

ЭРНСТ ГОФМАН

SPECIMENS OF GERMAN
ROMANCE; VOL. II.
MASTER FLEA

Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann
Specimens of German
Romance; Vol. II. Master Flea

*http://www.litres.ru/pages/biblio_book/?art=36320996
*Specimens of German Romance; Vol. II. Master Flea:**

Содержание

First Adventure	4
Second Adventure	35
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	47

E. T. A. Hoffmann

Specimens of German Romance; Vol. II. Master Flea

First Adventure

Introduction—Wherein the gentle reader learns as much of the life of Mr. Peregrine Tyss as is requisite for him to know.

Presentation of Christmas-boxes at the bookbinder's, Lemmerhirt, in the Kelbecker-street, and beginning of the First Adventure.—The two Alinas.

Once upon a time—But what author will venture to begin his tale so now-a-days?—Obsolete! tedious!—Such is the cry of the gentle, or rather ungentle reader, who wishes to be plunged at once, *medias in res*, according to the wise advice of the old Roman poet. He feels as if some long-winded talker of a guest, who had just entered, was spreading himself out, and clearing his voice to begin an endless discourse, and he angrily closes the book which he had but just opened. The present editor, indeed, of the wonderful tale of Master Flea, thinks this beginning a very good beginning, not to say the best for every history, on which account the most excellent story-tellers that are, namely, nurses,

old women, &c. have at all times made use of it; but as every author writes chiefly to be read, he,—that is, the aforesaid editor,—will not at any rate deprive the kind reader of the pleasure of actually being his reader. He tells him therefore at once, without more circumlocution, that this same Peregrine Tyss, of whose strange adventures this history is to treat, had never, on any Christmas evening, felt his heart so throb with anxious joyful expectation, as precisely on that with which begins the narration of his adventures.

Peregrine was in a dark chamber, next the show-room in which he was wont to receive his Christmas-box. There he crept gently up and down, listened a little at the door, and then seated himself quietly in a corner, and with shut eyes inhaled the mystic odours of the marchpane and gingerbread which streamed from the sanctuary. Then, again, there would shoot through him a sweet mysterious thrill when, on suddenly re-opening them, he was dazzled by the vivid beams of light which fell through the crevices of the door, and danced hither and thither upon the wall.

At length sounded the little silver bell,—the chamber door was flung open, and in rushed Peregrine, amidst a whole fire-flood of variegated Christmas lights. Quite petrified, he remained standing at the table, on which the finest gifts were arranged in the most handsome order, and only a loud "oh!" forced itself from his breast. Never before had the Christmas tree borne such splendid fruits, for every sweetmeat that can be named, and amongst them many a golden nut, many a golden apple from

the garden of the Hesperides hung upon the boughs, which bent beneath their burthen. The provision of choicest playthings, fine leaden soldiers, hunting trains of the same, picture-books, &c. is not to be told. But as yet he did not venture to touch any part of the wealth presented to him; he could only occupy himself in mastering his wonder, and comprehending the idea of his good fortune in all this being really his.

"O my dear parents! O my good Alina!"—so he exclaimed, with feelings of the highest transport.

"Well, my little Peregrine," replied Alina, "have I done it well? Are you in truth rejoiced from your heart, my child? Won't you look nearer at these handsome things? Won't you try the new rocking-horse and the beautiful fox?"

"A noble steed," said Peregrine, examining the bridled rocking-horse with tears of joy—"a noble beast, of pure Arabian race;" and he immediately mounted his proud courser; but though Peregrine might else be a capital rider, yet this time he must have made some mistake, for the wild Pontifer (so was the horse called) reared, and threw him off, making him kick up his legs most piteously. Before, however, Alina, who was frightened to death, could run to his assistance, he had got up again and seized the bridle of the horse, who threw out behind, and endeavoured to run away. Again he mounted, and using with strength and skill all the arts of horsemanship, he brought the wild animal so to his reason, that it trembled and panted, and recognized his master in Peregrine. Upon his dismounting, Alina

led the conquered horse into his stable.

This somewhat violent riding, which had caused an outrageous noise in the room, and indeed through the whole house, was now over, and Peregrine seated himself at the table, that he might quietly take a nearer view of the other splendid presents. With great delight he devoured some of the marchpane, while he set in motion the limbs of the different puppets, peeped into the various picture-books, mustered his army, which he with reason deemed invincible, since not a single soldier had a stomach in his body, and at last proceeded to the business of the chase. To his great vexation, he discovered that there was only a hare and fox hunt, and that the stag and wild boar chase were altogether wanting. These, too, ought to have been there, as none better knew than Peregrine, he himself having purchased the whole with unspeakable care and trouble.

But, hold!—It seems highly requisite to guard the kind reader against the awkward mistakes into which he might fall, if the author were to go on gossiping at random, without reflecting that though he may know the meaning of these Christmas Eve arrangements, it is not so with his reader, who would wish to learn what he does not comprehend.

Much mistaken would he be who should imagine that Peregrine Tyss was a child, to whom a kind mother, or some other well-affectioned female, called in romantic fashion Alina, had been giving Christmas-boxes—Nothing less than that!

Mr. Peregrine Tyss had got to his six-and-thirtieth year, and

herein had passed almost the best of life. Six years before, he was said to be a handsome man; now he was with reason called a man of gentlemanly appearance: but at all times,—then, as well as now,—it was the cry of all, that he lived too much to himself; that he did not know life, and was manifestly suffering under a diseased melancholy. Fathers, whose daughters were just marriageable, thought that to get rid of this melancholy, the good Tyss could do nothing better than marry; he had a free choice, and had little reason to fear a negative. The opinion of the fathers was at least correct in regard to the latter point, insomuch as Mr. Tyss, besides being, as before said, a man of gentlemanly appearance, possessed a considerable property, left to him by his father, Mr. Balthasar Tyss, a very respectable merchant. Maidens who have got beyond the heyday of love,—that is, who are at least three or four-and-twenty years old—when such highly gifted men put the innocent question of "Will you bless me with your hand, dearest?" seldom do otherwise than answer, with blushing cheeks and downcast eyes, "Speak to my parents, sir; I shall obey them—I have no will:"—while the parents fold their hands and say, "If it is the will of Heaven, we have nothing against it, son."

