

The Autobiography of Thomas Platter, a schoolmaster of the sixteenth century.

Thomas Platter



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Thomas Platter

THE

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

THOMAS PLATTER,

**A SCHOOLMASTER
OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.**

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

By MRS. FINN.

Second Edition.

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ORIGINAL MAXIMS FOR THE YOUNG.

BY J. C. LAVATER.

Translated from the German, by Mrs. FINN.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

MASTER THOMAS BECOMES A GOATHERD.

I came into this world on the Shrove-Tuesday of the year 1499, just as they were coming together for mass. From this circumstance, my friends derived the confident hope that I should become a priest, for at that time that sort of superstition was still every where prevalent. I had one sister, named Christina; she alone was with my mother when I was born, and she afterwards told it me. My father's name was Anthony Platter, of the old family of Platter, who have their name from a house which stands on a broad plat (Platte). This plat is a rock on a very high mountain, near a village of the name of Grenchen, in the district and parish of Visp, a considerable village of the Canton of St. Gall. My mother, however, was named Anteli Summermatter, of the very great family of that name. Her father attained the age of 126. I conversed with him six years before his death; and then he told me that he knew ten more men in the parish of Visp who were all older than he. When he was 100 years old he married a woman who bore him one son. By his first wife he left sons and daughters, of whom some were white-headed and some grey before he died. They called him old Hans Summermatter. The house in which I was born is near the village of Grenchen, and is called Am Graben. My mother could not nurse me herself, therefore I was obliged to drink cow's milk through a small horn, as is the custom in that country when they wean a child: because they give the children nothing to eat, but only milk to drink, till they are four or five years old. My father died when I was so young that I do not remember ever to have seen him. It is usual in that country for almost all women to be able to weave and sew. Before the winter, almost all the men go into the territory of Berne to buy wool: this the women spin, and make rustic cloth of it for coats and trowsers for the peasants. So also my father was in the district of Thun, in the territory of Berne, buying wool. There he was attacked by the plague and died, and was buried at Staffisburg, a village near Thun. Soon after, my mother married a man of the name of Heintzmann, who lived in a house between Stalden and Visp, that was called Am Grunde. So the children were all separated from her: I do not exactly know how many of them there were. Of my sisters, I knew only two;--one,

whose name was Elizabeth, died in Entlibuch, where she was married;--the name of the other was Christina, and she died above Stalden, at Burgen, of the plague, with eight persons of her family. Of my brothers, I knew three: the first was called Simeon, the other Hans, the third Theodore. Simeon and Hans fell in battle. Theodore died at Oberhofen, on the lake of Thun: for the usurers had mined my father, so that my brothers were obliged to go to service almost as soon as they could do any thing; and as I was the youngest, some of my aunts, my father's sisters, had me with them for a while. I can still well remember that I was with one whose name was Margaret. She carried me to a house that was called "In der Wilde," near Grenchen. One of my aunts was there also: she wrapped me up in a truss of straw that was accidentally in the room, and laid me on the table, and went to the other women. Once in the night, after my aunts had laid me down, they went to the mass at candle-mass time. Then I got up, and had run through the snow in winter, naked, to a house. When they came back, and did not find me, they were in great distress, but found me at last in that house, between two men, who were warming me, for I was frozen in the snow. Afterwards when I was also for a while with the same aunts, at "In der Wilde," my eldest brother arrived from the Savoy war, and brought me a little wooden horse, which I drew along by a thread before the door. I still remember well that I really thought the little horse could walk, and can therefore well explain to myself how the little children often think that their dolls, and what they have, are alive. My brother also strode over me with one leg, as I still perfectly remember, and said, "Oho! Tommy, now you will never grow any more." When I was about three years old. Cardinal Matthew Schinner passed through the country to hold a visitation and confirm every where, as is the custom in the Catholic Church, and came to Grenchen also. At this time there was a priest in Grenchen, whose name was Anthony Platter; he was a relation of mine; to him they brought me, that he should act as godfather at my confirmation. When however the Cardinal had dined, and was gone again into the church to confirm, (I do not know what my uncle had to do), I ran without his knowledge into the church, that I might be confirmed, and that my godfather might give me a crown piece, as it is the custom to give the children something. The Cardinal sat in an arm chair waiting till they brought him the children. I still recollect very well that I ran up to him. As my godfather was not with me, he spoke to me: "What do you want, my child?" I said, "I should like to be confirmed." Then he said, smiling, "What is your name?" I answered, "My name is Master Thomas." Then he laughed, murmured something with his hand laid on my head, and gave me a gentle slap on the cheek. At this moment Mr. Anthony came, and excused himself by saying that I had run away without his knowledge. Then the Cardinal related to him

what I had said, and said to that gentleman, "Certainly that child will become something wonderful,--probably a priest." And because I was born just as they were ringing for mass, many people supposed that I should become a priest; on which account also they sent me to school earlier than usual. When I was about six years old they sent me to Eisenthal behind Stalden, where my mother's sister had a husband, called Thomas of Rüdi, who lived on a farm called Am Boden. For him I was obliged to keep the goats near the house. I can remember how I often stuck in the snow, so that I could scarcely get out, and my shoes remained behind, so that I came home barefoot and shivering. This farmer had about eighty goats, which I had to tend in my seventh and eighth years. When therefore I opened the stable, and did not immediately get out of the way, the goats, as I was still so little, knocked me down, ran over me, and trod on my head, arms, and back; for I usually fell on my face. When I drove them over the bridge, then the foremost ran past me into the corn field; and when I drove these out, the others ran in. Then I used to cry and lament; for I knew well that in the evening I should be beaten. When, however, other goatherds came to me from other farmers, they helped me; particularly one, called Thomas of Leidenbach. He had pity on me, and shewed me much kindness. Then we all sat together, when we had led the goats up the high and frightful mountains, and ate our supper. Each one had a shepherd's basket on his back, with cheese and rye-bread in it. One day when we had dined we set about shooting for a trial of skill. On the top of a high rock there was a flat piece of ground. As one after the other now shot at the mark, one stood before me who wished to shoot. I endeavoured to get out of his way, that he should not strike me on the head; but as I stepped back a few paces I fell backwards from off the rock. The shepherds all cried out, "Lord Jesus! Lord Jesus!" till I was out of sight; for I had fallen under the rock, so that they could not see me; and they fully believed that I was killed. I however soon got up again, and climbed up by the side of the rock to them. If they wept before for grief, they now wept for joy. Six weeks after a goat belonging to one of them fell down at the same spot, and was killed! So carefully had God watched over me. About half a year after, I led out my goats early in the morning before the other shepherds, (for I was the nearest,) over a point of rock, called White Point, when my goats turned to the right over a piece of rock that was a good foot wide, but below which there was, in a frightful abyss more than 1000 fathoms deep, nothing but rocks. From the ledge of the rock one goat went up after the other, over one where they had scarcely room to put their feet on the little roots of grass which had grown on the rock. I had drawn myself up by the grass about a step but could get no farther. As soon as they were up, I wished to get after them. When, however, I had drawn myself up by the grass about a step, I could get no

farther; neither did I dare to step upon the rock again, much less to jump backwards, for I was afraid if I did so that I should jump too far, and so fall over the dreadful precipice. I remained therefore a good while in this position, and waited for the help of God, for I could not help myself; except that I held myself with both hands by a little tuft of grass, and supported myself by turns with my great toes on another tuft of grass. In this predicament I suffered extreme anxiety; for I was afraid that the great vultures that flew about in the air below me, would carry me away, as it sometimes does happen in the Alps, that they take away children and lambs. Whilst I stood there and the wind blew about my garment behind--for I had no trowsers on--my comrade Thomas perceived me from a distance, but did not know what it was. When he saw my coat fluttering in the wind, he supposed that it was a bird. When, however, he recognised me, he was so terrified that he became quite pale, and called to me, "Now, Tommy, stand still!" Then he hurried upon the ledge of rock, took me in his arms, and carried me down again to where we could get after the goats another way. Some years after, when I came home from the schools in distant lands, and my companion heard of it, he came, and reminded me how he had rescued me from death (as indeed is true, for which I give the glory to God). He said to me, that when I became a priest I should remember him, and pray to God for him. The master, however, with whom I served at that time, afterwards told my wife, "That he had never had a better little servant, as young and small as I was." Amongst other sisters of my father, was one of the name of Frances, who was unmarried, and my father had particularly recommended me to her care, as being the youngest child. When therefore the people told her in what a dangerous employment I was engaged, and that I should certainly kill myself some day by a fall, she came to my master and declared to him that she would not have me there any longer. At this he was dissatisfied; still she took me away again to Grenchen, where I was born, and placed me with a rich old farmer who was called "Hans im Boden." For him I was also obliged to mind the goats; when it happened one day that I and a little girl (who also minded her father's goats) were playing by an artificial channel, whereby the water was conducted down the mountain to the grounds, and had forgotten ourselves in play. We had made little meadows, and watered them as children do. In the mean while the goats had gone up the mountain, we knew not whither. Then I left my little coat lying there, and ascended the mountain up to the very top; the little girl however went home without the goats. I, on the contrary, as a poor servant, would not venture to go home unless I had the goats. Up very high I saw a kid that was just like one of my young goats, and this I followed at a distance till the sun went down. When I looked back to the village and saw that at the houses it was quite night, I

began to descend again; but it was soon quite dark. In the mean time I climbed from one tree to another, and held myself by the loose roots from which the earth had fallen off. When however it became quite dark, I would not venture any farther, but held myself by my left hand on a root; with the other I scratched the earth loose under the trees and roots, to hollow out a place to lie in, and listened how the lumps of earth rolled down into the abyss. Thereupon I forced myself into the opening which was made between the earth and roots, in order to lie firmly, and not to fall down in my sleep. I had nothing on except a little shirt, neither shoes nor hat; for the little coat, in my anxiety at having lost the goats, I had left by the watercourse. As I lay under the tree the ravens became aware that I was there, and made a noise on the tree; so that I was in great terror, being afraid that a bear was at hand. I crossed myself, however, and fell asleep, and slept till the morning, when the sun was shining over all the mountains. When however I awoke, and saw where I lay, I do not know that I was ever more frightened in my life: for had I in the night gone four yards deeper, I must have fallen down, a frightfully steep precipice many thousand feet deep. I was in great trouble too about the mode of getting away from thence. I drew myself from one root to the other, till I again got to the place from whence I could run down the mountain to the houses. When I was just out of the wood, near the farms, the little maid met me with the goats which she was driving out again; for they had run home of themselves the night before, and the people in whose service I was, were very much frightened on account of my not having come home with the goats. They believed that I had fallen and killed myself, and asked my aunt and the people in that house in which I was born (for that stood next to the house in which I served) whether they knew any thing of me, for that I had not come home with the goats. From that time on they would not allow me to mind goats any more, because they had to endure so much anxiety on my account. Whilst I was with this master and tended his goats, I once fell into a boiler of hot milk which stood on the fire, and scalded myself, so that one could see the scars all my life after. I was also in two other perils besides this while I was with him. Once there were two of us little goatherds in the wood, and were talking of various childish things: amongst others we wished that we could fly, for then we would fly out of the mountain to Germany (for so Switzerland was called in St. Gall). On a sudden came a frightfully large bird darting down upon us, so that we thought it was going to carry one or both of us away. At this we both began to scream, and to defend ourselves with our shepherd's crooks, and to cross ourselves, till the bird flew away; then we said to one another, "We have done wrong in wishing to be able to fly; God did not create us for flying, but for walking." Another time I was in a very deep fissure looking for crystals, of

which many were found in it. All at once I saw a stone as large as an oven starting from the side, and as I had no time to get out of the way, I stooped down upon my face. The stone fell several fathoms down to a spot above me, and from thence it made a spring away over me, so that I escaped with a whole skin. I had plenty of such joys and happiness on the mountains among the goats, of which I now remember nothing more. This I well know, that I seldom had whole toes, but often great bruises; had many bad falls; without shoes for the most part in summer, or else wooden ones; and endured great thirst. My food was in the morning, before day, a rye-broth, that is, a soup made of rye-meal. Cheese and rye-bread are given in a little basket to be carried at one's back; at night cheese-milk; of all however there was a fair allowance. In summer, lying on hay; in winter, on a straw mattress full of all sorts of vermin. Such are the resting-places of the poor little shepherds who serve the farmers in the wildernesses.

