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## **The city of the fountains, or Baden-Baden and its immediate neighbourhood**

**Whitelocke, Robert Heriot**

**Carlsruhe, 1840**

Chapter XXIX. The Kniebis

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CHAPTER XXIX.

THE KNIEBIS.

"Weiss ich mich in die Natur zu schicken, so ist  
Alles gethan."

GOETHE.

God bless me, Tuft, who would have thought of seeing you here, why how long have you left Paris?

Only a week, came through Strasburg as far as Carlsruhe, saw the Palace, went to the Theatre, saw the Grand Duchess, beautiful family hers is by the bye, rambled through the garden, looked at the Exotics and all that, popped in at the English bookseller's, Creuzbauer, how dy'e call him, bought some prints there, to astonish my friends at Philadelphia when I go back, came on to Rastadt, went over the Palace there too, the statues outside confounded ugly, bowled over here three or four days ago, saw some dreadfully ugly naked statues on the road, went to the Conversation House—

You didn't gamble there, did you?

Yes, but I did though, lost sixty francs, danced with a splendid girl, spoke to each other now and then, but neither of us

understood one single syllable of what the other said, visited every thing far and near, not half so good as the Alleghany mountains, and as for the Rhine, nothing like our Hudson after all, although it is more classical.

Why you have not seen it all yet, wait till you go down or up the whole of the river.

Very true, must not be prejudiced. It's all very fine, I confess.

Well, and where are you bound for now?

The Kniebis.

Why I am going there too.

That's capital, we shall keep each other in countenance on the road.

What's the name of this town?

Bühl.

Do you see those Mount Sinai noses and black sparkling antelope-eyes peeping at us out of every window?

Do you see the male oriental figures in the shops puffing away at their Meerschaums?

Oh Jephtha Judge of Israel, what a —

Now I know where my inexpressibles went the other day.

Why this is the land of milk and honey.

Good place to breakfast in then. — Coffee not over bad! what do you think of the Affenthaler?

The best I have tasted, 1834 I'll warrant. — Like Mauerwein better.



I suppose we must write our names in the book, the land-lord thinks it will do him good.—Don't like the system.

Neither do I; so write down Peter Periwinkle Esqr. and I will sign my name the Hon. Timothy Tugmutton, F. A. S. which meaneth being interpreted "Fellow of the Society of Asses."

Many a true word spoken in jest; you were not aware that there was once a Narrengesellschaft or Fools-society in this town, were you?

Not I; ha ha ha!

And SCHREIBER says that their acts are still visible, 'noch vorhanden' are his very words; very good that: *ecce signum!*

That is the church of Sasbach, I suppose.

Kutscher, links!

What does links mean?

To the left; you shall see; there! read!

"Jci fat tué Turenne."

Aye, Aye, so here he fell. Fine general!

"Er machte der Menschheit Ehre", says Montécuculi.

What did Mr. Montycuckoolee say?

He says, he was an ornament of human nature.

What a man who changed his religion, a turn-coat, an invader of another country, the tool of a tyrant?

He did his duty Tuft, he couldn't do more.

Not half so great a man as our Washington.

Oh! nobody disputes your leader's merit, but after all, Turenne was a noble fellow for the times he lived in.

My stars and garters ! this is warm work , getting up to this Castle.

What a splendid look out , Strasburg Cathedral can't be very far off , it stands out in such bold relief. That's Alsace , that's Swabia , upon my word this is as fine as the Old Castle ; has any human being been within these walls for the last fifty years , think ye ?

Not if I may judge by the brambles and brush-wood growing all round it , even the path is grown over. Which way are we to get out again ? Where did we come in at ?

That's not so easy to find again : here I suppose ; hold tight ; keep fast on to the rock ; seize that branch , by Jove I shall break my neck , — thanks oh ! ye friendly hobgoblins , for you seem to be the guardians of this donjon. Now we are safe.

Come , come , we can't stay any longer , if we wish to reach Griesbach to night , the horses have rested enough , and "we have a long way to go" down the mountain to regain the inn.

Oh ! my Heavens ! this is as hot as New York or Naples , 'you couldn't lind me the loan of a gridiron,' could you ?

Tremendous. — Landlord , a bottle of your best Klingelberger. Allerdings , mein Herr.

What does the fellow mean by his All her tinks ?

Learn German , then you'll know.

Haven't time. Apropos of Cherry-water , which you found very good no doubt , give me a light for my cigar.



With pleasure. Well, that Windeck was a pretty place after all.

Very. Come coachman, get on faster!

Fort!

Nothing very particular about Achern.

No.

What a host of villages!

Yes, and did you ever see such a tanned race of monkeys in all your born days?

"No, never, Beppo how's your liver."

This is Renchen. Now we are in the valley of the Rensch.

Beautiful! What book are you reading there?

Faust.

What does he say?

Why he says, that only let him know all the secrets of nature, and he is quite content to kick the bucket.

More fool he! Why, that's just the time to live and enjoy it.

So say I, it's like that speech of an epicure in the Elysian fields, who regretted never having eaten turtle-soup, but said that if Pluto would only give him a day's leave of absence, he'd be bound to kill himself before night with eating it.

How very metaphysical the Germans are!

Yes, and we are a 'leetle' too practical, as Sawney says.

Do you see that linden-tree, and those steeples?

To be sure I do, for I see through the dust as well as a mountain-cat does in the blue-mountains.

