

He burst into tears, which relieved him, and then went on:

"Oh, how I felt my blood boil at that moment; how my heart seemed bursting within me; and a voice appeared to whisper in my ear the name of 'coward!' It surely was an evil spirit. I felt that I was strong enough—my rising anger made me so—to seize my unjust assailant by the throat, and cast him gasping on the ground. I heard already the shout of applause that would have hailed my victory and turned the tables against him. It was the hardest struggle of my life; never were flesh and blood so strong within me. O God! may they never be again so tremendously powerful."

"And what did you do, then, my darling boy?" gasped forth the trembling matron.

He replied, "My good angel conquered the demon at my side. I stretched forth my hand to Corvinus, and said, 'May God forgive you, as I freely and fully do; and may He bless you abundantly.' Cassianus came up at that moment, having seen all from a distance, and the youthful crowd quickly dispersed. I entreated him, by our common faith, now acknowledged between us, not to pursue Corvinus for what he had done; and I obtained his promise. And now, sweet mother," murmured the boy, in soft,

gentle accents, into his parent's bosom, "do you think I may call this a happy day?"

spheroid (sfē'), a body or figure in shape like a sphere.

vellum, a fine kind of parchment, made of the skin of a lamb, goat, sheep or young calf, for writing on.

theme, a subject or topic on which a person writes or speaks. **score**, bill, account, reckoning.

supercil'ious, proud, haughty.

styles and tables, writing implements for schools. The tables or tablets were covered with wax, on which the letters were traced by the sharp point of the style, and erased by its flat top.

cestus, a covering for the hands of boxers, made of leather bands, and often loaded with lead or iron.

"If you are worthy of your name": Reference is here made by Corvinus to the *pancratium*, an athletic exercise among the Romans, which combined all personal contests, such as boxing, wrestling, etc.

Cassianus, St. Cassian, who, though a Bishop, opened a school for Roman youths. Having confessed Christ, and refusing to offer sacrifice to the gods, the pagan judge commanded that his own pupils should stab him to death with their iron writing pencils, called styles.

ay or **aye**, meaning *yes*, is pronounced *ī* or *äi*; meaning *ever*, and used only in poetry, it is pronounced *ā*.

Read carefully two or three times the opening paragraph of the selection, so that the picture conveyed by the words may be clearly impressed on the mind. Then with book closed write out in your own words a description of "The Martyr's Boy."

THE ANGEL'S STORY

Through the blue and frosty heavens
Christmas stars were shining bright;
Glistening lamps throughout the City
Almost matched their gleaming light;
While the winter snow was lying,
And the winter winds were sighing,
Long ago, one Christmas night.

Rich and poor felt love and blessing
From the gracious season fall;
Joy and plenty in the cottage,
Peace and feasting in the hall;
And the voices of the children
Ringing clear above it all.

Yet one house was dim and darkened;
Gloom, and sickness, and despair,
Dwelling in the gilded chambers,
Creeping up the marble stair,
Even stilled the voice of mourning,—
For a child lay dying there.

Silken curtains fell around him,
Velvet carpets hushed the tread,
Many costly toys were lying
All unheeded by his bed;
And his tangled golden ringlets
Were on downy pillows spread.

THE ANGEL'S STORY

The skill of all that mighty City
To save one little life was vain,—
One little thread from being broken,
One fatal word from being spoken;
Nay, his very mother's pain
And the mighty love within her
Could not give him health again.

Suddenly an unseen Presence
Checked those constant moaning cries,
Stilled the little heart's quick fluttering,
Raised those blue and wondering eyes,
Fixed on some mysterious vision
With a startled, sweet surprise.

For a radiant angel hovered,
Smiling, o'er the little bed;
White his raiment; from his shoulders
Snowy dove-like pinions spread,
And a starlike light was shining
In a glory round his head.

While, with tender love, the angel,
Leaning o'er the little nest,
In his arms the sick child folding,
Laid him gently on his breast,
Sobs and wailings told the mother
That her darling was at rest.

