

AN AMERICAN SCHOOLGIRL IN GERMANY

BY MARY D. HOPKINS

I CAN remember very well the pang I felt when my mother first asked me if I would like to go to Germany.

What? Leave my school, my home, my friends, and go no one knew where? Why, Europe was a place you went to when you were grown up, or when you were at any rate through school, and no doubt then was very nice. Of course you would be glad to go there some time; just so you might like some day more distant to get to heaven; but I think any little girl might be disconcerted by so sudden a proposal. And then the vision flashed into my mind of that dear summer cottage on the great river, with the boats and the swimming and the picnics. I felt that I could not bear it.

'O mother, must I? Oh, please, not this summer!' I appealed.

'Well, dear,' said my mother, 'you could stay with grandmother, of course, you know.'

She was surprised, I think, and a little disappointed.

But the prospect of being left behind was too much for me, and I began to discover symptoms of a desire for Europe.

So in doubt and misgiving began the year that I must call beyond all others *annus mirabilis*, that long chapter of delight and wonder which, starting as a summer's outing, was to spread itself unaccountably over a whole delightful year. Reluctance had vanished with my first step on the great liner. We sailed for a port in Germany, but it was Fairyland that I set foot in when

we landed; surely in Fairyland, with its quaintly walled and towered cities, its princes and peasants, its black forests and enchanted mountains, that we traveled that summer. The Hartz, the Schwarzwald! No need to tell me that the fairy tales were born there; they were fairy tales of themselves. I have no space to dwell here on the vivid enchantment of those first few months abroad. I hardly knew that they were over when I knew also that they were to be followed by something yet more wonderful,—a whole year in Germany.

My parents had decided to spend the winter in a great university town where my father wished to work in the libraries, and one of the minor questions to be decided was what should be done with me. I had been taught the violin at home, and of course I was to continue here at the famous Conservatory, or at least with one of its famous masters. This one proved to be Herr Konrad Ritter, youngest and not least brilliant of the reigning triumvirate of the violins; and I was soon running to and from the Conservatory with my violin tucked under my arm.

'Ritters sind doch reizend!' one of our German acquaintances had said to us; and charming they seem to my older judgment as they seemed to me then. He was not the blond Teuton of commonplace type. He was the type of South German that has, in common with Frenchman or Italian, a certain dark and fiery distinction. Mephistopheles they called him at the Conservatory, and the sobriquet was perhaps

invited by his dark good looks, his height, and his occasionally somewhat alarming irony. Indeed, with the red cap and feather, the mantle and sword, his tall figure would have been well suited to the famous rôle, — well suited if you had not seen the smile and the kind eyes that made the name so patently a misnomer.

Herr Ritter's wife was one of the most beautiful women I have ever known. She was tall and fair and slender, with hair like pale gold and eyes like blue stars, as a German poet might have put it, and she was very gentle and lovely. She might have stood for the Princess out of some German fairy tale. I have since supposed that she was very young (I knew of course that she was younger than mother, who was very old — thirty-five at least), but to fifteen she seemed immeasurably remote, set in a starry heaven of her own.

It was through her and fortune that I was sent to my German school.

'Give her to Fräulein Schmidt,' said the beautiful lady when October was drawing on, and my mother asked her advice about the city schools. 'It is one of the greatest good fortunes of a girl's life to have come under her influence.'

'Is the school so fine?' asked my mother.

'Yes; but even if she learned nothing in the classes, she would have a liberal education in being with Fräulein Schmidt.'

My mother laughed a little. 'That is saying a great deal,' she said. 'But if you are a sample of her products, I think she must try her hand on my little girl too.'

