHN. I have no fear for nature's terrors, so I can appease the torments of my soul.

TELL. At every cross, kneel down and expiate Your crime with burning penitential tears— And if you 'scape the perils of the pass, And are not whelm'd beneath the drifted snows, That from the frozen peaks come sweeping down, You'll reach the bridge that's drench'd with drizzling spray. Then if it give not way beneath your guilt, When you have left it safely in your rear, Before you frowns the gloomy Gate of Rocks, Where never sun did shine. Proceed through this, And you will reach a bright and gladsome vale. Yet must you hurry on with hasty steps, You must not linger in the haunts of peace.

JOHN. O, Rudolph, Rudolph, royal grandsire! Thus Thy grandson first sets foot within thy realms!

TELL. Ascending still, you gain the Gotthardt's heights, Where are the tarns, the everlasting tarns, That from the streams of Heaven itself are fed, There to the German soil you bid farewell; And thence, with swift descent, another stream Leads you to Italy, your promised land.

[Ranz des Vaches sounded on Alp-horns is heard without.]

But I hear voices! Hence!

HEDW. (hurrying in). Where art thou, Tell? My father comes, and in exulting bands All the confederates approach.

DUKE JOHN (covering himself). Woe's me! I dare not tarry 'mong these happy men!

TELL. Go, dearest wife, and give this man to eat. Spare not your bounty; for his road is long. And one where shelter will be hard to find. Quick—they approach!

HEDW. Who is he?

TELL. Do not ask! And when he quits you, turn your eyes away, So that you do not see which way he goes.

[Duke John advances hastily towards Tell, but he beckons him aside and exit. When both have left the stage, the scene changes.]

SCENE III.

The whole valley before Tell's house, the heights which enclose it occupied by peasants, grouped into tableaux. Some are seen crossing a lofty bridge, which crosses the Shechen.

Walter Furst with the two boys. Werner and Stauffacher come forward. Others throng after them. When Tell appears, all receive him with loud cheers.

ALL. Long live brave Tell, our shield, our saviour!

[While those in front are crowding round Tell, and embracing him, Rudenz and Bertha appear. The former salutes the peasantry, the latter embraces Hedwig. The music from the mountains continues to play. When it has stopped, Bertha steps into the centre of the crowd.]

BERTH. Peasants! Confederates! Into your league Receive me, who was happily the first That found deliverance in the land of freedom. To your brave hands I now entrust my rights. Will you protect me as your citizen?

PEAS. Ay, that we will, with life and goods!

BERTH. 'Tis well! And now to him

[Turning to Rudenz]

I frankly give my hand, A free Swiss maiden to a free Swiss man!

RUD. And from this moment all my serfs are free!

[Music, and the curtain falls.]

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK WILHELM TELL ***

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG™ LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public

domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in

the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project

Gutenberg work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg electronic works provided that:

• You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.” • You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works. • You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid

for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work. • You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU

FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of

Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg's goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 41 Watchung Plaza #516, Montclair NJ 07042, USA, +1 (862) 621-9288. Email contact links and up to date contact

information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit:

www.gutenberg.org/donate.

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.