THE ANGEL'S STORY

So the angel, slowly rising,
Spread his wings, and through the air
Bore the child; and, while he held him
To his heart with loving care,
Placed a branch of crimson roses
Tenderly beside him there.

While the child, thus clinging, floated
Towards the mansions of the Blest,
Gazing from his shining guardian
To the flowers upon his breast,
Thus the angel spake, still smiling
On the little heavenly guest:

“ Know, dear little one, that Heaven
Does no earthly thing disdain;
Man's poor joys find there an echo
Just as surely as his pain;
Love, on earth so feebly striving,
Lives divine in Heaven again.

“ Once, in that great town below us,
In a poor and narrow street,
Dwelt a little sickly orphan;
Gentle aid, or pity sweet,
Never in life's rugged pathway
Guided his poor tottering feet.

THE ANGEL'S STORY



Kaulbach.

THE ANGEL'S STORY

“ All the striving, anxious fore-thought
That should only come with age
Weighed upon his baby spirit,
Showed him soon life's sternest page;
Grim Want was his nurse, and Sorrow
Was his only heritage.

“ One bright day, with feeble footsteps
Slowly forth he tried to crawl
Through the crowded city's pathways,
Till he reached a garden-wall,
Where 'mid princely halls and mansions
Stood the lordliest of all.

“ There were trees with giant branches,
Velvet glades where shadows hide;
There were sparkling fountains glancing,
Flowers, which in luxuriant pride
Even wafted breaths of perfume
To the child who stood outside.

“ He against the gate of iron
Pressed his wan and wistful face,
Gazing with an awe-struck pleasure
At the glories of the place;
Never had his brightest day-dream
Shone with half such wondrous grace.

THE ANGEL'S STORY

“ You were playing in that garden,
Throwing blossoms in the air,
Laughing when the petals floated
Downwards on your golden hair;
And the fond eyes watching o'er you,
And the splendor spread before you,
Told a House's Hope was there.

“ When your servants, tired of seeing
Such a face of want and woe,
Turning to the ragged orphan,
Gave him coin, and bade him go,
Down his cheeks so thin and wasted
Bitter tears began to flow.

“ But that look of childish sorrow
On your tender child-heart fell,
And you plucked the reddest roses
From the tree you loved so well,
Passed them through the stern cold grating,
Gently bidding him 'Farewell!'

“ Dazzled by the fragrant treasure
And the gentle voice he heard,
In the poor forlorn boy's spirit,
Joy, the sleeping Seraph, stirred;
In his hand he took the flowers,
In his heart the loving word.

“ So he crept to his poor garret;
Poor no more, but rich and bright;

THE ANGEL'S STORY

For the holy dreams of childhood—
Love, and Rest, and Hope, and Light—
Floated round the orphan's pillow
Through the starry summer night.

“Day dawned, yet the visions lasted;
All too weak to rise he lay;
Did he dream that none spake harshly,—
All were strangely kind that day?
Surely then his treasured roses
Must have charmed all ills away.

“And he smiled, though they were fading;
One by one their leaves were shed;
'Such bright things could never perish,
They would bloom again,' he said.
When the next day's sun had risen
Child and flowers both were dead.

“Know, dear little one, our Father
Will no gentle deed disdain;
Love on the cold earth beginning
Lives divine in Heaven again;
While the angel hearts that beat there
Still all tender thoughts retain.”

So the angel ceased, and gently
O'er his little burden leant;
While the child gazed from the shining,
Loving eyes that o'er him bent,

THE ANGEL'S STORY

To the blooming roses by him,
Wondering what that mystery meant.

Thus the radiant angel answered,
And with tender meaning smiled:
“Ere your childlike, loving spirit,
Sin and the hard world defiled,
God has given me leave to seek you,—
I was once that little child!”

In the churchyard of that city
Rose a tomb of marble rare,
Decked, as soon as Spring awakened,
With her buds and blossoms fair,—
And a humble grave beside it,—
No one knew who rested there.