So presently, one golden September day, we went to see Fräulein Schmidt. There was nothing prepossessing, certainly, about a first view of her little domain. We entered an old house in

the Nordstrasse, climbed three flights of gloomy stairs, passed by the open doors of worn and dingy schoolrooms, and were shown at last into a quaint, sunny German *salon*, where a woman tall and large, a colossal woman, who might have weighed two hundred pounds, I thought, old, kindly, with a deep, sweet voice, welcomed us and talked with my mother. In earlier days she must have been of heroic mould. She had eyes black as sloes, eyes that could be sunshine or lightning, cheeks like a winter apple, and a great organ voice which could roll like thunder — a terror to evil-doers! — or soften to a caress. But this is what I learned afterwards. Now she patted me kindly on the head, asked me a few questions, and when I went away I was enrolled in the 'Höhere Töchter Schule' of Fräulein Auguste Schmidt, and due to appear there next Monday morning at eight o'clock.

The ministrations of the German nurse whom I had had at home and detested heartily — *mea culpa*, poor Helga! — made it possible now for me to enter a class with girls of my own age; and in the first class accordingly I presently found myself, to my mingled discomfiture and satisfaction, the only foreigner in a group of girls who seemed to me formidably big and tall and clever. Here I spent a silent and unhappy morning, spoken to pleasantly indeed by my neighbors and then promptly forgotten. How quickly and readily they recited! Then, when the books were opened and the pens came out, what terrifying speed of dictation! How well they spoke French! And how many things they knew that I had never even heard of! Could I ever, ever, keep up with them? My only ray of comfort was a momentary feeling of superiority in the English class. After all, they too were mortal.

Noon came at last, and the girls

poured out chattering and laughing, and I went out, too, hardly daring to hope that any of them would speak to me, much less walk with me. But they were merry, kindly souls for the most part, and two of the very nicest, two that I had looked at longingly during my lonely morning, fell in with me at once as I started off, and walked home with me all the way.

Dear Else and Grete! I wish across all the years these pages might bring you any sense of the grateful love of your little American friend. For thus began the friendship that was to be so happy during all that happy year, and so many years afterwards. From that day all was well with me at school. I was no longer alone; I had friends, I was accepted as a comrade. *Fräulein Schmidt* and the other teachers were 'sehr rücksichtsvoll mit dem kleinen Fremdling,' and all was very good and very happy.

My new friends, as it turned out, lived only a few doors from me, and we used almost daily to walk the two miles to and from school together. This was all very well in the pleasant autumn weather, but not so pleasant in the bleak North German winter, with its short days, its cold and snow and fog. We lived across the city from the school, in the new quarter, and walking, as we always did, even by the shortest cut through the *Altstadt*, meant starting at half-past seven, often with the street-lamps still lighted and no sign of dawn in the sky. How often there would be no time to sit down to the table and I would have to run off with a buttered roll in my hand, my only breakfast! My father would butter that 'Brödchen,' and have it ready for me when I was late, and I would nibble it as I ran down the street, for was not Else waiting under the street-lamp at the corner? Or, if it were lighter, the heavy fog would perhaps shut down so close that people

in the streets would seem like shadows walking, and crossing the great *Markt* one would plunge into a gray, shoreless sea of mist, with the gables of the old Gothic *Rathhaus* standing out, gray, too, and weatherbeaten, like rocks in the storm.

It is strange how those mornings impressed me, for I suppose they were not so very many out of the year. In the afternoons, however, I remember no fog or snow, though the dusk fell early, but clear bright skating weather, with all the world on the ice in the *Johanna Park*, the band playing on the *Island*, the ring and whirr of skates, and the gay crowd of skaters swinging round and round beneath the bridges. Here around a curve a group of tall officers and pretty ladies would be dancing a quadrille or waltzing on the ice; here some students, with the colored caps above their scarred faces and the *Corps* ribbons crossing their breasts, would skate swiftly, four or five in line; there again some long-haired musicians, with brigandish slouch hats and wrapped in Italian-looking cloaks, would sweep gravely by, — old and young, children and their grandparents making one party often in the simple, happy enjoyment that the Germans know so well, and that our nation has lost the secret of. And then perhaps — oh joy! — would come *Frau Ritter*, the beautiful lady, tall and queenly, looking like the *Snow Princess* in her white furs, with her tall foreign-looking husband, *Mephistopheles* indeed, but for the smile and the friendly eyes. And perhaps for a crowning happiness, while *Frau Ritter* was claimed by some handsome officer, *Herr Ritter*, a wonderful skater, would take me once or twice around the ice, or show me strange curves and figures that I would try in vain to imitate; for our relations with the *Ritters* were growing more and more friendly.