CHAPTER II.

MASTER THOMAS BECOMES A TRAVELLING SCHOLAR.

As they would not any longer allow me to tend the goats, I entered the service of a farmer who had one of my aunts to wife, and was a fiery passionate man. I had to keep his cows; for at most places in St. Gall they have not shepherds in common, to mind the cows for all; but whoever has a mountain whither he can send them during the summer, has a little shepherd who watches them upon his own property. When I had been with them a while my aunt Frances came, who wished to send me to my uncle, Mr. Anthony Platter, that I should learn *the writings* (such was their phrase when they wished to send any one to school). That gentleman was at that time no longer in Grenchen, but was become an old man at St. Nicholas, in the village that is called Gasse. When my farmer, whose name was the "Antsche," or "Anthony an der Habzucht," was aware of my aunt's intention, he was much dissatisfied: and said, "That I would learn nothing notwithstanding;" and added, putting the forefinger of his right hand into the palm of the left, "the urchin will learn just as much as I can drive my finger through." That I saw and heard myself. My aunt answered, "Oh! who knows? God has not refused him his gifts: he may yet become a pious priest." And so she led me to the spiritual gentleman, when I was about nine and a half years old. Then it was that my sufferings really began, for the gentleman was a very passionate man, but I a little awkward peasant boy. He beat me barbarously; often took me by the ears and dragged me from the ground. I screamed like a goat that had the knife sticking into it, so that often the neighbours came screaming in to him to know whether he would kill me out and out. I did not remain long with him. Just at this time there came one who had travelled to the schools at Ulm and Munich in Bavaria, a grandson of my old grandfather. This student's name was Paul Summermatter. My friends had told him of me, and he promised them that he would take me with him, and in Germany take me to school. As soon as I heard of this I fell on my knees, and besought God Almighty to help me away from the priest, who taught me sheer nothing, but on the contrary beat me unmercifully. I had scarcely learned to sing the "Salve" a little, and to go about the village with other scholars who were also with the

priest, and were obliged to sing before the houses for eggs.

Once, when we were about to celebrate mass, the other boys sent me into the church to fetch a taper. This I thrust alight into my sleeve and burnt myself so, that I still bear about me the scar of it. When Paul wished to wander again, I was to come to him to Stalden. Behind Stalden is a house called "Zum Müllibach;" there my mother's brother, Simon Summermatter, lived; he was to be my guardian, and gave me a golden florin: which I carried in my hand to Stalden, and on the way often looked at it to see whether I had it, and then gave it to Paul. Thus we left the country. I was then obliged to beg for the necessary money on the road, and also to share it with Paul my Bacchant. Schools were not then established in all places; and young persons who wished to learn any thing, or to prepare themselves for any religious office, which at that time required but little knowledge, went, either singly or in greater numbers, after renowned teachers. As they were for the most part poor people, they lived on alms by the way. And when the thing degenerated the grown ones were called Bacchants, because they lived well on what was obtained by begging, and led a wild and dissolute life: the little ones were called *a-b-c* fags.^[1] They, when the begging was not sufficient, did not make any scruple about stealing, which was called "Sharp-Shooting." They were, however, usually called Scholastics, or Travelling Scholars. So bad were the school-arrangements; until the Reformation made improvements in this department also. On account of my simplicity and provincial dialect, people gave very liberally to me. When I crossed over the Grimsel, and came into an inn at night, I saw a stove made of tiles of white delft for the first time, and the moon shone on the tiles. I thought it was a large calf, for I saw only two tiles shining, and believed them to be the eyes. In the morning I saw geese, of which I had never seen any before. When therefore they set on me hissing, as geese are accustomed to do, I ran away from them with a loud cry, for I thought it was the devil who wanted to devour me. In Lucerne I saw the first tiled roofs, and wondered very much at the red colour. Hereupon we came to Zurich: there Paul waited for several comrades who wished to go with us to Meissen. In the mean time I went for alms, with which I was obliged almost entirely to support Paul: for when I came into an inn the people liked to hear me speak the St. Gall dialect, and gave me liberally. At that time there was in Zurich a certain fellow, a great rogue, out of Leak in St. Gall: his name was Carle. He once came to me--for we lodged in the same house--and said to me, that I should allow him to give me one blow on the bare back, and that he would give me a Zurich sixer (sixpence) for it. I allowed myself to be persuaded. He then laid hold of me stoutly, laid me across a chair, and beat me very sorely. When I had

borne that, he asked me to lend him the sixer again, for he wished to sup with the landlady at night, and could not pay the reckoning. I gave him the sixpence, but never got it again. Thus were my innocency and inexperience abused. After we had waited for company about eight or nine weeks, we set out for Meissen; for me, a very long journey, because I was not accustomed to travel so far, and besides that, I was obliged to provide my provisions on the way. We travelled eight or nine together--three little fags, and the rest great Bacchants, as they were called, and I was the smallest and youngest of the fags. When I could not get on vigorously, my relation Paul walked behind me with a rod or stick, and beat me on the bare legs; for I had no hose on, but bad shoes. I cannot now remember all that befel us on the road; but some adventures I have not yet forgotten. When we were upon the journey, and were speaking of all sorts of things, the Bacchants narrated to one another how it was the custom in Meissen and Silesia for the fags to be allowed to steal geese and ducks, and other articles of provision, and that nothing was done to them on that account if they could only escape from the owner. In my simplicity I believed every thing, for I knew nothing of the commandments of God, and had had no experience of the world. We were one day not far from a village; there was a great flock of geese there, and the herdsman was not at hand, but pretty far off with the cowherds. Then I asked my comrades, the fags, "When shall we be in Meissen, that I may throw at the geese and kill them?" They said, "We are there already." Then I took a stone, threw it, and hit one on the foot. The others fled away, but the lame one could not follow. I took another stone, threw, and hit it on the head, so that it fell down; for when with the goats, I had learned to throw well, so that no shepherd of my age was superior to me: could also blow the shepherd's horn, and leap with the pole; for in such arts I exercised myself with my fellow-shepherds. I then ran to it, and caught the goose by the neck, and put it under my little coat, and went along the road through the village. The urchin has robbed me of a goose. Then the gooseherd came running after, shouting through the village, "The urchin has robbed me of a goose." I and my fellow fags ran off, and the feet of the goose hung out from under my little coat. The peasants came out of their houses with halberds, and followed us. When I now saw that I could not escape with the goose, I let it fall. I jumped aside into a thicket outside the village; but my two comrades ran along the road and were overtaken by two peasants. They then fell down on their knees and begged for mercy, for that they had done them no harm. The peasants therefore seeing that he was not there who had let the goose fall, went back into the village and took the goose along with them. When I saw how they ran after my companions, I was in a great fright, and said to myself, "O God! I believe that I have not blessed myself to-day:" as I had been taught that I

should bless myself every morning. When the peasants came into the village they found our Bacchants in the public-house; for they had gone before, and we came after. Then the peasants thought that they ought to pay for the goose, which would have made about two bats (four-pence), but I do not know whether they paid it or not. When they came to us again they laughed, and asked how it had happened. I excused myself with saying, that I thought such was the custom of the country; but they said that it was not yet time. When, however, some of the Bacchants behaved themselves very rudely towards us, some of us, with Paul, determined to run away from the Bacchants, and go by way of Dresden to Breslau. On the way we had to suffer much from hunger, so that several days we ate nothing but raw onions with salt; some days roasted acorns, crab-apples, and wild pears. Many a night we lay in the open air, because no one would suffer us in the houses, no matter how early we might ask for lodging. Now and then the dogs were set at us. When however we came to Breslau there was an abundance of every thing; yes, every thing was so cheap that the poor fags used to eat too much, and often made themselves sick. At first we went to school in the cathedral of the Holy Cross; when however we heard that in the principal parish of St. Elizabeth there were several Swiss, we went thither. There were there two from Bremgarten, two from Mellingen, and others, besides a number of Suabians. There was no difference made between the Suabians and the Swiss; they addressed one another as countrymen, and protected one another. The city of Breslau has seven parishes, each a separate school: and no scholar was allowed to go singing into another parish; else they immediately shouted "Ad idem! ad idem!" Then the fags ran together, and beat one another very sorely. There were, as was said at that time, several thousand Bacchants and fags in the city at once, who all lived upon alms. It was said also that there were some that had been there twenty, thirty, or more years, who had had their fags that were obliged to wait upon them. I have often in one evening carried my Bacchants five or six loads of provisions home to the school where they lived. People gave to me very willingly, because I was little, and a Swiss; for they were uncommonly fond of the Swiss. They also felt great compassion with the Swiss, because just at that time they had suffered sorely in the great battle at Milan; so that the common people said, "The Swiss have now lost their Pater-Noster." For before that, they imagined that the Swiss were quite invincible.