Well, this is a lovely spot, I am enchanted: let's have some of that fruit! This is where Klingelberger is made you must know, so we'll have another bottle upon the strength of it.

Hum! not quite so good as I expected; the vintage has been bad these few years past. The place once belonged to the family of Rohan, I find in my guide-book.

Did it? Who was he?

A Duke of that name is often mentioned in French history.

I suppose some branch or another.

Extinct no doubt as far as Oberkirch is concerned?

Long ago.

This is the little village of Lautenbach, pretty Gothic chapel enough, old as Methusalem by the look of it.

It seems to be something like the one at Lichtenthal.

What do you think of Oppenau?

That's its name, is it?

So they say, and this is Peterthal; let's have one glass a piece of the mineral water, and eat a trout; if we don't take any thing else at the Table d'hôte. Too late do you say? oh! aye I forgot: well then let's be off for Griesbach.

Here we are, Gentlemen, this is Griesbach.

How 'here we are?' This is not Mr. Dollmätch's.

No, Mr. Monch's, mein Herr.



Well drive further.

As you command.

This is where the Grand Duke Charles of noble memory, which I although an Englishman believe him to be, gave a constitution to the Grand Duchy of Baden; may they never prove themselves unworthy of it!

Amen, so say I; freedom and religious liberty all over the world is my motto.

This is where the Grand Duchess Sophie comes sometimes, she it is, who has made all these improvements.

Why then we'll drink a glass of some wine or another to her health after dinner, and to let you into a secret, I am as hungry as a hunter.

Very good dinner, and the cook actually knows how to make a pudding à l'Anglaise.

God be praised for what we have recieved. Too late to get on any further to night. Let's have one peep at the Kniebis, a slight stroll, one cigar and then to bed.

Good night. Mind and call me at half past two to morrow morning, Boots, Hausknecht or 'whatever your name may be.'

Hollo, time to get up, Sir.

Why, what o'clock is it?

Just one.

Why, I told you to call me at 'half-three,' stupid Carle.

Donnerwetter, so you did, mein Herr!



Never mind; I'll get up, it is a bright moonlight night, so come Tuft, get up with you there; the carriage goes round the road-way, we are going to take the mountain by storm.

What no soap? by the Lord Harry I forgot to bring a cake of it with me, and landlords don't find soap in this part of Europe.

"After that she did a very foolish thing." Never mind! go without for once, we shall be too late to see the sun-rise.

To arms, or rather to legs then!

Stop! I am out of breath, what a breather! Do you see that thread of water that falls and dances in the pale beams of the moon! how exquisitely beautiful!

Yes, and more by token, we are at least half way up; this alone is worth coming to see, and how deliciously cool the wind sighs through the foliage!

Hark, that was the nightingale!

My limbs tremble under me, don't climb so fast, this is harder work than getting up to the old castle, I think.

And at least one third higher.

Do you see the grey of the morning?

And yonder is a red burning bar on the eastern horizon, that looks like a red-hot horse-shoe on a blacksmith's stithy.

What curious comparisons you make!

Not the less just or less natural on that account.

He comes, he comes like a race-horse in his pride, the hills are lighted up; by heavens 'tis a sea of them, they look like billows in a storm; the forests glow, but the valleys are dark!

And will be most likely for an hour to come, I wonder how the day-light can ever reach them.

Come confess, is not this as fine as the Alleghany mountains?

Why it's not exactly in the same style, but it amply repays the fatigue of climbing. That is Rippoldsau, isn't it?

Yes, and these stairs are to get to it.

No they are not, they are dumb-stairs. The view, the view! oh how lovely! What fine shooting there must be in these woods!

The heath-cock amongst others.

Well, here we are at Rippoldsau and no bones broke. Good morning, Mr. GÖRINGER!

Good morning, gentlemen! glad to see you, hope you have enjoyed the view from the Kniebis; breakfast shall be served up instantly. Very sorry that we have no beds vacant, every room full, and those bespoke twice over for a month to come, but hope you will stay to dinner, brilliant society, Archbishop of Freiburg amongst the guests, very distinguished man, gentlemen, ornament to the state.

Not the least doubt of it, only never heard of his name before; and who built this fairy-palace in this Oasis? it looks like enchantment, not Aladdin's lamp, was it?

Oh no, Gentlemen, the Architect's name was Arnold of Freiburg; perhaps, Gentlemen, when you are rested, you would like to see the Convent; you have only to follow the course of the stream down yonder avenue; it flows into the Kinzig, and the valley of the Kinzig is formed by it.



Rather cold in winter I should think Mr. Geringer, for I feel it rather chilly.

A warm breakfast and Galignani will soon chase away the cold; good morning, Gentlemen, till dinner-time.

What do you think of the dinner, Tuft?

Not half so good as we got last night at Griesbach.

Nothing *à l'anglaise* here.

Which way shall we return?

By the valley of the Murg, through part of Wurtemberg: what was the news in Galignani, Tuft, for you are more of a politician it seems than I am?

Every thing breathes war; you John Bulls and we Yankees are at loggerheads again.

Are we? I hope you'll get a confounded threshing then.

Thankee. "The same to you and all your family."

Where do you intend taking supper and putting up for the night?

At Forbach.

Hark to the Convent bell! "The Convent bell is swinging."

Adieu Rippoltsau, and your far famed waters; I won't say the same to you, oh Kniebis, for we have first of all to get down the other side, which is not so soon done as said.