Adelaide A. Procter.

Enlarge the following brief summary of the Angel's Story into a composition the length of which to be determined by your teacher. Use many of the words and forms of expression you find in the poem.

THE ANGEL'S STORY

A poor little boy, to whom a child of wealth had in pity given a bunch of “reddest roses,” died with the fading flowers. Afterwards he came as a “radiant angel” to visit his dying friend, and in a spirit of gratitude bore him to heaven.

GLUCK'S VISITOR

al' ti tude	as tound' ing	ve loc' i ty
vag' a bond	mus tach' es	hes i ta' ting ly
par' a lyzed	tre men' dous	ex traor' di na ry

It was drawing toward winter, and very cold weather, when one day Gluck's two older brothers had gone out, with their usual warning to little Gluck, who was left to mind the roast, that he was to let nobody in and give nothing out. Gluck sat down quite close to the fire, for it was raining very hard. He turned and turned, and the roast got nice and brown.

"What a pity," thought Gluck, "that my brothers never ask anybody to dinner. I'm sure, when they have such a nice piece of mutton as this, it would do their hearts good to have somebody to eat it with them." Just as he spoke there came a double knock at the house door, yet heavy and dull, as though the knocker had been tied up. "It must be the wind," said Gluck; "nobody else would venture to knock double knocks at our door."

No; it wasn't the wind. There it came again very hard, and what was particularly astounding, the knocker seemed to be in a hurry, and not to be in the least afraid of the consequences. Gluck put his head out the window to see who it was.

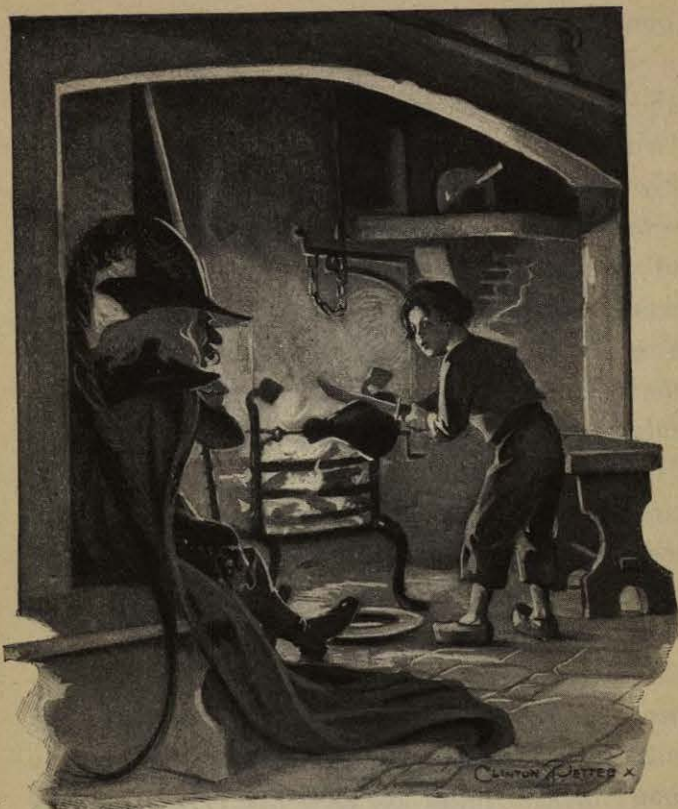
It was the most extraordinary looking little

GLUCK'S VISITOR

gentleman he had ever seen in his life. He had a very large nose, slightly brass-colored; his cheeks were very round and very red; his eyes twinkled merrily through long, silky eyelashes; his mustaches curled twice round like a corkscrew on each side of his mouth, and his hair, of a curious mixed pepper-and-salt color, descended far over his shoulders. He was about four feet six in height, and wore a conical pointed cap of nearly the same altitude, decorated with a black feather some three feet long. He wore an enormous black, glossy-looking cloak, which must have been very much too long in calm weather, as the wind carried it clear out from the wearer's shoulders to about four times his own length.

