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and expeditiously executed, and at prices to
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A Night Among the Clouds.

A THRILLING STORY.

The sun was setting on a certain Sun-
day in August, some years ago, at Man-
heim; and the pleasure gardens which
surround the town were rapidly becom-
ing silent and deserted. In one, how-
ever, the crowd still remained—the cot-
tage garden, then famous for its enter-
tainments, its fireworks, and its balloon
ascents.

These latter had long been so popu-
lar as to attract great crowds, perhaps
the more so as the aerial voyages were
as little dangerous as they were short.
The balloons were strongly attached to
the ground by ropes, which could be
lengthened or shortened at pleasure, the
ascend never exceeding the tops of the
trees, even among the bravest of two ad-
venturers.

The crowd was now leaving the bal-
loon for the fireworks, on another ter-
race, when a young girl, leaning on the
arm of a man about forty years of age,
appeared at the end of the avenue.—
They were walking slowly, and appeared
preoccupied by some serious matter.—
After a silence, the man said, energeti-
cally—

"No, sister, as long as I live, I can
never forget that Christian Loffmann
for dissipating my inheritance, for
my cousin's property; for Loffman
knows it was not left to me as a gift, but
as my right for what he owed me."

"He should have said so in his will,"
Michael, answered the young girl.
"And just because he did not, I am
deprived of my due! Because a dying
man did not explain all his reasons and
circumstances, I am accused of interest-
ed and almost fraudulent designs by this
Loffmann!"

"Alas! he does not know us, brother,"
said the girl gently. "They have filled
him with prejudices against us, and he
has believed them, because it was his
interest to do so."

"And so," replied Michael, bitterly,
"the land I have cultivated for twenty
years, and earned by my unceasing la-
bors, is to be taken away from me by a
foreigner, simply because he happens to
be born a fifth cousin!"

"The judgment has not been given,"
interrupted Florence.

"Ah! but I have little to hope from
it," answered Michael. "This Loffmann
is young and active; he has friends
too; perhaps, already the decree has
been pronounced."

He stopped on hearing his sister sigh.
"Well, well; here I am talking of it
all again, when I have brought you here
on purpose to make us both forget it.
I wish something wonderful would hap-
pen to divert us."

As he said these words, they turned a
corner of the path, and came suddenly
upon the open glade, where the balloon
was floating a few feet above their heads
sustaining a light, pretty car, which
seemed to be swimming over the grass.

Florence could not restrain a cry
of surprise and admiration. It was the
first time she had seen a balloon closely.
She drew nearer.

"Two more places!" cried the man
who held the cords.

One man was sitting in the car, in the
dress of a traveler, with one of the iron
spiked walking sticks used on mountain
excursions.

"Two places! Who will for a ride in
the air?" repeated the man.

"Is there no danger?" asked the girl.

"None in the least," answered the
man; "more than ten thousand souls have
taken these little rides."

"And can one descend when one
likes?"

"You need only ring the little hand
bell."

"Let us go," cried Michael.

So saying, he lifted Florence into the
car. The man loosed the ropes, and in
another moment the balloon slowly be-
gan to ascend. The young girl turned
pale. The stranger saw it, and moving
toward the hand bell, said, smiling—

"Shall we stop?"

"A thousand thanks," said Florence.
"I shall soon be used to it," and her
color returned.

They rose above the trees, and the
girl forgot her fears in the newness of
the sight. The Black Forest and the
Rhine appeared on either hand, and the
Neckar meandered among rich mead-
ows dotted with villages toward the
horizon.

"Happy country," said the stranger
as if speaking to himself, "of fertile
fields and wooded mountains!"

Michael sighed, and said, in a low
voice—

"Happy, indeed, if one is not under
the ban of persecutions and calumnies!"

The stranger turned to him—

"Ah! sir," said he, "no one knows
that better than myself?"

"Are you, then, also condemned to
defend your just rights?"

"Yes; and from an adversary who ne-
glects no means of annoying me."

"Like mine," returned Michael. "If
he gains his cause, I lose everything I
have gained in my whole life."

"And I, all that I have been looking
to in the future."

"The fruits of my labors will go to
enrich an avaricious man!"

"And all my hopes will be destroyed
to profit a hypocrite!"