But Mr. Peregrine Tyss seemed inclined to nothing less than marriage; for besides that he was in general averse to society, he showed more particularly a strange idiosyncrasy towards the female race. The mere proximity of any woman would bring the perspiration on his forehead; and if actually accosted by a tolerably handsome girl, he would fall into an agony that fettered

his tongue, and caused a cramp-like trembling through all his limbs. Hence, perhaps, it was that his old servant was so ugly, that, in the neighbourhood where Mr. Peregrine Tyss lived, she passed for a wonder in natural history. The black, rugged, half-grey hair accorded well with the red blear eyes, and just as well agreed the thick copper nose with the pale blue lips, in forming the image of an aspirant to the Blocksberg¹; so that two centuries earlier, she would hardly have escaped the stake, instead of being, as now, esteemed by Mr. Peregrine, and others too, for a good sort of person. This, in fact, she was, and might therefore well be forgiven, if she comforted her body with many a little dram in the course of the day, or, perhaps, too often took out from her stomacher a huge black japanned snuffbox, and fed her respectable nose very richly with pure Oppenbacher. The kind reader has already observed that this remarkable person is the very same Alina who managed the business of the Christmas-boxes. Heaven knows how she came by the celebrated name of the Queen of Golconda!

But if the fathers desired that the rich agreeable Mr. Peregrine should lay aside his horror of women and marry without more ado, the old bachelors, on the other hand, said that he did quite right to remain single, as his turn of mind was not suited to matrimony. It was unlucky, however, that at the phrase "turn of mind," not a few made a very mysterious face; and upon

¹ The Blocksberg, or Brocken, is the name of the highest part of the Hartz mountains, where the German witches celebrate their saturnalia.—Tr.

close inquiry, gave it to be pretty plainly understood, that Mr. Peregrine Tyss was at times a little cracked. The numerous retailers of this opinion belonged chiefly to those who are firmly convinced that on the great high way of life, which is to be kept according to reason and prudence, the nose is the best guide, and who would rather put on blinkers than be led aside by any odorous shrub or blooming meadow that grows by the way. It was, however, true that Peregrine had many things about him which people could not comprehend.

It has been already said that his father was a rich and respectable merchant; when to this is added that he owned a handsome house in the Horse-market, and that in this house, in the very same chamber where the little Peregrine had always received his Christmas-boxes, the grown-up Peregrine was now receiving them, there is no room to doubt that the place of the strange adventures to be narrated in this history is the celebrated city of Frankfort on the Maine. Of his parents little more is to be told than that they were quiet honest folks, of whom no one could speak any thing but good. The unbounded esteem which Mr. Tyss enjoyed upon 'Change he owed to two circumstances; he always speculated well and safely, gaining one sum after the other; while at the same time he never presumed, but remained modest as before, and made no boast of his wealth, which he showed merely by his haggling about nothing, and being indulgence itself towards insolvent debtors who had fallen into misfortune, even though it were deservedly.

For a long time the marriage of Mr. Tyss was unfruitful, till at length, after almost twenty years, Mrs. Tyss rejoiced her husband with a fine lusty boy, who was our identical Master Peregrine Tyss. The boundless joy of the elders may be imagined, and the people of Frankfort yet talk of the splendid christening given by the old Tyss, at which the noblest hock was filled out as if at a coronation festival. But what added still more to the posthumous fame of Mr. Tyss was, that he invited to this christening a couple of people who, in their enmity, had often injured him; and not only them, but others too whom he thought he had injured; so that the feast was really one of peace and reconciliation.

Alas! the good man did not suspect that this same child, whose birth so much rejoiced him, would soon be a cause of sorrow. At the very first, the boy Peregrine showed a singular disposition. After he had cried night and day uninterruptedly for some weeks, without their being able to find out any bodily ailment, he became on the sudden quite quiet and as it were stupified into a motionless insensibility: he seemed incapable of the least impression. The little brow, which appeared to belong to a lifeless puppet, was wrinkled neither by tears nor laughter. His mother maintained that it was owing, on her part, to the sight of the old book-keeper, who had for twenty years sat in the counting-house before the great cash-book, with the same lifeless countenance; and she wept bitter tears over the little automaton.

At last an old gossip hit upon the lucky thought of bringing Peregrine a very motley, and, in fact, a very ugly harlequin. The

child's eyes quickened in a strange fashion, the mouth contracted to a gentle smile, he caught at the puppet, and, the moment it was given to him, hugged it tenderly. Then again he gazed upon the manikin with such intelligent and speaking eyes, that it seemed as if reason and sensation had suddenly awakened in him, and with much greater vigour than is usual with children of his age.

"He is too wise," said the godmother; "you'll not keep him. Only look at his eyes; he already thinks more than he ought to do."

This declaration greatly comforted the old merchant, who had in some measure reconciled himself to the idea of having begot an idiot, after so many years of fruitless expectation. Soon, however, he fell into a fresh trouble; and this was, that the time had long since gone by in which children usually begin to speak, and yet Peregrine had not uttered a syllable. The boy would have been thought dumb, but that he often gazed on the person who spoke to him with such attention, nay even showed such sympathy by sad as well as by joyful looks, that there could be no doubt not only of his hearing, but of his understanding, every thing.

In the meantime his mother was mightily astonished at finding what the nurse had told her confirmed. At night, when the boy lay in bed and fancied himself unnoticed, he talked to himself single words, and even whole sentences, and so little broken that a long practice might be inferred from this perfection. Heaven has lent to women a certain tact of reading human nature as

its growth variously developes itself, on which account, for the first years at least of childhood, they are the best educators. According to this tact, Mrs. Tyss was far from letting the boy see he was observed, or from wishing to force him to speak; she rather contrived to bring it about by other dexterous means, that he should of himself no longer keep concealed the beautiful talent of speech, but should slowly, yet plainly, manifest it to the world, and to the wonder of all. Still, however, he evinced a constant aversion to talking, and was most pleased when they left him in quiet by himself.

Thus was Mr. Tyss freed from all anxiety on account of his want of tongue, but it was only to fall into a much greater care afterwards. When Peregrine had grown a boy and ought to have learnt stoutly, it seemed as if nothing was to be driven into him without the greatest trouble. It was with his writing and reading as it had been with his talking; at first the matter could not be compassed at all, and then on a sudden he did it admirably, and beyond all expectation. In the meantime one master after another left the house, not from dislike to the boy, but because they could not enter into his disposition. Peregrine was still, mannerly, and industrious, and yet it was no use thinking of any systematic learning with him; he had understanding for that only which happened to chime in exactly with his genius; all the rest passed over him without leaving any impression: and that which suited his genius was the *wonderful*,—all that excited his imagination; in that he lived and moved. So, for example, he once received

a present of a sketch of Pekin, with all its streets, houses, &c. which occupied the entire wall of his chamber. At the sight of this city of fables, of the singular people that seemed to crowd through its streets, Peregrine felt as if transported by some magic sleight into another world, in which he was to become at home. With eagerness he now fell upon every thing that he could get hold of respecting China, the Chinese, and Pekin; and having somewhere found the Chinese sounds described, he laboured to pronounce them according to the description, with a fine chanting voice; nay, he even endeavoured, by means of the paper-scissors, to give his handsome calimanco bed-gowns the Chinese cut as much as possible, that he might have the pleasure of walking the streets of Pekin in the fashion. Nothing else could excite his attention—to the great annoyance of his tutor, who just then wished to instil into him the history of the Hanseatic League, according to the express wish of Mr. Tyss; but the old gentleman found to his sorrow, that Peregrine was not to be brought out of Pekin, wherefore he brought Pekin out of the boy's chamber.