Gluck was so perfectly paralyzed by the appearance of his visitor that he remained fixed, without uttering a word, until the old gentleman turned round to look after his fly-away cloak. In so doing he caught sight of Gluck's little yellow head jammed in the window, with its mouth and eyes very wide open indeed.

"Hello!" said the little gentleman, "that's not the way to answer the door. I'm wet; let me in." To do the little gentleman justice, he *was* wet. His feather hung down between his legs like a beaten puppy's tail, dripping like an umbrella; and from the end of his mus-



taches the water was running into his waistcoat pockets, and out again like a mill stream.

"I'm very sorry," said Gluck, "but I really can't."

"Can't what?" said the old gentleman.

"I can't let you in, sir. My brothers would beat me to death, sir, if I thought of such a thing. What do you want, sir?"

"Want?" said the old gentleman. "I want

fire and shelter; and there's your great fire there blazing, crackling, and dancing on the walls, with nobody to feel it. Let me in, I say."

Gluck had had his head, by this time, so long out of the window that he began to feel it was really unpleasantly cold. When he turned and saw the beautiful fire rustling and roaring, and throwing long, bright tongues up the chimney, as if it were licking its chops at the savory smell of the leg of mutton, his heart melted within him that it should be burning away for nothing.

"He does look *very* wet," said little Gluck; "I'll just let him in for a quarter of an hour."

As the little gentleman walked in, there came a gust of wind through the house that made the old chimneys totter.

"That's a good boy. Never mind your brothers. I'll talk to them."

"Pray, sir, don't do any such thing," said Gluck. "I can't let you stay till they come; they'd be the death of me."

"Dear me," said the old gentleman, "I'm sorry to hear that. How long may I stay?"

"Only till the mutton is done, sir," replied Gluck, "and it's very brown." Then the old gentleman walked into the kitchen and sat himself down on the hob, with the top of his cap up the chimney, for it was much too high for the roof.

"You'll soon dry there, sir," said Gluck, and sat down again to turn the mutton. But the old gentleman did *not* dry there, but went on drip, drip, dripping among the cinders, so that the fire fizzed and sputtered and began to look very black and uncomfortable. Never was such a cloak; every fold in it ran like a gutter.

"I beg pardon, sir," said Gluck, at length, after watching the water spreading in long, quicksilver-like streams over the floor; "mayn't I take your cloak?"

"No, thank you," said the old gentleman.

"Your cap, sir?"

"I am all right, thank you," said the old gentleman, rather gruffly.

"But—sir—I'm very sorry," said Gluck, hesitatingly, "but—really—sir—you're putting the fire out."

"It'll take longer to do the mutton, then."

Gluck was very much puzzled by the behavior of his guest; it was such a strange mixture of coolness and humility.

"That mutton looks very nice," said the old gentleman. "Can't you give me a little bit?"

"Impossible, sir," said Gluck.

"I'm very hungry," continued the old gentleman; "I've had nothing to eat yesterday nor to-day. They surely couldn't miss a bit from the knuckle!"

He spoke in so very melancholy a tone that it quite melted Gluck's heart.

"They promised me one slice to-day, sir," said he; "I can give you that, but no more."

"That's a good boy," said the old gentleman again.

"I don't care if I do get beaten for it," thought Gluck.

Just as he had cut a large slice out of the mutton, there came a tremendous rap at the door. The old gentleman jumped; Gluck fitted the slice into the mutton again, and ran to open the door.

"What did you keep us waiting in the rain for?" said Schwartz, as he walked in, throwing his umbrella in Gluck's face.

"Aye; what for, indeed, you little vagabond?" said Hans, administering an educational box on the ear, as he followed his brother.

"Bless my soul!" said Schwartz, when he opened the door.

"Amen," said the little gentleman, who had taken his cap off, and was standing in the middle of the kitchen, bowing with the utmost velocity.