"Ah! I see," cried Michael, "our
positions are alike; you plead against
some Christian Loffmann, like me."

"Christian Loffmann?" cried the stran-
ger; "why, that is my name! My ad-
versary is Michael Ritter!"

"Why, that is mine!"

That two men exchanged glances of
surprise, passion and hatred. Florence
looked frightened. She laid a hand on
her brother's arm.

"Let us descend!" said she.

"What Herr Loffmann said to his
adversary is a calumny!" exclaimed he,
with glittering eyes.

"And what Herr Ritter said of his is
false!" replied the young man, forcibly.

"Oh! heavens! let us descend!" cried
the girl, trembling.

"Yes," said Michael; "explanations
will be more satisfactory on ground."

"And I hope they will be decisive,"
added Loffmann, in a significant voice.

He rang the bell; but the balloon
remained stationary; again, a second
and third time, with a little effect.

They looked over the side of the car.

"Gracious Heavens!" cried Michael,
"there is an emette in the garden! They
are tearing down the railings, and mak-
ing a bonfire of the seats, and breaking
the lamps!"

"There! they are now under the bal-
loon!"

"What are they doing?"

"By Jove, they are cutting the cords."

The three travelers shrieked aloud—
but in vain. Believing the car empty,
the students had cut the cords, and in
another moment the balloon darted
up high into air, and disappeared from
their eyes in the gathering clouds of
night.

The unfortunate prisoners in the air
wasted some breath in useless cries
and exclamations; but despair soon
succeeded, they remained silent and
quiet, believing themselves doomed for
a speedy but inevitable death. Florence
hid her terrified face on her brother's
shoulder, but he had no words of con-
solation to give her.

Loffmann sat at the other end of the
car, seeming somewhat less disturbed,
and now and then casting a look of pity
on Ritter and his sister; but the recol-
lection of their reciprocal insults so
lately uttered, kept from communication
even in their common danger.

Meanwhile, the balloon, at the mercy
of the night winds, floated through the
sky with the rapidity of a swallow re-
turning to its nest, while its inmates
could but just perceive the glimmer of
some town or city over which they were
passing. But, by degrees, even this
failed them; the balloon mounted high-
er and the cold became oppressive. Dull
rumblings came in their ears, sharp tin-
glings in their extremities, and stiffness
in their limbs. Florence at last glided
down from her seat, unable to support
herself any longer.

"I am sleepy," she murmured.

"Oh! waken up! waken up!" cried
Michael; "sleep here is death! Get up,
Florence! get up!"

But she did not move.

"Florence! Oh! my God! she does
not hear me; and I have nothing to—"

"Take this cloak."

He turned, and saw Loffmann strip-
ping himself of his coat, which was lined
with fur.

"But you yourself?" hesitated Ritter,
touched and surprised.

"I am stronger," he answered, briefly.

Both stopped to wrap it around the
girl, and their hands met. Michael
seized his adversary's—

"Let this wipe out the past. I am
sorry I said so much to wound you!"

"Regret nothing," answered Loffmann.

"I was most in the wrong."

"Let us each forgive the other, then,"
answered Michael. "We shall all three
soon be before the judgment seat of God.
Let us throw away our anger before
that!"

"I have none left," cried Christian.

"Here is my hand, Ritter, and it is in-
deed a friend's hand."

"I accept it as such. Loffmann, we
have both been deceived, because our
interests were opposed; and we had no
means of learning the contrary by ac-
quaintance. Let us thank God that in
our last hour he has brought us together
that we may appear before him without
rancor in our hearts."

"Amen!" answered Loffmann; "and
may God forgive us as we forgive each
other!"

Then, looking up, they perceived a
pale light on one side—it was then
dawn.

The wind appeared to change and
sink; the balloon began to descend slow-
ly; and a little hope remained in their
hearts. The sun rose, and the country
began to reappear. It seemed like a
resurrection to them. The earth ex-
isted still, and for them; and the balloon
continued to descend. They soon dis-
tinguished the villages and fields. Sud-
denly, Ritter joyfully exclaimed—

"It is Loerach!"

And Florence, revived and thankful
recognized their old house and meadows.

But at this moment the balloon seem-
ed beginning to reascend on a fresh
wind. Florence clasped her hands.