I one day went up to two gentlemen or country squires in the market-place, (I heard afterwards that the one was called Benzenauer, the other Tucker,) who were walking there, and asked alms from them, as poor fags were accustomed to do. Tucker said to me, "From whence are you?" and when he heard that I was a

Swiss, he was surprised, together with Benzenauer, and said to me, "But are you really a Swiss? If that is the fact, I will adopt you as a son, and I will assure you of that here before the council in Breslau; but, in return, you must promise to remain with me, and accompany me wherever I go." I answered, "In my native place I was given in charge to a certain person; I will ask him about it." But when I asked my relation Paul about it, he said, "I have conducted you out of your own native place, and I will conduct you to your own friends again, and then whatever they bid you, that you can do." I therefore declined this offer. But whenever I came before the house I was not allowed to go empty away. Thus I remained for a time in Breslau; was also three times ill in one winter, so that they were obliged to bring me into the hospital, for the travelling scholars had a particular hospital and physicians for themselves. Sixteen hellers were also paid weekly from the Town-house for each sick person, by which one person could be well supported. Care was then taken of the patients, and they had good beds, only they were not clean; so that I rather lay upon the floor than in the beds. During the winter the fags lay upon the floor in the school; but the Bacchants in small chambers, of which there were several hundreds at St. Elizabeth's. But in summer, when it was hot, we lay in the church-yard: collected grass, such as is spread in summer before the doors on Sunday in the gentlemen's streets,^[2] and lay in it, like pigs in the straw. When however it rained we ran into the school; and when there was thunder we sang responsories and other sacred music the whole night, with the Subcantor. Now and then after sapper, in summer, we went into the beer-houses to beg for beer. And the drunken Polish peasants would then give us so much, that I was often unable to find my way to the school again, though only a stone's throw from it. In short, there was plenty to eat here, but there was not much study; and of true piety no one had an idea. In the school at St. Elizabeth's, indeed, nine Bachelors of Arts read lectures at the same hour, and in the same room; still the Greek language had not yet made its way anywhere in the country; neither had any one printed books, except the Preceptor, who had a printed Terence. What was read had first to be dictated, then pointed, then construed, and at last explained; so that the Bacchants had to carry away thick books of notes when they went home.

From Breslau eight of us migrated again to Dresden; had however to suffer much from hunger on the way. We then determined to separate for one day; some went to see after geese; some after turnips, and carrots, and onions; some about a pot; we little ones however were to procure bread and salt in the neighbouring town of Neumark. In the evening we intended to assemble again outside the city, and there take up our lodging, and cook what we might have.

About a gunshot distant from the city there was a well, by which we wished to remain during the night; but when the fire was seen, they fired at us; still no one was hit. We therefore took ourselves off behind a ridge to a little rivulet and thicket. The bigger companions hewed branches down, and made a hut; others plucked the geese, of which they had managed to get two; others cut the turnips into the pot, and put the head and feet and the like in also; others made two wooden spits, and began to roast; and as soon as it was a little brown, we took it from the spit and ate it, and the turnips too. To none of us did it occur that we were partaking of stolen provisions, and so were worthy of punishment in the sight of God and man. In the night we heard something making an odd noise. There was a wear near us from which the water had been let off the day before, and the fish were springing up to the wall; we therefore took as many as we could carry in a shirt, and on a stick, and set off for the nearest village. There we gave part of them to a peasant, that, in return, he should boil the others in beer for us.

From Dresden we went to Nuremberg. On the way, not far from Dresden, it happened that I went into a village to request alms, and came before a peasant's house. Then the peasant asked me where I came from. When he heard that I was a Swiss, he asked, if I had any companions. I answered, "My companions are waiting for me outside the village." "Desire them to come hither," said he, and he got a good meal ready for us; also beer enough to drink. When we were comfortable, and the peasant with us, he said to his mother, who was lying in bed in the room, "Mother, I have often heard from you, that you would like to see a Swiss before you die: there you see several; I have invited them for your sake." Then the mother raised herself up, thanked the son for bringing such guests, and said, "I have heard so much good of the Swiss, that I very much desired to see one: methinks that I will now die more willingly; therefore make yourselves merry." Whereupon she laid herself down again, and we set out again after we had thanked the peasant. From thence we came to Munich, where Paul and I found lodging with a soap-boiler of the name of Hans Schräll, who was a Master of Arts of Vienna, but an enemy to the clerical state. Him I helped to make soap, rather more than I went to school; and travelled about with him to the villages to buy ashes. Paul at length determined to pay a visit to our home, for we had not been at home during five years. Accordingly, we went home to St. Gall. My friends were then unable to understand me, and said, "Our Tommy speaks so profoundly, that no one can understand him:" for, being young, I had learned something of the language of every place where I had been.

CHAPTER III.

MASTER THOMAS BEGINS TO STUDY.

My stay at home was not long. We soon set out again towards Ulm. Paul then took another boy With him, whose name was Hildebrand Kälbermatter; he was also very young. Some cloth, such as was made in that country, was given to him for a little coat. When we came to Ulm, Paul desired me to go about with the cloth, and beg the money to pay for the making. With it I earned a great deal of money; for I understood begging well, because the Bacchants had always kept me to it. To the schools on the contrary, they did not draw me, not even so much as to teach me to read. Thus it was at Ulm too: when I ought to have gone to school, I was obliged to run about with the cloth. I suffered great hunger at this time; for all that I got I had to bring to the Bacchants, and did not dare, for fear of stripes, to eat even a morsel. Paul had taken another Bacchant to live with him, of the name of Achatius, a native of Mayence; and I, with my companion Hildebrand, had to wait on them both. But my companion ate almost all that was given him at the houses himself. The Bacchants on that account went after him into the street, and found him eating: thereupon they threw him on a bed, covered his head with a pillow, so that he could not cry, and beat him with all their might. That made me afraid, so that I brought home all that I got. They had often so much bread that it became mouldy; they then cut off the mouldy outside, and gave it to us to eat. I was often very hungry, and frost-bitten too, because I had to go about in the dark till midnight, to sing for bread. Now there was at that time a pious widow at Ulm, who had a son, Paul Reling, and two daughters. This widow during the winter often wrapt my feet in a warm fur, which she laid behind the stove, to warm them when I came; gave me also a basin full of vegetables, and then allowed me to go home. I was indeed sometimes so hungry, that I drove the dogs in the street away from their bones, and gnawed them; I also sought together the last crumbs out of the bags, and eat them.

From Ulm we went to Munich, where I still had to beg for money to make up the cloth, which however was not mine. A year after we came again to Ulm,

intending to go once more to our native place. I brought the cloth again with me, however, and was obliged again to beg for money to make it up. I can still well remember that some said to me, "What! has the coat never been made? I believe that you are playing tricks." What became of the cloth, and whether the coat was ever made, I know not. From thence we made a visit to our native place, and after that returned again to Munich.

As three of us little fags had no lodging, we intended to go at night to the corn-market, and sleep upon the corn sacks. There were several women in the street standing before the salt-house, who asked where we were going. A butcher's widow was of the number, who, when she understood that we were Swiss, said to her maid, "Run, hang the pot with the soup and the remainder of the meat over the fire; they must lodge with me to-night; I am friendly to all Swiss. I served in an inn at Inspruck at the time the Emperor Maximilian held his court there. The Swiss had much dealing with him then, and were such good people, that I will be friendly to them all my life long." She gave us enough to eat and drink, and a good place to rest in. In the morning she said to us, "If one of you will stay with me, I will give him lodging, and meat and drink." We were all willing, and because I looked a little sharper than the others, she chose me. I helped her with her household and field occupations; but was still obliged, however, to wait on my Bacchant. The woman did not like to see that, and said, "Let the Bacchant alone, and stay with me, then you need not beg." For eight days, therefore, I went neither to the Bacchant nor to the school. He then came and knocked at the house-door. She said to me, "Your Bacchant is there, say that you are sick." I did what she desired me, for I did not know that a lie of that kind was a sin. When Paul came she said to him, "You are truly a fine gentleman, and should have looked after Thomas: he has been sick, and is so still." He said then, "I am sorry for it, boy: when you can go out again, come to me." Afterwards, on a Sunday, I went to vespers; then he said to me after vespers, "You fag, you do not come to me, I will trample you under foot some day." Then I resolved that he should not trample on me, for that I would run away. On Sunday I said to the butcher's widow that I wanted to go into the school and wash my shirt. I went, however, over the Iser, for I was afraid that if I went to Switzerland Paul would follow me. At the other side of the Iser is a hill; there I sat down, looked at the city, and cried bitterly, because I had now no longer any one to help me. I thought of going to Saltzburg or Vienna in Austria. As I sat there, a peasant came by with his waggon. He had brought salt to Munich, and was already drunk, although the sun had only just risen. I asked him to allow me to get up, and rode with him till he stopped to get something for himself and his horses to eat. In the

mean time I begged in the village; and not far from the village I waited for him, and fell asleep. On awaking I cried heartily; for I thought that the peasant had driven away, and felt as if I had lost a father. However he soon came, quite drunk; told me to get up again, and asked whither I wished to go? I said to Saltzburg. When it was evening he drove side-ways off the highroad, and said, "Now you can get down, there is the road to Saltzburg." We had driven eight miles that day. I came into a village; when I got up in the morning there was a hoar frost, as if it had snowed, and I had no shoes, only torn socks; no cap, and a jacket without folds. I therefore went to Passau, and wished there to get a passage, and sail on the Danube to Vienna. In Passau they would not let me in. Then I determined to go to Switzerland, and asked the gatekeeper which was the nearest road to Switzerland. "By Munich," said he. "To Munich!" I answered, "I will not go. I would rather go out of my way ten miles to avoid it." He then directed me to Freissing, where there was a high-school or university. There I found Swiss. But before many days had elapsed Paul arrived with an halberd. The fags said to me, "The Bacchant from Munich is here, and is looking for you." Then I ran out at the gate as if he had been behind me, and went to Ulm, where I came to my saddler's widow, who had formerly warmed my feet by wrapping them in fur. After several weeks, one came to me who had been a companion of Paul's, and said to me, "Your relation Paul is here, and looking for you." So he had come eighteen miles after me; for in me he had lost a good benefice, because I had supported him several years. When however I heard this, although it was nearly night, I ran out at the gate, on the road to Constance; but lamented in my soul, for it was very grievous to me on account of the dear woman who had taken care of me like a mother. So I crossed the lake to Constance, and went over the bridge, and saw some little Swiss peasants in white jackets. Oh how glad I was! I imagined I was in the kingdom of heaven. From thence I came to Zurich, where I found some fellow-countrymen, natives of St. Gall, great Bacchants; to them I offered my services, if in return they would instruct me; but that they did as little as the others. After several months Paul sent his fag Hildebrand from Munich, to tell me that if I would return he would pardon me; but I would not, but stayed in Zurich, though indeed without studying. There was one Anthony Benetz there, out of Visp in St. Gall, who persuaded me to accompany him on a tour to Strasburg. When we arrived, there were a great many poor scholars there, and, as was said, not even one good school; we therefore went to Schlestadt. A gentleman met us, and asked, "Where are you going?" When he heard that we wished to go to Schlestadt he dissuaded us from it, by saying that there were many poor scholars there, and no rich people. Whereupon my comrade began to cry bitterly, because he did not know