"Who's that?" said Schwartz, catching up a rolling-pin, and turning fiercely to Gluck.

"I don't know, indeed, brother," said Gluck, in great terror.

"How did he get in?" roared Schwartz.

"My dear brother, he was so *very* wet!"

The rolling-pin was descending on Gluck's head; but, at that instant, the old gentleman interposed his conical cap, on which it crashed with a shock that shook the water out of it all over the room. What was very odd, the rolling-pin no sooner touched the cap, than it flew out of Schwartz's hand, spinning like a straw in a high wind, and fell into the corner at the farther end of the room.

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Schwartz.

"What's your business?" snarled Hans.

"I'm a poor old man, sir," the little gentleman began, very modestly, "and I saw your fire through the window, and begged shelter for a quarter of an hour."

"Have the goodness to walk out again, then," said Schwartz. "We've quite enough water in our kitchen, without making it a drying house."

"It's a very cold day, sir, to turn an old man out in, sir; look at my gray hairs."

"Aye!" said Hans, "there are enough of them to keep you warm. Walk!"

"I'm very, very hungry, sir; couldn't you spare me a bit of bread before I go?"

"Bread, indeed!" said Schwartz; "do you suppose we've nothing to do with our bread but to give it to such fellows as you?"

"Why don't you sell your feather?" said Hans, sneeringly. "Out with you."

"A little bit," said the old gentleman.

"Be off!" said Schwartz.

"Pray, gentlemen."

"Off!" cried Hans, seizing him by the collar. But he had no sooner touched the old gentleman's collar than away he went after the rolling-pin, spinning round and round, till he fell into the corner on the top of it.

Then Schwartz was very angry, and ran at the old gentleman to turn him out. But he also had hardly touched him, when away he went after Hans and the rolling-pin, and hit his head against the wall as he tumbled into the corner. And so there they lay, all three.

Then the old gentleman spun himself round until his long cloak was all wound neatly about him, clapped his cap on his head, very much on one side, gave a twist to his corkscrew mustaches, and replied, with perfect coolness: "Gentlemen, I wish you a very good morning. At twelve o'clock to-night I'll call again."

John Ruskin.

NOTE.—"The King of the Golden River," from which the selection is taken, is a charming story for children. It was written in 1841 for the amusement of a sick child. It is said to be the finest story of its kind in the language.

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

elf jerk rein' deer tar' nished
en cir' cled hur' ri cane min' i a ture

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all
through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse:
The stockings were hung by the chimney with
care,
In the hope that St. Nicholas soon would be
there.
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their
heads;
And Mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's
nap,
When out on the lawn there rose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the
matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters, and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the luster of midday to objects below;
When, what to my wondering eyes should
appear
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver; so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick!
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

And he whistled, and shouted, and called them
by name:

"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer!
now, Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now, dash away! dash away! dash away, all!"
As dry leaves, that before the wild hurricane fly
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the
sky,

So, up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas,
too;

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a
bound.

He was dressed all in fur from his head to his
foot,

And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes
and soot;

A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,
And he looked like a pedler just opening his
pack;

His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how
merry!

His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,

A VISIT FROM ST. NICHOLAS

And the beard on his chin was as white as the
snow;
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it encircled his head like a
wreath;
He had a broad face, and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowlful
of jelly.
He was chubby and plump,—a right jolly old
elf,—
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of
myself.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his
work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a
jerk,
And, laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a
whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a
thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of
sight,
“Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-
night!”

Clement C. Moore.