'Is n't Mariechen enchanted with Fräulein Schmidt?' said Frau Ritter to my mother, when my mother was one day taking tea with her in her charming apartment.

'Ah, but is n't she enchanted with Herr Ritter?' my music-master had cut in mischievously; and truth compelled my mother to declare that whatever my feeling was for Fräulein Schmidt, I was certainly '*entzückt*' with Herr Ritter.

I can still remember my hot embarrassment when mother repeated this anecdote at home.

From the first I had regarded him with a dog-like devotion, and as I look back I can only be grateful to him for so much patience and kindness with a stupid child. Docile I was and plodding, quick enough to understand and to feel, sometimes with a dash of something mysteriously called temperament; but some obstacle seemed to be set between brain and fingers; there could have been little enough reward even on the best days for the pains of an ambitious teacher, and reward of other sorts (for American prices had not yet invaded Germany) was almost ludicrously small. Some days indeed that obstacle seemed to vanish; all would go well, and Herr Ritter's 'Na, liebes Kind, es war gar nicht schlecht,' would send me home walking on air. But other days everything would go wrong, and that kind patience would give way. He would sit back wearily with his arms folded while I blundered through my carefully practiced exercises, his black eyes sparkling dangerously, his moustache curling like a great cat's.

'Aber, lieber Himmel, das ist ja bodenlos! das ist zur Verzweiflung!' he would cry, springing up and towering furiously over me, when with stolid exterior but growing terror I had repeated the same mistake for perhaps the tenth time. I would struggle on for

a moment desperately; then came the frightful climax, 'Sapperlot, Mariechen, was machst du denn?' And with a savage, 'Schau' doch mal her!' he would snatch the violin out of my guilty hands and mimic with terrible veracity what I had done. I draw the veil over such horrors. If I were asked to specify the worst moments of my life, I should undoubtedly have to include those imitations. Then, softening at my evident distress: 'So war's — nicht? Und jetzt höre!' And the violin would sing under his hands, beautiful, clear, true tones that made the commonest exercise pure music.

But I would go away sounding black depths of despair that I did not know existed; not so much, I think, because I had been stupid at my lesson as because forsooth I had displeased Herr Ritter.

Luckily that valley of humiliation could be trodden at most only twice a week, and there was time between for recovery. And I was not stupid for Fräulein Schmidt. The rapid dictation that had seemed so terrifying the first day, I grew to take with mechanical ease and accuracy. I had a quick verbal memory, and I could memorize the lesson as fast and as well as anybody.

'So, mein Kind, es war recht gut,' Fräulein Schmidt's deep, kind voice had said after my first much-dreaded little recitation. 'Willst du weiterfahren, Else?'

Grete patted me under the desks, and the ordeal was over. After that everything was easy; and with my mind freed from anxiety over myself and my limitations, I was able to throw myself into the interest, keen always, often absorbing, of those wonderful literature lessons, the lessons of one of the most inspired and inspiring teachers it has ever been my fortune to know.

Her methods, I suppose, would sound strange to American ears. About

ten minutes after the hour — there was a short recess after every class — a mighty tread would be heard in the hall, and Fräulein Schmidt would march into the room, instant silence heralding her as she appeared.

‘Guten Morgen, Kinder. Wo sind wir denn geblieben? Ja so, willst du anfangen, Katerina?’

And promptly and glibly the girl in question began to recite word for word the lesson of yesterday; it was taken up by the girl next her, and so the recitation swept round the class until the whole of yesterday’s dictation was recited.