any other place to go to. I comforted him, and said, "Be of good courage! If there is one in Schlestadt who makes shift to live alone, I will manage to support us both." Whilst in a village outside of Schlestadt, where we got lodging in a mill, I got such a pain that I thought I must choke, and scarcely could get breath; for I had eaten a great many green nuts, which fall off about that season. Anthony then cried again; for he thought that he should lose his companion, and then not know how to help himself any more: and yet he had ten crowns secretly about him, and I not a halfpenny. When we came into the town, and had found lodging in the house of an aged married couple, of whom the man was stone blind, we went to the preceptor, Mr. John Sapidus, and begged of him to receive us. He asked us whence we came; when we said, "From Switzerland, from. St. Gall." He said, "There are wicked peasants there; they drive all their bishops away out of the country. If you intend to study properly you need not give me any thing; but if not, you must pay me, or I will pull your coats off your back." That was the first school which seemed to me to go on well. At that time the study of languages and sciences came into fashion. It was the same year that the diet was held at Worms. Sapidus had at one time nine hundred scholars, amongst whom were several fine learned fellows, who afterwards became celebrated men. When I entered the school I could do nothing, not even read the Donatus,^[3] and was nevertheless already eighteen years old. I seated myself among the little children, but was like the clucking hen among the chickens. When we had been there from Autumn till Whitsuntide, and there was a continual influx of scholars from all quarters, I was no longer able to procure sustenance for us both; we therefore went away to Solothurn, where there was a tolerably good school, and also a maintenance easier to be found. But as a set-off against this, we had to stay much in church, and lose time: so we went again to our native place, where I remained awhile, and went to school to a priest who taught me a little writing, and other things I know not what. Here I got the ague, and was nursed by my aunt Frances in Grenchen. At the same time I taught the little son of my other aunt, Simon Steiner, his A B C. He came to Zurich a year after, and studied by degrees: then he came to Strasburg, where he became Dr. Bucer's Famulus: and because he was attentive to his studies, he was made teacher of the thirds and afterwards of the second, class; and was very much regretted by the scholars at Strasburg when he died.

In the following Spring I left the country again, with two brothers. When we took leave of our mother, she cried and said, "God have mercy upon me, that now I must see three sons go into misery." Excepting that time I never saw my mother cry, for she was a courageous stout-hearted woman, but rather rough.

When her third husband died, whom she had married in my absence, she remained a widow, and did all manner of work like a man, in order that she might be better able to bring up her youngest children. Hewing wood, hay-making, threshing, and other work which belongs more to men than women, were not too much for her. She had also buried three of her children herself, who had died in a time of very great pestilence; for in time of pestilence it costs a great deal to get persons buried by the gravediggers. Towards us her first children she was very harsh, for which reason we seldom entered the house. Once when I came to her again, after an absence of five years, in which I had travelled much in far distant lands, the first word she said to me was, "Has the devil carried you hither once more?" I answered, "The devil has not carried me, but my feet; I will not however be a burden to you long." She then said, "You are not a burden to me; but it grieves me that you go strolling backwards and forwards in this manner, and doubtless learn nothing at all. If you learned to work, as your late father did, that would be better;--you will never be a priest: I am not so lucky as to be the mother of a priest." So I remained with her two or three days. She was otherwise a respectable, honest, and pious woman, as was admitted by every body.

On my departure with my two brothers, as we were crossing the Letshi mountain towards Gestelen, my brothers sat down upon the slopes on the snow, and so slid down the mountain. I wished to imitate them, but because I did not instantly put my feet asunder the snow threw me over, so that I slid down the mountain head over heels. It would have been no wonder if I had killed myself by knocking my head against a tree; for there were no rocks. Three times I had the same mishap, for I always thought that I should be able to do it as well as my brothers; but they were more used to the mountains than I. Thus we travelled on together. They both remained in Entlibuch, but I went on to Zurich. There I lodged with the mother of the far famed, pious, and learned Mr. Rudolph Gwalther, who is now pastor at St. Peter's. He was then in the cradle, and I used often to rock him. I now visited the school in Frauenmünster, in which Wolfgang Knaüel, a pious Master of Arts, taught. I was quite in earnest in my desire to study, for I perceived that it was high time. They said at that time, that a teacher would come from Einsiedeln, a learned and faithful man, but extremely old. So I made a seat for myself in a corner not far from the teacher's seat, and said to myself, "In this corner you will study or die." When he came into the school for the first time, he said, "This is a nice school, but methinks there are stupid boys: still we shall see; only be industrious." This I know, that had my life depended on it I could not have declined a noun of the first declension, although I had

learned Donatus off by heart to a nicety. For when I was at Schlestadt, Sapidus had a certain Bachelor of Arts, George von Andlau, a very learned man: he plagued the Bacchants so grievously with the Donatus, that I thought, "If it be such a good book, then you must learn it by heart," and as I learned to read it I learned it by heart at the same time. That turned to good account for me in the opinion of Father Myconius, my new teacher in Zurich; for he began at once to read Terence with us, and then we had to decline and conjugate every little word of a whole comedy. He used often to deal with me until my shirt was wet with perspiration through fear, and my eyes grew dim; and yet he never gave me a blow, except on one single occasion with the left hand on my cheek. He also read lectures upon the Holy Scriptures, which were attended by many of the laity; for at that time the light of the Gospel was just beginning to dawn, although Mass and the idolatrous pictures in the churches were continued for a long time after. Whenever he was rough towards me, he afterwards took me to his house, and gave me a meal; for he liked to hear me relate how I had travelled through all the countries in Germany, and what I had suffered every where, which I could much better remember then than now. Myconius without doubt was already acquainted with the pure doctrine; but was obliged, notwithstanding, to go to church at Frauenmünster with his scholars to sing the Vesper, Matins, and Masses, and to direct the singing. Once he said to me, "Custos,"^[4] (for I was his Custos), "I would now rather read four lessons than sing one Mass; do me a favour, and sometimes attend to an easy Mass, a Requiem, and such like for me: I will not let it be unrewarded." With that I was well content, for I was accustomed to that sort of thing, not only at Zurich, but also at Solothurn and elsewhere; for everything was still Popish. Many a one was to be found who could sing better than expound a Gospel; and it was daily to be seen in the schools that wild Bacchants went off and were ordained, if they could only sing a little, though they understood nothing either of grammar or Gospel. During the time that I was Custos, I was often in want of wood for heating the school. One morning Zuinglius was to preach before day in Frauenmünster; and as they were ringing the bell for service, there being no wood for heating the school, I thought in my simplicity, "You have no wood, and there are so many idols in the church!" As no one was there I went into the church to the nearest altar, seized a wooden St. John, hurried with him into the school, put him into the stove, and said to him, "Johnny, now bend yourself; you must go into the stove, even though you do represent a St. John." When he began to burn, there were nasty great blisters from the oil paint. I thought, "Now hold still; if you stir, which you however will not do, I will shut-to the door of the stove, and you dare not come out, unless the evil one fetches you." In the mean time the wife of Myconius came, intending to

go to church to the sermon, and said, "God give you a good day, my son; have you heated the stove?" I closed the stove door, and said, "Yes, mother; I am quite ready." I would not however tell it to her; for if it had been known, it would have cost me my life at that time. In the school Myconius said, "Custos, you have had famous wood to-day," I thought, "St. John deserves the most praise." When we were to sing the Mass two priests were quarrelling together, and one said to the other, "You Lutheran knave, you have robbed me of a St. John." This they continued a good while. Myconius did not know what the matter was, but St. John was never found again. Of course I never told it to any one, till several years after, when Myconius was preacher at Basle; I then told it to him, and he wondered very much, and remembered well how the priests had quarrelled together. Although it appeared to me then that Popery was mere mummery, yet I still had it in my mind to become a priest, and to do the duties of my office faithfully, and deck out my altar smartly. For of real piety I understood at that time nothing; all rested merely on outward ceremonies. When, however, Ulrich Zuinglius preached severely against it, my scruples increased more and more in course of time. Otherwise I had prayed much, and fasted rather more than was agreeable to me; had also my saints and patrons, to whom I prayed: our Lady, the Virgin Mary, that she would be my intercessor with her Son; St. Catherine, that I might become learned; St. Barbara, that I might not die without the sacrament; St. Peter, that he would open heaven to me. What I neglected I wrote in a little book, and when there was a holiday at school, as on Thursday and Saturday, I went to Frauenmünster to a school: began and wrote all my offences upon a chair, and paid one debt after the other with prayers, blotting them out one after the other, and thought then that I had done right. Six times I went with processions from Zurich to Einsiedeln; was diligent in confession, and have often fought with my companions for Popery. One day, however, Ulrich Zuinglius preached in Söllnau upon the Gospel of St. John x., "I am the good Shepherd," &c.: that he explained so pointedly, that I felt as if some one had pulled me up into the air by the hair of my head, and made known to me how God would require the blood of the lost sheep at the hands of the shepherds who are guilty of their destruction. Then I thought to myself, "If that be the meaning, then adieu to the priest's office! a priest I will never be!" I continued however in my studies; began also to dispute with my comrades; attended the sermons diligently, and was fond of hearing my preceptor Myconius. Mass and the idolatrous pictures, however, were still continued at Zurich.

CHAPTER IV.

MASTER THOMAS BECOMES ROPE-MAKER AND HEBREW PROFESSOR.