THE BOY OF RATISBON

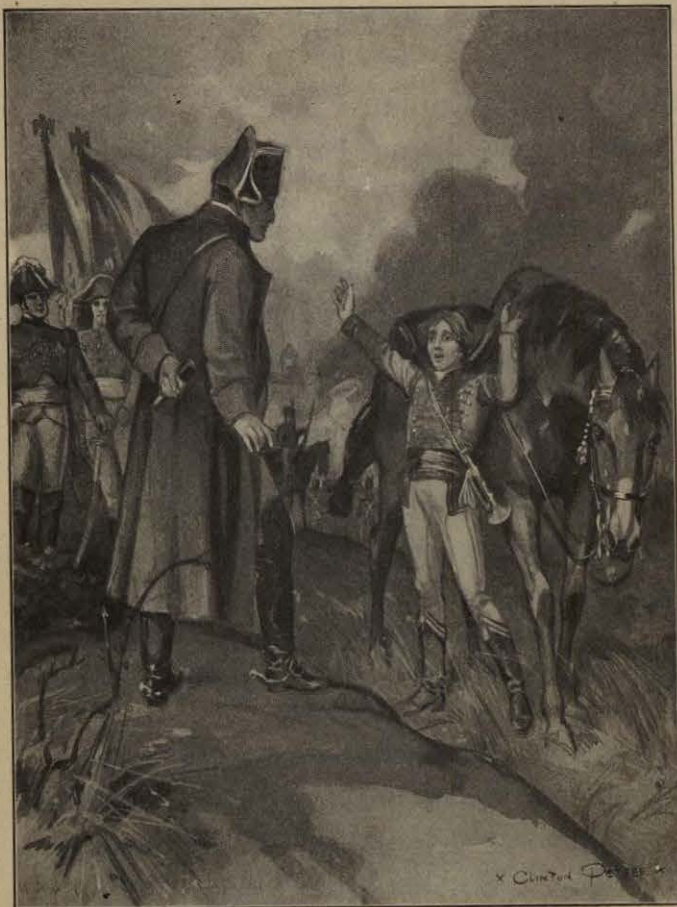
perched	ea' glet	com pressed'
sheathes	bal' ance	op press' ive

For Recitation:

You know we French stormed Ratisbon;
A mile or so away,
On a little mound, Napoleon
Stood on our storming day;
With neck out-thrust,—you fancy how,—
Legs wide, arms locked behind,
As if to balance the prone brow
Oppressive with its mind.

Just as perhaps he mused, “My plans
That soar, to earth may fall,
Let once my army leader, Lannes,
Waver at yonder wall,”
Out 'twixt the battery smoke there flew
A rider, bound on bound,
Full-galoping; nor bridle drew
Until he reached the mound.

Then off there flung, in smiling joy,
And held himself erect
By just his horse's mane, a boy;
You hardly could suspect—
So tight he kept his lips compressed,
Scarce any blood came through—
You looked twice ere you saw his breast
Was almost shot in two.



“Well,” cried he, “Emperor, by God’s grace
 We’ve got you Ratisbon!
 The Marshal’s in the market place,
 And you’ll be there anon
 To see your flag-bird flap his vans
 Where I, to heart’s desire,

Perched him!” The chief’s eye flashed; his
 plans
 Soared up again like fire.

The chief’s eye flashed; but presently
 Softened itself, as sheathes
 A film the mother eagle’s eye
 When her bruised eaglet breathes.
 “You’re wounded!” “Nay,” the soldier’s
 pride

Touched to the quick, he said:
 “I’m killed, Sire!” And, his chief beside,
 Smiling, the boy fell dead.

Robert Browning.

Ratisbon (răt'is bön), a town in Bavaria, on the
 river Danube. storming, attacking.

Marshal, the highest officer in the French army.
 battery, two or more pieces of artillery in the field.

vans, wings. anon, soon.

What is meant by “as sheathes a film the mother
 eagle’s eye when her bruised eaglet breathes”?

Tell what “Touched to the quick” means.

Who was Napoleon? Who is the author of the poem?

Tell what you know of each.

Why is the idea of the eagle kept constantly before
 the reader’s mind?

Write out this story in the form of a composition.
 Write it as effectively as you can. Imagine you were on
 the mound beside Napoleon, and saw the whole incident.
 Let your imagination supply details omitted by the poet.