The elder Mr. Tyss had always considered it a bad omen that Peregrine, as a little child, should prefer counters to ducats, and next should manifest a decided abhorrence of moneybags, ledgers, and waste books. But what seemed most singular was, that he never could hear the word "bill of exchange" pronounced without having his teeth set on edge, and he assured them that he felt at the sound as if some one was scratching up and down

a pane of glass with the point of a knife. Mr. Tyss, therefore, could not help seeing that his son was spoilt for a merchant, and however he might wish to have him treading in his footsteps, yet he readily gave up this desire, under the idea that Peregrine would apply himself to some decided occupation. It was a maxim of his, that the richest man ought to have an employment, and thereby a settled station in life; people with no occupation were an abomination to him, and it was precisely to this *no-occupation* that his son was entirely devoted, with all the knowledge which he had picked up in his own way, and which lay chaotically confounded in his brain. This was now the greatest and most pressing anxiety of Mr. Tyss. Peregrine wished to know nothing of the actual world, the old man lived in that only; from which contradiction it could not but be that, the older Peregrine grew, the worse became the discord between father and son, to the no little sorrow of the mother: she cordially conceded to Peregrine, who was otherwise the best of sons, his mode of life, in mere dreams and fancies, though to her indeed unintelligible, and she could not conceive why her husband would positively impose upon him a decided occupation.

By the advice of tried friends, Tyss sent his son to the university of Jena, but when, after three years, he returned, the old man exclaimed, full of wrath and vexation, "Did I not think so? Hans the dreamer he went away, Hans the dreamer he comes back again." And so far he was quite right, for the student was substantially unaltered. Still he did not give up all

hope of bringing the degenerate Peregrine to reason, thinking that if he were once forced into some employment, he might, perhaps, change his mind in the end, and take a pleasure in it. With this view he sent him to Hamburgh, with commissions that did not require any particular knowledge of business, and moreover commended him to a friend there, who was to assist him faithfully in all things.

Peregrine arrived at Hamburgh, where he gave into the hands of his father's friend not only his letter of recommendation, but all the papers too that related to his commissions, and immediately disappeared, no one knew whither. Hereupon the friend wrote to Mr. Tyss:

"I have punctually received your honoured letter of the—by the hands of your son. The same, however, has not shown himself since, but set off from Hamburgh immediately, without leaving any commission. In peppers we are doing little; cotton goes off heavily; in coffee, the middle sort only is inquired after: but on the other hand molasses maintain their price pleasantly; and in indigo there is not much fluctuation. I have the honour," &c.

This letter would have plunged Mr. Tyss and his spouse into no little alarm, if by the very same post another had not arrived from the lost son, wherein he excused himself, with the most melancholy expressions, saying that it had been utterly impossible for him to execute the received commissions, according to his father's wishes, and that he found himself irresistibly attracted to foreign countries, from which he hoped

to return home in a year's time with a happier and more cheerful disposition.

"It is well," said the old man, "that the younger should look about him in the world; he may get shaken out of his day dreams."—And when Peregrine's mother expressed an anxiety lest he should want money for his long journey, and that, therefore, his carelessness was much to be blamed in not having written to tell them where he was going, the old gentleman replied laughing, "If the lad be in want of money, he will the sooner get acquainted with the real world; and if he have not said which way he is going, still he knows where his letters will find us."

It has always remained unknown which way his journey really was directed; some maintain that he had been to the distant Indies; others declare that he had only fancied it; thus much, however, is certain, he must have travelled a great way, for it was not in a year's time, as he had promised his parents, but after the lapse of full three years, that Peregrine returned to Frankfort on foot, and in a tolerably poor condition.

He found his father's mansion fast shut up and no one stirred within, let him ring and knock as much as he would. At last there came by a neighbour from 'Change, of whom he immediately inquired whether Mr. Tyss had gone abroad? At this question the neighbour started back, terrified, and cried, "Mr. Peregrine Tyss! Is it you? Are you come at last? Don't you then know it?"

Enough,—Peregrine learnt that, during his absence, both

parents had died, one after the other; that the authorities had taken possession of the inheritance, and had publicly summoned him, whose abode was altogether unknown, to return to Frankfort and receive the property of his father.

Peregrine continued to stand before his neighbour without the power of utterance. For the first time the pain of life crossed his heart, and he saw in ruins the beautiful bright world wherein, till now, he had dwelt with so much delight. The neighbour soon perceived that he was utterly incapable of setting about the least thing that the occasion called for; he therefore took him to his own house, and himself arranged every thing with all possible expedition, so that, on the very same evening, Peregrine found himself in his paternal mansion.

Exhausted, overwhelmed by a feeling of disconsolation such as he had not yet known, he sank into his father's great arm-chair, which was still standing in its usual place, when a voice said, "It is well that you have returned, dear Mr. Peregrine; ah, if you had but come sooner!"

Peregrine looked up and saw close before him the old woman, whom his father had taken into his service chiefly because she could get no other place, on account of her outrageous ugliness: she had been Peregrine's nurse in his early childhood, and had not left the house since. For a long time he stared at the woman, and at last began with a strange smile, "Is it you, Alina? The old people live still, do they not?" And with this he got up, went through every room, considered every chair, every table, and

every picture, and then calmly added, "Yes, it is all just as I left it, and just so shall it remain."

From this moment Peregrine adopted the strange life which was mentioned at the very beginning of our story. Retired from all society, he lived with his aged attendant in the large roomy house in the deepest solitude: subsequently he let out a couple of rooms to an old man, who had been his father's friend, and seemed as misanthropical as himself— reason enough why the two should agree remarkably well, for they never saw each other.