At that time six of us went home to St. Gall: and on our arrival at Glyss, one Saturday, we heard that the priests were singing Vespers. After Vespers one of them came and asked, "Whence do you come?" I, as the boldest, replied, "From Zurich." On this the priest said, "What have you done in that heretic city?" I became angry and said, "Why heretic city?" The priest replied, "Because they have put away the Mass, and removed the pictures from the church." Thereupon I said, "That is not so, for they still celebrate Mass there; they have also pictures; why are they then heretics?" "For this reason," he replied, "because they do not consider the Pope as the head of the Christian Church, and do not call upon the Saints." I went on, "Why is the Pope the head of the Christian Church?" He said, "Because St. Peter was Pope at Rome, and has given the Popedom there to his successors." I said, "St. Peter very likely was never at Rome;" pulled my New Testament out of the bag, and shewed him how in the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle salutes so many, and yet never mentions St. Peter, who, according to his assertion, was the most eminent among the Christians of that place. Thereupon he said, "How could that be true, then, that Christ met St. Peter outside the city of Rome, and was asked by him where he was going to? whereupon he answered. To Rome, to allow myself to be crucified." I asked, "Where have you read this story?" He said, "I have often heard it from my grandmother." Thereupon I answered, "So, then, I perceive that your grandmother is your Bible! And why should we call upon the Saints?" Answer--"Because it is written, God is wonderful in all his works." Then I stooped down, plucked a little plant, and said, "If one were to collect all men together, they would not be able to make a plant like this." He then became angry, and so our conversation ended. We had besides more than an hour's walk before us that night. Early on Sunday we came to Visp, where a lazy ignorant priest was to celebrate his first mass; for which reason a great many priests and scholars, and a great crowd of other people, came together. We scholars helped the priest to sing the mass. Then one who passed for the most eminent preacher preached from a window, and

said amongst other things, to the young priest, "O thou noble knight! thou holy knight! thou art holier than the mother of God herself: for she only bore Christ once, but thou shalt hear him every day of thy life henceforth." Then one on the bridge, a Basle Master of Arts, out of Sitten, said a little too loud, "Priest! you lie like a miscreant." The priests had all an eye upon me;--I knew not why, till I saw the priest with whom I had disputed the day before; then I could well imagine that he had complained of me. When the mass was over, all the priests and scholars were invited to dinner; but no one invited me. No man can believe how happy I then was, and how willing I was to fast for Christ's sake. When however my mother saw me, she said, "How comes it that they have not invited you also?" and she put bread and cheese into a bowl, and prepared me some porridge. Once when I was there at home, I visited my uncle (my mother's brother) who was at that time Castellan (that is, chief person in the Visper tenth), and said to him after supper, "Uncle, tomorrow I shall set out again." He asked "Whither?" I said: "To Zurich." He: "Pray do not go to that place, at your peril; for the Confederates will invade it; and have sent deputies from all places. They will be taught to give up the heretic faith." I: "And is no one here from Zurich?" He: "There is a messenger here with a letter." I: "Have they read the letter before the deputies and country people?" He: "Yes." I: "And what does the letter contain?" He: "In the letter they declare that they have adopted a doctrine by which they intend to abide! But if any one can convince them of another out of the Old or New Testament, then they will give it up." I: "Is not that right?" Upon that he said distinctly, and in these very words, "Let the devil take them and the New Testament together." I was horrified, and said, "O God! how you speak! It would be no wonder if God were to punish you both in body and soul. What then is the New Testament?" "It is their new heretic doctrine," said he; "so the deputies have acquainted us, particularly the one from Berne." Thereupon I said, "The New Testament is the new covenant which Christ established with the faithful, and sealed with His blood. That is recorded in the four Gospels and in the Epistles of the holy Apostles." Then he said, "Is that so?" "Yes," I answered; "and if you will, I will go with you to-morrow to Visp, and, if they will let me speak openly, I shall not let myself be restrained either by shame or by fear." He then said, "If the matter stands thus, I will not give my voice for making war upon them." On the following day the country people consulted together, and determined that this was a religious matter, and because the people of Zurich desired to be taught by the Holy Scriptures, the learned should be left to fight it out together. So nothing came of it, and I went again to Zurich, and pursued my studies in great poverty. I lodged in the house of an old woman of the name of Hutmacherinn, and had a room in company with a good and tolerably clever companion. There God

knows that I often suffered great hunger, and many days had not a mouthful of bread to eat. More than once I put some water into a pan, begged of the woman a little salt to put into the water, and then drank it from sheer hunger. I had to give a Zurich shilling to the woman every week for the room; I therefore went now and then with messages across the country, for I got a bat (two-pence) for a mile; or I helped to carry wood, or to do other work of which many a student would be ashamed, and got something to eat for it, of which I was very glad and well satisfied. I was also Custos, for which I got at every quarterly fast a Zurich angster from each of the boys, of whom there were nearly sixty, sometimes more. Zuinglius and Myconius used also often to employ me to carry letters to the lovers of the truth in the allied districts. In this service I have often ventured my life with joy, that the doctrine of the truth might be spread, and several times narrowly escaped. So I remained in poverty in Zurich till Mr. Henry Werdmüller engaged me as tutor to his sons; one of whom, Otho Werdmüller, afterwards became Master of Arts in Wittenberg, and then preacher at Zurich; the other, however, was killed in the battle of Kappel. My sufferings from want were now at an end, for I got my dinner every day, but was near over-doing myself with study. I wished to study Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, all at the same time; and many a night slept very little, but tormented myself grievously with struggling against sleep; often I took cold water, raw turnips, or sand into my mouth, that the grating of my teeth might awake me. My dear father Myconius often warned me against it, and said nothing to me if it sometimes happened that sleep overpowered me during the lesson. Though I never had the fortune to hear lectures on Latin, Greek, and Hebrew grammar, yet I began to read them with others, in order to practise myself in them; for Myconius only drilled us diligently in the Latin language; not being himself thoroughly master of the Greek, as this was something very rare at that time. In private I occupied myself with Lucian and Homer, of which I had translations. Now also it happened that Father Myconius took me to live in his house. He had several boarders, among whom was the late Dr. Gessner, with whom I was to work Donatus and the declensions: this exercise was uncommonly useful to me. At that time Myconius had the very learned Theodore Bibliander as assistant, who was extraordinarily well versed in all languages, but particularly in the Hebrew, and had written a Hebrew grammar. He also boarded at Myconius's table, and instructed me, at my request, in Hebrew. I used to get up early every morning, made a fire in the stove in Myconius's little apartment, seated myself before the stove, and copied the grammar as long as Bibliander slept, and he never found it out. In this year Damian Irmi, of Basle, wrote to Pellican in Zurich, that he was going to Venice, and that if there were any poor fellows who might like to have Hebrew Bibles,

he would bring some with him as cheap as possible. Dr. Pellican told him to bring twelve. When they came a copy cost a crown. I had still a crown left of a legacy which I had received a short time before; that I gave with joy for one, and then began to compare the original Hebrew Bible with the translation, and so to make myself acquainted with the meaning of the words. One day Conrad Pur, preacher at Mettmensstetten, in the Canton of Zurich, came; and when he saw me sitting at work over the Hebrew Bible, he said, "Are you a Hebrew? you must teach it to me also." I said, "I know nothing;" but he would not let himself be put off his purpose, till I promised him; for I also thought that by staying there longer I might become a burden to Myconius. I therefore went with him to Mettmensstetten, instructed him in Hebrew, had plenty to eat and to drink, and remained seven-and-twenty weeks with him. From him I came to Hedingen, to pastor Weber, who likewise desired instruction in Hebrew, and remained about twenty weeks with him. After that I came to another pastor at Rifferswyl; he was eighty years old, and wished to begin to learn Hebrew. From him I came again to Zurich. In the mean time there came a very learned young man from Lucern, of the name of Rudolph Collin; he was to go to Constance to receive priest's orders. Zuinglius, however, and Myconius, persuaded him to learn the rope-making trade with his money instead. After he had married, and become a master, I asked him to teach me the rope-making trade also. He said he had no hemp. Now just at that time a small legacy had fallen to me from my mother; with that I bought the master a cwt. of hemp, and learned as much as possible, till it was used up; but had, at the same time, always a desire for study, I used to get up quietly when the master thought I was asleep, and strike a light, and had a Homer, and secretly my master's translation, out of which I made notes into my Homer. When I was working at my trade, I took Homer with me. When the master discovered that, he said, "Platere! pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus:" (Either study or follow your trade!) Once as we were eating our supper, and drinking water to it, he said, "Platere! how does Pindar begin?" I answered, "Ἀριστον μὲν τὸ ὕδωρ [Ariston men to hudor]," (Water is the best). He then laughed and said, "Then we will follow Pindar's advice and drink water, because we have no wine." When I had used up the cwt. of hemp my apprenticeship was over, and I intended to go to Basle. I therefore took leave of my master, as if I was going early next morning; but I went to my old lodging at the house of the hatter's widow, and remained there six weeks privately, and wrote a gloss upon Euripides, that I might be able to take it as well as Homer with me; for I intended also to study on the way. I then took my bundle and left Zurich at day-break, came in one day as far as Muttentz, and the next morning to Basle. Here I inquired after a master, and came to Hans Stäheli at the Ox-market, whom they

called the Red Rope-maker. They said that he was the rudest master on the whole length of the Rhine, on which account the rope-making journeymen did not like to be with him, and I found a place open the sooner. When he first employed me I could scarcely hang up the hemp, and could twist it very little. Then the master shewed me his manners, began to be abusive and to curse, and said, "Go stick out the eyes of the master that taught you; what shall I do with you? you can do nothing!" He did not however know that I had not worked up more than one cwt. of hemp in my whole life. That I did not dare to tell him; for he had a very bad apprentice who could work better than I, and who treated me very contemptuously, and insulted me. After the master had tried me eight days, I spoke to him in a friendly manner, and said that he should have patience with me; and whether he gave me wages or not, that I would render him faithful service, and write down every thing punctually; for no one in the house could write. "I have," said I, "learned little--that I clearly perceive;--my master had seldom any hemp." I read as I went backwards and forwards when I twisted. So he allowed himself to be persuaded to keep me, and gave me two-pence a week wages. With this money I bought candles and studied at night although I was obliged to work till the trumpet sounded in the evening and to get up again in the morning at the sound of the trumpet. Yet I was willing to bear that, if I could only stay and learn the trade. In the course of half a year I was able to twist a day's work, and act as foreman. I also worked often, when we made the large ropes or cables, in the sweat of my brow. Then the master used to laugh at me, and say, "Had I studied so much as you, and had such a love for it, I would let the rope-making go where it liked;" for he saw well that I had a singular love for books. I had made acquaintance with a pious printer, Andrew Cratander; he presented me with a Plautus, which he had printed in octavo. As it was not yet bound, I took one sheet after the other, and stuck it in a little wooden fork split at the bottom, and the little fork I stuck in the hemp. This I read as I went backwards and forwards when I twisted, and then when the master came I threw the hemp over it. Once, however, he caught me in the act, and behaved very wildly. "If you wish to study," said he, "follow it, or follow the trade. Is it not enough that I allow it you by night, or on a holiday, that you must also read while you twist?" On holidays, as soon as I had eaten my dinner, I took my little book, went into a summer-house, and read the whole day, till the watchman at the city gate called. By degrees I made acquaintance with a few students, particularly with the scholars of Dr. Beatus Rhenanus. These and others often passed my shop, and wished me to give up the rope-making trade, and they would recommend me to Erasmus of Rotterdam, who at that time lived at Basle. But it was all of no use, although Erasmus himself came to me once, as I was

helping to make a great rope on the Peter's-place; although with great exertion and labour I only got bad food, and not enough of that, and in winter had to suffer sadly from cold. I became acquainted with Dr. Oporinus, amongst others. He requested me to instruct him in Hebrew; but I excused myself, saying that I myself knew but little of it, and also that I had not time. As however he left me no peace, I made my master the offer, that if he would only let me have some time free, I would serve him for nothing, or else take less wages than hitherto. He then allowed me every day one hour in the afternoon, from four to five. Now Oporinus put up a notice on the church, that a certain person intended to give lessons in the elements of the Hebrew language, about four o'clock on Monday, at St. Leonard's. When I came there at the appointed hour, thinking that I should find Oporinus alone,--for I had not seen the bill on the church door,--there were eighteen very learned gentlemen there. I wished directly to run away; but Dr. Oporinus called to me, "Do not run away; these are also good fellows." Although I was ashamed of being seen in my little apron which ropemakers are in the habit of wearing, yet I allowed myself to be persuaded, and began to read them "Munster's Hebrew Grammar," which had not yet come to Basle, also the Prophet Jonah, as well as I was able. The same year a Frenchman came from Basle, whom the Queen of Navarre had sent that he should learn Hebrew. He also came into the school; and when I went in with my poor clothes, I seated myself behind the stove, where I had a comfortable little seat, and allowed the students to sit at the table. The Frenchman now asked, "When does our Professor come?" Oporinus pointed to me. At this he looked at me, and without doubt felt surprise, because he thought such an one ought to be otherwise dressed, and not so badly. When the lesson was over, he took me by the hand, led me over the little bridge, and asked me how it happened that I was so badly clothed; and offered to write respecting me to the Queen, saying that she would make me a great man if I would only follow him. This person was expensively dressed, had a golden cap, and a servant who carried his hat and cloak after him. He also attended my lectures till he left the place; but I had no wish to follow him.