‘Nun, wir wollen also weiterfahren,’ said Fräulein Schmidt, who perhaps meantime had been walking up and down the class-room. *Hefte* were opened, pens and ink flew; the rest of the hour varied between dictation and talk. I will only say of that dictation that it was as rapid as many a college lecture; yet those German note-books were filled with the most delicate clear writing, fine and perfect as steel-engraving. That ideal, alas! I could never reach, and my own books were a bitter trial to me, because, try as I would, I could never make them beautiful like Else’s and Grete’s.

But already I seem to see the lifting of pedagogical eyebrows. Was this sound method? Was this the way to train those children to self-expression? What was to become of the pupil’s originality? But oh, dear pedagogical friends, if you could have heard them, if you could have seen the eager faces, the lighted eyes! I wonder how often your pupils look at you as those girls looked at Fräulein Schmidt. Why, if you come to that, should we not have learned her lessons word by word? Her words were better than any we could have dreamed of using, and we ran a chance, in learning them, of learning as well from a noble model something

of the meaning of good style and good construction. We are proud of our pedagogy over here, proud, and justly so, of our system and our correct method. But it may do us good sometimes to reflect that there were brave men before Agamemnon. Perhaps, after all, we in America have not discovered the ultimate secret of teaching. And we shall do well not to close our ears to the still small voice that warns us not to put our trust too much in methods, in which of themselves there is no salvation. For the true teacher, like the poet, is born, not made. Conscientiousness, faithfulness, study, these things make meritorious teaching; but if that be all, there will always be about it what Professor James calls so admirably ‘the hopeless inferiority of voluntary to instinctive action.’ Before all teaching comes the teacher, the great, the gifted personality. High vitality and the gift of God, these are the essentials. Other things may make a teacher good (a reluctant *credo*), there is certainly nothing else that makes him great.

But it was best of all when Fräulein Schmidt would turn aside from the stated lesson, and as if in sudden reminiscence would tell us stories of the great men we were studying. How those men lived! And how little I have since read or heard that in any way approached the vitality with which this genius in story-telling brought us in touch with the great dead. Goethe and Schiller! we knew their very walk, the cut of their coats, their living manner and gesture.

I could not pass the Altes Theater without thinking of the night of the triumphant first performance of *Die Jungfrau*; without seeing the great Schiller, his noble head bent, walking away from the building through the crowds of people who stood bareheaded and silent in that great moment’s

tribute to their poet. A mother that night, Fräulein Schmidt told us, had lifted up her child to see, and had said, 'Da, nun hast du ihn auch gesehen — den grossen Schiller!' and I wished I could have been that little child.

I could never visit places in Germany afterwards that were not haunted, alive with the past, with ghosts more real than the actual passers-by. Schiller and Goethe passed down the street together in Weimar, the older man's arm affectionately on the other's shoulder; or Goethe himself in earlier days, the young god of a nation's worship, led the duke's revels, or, a student in Strasburg, walked on earth incognito and bound all hearts to his service. The Hartz sang with Heine's poetry; the immortal plums still reddened on the way from Jena to Weimar; and a child of less Teutonic training might blush to own the famous *curiosités* I was willing to miss seeing later in Paris for the sake of one lonely grave in distant Montmartre.

And that passing officer, splendid in gold and red, — he might be young Körner, Theodor Körner the soldier-poet, who for his country's sake took up the sword and found a hero's death.

Ah, we learned in that school to think *Begeisterung* one of the greatest of great words, as we learned to think *Schwärmerei* one of the cheapest and poorest of lesser ones. I like to think, too, that we learned from Fräulein Schmidt (as who could help learning from such an example?) honor and love for all great things and all greatness always.