There were four family festivals which Peregrine celebrated with infinite solemnity; and these were the birth-days of his father and mother, Easter, and his own day of christening. At these times Alina had to set out a table for as many persons as his father had been wont to invite, with the same wine and dishes which had been usually served up on those occasions. Of course the same silver, the same plates, the same glasses, such as had then been used, and such as they still remained, were now brought forward, in the fashion which had prevailed for so many years. Peregrine kept to this strictly. Was the table ready? He sat down to it alone, ate and drank but little, listened to the conversation of his parents, and the imaginary guests, and replied modestly to this or that question as it was directed to him by any one of the company. Did his mother put back her seat? he too rose with the rest, and took his leave of each with great courtesy. Then he retired to a distant chamber, and consigned to Alina the division of the wine and the many untasted dishes amongst

the poor; which command of her master, the faithful soul was wont to execute most conscientiously. The celebration of the two birth-days he began early in the morning, that, according to the custom of his boyhood, he might carry a handsome nosegay into the room where his parents used to breakfast, and repeat verses which he had got by heart for the occasion. On his own day of christening, he naturally could not sit at table, as he had not then been long born; Alina, therefore, had to attend to every thing, that is, to invite people to drink, and, in the general phrase, to do the honours of the table: with this exception, every thing was the same as at the other festivals. But in addition to these, Peregrine had yet another holiday in the year, or rather holy evening, and that was Christmas Eve, with its gifts, which had excited his youthful fancy more than any other pleasure.

He himself carefully purchased the motley Christmas lights, the playthings, the sweetmeats, just as his parents had presented them to him in his childish years; and then the presentation took place, as the kind reader has already seen.

"It is very vexatious," said Peregrine, after having played with them some time—"it is very vexatious that the stag and wild boar hunt should be missing. Where can they be? Ah, look there!"—At this moment he perceived a little box which still remained unopened, and hastily snatched at it, expecting to recover the missing treasure. But on opening it he found it empty, and started back as if a sudden fright had seized him.—"Strange!" he murmured to himself; "strange! What is the matter with this box?"

It seems as if some fearful thing sprang out upon me, that my eye was too dull to grapple with."

Alina, on being questioned, assured him that she had found the box among the playthings, and had in vain used every exertion to open it; hence she had imagined that it contained something particular, and that the lid would yield only to the experienced hand of her master.

"Strange!" repeated Peregrine, "very strange!—and it was with this chase that I had particularly pleased myself; I hope it may not bode any evil!—But who, on a Christmas Eve, would dwell upon such fancies, which have properly no foundation? Alina, fetch me the basket."

Alina accordingly brought a large white basket; in which, with much care, he packed up the playthings, the sweetmeats, and the tapers, took the basket under his arm, the great Christmas-tree on his shoulder, and set out on his way.

It was the kind and laudable practice of Mr. Tyss to surprise some needy family, where he knew there were children, with his whole cargo of Christmas-boxes, just as he had purchased it, and dream himself for a few hours into the happy times of boyhood. Then, when the children were in the height of their joy, he would softly steal away and wander about the streets half the night, hardly knowing what to do with himself, from the deep emotions which straitened his breast, and feeling his own house like a vault, in which he was buried with all his pleasures. This time his Christmas-boxes were intended for the children

of a poor bookbinder, of the name of Lemmerhirt, who was a skilful, industrious man, had long worked for him, and whose three children he was well acquainted with.

The bookbinder, Lemmerhirt, lived in the top floor of a narrow house in the Kalbecher-street; and as the winter storm howled and raged, and the rain and snow fell with mingled violence, it may be easily imagined that Peregrine did not get to his object without great difficulty. From the window twinkled down a couple of miserable tapers; with no little toil he clambered up the steep stairs, knocked at the door, and called out, "Open! Open! Christmas sends his presents to all good children."

The bookbinder opened the door in alarm, and it was not till after some consideration that he recognised Peregrine, who was quite covered with snow.

"Worshipful Mr. Tyss!" he exclaimed, full of wonder—"How in the name of Heaven do I come to such an honour on Christmas Eve?"

Worshipful Mr. Tyss, however, would not let him finish, but calling out, "Children! Children! Alert! Christmas sends his presents"—he took possession of the flap-table in the middle of the room, and immediately began to pull out his presents from the basket; the great Christmas-tree, indeed, which was dripping wet, he had been forced to leave outside the door. Still the bookbinder could not comprehend what it all meant; the wife, however, knew better, for she smiled at Peregrine, with

silent tears, while the children stood at a distance, devouring with their eyes each gift as it came out of the cover, and often unable to refrain from a loud cry of joy and wonder. At last he had dexterously divided, and ordered the presents according to each child's age, lighted all the tapers, and cried, "Come, come, children! this is what Christmas sends you." They, who could yet hardly believe that all belonged to them, now shouted aloud, and leaped, and rejoiced; while their parents prepared to thank their benefactor. But it was precisely this thanksgiving that Peregrine always sought to avoid, and he therefore wished, as usual, to take himself off quietly. With this view he had got to the door, when it suddenly opened, and in the bright shine of the Christmas lights stood before him a young female, splendidly attired.

It seldom turns out well, when an author undertakes to describe narrowly to the reader the appearance of this or that beautiful personage of his tale,—showing the shape, the growth, the carriage, the hair, the colour of the eyes; it seems much better to give the whole person at once, without these details. Here, too, it would be quite enough to state that the lady, who ran against the startled Peregrine, was uncommonly handsome and graceful, if it were not absolutely requisite to speak of certain peculiarities which the little creature had about her.

She was small, and, indeed, somewhat too small, but, at the same time, neatly and elegantly proportioned. Her forehead, in other respects handsomely formed and full of expression, acquired a something strange and singular from the unusual size

of the eyeballs, and from the dark pencilly brows being higher placed than ordinary. The little thing was dressed, or rather decorated, as if she had just come from a ball. A splendid diadem glittered amongst her raven locks, rich point lace only half veiled her bosom, a black and yellow striped dress of heavy silk sate close upon her slender body, and fell down in folds just so low as to let the neatest little feet be seen, in white shoes, while the sleeves were just long enough, and the gloves just short enough, to show the fairest part of a dazzling arm. A rich necklace, and brilliant ear-rings, completed her attire.

It could not but be that the bookbinder was as much surprised as Peregrine,—that the children abandoned their playthings, and stared with open mouths at the stranger: as, however, women in general are wont to be the least astonished at any thing unusual, and are the quickest to collect themselves, so, on this occasion also, the bookbinder's wife was the first that recovered speech, and asked, "In what she could serve the lady?"