CHAPTER V.

MASTER THOMAS BECOMES ARMOUR-BEARER AND THEN SCHOOLMASTER.

When for the first time they took the field against the five Cantons, (Lucern, Schwyz, Uri, Unterwalden, and Zug,) my master was also summoned, and I carried his armour to Mettmenstetten. When however a truce was concluded, I remained a while in Zurich with Myconius; and studied. He and his wife recommended me to marry their housekeeper Anne, and give up the wandering hither and thither, and then they would make us their heirs. I allowed myself to be persuaded, and after a few days we went to Dübendorf, to Myconius's brother-in-law, to church, and celebrated the wedding with such pomp, that there were people at table with us who did not know that it was a wedding. Myconius owed my wife fourteen florins wages, of which he gave her two florins. With these we went away the first day to Mettmenstetten to the gentleman whom I had taught Hebrew, by way of Lucern, and Sarnen, to Visp in St. Gall. At first we visited my sister Christina in Bürgendorf; she had there a husband and nine children. He had two aunts, who were so old that they did not know how old they were, and no one else did. With her we remained until St. Gall's day. I had inherited some household furniture, which my sister had kept for me; and she lent me her ass, that I might bring it to Visp. There happened to be an empty house there with a bed that was not wanted, and we got it lent to us rent free. It was almost the best house in the village, with nice windows that had panes. There all went on well at first. I began to prepare my rope-making trade, and to keep a school. In winter I had about thirty scholars; in summer scarcely six. Each had to pay a penny every quarterly fast; besides which, I got many presents. I had many relations; one brought me eggs, another cheese, or a ball of butter. Also others, whose children came to me to school, brought the like; some a quarter of a sheep; those who were at home in the village gave milk, vegetables, jugs of wine; so that seldom a day passed in which something was not given to us. At times we have reckoned at night, that in one day eight or nine different presents had been sent to us. A few weeks before my arrival, several women in Eisterthal, who were in a room together, had spoken of me, how magnificent the

first Mass would be that I should celebrate, and how large the offerings which I should receive. For of the Summermatters alone, the family of my mother, I had seventy-two cousins, not one of whom was yet married, and who therefore would have been able to carry their offerings to the altar themselves. Through my marrying, however, all these splendid hopes were disappointed. When we began our housekeeping I borrowed fifteen Swiss bats of my uncle, Anthony Summermatter. With this we began to trade--bought wine, and sold it again retail; bought apples also, which, my wife sold again to the boys who would have them; so that we did very well, and had no want. I had never been so well off. The priests however were not very friendly to me, although they did me an occasional kindness, and often invited me as a guest, that I might not take too much to the Lutheran ways. But when I had to go to church, and help to sing the Mass, it was a burden to me, and against my conscience to be obliged to help in the commission of idolatry,--to be present, and not to be able to speak my mind freely at all times. I therefore began to think over the matter, what I should do in order to get out again, and went to Zurich to consult with Father Myconius. He advised me to leave the place, for that I had prospects of being able to go to Basle again. When I set out on the journey home, I had a scholar with me, who was not able to keep up with me on the Grimsel. It began to snow and to rain, and was very cold; so that we were almost frozen. As however I was acquainted with the manner of living upon the mountains, I told the boy that he should not sit down, but keep going forward. Now and then I went on far before him to warm myself, and then ran back to the boy; till at last, by the help of God, we came to the hospital, a good inn on the mountain, where one can find good victuals and drink. That was before the middle of August. It happened once before, that I went over the same mountain, and because I was alone, and did not know the method of travelling over the mountains, becoming faint and tired I sat down, and wished to rest. I then suddenly felt an odd sensation about my heart; I became delightfully warm, and fell asleep with my arms laid on my knees; when a man came to me, laid his hands upon both my shoulders, awoke me, and said, "Hey! why do you sit there; stand up and walk?" What became of the man I know not; but whithersoever I looked, above or below, I could see no one. I then stood up, took out of my bag a bit of bread, and ate it. When I related that to several people who were acquainted with the life on the mountains, they said I had been good as dead; for if any one feels excessively cold on the mountains, and sits down from weakness, the blood rushes from the heart into the face and extremities, and the person must die. I cannot think otherwise than that God preserved my life in a wonderful manner, as the people also assured me, for there is no easier death than freezing. On that account persons are sometimes found

upon the mountains sitting as though they slept, and they are dead. When however the inhabitants of the mountains, who are acquainted with this danger, are overtaken by night, they take each other's hands and move round and round in a circle, if it be ever so dark, till it becomes day again. My wife was glad when I came home; for the pastor of the village had been seized with the plague, and no one would attend on him. She was also anxious as to how it might fare with herself, if she should become sick. I had experienced the same thing several years before; for whilst going to school at Zurich, there was a terrible plague there; so that in the great Minster they laid nine hundred persons in one grave, and in another seven hundred. At that time I went home with others of my countrymen, and had a boil on my leg, which I looked upon as a plague boil; by reason of which they would scarcely let us in any where. I went to Grenchen to my aunt Frances, and between Galpentran (a little village at the foot of the mountain) and Grenchen, I fell asleep eighteen times in half a day. My aunt, however, put on a bandage of herb-leaves, and no evil consequence ensued to me or others; yet neither I nor my aunt was allowed to go near any one for six weeks.

Being now desirous to leave the country, when the Bishop Baron Adrian von Rietmatt heard of it he sent his cousin John von Rietmatt to me with a message that I should come to him at Sitten, and become schoolmaster of the whole country; and that a good salary should be given me. I thanked his Grace, but begged several years' more leave of absence, for that I was still young and unlearned, and should like to study more. At this he shook his finger at me, and said, "O Platter! you would be old and clever enough, but you have something else in your mind; but when we call upon you at some future time we hope that you will be more ready to serve your native country than a foreign land." So I took my baby that had been born meanwhile, the cradle suspended from a hook on my back, and left the place. The child's godmother gave it at parting a double ducat. Besides that, from twelve to fifteen pieces of money had also been given to us. The little household furniture which we took with us I carried, and the mother followed after as a calf the cow. The books, however, I had sent by way of Berne to Basle; thither we also went by way of Zurich. I carried the child, and a scholar went with us who helped the mother to carry her bundle. After looking for a dwelling for a long time, we at last got a small house which was called the sign of the Lion's Head. Dr. Oporinus was living in the great court by the Bishop's Palace (where afterwards the Baroness von Schönau lived), and was schoolmaster at the Castle. Through the solicitation of some pious people I was appointed assistant to Dr. Oporinus, and the gentlemen deputies fixed my salary

at forty pounds. So much, they said, they had never given to any one before me. Out of this I had to pay ten pounds house-rent; at that time too every thing was dear; for a quartern of corn cost six pounds, and a quart of wine eight rapps. The scarcity however did not last long. I went to the market and bought a little cask of wine--I think it was an aulm--which I carried home upon my shoulder. During the drinking of this wine my wife and I had many disputes; for we had no drinking vessel but an anker, and as soon as we went into the cellar with the anker, there was a quarrel. I said, "Do you drink; you have to nurse." My wife said, "Drink you; you have to study, and to work yourself to death in the school." Afterwards a good friend bought us a glass, in shape something like a boot; with which we went into the cellar when we had bathed. This glass held rather more than the anker. The cask lasted long; and when it was out we bought another. I went into the Hospital, and bought a little kettle and a tub, both of which had holes in them. I also bought a chair, and a tolerably good bed, for five pounds. We had not much superfluous furniture; but God be praised, poor, as we were from the beginning, I cannot remember we ever had a meal without bread and wine. I studied every day,--got up early, and went to bed late;--in consequence of which I often had the headache, and great dizziness; so that at times I had to hold by the benches. The physicians would gladly have helped me by bleeding and the like, but it was all in vain. At that time a famous physician--Epiphanius, a native of Venice--came to Bruntrut, who cured me in a very simple manner; so that I never had dizziness again, except when I stayed up too long, and remained fasting.

CHAPTER VI.

MASTER THOMAS IN THE WAR--BECOMES PROFESSOR IN BASLE.