"Is there no means of stopping it?"
she cried, imploringly.

"There is one," said Loffmann; "but
it is a dangerous one."

"Oh! let us try it," cried Ritter.

"Nothing can be worse than last night."

Loffmann stepped on the edge of the
car, and hanging on by the cords, thrust
the spike of his walking staff through
the silk of the balloon. The gas rushed
out with a roar; the balloon sank with
frightful rapidity, and the travelers shut
their eyes in terror. A violent bump
came, and they found themselves entan-
gled in the branches of a pine tree, with
the car but a few feet from the ground.

Toward the close of the day, Loffmann
and Ritter were leaning on the win-
dow of the old house—the disputed
property—to which Michael had con-
ducted his two companions after their
common deliverance. Their mutual
congratulations had at first quite occu-
pied their minds; but now that the first
feelings of relief had passed away, Ritter
began to feel his menaced interests re-
awakening within him.

He was still leaning silently on the
wooden balcony, when Christian, who
had been looking out intently all over
the country, suddenly asked—

"How far does your demesne extend?"

Michael started as if his conscience
told him his guest had divined his secret
thoughts.

"Ah! you want to know how much
your cause will gain for you?" he an-
swered, bitterly.

"Upon my word, I was not thinking
of it!" replied Loffmann; but he looked
disconcerted.

"You need not blush about it," said
Ritter; "we each have confidence in our
own rights, naturally. I will show you
the demesne."

And he pointed out woods and fields
one after another, far and near.

"It seems a wonderfully well culti-
vated property," observed Christian.

"I have given every thought and hour
I possessed to it," replied Michael. "I
had hoped to combine my improvements;
but who can tell how many or how few
days it may perhaps still be mine? Per-
haps, already."

As he said these words, Florence en-
tered. She seemed troubled as she ad-
vanced, holding a letter in her hand.

"Is that from Herr Litoff?" asked Mi-
chael, as he turned pale.

"Yes," answered the girl.

"Then the judgment is pronounced,
and we shall soon know."

He stretched out his hand trembled.

Florence took it between hers, and look-
ing timidly at Loffmann, said gently—

"Whatever happens, do not forget
that we have forgiven each other!"

"The letter! the letter?" cried Mi-
chael, impatiently.

The girl drew back a step.

"Promise to submit quietly, and not
angrily, to the decision," she said.

Pointing to the hill, where the pine
tree which had entangled them was still
visible, she added, solemnly—

"Have you so soon forgotten our
night in the clouds?"

Ritter and Loffmann looked at each
other. For a moment they each hesi-
tated, and then held out their hands
both together.

"Ah!" cried Michael, "it shall not be
said that in danger alone our hearts were
disposed to mercy. Saved by the good-
ness of God, let us prove our gratitude
by our submission! We have left our
enmity in the clouds—do not let us re-
turn to it on earth. Whatever this let-
ter may announce, I declare that I will
accept my fate with peace and calm-
ness."

"And for myself, I shall thank Heaven
for having gained a friend," answered
Christian, "even if it tells me of the ruin
of all my hopes."

Florence then gave the letter to her
brother. He opened it with a firm hand,
and turned slightly pale.

"You are in your own house, Loff-
mann!" said he, turning to the young
man, who was at his side.

"In my favor?" cried Loffmann, joy-
fully.

"You are master of all that belongs to
your cousin; his demesne is yours."

"A demesne is not worth as much as
the happiness of a friend," interrupted
Loffmann; and he tore the letter in
pieces.

Ritter beheld him with astonishment.
Florence clasped her hands.

"Yes," continued the young man; "I
came in here as guest, and will not re-
main as an enemy. He who has receiv-
ed me so kindly, shall himself be the
arbiter of our rights."

"Me?" cried Ritter. "Ah! if I could
choose!"

Loffmann turned a look full of tend-
erness on Florence, who cast down her
eyes; then, taking Michael's hand—

"It is for her who began our friendship
to tie the knot which shall bind us to
each other, and render our division of
rights more easy," said he.

"How?" asked Michael astonished.

"By enabling friends to become broth-
ers."

Ritter smiled as Florence hid her
blushing face in his bosom, and held
out her hand to Loffmann.