Upon this the stranger came fairly into the room, and the frightened Peregrine would have seized the opportunity to take himself quickly off, but she caught him by both hands, lispng out, in a little soft voice, "Fortune, then, has favoured me! I have found you, then! O Peregrine, my dear Peregrine, what a delightful meeting!" Herewith she raised her right hand, so that it touched Peregrine's lips, and he was compelled to kiss it, though, in so doing, the cold drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. She now, indeed, let go his hands, and he might have fled, but

he felt himself spellbound, he could not move from the place—like some poor little animal that has been fascinated by the eye of the rattle-snake.

"Allow me," she said, "dear Peregrine, to share in this charming treat that you have so nobly, and with such real goodness, prepared for the children. Permit me, also, to contribute something to it!"

From a little basket which hung upon her arm, and which had not been remarked till now, she took out all sorts of playthings, arranged them on the table with graceful bustle, brought forward the children, pointed out to each the present intended for him, and sported so prettily withal, that nothing could be more delightful. The bookbinder thought he was in a dream, but the wife laughed roguishly, fancying that there must be some particular acquaintance between Peregrine and the stranger.

While now the parents were wondering, and the children were rejoicing, the lady took her seat upon an old frail sofa, and drew down Mr. Peregrine, who, in fact, scarcely knew any longer whether he actually was this same person. She then gently lisped into his ear, "My dear, dear Peregrine, how happy, how delighted I feel by your side!"—"But, lady," stammered Peregrine, "honoured lady—" On a sudden, Heaven knows how, the lips of the stranger came so close to his, that, before he could think about kissing them, he had really done it. That by this he lost all power of speech is easily to be imagined.

"My sweet friend," continued the lady, creeping up to Peregrine so closely, that she almost sate in his lap—"My sweet friend, I know what troubles you; I know what has so much afflicted your simple heart this evening. But, take comfort. That which you lost, that which you hardly hoped to find again,—see, I bring it to you."

With this she took out a little wooden box from her basket, and gave it into the hands of Peregrine. In it was the hunting-set that he had missed on the Christmas-eve table. It would be hard to describe the strange feelings which were now thronging and jostling in his bosom.

The whole appearance of the stranger, in spite of all her grace and loveliness, had yet something supernatural about it, which those, who had not Peregrine's awe of woman, would yet have received with a cold shudder through every vein; of course, therefore, a deep horror seized the poor Peregrine, already in sufficient alarm, when he found the lady most narrowly informed of all that he had been doing in the profoundest solitude. Still, when he looked up, and met the glance of two bright black eyes flashing from under the silken lids—when he felt the sweet breath of the lovely being, and the electric warmth of her limbs— still, with all his terror, there awoke in him the sadness of unutterable desires, such as he had not yet known. For the first time his whole mode of life, his trifling with the Christmas presents, appeared to him absurd and childish, and he felt ashamed that the stranger should know of it; but then again it seemed as if her gift was the

living proof that she understood him, as none else on earth had understood him, and, in seeking to gratify him after this manner, had been prompted by the most perfect delicacy of feeling. He resolved to treasure up the dear gift for ever, never to let it go out of his own hands; and, carried away by a feeling which totally overpowered him, he pressed the casket to his breast with vehemence.

"Delightful!" murmured the maiden, "my gift pleases you! Oh, my dearest Peregrine, then my dreams, my presentiments, have not deceived me!"

Mr. Tyss came somewhat to himself, so that he was able to say, with great plainness and distinctness, "But, most respected lady, if I only knew to whom in all the world I had the honour—"

"Cunning man," said the stranger, gently tapping his cheeks,— "to pretend as if you did not know your faithful Alina! But it is time that we should leave the good folks here to their own pleasures. Accompany me, Mr. Tyss."

On hearing the name Alina, Peregrine naturally reverted to his old attendant, and he felt exactly as if a wind-mill were going round in his head.

The strange Alina now took the kindest and most gracious leave of the family, while the bookbinder, from pure wonder and respect, could only stammer out a something unintelligible; but the children made as if they had been long acquainted with her, and the wife said, "Such a kind, handsome man as you are, Mr. Tyss, well deserves to have so kind and handsome a bride,

who, even at this hour, assists him in doing acts of benevolence. I congratulate you with all my heart."—The strange lady thanked her with emotion, protesting that the day of her wedding should also be a day of festival to them; and then, strictly refusing all attendance, took a taper from the Christmas table to light herself down the stairs.

It is easy to imagine the feelings of Peregrine at all this, on whose arm she leant.—"Accompany me, Mr. Tyss,"—that is,—he thought within himself,—down the stairs to the carriage which stands at the door, and where the servant, or perhaps a whole set of servants, is in waiting, for in the end it must be some mad princess, who—Heaven deliver me with speed from this strange torture, and keep me in my right senses, such as they are!

Mr. Tyss did not suspect that all, which had yet happened, was only the prologue to a most wonderful adventure, and had therefore, without knowing it, done exceedingly well in praying to Heaven for the preservation of his senses.

No sooner had the couple reached the bottom of the stairs, than the door was opened by invisible hands, and, when they had got out, was shut again in the same manner. Peregrine, however, paid no attention to this, in his astonishment at finding not the slightest appearance of any carriage before the house, or of any servant in waiting.—"In the name of Heaven," he cried, "where is your coach, lady?"

"Coach!" replied the stranger—"Coach! what coach? Did you think, dear Peregrine, that my impatience, my anxiety, to find

you, would allow me to come riding here quite quietly? No; hurried on by hope and desire, I ran about through the storm till I found you. Thank Heaven that I have succeeded! And now lead me home; my house is not far off."

Peregrine resolutely avoided all reflection on the impossibility of the stranger going a few steps only, tricked out as she was, and in white silk shoes, without spoiling her whole dress in the storm, instead of being, as now, in a state that showed not the slightest trace of discomposure; he reconciled himself to the idea of accompanying her still farther, and was only glad that the weather was changed. The storm, indeed, had past, not a cloud was in the heaven, the full moon shone down pleasantly, and only the keen air made the midnight to be felt.

Scarcely had they gone a few steps, when the maiden began to complain softly, and soon burst out into loud lamentations, that she was freezing with the cold. Peregrine, whose blood glowed through his veins, who had therefore been insensible to the weather, and never thought of her being so lightly clad, without even a shawl or a tucker, now on a sudden saw his folly, and would have wrapt her in his cloak. This, however, she rejected, exclaiming piteously, "No, my dear Peregrine, that avails me nothing: my feet!—Ah, my feet! I shall die with the dreadful agony."

And she was about to drop, half senseless, as she cried out with a faint voice, "Carry me, carry me, my sweet friend!"