And beside these giant sons of Germany were figures scarcely less real, yet inhabiting a sort of sublimated world of their own; the world where Karl Moor watches the sunset and weeps for his lost innocence, and Max Piccolomini, torn between two loyalties, takes the clear road of honor and

rides to death at the head of his troop; where Alba, grim and scornful, sees the splendid, careless Egmont from the palace window, and speaks the words of doom as his guest dismounts in the courtyard; where the Maid beats back England in the joy of heroic battle and the clash of arms, and the lilies of France stoop over her as she dies among the people she has saved. The gallant young Templar, Carlos, and the Queen his mother, Tell the patriot, Thekla, white and starry, pale flower of an ideal love, the Scottish Queen for whom men counted the world well lost, the terrible Duke Wallenstein, Diana's maiden priestess Iphigenie, — I knew them all, and it was as friends that they came to meet me later in the plays I read.

There was little time to read at home, for the literature classes, with thirty-six hours of class-room work a week (the time actually spent in the classes by some of my German friends in their last year!). In the reading classes we read and studied something at least of the classics of three nations, and were taught not a little of what careful reading meant. But what we were given in the literature classes was the will and heart to read. It was a great preparation, a great and noble frame into which we might afterwards put whatever our experience might offer. For she would tell those great stories so that the dullest would take fire, the least imaginative be moved. Fancy the effect then on a foreign child, eager, alert, imaginative, with heart and brain almost overstimulated by the wonders of this new world on which she was entering. I know that Fräulein Schmidt's stories of Goethe's and Schiller's dramas, — her stories, together with the constant chance of seeing those dramas nobly performed at the theatre, sent me hot-foot to the book-shelves to pull out books that I should never have dreamed of looking at on the

strength of a mere grown person's recommendation, and read to myself for pure delight and wonder.

Then on Sunday mornings, what excitement over the *Tageblatt*, with the theatrical notices for the week; for in some strange way theatre and opera over there had become a kind of ecstatic duty, — and what grief if *Siegfried* conflicted with *Carlos*, or if the plays that we absolutely must not miss ran above the one or two nights permitted by wise parents!

And be sure that it was not only of the plays that we heard from Fräulein Schmidt. I remember my introduction, stormy and splendid, to *Lenore* — the terror of the hurrying hoof-beats, the magnificent imaginative rush of the story. There was poetry, legend, fiction, — God's plenty always.

I have spoken perhaps overmuch of literature. There were plenty of other lessons under good teachers — all that we should expect at home except Greek and Latin, and others that we should not expect. But it was Fräulein Schmidt's literature that left its mark.

Of course at fifteen one did not read *Faust*, but it would be strange if that year had passed without an initiation into Goethe's tremendous masterpiece. And it did not. By its end I knew, at least as a novice, that great and terrible drama; I too had passed,

Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle,

and back again to heaven; and when in later years I came to study *Faust*, it was as one already partly free of its mysteries. And in Fräulein Schmidt's telling, from the —

Es irrt der Mensch so lang er strebt,

of the great grim Prologue, to the starry clearness and beauty of the angel chorus at the close —

Wer immer strebend sich bemuht
Den können wir erlösen, —

one great note rang like a trumpet through the story, the note of heroic human striving and the unsatisfied heart of man.

I think that great story contained the keynote of her teaching. A fighter herself all her life for all good and holy things, she had no patience with milk-and-water ideals or insipid virtues. No; goodness must be militant, athletic, confident against a world in arms. It would be wrong not to tell of Fräulein Schmidt that she was more than a teacher: she was a pioneer in the Woman's Movement in Germany, and one of its most gifted speakers. One day in the class-room some one of us, little prigs, I dare say, as children are so apt to be when they are not imps, had in an answer uttered some platitude about the 'virtues' of this or that.

'Don't talk so much about the virtues, children,' Fräulein Schmidt had said with a fine note of scorn, 'Das hohe Streben' — and the deep voice thrilled and rang — 'das ist das Kennzeichen der Menschen!'