"ENGLISH WORKERS AND THE REBELS."

One of the ablest writers for the Jour-
nal debates is now writing letters to
that journal from Manchester and Bir-
mingham; and he extols as something the
most grand and wonderful he ever saw,
the "abnegation and practical sound-
sense of the English laboring classes un-
der their present suffering." But he
adds, "what is more wonderful still, is
that this 'class' understand the 'red'
question as issues in the United States,
and nearly universally and by that in-
distinct which unites the democratic mas-
ses everywhere; takes sides with the
north, and refuses to murmur because
they see their own battle—the battle
for free labor—being fought out."

So writes the Paris correspondent
of the New York Commercial. How
beautiful that is! How touching that
the men who, in all England, are our
firmest friends, are those who are suffer-
ing most intensely from the war.

A disease new to modern times
but possessing many points in common
with the *melancholia* of the ancients
has lately made its appearance in Chi-
cago. The disease shows itself in spots
not unlike those characterizing *variola*
but much more suddenly, and the pustules
are of a dark purple color. Several
cases of death from this new disease
occurred in Chicago last week. Where-
ever it has made its appearance, the
efforts of physicians have been unavailing.

There was a shrewd girl, and not
devoid of true modesty either, who re-
marked when other girls were making
fun of her short skirts and white hose
and affected to be much shocked at the
exhibition thereof at a party: "If you'd
only pull up your dresses about your
necks, where they ought to be, they'd be
as short as mine!" She was not troubled
any more.

All maidens are good, says one
moralist; "but where do the bad wives
all come from?"

SAVE YOUR PAPER AND RAGS.—We
are told by many of the largest paper
manufacturers that the question is not
merely as to price, whether at any price
the quantity of paper required can be
supplied; so limited has become the
supply of stock. This should call the
attention of the community to the sav-
ing of rags and paper, large quantities
of which have been wasted. Old paper
answers for mixing largely with rags,
and this is generally saved instead of
being wasted or destroyed, it will afford
much relief. Old paper, the waste and
sweepings of our stores and houses, now
commands six cents a pound, when it is
taken into view that the newspapers
circulating in the community will aver-
age about fifteen to the pound; rather
more than an ounce each, every one will
see that a large amount of wastage is
made here which may easily be saved.
Fragments of paper, equal in quality to
one printed newspaper sheet, will sell
for three-eighths of a cent by the pound
and old worn-out newspapers are in de-
mand for wrapping and other purposes,
at 50 to 60 cents a hundred. In these
times every piece of paper as large as a
bank bill, as well as rags of the smallest
size, should be saved. In many houses
and shops a great deal of paper is waste-
d in various ways. Doubtless many
families waste enough by burning in
kindling fires, in the course of a year, to
pay for supplying themselves with a
weekly, and perhaps even a daily news-
paper.

A HARD WIND.—Old Peter H—
lived in a one story wooden house of not
very extensive dimensions; and when it
was subjected to the force of wind its
powers of resistance were insufficient to
withstand so great a pressure, and it
yielded the point without a struggle;
however, it was not upset or torn to
pieces, but merely moved a few rods.—
In the course of the journey, the stove
was upset and the fire was spilled out,
and the danger of conflagration was
imminent. Old Peter was too much ex-
cited to notice the removal of his house,
and seeing the necessity of immediately
applying water to the burning embers of
the floor, he seized a bucket and darted
out behind the house, when great was
his astonishment to find all traces of his
well obliterated. After looking in blank
astonishment a moment he called to his
wife: "Sarah, I'll be blamed if the wind
blow down the well clear out of the lot!
There is not so much as a stone left!"

POPULAR IGNORANCE.—At a religious
public meeting, not long ago, a speaker
was illustrating the ignorance that pre-
vailed in the country, and said that a
corporation, going with tracts into the
log house of a dweller on the Ohio,
asked the woman if they had any Gos-
pel there. She said "No; but they had
it dreadful bad about four miles be-
low."

Worse than this, we have this week
a letter from a chaplain in Arkansas,
who says that a man buying furs was
conversing with a woman at whose house
he called, and asked her "if there were
any Presbyterians around there?" She
hesitated a little, and said, "she guessed
not; her husband hadn't killed any
since they had been there."