Without more ado, Peregrine took up the light little creature

in his arms like a child, and wrapt her in his cloak. But he had not gone far with his burthen, before the wild intoxication of desire took more and more possession of him, and, as he hurried half way through the streets, he covered the neck and bosom of the lovely creature, who had nestled closely to him with burning kisses. At last he felt as if waking with a sudden jerk out of a dream: he found himself at a house-door, and, looking up, recognised his own house, in the Horse-market, when, for the first time, it occurred to him that he had not asked the maiden where she lived; he collected himself therefore with effort, and said, "Lady—sweet, angelic creature where is your abode?"

"Here, my dear Peregrine," she replied, lifting up her head; "here, in this house: I am your Alina; I live with you; but get the door open quickly."

"No—never!" cried Peregrine, in horror, and let her sink down.

"How!" exclaimed the stranger—"how! Peregrine, you would reject me? and yet know my dreadful fate,—and yet know that, child of misfortune as I am, I have no refuge, and must perish here miserably if you will not take me in as usual! But perhaps you wish that I should perish? Be it so then! Only carry me to the fountain, that my corse may not be found before your door. Ha!—the stone dolphins may, perchance, have more pity than you have. Woe is me!—woe is me!—The bitter cold!"

She sank down in a swoon; Peregrine was seized with despair, and exclaiming wildly, "Let it be as it will, I cannot do otherwise—" he lifted up the lifeless little thing, took her in

his arms, and rang violently at the bell. No sooner was the door opened than he rushed by the servant, and instead of waiting, according to his usual custom, till he got to the top of the stairs, and then tapping gently, he shouted out, "Alina! Alina! light!" and, indeed, so loudly, that the whole floor re-echoed it.

"How!—what!—what's this?—what does this mean?" exclaimed the old woman, opening her eyes widely as Peregrine unfolded the maiden from his cloak, and laid her with great care upon the sofa.

"Quick, Alina, quick! Fire in the grate!—salts!—punch!—beds here!"

Alina, however, did not stir from the place, but remained, staring at the stranger, with her "How!—what!—what's this?—what does this mean?"

Hereupon Peregrine began to tell of a countess, perhaps a princess, whom he had met at the bookbinder's, who had fainted in the streets, whom he had been forced to carry home; and, as Alina still remained immoveable, he cried out, stamping with his feet, "Fire, I tell you, in the devil's name!—tea!—salts!"

At this, the old woman's eyes glared like a cat's, and her nose was lit up with a brighter phosphorus. She pulled out her huge black snuff-box, opened it with a tap that sounded again, and took a mighty pinch. Then, planting an arm in either side, she said with a scoffing tone, "Oh yes, to be sure, a countess!—a princess! who is found at a poor bookseller's, who faints in the street! Ho! ho! I know well where such tricked-out madams are fetched from

in the night-time. Here are fine tricks! here's pretty behaviour! to bring a loose girl into an honest house; and, that the measure of sin may be quite full, to invoke the devil on a Christmas night!—and I, too, in my old days am to be abetting! No, Mr. Tyss—you are mistaken in your person; I am not of that sort: to-morrow I leave your service."

With this she left the room, and banged the door after her with a violence that made all clatter again. Peregrine wrung his hands in despair. No sign of life showed itself in the stranger; but at the moment when, in his dreadful distress, he had found a bottle of Cologne water, and was about to rub her temples with it, she jumped up from the sofa quite fresh and sound, exclaiming, "At last we are alone! At last I may explain why I followed you to the bookbinder's—why I could not leave you to-night! Peregrine! give up to me the prisoner whom you have confined in this room. I know that you are not at all bound to do so; I know that it only depends upon your goodness; but I know, too, your kind affectionate heart; therefore, my good, dear Peregrine, give him up—give up the prisoner!"

"What prisoner?" asked Peregrine, in the greatest surprise. "Who do you suppose is a prisoner with me?"

"Yes," continued the stranger, seizing Peregrine's hand, and pressing it tenderly to her breast—"yes, I must confess that only a noble mind can abandon the advantages which a lucky chance puts into his hands, and it is true that you resign many things which it would be easy for you to obtain if you did not give up the

prisoner; but—think, that Alina's destiny, her life, depends upon the possession of this prisoner, that—"

"Angelic creature!" interrupted Peregrine, "if you don't wish that I should take it all for a delirious dream, or perhaps become delirious on the spot myself, tell me at once of whom you are speaking,—who is this prisoner?"

"How!" replied the maiden—"I do not understand you; would you deny that he is in your custody? Was I not present when you bought the hunting-set?"

"Who," cried Peregrine, quite beside himself, "who is this HE? For the first time in my life I see *you*, lady, and who are YOU? who is this HE?"

Dissolving in grief, the stranger threw herself at Peregrine's feet, while the tears poured down in abundant streams from her eyes: "Be humane, be merciful—give him back to me!"—and at the same time her exclamations were mingled with those of Peregrine, "I shall lose my senses! I shall go mad! I shall be frantic!"

On a sudden the maiden started up. She seemed much larger than before; her eyes flashed fire, her lips quivered, and she exclaimed, with furious gestures, "Ha, barbarian! no human heart dwells in you! You are inexorable! You wish my death, my destruction! You won't give him up! No—never, never! Wretched me!—Lost! lost!"

And with this she rushed out of the room. Peregrine heard her clattering down the stairs, while her lamentations filled the

whole house, till at last a door below was flung to with violence.

Second Adventure

The Flea-tamer.—Melancholy fate of the Princess Gamaheh, in Famagusta.—Awkwardness of the Genius, Thetel, and remarkable microscopic experiments and recreations.—The beautiful Hollandress, and singular adventure of the young Mr. George Pepusch, a student of Jena.

At this time there was a man in Frankfort, who practised the strangest art possible. He was called the flea-tamer, from having succeeded—and certainly not without much trouble and exertion—in educating these little creatures, and teaching them to execute all sorts of pretty tricks. You saw with the greatest astonishment a troop of fleas upon a slab of highly-polished marble, who drew along little cannons, ammunition-waggon, and baggage-carts, while others leaped along by them with muskets in their arms, cartouch-boxes on their backs, and sabres at their sides. At the word of command from the artist, they performed the most difficult evolutions, and all seemed fuller of life and mirth than if they had been real soldiers; for the marching consisted in the neatest entrechats and capers, and the faces about, right and left, in the most graceful pirouettes. The whole troop had a wonderful a-plomb, and the general seemed to be at the same time a most admirable ballet-master. But even more handsome and more wonderful were the little gold coaches, which were

drawn by four, six, or eight fleas. Coachmen and servants were little gold flies, of the smallest kind and almost invisible; while that, which sate within, could not be well distinguished. One was involuntarily reminded of the equipage of Queen Mab, so admirably described by Shakspeare's Mercutio, that it is easy to perceive she must often have travelled athwart his own nose.

