

**THE MISTLETOE,
GERMAN TALE
OF CHRISTMAS**

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The Mistletoe, German Tale of Christmas by Thomas Allman

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THOMAS ALLMAN

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THE MISTLETOE:

GERMAN TALE OF CHRISTMAS.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE WEDDING BELLS,"
ETC., ETC.

"For Fable is Love's world, his home, his birth place—
Delightedly dwells he 'mong Fays, and Talkmans,
And Spirits; and delightedly believes
Divinities—being himself divine."

LONDON:
THOMAS ALLMAN, 42, HOLBORN HILL.

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THE MISTLETOE.

CHAPTER I.

"And noiseless as a lovely dream, is gone;
And was she there? and is he now alone?"

A TRUE undisguising narration of my life's first and chiefest adventures may amuse—must instruct you. Fancy me at the moment I introduce myself to you, twenty years old, and in the most blissful state of mind to which human events may possibly exalt one. Under the spell of that charming mixture of hope and certainty, retaining all the ardour, the eagerness, the excitement of the chase, with the content, the repose of heart attending undoubted success, or all but perfect assurance of success—and with just enough of uncertainty for the invigorating prospect of something to be achieved; fancy all this, and you have a faint idea of my heart's picture during that eventful journey upon which I first present myself to you.

It was winter.—I was travelling alone, through

one of our most monotonous pine forests, on the wings of hope, though by slow lagging stages. I was scarcely impatient of delays, my reveries so amply repaid me for their transient vexings.

They were to lead me to one I had not met since we were children together. My old playfellow, my sweet friend, my betrothed, such I considered her, my Juliet, mine alone.—“*Mine*,” I repeated to myself as I glided or jolted along, as the case might be—less of the first than the last. Yes, sweetest Juliet, everything conspired to prove that we were to be each other’s.

Our fathers were both professors at the University of which I had been, till now, the hope and ornament. Both might claim to be of good families; but each cared more for the interests of science than for such personal considerations—even though, in substantiating their pedigrees, they might have proved an unbroken descent from Rodolf of Hapsburg, or Charlemagne! This view of things more especially applied to my own parent, both from his higher claims of ancestry and his utter indifference to them. We were descended from the elder branch of one of the oldest and wealthiest Graffschafths of our empire, which for several generations had been enjoyed by the descendants of a younger son, by a second marriage; while the rightful heir was a poor professor.