AN AMUSING ERROR.—Some women
in Lexington, Kentucky, rebel sym-
patizers, learning that several hundred
rebel prisoners were to come through
that place, repaired to the railroad sta-
tion with a liberal supply of provisions
for them. The train came in, and on it
was also the same number of Union sol-
diers. The women mistook them for
the rebels and had distributed their
"aid and comfort" before their error
could be rectified.

A gentleman from Boston chanced
to find himself among a little party of
ladies, away down East this summer,
in the enjoyment of some innocent social
play. He carelessly placed his arm
about the slender waist of as pretty a
damsel as Maine can boast of, when she
started and exclaimed, "Begone Sir!
don't insult!" The gentleman instantly
apologized for his seeming rudeness, and
assured the half offended fair one that
he did not mean to insult her. "No,"
she replied archly, "well if you didn't
you may do it again!"

The ghost which has annually re-
turned to plague the Clevelanders (Ohio)
has been laid at last. A company of
ghost detectives was recently organized,
which, after much tribulation, and sev-
eral stampedes, discovered that the
ghost was nothing more than a night
shirt and night cap bung out to dry.

PLEASE STOP MY PAPER.—"I am going
to stop my paper," said a miserly sub-
scriber to one of his neighbors; "I can-
not afford to take it."

"How much does it cost a year?"
asked the neighbor.

"One dollar," was the reply.

"And can't you afford one dollar a
year? Think of it; only one dollar a
year! A year is a long time. Perhaps
you have only a few shillings to spend
on earth. A year, a whole year! And
what do you get for your money? A
goodly-sized, closely printed, useful
sheet—giving you the news of the week,
and a large amount of miscellaneous
reading—philosophical, grave and hu-
morous—and you can't afford one dollar
for such a paper a whole year?"

"Well, I do declare, neighbor, you
talk like an experienced man. I never
thought of it in just that light before;
it is only one dollar a year, and yet the
paper comes to me every week, and I
love to read it; I always find something
in it that is interesting to me; and,
moreover, on second thought, I perceive
after all that a good newspaper is about
the cheapest thing a man has. It gets
more reading for his money than in any
other way."

"True, neighbor; and this shows that
what I have already said is true. News-
papers seem to be designed almost ex-
clusively for the poor to take, because
they are the cheapest thing they can
have."

How do you do, Mrs. Towe?—
Have you heard the story about Mrs.
Ludy?

"Why no, really, Mrs. Gad! What
is it? Do tell."

"Oh, I promised not to tell for all the
world! No, I must never tell out;
I'm afraid it will get out."

"Why, I'll never tell on't as long as
I live, just as true as the world. What
is it? Come, tell!"

"Now, you won't say anything about
it will you?"

"No, I'll never open my mouth about
it—never. Hope to die this minute."

"Well, if you'll believe it, Mrs. Fundy
told me last night that Mrs. Trot told
her that her sister's husband was told
by a person what dreamed it, that Mrs.
Trot's oldest daughter told Mrs.
Niceen's that her grandmother heard by
a letter she got from her sister's second
husband's oldest brother's step-daughter
that it was reported by the captain of a
clan-boat just arrived from the Feejee
Islands, that the mermaids made out of
shark skins."

Why are officers and soldiers so
habitually profane? It seems strange
that those most liable to be summoned
suddenly, into the very presence of
God should be the readiest to blaspheme
His holy name.

Father wants you to send him
two yards of black broadcloth; he don't
care what color it is, and when he kills
his pig last week he'll pay you what
you owe him!"

Why are ladies the biggest thieves
in existence?

Because they steal the petticoats,
bone the stays, and crib the babies.—
Yes, and hook the eyes, too.

A man who has addressed a stranger
by mistake, apologizes by saying, "I
was mistaken in the person." Many a
married couple might make the same
apology to each other.

There is a town down east where
the people are so opposed to commit-
ting an assault, that it is with difficulty
they can be persuaded to strike a tune
at church.

Mark what you remember upon
your finger-nails; they make convenient
horn-books, and you will have your les-
son at your finger's ends.

A western girl, after giving her
lover a hasty smack, exclaimed, "Dog
my cats, if you haven't taken a little rye,
old hoss."