But it was not till you overlooked the table with a good magnifying glass that the art of the flea-tamer developed itself in its full extent; for then first appeared the splendour and grace of the vessels, the fine workmanship of the arms, the glitter and neatness of the uniforms, all of which excited the profoundest admiration. It was quite impossible to imagine what instruments the flea-tamer could have used in making neatly and proportionately certain little collaterals, such as spurs and buttons, compared to which that matter seemed to be a very trifling task, which else had passed for a master-piece of the tailor, namely, the fitting a flea with a pair of breeches; though, indeed, in this the most difficult part must have been the measuring.

The flea-tamer had abundance of visitors. Throughout the whole day the hall was never free from the curious, who were not deterred by the high price of admission. In the evening, too, the company was numerous, nay almost more numerous, as then even those people, who cared little about such trickeries, came to admire a work which gave the flea-tamer quite another character, and acquired for him the real esteem of the philosopher. This

work was a night-microscope, that, as the sun-microscope by day, like a magic lantern, flung the object, brightly lit up, upon a white ground, with a sharpness and distinctness which left nothing more to be wished. Moreover, the flea-tamer carried on a traffic with the finest microscopes that could be, and which were readily bought at a great price.

It chanced that a young man, called George Pepusch,—the kind reader will soon be better acquainted with him,—took a fancy to visit the flea-tamer late in the evening. Already, upon the stairs, he heard the clamour of a dispute, that grew louder and louder with every moment, and at last became a perfect tempest. Just as he was about to enter, the door of the hall was violently flung open, and the multitude rushed out in a heap upon him, their faces pale with terror.

"The cursed wizard!—the Satan's-brood! I'll denounce him to the supreme court!—He shall out of the city, the false juggler!"

Such were the confused cries of the multitude, as, urged by fear and terror, they sought to get out of the house as quickly as possible.

A glance into the hall at once betrayed to the young Pepusch the cause of this horror, which had driven away the people. All within was alive, and a loathsome medley of the most hideous creatures filled the whole room. The race of beetles, spiders, leeches, gnats, magnified to excess, stretched out their probosces, crawled upon their long hairy legs, or fluttered their long wings. A more hideous spectacle Pepusch had never seen.

He was even beginning to be sensible himself of horror, when something rough suddenly flew in his face, and he saw himself enveloped in a thick cloud of meal dust. His terror immediately left him, for he at once perceived that the rough thing could be nothing else than the round powdered wig of the flea-tamer—which, in fact, it was.

By the time Pepusch had rubbed the powder from his eyes, the disgusting population of insects had vanished. The flea-tamer sat in his arm-chair quite exhausted.

"Leuwenhock!"—exclaimed Pepusch to him—"Leuwenhock, do you see now what comes of your trickeries? You have again been forced to have recourse to your vassals to keep the people's hands off you—Is it not so?"

"Is it you?" said the naturalist, in a faint voice—"Is it you, good Pepusch?—Ah! it is all over with me—clean over with me—I am a lost man! Pepusch, I begin to believe that you really meant it well with me, and that I have not done wisely in making light of your warnings."

Upon Pepusch's quietly asking what had happened, the flea-tamer turned himself round with his arm-chair to the wall, held both his hands before his face, and cried out piteously to Pepusch to take up a glass and examine the marble slab. Already, with the naked eye, Pepusch observed that the little soldiers, &c. lay there as if dead,—that nothing stirred any longer. The dexterous fleas appeared also to have taken another shape. But now, by means of the glass, Pepusch soon discovered that not a single flea was

there, but what he had taken for them were nothing more than black pepper-corns and fruit-seeds that stood in their uniforms.

"I know not," began the flea-tamer, quite melancholy and overwhelmed,— "I know not what evil spirit struck me with blindness, that I did not perceive the desertion of my army till the people were at the table and prepared for the spectacle. You may imagine, Pepusch, how, on seeing themselves deceived, the visitors first murmured, and then blazed out into fury. They accused me of the vilest deceit, and, as they grew hotter and hotter, and would no longer listen to any excuses, they were falling upon me to take their own revenge. What could I do better, to shun a load of blows, than immediately set the great microscope into motion, and envelope the people in a cloud of insects, at which they were terrified, as is natural to them?"

"But," said Pepusch, "tell me how it could possibly happen that your well-disciplined troop, which had shown so much fidelity to you, could so suddenly take themselves off, without your perceiving it at once?"

"Oh!" cried the flea-tamer, "O, Pepusch! HE has deserted me!—He by whom alone I was master—He it is to whose treachery I ascribe all my blindness, all my misery!"

"Have I not," said Pepusch, "have I not long ago warned you not to place your reliance upon tricks which you cannot execute without the possession of the MASTER? and on how ticklish a point rests that possession, notwithstanding all your care, you have just now experienced."

Pepusch farther gave the flea-tamer to understand, that he could not at all comprehend how his being forced to give up these tricks could so much disturb his life, as the invention of the microscope, and his general dexterity in the preparation of microscopic glasses, had long ago established him. But the flea-tamer, on the other hand, maintained, that very different things lay hid in these subtleties, and that he could not give them up without giving up his whole existence. Pepusch interrupted him by asking, "Where is Dörtje Elverdink?"

"Where is she?" screamed Leuwenhock, wringing his hands—"where is Dörtje Elverdink?—Gone!—gone into the wide world!—vanished!—But strike me dead at once, Pepusch, for I see your wrath growing: make short work of it with me!"

"There you see now," said Pepusch, with a gloomy look—"you see now what comes of your folly, of your absurd proceedings. Who gave you a right to confine the poor Dörtje like a slave, and then again, merely for the sake of alluring people, to make a show of her like some wonder of natural history? Why did you put a force upon her inclinations, and not allow her to give me her hand, when you must have seen how dearly we loved each other?—Fled, is she? Well then, she is no longer in your power; and although I do not at this moment know where to seek for her, yet am I convinced that I shall find her. There, Leuwenhock, put on your wig again, and submit to your destiny; that is the best thing you can do."