Not long after that, the inhabitants of Zurich and the five Cantons went to war again. The event was very lamentable, for many a worthy and honest man met his death there; amongst others that eminent man, Ulrich Zuinglius. I was at that time in Zurich. When the battle was lost, and the report reached Zurich, they sounded an alarm on the great bell, just about the time the candles were lighted. Then many people ran out of the town towards the Sihlbridge, lower down on the Albis. I also snatched up a halberd and sword in Myconius's house, and ran out with the others: but when we had proceeded some distance, the sight was so dreadful that I thought to myself, "Better for you to have staid at home;" for many met us who had only one hand; others held their head with both hands, grievously wounded and bloody; others suffering still more dreadfully, and men with them who lighted them along, for it was dark. When we came to the bridge they let every one out over the bridge; but into Zurich they would let no man; for there were armed men standing on the bridge to hinder it;--otherwise I believe the most would have fled into the city. They then exhorted each other not to be disheartened. There was one man out of the Zurich territory, a very stout-hearted fellow, who spoke with a loud voice, so that every one could hear, and reminded them how it often happened that at the beginning the prospect was gloomy, and yet afterwards matters turned out well; he also advised that during the night they should march towards the Albis, for the purpose of receiving the enemy should they come on the morrow. When we reached that place no captain was any where to be found; for they had all been shot in the night. Besides this, it was excessively cold at that time: for in the morning there was a severe frost. We then made fires; and I seated myself close to one of the fires, and pulled off my shoes to warm my feet. There was also one Fuchsberger at my fire, at that time trumpeter of the States of Zurich; he had neither shoes nor cap, nor any sort of weapon. As we sat there an alarm was sounded to see how the people would behave themselves; and while I was going to draw on my shoes, Fuchsberger snatched up my halberd, and was going into the ranks with it. I said to him,

"Hold, comrade! leave me my weapon:" when he gave it back instantly, and said, "Well, in God's name they knocked me about so grievously yesterday, they may kill me outright to-day;" and with these words he laid hold of a large hedge-stake, and placed himself in the rank directly before me. Then I thought, "What a fine fellow that is! and there he stands quite unarmed!" I repented very much that I had not let him keep my halberd. Otherwise I had given myself up to my unalterable fate, and thought, "Now it must be." I was not at all frightened; but thought I would defend myself stoutly with my halberd; and if I lost my halberd, then I would defend myself vigorously with my sword. When however they saw that no enemy was at hand, they allowed the ranks to disband themselves; and I was not less glad than many another whom I knew, and who used to walk about very haughtily in Zurich, but trembled there like an aspen leaf. Then I heard a brave man, who stood on an elevated place, call out aloud, "Where are our captains? O God of heaven! is there then no one here to direct us what to do?" Although several thousands of us were assembled, yet no one knows what would have happened if the enemy had come up. When it was about nine o'clock in the morning the chief captain was seen coming across a meadow; he had lost his way in the flight: the other captain, William vom rothen Hause, had been killed. The third, however, George Göldin, had so conducted himself, that afterwards in Zurich he was convicted of treachery, and had to leave the country. What further happened there I know not: for I was not equipped like the others; and having nothing to eat, I went back again to Zurich. My old teacher Myconius asked me, "What is the news? has Ulrich Zuinglius been killed?" When I said "Yes," he said, with a grieved heart, "My God! have mercy upon us: now I have no wish to remain any longer in Zurich;" for Zuinglius and Myconius had been good friends for many years. When I had got something to eat; we went out together into a chamber, and Myconius said, "Where shall I now go to? I have no desire to remain longer in Zurich." Hearing a few days after, that the preacher Hieronymus Bodanus, of St. Alban's in Basle, had also been killed in the battle, I said to Myconius, "Go to Basle, and become preacher there." He answered, "What preacher would give way to me, and let me occupy his place?" I now acquainted him that the preacher of St. Alban's had been killed, and that I believed he would be received there: there was however nothing more said about it.

After the peace was concluded, four hundred Swiss came, who were desirous to get into the town at night. This caused a tumult among the citizens, who feared that they were going to make a murderous night of it; for there were but too many traitors in the town, who could have pointed out which were to be

murdered. They then locked the gate, and the whole Rennway was filled with people. The traitorous blockhead Escher, who had become colonel in Lavater's place, rode out to the Swiss at the Sihl, and gave them lodging--whoever would not let them into his house he forced the door, and was very friendly to them. When every one had gone home from the Rennway, Dr. Ammianus came to Myconius, and said to him, "Mr. Myconius, I will not allow you to sleep in your house to-night. No one knows what may happen, and they will certainly not spare you; come therefore with me." Several of his scholars escorted him to Dr. Ammianus's house, and I amongst them. Myconius said to me, "Thomas, do you sleep with me to-night;" so we both slept in one bed, and each had a halberd lying beside him in the bed. On the following day the Swiss went up along the lake of Zurich towards home. When all was quiet again, and as I was losing my time, I determined to go again to Basle to my studies. I studied in the college, and slept in my own bed; I had my board at the sign of the Pilgrim's Staff, for my wife was still in Zurich. There I have often dined for threepence; so that one can well imagine what sort of plenty I had. At that time I said to Henry Billing, the son of the burgomaster, that I had heard from Myconius that he did not like to stay longer in Zurich now that Ulrich Zuinglius had been killed. He said, "Do you think that he could be persuaded to come here to us?" I related my conversation with him respecting the preacher's office at St. Alban's. He informed his father, the burgomaster, of it; and he in turn told it to the gentlemen deputies, who sent for me to come to the convent of the Augustines, in order to converse with me. After they had heard me they sent me to Zurich to fetch Myconius. The travelling expences I had however to bear myself. On the journey to Basle, four horsemen met us in the field above Mumpf, and as that was not in the jurisdiction of the confederacy Myconius said, "What if those men should take us prisoners, and carry us to Ensen?" I comforted him however when they came nearer, by saying, "Do not be afraid, they are Baslers." They were the cadets Wolfgang von Landenberg, Eglin Offenber, Landenberg's son, and a horse-soldier. When they were come nearer I said, "I know that they are Baslers, for I have often seen them at Ecolompadius's sermons." At Mumpf they turned in at the Bell Inn, for it was near night, and we also turned in there. When we came into the room, cadet Wolfgang asked, "Whence do you come?" Myconius answered, "From Zurich." The cadet said, "What news in Zurich?" Myconius replied, "They are in great trouble because Master Ulrich Zuinglius has been killed." Cadet Wolfgang continued, "Who are you?" Myconius answered, "My name is Myconius, and I am schoolmaster in Zurich, at the Frauenmünster." Thereupon he also asked him who he was? He said, "I am Wolfgang von Landenberg." A little while afterwards Myconius taking me by the coat, led me

aside, and said, "Now I see how industriously you go to church in Basle: it appears to me that this cadet did not take up much room in the church." This he said because he had heard him much talked of. Whilst we sat, the cadet Eglin also came into the room, together with the two others. After supper they began to drink immoderately, and the horseman brought Myconius a glass full to the brim. Myconius drank a little out of the glass; then the horseman said, "O, Sir, you must not put me off so." As he continued importuning him, Myconius became angry, and said, "Hark ye, comrade, I was able to drink before you were able to count five--leave me alone." The cadet Eglin, who sat at the top of the table, heard that, and asked, "What is the matter with you there?" Myconius answered, "That young fellow there wants to force me to drink." On that Eglin became very angry with the horseman; so that we thought that he would beat him; he spoke very sharply to him: "Thou miserable fellow, wilt thou force an old man to drink?" and the like. Thereupon he asked Myconius, "Dear sir, who are you?" "My name is Oswald Myconius." "Were you not once schoolmaster at St. Peter's in Basle?" "Yes." The cadet said, "My dear sir, then you were my preceptor: had I minded you then I should have become an honest man; whereas at present I can scarcely say what I am." They then went on drinking immoderately. The cadet Wolf, however, had not taken any part whatever in the quarrel. When Elgin had had enough, he laid himself down with his elbows on the table. On this his father began to scold him harshly, as if he had committed the greatest crime. After supper Myconius and I went to bed: they however drank more before they went to bed, and made an abominable noise with singing and shouting. We heard afterwards that they had been about fourteen days in Zurich, and had, with those who felt rather joy than sorrow, assisted at the funeral of Zuinglius, and others who had been killed. Next morning, as we were going over the Melfeld, Myconius said to me, "How did you like the education of those gentlemen yesterday? To make a person drink till he is sick, is no shame; but to lay the elbows a little on the table deserves all that cursing and scolding!" On our arrival in Basle, Myconius went to Dr. Oporinus, but I to the college. Several days after, Myconius was to preach the council-sermon. I do not know whether he had been told of it or not. When I came to him he was still in bed; I said, "Father, get up; you are to preach." "What," replied he, "must I preach?" and raising himself up quickly, he turned to me with these words: "Tell me what I shall preach." "I do not know," I said. He continued, "I am determined you shall tell me." Thereupon I proposed to him to shew in his sermon whence and wherefore the misfortune came that had befallen us. He required me to make a note of it on a slip of paper. That I did, and gave him my little Testament, into which he put the slip of paper, and so entered the pulpit; and expounded the question to the learned people who

had assembled to hear him, as one who had never before preached a sermon. They were however all so surprised at his sermon, that I heard amongst others Dr. Grynäus say to a student of the name of Sultzer, after the sermon, "O Simon, let us pray to God that *that* man may be spared to us, for that man CAN teach." So then he was received as preacher at St. Alban's. I accompanied him again to Zurich, and then went back again to Basle to my studies. After he had received his honourable dismissal he came with his wife to Basle, and my wife also came with him. When however he began to preach at St. Alban's, so many people went to hear him, that it was determined to elect him, in place of Dr. Ecolompadius, to the office of Antistes, or chief pastor, of which situation Mr. Thomas Gyrenfalk had hitherto done the duties. I immediately got the professorship of the Greek language in the Pædagogium, and lectured upon Cæporins' Grammar and Lucian's Dialogues: but Oporinus received the professorship of Poetry. Not long after, there was an attack of an infectious disease, and Dr. Heerwag's corrector of the press--Jacob Rubert, the beloved friend of Oporinus and myself--died; thereupon Dr. Sultzer came for a while in his stead into Dr. Heerwag's service: but when he saw that the work rather hindered than helped him in his studies, he persuaded me to undertake it. I was indeed fearful that it would be too much for me; but Dr. Heerwag never ceased to press me, until I complied with his request. This business I attended to for four years, with much trouble and labour; for there never was a burden taken off my shoulders but another was laid on in its place.

CHAPTER VII.

MASTER THOMAS TURNS PRINTER.

In the mean time it happened that at the diet at Sitten, in St. Gall, it was resolved to call me to the situation of chief teacher; and the captain, "Simon in Alben," was commanded to write to me, and tell me to come. It was Christmas-time that the resolution was passed, the execution was delayed till Shrovetide. Now at that time there was one Herbert, provost in the lower college: he had been first at Basle, and then went to Friburg, where he gave out that he could not hold out any longer among the heretics in Basle. After that he came again to Basle, where they were unwilling to receive him, unless he assured them on oath that he was devoted heartily to the Reformed Confession. This oath he took at once, and said he could not endure the idolatrous doings at Friburg. This man had boarders from St. Gall, from whom he learned that they wished to have me there as teacher. As I had to superintend Dr. Heerwag's printing-office while he was in Frankfort at the fair, and could not therefore immediately obey the call I had received, Herbert availed himself of the opportunity and hastened to Sitten to the Bishop, whom he informed falsely that I would not come; for that I had said that I should not like to plunge into the midst of idolatry; and also that I was in the habit of eating meat on forbidden days, and the like. The Bishop readily believed it; for I was already suspected by him as to my religion: so Herbert was received. When he came again to Basle I went to him into the college, and asked him, "What have you been doing in St. Gall?" (for I already knew of the matter.) He answered, that he had had private business. Then I said, "You have had the business of a rogue, and a wicked fellow. You have no doubt slandered me; but I will also go there, and if you have lied about me I will convict you of your wickedness." I really took the journey to St. Gall, for I had private business besides. When I arrived at Visp, the Bishop happened to be there just then for the purpose of confirming. I also met the Captain, Simon, who had a house in Visp, and visited him. At first he expressed his dissatisfaction that I had not come at the right time, and told me that on that account another had been already appointed. He also told me what crooked artifices Herbert had employed with the Bishop, and how only the day before, he had written and sent a messenger to

say that I was coming, and that they should not believe me. The Captain finished with these words: "Well! the priests have chosen for themselves a teacher, and him they shall have."