Oh, there was no Sunday-school teaching about Fräulein Schmidt. I have her picture before me as I write. I see a woman past middle age, gray-haired, capped with delicate lace, a loose dress with its white collar clasped at the throat by a heavy cameo, a woman whose every feature breathes fire, determination, life — yes, greatness! It is many years according to the flesh since Fräulein Schmidt died, but it is impossible to think of that valiant heart silenced, that indomitable spirit quenched. Somewhere surely,

In the sounding labor-house vast
Of being is practiced that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Somewhere still she must

Strengthen the wavering line . . .
On to the bound of the waste,
On to the City of God.

But why should I look so far? Does

she not live, is she not living, wherever an old pupil, as I do here, looks back to her for inspiration, strength, sincerity, priceless gifts she can never thank her for, a touchstone only truer as the years pass? Does she not live wherever her daughters in the spirit rise up and call her blessed, wherever in Germany women are enjoying the privileges for which she made so brave a fight? Another generation is growing up there now, and these girls, thanks to her work and that of women like her, find a different Germany from that of the old days.

Ah, the memories that crowd as I try to write about that wonderful year!

There was the German Christmas. We had kept our Christmas soberly at home, and I knew rather wistfully that I was much too big for a tree. We would not go to the trouble of having one here. But this simple decision produced a ripple of something like consternation among our acquaintance.

'What! not a tree?' said our old neighbor, the Herr Professor, coming across one morning with pipe and carpet slippers, 'Weihnacht ohne Weihnachtsbaum — das existirt doch nicht!'

'No tree?' my schoolmates chorused. 'Aber, Mariechen, das ist doch zu arg!'

'What? not for our *kleines Fräulein*?' said Alma the maid, genuinely shocked.

I lifted appealing eyes.

'Well, Henry,' said my mother softly, 'perhaps as we're here —?'

And so it happened that the night before Christmas Eve my father took me to buy a tree. For here was a whole country where nobody was too big for trees, and it would have been a hard-hearted foreigner who could have held out against the infectious joy of a German Christmas.

I see that night yet: the thickly falling snow, — Frau Holle's feathers, I had been taught to call it once; the gay

shop-windows, the merry crowd; and then at last the great empty square, the familiar Augustusplatz, suddenly grown strange as a dream, sprung by miracle into a green forest of fir-trees, a veritable *Märchenwald*. Everywhere, as far as you could see, those green trees stretched, trees of all sizes, from the great spruces for churches down to baby firs such as you might pick up in your fingers and set on your table. Green lanes ran to and fro, and in those lanes twinkling lights marked little booths full of wonderful shining things of gold and silver and crystal: such stars, such balls and pendants, such magic fruits! And above all, the angels and the blessed *Christkind* for the topmost branches! What a night that was, and how proudly we came home with our treasures, — the tiny tree with its precious decorations! There never was a better Christmas. And when the tree was lighted, who should come in but Vera Ritter, Herr Ritter's clever young sister, to accompany me for the Christmas *Vorspiel*, the surprise that every German child who studies music must have ready for its parents on Christmas Eve. Oh, I was as proud that night as if I could play the *Kreutzer Sonata*!

Then there was the *Messe*, the immemorial Fair that spring and autumn filled the great squares with booths and the lesser ones with *Carrousels* and penny theatres, and the town with the motley throng who seemed the survivors of an earlier age, strays down the centuries of the great mediæval tide of wayfarers. From the ends of the earth those bare stalls levied tribute: coral and tortoise-shell from the south of Italy, yellow amber from the North Sea, carven wood from Swiss villages, and who knows what barbaric splendors from the East! All that the heart of man could covet, or his need require, was spread somewhere, it seemed, upon

those wooden boards. I remember well the *Töpfermarkt* where it was so pleasant to linger a bit on spring mornings; the old Pottery Fair that stretched half a mile down the Promenade, that pleasant green strip of park which marked the line of the old city wall; the wares, from delicate table china to the roughest and cheapest pottery, standing out unprotected under the open sky, and tended by quaint old peasant women. The walk to school was very entertaining in *Messe* time.