The flea-tamer arranged his wig on his bald head with his

left hand, while with his right he caught Pepusch by the arm, exclaiming—

"Pepusch, you are my real friend, for you are the only man in the whole city of Frankfort, who know that I lie buried in the old church at Delft, since the year seventeen hundred and twenty-five, and yet have not betrayed it to any one,—even when you were angry with me on account of Dörtje Elverdink. If at times I cannot exactly get it into my head that I am actually that Anton van Leuwenhock, who lies buried at Delft, yet again I must believe it, when I consider my works, and reflect upon my life; and on that account it is very agreeable to me that it is not at all spoken of. I now see, my dear Pepusch, that, in regard to Dörtje Elverdink, I have not acted rightly, although in a very different way from what you may well imagine—that is, I was right in pronouncing your suit to be an idle struggle,—wrong, in not being open with you, in not telling you the real circumstances of Dörtje Elverdink; you would then have seen how praiseworthy it was to talk you out of wishes, the accomplishment of which could not be other than destructive. Pepusch, sit down by me, and hear a wonderful history."

"That I am likely to do," replied Pepusch with a malicious glance, sitting down in an armchair, opposite the flea-tamer, who thus began:

"As you are well versed, my dear friend, in history, you know, beyond doubt, that King Sekakis lived for many years in intimate intercourse with the Flower-Queen, and that the

beautiful Princess Gamaheh was the fruit of this passion. But it is not so well known, nor can I tell you, in what way the Princess Gamaheh came to Famagusta. Many maintain, and not without reason, that the princess wished to conceal herself there from the odious Leech-Prince, the sworn enemy of the Flower-Queen. Be this as it may,—it happened once in Famagusta, that the princess was walking in the cool freshness of the evening, and chanced upon a pleasant cypress-grove. Allured by the delightful sighings of the evening breeze, the murmurs of a brook, and the soft music of the birds, she stretched herself upon the moss, and quickly fell into a sound slumber. At this moment, the very enemy whom she had been so anxious to escape lifted his head out of the marshes, beheld the princess, and became so violently enamoured of the fair sleeper, that he could not resist an inclination to kiss her; and, creeping forward, he kissed her under the left ear. Now you know, friend Pepusch, that, when the Leech-Prince sets about kissing a fair one, she is lost, for he is the vilest bloodsucker in the world. So it happened on this occasion: the Leech-Prince kissed the poor Gamaheh so long, that all life left her, when he fell back gorged and intoxicated upon the moss, and was forced to be carried home by his servants, who hastily rolled out of their marshes. In vain the root mandragora toiled out of the earth, and laid itself upon the wound inflicted by the treacherous kisses of the Leech-Prince; in vain all the other flowers arose and joined in his lamentations: she was dead. Just then it happened that the genius, Thetel, was passing, and he

too was deeply moved by Gamaheh's beauty and her unlucky end. He took her in his arms, pressed her to his breast, and endeavoured to breathe new life into her; but still she awoke not from the sleep of death. Now, too, the genius perceived the odious prince,—who was so drunk and unwieldy that his servants had not been able to get him into his palace,—fell into a violent rage, and threw a whole handful of rock-salt upon him, at which he poured forth again all the purple blood which he had drawn from the princess, and then gave up his spirit in a wretched manner, amidst the most violent convulsions. All the flowers that stood around dipped their vestments in this ichor, and stained them, in perpetual remembrance of the murdered princess, with so bright a purple, that no painter on earth can imitate it. You know, Pepusch, that the most beautiful pinks and hyacinths grow in that cypress-grove where the Leech-Prince kissed to death the fair Gamaheh.

"The genius, Thetel, now thought of departing, as he had much to do at Samarcand before night, and cast a farewell look at the princess, when he seemed as if fixed by magic to the spot, and gazed on the fair one with deep emotion. Suddenly a thought struck him. Instead of going on farther, he took the princess in his arms, and rose with her high into the air; at which time two philosophers,—one of whom it should be said was myself,—were observing the course of the stars from the gallery of a lofty tower. They perceived high above them the genius, Thetel, with the fair Gamaheh, and at the same moment there fell upon

one,—but that is nothing to the present matter. Both magicians had recognised the genius, but not the princess, and exhausted themselves in all manner of conjectures as to the meaning of this appearance, without being able to get at any thing certain, or even probable. Soon after this the unhappy fate of the princess became generally known in Famagusta, and now the magicians knew how to interpret the vision of the genius with the maiden in his arms. Both imagined that the genius must certainly have found some means of recalling the princess into life, and resolved to make inquiries in Samarcand, where, according to their observations, he had manifestly directed his flight. But in Samarcand all were silent about the princess; no one knew a word.

"Many years had passed; the two magicians had quarrelled, as it will happen with learned men,—and the more learned the oftener,—and they only imparted to each other their most important discoveries from the iron force of custom—You have not forgotten, Pepusch, that I myself am one of these magicians—Well, I was not a little surprised at a communication from my colleague, which contained the most wonderful, and at the same time the happiest, intelligence of the princess that could be imagined. The matter was thus:—by means of a scientific friend in Samarcand, my colleague had obtained the loveliest and rarest tulips, and as perfectly fresh as if they had been just cut from the stalk. His chief object was the microscopic examination of the interior portions, and, in fact, of the petal. It was with this view that he was dissecting a beautiful tulip, and discovered in the cup

a strange little kernel that struck him prodigiously; but how great was his astonishment when, on applying his glass, he perceived that the little kernel was nothing else than the Princess Gamaheh, who, pillowed in the petal of the tulip, seemed to slumber softly and calmly.

"However great the distance that separated me from my colleague, yet I set off immediately, and hastened to him. He had in the meantime put off all operations, to allow me the pleasure of a sight first; and perhaps, too, from the fear of spoiling something if he acted entirely from himself. I soon convinced myself of the perfect correctness of my colleague's observations; and, like him, firmly believed that it was possible to snatch the princess from her sleep, and give her again her original form. The sublime spirit, dwelling within us, soon let us find the proper method; but as you, friend Pepusch, know very little,—in fact nothing at all,—of our art, it would be quite superfluous to describe to you the different operations which we went through to attain our object. It is sufficient if I tell you that by the dexterous use of various glasses—for the most part prepared by myself—we succeeded not only in drawing the princess uninjured from the flower, but in forwarding her growth, so that she soon attained her natural dimensions. Now, indeed, life was wanting; and this depended on the last and most difficult operations. We reflected her image by means of one of the best solar microscopes, and loosened it dexterously from the white wall, without the least injury. As soon as the shadow floated freely, it shot like lightning into the glass,

which broke into a thousand shivers. The princess stood before us full of life and freshness. We shouted for joy; but so much the greater was our horror, on perceiving that the circulation of the blood stopped precisely there where the Leech-Prince had fastened himself. She was just on the point of swooning, when we perceived on the very spot behind the left ear a little black dot, that quickly appeared and as quickly disappeared. Immediately the stagnation of the blood ceased, the princess revived, and our work had succeeded.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.