I would gladly have waited on the Bishop, but could not manage it till he came to Gusten. There he gave me an audience, and as I entered said, "Thomas, while Esau was following the chase Jacob took his blessing away." I answered, "Has then your princely Grace only one blessing?" He then bade me welcome, and said that he had been informed that I would not come, also that I was suspected as to my faith; and that at Basle I was in the habit of eating meat on forbidden days. Thereupon I answered, "Yes, my lord, and he that has told that of me has also eaten meat often enough on forbidden days;" which was true, for we had very often dined at Dr. Phrygius's when the Doctor invited me, and the little man came to see what he could get. Also when I said that, there were three Canons standing by, and the Governor, Anthony Venetz, and they intimated that if that was the case with the little man, they would let him go about his business and take me. But I said, "No; for then between two stools he would fall to the ground, and I have a good service already;" so I went back to Basle. And here it occurs to me, that some time before, my very faithful and dear friend Henry Billing, son of the burgomaster in Basle, had requested me to take a journey with him into the country of the Confederacy, and then he would go with me into St. Gall. We went therefore first to Shaffhausen, Constance; after that to Lindau, where he had business; and from thence to St. Gall, Toggenburg, Rapperschwyl, Zuge, Schweitz, and Uri. We were treated with great respect, when it was known that we were from Basle. After that we went into the valley of Urseron to Realp; but when in the evening Henry saw the mountains he was terrified, and hesitated about crossing the mountain on the morrow. He was so cast down, that the landlady said, "If the Baslers are all so faint-hearted, they will not go to war with the St. Gallians. I am a feeble woman, yet I would take the child to-morrow by the hand and go over the mountains with him." Henry did not sleep much during the night. We had engaged a strong Alpine guide to shew us the way: he took a staff over his shoulder, went forward in the snow, and sang so loud that the mountains echoed again. He however slipped a little in the plain, as it was pretty dark; and Henry seeing him fall, would not go a single step farther, but said, "Do you go to St. Gall, I will go back to Basle." I would not however separate from him in the wilds, but determined to accompany him out again. This made me so spiritless that we conversed but little together that day. We came again to Uri, and from thence to the lake. There a little wind arose, so that Henry was very much afraid, and said to the boatman, "Get ashore, I will not sail any further."

The boatman said, "There is no danger." But Henry behaved himself so outrageously that we were obliged to get to land not far from the place where William Tell sprang on shore. We came to a little village, where we slept on straw. In the morning we went to Berkenried, then to Unterwalden, and over the Brünig into the valley of Hasli. Then I said to him, "Now you have a good road to Thun, and from thence to Berne and Basle." So we parted, and I crossed the Grimsel to St. Gall. When I came to Visp, Captain Simon was there, who was very favourably inclined towards me. He was Master of Arts at Cologne; had read Cicero's *Officia* at the Academy at Basle; afterwards had business ten years in Rome with the Pope, and was well versed in the Latin language. He said to me, "I shall take the bath at Briegen to cure the gout; bathe with me, and I will pay for you." I went with him; for the bath is not half a mile distant from Visp. At first several of us had to carry him into the bath; but when he had bathed about two hours he could walk out on two crutches. There came thither also the Captain of the Guard of the Duke of Milan, who had physicked away nine hundred ducats on one leg without being any the better: he also bathed, and in three days his ankle was well, and remained so from that hour. That I saw with my own eyes, and other things besides; so that I could relate wonders enough concerning it. The bath did me a great deal of good, except that I lost all appetite, and could scarcely eat any thing but rye bread; neither could I drink any wine, for it was too strong for me. I complained of that to the host. Captain Peter Oweling, who was a wonderfully fine man, and had also studied in Milan; and he said to him, "Oh! if you only had sour wine!" He ordered wine for me from Morrill, which was dreadfully sour; for it is there very wild, and is the highest wine that grows in that country. When the wine came, the host said to me, "Platter, I will make you a present of that wine." It was about two saum. He then gave me a pretty crystal glass, which held nearly a measure of wine: with this I went into the cellar, and drank the largest draught I ever remember to have swallowed in my life before, for I had been a long time very thirsty, because I drank nothing but warm bath water, and there was also an eruption on my skin. When I had taken that draught I lost all wish for any more of that wine; but my appetite for eating and drinking had returned again. Captain Simon received many presents in the bathing place, and amongst others seventy and odd pheasants, some feathers of which I brought to Basle. As I had no opportunity of sending letters to Basle, and remained away nine weeks, they said that I had certainly perished on the mountain. When the bath cure was over I went again to Basle, and became, as before, corrector of the press to Dr. Heerwag, and professor at the Pædagogium. I afterwards, in partnership with Dr. Oporinus, Balthasar Ruch, and Ruprecht Winter, bought the printing establishment of

Andrew Cratander, and became a master-printer. That trade I followed several years with much sorrow and trouble, particularly on account of the debts I had to contract, because I had no property of my own to advance. One day, as Oporinus and I were still professors, it happened that the Town Secretary invited me into his house, and asked me how it was that the University did not rightly prosper. I said, "Methinks that there are too many professors; for there are often more of them than students. It would be enough if there were four eminent men, who must however be well remunerated, and four with inferior salaries, that would be eight persons; if each were to read industriously only one lecture a day, there would be students enough." He then said, "What shall we do with our Baslers?" I said, "If you will attend to that, and not rather care for the youth, then I can advise nothing more; I have always had the idea that the Baslers should be preferred if they can be found; but if not, then the best that can be had ought to be taken, in order that youth may be assisted." This advice was at once followed with respect to me and Dr. Oporinus; for as we had engaged in the printing, it was expected either that we should give up the printing, and apply ourselves to the professorship, or else give up the professorship. The latter happened; for we were so deeply engaged in that trade, that we could not have given it up without great loss.

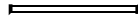
CHAPTER VIII.

MASTER THOMAS BECOMES PROFESSOR AGAIN--DIES.

[Illustraton: I went on with the printing.]

I went on with the printing. I therefore went on with the printing, and had a bad time of it, as also my wife and children; for the children were often obliged to fold paper till their little fingers bled. But yet my circumstances were improved; for with the printing alone I was able to gain 200 florins a year, improve my printing-office and household furniture, and always found people to advance me money when I wanted it. Notwithstanding, from various circumstances, I got tired of my business after some time;--and was also requested from different quarters to become schoolmaster again: for in a few years they had had I several schoolmasters, and the school had almost entirely fallen into decay. I one day called on Mr. Rudolph Frey; he was chief deputy, and constable in the town. He said, "Pray become schoolmaster; by so doing you will oblige the council, and serve God and the world." Dr. Grynæus said to me, "Become schoolmaster! there is no office more heavenly! There is nothing I would rather be, if only I had not to say a thing twice over." They went on persuading me, until at last I consented. I got a salary of 200 florins, of which I had to pay 100 to the assistants; and thus I turned professor again; but I had to get through a great deal of disputing with the University, because they did not wish me to be independent, and to read lectures, the right to which they claimed for themselves exclusively. When my wife and I had attained a considerable age, a dreadful sickness came, which spared no age, and also seized us both. But our heavenly Father allowed us to remain yet a little longer here below on earth. The Lord grant us grace that it may serve to the glory of God and salvation of our souls! Amen! And to the glory of God I cannot conceal, that during the whole of my sickness I did not experience the least pain; although my wife and others had to bear great suffering. That also I ascribe to the mercy of God! May he deliver us all from

everlasting torment, through his Son Jesus Christ. Amen.



The close of this history, which Thomas wrote for his son Felix, runs as follows: "Now I have, according to your desire, dear son Felix, written the beginning and continuation of my life up to the present time, as well as I could remember it after so many years; but certainly not *all*, for who would be able to do that? for I have often been in great dangers on the mountains and waters, as on the lakes of Constance and Lucerne; and others also on the Rhine; likewise on land in Poland, Hungary, Silesia, Meissen, Swabia, and Bavaria, where in my youth (besides what is noted in this book) I suffered very much; so that I often thought, How is it possible that I am still alive, and can stand or walk so long a time, and have neither broken nor injured a limb? God protected me by his angels; and however mean my beginning, and however full of danger my life has been, I have notwithstanding, as you see, arrived at a tolerably comfortable position; for although I had as good as nothing of private property, and my wife possessed nothing, still in time we have arrived at this point, that I, by great application to business, have acquired, in the town of Basle, four houses, with tolerable furniture: also, through the blessing of God, possess an estate with house and farm, besides the official residence at the school; whilst at first I had not a hut in Basle to afford me refuge. And, notwithstanding my mean descent, yet God has granted me the honour of having been now thirty-and-one years professor in the head-school next the university, in the far famed city of Basle, and of having instructed the child of many an honourable man, of whom many have become doctors, or otherwise learned men: several, and indeed not a few, of the nobility, who now possess and rule over land and people, and others who sit on the judgment seat, and in the council. Also, at all times, I have had many boarders, both of noblemen and other people of consequence, who speak well of me, and shew me all manner of kindness; so that the worshipful town of Zurich, and other places, have sent me presents of their wine of honour. Likewise, in Strasburg, eleven doctors have appeared to my honour, because I brought up my dear brother Simon, who is preceptor of the second class there. At Sitten, when they sent me the wine of the city, the curate said, 'This wine the city of Sitten

sends to our dear countryman, Thomas Platter, as to a father of the children of the province of St. Gall.' What shall I then say of thee also, Felix, of thy honour and prosperity, that God has granted thee the honour, that thou hast already lived long and happily with thy wife, and hast been known to princes and lords, noblemen and commons. This all, dear Felix, thou wilt acknowledge and own, ascribing nothing to thyself, but giving God alone honour and glory all thy life long: thus thou wilt attain to everlasting life.--Written by THOMAS PLATTER, the 14th of February 1573, the seventy-third year of my age. God grant me a happy end, through Jesus Christ. Amen."

In the year 1582, the 26th January, my dear father died happily. Almighty God grant that he may rise again joyfully at the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. DR. FELIX PLATTER.

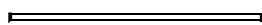
FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 1](#): Literally "Sharp-Shooters;" but the office is probably the same as that known still in England by the name of "Fag."

[Footnote 2](#): It is still not unusual in Poland, on certain festival days or public occasions, to strew a sort of reed or coarse grass in the streets.

[Footnote 3](#): The Latin grammar of Ælius Donatus, a famous Latin scholar and teacher of the 4th century, which was then in general use.

[Footnote 4](#): School-Servant in fact.



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