And as the weather grew warmer, there was such swimming in the Pleisse, a mile's walk from the city through the lovely Rosenthal, where the stream wound among green trees and fields. I have talked much of lessons, but my German friends were no muffs or digs. Else could beat me at swimming, and I had been brought up on the water; in winter they thought nothing of a ten-mile skate up the frozen river. They were normal, healthy, and happy girls, though with wider interests, a broader intelligence, and more cultivated and alert minds than our children of the same age.

But the year was sweeping by, and the time came all too soon, in spite of

the joys foreseen of the long vacation, when school was over and we must say good-by to Fräulein Schmidt.

'I don't know what else I have done or failed to do, children,' she said on one of the last days, 'but I have tried to give you a little glimpse into the great kingdom of thought — das grosse Reich der Gedanken.'

I think of that sometimes when I see a teacher, painstaking and conscientious, trying, as some one has put it, 'to draw out ideas that are n't there.'

'It is the soil that is there,' I can fancy Fräulein Schmidt saying, — 'fertilize that, plant the seed, and who knows what *Wunderblumen* may spring up?'

And then came the last day of all. There were the kind faces at the train, the dear quaint bouquets, the pleasant voices.

'Wiedersehen, Mariechen!'

'Vergiss uns nicht!'

'Komm bald zurück nach Deutschland!'

And they were long out of sight and hearing when I was still waving a limp handkerchief at the window, and trying to keep back the first tears of homesickness I had ever known.

THE SQUIRE

BY ELSIE SINGMASTER

THE squire was a bachelor, and lived alone in his house; therefore he was able to use the parlor and dining-room for offices. The parlor contained only a pine desk, a map, hanging 'at' the wall, as Millerstown would have said, and a dozen or so plain pine chairs. The law was administered with scant ceremony in Millerstown.

The squire sat now in the twilight in his 'back' office, which was furnished with another pine table, two chairs, and a large old-fashioned iron safe. He was clearly of a geographical turn of mind, for table, safe, and floor were littered with railroad maps and folders. The squire was about sixty years old; he had all the grave beauty which the Gaumer men acquired. Their hair did not thin as it turned gray, their smooth-shaven faces did not wrinkle. They all looked stern, but their faces brightened readily at sight of a little child or an old friend, or with amusement over some untold thought.

The squire's face glowed. He was going — his age, his inexperience, the certain disapproval of Millerstown notwithstanding — he was going round the world! He would start in a month, and thus far he had told no one but Edwin Seem, an adventurous young Millerstonian who was to leave that night for a ranch in Kansas, and whom the squire was to visit on his own journey. For thirty years he had kept Millerstown straight; there was no possible case for which his substitute would not find a precedent. Fortunately there were no trusts to be investi-

gated and reproved, and no vote-buyers or bribers to be imprisoned or fined. There were disputes of all kinds, dozens of them. There was one waiting for the squire now in the outer office; he shook his head solemnly at thought of it, as he gathered up his maps and thrust them back into the safe, that precious old safe which held the money for his journey. He had been thirty years gathering the money together.

The law might be administered in Millerstown without formality, but it was not administered without the eager attention of the citizens. Every one in the village was on hand when simple-minded Venus Stuber was indicted for stealing, or when the various dramatic scenes of the Miller-Weitzel feud were enacted. This evening's case, *Sula Myers vs. Adam Myers* for non-support, might be considered part of the Miller-Weitzel feud, since the two real principals, Sula's mother and Adam's mother, had been respectively Sally Miller and Maria Weitzel.

The air was sultry, and rain threatened. The clouds seemed to rest on the tops of the maple trees; it was only because the Millerstonians knew the rough brick pavements as they knew the palms of their hands that there were no serious falls in the darkness. They laughed as they hurried to the hearing; it was seldom that a dispute promised so richly. There was almost no one in the village who could not have been subpoenaed as a witness, so thorough was every one's knowledge of the case.